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## **Re-evaluation of the Early Archaeological Collections from Oaxaca: A Trip to the Seler Archives in Berlin**



**Research Year:** 2005

**Culture:** Zapotec

**Chronology:** Pre-Classic to Post Classic

**Location:** Oaxaca, México

**Site:** Oaxaca, San José Mogote, Ejutla, San Pablo Huitzo, Zaachila, La Ciénaga, Xoxocotlán

### **Table of Contents**

[Abstract](#)

[Resumen](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Background](#)

[Objectives](#)

[Methods](#)

[Overview of the Selers' archaeological and archival materials](#)

[Eduard and Caecilie Seler in Oaxaca](#)

[The Sologuren Collection](#)

[The Martínez Gracida Collection](#)

[Placing the archaeological materials in context](#)

[San Pablo Huitzo, district of ETLA](#)

[Hacienda de Cacique, San José el Mogote, district of ETLA](#)

[Zaachila, district of Zimatlán](#)

[La Ciénaga, district of Zimatlán](#)

[Tomb A, Mogote 5, Xoxocotlán](#)

[Ejutla, district of Ejutla](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[List of Figures](#)

[Sources Cited](#)

## **Abstract**

In this project, I proposed a two-week trip to Germany to review archival and archaeological materials associated with Eduard's and Caecilie Seler's journeys to Oaxaca, México, in the late nineteenth century. The materials are housed in the Ethnologisches Museum (formerly the Völkerkunde Museum) and the Ibero-American Institute, both in Berlin. My goal in reviewing these assorted holdings is to understand the extent of the archaeological activities and collection building the Selers undertook while in Oaxaca, but also to gather information on the collections, and the little-known local collectors with whom they were in contact. My purpose in studying older archaeological collections is to recuperate provenience and contextual data for artefacts that over time have been divorced from this vital information.

## **Resumen**

En este proyecto yo propuse un viaje de dos semanas a Alemania para revisar materiales de archivo y arqueológicos asociados con los viajes de Eduard y Caecilie Seler a Oaxaca, México, a fines del siglo XIX. Los materiales están alojados en el Ethnologisches Museum (antes Völkerkunde Museum) y en el Instituto Iberoamericano, ambos en Berlín. Mi objetivo en la revisión de estos variados materiales fue entender la extensión de las actividades arqueológicas y la formación de la colección que los Seler llevaron a cabo mientras estuvieron en Oaxaca, pero también recabar información sobre las colecciones y los poco conocidos coleccionistas locales con los que estuvieron en contacto. Mi propósito en estudiar colecciones arqueológicas viejas es recuperar datos sobre contexto y procedencia de artefactos que a través del tiempo se han visto divorciados de esta importante información.

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## Introduction

In this project, I proposed a two-week trip to Germany to review archival and archaeological materials associated with Eduard's and Caecilie Seler's journeys to Oaxaca, México, in the late nineteenth century. The materials are housed in the Ethnologisches Museum (formerly the Völkerkunde Museum) and the Ibero-American Institute, both in Berlin. My goal in reviewing these assorted holdings is to understand the extent of the archaeological activities and collection building the Selers<sup>1</sup> undertook while in Oaxaca, but also to gather information on the collections, and the little-known local collectors with whom they were in contact. My purpose in studying older archaeological collections is to recuperate provenience and contextual data for artefacts that over time have been divorced from this vital information. Specifically, I sought out information on the ceramic effigy vessel commonly known as the Zapotec urn, as this object was vigorously collected during the time period studied and was ubiquitous in all the collections of the day. Using the Selers' references to pre-Hispanic artefacts in nineteenth-century collections, such as notes, drawings and photographs, combined with other documentary sources, I was able to restore provenience information and contextual data for a number of artefacts now in Mexican museums.

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<sup>1</sup> The explorations carried out in México were clearly a joint effort by the husband and wife team, so in this report I have chosen to refer to the German couple in the plural.



**Figure 1. Map of the sites mentioned in this article.**

The material remains I will present in this report are from several archaeological sites in Oaxaca, as reported on by the Selers and by the local collectors studied ([Figure 1](#), shown above). The results of my analysis of specific effigy vessels both from the Selers' collection at the Ethnologisches Museum, and in the older collections of the Mexican museums, is published in an on-line database that may be consulted at the following link on the FAMSI website: [Catalogue of Zapotec Effigy Vessels](#). This database can be searched by collector name or by museum. In this report, I will discuss these materials in a more comprehensive context, both historically and archaeologically.

## Background

This project is part of a much larger research effort to document the local history of archaeological exploration, collection forming and museum building in the Mexican states of Oaxaca and Yucatán in the late nineteenth century. My focus is on the *Porfiriato*, a political period lasting three decades that saw a concerted government effort to conserve and to recuperate the pre-Hispanic past (Valderrama and Velasco 1981: vol. I, 1). During this time, a group of Mexican professionals schooled in the positivist scientific tradition, and with interests in archaeology and the origins of the American Indian, were highly active exploring the ruins in their home states. Through direct excavation, and trade with local indigenous peoples, they amassed huge archaeological collections, many of which went on to form the basis for the state and federal museums in México, while others were sold to foreign interests.

Accumulating large amounts of archaeological material is the activity that really defines this social group, so I refer to them as "collectors" nonetheless, many of them were highly capable scientists. It is key to make this distinction. Their pursuit of archaeological collecting was not motivated by a lust for unique and beautiful objects, as we often conceive of this activity today, rather, they were motivated by scientific interests. Here we must consider the times in which they lived and the profound changes they helped forge. In the mid-nineteenth century the discipline of archaeology in México was still in its infancy and there was little information available to inform speculation on the past. During the *Porfiriato* this situation changed dramatically with the systematic description of archaeological remains and monuments (Willey and Sabloff 1974: 83; Bernal 1980: 129). Charged with a positivist education, the local collectors used their massive collections to introduce some of the first classifications of ancient material by type and cultural affiliation. Not only did they establish a conceptual breakthrough, but also an important material base, as their collections would be used by subsequent generations of archaeologists to create new classifications and comparisons.

