

MESOAMERICAN SURVEY I

The Mesoamerican Survey I slide set contains photographs of the artifacts and major sites of the non-Maya peoples of pre-Columbian Mexico. Arranged in roughly chronological order, the slides may be used either in sequence or in groups.

<u>NAME, AREA, HORIZON</u>	<u>SLIDE NUMBER</u>
Map	1
Olmec Gulf Coast Formative or Preclassic	2 through 15
Teotihuacan Central Highlands Formative or Preclassic, Classic	16 through 31
Monte Alban, Mitla, Lambityeco Oaxaca Valley Formative or Preclassic, Classic, Postclassic	32 through 51
El Tajin and Central Veracruz Gulf Coast Classic, Postclassic	52 through 64
Xochicalco Central Highlands Late Classic, Early Postclassic	65 through 72
Tula Central Highlands Early Postclassic	73 through 85
The Aztecs-Tenayuca, Tenochtitlan Central Highlands Postclassic	86 through 100

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1. Map
2. OLMEC. Colossal head No. 1 from La Venta. This was found directly south of the Great Pyramid at La Venta. MPV
3. OLMEC. Colossal head, Monument 5 from San Lorenzo. Note pitting on helmet, the result of intentional mutilation. It is believed that all of the colossal heads are portraits of real rulers or priests. INAH.
4. OLMEC. Tomb A from La Venta, reconstructed at the Museo Parque de la Venta in Villahermosa. The tomb, made of basalt columns carved to resemble logs, was found buried within a pyramid. Two burials, probably of infants, were found covered with red pigment and accompanied by grave goods.
5. OLMEC. Burial offerings from Tomb A. Two of these figures are male, two are female. Also found in the tomb was a pair of small carved jade hands, jade awls in the form of a sting-ray spine, used for ceremonial blood-letting, and a tooth from an extinct giant shark. INAH
6. OLMEC. Detail of enclosure of prismatic basalt columns surrounding the Ceremonial Court at La Venta, reconstructed at Museo Parque de la Venta, Villahermosa. This structure was built during the fourth and last building stage of the center, between 800 and 400 B.C.
7. OLMEC. One of three mosaic floors from La Venta, reconstructed at Museo Parque de la Venta, Villahermosa. Representing a jaguar mask, these floors were made of slabs of imported serpentine and then covered with several layers of colored clays. Their function is unknown, but they probably were a form of offering.
8. OLMEC. Altar 5 from La Venta. A male figure, probably a priest/ruler, is seated in a niche and holds a were-jaguar infant, perhaps as an offering. MPV.
9. OLMEC. Side of Altar 5. Two adults hold struggling were-jaguar children. MPV.
10. OLMEC. Stele 2 from La Venta. Probably a portrait of an actual ruler, the main figure carries a staff of office and is surrounded by six running figures. MPV

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11. OLMEC. Altar 4 from La Venta. In classic Olmec style, a priest/ruler sits in a niche representing the mouth of a jaguar. He holds a knife in his left hand as well as a rope which runs around the entire altar. MPV
12. OLMEC. Side of Altar 4. The rope held by the figure in front holds captive an individual who is physically distinctive from the Olmec ideal. Note the "Maya" profile and deformed skull. MPV
13. OLMEC. Monument 52 from San Lorenzo. An Olmec jaguar deity, probably Tlaloc, god of water. Note "x" motif on pectoral and the cleft in the head, both conventions of Olmec sculpture. INAH
14. OLMEC. "The Wrestler" from Santa Maria Uxpanapa. Note realistic modeling. INAH
15. OLMEC. Offering No. 4 from La Venta. This group of jadeite, serpentine and granite figurines was found as it is shown, buried under several layers of color clay in the Ceremonial Court. Some time after it was first buried, someone dug into the exact spot where it was located, inspected the offering, and then covered it up again, untouched. INAH
16. TEOTIHUACAN. The Citadel. This is a large plaza on the south end of the Avenue of the Dead. The plaza is bounded by temple platforms. At the rear of the plaza is a very large pyramid, in front of which is a platform with stairways on three sides. Note the typical tablud-tablero style of Teotihuacan, with its strong horizontal panels which shadow the ascending part of the pyramid. Opposite the Citadel plaza, across the Avenue of the Dead, was an enormous area called the Great Compound, which may have been the actual center of the planned city, serving both as a great market and as an administrative center.
17. TEOTIHUACAN. Temple of Quetzalcoatl, discovered when the Citadel was restored. The carved and painted facade had been preserved by being covered by the Citadel. Note the similar tablud-tablero proportions of this earlier building, as well as the balustrade decorated with serpent heads.
18. TEOTIHUACAN. Facade of Temple of Quetzalcoatl, apparently dedicated to two deities, a fire-serpent and a grotesque creature related to the God with a Bow Headdress, a god of the Oaxaca area. Note the water symbols of marine shells and waves. Traces of the original red and blue paint remain.

