

## Recent Advances in Mixtec Archaeology

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Published online: 11 August 2012  
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**Abstract** Current research in the Mixteca region of Mexico has revealed that Formative communities were as populous as in other Mesoamerican regions. Evidence of emerging social complexity is associated with the use of and access to luxury items of foreign style and/or manufacture. Research efforts draw from indigenous models to interpret data and investigate urbanism. Regional and environmental approaches, household studies, and ethnohistory are integrated to study ethnic diversity and the complex history of human occupation. The politics associated with cultural resource management and community archaeology in the Mixteca also are discussed.

**Keywords** Urbanism · Ethnohistory · Households · Regional studies · Mesoamerica

### Introduction

The Mixtec region of southern Mexico is one of the lesser-known areas of Mesoamerica. It also is a place where early complex societies and urban centers developed. Some of these urban centers were contemporaries of Monte Albán and Teotihuacan, while others outlasted these better-known urban capitals for centuries. In the Mixteca not one but several major political players emerged; in coastal Mixteca, the expansionistic state of Tututepec developed and rivaled Aztec regional supremacy. The Mixtec are renowned for their rich cultural, urban, and written traditions and were the makers of some of the finest examples of pre-Columbian codices, polychrome pottery, lapidary, and fine metal objects. The Mixtec built

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