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GUERRERO DURING THE MIDDLE FORMATIVE

Paul Schmidt
Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Quite a bit of writing

It has become a tradition for someone to write a general review article or chapter on the Olmecs of Guerrero every so often (Henderson 1979; Paradis 1974, 1981, 1990, 2008; Martínez 1994; Reyna and Schmidt 2006). The last article, product of a lecture given a little over a year ago, in August 2007, appeared in press only last month (Paradis 2008). Now it is my turn, although I am not quite sure what makes me qualified for the task. I had serious doubts as to participate in this symposium because I have never considered myself a specialist on anything to do with Olmecs. Maybe having worked three seasons at El Manatí (1988, 1989, and 1996) with Ponciano and Carmen and spent some time at Cerro Quiotepec doing survey and digging a stratigraphic pit practically in view of the Oxtotitlán murals, or perhaps having found white and darker wares with double-line-breaks in Chilpancingo and Xochipala, or a sherd with rocker stamping and another possible Calzadas Carved-like sherd from Chilapa qualify me to say something on the topic. Or, maybe because my son was born in Veracruz. Anyway, I do not really consider myself a specialist on the Olmec; I have trouble relating to the creation of dieties and interpretations of meaning based on figures, mostly without context. Nevertheless, I have had contact in Guerrero with contexts in which Olmec style objects have been found and, more than anything else, I feel I can point to several problems that need a lot more looking into.

What is the Middle Formative?

I think what we are all taking for granted is that by the Middle Formative, at least when talking about the Olmec, we refer to the time of La Venta, ca. 900-600/400 B.C. However, in Mexico a number of authors are now talking about Middle Formative or Preclassic as referring to the whole Olmec horizon, from 1200 to 600/400 B.C. (López and López 1996). With regard to Guerrero it is still too early to

say the division of the Formative into Early, Middle, and Late makes sense or reflects real changes, especially when comparison with other areas points to greatest similarities with Christine Niederberger's sequence (1987) which she did not divide into the three periods. If her sequence —especially phases Ayotla, Manantial, Tetelpan, and Zacatenco— is more applicable in Guerrero than the Early (San Lorenzo) – Middle (La Venta) division, I feel it is best to go with phases without grouping them into periods, at least until we have a considerable number of absolute dates to see where the various phases stand in relation to each other. Nevertheless I will be talking about Middle Formative here from 1000 B.C. to 400 B.C., reflected in the gray area of the chronological chart (Fig. 1)

What sites are known from the Middle Formative (Fig. 2)

Olmec figurines, green stone celts, and ceramics which can easily be attributed to the Olmec style seep out of the pores of Guerrero, everywhere, along its coasts, the *Costa Grande*, northwest of Acapulco, and the *Costa Chica*, southeast of Acapulco, the central and northern parts of Guerrero, *Tierra Caliente*, and *La Montaña*. Fewer remains come from the *Sierra* west of Chilpancingo between the *Costa Grande* and *Tierra Caliente*, but that may well be because it is practically unknown territory. This led Miguel Covarrubias to propose Guerrero as the place of origin of the Olmec style (1946; 1948; 1957). Despite the thousands of Olmec style objects in private collections and museums, only a handful have context and can be dated. Even Martínez (1994: 144) presents a map with 21 locations for Olmec materials, but only eight of them (Chilpancingo, Texayac, Juxtlahuaca, Cahuaziziqui, Oxtotitlán, Teopantecuanitlán, San Miguel Amuco) surely have Olmec style materials in context, and one more, Xochipala, has Middle Formative, but not Olmec. A few other sites can be added to this list. Following, I present a resumé of Guerrero sites both with Olmec style materials and Middle Formative occupation without Olmec.

Amuco Abelino

Here, Louise Paradis (1974) found the first evidence of Olmec style portable materials found in context, with early ¹⁴C dates. Paradis assigned an Olmec ceramic masquette to the Sesame 1 subphase, prior to a date of 1530 B.C. and a figurine head to the Sesame 2 subphase (Fig. 3). What led Paradis to excavate at Amuco Abelino in the first place was the find of a small stela with a standing figure wearing a bird mask (Grove and Paradis 1971; Fig. 4). Although it had been looted and was in a private collection, the authors are certain to have located the site it was looted from. Given what appear to be associated ceramic materials, they made an educated guess at its

chronology, placing it probably in the Middle Formative, along with similar Monuments Monuments 21, 27, and 28 from Chalcatzingo (Fig. 5), falling into the style Grove calls “frontier” Olmec. Later on, Paradis (1990) proposed two moments of Olmec presence in Tierra Caliente: An early moment, from 1300 to 1100 B.C. and a later moment, from 1000 to 800 B.C. to which the Amuco stela corresponds. Paradis’ work in the area led her to propose a hypothesis by which she saw the Olmec style in Guerrero and other places outside the nuclear area as taking advantage of already established trade networks of obsidian, shell from the Pacific, and jade since Early Formative times, and appearing as “foreign, even intrusive” (1990: 35). Niederberger (1976) proposed a similar view regarding Olmec presence outside the Gulf Coast. Nevertheless Paradis, on the basis of her early dates left the door open for the acceptance of Covarrubias’ proposal of Olmec origin. Not until this year, 2008, does she give up on that idea, clearly stating that Veracruz was earlier, but not accepting by any means the “mother culture” idea, where she talks about the “Olmec code” as sort of a *lingua franca* of political and ideological power between four regional capitals: La Venta, Chalcatzingo, Teopantecuanitlán, and San José Mogote.

Chilpancingo

What have been published as four sites —La Cueva (Schmidt 1976), Temixco II (Martínez 1990), COOVISUR¹ (Reyna and González 1998; Reyna and Martínez 1989), and El Tomatal (Goncen 1993)— with Middle Formative occupations are located here.

La Cueva was located on the northern edge of the city of Chilpancingo, on the eastern slope of the Valley of Chilpancingo; today it is well within the city, buried under streets and houses. The excavation of a stratigraphic pit and a trench served to define five building phases and three cultural phases ranging from the Middle Formative (phases I and Chilpancingo, Fig. 1) through the Late Classic. White slipped cajetes and Mica Buff ware with double-line-breaks and tecomates in both Mica Buff and Chilpancingo Orange (my earlier name for Granular White) are characteristic of this phase (Fig. 6). Yet nothing I would definitely call Olmec appeared.

The other three sites are located very close to each other on the slope of the eastern area of Chilpancingo; they may well be one site. Olmec-style —perhaps more of a localized rendering— objects were recovered from all three. Reyna and González (1998) find the closest

¹ This is an abbreviation, I believe for a habitational complex. If anyone is dying to know what it means, I can find out, or maybe include it in the final draft of the paper.

resemblance of the ceramics with Manantial phase materials in the Basin of Mexico.

At Temixco II, the materials (Fig 7) come from a burial inside a short-necked bottleshaped shaft tomb. These tombs, sometimes known as *sótanos*, are common in central Guerrero, although their temporal range is not clear. The COOVISUR materials were associated with cists and a corbeled vault tomb (Fig. 8), perhaps making this Middle Formative architectural technique the earliest known example from Mesoamerica (Reyna Robles 2002).

The cist burials, and especially the tomb with its offerings, suggest social stratification beyond the small village level. A ceramic vase with a modeled Olmec-looking face (local Olmec style?) was part of the offering in the tomb (Fig. 9); similar vases have been found at Teopantecuanitlán, and recently, not yet published, by Miguel Pérez Negrete at the northern edge of Chilpancingo. Also suggestive of upper class burials is the lack of Granular White ware in the offerings. At Xochipala (Schmidt 1990), La Cueva (Schmidt 1976, called Chilpancingo Orange here), Paradis' Mezcala project (Paradis, *et al.* 1983), and in Teopantecuanitlán (Niederberger 1986; Reyna 1996), during the Middle Formative, Granular White was one of the most common wares, perhaps the most common decorated utilitarian ware, mainly in the form of *tecomates* and flat-bottomed amphoras with three handles around the mid section and anthropomorphic appliqué features on the rim exterior painted with wide red bands over a fugitive white slip, giving the surface a pinkish tone. (Fig. 10).

Puerto Marqués

The famous site of Puerto Marqués has a long sequence which is not without its problems for relating layers to periods and absolute time. One has to refer to the dissertations of both Charles and Ellen Brush (Brush, Charles F. 1969; Brush, Ellen 1968) in order to make an approximate guess which is presented in the chronological chart (Fig. 1). There apparently are hollow Olmec figurines during the Uala phase (layers 30-27) which corresponds to the Early Formative and solid baby-faced figurines (Fig. 11) in the Tom and Rin phases (layers 26-16) of the Middle Formative. There is not much more data to be gleaned about the Middle Formative in Acapulco, except that the area was inhabited and had contact with the outside world.

Teopantecuanitlán (Fig. 11.1)

This is the most Olmec site of Guerrero so far; the most Gulf Coast looking. Guadalupe Martínez has published a few articles (1982, 1985, 1986, 1994). The four inverted T sculptures in the round (Fig. 12), a couple of other stone figures (Fig. 13), and white ceramics, mainly

flat-bottomed bowls with double or triple-line-breaks incised on the interior rim and incised figures on the interior bottom. The sculptures were placed on the eastern and western sides of a patio with what looks like a miniature ball court in the middle. An impressive structure at the site is a 0.70 – 0.90 m wide canal made out of monolithic limestone slabs up to 2.10 m tall, perhaps used for irrigation (Fig. 14). The site has a clear ceremonial area, *El Recinto* (Fig. 15), where Rosa Reyna (1996) excavated four strata pits, and a habitational area, *Lomeríos*, was excavated by Christine Niederberger (1986). However, the major publications, both descriptive and interpretative, have yet to be written, a real loss given the importance of the site.

Guadalupe Martínez (1994) proposes three epochs for Teopantecuanitlán: 1) Before 1200 B.C. when the first ceremonial structures were built; 2) between 1000 and 800 B.C. when the walls of the central sunken patio were faced with travertine and the four sculptures, also of travertine, were placed in the wall; the monolithic aqueduct and first phase of the ballcourt (? not published anywhere) correspond to this phase; and 3) 800-600 B.C. corresponding to the building of structures 2 and 3 and the last building phase of the ballcourt.

She says that during the 1000-800 B.C. phase, Teopantecuanitlán reached its maximum splendor, becoming a regional center in which Juxtlahuaca, Oxtotitlán, Texayac, Chilpancingo, Zumpango del Río (? no systematic work here) and Xochipala, among others, participate. Niederberger (2002) also places Teopantecuanitlán as a major center placed precisely at the crossroads of two major trade routes, one south-north along the Papagayo, Omitlán, Azul, Atempa, and Amacuzac rivers and the other east-west route along the Mezcala river (Fig. 16). As far back as 1970, a while before Teopantecuanitlán was known, Grove (1970a: 33; 1970b: 92) proposed a route between the Costa Chica and the Central Highlands along the Amacuzac, Atentli (Atempa), Azul, Omitlán, and Papagayo rivers with Oxtotitlán and Juxtlahuaca along it. Niederberger (2002) expanded on this same route and the trade items involved once Teopantecuanitlán was found to be part of the same route.

Besides Olmec style figurines (Fig. 17), among the most Olmec-looking ceramics from Teopantecuanitlán is a vessel with a modeled face (Fig. 9) recovered by Niederberger in the excavation at *Lomeríos* (see COOVISUR, above).

An interesting aspect of the third phase, between 800 and 600 B.C., is the stone facing of Structure 2 (Fig. 18) which has bars, dots (numerals ?) and "V" forms. Recently the same architecture has been found at Zazacatla (Fig. 19), in southwestern Morelos (Canto and Castro 2007), only at this site two unquestionable Olmec stone

sculptures were found in the niches (Fig. 20). Their similarity to Veracruz figures such as the Prince from Cruz del Milagro or Monument 10 from San Lorenzo is suggestive of perhaps an earlier date for this architectural style (?). Somewhat similar is the stone facing of the patio around the altar on Terrace 25 of Chalcatzingo, only here the "V" is inverted: "\/" (Fig. 21).

Several corbeled vaults have been located at Teopantecuanitlán, but it is still impossible to determine their chronological placement, whether Formative like at COOVISUR, or part of the Classic occupation of the site.

Baño Negro

On the northwest edge of the city of Chilapa I located a small village in 2004 during my survey of the Chilapa-Zitlala area (Fig.22). It is at the inner bend of the *Ajolotero* river which empties into the *Atempa* or *Atentli* river east of Chilapa (Fig. 23). In 2005 Eliseo Padilla, of my project, excavated a 4.0 m deep pit there, recovering what appears to be a sequence ranging from the Early through Late Formative. Work is still proceeding on the ceramic classification, and I am waiting to determine the key points in the ceramic sequence before submitting carbon samples for dating. One sherd, very much like Calzadas Excavated and another with rocker-stamping (Fig. 24) suggest an Early Formative occupation. First impressions of the ceramics following the Early Formative suggest close ties with the Basin of Mexico, from Manantial through Zacatenco phases, especially flat-bottom dark gray to black bowls with outslanting walls and tabs along the rim with punctation marks (Fig. 25). One sherd can almost be a duplicate of a bowl from COOVISUR (Fig. 26) which Reyna and Quintero (1998) call *Imitación laca*, similar to *Chilapa Naranja* from Zohapilco (Manantial phase) and Imitation Laca from Chalcatzingo (Middle Barranca). There also appear to be similarities with Morelos and maybe Oaxaca too. It is quite interesting that not a single double-line-break has appeared anywhere in my survey area despite having an important Middle Formative occupation. Granular White ware occurs from the earliest levels, but in very low frequencies compared to Chilpancingo or Xochipala.

Possible fragments of Olmec figurines were found, but without heads, so it cannot be determined if they had Olmec faces. One consists of the chest and an arm of a hollow figurine (Fig. 27) while the other two are seated figurines with legs crossed in a lotus position (Fig.28).

Oxtotitlán – Cerro Quiotepec (Fig. 29)

I have made this a composite name reflecting one site because Cerro Quiotepec² is right next to the cave. The main mural (Fig.30) can be seen from the top of the hill 0.4 km. to the west, and cultural materials are found continuously between the hill and the cave. The site covers 79 hectares. It is a small hill, 80 m high, within a bend of the Atentli river. there are 113 prehispanic terraces on the west and south sides of the hill, almost all of them with signs of some sort of construction, probably mostly houses, but some appear to be ceremonial constructions.

On top of the hill there are eight small pyramidal base structures, presently no more than 1 to 2 meters high. Two of them, structures 1b and 2 have indented corners. Could it be that this shape, as seen from above has something to do with the representation of a cave and the earth monster? Look at Monument 9 from Chalcatzingo (Fig. 31); the mouth, or cave opening, is a perfect topographical rendition of a pyramid with indented corners, and the structures are associated with a site with a sacred cave. Maybe this is a wild hypothesis, but I just can't help myself doing some science fiction.

Based on a first guess, mainly the similarity of black and gray bowls with Manantial and Zacatenco ceramics, the largest occupation of the site appears to be Middle Formative. Two pits were excavated on terraces which, from surface materials, appeared to cover a long sequence, from Formative through Postclassic (Early Postclassic snake head supports were recovered from several terraces and one Aztec III sherd was found). Granular White ware is found, but in small quantities, like at Baño Negro. Nothing was found that I could venture to say is Olmec style, but if the Olmec style paintings in the cave are Middle Formative, then they are contemporary with the major occupation of the hill. Again, as with Paradis' impression, the Olmec paintings appear to be coexisting with a local cultural tradition apparent at Cerro Quiotepec.