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19. TEOTIHUACAN. Pyramid of the Sun. In front of the pyramid is an offertory on top of which are the remains of a two-chambered temple. The Plaza of the Pyramid of the Sun is surrounded by the remains of temples and palaces. The oldest structure at Teotihuacan, the Pyramid of the Sun is the second largest pyramid in Mexico (the largest is at Cholula), and only slightly smaller than the pyramid of Cheops in Egypt. First built around 100 B.C., it is oriented 15° 30' east of astronomical north. Its orientation is such that on the day the sun reaches its zenith--June 21--the sun sets directly in front of the pyramid. The orientation of this pyramid governs the axial arrangement of all the other buildings at Teotihuacan, as well as the Avenue of the Dead. A sighting mark has been discovered on a mountain about 2 miles west of the city. This sights directly to where the top of the pyramid was originally. There are other sighting marks consisting of concentric rings and a cross pecked into the base of other buildings on the site. Aveni suggests that the rising of the Pleiades may also have governed the orientation of the site.
20. TEOTIHUACAN. Temple of the Quetzal Butterfly (Quetzalpapalotl) in the plaza of the Pyramid of the Moon. This large building, rebuilt many times, was probably a residence.
21. TEOTIHUACAN. Courtyard of the Temple of the Quetzal Butterfly. This was a square patio, the columns of which were carved with representations of the quetzal, a brilliantly colored bird whose habitat is hot lowland rain forest. The quetzal, therefore, represents either influence or trade from the south, probably in both live birds and feathers. Note the merlons, which are Teotihuacan year signs.
22. TEOTIHUACAN. View of the Avenue of the Dead, with the Pyramid of the Moon. The names of the various structures and that of Teotihuacan itself (which means "place of the gods") are all translations of Aztec names.
23. TEOTIHUACAN. Architectural element representing Tlaloc, made of painted stone. INHA
24. TEOTIHUACAN. Monumental stone sculpture of water goddess. INAH
25. TEOTIHUACAN. Paint palette. Using mineral paints and brushes made either from animal hairs or plant fibers, the Teotihuacanos painted murals and pottery. INAH

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26. TEOTIHUACAN. Reproduction, the National Museum of Anthropology of Mexico, of a mural in the Palace of Tepantitla, on the outskirts of Teotihuacan. On each side of the entrance is a representation of Tlaloc, flanked by his priests. The god's headdress is made of streams, trees, birds and flowers. Beneath are two scenes, one of a ballgame, the other, the paradise of Tlaloc.
27. TEOTIHUACAN. Detail of paradise of Tlaloc at Tepantitla. People dance, sing, catch butterflies and play a ballgame resembling soccer.
28. TEOTIHUACAN. Small clay heads made from molds. The making of molded heads and figurines persisted in various styles throughout the history of the city. INAH
29. TEOTIHUACAN. Thin orange bowl painted in polychrome. This ware was traded throughout Mesoamerica. Teotihuacan IIa-III. INAH
30. TEOTIHUACAN. Polychrome vessel with representation of Tlaloc or his priest. Teotihuacan III. INAH
31. TEOTIHUACAN. Funerary mask of turquoise and coral mosaic. INAH
32. MONTE ALBAN. View of Great Plaza, looking from North Platform to South Platform. On the left are a ballcourt and palaces, in the center is the central mound, and straight ahead is the largely unexcavated South Platform. On the right are Group M, the Danzantes Mound, and System IV, Mound J is behind the Central Mound. The site was built on a mountain top which was artificially leveled to form a huge building platform. There was apparently no water nor any source of food, and all provisions had to be carried up to the acropolis.
33. MONTE ALBAN. I-shaped ball court. Note stone marker in the center.
34. MONTE ALBAN. East side of plaza with adoratorio or altar which is being reconstructed. This is connected by underground tunnels to the structure in the rear and to the Central Mound.
35. MONTE ALBAN. Detail of vaulted stairway leading to top of building.