The local collectors contributed greatly to the development of Mexican archaeology, yet their legacy has been largely ignored in the literature. There are many reasons why the story of these Mexican collectors has fallen into oblivion. One reason is that they were overshadowed by the exploits of the foreign explorers who were more successful in publishing their work. But perhaps the principal reason was their close political ties to the dictator Porfirio Díaz. The demise of Díaz's power in 1910 resulted in violent revolution and social upheaval and those associated to the regime were excluded from prominent positions. Consequently, much of the work they had carried out on their archaeological collections was archived and forgotten. Before the revolution, many of their collections had been acquired by México's National Museum, but after Díaz's destitution, these holdings came under a new stewardship. The new curators soundly rejected the previous institutional structure based on insidious cronyism and took steps to erase the link between the Porfirian collectors and their collections, some of which enjoyed special display cases. One such display was considered so anachronistic that it was banished to the servants' bathroom of the Museum. In this unfortunate process,

many of the collectors' classifications were undone and some of the material was divorced from its associated records.

The Porfirian collectors' archaeological legacy continues to occupy a dark corner of history. The breadth of their work is largely unknown and the documentary sources are fragmentary. References to their work can be found in institutional archives in México as well as in archives in North America and Europe. The copious documentation produced by the Selers is the richest narrative available. The archival materials in Berlin illustrate a period of intense archaeological exploration. In the nineteenth century, the Oaxacan collectors explored ruins in the vicinity of the towns of ETLA, Tlacolula, Xoxocotlán, Zaachila, Zimatlán, Ocotlán, and Ejutla. Many of these sites today are either thoroughly diminished or have been obliterated as a result of the pressures of urbanization and agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the material remains taken from these ruins have been removed to museums throughout México and the world. As Childs and Sullivan (2004: 3) have argued, once an archaeological site is severely damaged or destroyed, the material remains (archaeological collections) and associated records, may be the only legacy of that site and the people who inhabited it. In this sense, the documentation in Berlin represents an invaluable resource to archaeologists and historians, as it is often the *only* surviving evidence of a particular site or artifact. For this reason alone, we should concern ourselves with its study.

## Objectives

The general objective is to generate an understanding of the breadth and depth of the Seler archive and how this can be useful for clarifying the history of archaeology and collecting in Oaxaca during the *Porfiriato*. My goal is to find out more about the local Mexican collectors with whom many foreign travelers had contact. Little is known about these collectors in terms of biographical information and their inter-relationships, but also what they collected and where this material is presently located.

The specific objective is to recuperate archaeological data for artefacts collected during this period. The role and value of associated documentation in the interpretation and analysis of artefacts is as important as the initial find, and for an archaeological collection to have any significant research value, it must be accompanied by documentation that registers the critical information regarding associations, context and provenience. Unfortunately, this is a major problem for much of the archaeological material collected in the nineteenth century, as it has become disassociated from this documentation. Therefore, re-establishing the link between artefact and documentation is a specific goal. Once this relationship has been established, the archaeological materials can be evaluated in a more comprehensive context.

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<sup>2</sup> The collectors also frequented the Valley's premier site, Monte Albán, but at this juncture little excavation was carried out and few artifacts were extracted. I am not entirely sure why this occurred, but perhaps access to the site was limited given that it was on private property and special permission was needed from the owner, Manuel Bustamante.

## Methods

For the general objective, I compiled historical background information on the Selers in order to comprehend the chronology of their activities and to understand how their documentary materials are organized. For this task, I relied heavily on published sources and the knowledge of my German counterparts who are well versed in the Seler legacy. I combined this information with previous research carried out in Mexican archives where I have identified the principal Oaxacan collectors who were active during the *Porfiriato* and who had contact with the Selers.

For the specific objective, my procedure entailed identifying and recording the documents in the Seler archive that referred to Zapotec effigy vessels in the original collections in Oaxaca. Most of these objects have been published in Caso's and Bernal's seminal work *Urnas de Oaxaca* (1952), thus it is possible to link specific objects to the original collectors' data. In particular, I was interested in identifying objects that belonged to the Sologuren collection, as this large holding forms the basis for a large proportion of the Oaxacan holdings at the MNA and is well represented in Caso and Bernal (*ibid.*). Additionally, I carried out a comparative study of the information gleaned from the Seler archive with three inventory lists I have discovered in Mexican archives corresponding to the collectors Fernando Sologuren, Francisco Belmar, and Manuel Martínez Gracida. The visual material produced by the Selers compliment the verbal descriptions contained in those lists and help clarify provenience and contextual information for a number of key artefacts.

## Overview of the Selers' archaeological and archival materials

Two institutions in Berlin hold the Selers' archaeological collections and the documentation related to their trips to Oaxaca:

The [Ethnologisches Museum](#) (formerly the Völkerkunde Museum) in Dahlem houses the archaeological artefacts gathered during their journeys to México. The collection is complemented by accession documentation that includes a great deal of correspondence from Eduard Seler to the Museum. There is also a holding of photographs that register an important Oaxacan archaeological collection belonging to Fernando Sologuren, and many paper moulds, stored in the attic, of small and large carved stones.

The [Ibero-American Institute](#) at Potsdammer Platz houses the Seler archival materials relative to their research sojourns to Oaxaca and other areas of México.<sup>3</sup> According to

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<sup>3</sup> Also of related interest is the Walter Lehmann bequest of 1,300 boxes and more than 150 small boxes with notes (310 linear feet). Lehmann (1878-1939) was a student of Eduard Seler and after his teacher's death used many of his notes and drawings for his own research.