The paintings from the cave of Oxtotitlán (Fig. 32; Grove 1969, 1970a, 1970b) are clearly Olmec style. Although they have not been dated by absolute means, both their style and the ceramic materials from the hill suggest a Middle Formative date, contemporaneous with La Venta. The cave has almost certainly been continuously in ritual use since that time, through the present.

Juxtlahuaca

The first Olmec-style murals reported are those of Juxtlahuaca (Fig. 33), 25 km. south of Chilapa in a straight line (Gay 1967; Griffin

² Cerro Kiyetepec, with a K and y, according to the local inhabitants.

1967). Although not dated by any means except style, it is more or less assumed that, as the Oxtotitlán paintings, they date to the Middle Formative.

Cahuaziziqui and Texayac

Samuel Villela (1989) reported on these paintings (Figs. 34, 35), also associated with caves, and, as with Juxtlahuaca, they may be Middle Formative. As with Juxtlahuaca, no systematic survey has been carried out nearby in order to locate sites.

Tlaxmalac

In 2004 Norma Peñaflores excavated at what appears to be an Olmec site with large platforms similar to Teopantecuanitlán. On my visit to the excavations I saw solid baby-face figurines. A stela with a figure similar to that of the Amuco stela and other frontier style figures (Fig. 36). I understand there are ¹⁴C dates processed by INAH which apparently would be Early Formative, but they have not been published, and their context is still not clear. Lack of publication so far makes it difficult to obtain more information.

Ahuelican

A surface collection by Paradis and Henderson in 1971 obtaining ceramics of Middle Preclassic appearance with double-line-breaks. (Paradis 1974: 252)

Xochipala

I carried out survey and excavation at Xochipala between 1975 and 1978 (Schmidt 1990). One phase, Tejas, dated by a single ¹⁴C date (585 ±370 B.C.), appears to correspond to the late Middle Formative; however I feel the phase probably goes back two or three centuries given the definitely Middle Formative materials. In my published work (1990) I distinguished two quite rudimentary but distinct settlement patterns, one pertaining to an Early Tradition (from Middle Preclassic, Tejas phase, through the Early Classic, Xaltipan phase) (Fig. 37) during which sites were located mainly in the piedmont surrounding the basin floor of Xochipala. During the Late Tradition (Epiclassic and Postclassic) (Fig. 38) the basin filled with small sites. Later on I have worked on a new model for the settlement pattern, phase by phase, and controlling site ranks to some degree. Of the 93 sites located, only four could be placed during the Tejas phase, two rank 2, one rank 3, and one rank 7 sites (Fig. 39). This needs a bit more work because, needless to say, my rank 7 means quite a few large structures and a very large site. The extension of the rank 7 XO-35 site is around 100 ha., but this information is based mainly on surface observation of a

site which continues to be occupied through the Late Classic. I really have no idea if the site was more than 1 ha during the Tejas phase. This is a problem settlement pattern studies based on surface survey always face, a problem quite clearly pointed out by Ford and Willey ever since the Viru Valley project (1949). Nevertheless, compare the Tejas distribution of sites and their ranks with that of the Epiclassic Tepenacxtla phase (Fig. 40) where there is a wide range of differential ranks, where higher ranked sites make sense because they have a whole series of smaller and smaller sites around each other. In this case, during the Epiclassic, a rank 7 site makes sense, perhaps reflecting what many would call a state, including Rosa Reyna, who has worked this period in Xochipala (2003). The Tejas phase distribution is clearly not a state, but the site of Las Tejas, where I excavated, is a complex habitational, perhaps even ceremonial, site with solid stone walls enclosing rooms which indicate a degree of social differentiation. It is located precisely at one of the entrances, or exits, to or from the Xochipala basin at the head of a gully which connects with the Coloapa and Mezcala rivers. It is also probable that at many places the Middle Formative materials have not made their way to the surface.

I must mention that I do not have a single sherd, figurine, or whatever from Xochipala which I would call Olmec. There are incised white ware flat-bottomed bowls with double-line-breaks which appear to be imported (Fig. 41); the Mica Buff ware with double-line-breaks, so common at La Cueva in Chilpancingo, is absent. I feel this is a pan Mesoamerican horizon marker at this time, the origin of which is not possible to determine yet. Granular White (Fig.10) constitutes around 30 % of ceramics between the Tejas phase and the end of the Classic, when it diminished to around 15 %, and disappears sometime during the Early Postclassic. This type is common at La Cueva and Teopantecuanitlán during the Middle Formative, also appearing further north at Ahuinahuac, Cacahuamilpa, and in Morelos, at Xochicalco. By the Late Formative it becomes an integral part of the definition of the Mezcala complex, or "culture" as defined by Reyna (2006) together with architectural features such as pegs placed in *tableros* on building façades, buildings with porticos, and corbeled vaults. This ware appears to be part of the core culture of central and northern Guerrero even before, since the Early Formative.

Tepecoacuilco drainage

Louise Paradis carried out settlement pattern studies over a fairly large area of the Tepecoacuilco river drainage (Fig. 42) since the early 80's, combined with excavation, especially at the site of Ahuinahuac, which appears to be fairly complex by the Late Formative, during the

Ahuinahuac phase (Ross 1999) when the earliest Mezcala style stone figurines make their appearance. During the Middle Formative Ahuelican phase, a diagnostic ceramic appears to be *Tetipan Blanco*, decorated with double-line-breaks, similar or the same as other Middle Formative incised white wares from sites such as Xochipala, La Cueva, Teopantecuanitlán, etc. During the Ahuelican phase, the site of Ahuinahuac (Ross 1999; Paradis 2002) may play a role similar to that of Las Tejas at Xochipala. Although there is a wealth of data from this project which will tell us much about the development of social complexity in central and northern Guerrero during the Middle and Late Formative, the data and interpretations of this project are yet to be published.

Lower Balsas

This area was studied during the early sixties with the salvage work in the bowls of dams along the Balsas river. Two theses which experimented with the use of numerical taxonomy in forming groups of sites (González Crespo 1979, thesis in 1970) and comparing burials with their offerings (Maldonado 1980, thesis in 1976) resulted from the salvage effort. Although the information exists between them, the studies were primarily methodological experiments with numerical taxonomy, without seriating the sites chronologically or offering any kind of interpretation concerning change or development of social complexity via the establishment of site hierarchy. Another thesis (Cabrera 1976, 1986) from the same salvage effort attempts to establish a sequence, but it is not that helpful during the Formative because just one long phase —Infiernillo— runs from 1200 to 200 B.C. (Fig. 1).

Tezahuapa

As part of an INAH salvage project defining sites along an electricity line between Chilpancingo and Chilapa, a limited excavation was carried out at this site, on the outskirts of Tixtla (Porcayo 2004). Three phases were defined, two of which —Jacayales (1000-753 B.C.) and Tezahuapa (753-400 B.C.)— fall in the Middle Formative. According to Porcayo, besides diagnostic Manantial-like incised white ware, *Tecuani Blanco* (he uses the Teopantecuanitlán terminology) and Granular White, he claims the the first evidence of the *talud and tablero*, occurs here at this time. There are problems with trying to understand the dating of structures at this site and figuring out how the presence of a three level class system —palaces, lineage chiefs, and houses on terraces— was arrived at from very limited data.

What does constitute a real novelty here are a series of unique ceramic vessels which he assigns to the Tezahuapa phase (Fig. 43).

For the moment I am skeptical about this dating given apparent flaws in other parts of this study.

El Caracol

The Caracol dam salvage project should also be mentioned. 261 sites were located (Fig. 44), and a few test pits were excavated, but beyond a couple articles or papers presented in meetings (Rodríguez 1986), the materials have not been adequately described and no settlement pattern study has been carried out. Most interesting from this project are Early Formative Olmec-looking ceramics excavated at site C191; they are polished black ware with excavated geometric motifs filled with red pigment and rocker-stamping (Fig. 45). Mention is made of the Calzadas-like sherds by Rodríguez (1986: 159), but the illustrations were never published.

Cuetlajuchitlán (Manzanilla 1996, 1998, 2002; Manzanilla and Talavera 1993)

What would appear to be a mainly Late Formative site just outside Paso Morelos, on top of the Cuernavaca-Acapulco highway has a patio with an altar (*Recinto Ceremonial 1*), the distribution of which strikes me as similar to the patio with altar on terrace 25 of Chalcatzingo (Fig. 46). There are differences: at Cuetlajuchitlán the altar is on the east side of the patio, it has no carving, and the façade of the patio lacks the "V" motif. Nevertheless, the general similarity may suggest a date contemporary with the Cantera phase at Chalcatzingo.

At a place called *El Frijolar*, very near Cuetlajuchitlán, maybe part of the same site, corbeled vaults have been discovered, but as at Teopantecuanitlán, they have not been excavated, and it is not possible to determine whether they are Formative, like the one at COOVISUR or Late Classic, such as those at Xochipala (Schmidt 1990).

Social complexity

It should be clear that we cannot really say much about cultural development on a regional basis in Guerrero during the Formative. Information is sparse. Although several projects have recovered information which should have resulted in good settlement pattern studies, they have either not been studied thoroughly —the Lower Balsas and El Caracol— or are still in the process after many years —the Tepecoacuilco drainage. Only one project has been published —Xochipala—, and another —Chilapa-Zitlala— should be ready in a couple years. Likewise, three very important sites —Teopantecuanitlán, Ahuinahuac, and Cuetlajuchitlán— have been excavated quite intensively, apparently only to be filed away with only a few articles and without adequate description.

Local traditions

The Olmec in Guerrero are not the Olmec of the Gulf Coast. It has been pointed out quite aptly by Paradis that Guerrero Olmec is sort of a veneer pasted over local traditions. However there is a problem here because we also know very little about local traditions in Guerrero, and exactly, How much Olmec must there be to be called fully Olmec or merely remain something "foreign" or "intrusive"? And what of that which is called Olmec is native to the nuclear Olmec area or originates elsewhere? Is Teopantecuanitlán an Olmec town or city? There is definitely a local tradition there, clearly represented by Granular White ware, which continues into the Late Formative, when it becomes an integral part of the Mezcala complex or culture (Reyna 2006). This is really the only local tradition that is more or less understood, and it does not seem to derive from the Olmec. Covarrubias (1948) sort of implied a series of evolutionary steps in the development of Mezcala stone figure style, starting with the Olmecoid, Olmecoid-Teotihuacanoid, Teotihuacanoid, and finally local Mezcala-style figures (Fig. 47). Unfortunately none of his Olmecoid style figures have been found in context, and therefore impossible to place chronologically with respect to other Olmec or Olmec-like manifestations found in context. It must be remembered that Covarrubias, with Caso, insisted on the Olmec mother culture concept (1942). In other areas of Guerrero, mainly on the coast and in the mountains, we have no idea what the local cultural manifestations are like.

Problems

There just is not enough information yet to distinguish between what is called Lower and Middle Formative in other parts of Mesoamerica. Can San Lorenzo time be distinguished from La Venta time in Guerrero? At Baño Negro I see evidence of materials which correspond to Early, Middle, and Late Formative in other areas of Mesoamerica appearing in a logical sequence, one above the other, but all that is telling us is that during different periods there was contact with other subareas. We still do not understand the nature of the local cultures, what the presence of foreign pots, figurines, etc. means, why they were adopted, whether they arrived in exchange for something local or because they have an important symbolic meaning.

There is a lot of research going on in Guerrero at the moment, out of the Centro INAH, mainly via follow-up of reports of sites. Olmec style objects are appearing everywhere, just as Covarrubias reported (Fig. 48), but little more is being achieved; an understaffed Centro INAH can do little more than record finds, maybe carry out short salvage

excavations, and more often than not the materials are stored, and nothing more than a short report saying where the site is and/or specifying the method involved in excavation is filed, and full study of materials and publication is never carried out.

We still have not solved or agreed upon the problem concerning what "Olmec" really means (Grove 1989). I certainly hesitate to call Olmec looking things found outside the nuclear area more than objects falling into a style, especially when we still do not know very much about their origin.

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	Xochipala (Schmidt 1990)	La Cueva Building phases (Schmidt 1976)	La Cueva Cultural phases (Schmidt 1976)	Mezcala-Balsas (Paradis 1999)	Amuco (Paradis 1974)	Puerto Marqués (Brush 1979)	Bajo Balsas (Cabrera 1976)	Atopula (Henderson 1979)	Teopantecuanitlán (Martínez 1994)	Tixtla (Porcayo)	Chalcatzingo (Grove 1987)
1	Chichitlantepec	II	Cueva	Ahuinahuac	Guacamole 2	Et	La Villita				
50											
100											
150											
200											
250											
300											
350											
400											
450											
500	Tejas	I	Chilpancingo	Ahuelican	Gap	Rin	Infiernillo	3	Tezahuapa	Cantera	
550											
600											
650											
700											
750											
800											
850											
900											
950											
1000											
1050	?				Sesame 3	Tom		2	Jacayales	Barranca	
1100											
1150											
1200											
1250											
1300											
1350											
1400											
1450											
1500											
1550											
1600					Sesame 1 (Ceramic masquette & figurine head)	Uala		1	Tixtla	Amate	

Fig. 1. Chronological chart of major sites with Middle Formative presence.

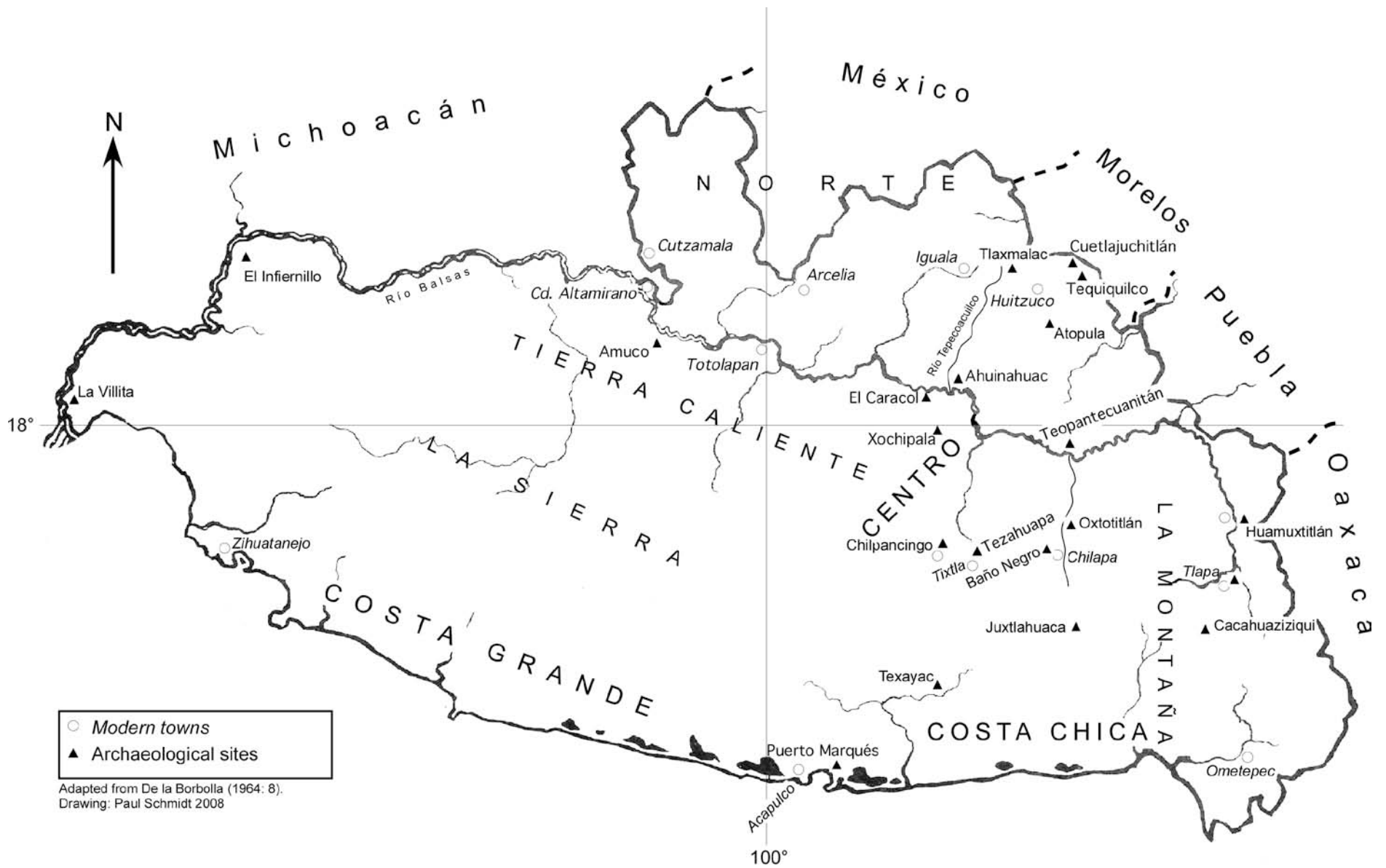


Fig. 2. Sites mentioned in the text.