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36. MONTE ALBAN. Mound J. An arrowhead-shaped building whose point is oriented to the southwest. It differs from all other buildings at Monte Alban and resembles only one other structure in Mesoamerica, which is nearby. One of the earlier constructions at Monte Alban, it was built around 275 B.C. It is crossed by a vaulted tunnel which has an opening to the top of the building. Directly opposite the plaza and in line with the point of the building, is a doorway which in 275B.C. aligned with the rising point of Capella, a bright star which heralded the day of zenith passage of the sun at Monte Alban.
37. MONTE ALBAN. Group M and the Danzantes Mound. "The Gallery." Carved slabs were found between these two structures. The Danzantes Mound was originally faced with rows of sculptured panels, which were later covered by another building or reused in other constructions at the site.
38. MONTE ALBAN. Danzante sculpture. In the upper right-hand corner is a glyph representing a date or place.
39. MONTE ALBAN. Danzante sculpture, possibly indicating genital mutilation or castration, with calendrical glyphs similar to the Mayas'. Most of the Danzante sculptures appear to represent dead men.
40. MONTE ALBAN. Entrance to tomb. Many of the tombs at Monte Alban were first used by the Zapotecs and later rebuilt or reused by another group, the Mixtecs. Above the doorway is a typical niche containing an urn which represents a god.
41. MONTE ALBAN. Clay jar. Monte Alban I. INAH
42. MONTE ALBAN. Clay braziers with Olmecoid faces. Monte Alban I. INAH
43. MONTE ALBAN. Mask of Bat God, made of articulated pieces of jade. Found buried in adoratorio in the Great Plaza. Monte Alban II. INAH
44. MONTE ALBAN. Funerary urn, representing the god Cocijo in a serpent mask. Monte Alban IIIIB. INAH
45. MONTE ALBAN. Necklace of turquoise, pearls, coral and gold. Mixtec, from Tomb 7, Monte Alban. Monte Alban V. RMO

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46. MONTE ALBAN. Gold pectoral from Tomb 7, Monte Alban. Mixtec. Represents, according to Caso, a Tiger Knight. The dates are the years 10 Wind and 11 House; the day is 2 Flint. The year sign is the entwined AO in the two lower areas. Monte Alban V. RMO
47. OAXACA VALLEY. Lambityeco was inhabited around 700 A.D. during the period when Monte Alban was being abandoned by its Zapotec population. A house was discovered under a small pyramid during the excavation of this Oaxaca Valley site. The wall of the house contained friezes portraying four couples, and between the two remaining friezes stands a small altar-like structure (top half of slide). The wall had originally covered a tomb (Tomb 5). Above the entrance of Tomb 5 are portraits in stucco of an elderly man and woman, presumably the owners of the house.
48. OAXACA VALLEY. Detail of Tomb 5.
49. MITLA. Group of the Columns. There are five main groups of buildings at Mitla. Although some buildings at Mitla are contemporaneous with Monte Alban I, this structure, probably a palace, was built during Monte Alban V, in a style which combined that of the Zapotecs of Monte Alban with a new one, that of the Mixtecs.
50. MITLA. Interior patio of the Group of the Columns. Note the many mosaic patterns of inlaid cut stone. Also note that the lintel, which is very low in relation to the height of the person, is a monolithic stone slab carved to simulate mosaic.
51. MITLA. The Hall of the Columns. The wooden roof of this very large room (132 x 24 feet) was supported by the six monolithic columns.
52. EL TAJIN. Pyramid of the Niches. This is the final reconstruction of this building, probably the oldest at El Tajin. It contains 365 visible niches, with more under the central stairway, which was apparently added after the pyramid was completed. The building faces almost directly east. The proportions of the tablud-tablero are similar to those of Teotihuacan, but the pyramid looks different because of the upward-slanting cornices, which cast deep shadows. The cornices in effect balance the taluses. The play of light and shadow gives the structure a lively quality which is quite different from that of Teotihuacan.