Dr. Gregor Wolff, Head of Bequests and Special Collections for the Institute, the Seler archive contains 229 large boxes and more than 230 small boxes, totalling 56.59 linear feet. In the large boxes, there are numerous photos and illustrations, newspaper clippings, drawings, sketches, transcriptions of codices, and large-format tracing samples. In the small boxes, there are 800-1000 vocabulary notes on 38 indigenous languages. About one-fourth of the contents of the large boxes deal directly with their trip to Oaxaca. Some documents are references to the archaeological material they collected for Berlin's Völkerkunde Museum, while other documents refer to local collections that were in Oaxaca at the time. This holding provides a fascinating visual record of the state of pre-Hispanic ruins in Oaxaca in the nineteenth century, and of hundreds of archaeological objects complemented by provenience and collector information as noted by Eduard Seler.



**Figure 2. Eduard Seler (1849-1922). Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.**



## Eduard and Caecilie Seler in Oaxaca

In the second half of the nineteenth century, museums around the world sent out teams of scientists to document faraway lands and to retrieve collections for their cabinets. Eduard Seler ([Figure 2](#), shown above), a curator at Berlin's Völkerkunde Museum trained in natural science and philology, chose to focus on México and Guatemala. He and his wife, Caecilie Seler-Sachs ([Figure 3](#), shown below), carried out six field seasons in these countries between the years 1887 and 1911, acquiring an astonishing 13,000 objects for the Museum (Dolinski 1998: 7). My particular interest is the archaeological collections and sites the German couple documented during two field seasons to Oaxaca, one in 1887/1888 and another in 1895. Much of the archaeological information gleaned from their first voyage was presented shortly after at a conference of Americanists in Berlin. This was first published in French (E. Seler 1888) and then later in German (E. Seler 1904a). Caecilie also published a fascinating account of their voyages with many references to contacts with local collectors (C. Seler-Sachs 1900). Although the published sources are useful, the unpublished notes, drawings and photographs that formed the bases for these works provide a more comprehensive view of their Oaxacan experience.



Figure 3. Caecilie Seler-Sachs (1855-1935). Photo in Dolinski (1998).

During their two trips, the Selers were received by a group of local collectors who were part of Oaxaca's professional elite, made up of doctors, lawyers and government bureaucrats. In particular, the Selers had close contact with a select few who were closely associated by their interest in archaeology. Van Doesburg (1998: 52) has referred to them as the "archaeological club", and at its core, there were four men: Fernando Sologuren, Francisco Belmar, Manuel Martínez Gracida, and Abraham Castellanos. According to accounts of the day, these four colleagues would make weekend excursions together to excavate different archaeological sites in the vicinity (Olavarría y Ferrari 1895: 27; Castellanos 1905: 231). The local collectors were delighted to meet the German couple and lavished them with typical Mexican hospitality. The Selers were particularly well received, not only because they had excellent academic credentials and an agreeable manner, but also letters of introduction from Porfirio Díaz (König 2003: 328), to whom all these men's fortunes were inextricably tied. A picture published by Caecilie Seler-Sachs (1900: plate VII, *Eine Landpartie auf dem Monte Albán*), illustrates an outing taken in 1895, and shows Eduard and Caecilie enjoying a picnic on Monte Albán accompanied by all four members of the archaeological club (Figure 4, shown below).<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 4. *Eine Landpartie auf dem Monte Albán* (Seler-Sachs 1900: plate VII). Key to identify the persons in the photo: 1. Fernando Sologuren, 2. Eduard Seler, 3. Caecilie Seler-Sachs, 4. Abraham Castellanos, 5. Manuel Bustamante, 6. Francisco Belmar?, 7. Manuel Martínez Gracida.**

Central to the Selers' mission in México was the acquisition of artefacts for the Museum back home. They avoided the expensive and time consuming archaeological excavations that required official permits, and instead bargained with local collectors for objects. Most collectors were willing to sell, but some of them, Sologuren in particular, declined the offers. As an alternative to obtaining the actual artefact, the Selers would document it using photographs and drawings, and where possible, included

<sup>4</sup> The original photo is part of the Seler archive at the Ibero-American Institute. The names of Fernando Sologuren, Abraham Castellanos, and Manuel Martínez Gracida are written under the photo. Francisco Belmar's name is notably absent, however I believe he is standing behind Martínez Gracida. Manuel Bustamante, the man who owned the land on Monte Albán, is also present.

provenience information, sometimes with plans of the sites where the objects were found. They placed a great deal of emphasis on this task, demonstrating their commitment to scientific method as opposed to a mere obsession with collecting. In homage to his mentor E. Seler, Walter Lehmann stressed the importance of this work in the development of the discipline:

In days gone by, archaeologists thought it sufficient to collect potsherds and clay figurines without concerning themselves in the very least with their exact provenance. Only much later did travellers begin to take careful note of exactly where each find had come from, which made it possible for us to classify them according to locality. Seler, for example, in the course of his many long journeys, defined a number of clearly distinguished local types which are not without importance for the tracing of trade routes (Lehmann 1909: 2-3).

There is no doubt that his teacher's role was significant in defining ceramic categories, but Lehmann overstates his case by giving the impression that the overall effort was achieved by "travellers" (read: foreigners). In fact, the Selers and others were successful in their documentary strategies because the local collectors, in true positivist tradition, had meticulously recorded location and provenience information for all their archaeological artefacts. This is particularly salient for the area of Oaxaca, and we can posit that the quality of the archaeological information the Selers recorded, and later brilliantly synthesized, was largely dependent on what the local collectors had already established in terms of data collection.

The two Oaxacan collections I will discuss next provided the basis for much of the Selers' published works on Oaxaca, and a diversity of studies carried out in the twentieth century. The first collection I will present, Sologuren's, was only documented by the Selers, while the second collection, Martínez Gracida's, was partially acquired by them.



Figure 5. Dr. Fernando Sologuren (1850-1918). Photo courtesy of Lucerna Topete Vargas.