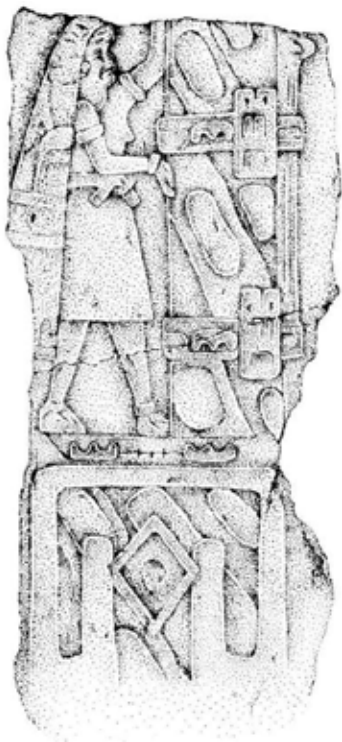


Fig. 3. Amuco Abelino. a) Ceramic masquette, b) ceramic figurine head

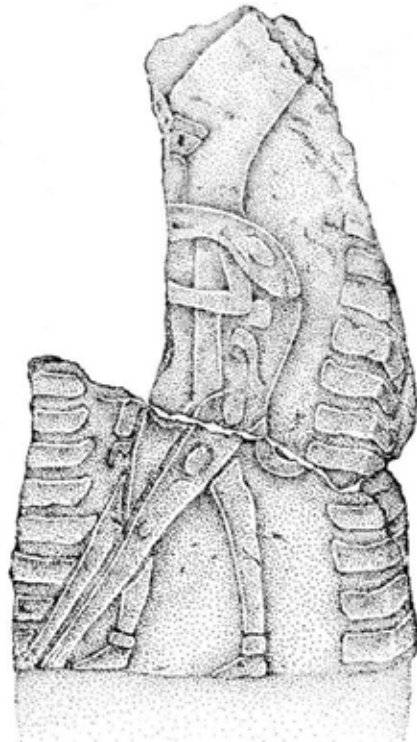


Fig. 4. Stela from San Miguel Amuco

Fig. 3. A reconstruction of the San Miguel Amuco stela. The shaded area represents destroyed areas of the stela.



a



b



c

Fig. 5. Chalcatzingo. a) Monument 21, b) Monument 27, c) Monument 28

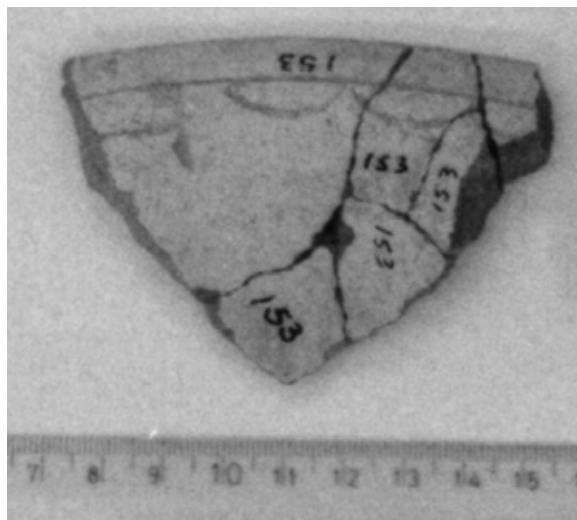


Fig. 6. Pozole White, from Chilpancingo

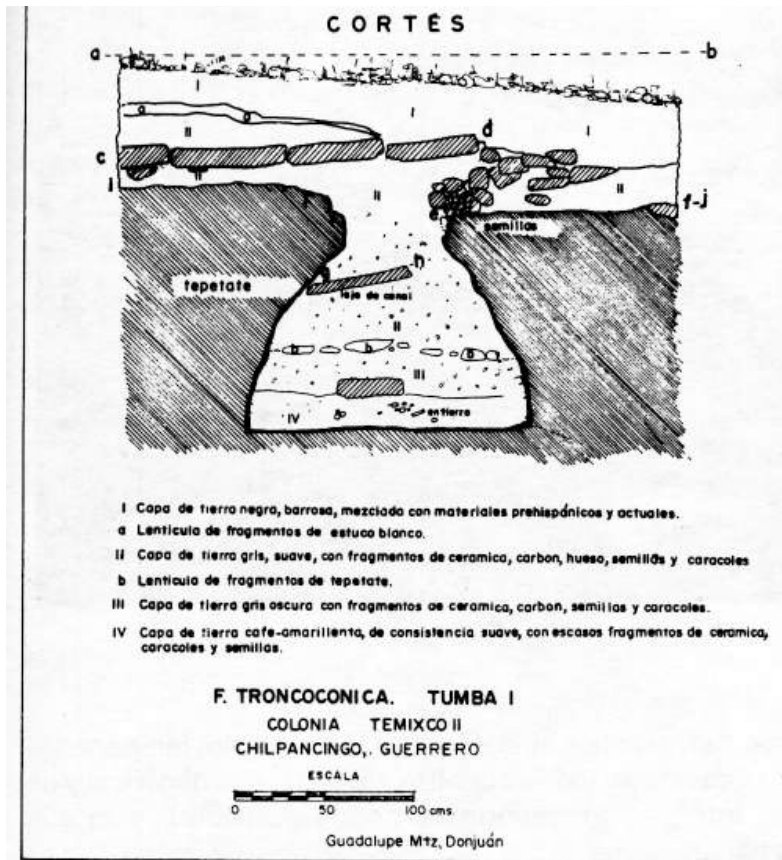


Figura 2. Planta y corte de la formación trocónica.

Fig. 7. Temixco II, Chilpancingo.

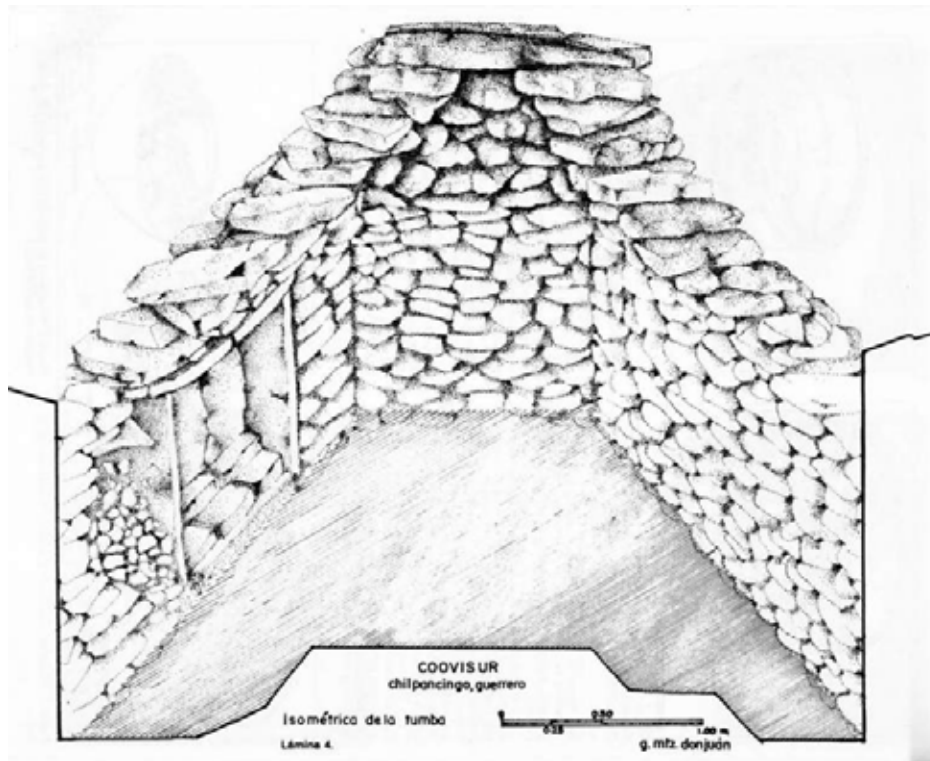


Fig. 8. Tomb 1 with corbeled vault. COOVISUR, Chilpancingo



a



b



c

Fig. 9. Modeled bird-face vases. a) COOVISUR. Chilpancingo, b) Teopantecuanitlán, c) Chilpancingo.



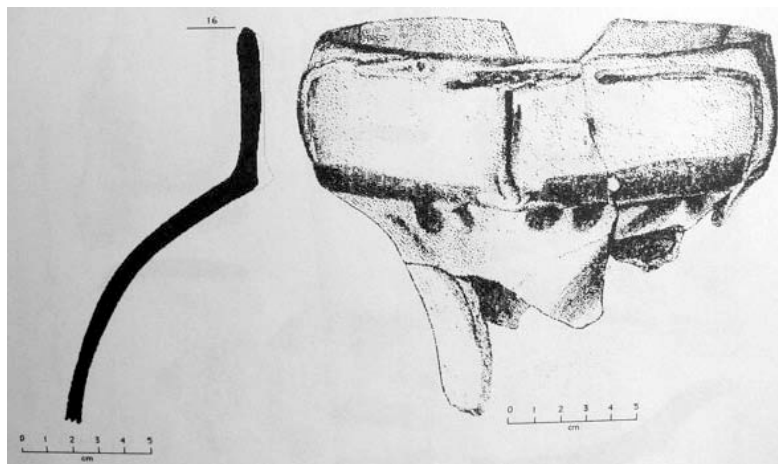
a



b



c



d

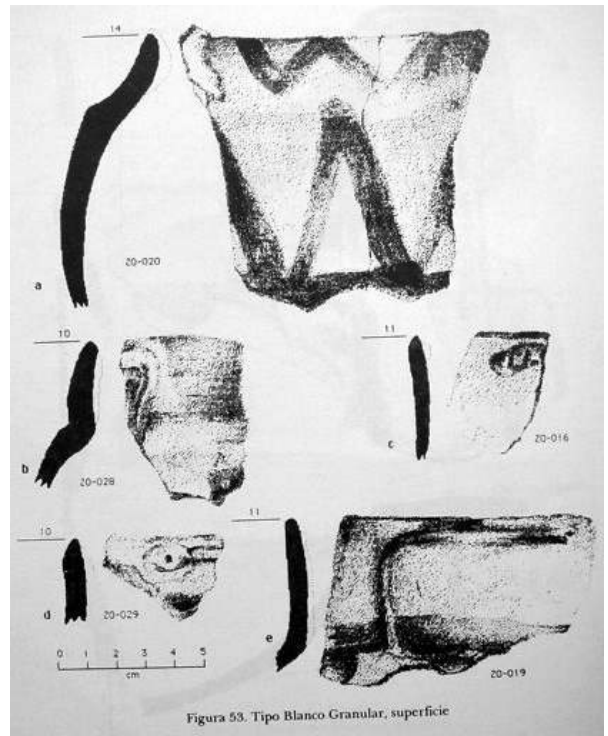
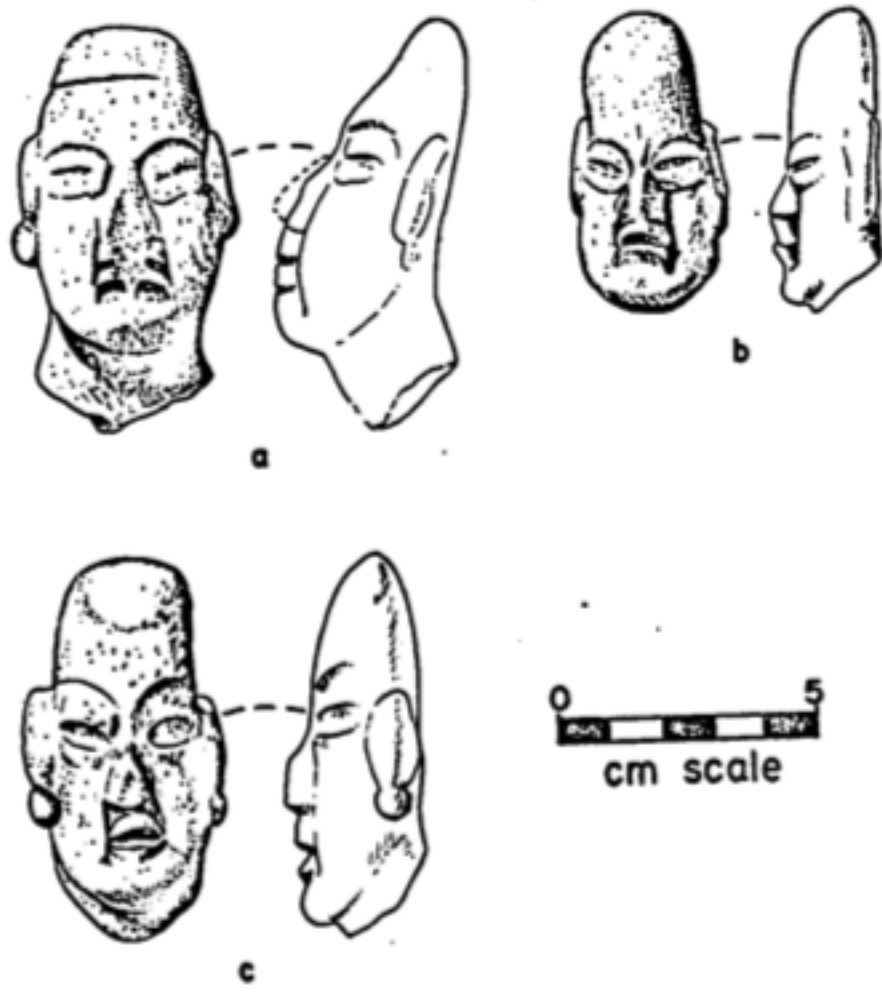


Figura 53. Tipo Blanco Granular, superficie

e

Fig. 10. Granular White ware. a) Teopantecuanitlán. b-e) Xochipala.



Babyfaced Figurines. In profile examples b and c actually slant backwards at approximately the same angle as a.

Fig. 11. Baby-faced figurines from Puerto Marqués.

Fig. 11. Teopantecuanitlán. a) Most of the site, b) the central ceremonial area.