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53. EL TAJIN. The sides of the Pyramid of the Niches are curved to produce the optical effect of a straight line.
54. EL TAJIN. Sculpture from the Pyramid of the Niches. An obese figure either kicks or jumps over a serpent or lizard. The reptile appears to be feathered and has the curved eyebrow probably indicative at El Tajin of the supernatural. The moving figure is one of the very few depictions at El Tajin of violent action. He carries a feathered bag, probably to hold incense. His teeth may represent jaguar teeth, similar to those of Tlaloc, the water god of Teotihuacan. MAUV
55. EL TAJIN. South Ball Court. Oriented in an east-west direction, the ball court is about 160 feet long and 60 feet wide. Note that it has neither enclosing ends nor rings. This court was rebuilt three times, first with rough stone wall, then with smoothed stone walls, and finally, around 1100 A.D. or earlier, it was decorated with six panels in bas relief and a sculptured horizontal frieze.
56. EL TAJIN. South Ball Court Panel 3, northwest panel. This scene takes place in the ball court itself, probably the actual ball court we are observing. It is a confrontation of two ballplayers, with three spectators. Note the protective belts, the palmas and the feathered trains worn by the two main figures. The figure on the left crosses his arms over his chest, a submissive gesture. The person on the right carries a stone knife. Between the feet of the two is a round object, probably the solid rubber ball used in the ritual ballgame. On the far left is another ballplayer. On the left a man wearing an animal mask and a skeletal figure.
57. EL TAJIN. South Ball Court Panel 4, northeast panel. A scene of sacrifice, again taking place within the walls of the ball court. Outside the scene, but part of it, is a skeleton with a plumed headdress in a pulque jar. The man on the left holds the middle man, whose throat is about to be cut by the man on the right. Another individual, a ballplayer sits on the ball court wall on the right side, while above the sacrificial victim hovers a skeletal figure with a curving eyebrow.
58. EL TAJIN. Detail of Panel 4.

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59. EL TAJIN. Monument A, Tajin Chico. Built later than El Tajin on a hillside terrace, most of the buildings at Tajin Chico appear to have been used as administrative buildings and residences. This Maya-like arch is the only entrance to the two-story building, which was decorated with polychrome paintings.
60. EL TAJIN/CENTRAL VERACRUZ. Palma. This (or a lighter replica in wood) was worn as a chest and abdominal protection in the ballgame. Similar objects are seen in the ball court panels. INAH
61. EL TAJIN/CENTRAL VERACRUZ. Hacha in the form of a human profile with a dolphin headdress. INAH
62. EL TAJIN/CENTRAL VERACRUZ. Stone yoke, also used (or a lighter version) as ballplaying equipment. MAUV
63. CENTRAL VERACRUZ. Wheeled toy in the form of a smiling or snarling dog with a collar. MAUV
64. CENTRAL VERACRUZ. Mold-made late Classic Veracruz "Smiling face" of the Mistequilla type. Note the design on the headdress which may incorporate the twined "x", a very common symbol, possibly of wind or motion, at El Tajin. MAUV
65. XOCHICALCO. View of Xochicalco, showing its stepped terraces, buttresses and the remains of fortifications. The slopes of the large site are honeycombed with caves, some of which have been painted and floored with stucco, and some of which have holes in the cave ceiling and may have been used as astronomical observatories. Xochicalco may have been on a major trading route as well as being a possible meeting place for religious leaders.
66. XOCHICALCO. Front view of the Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent. Note the serpent scales on the balustrade. Also note the proportions of the tablud-tablero system, which differ greatly from those at Teotihuacan. The tablud is used as a surface for bas relief and as a base for a carved cornice. There is a second story, which may have been roofed. The profile of the pyramid is reminiscent of that of structures at El Tajin.