### The Sologuren Collection

Dr. Fernando Sologuren (1850-1918) ([Figure 5](#), shown above) is the most significant of all the local collectors the Selers met while in Oaxaca. He is mentioned numerous times in their writings and both Eduard and Caecilie spent a great deal of energy documenting his collection. Eduard published an extensive article on his collection of painted Mixtec vessels (1906 [1993]). Sologuren possessed the largest archaeological collection in the state of Oaxaca, if not the entire country. He began collecting in the early 1870s, and by the turn of the century, his collection easily surpassed the holdings of the State museum ([Figure 6](#), shown below). In 1895, the Congress of Americanists made a special trip to Oaxaca to see the private museum, as it was said to be the most important in the nation (Lombardo de Ruíz 1994: vol. I, 284). Sologuren sold his entire collection to the National Museum in 1907, at which point it had over 2,000 artefacts (cf. Sellen 2005a).





**Figure 6. Dr. Fernando Sologuren's archaeological collection circa 1902. Photographer probably C.B. Waite. Photo courtesy of the Museum Library of the University of Pennsylvania.**

In her book on their travels throughout México, Caecilie Seler-Sachs spoke of the collection from the time they had first seen it in 1888, explained how Sologuren put it together, and reminisced about how it had changed over the years:

Apart from the museum... there was the opportunity to examine some private collections. Among these, one has to name first Dr. Sologuren's, a capable physician who is equally capable as a distinguished expert on antiquities. In our first stay in Oaxaca, we met him and saw his collection, and it already had many marvellous things, however we were now surprised to see the dimension his museum had grown. As a physician, Dr. Sologuren travels to all parts, and his patients, ladinos and indians, know well how to please him. The poor man not capable of paying his debts, pays them with a beautiful polychromed pot that was churned up by their primitive plough. Besides this, Dr. Sologuren has an extended family that live all over the state and dedicate themselves to collect for him. It is not a miracle then that his collection is not only large, but also beautifully chosen, and apart from the forms that are generally well known, it has pieces that are very strange. There are also small precious green stones and other semi-precious stones and even ancient pieces of gold (in König 2003: 328-329).

Acutely aware of the research value offered by the collection, the Selers obtained photographs of all the objects, as these were displayed on shelves in Sologuren's home. They also made numerous pencil sketches and watercolours of individual pieces, and took paper moulds of some of the relief carvings. Written in black ink on the cards that hold the drawings and photographs, Eduard Seler had noted the name of the collector and the object's provenience information, and in some cases, he wrote down more detailed contextual information. From these documents, we can get a concrete idea of the size of the collection, as well as numerous details about individual artefacts.

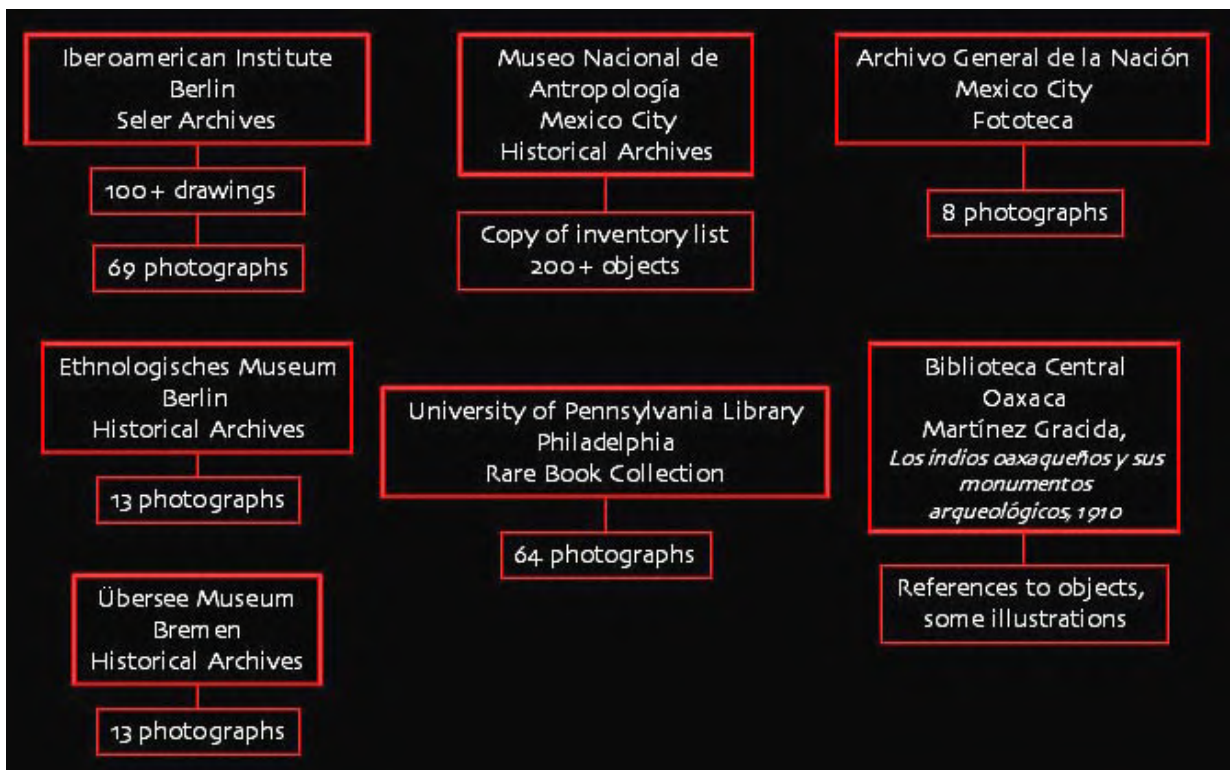


Figure 7. Source of documents related to the Sologuren collection.