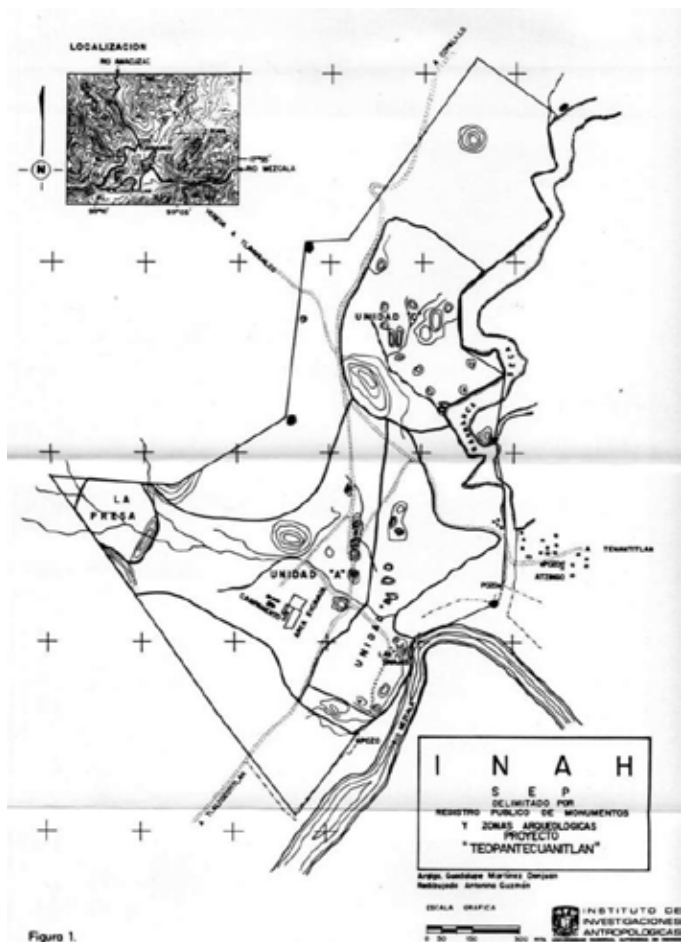
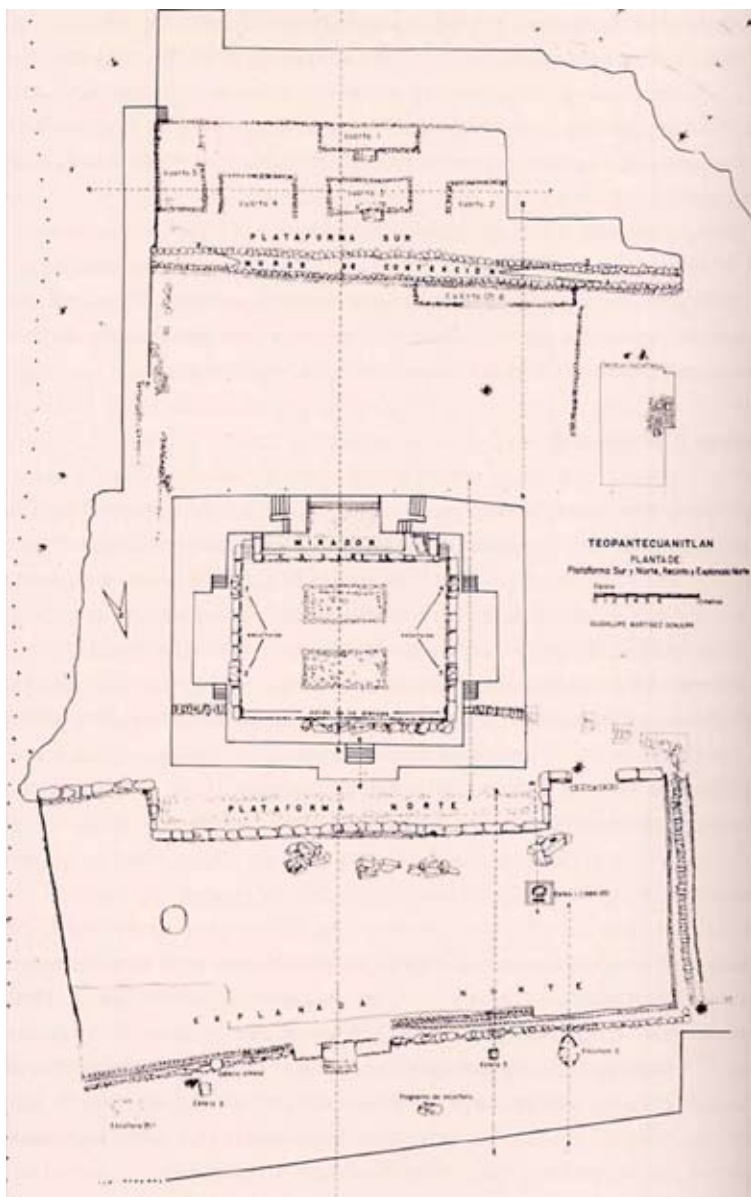


Figura 1.

a



b

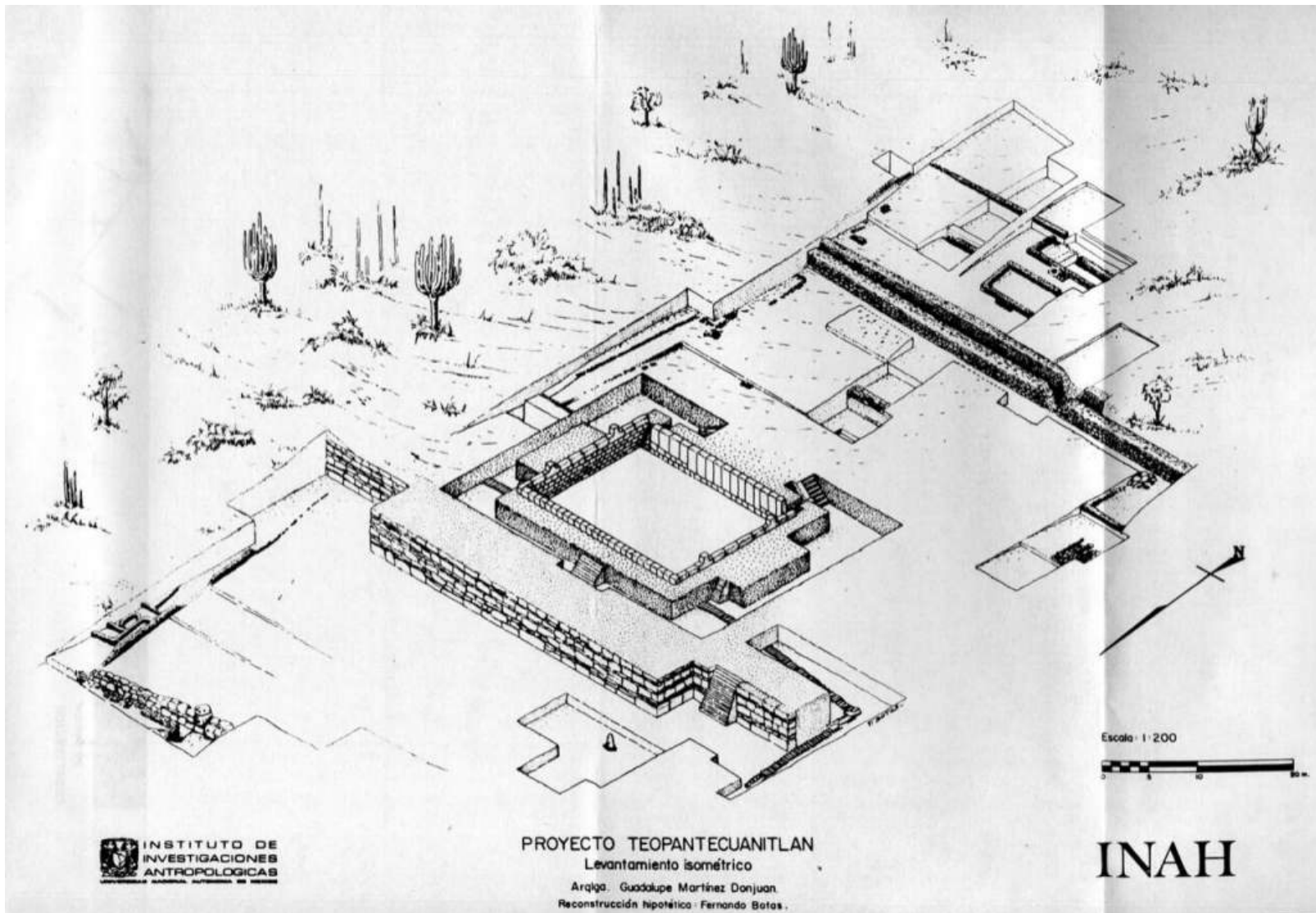


Fig. 11. Isometric reconstruction of Teopantecuanitlán by Fernando Botas.

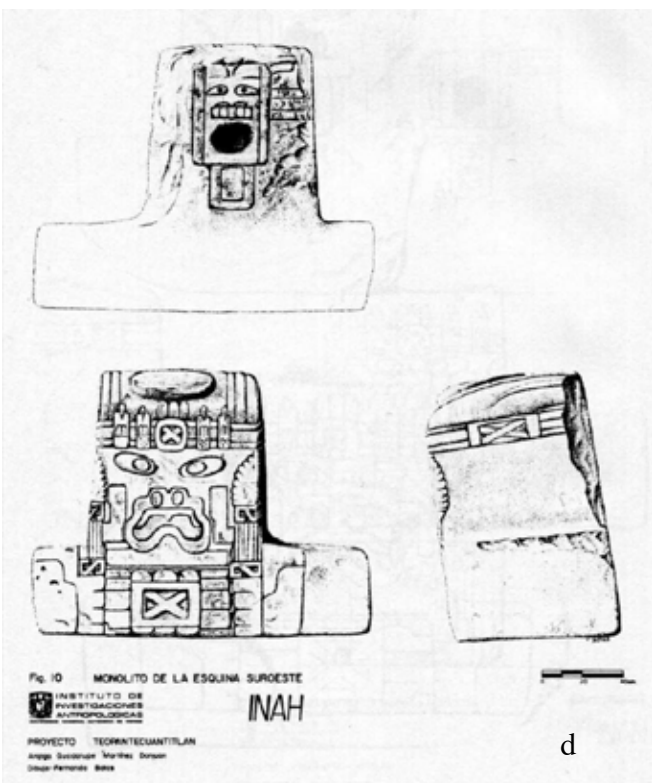
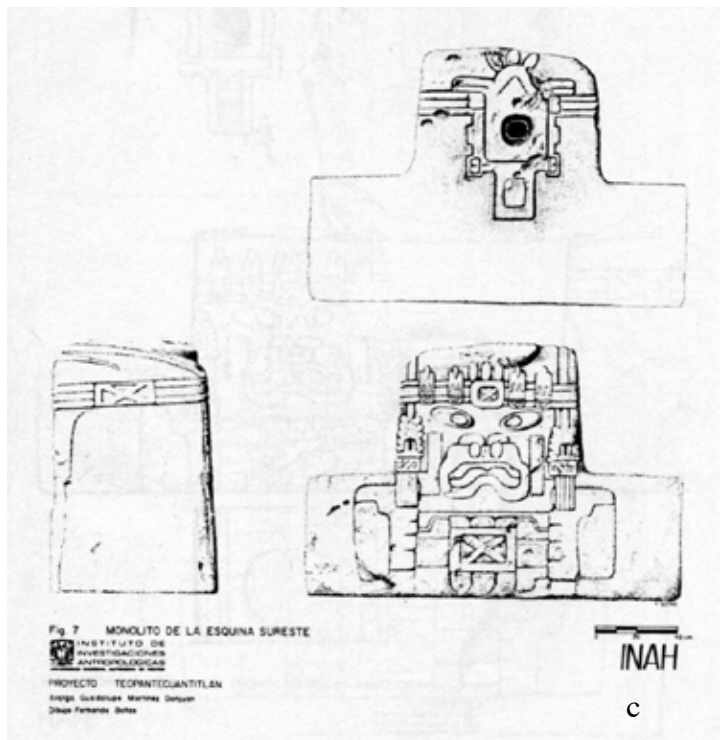
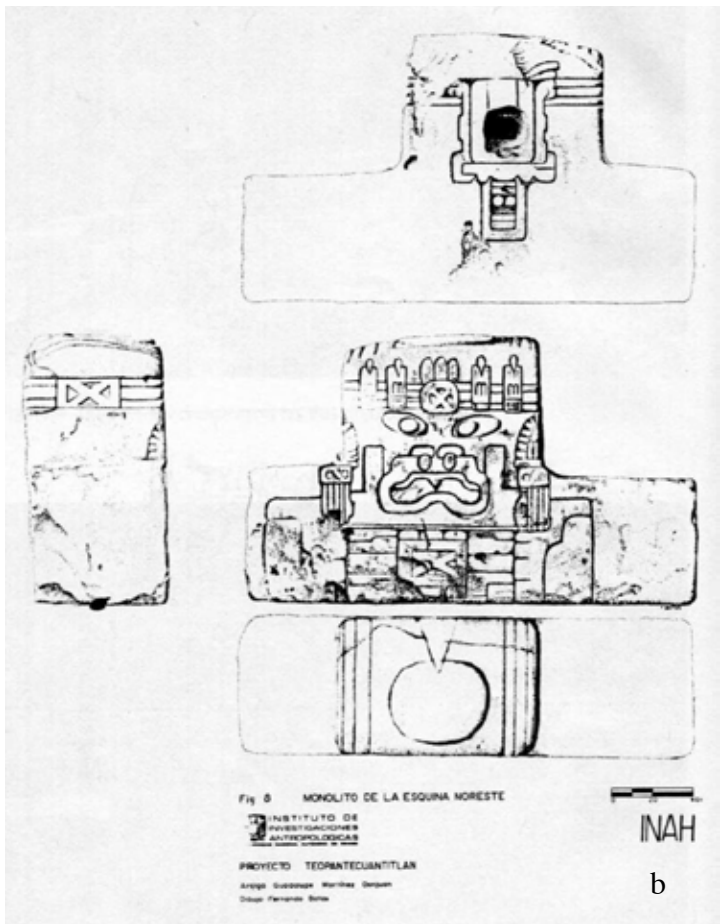
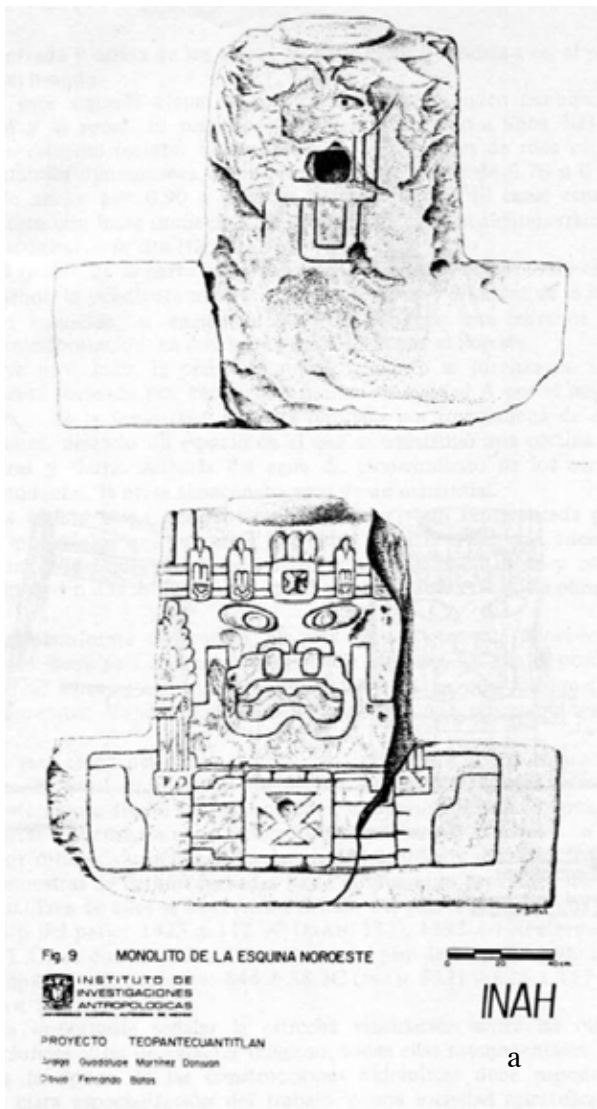