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67. XOCHICALCO. South side of Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent. The andesite facing is carved with undulating feathered serpents whose heads are at the corners and whose tails meet in the center, separated by a trellis design.
68. XOCHICALCO. Carved figures, almost identical to those on Altar Q at Copan, are seated in the undulations of the serpents. This is probably a Maya notable, from whose mouth a speech scroll issues. There is a theory that religious figures from all over Mesoamerica met at Xochicalco to coordinate the various calendrical systems.
69. XOCHICALCO. Stone of the Four Glyphs. This may be a symbolic representation of a presumed astronomical meeting at Xochicalco. The top two date symbols, 10 Acatl and 4 Tochtli (rabbit) are shown in Nahuatl-Mixtec notation; the two lower dates, 7 Eye of Reptile and 6 "A" are in Zapotec-Maya notation. INAH
70. XOCHICALCO. Buried under the stucco floor of a small room near the Temple of the Plumed Serpent was a treasure of offerings from all of Mesoamerica, as well as three important stelae. In addition to various vessels of clay and alabaster, obsidian points and ornaments, incised shell, and other jade objects were found. INAH
71. XOCHICALCO. View of ball court. The I-shaped ball court, with rings on the lateral walls, is over 200 feet long. It is similar to the ball courts of Mayan Coba, Piedras Negras, and Copan. In the background is a residential complex and a large unexcavated pyramid, La Malinche.
72. XOCHICALCO. Marker in shape of macaw head, found near the ball court, and similar to marker found at Copan. INAH
73. TULA. The Great Plaza. On the left is the Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl, which closes the north end of the plaza.
74. TULA. Atlantean figures on top of Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl. Carved from basalt, these figures are nearly 15 feet tall. They are constructed in four sections in a mortice-and-tenon system. These figures were buried within the pyramid at some time before the arrival of the Aztecs. They represent warriors (or possibly Quetzalcoatl himself), and carry a bundle of darts and an atlatl (spear thrower). Together with carved columns in back of them, these sculptured figures served to support the roof of the temple. Similar figures appear later in Toltec Chichen Itza in Yucatan, but the later sculptures lack the grandeur and force of these.

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75. TULA. A procession of coyotes and jaguars banded the base of the pyramid, as well as eagles or vultures and the head of a deity, probably Tlaloc.
76. TULA. The Coatepantli, or Wall of the Serpents, in the foreground and Ball Court Number 1 in the background. The view is to the north from the Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl. The wall is approximately 130 feet long and 8-1/2 feet high.
77. TULA. Detail of Coatepantli, which depicts a band of serpents devouring a skeletal form. This may be symbolic of the sun devouring the night each morning. At the top of the wall is a band of water symbols in the form of shell cross-sections. The mosaic step-fret design is common throughout Mesoamerica.
78. TULA. Hall of the Columns. The columns supported a roof, probably thatched. The very large structure may have served both as a market and as an administrative center. The entire floor was plastered. Next to the Chac Mool is a fire pit.
79. TULA. Chac Mool. These curious figures ("messenger to the gods") are common in Toltec sites. They are portrayed in a supine position, a receptacle used almost certainly for offerings on their bellies. A stone knife is bound to the left arm, and this figure wears square earplugs, similar to those of the Atlantean figures and rare in other contexts.
80. TULA. Surrounding the Hall of the Columns is a stone banquette, on the base of which is carved a procession of carved, painted figures.
81. TULA. View of Ball Court Number 2. It is about 350 feet long, the largest in the Mexican plateau. Note the altar or adoratorio on the left and the Tzompantli, or skull rack, the long, low platform in front of the ball court. Here, presumably, skulls of sacrificed ballplayers were displayed. The ball court is oriented in a north-south direction.
82. TULA. Bas relief from a wall of Ball Court Number 1, showing a ballplayer in his playing gear. INAH.
83. TULA. Plumbate effigy vessel found at Tula, probably imported from Guatemala, INAH
84. TULA. Toltec domestic pottery. The red lines are drawn with a bundle of reeds. INAH