Information from other sources complements the Seler materials on the Sologuren collection (Figure 7, shown above). Various archives in México, United States, and Germany have photographs of the collection and the majority of these appear to have been taken by the American photographer Charles Burlingame Waite. There is also a valuable bank of data in the work of Martínez Gracida, *Los Indios Oaxaqueños y sus Monumentos Arqueológicos* that was completed in 1910, but never published. The author documented much of Sologuren's holding and provided details on the discovery of the objects, including the date of the event. Unfortunately, the tome that illustrates the artefacts, and corresponds to the text descriptions, has gone missing (*Civilización Mixteca-Zapoteca. Vol. I Cerámica*). Finally, a key source of information is the collector's own inventory list that he wrote just before sending the entire collection to the

National Museum in México City. The inventory list numbers each piece and gives provenience, measurements and additional comments by the collector.<sup>5</sup>

Sologuren's collection has been highly significant to archaeological research, and individual artefacts from the holding are often published or exhibited. A prime example is Caso's and Bernal's often cited work *Urnas de Oaxaca* (1952). Many ceramic effigy vessels from nineteenth-century collections were used in this work, as it was a stated intention of the authors to compare objects from their field excavations, primarily at Monte Albán and Mitla, with artefacts already in the MNA. In total, they illustrated 527 artefacts, placing a special emphasis on material from the collections of Seler, Sologuren, Heredia, and Martel, because these had a corresponding catalogue from which provenience information could be gleaned (ibid. 1952: 11). However, the archaeologists did not specify the proportion of excavated material compared with that from the older collections. This information is key if we want to understand the overall nature of the sample. Fortunately, the link between object and collector can be established, and to date I have associated 95% of the artefacts from the older collections illustrated in *Urnas de Oaxaca* with their original collector. Particularly useful for this task were the photographs of the Sologuren collection in the Seler archive.

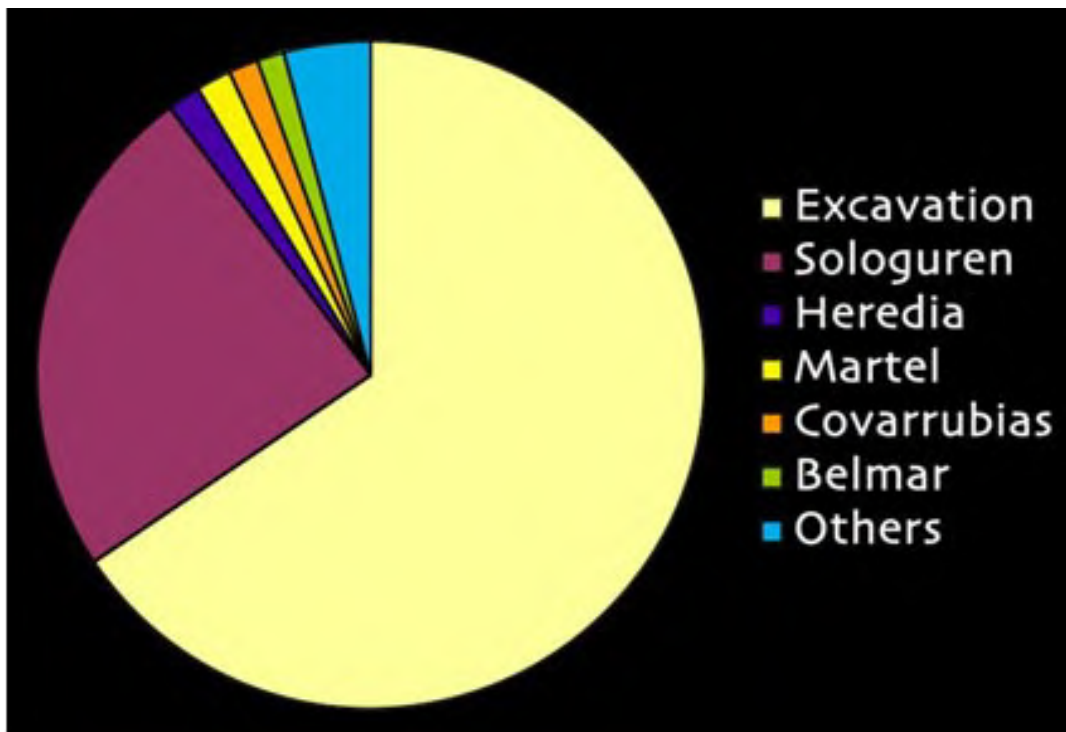


Figure 8. Proportion of objects from collections used to illustrate Caso's and Bernal's *Urnas de Oaxaca* (1952).

<sup>5</sup> The story of this list is complicated, the original manuscript having been lost. For more information cf. Sellen (2005a).



The results of my study show that about a third of the sample in *Urnas de Oaxaca* came from the older collections at the MNA ([Figure 8](#), shown above). The surprise was that Caso and Bernal used over 100 objects from Sologuren's collection alone, compared to 252 objects from their own excavations. In proportion, therefore, Sologuren's collection represents 25% of all the material illustrated, and after excavated materials, it was their primary source of data. Caso and Bernal may not have been aware that they were using so many objects from one collection, given that Sologuren is rarely mentioned in association with the pieces. The graph in [Figure 8](#) also shows us that Sologuren's material dwarfs the number of objects used from other collectors.



**Figure 9. Manuel Martínez Gracida (1847-1924). Photo in Brioso y Candini (1910).**

### **The Martínez Gracida Collection**

In her 1910 work, Caecilie Seler-Sachs wrote that they had wanted to obtain archaeological material from Sologuren, but that his asking price was exorbitant. As an alternative, she mentioned that there were plenty of other private collectors in Oaxaca willing to sell artefacts at more reasonable prices (in König 2003: 329). In published sources, they do not mention any of these collectors' names, however the accession

information at the Ethnologisches Museum indicates that a large quantity of material was bought from Manuel Martínez Gracida. Born in Ejutla, Martínez Gracida (1847-1924) ([Figure 9](#), shown above) gained local prominence as a highly prolific historian and government bureaucrat. At the time of his death, he had published 31 works and left another 45 unpublished, and by his own admission, had written over 30,000 letters throughout his career (Brioso y Candini 1910).