Fig. 12. The four inverted T sculptures from Teopantecuanitlán. a) NW, b) NE, c) SE, d) SW



Fig. 13. Other stone sculptures from Teopantecuanitlán

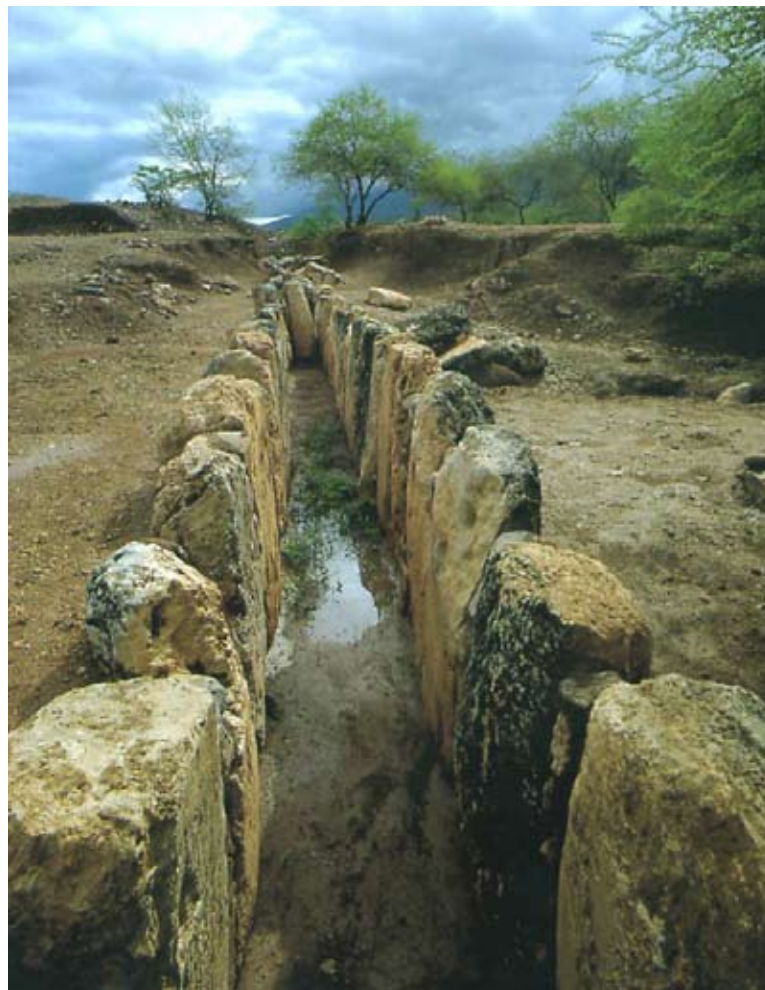


Fig. 14. Monolithic stone canal at Teopantecuanitlán.



Fig. 15. Miniature ball court in the Recinto at Teopantecuanitlán.

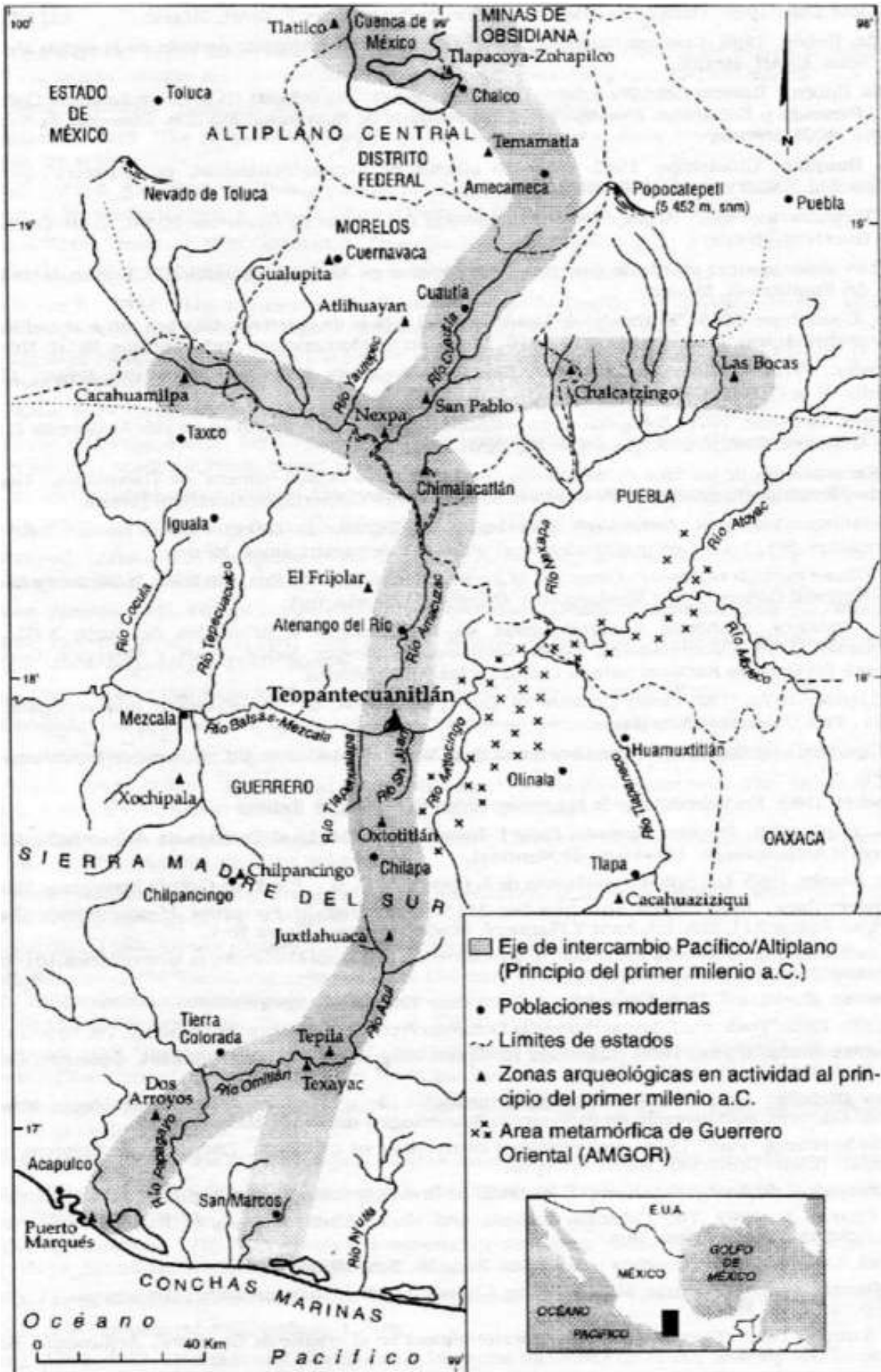


Fig. 16. Grove and Niederberger's Amacuzac-Papagayo exchange route.



Fig. 17. Teopantecuanitlán Olmec figurines.

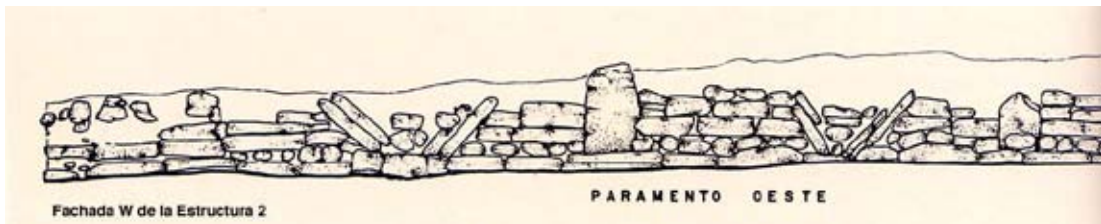


Fig. 18. Structure 2, Teopantecuanitlán.



a



b

Fig. 19. Zazacatla, Morelos. a) Façade with “V” figure; b) Monolithic stones, perhaps part of a canal.



Fig. 20. Zazacatla, Morelos. Sculptures found in the niches on the façade of the building.

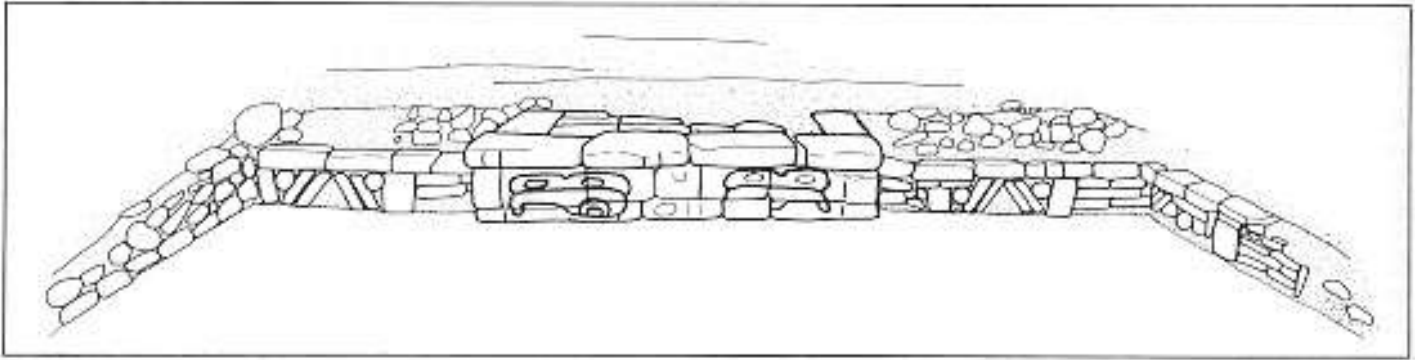


Figure 7.4. Altar and patio area showing altar face and patio wall niches.



Figure 7.6. Southwest corner of patio showing niche.

Fig. 21. Inverted "V" façade at Chalcatzingo, Morelos.

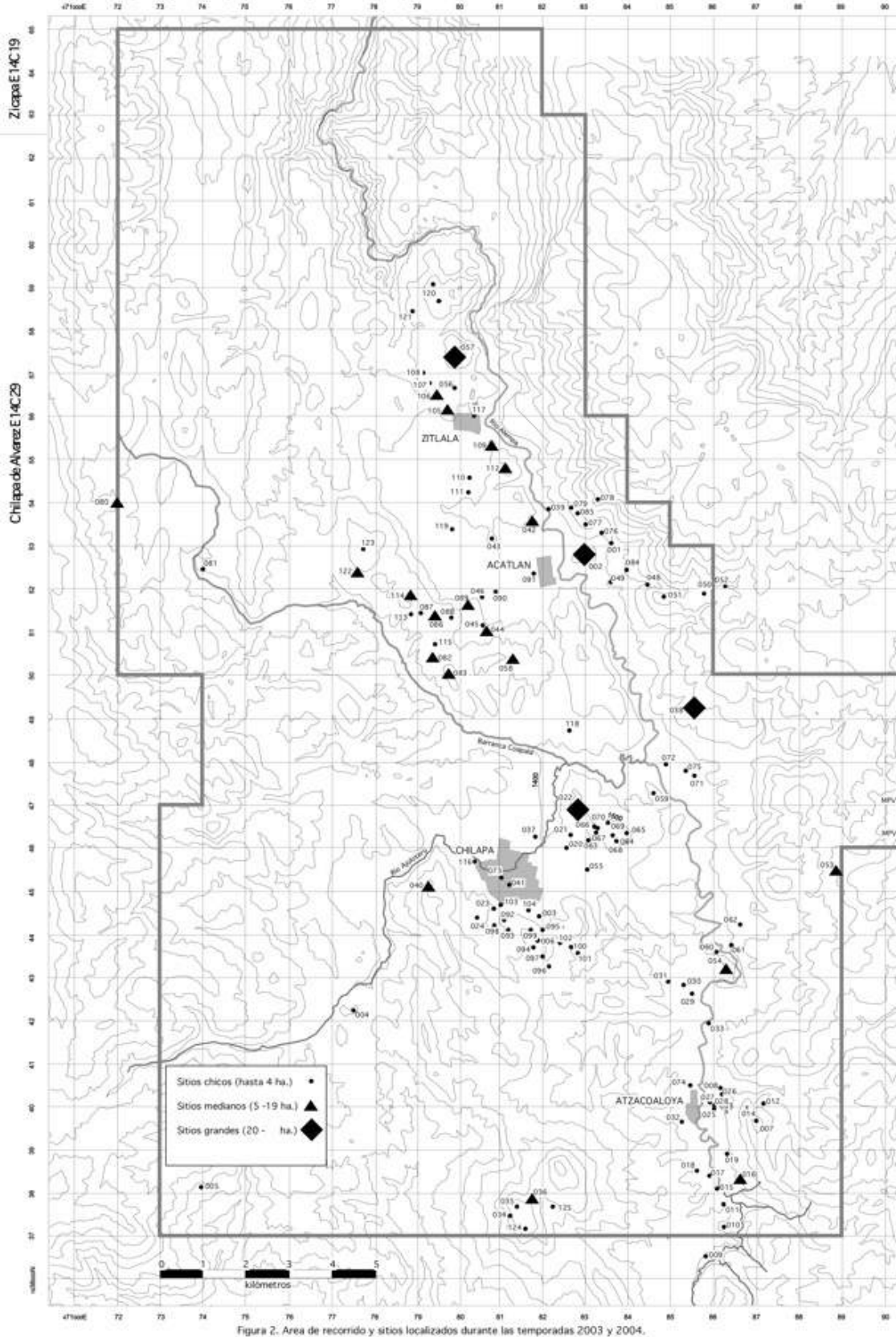


Figura 2. Area de recorrido y sitios localizados durante las temporadas 2003 y 2004.

Fig. 22. The Chilapa-Zitlala surface project. Site distributions.



Fig. 23. Baño Negro, Chilapa.



Fig. 24. Early Formative Calzadas-like sherd, and rocker-stamping from Baño Negro.



Fig. 25. Middle Formative flat-bottom bowls with tabs and punctation along the rims, from Baño Negro,



a



b

Fig. 26. a) Imitation Laca vase from COOVISUR; b) Sherd from Baño negro.



Fig. 27. Hollow figurine fragments from Baño Negro.



Fig. 28. Crossed-leg figurines from Baño Negro.