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85. TULA. Human face, probably of a knight, wearing a coyote headdress. Pottery, obsidian and mother of pearl. INAH
86. AZTEC. Pyramid at Tenayuca. This pyramid was enlarged eight times by covering the previous building with rubble and then a new facing. The date of the original structure, in a local style, is unknown, but the last five superimpositions were Aztec. The reconstructions were probably done each 52 years--in 1299, 1351, 1403, 1455, and 1507. Tenayuca may have been the earliest of the Aztec pyramids. Except for the great stairway, which is all that remains of the eighth reconstruction, the pyramid as it exists today is the seventh reconstruction. Divided by a ramp, the great stairway faces the west directly to where the sun sets on the days of equinox. The entrance on the stairs leads to an earlier construction. The pyramid was a base for twin temples.
87. AZTEC. On three sides of the pyramid is a wall of 138 painted serpents, the Coatepantli.
88. AZTEC. Model of the reconstructed pyramid of Tenayuca in the Mexican Museum of Anthropology. Note the twin temples, the one on the left dedicated to Tlaloc, the ancient rain god, the one on the right, to Huitzilopochtli, god of war. The latter was decorated with skulls. Both temples were painted brilliantly.
89. AZTEC. Model, in the Mexican Museum of Anthropology, of the sacred precinct of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital, now buried under modern Mexico City. In the rear is the Great Temple with its twin shrines to Tlaloc and Huitzilopochtli. The round building in front is the Temple of Quetzalcoatl, possibly an observatory for the sunrise on the days of solstice. The rectangular structure on the right is one of several skull racks in the precinct. In the middle foreground is a ball court. To the right of the twin temples is a temple dedicated to the god Tezcatlipoca. The colonnaded chambers at the base of the Great Temple were administrative buildings. Surrounding the temple area was a serpent wall, or Coatepantli. Monumental stone serpents and huge braziers flanked the pyramid. This reconstruction is based on archeological findings as well as descriptions and drawings made by the Spanish when they arrived at Tenochtitlan.

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90. AZTEC. Xuihcoatl, the Fire-Serpent. Two of these sculptures, of which only the head is shown, flanked the Great Temple on the north and south sides. The crest of the serpent is made of stars. In Aztec cosmology, the Fire Serpent led the sun across the sky each day. INAH
91. AZTEC. Temple of the Sacred War. This commemorative monument represents a temple as well as the major concepts of the sacred war, an institution designed to procure victims for the very extensive human sacrifices of the Aztecs. In the top part of the monument is a solar disk flanked by the tribal gods of the Aztecs, Huitzilopochtli and Tezcatlipoca. Both carry bags of incense and a maguey thorn, used to draw blood in autosacrificial rites. From their mouths comes the symbol for the sacred war. INAH
92. AZTEC. Stone receptacle in the shape of a jaguar, in which the hearts of sacrificial victims were placed. Several such containers were found in the temple court at Tenochtitlan. INAH
93. AZTEC. Stone of the Sun. This stone, more than 3-1/2 meters in diameter, was found in the main square in Mexico City where the Cathedral now stands. It is a representation of the Aztec conception of time and the universe. Traces of the original paint remain. INAH
94. AZTEC. Coatlicue, goddess of earth, life and death. This sculpture shows the goddess as a decapitated woman. Serpents symbolizing blood grow from her neck. She wears a necklace of human hands and hearts, representing life, and a skull pendant, representing death. The goddess's skirt is made of entwined serpents, and her belt is fastened in front and back with a skull and rattlesnake rattles. Her feet are eagles' claws. INAH
95. AZTEC. Coyolxauhqui, the moon goddess, who in Aztec cosmology was beheaded every morning by her brother the sun. The head of the goddess is depicted here with the half-open eyes of the dead, solar earplugs, and a nose ornament in the form of a maguey thorn, a symbol of sacrifice. Her cheeks are adorned with gold bells, and she wears down balls in her hair, also symbolic of sacrifice. INAH
96. AZTEC. Eagle Knight, one of the high military orders. INAH

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97. AXTEC. Xochipilli, god of flowers, song, love and poetry. Painted red, the god wears a mask and is covered with flowers. His throne is decorated with flowers, butterflies, and jade ornaments. INAH
98. AZTEC. A dead man. To die in war or as a sacrificial victim was considered the best possible death. INAH
99. AZTEC. A woman, possibly a captive. INAH
100. AZTEC. Sculpture of a grasshopper. At the end of the 13th century, the Aztecs settled at Chapultepec, of "Hill of the Grasshopper." Therefore, the grasshopper is an important symbol in Aztec history. INAH

MAUV Museo de Antropologia de la Universidad, Veracruzana, Xalapa, Veracruz

RMO Regional Museum of Oaxaca

INAH Museo Nacional de Antropologia, Mexico D.F

MPV Museo Parque de la Venta, Villahermosa Tabasco