**Figure 10.** Objects from Martínez Gracida's collection now in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum. Left: Tripod vessel, ca. 28943; Provenience: Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca; Period: Niza 100 B.C.E.–200 C.E.; Collection: Martínez Gracida; E. Seler. Right: Bowl, ca. 28962; Provenience: Cuicatlán, Oaxaca; Period: Xoo 600–800 C.E.; Collection: Martínez Gracida (1897); E. Seler. Photographer: Adam Sellen.

Martínez Gracida had also put together a substantial archaeological collection that was carefully labeled and classified according to origin and cultural affiliation. Many of the ceramic objects in the Ethnologisches Museum's collection still have the printed labels the collector used to identify the object, where in his tight and easily recognizable handwriting, he would fill in the pertinent information ([Figure 10](#), shown above). His system of labelling his wares is a clear indication of the incipient classification of archaeological material that was taking place on a local level in nineteenth-century Oaxaca.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Martínez Gracida was divesting his entire collection to different buyers, and an undated inventory list shows that at one point, it had almost 500 objects. Many of the large and spectacular Zapotec urns were sold to different foreign collectors, and in 1895, the Selers bought the bulk of the holding, including many of the smaller items. As part of an agreement with the Duke of Loubat who funded his work, E. Seler sent approximately half of these materials to the American Museum of Natural History in New York, while the other half was sent to the museum in Berlin. As a result of a trade in 1923, some of the objects in Berlin were

transferred to the Ethnographic Museum in Gothenburg, Sweden (now known as the Museum of World Cultures).

### **Placing the archaeological materials in context**

A goal of this project is to place the archaeological materials I have identified in older collections in a more comprehensive context, relying on what we now know of ancient Zapotec culture. Many of the objects the Selers collected or referred to in their notes and drawings lack specific information regarding their archaeological context, such as we might find in an archaeological report published today. Nonetheless, there is sufficient information to draw conclusions of what the original context may have been. Some of these reconstructions of context are hypothetical, but we can pose them with some certainty because much more is now known about the pattern of Zapotec burials and the chronological sequence of their ceramics. There are dozens of sites referred to in the Seler materials, too many to show here, so I have chosen to highlight a sample from different areas in the Central Valleys.



**Figure 11. Two carved stones on display in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum. (Left) ca. 29281 (Right) ca. 29282; Provenience: San Pablo Huitzo, Etlá; Period: Peche 500-600 C.E.; Collection: Agustín Robles Arenas (1894); Martínez Gracida; E. Seler. Photographer: Adam Sellen.**

### **San Pablo Huitzo, district of Etlá**

Originally part of Martínez Gracida's archaeological collection, a special holding currently on display in the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin is two carved stones from San Pablo Huitzo, Etlá ([Figure 11](#), shown above). A talented local artist, Sabino Soriano, whose work illustrates much of *Los Indios Oaxaqueños...*, rendered one of these stones in the nineteenth century. The title on the image gives the object's provenience as well as confirms the name of the collector ([Figure 12](#), shown below). Thanks to the detail in the corresponding notes, we learn that the "*jefe político*" of Etlá, Agustín Robles Arenas, gave Martínez Gracida the stones after discovering them in

1894. Given that both stones were found in the same year, and that they are of a uniform size (83×33×11 and 71×28×10), it is very likely that they are from the same tomb, where they may have functioned as doorjambs.



Figure 12. Drawing by S. Soriano. In: Martínez Gracida, *Los Indios Oaxaqueños...Tomo I Artefactos de Piedra, Losas Sepulcrales*, plate 59, 1910. Photo courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia.





**Figure 13. Eduard Seler with archaeological collection. Hacienda del Cacique, San José el Mogote, Etlá. Top photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.**

### **Hacienda de Cacique, San José el Mogote, district of Etlá**

A black and white photograph, probably taken by Caecilie, shows Eduard posing next to one of the collections he had acquired in the vicinity of San José el Mogote, Etlá. The text on the photo identifies the place as the "Hacienda del Cacique" ([Figure 13](#), shown above). This hacienda is located at the foot of the main pyramid in the town of San José el Mogote, that over centuries has served as a residence for the various ruling caciques. Today, it is a museum housing the archaeological objects recovered from the adjacent site. The last owner of the property, around the turn of the twentieth century, was a Protestant farmer of Dutch descent, Luis Alida Lührs. It is not clear if he sold or gave this small collection to the Selers.

At first glance, the image has the feeling of tourist's snapshot, but I believe the intention is more purposeful, and the photo was meant to record a ceramic assemblage from a

tomb that had been excavated nearby. A closer look at the objects on the table reveals that they coincide with each other temporally, and can be correlated with the Tani phase (250-350 C.E.). In Oaxaca, this period is characterized by interaction between the highland Teotihuacán culture and the Zapotec of the Central Valleys. Some of the ceramic wares found in Oaxaca dating to this time correspond to Teotihuacán forms of the early Tlamimilolpan phase (200-350 C.E.), and typical Zapotec ceramics, such as urns, have been found in Teotihuacán (cf. Caso, Bernal and Acosta 1967: 311; Winter et al. 1998; Urcid 2003).



**Figure 14. Ceramic assemblage corresponding to the Tani phase (250-350 C.E.), Provenience, San José el Mogote, Etlá.**

Combing through the collections at the Ethnologisches Museum, I was able to find about half of the objects that had been originally assembled on the table by the Selers. To facilitate their identification, I took a photograph of them in the same configuration, illustrated in [Figure 13](#) (above), and I also generated a drawing of all the objects that could be readily identified in the Selers' photo ([Figure 14](#), shown above). The urn displayed in the middle of the ceramic assemblage is typical of Etlá urns from the Tani phase, characterized principally by the "lampshade" style headdress. The ceramic pieces surrounding this object can also be dated to the same time period, and many comparative examples are found in Caso, Bernal and Acosta (1967: 311-362). Of special interest are the typical Teotihuacán forms, such as the large fine orange tripod pot at the back (not found in the collections of the EMB); the "*candelero*" lying in front of the urn; to the right of the urn, the pot with the double pouring spouts with cones adhered to the neck (one spout is missing); and the small moulded heads on the left ([Figure 15](#), shown below).