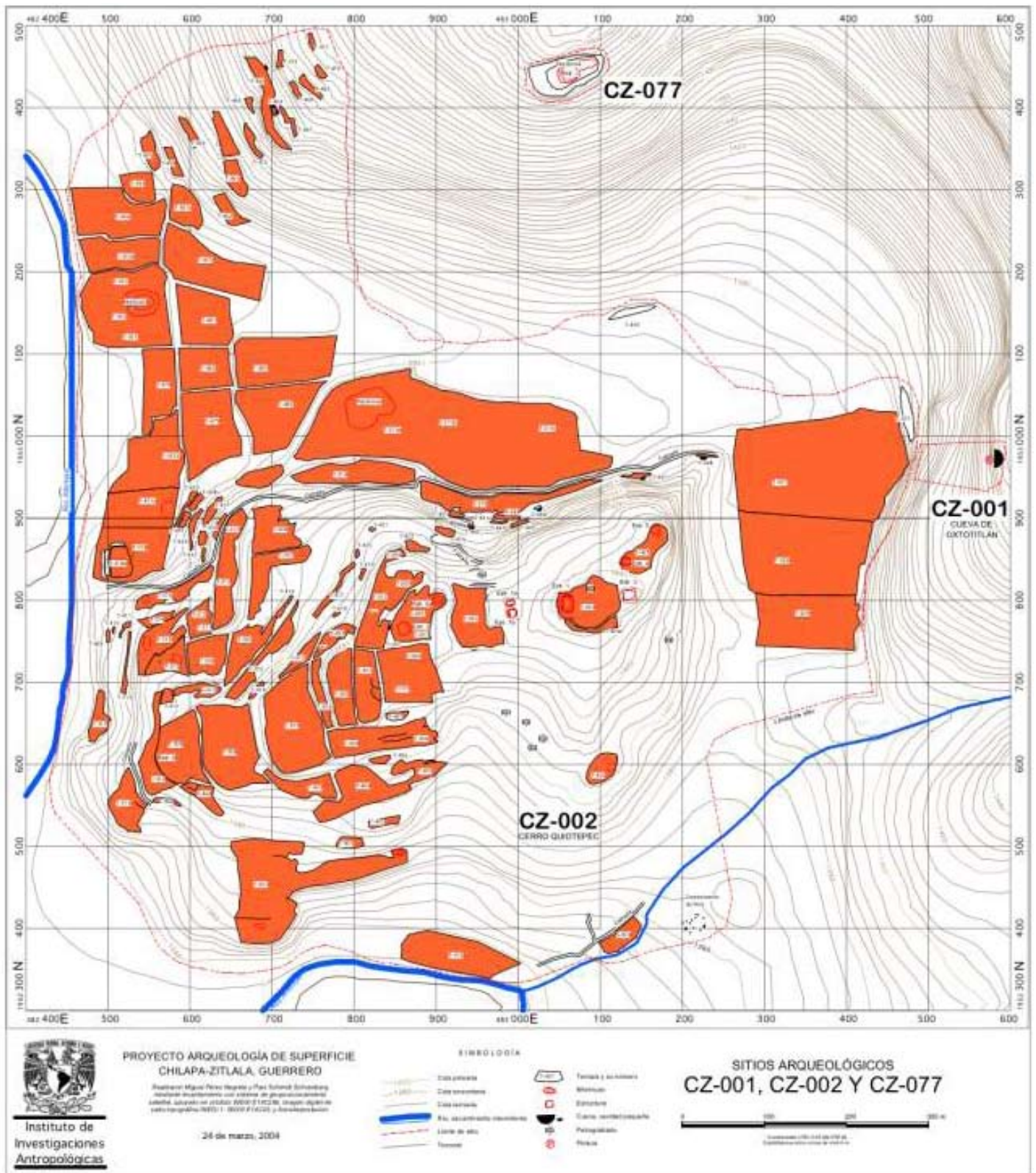


Fig. 29. Oztotilán-Quiatepec.



Fig. 30. Oxtotitlán, Mural 1.

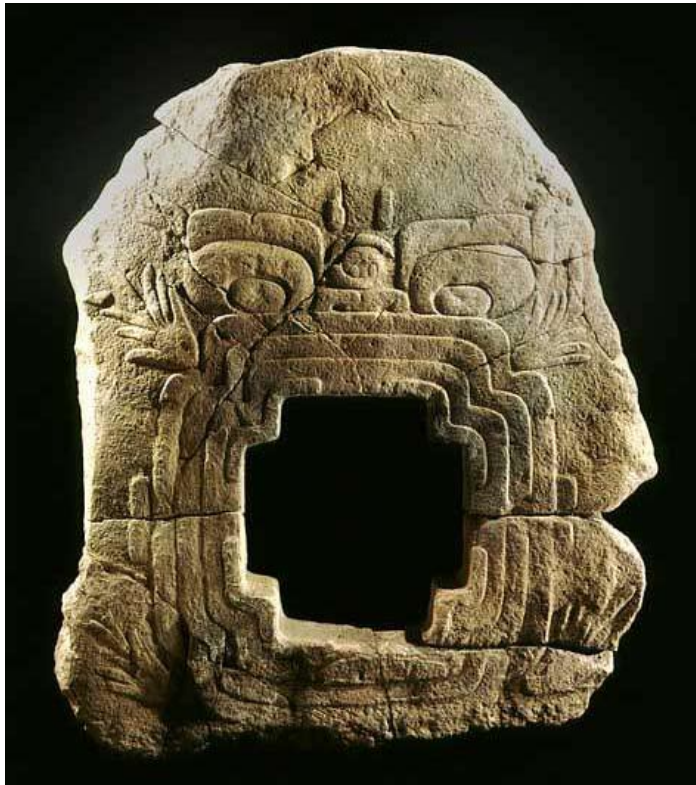
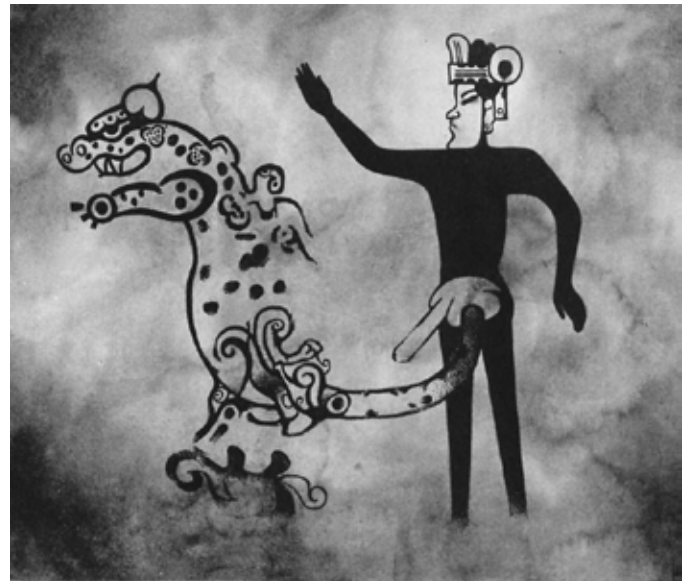


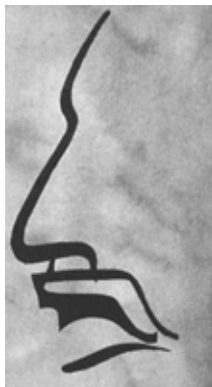
Fig. 31. Monument 9, Chalcatzingo.



a



b



c

Fig. 32. Other Olmec-style paintings at Oxtotitlán. a) Painting 7, b) Painting 1-d, c) Painting 5.

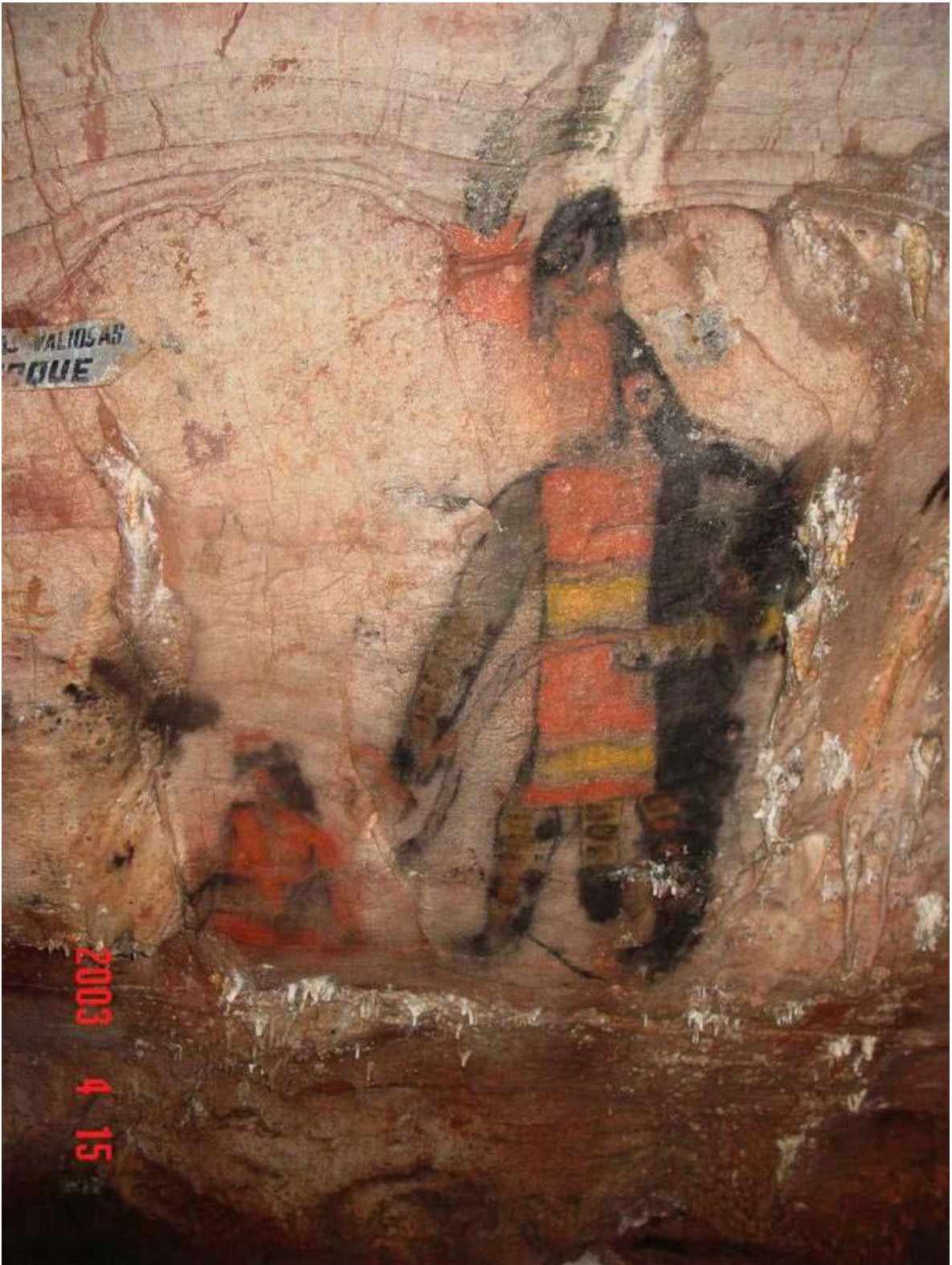


Fig. 33. Juxtlahuaca.

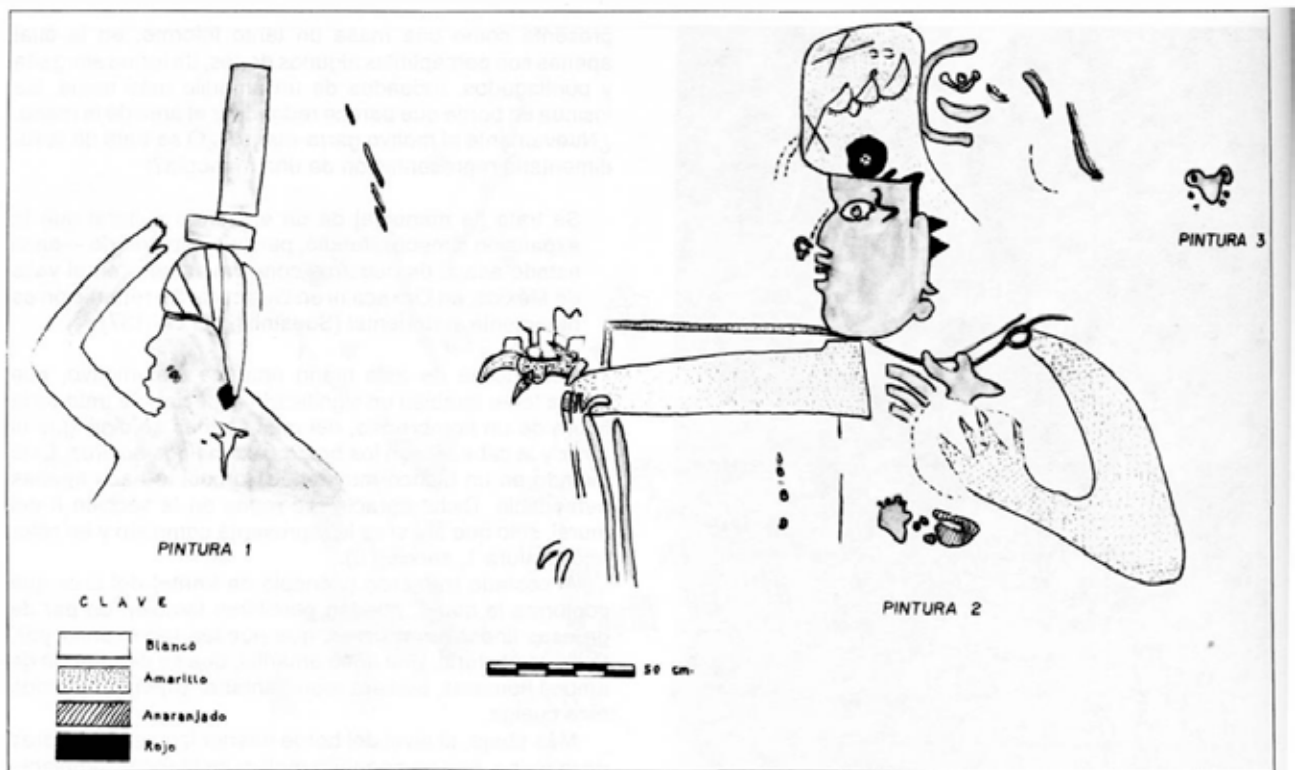


Figura 2. Pinturas 1 y 2 de la Sección I de Cacahuaziqui.

Fig. 34. Cahuaziziqui.



Fig. 35. Texayac



Fig. 36. Stela at Tlaxmalac.

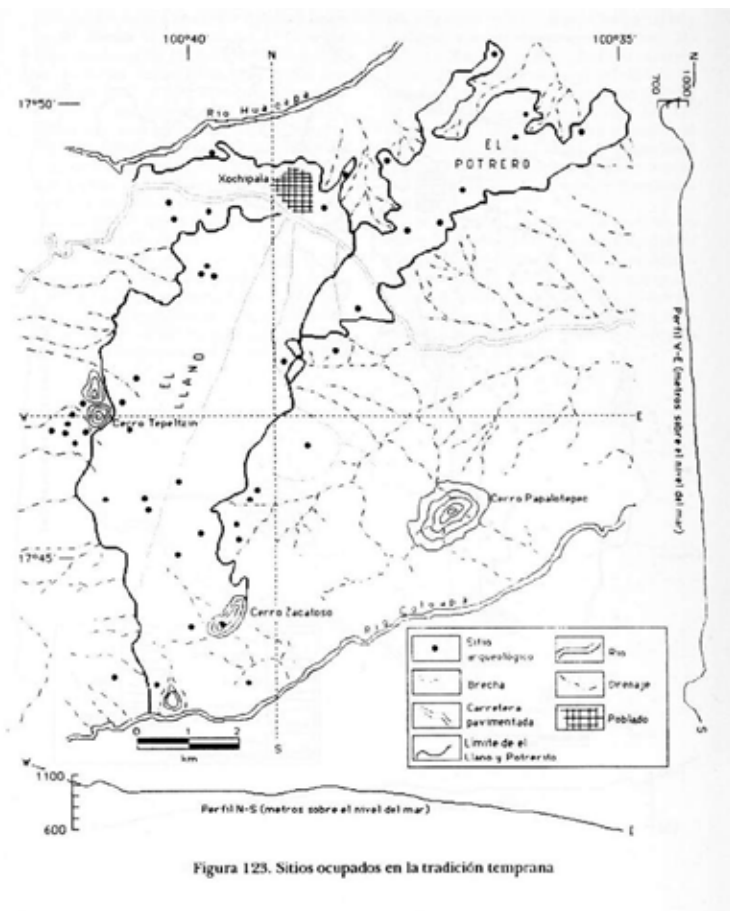


Fig. 37. Xochipala, Early Tradition.

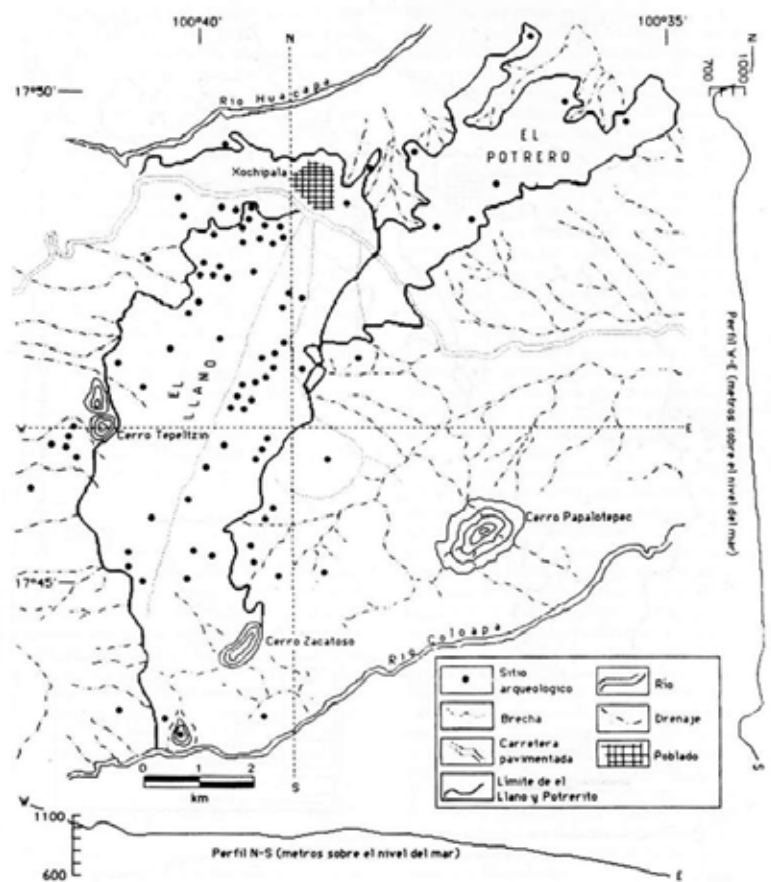


Fig. 38. Xochipala, Late Tradition

Fig. 39. Tejas phase, Xochipala.

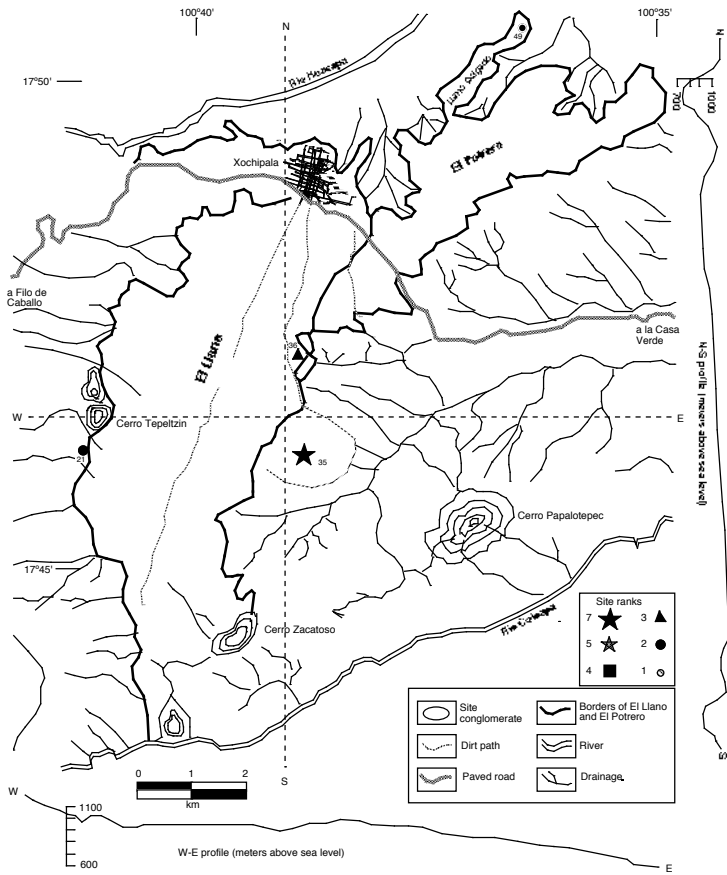


Figure 39. Xochipala, Tejas Phase.

Paul Schmidt, 1978, 1995

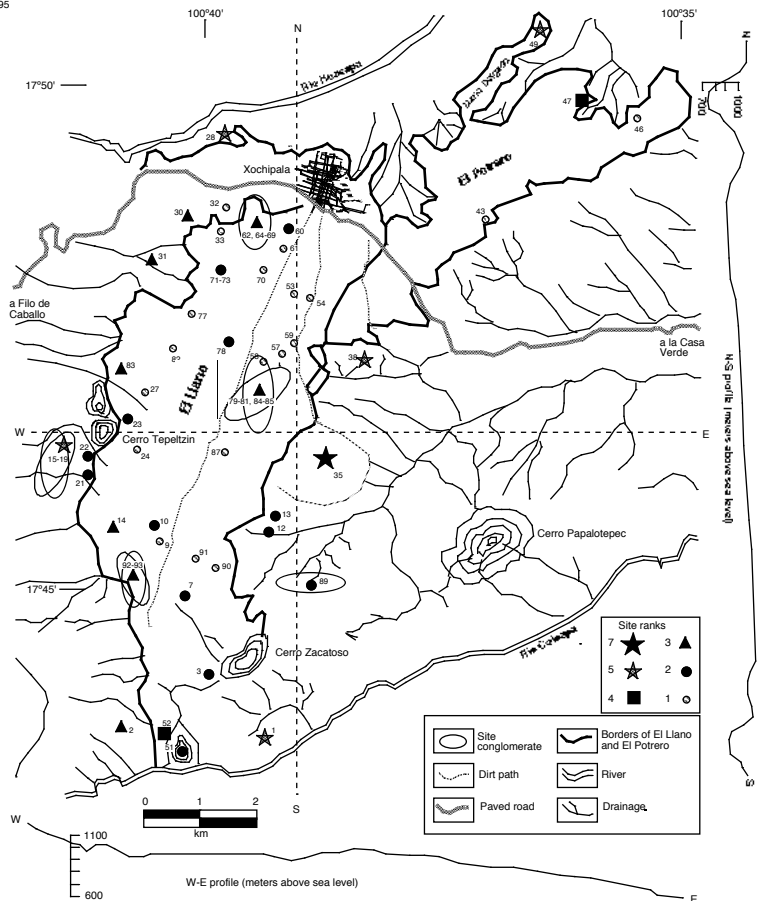


Fig. 40. Tepenacaxtla phase, Xochipala

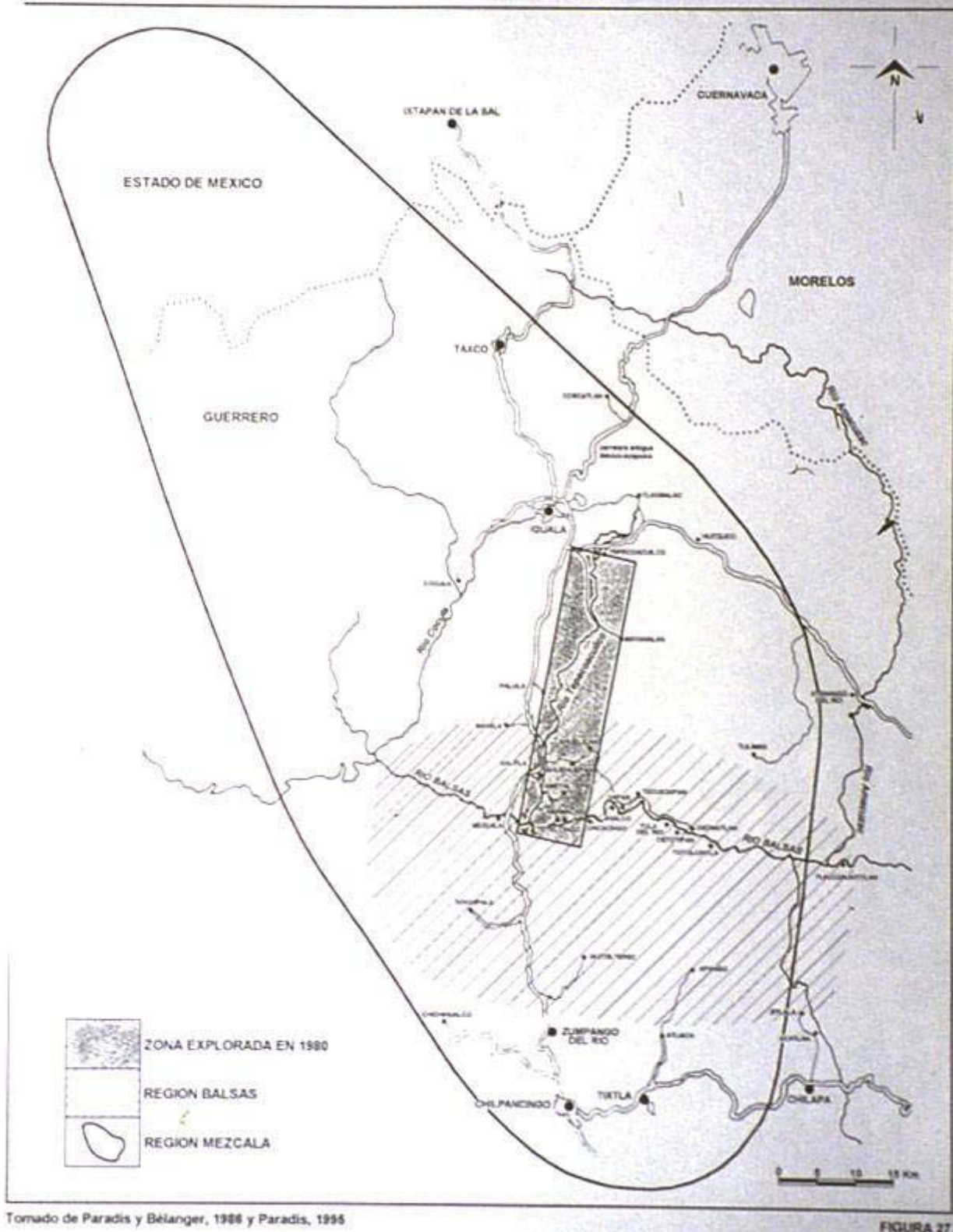
Figure 4. Xochipala, Tepenacaxtla Phase.

Paul Schmidt 1996



Fig. 41. Incised White ware, Xochipala.

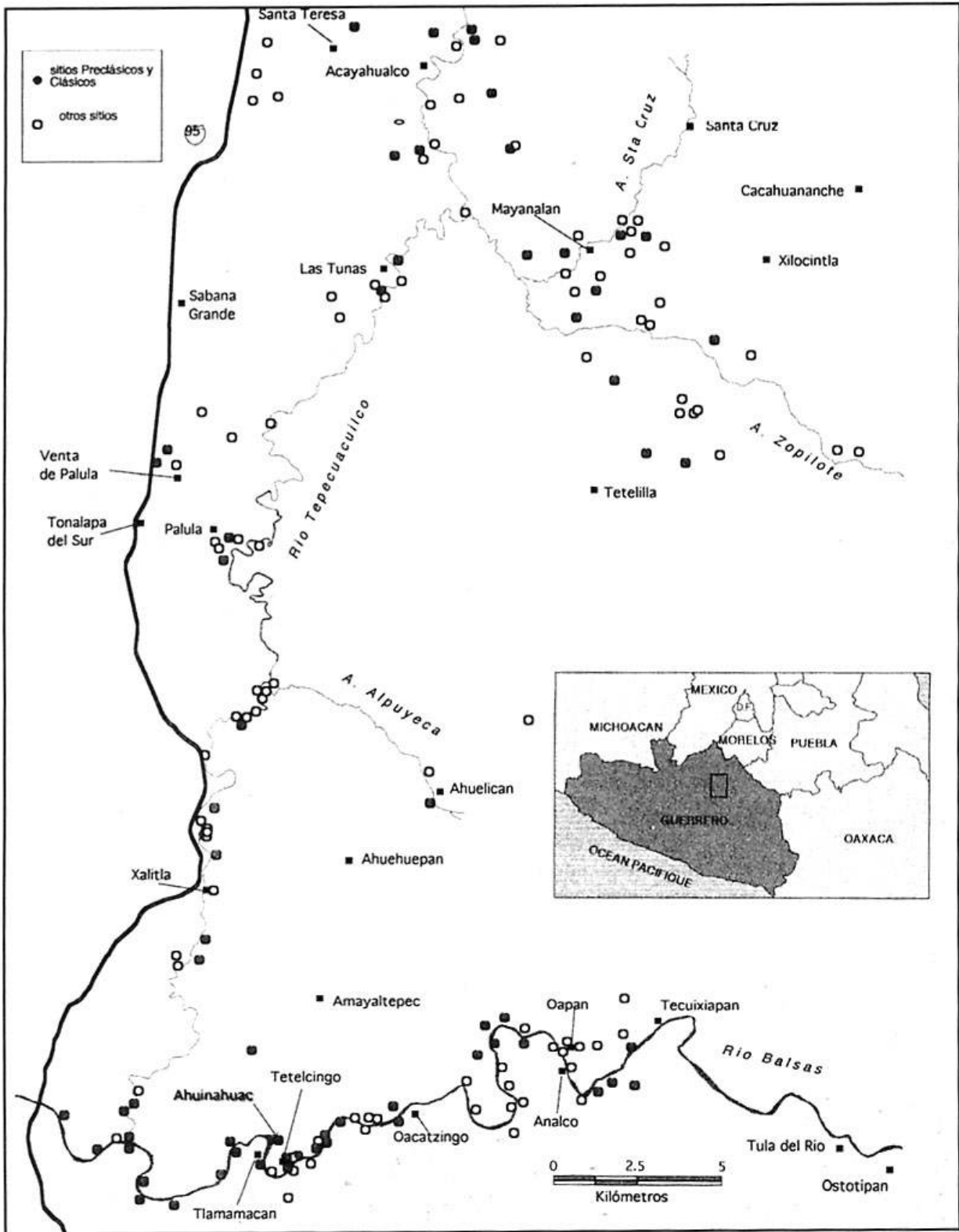
INVESTIGACIONES EN LA CUENCA DEL RIO TEPECOACUILCO



Tomado de Paradis y Bélanger, 1986 y Paradis, 1995

FIGURA 27

Fig.42.1. The area of the Mezcala project.



Mapa 2: Zona de exploración del Proyecto Mezcala indicando los sitios arqueológicos.