Figure 15. Artefacts corresponding to the Tani phase (250-350 C.E.) (Left) ca. 35338 (Right) ca. 35350, Provenience, San José el Mogote, Etna. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum. Photographer: Adam Sellen.

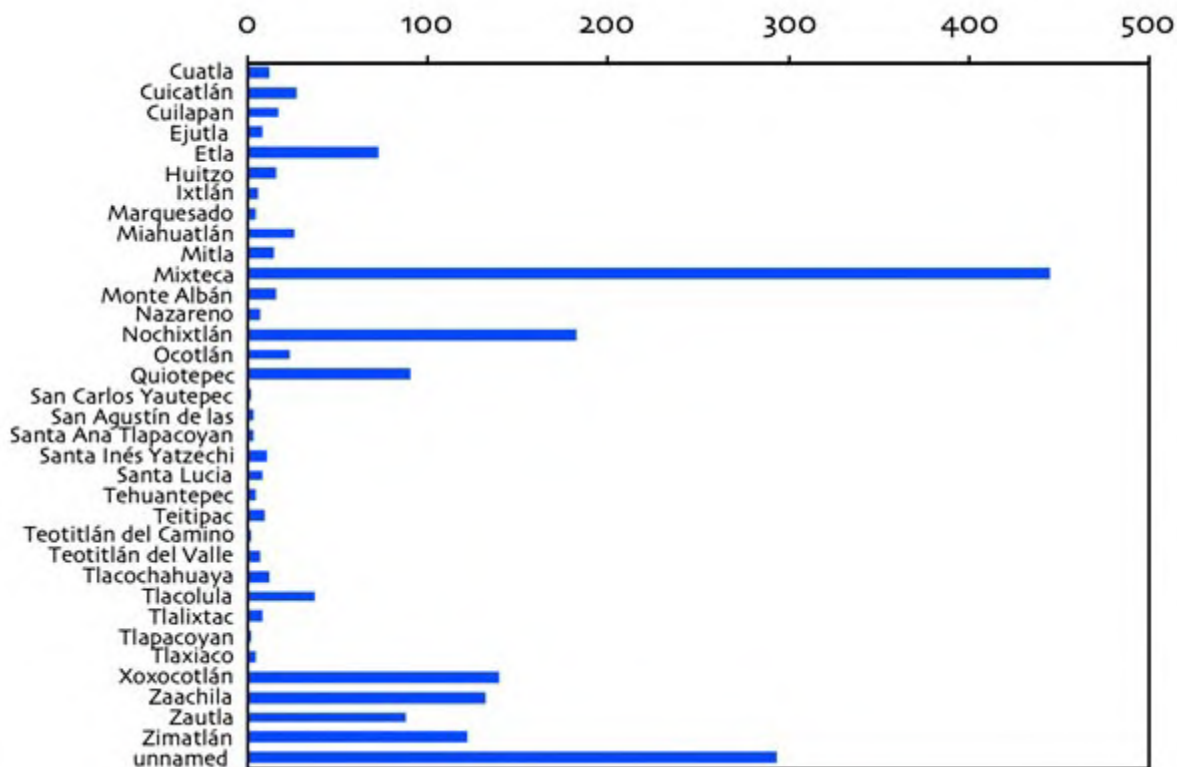


Figure 16. Summary of provenience for the Sologuren collection.

### Zaachila, district of Zimatlán

Today, the town and environs of Zaachila are not well known archaeologically, partly because of intensive agricultural practices that have levelled the mounds and unearthed many tombs, but also because the large urban settlement that now covers most of the site impedes further exploration. However, in the nineteenth century, this area represented a bonanza for the local collectors, a fact borne out by their inventory lists that show a large proportion of objects coming from the region. See the graphs summarizing artefact provenience for the three collectors, Sologuren ([Figure 16](#), shown above), Belmar ([Figure 17](#), shown below) and Martínez Gracida ([Figure 18](#), shown below).