Figure 42.2. Sites located in the Mezcala project.

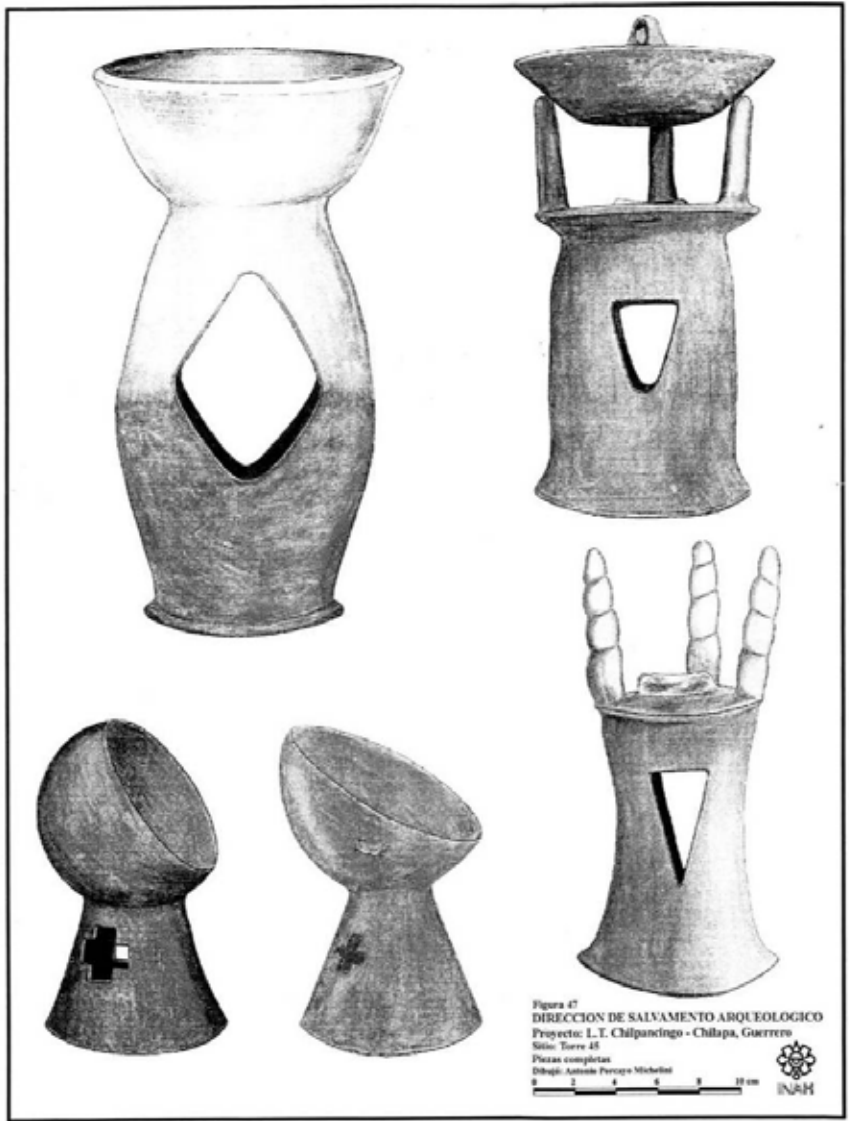


Fig. 43. Odd shapes from Tezahuapa.

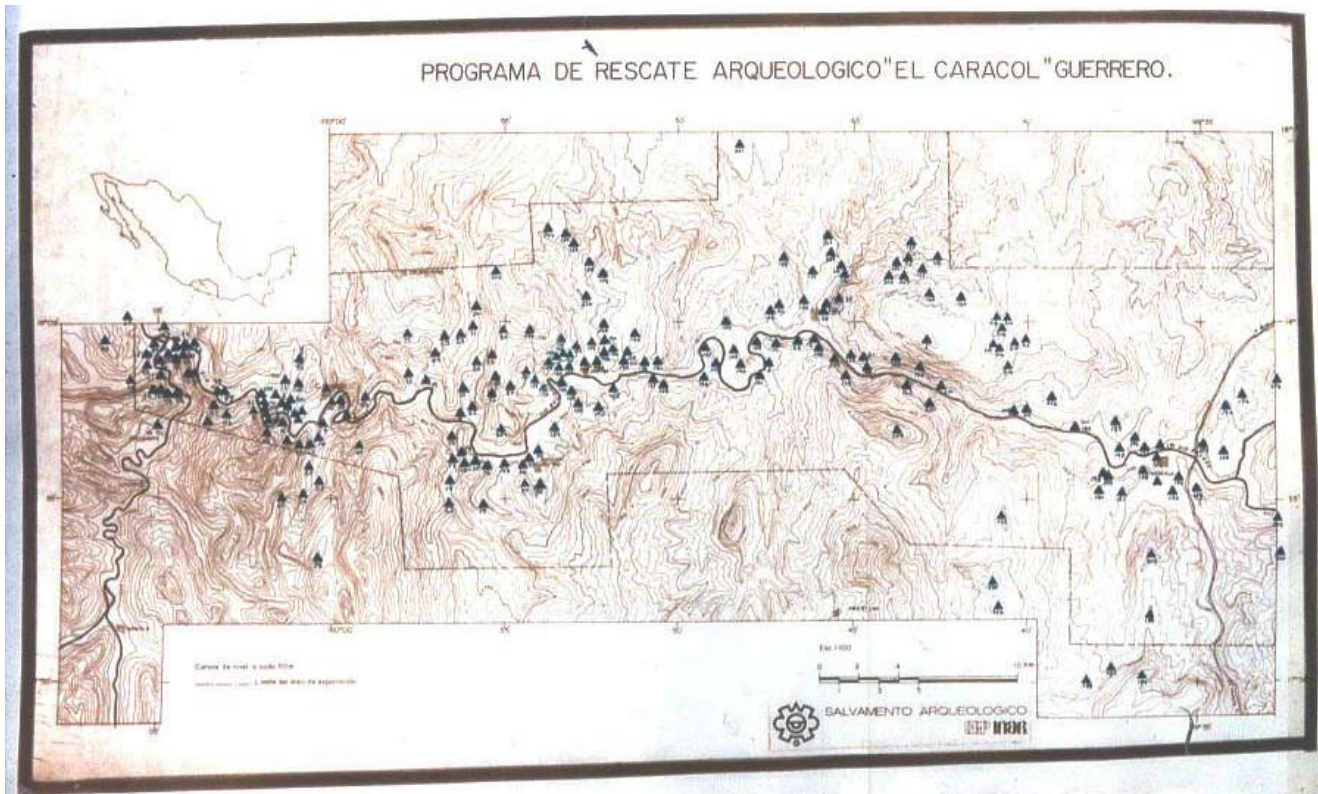


Fig. 44. Sites located in the Caracol project.



Fig. 45. Early Formative sherds from the Caracol project.

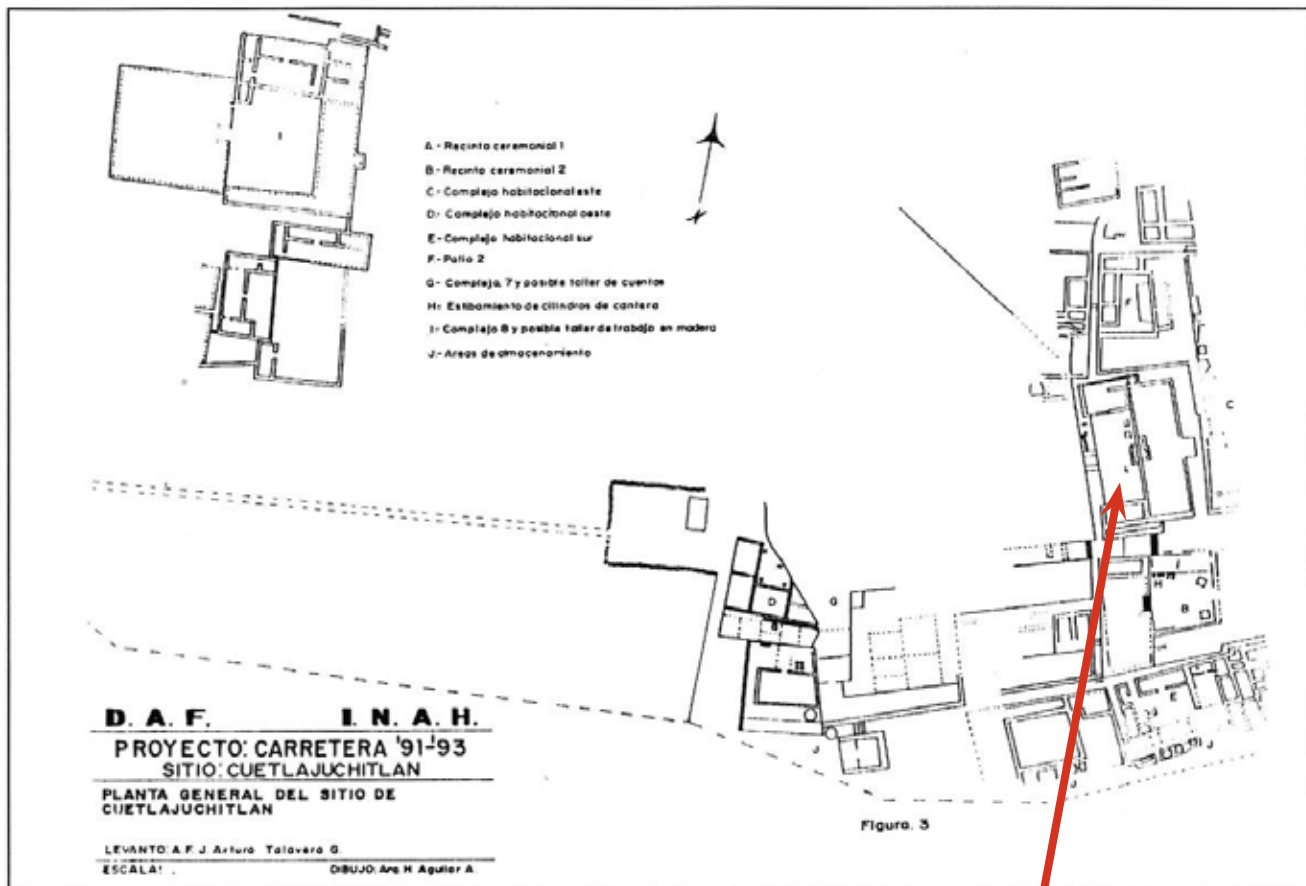
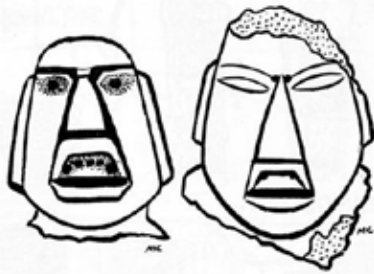
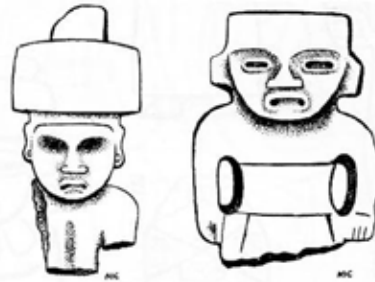


Fig. 46. Cuetlajuchitlán. The *Recinto Ceremonial 1*.



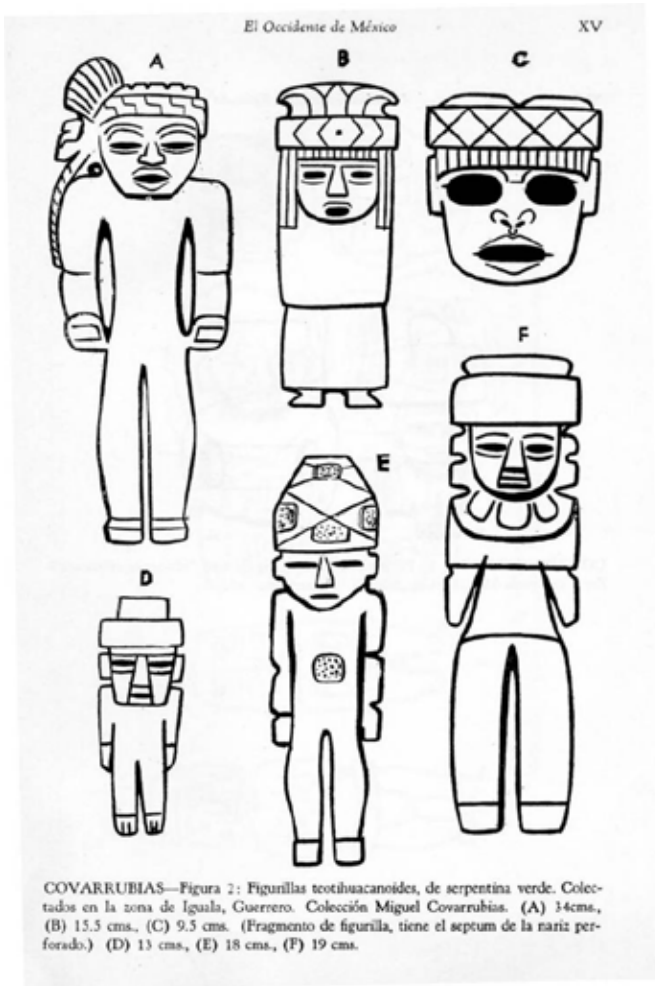
COVARRUBIAS.—Fig. 1: Fragmentos de figurillas de piedra verde de tipo "olmecoide". Zona de Iguala-Mezcala. Colección M. Covarrubias.

1



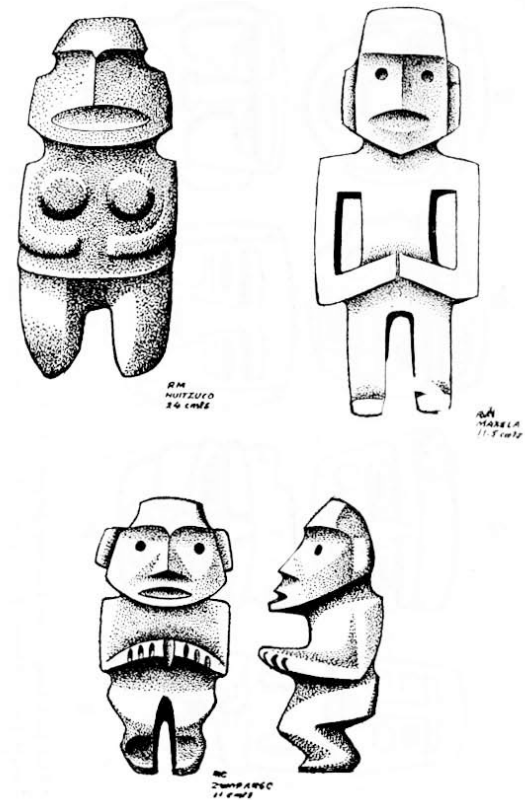
COVARRUBIAS.—Fig. 3: Fragmentos de figurillas de tipo "olmecca-teotihuacano". Zona de Iguala-Mezcala. Colección M. Covarrubias.

2



3

IV Reunión de Mesa Redonda



COVARRUBIAS.—Fig. 5: Figurillas de piedra de técnica mecanizada, tal vez derivadas de hacías. Zona Iguala-Mezcala. Colección R. Montenegro y M. Covarrubias.

4

Fig. 47. Covarrubias' proposed sequence of stone figures.



El Espinalillo



Yoloxóchitl

Fig. 48. Olmec style figurines from two sites on the Costa Chica.