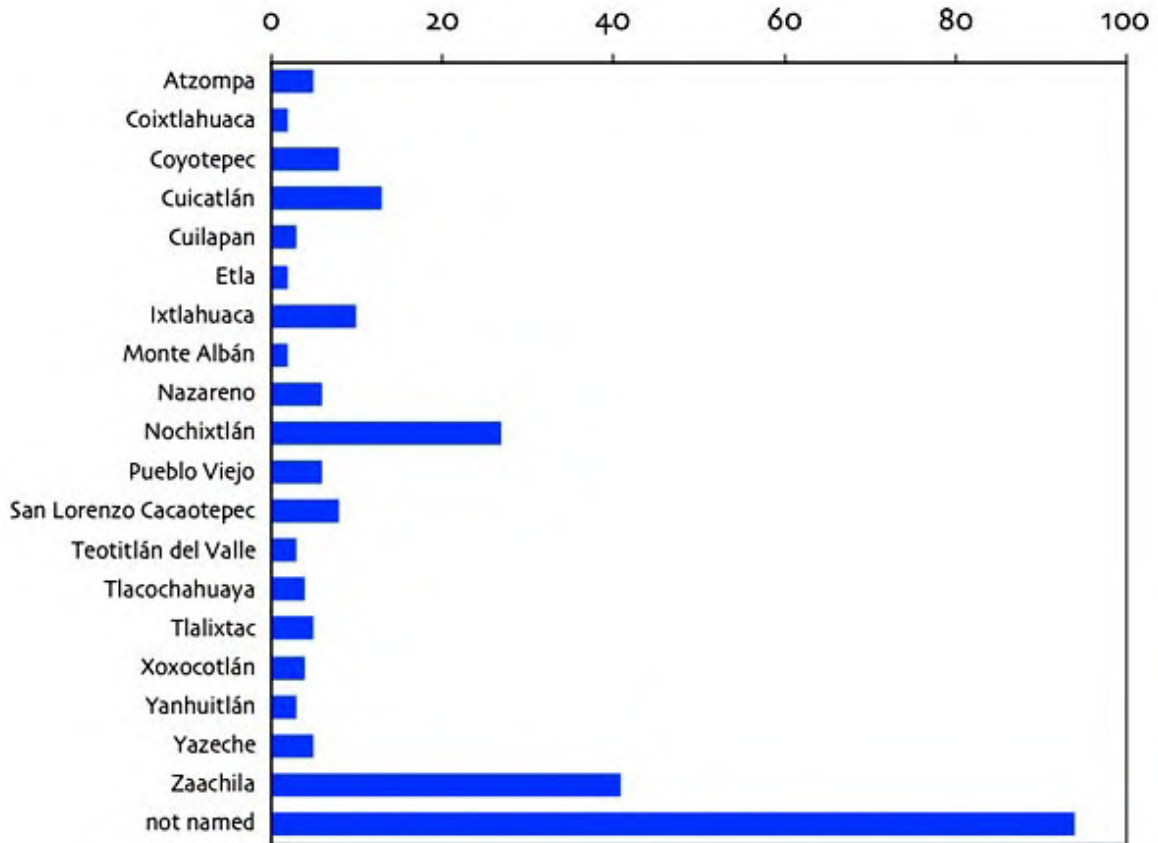


Figure 17. Summary of provenience for the Belmar collection.

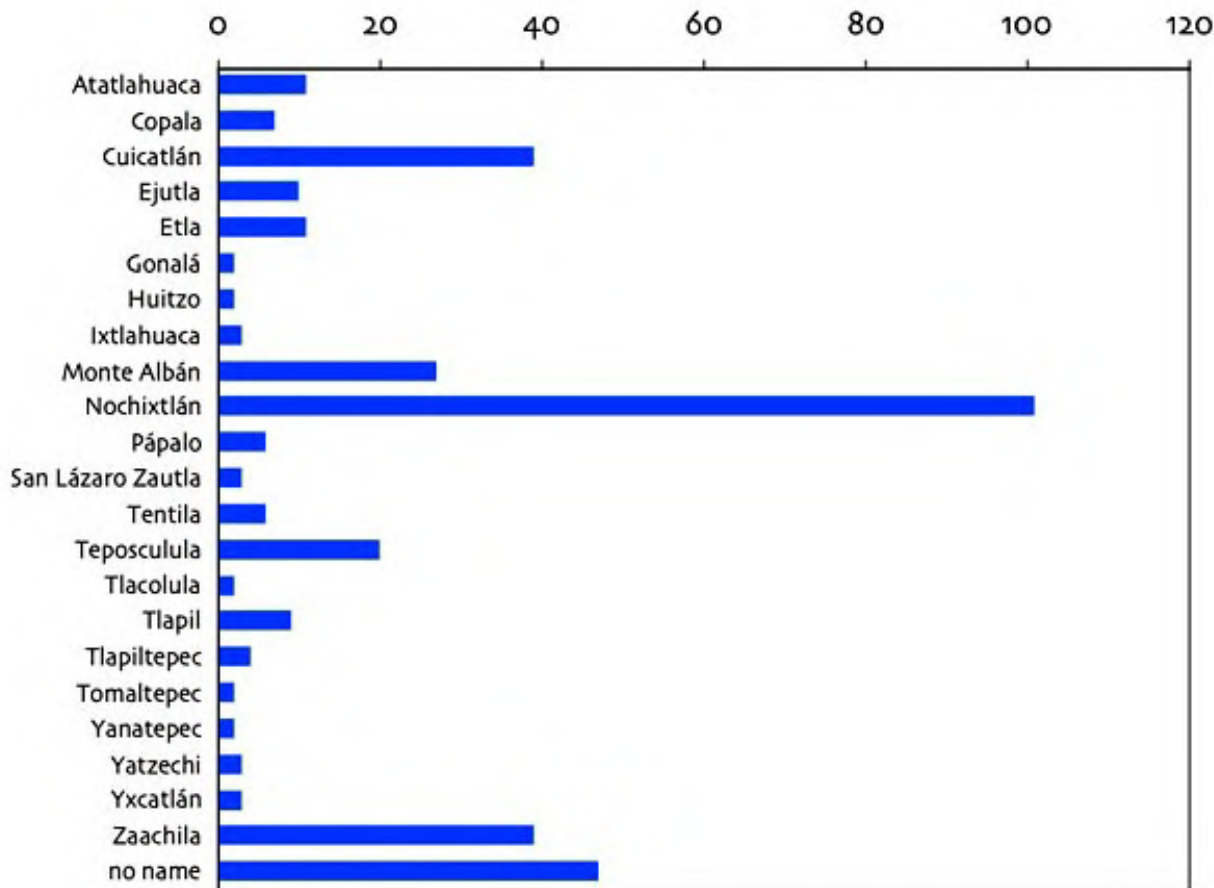


Figure 18. Summary of provenience for the Martínez Gracida collection.

The main archaeological site in Zaachila is located in the center of the town, located 15 km southeast of Oaxaca City. According to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historical documents, Zaachila was the last Zapotec capital, and during the decline of Monte Albán in the Xoo phase (600-800 C.E.) rose to be one of the most important places in the valley (Flannery 1983: 290). Archaeological excavations carried out in the principal mounds in the center of the town bear this out, but also present a complex picture of Mixtec occupation of the site (Gallegos Ruíz 1997). Nonetheless, material remains that are reportedly from this area, most notably urns and carved stones with hieroglyphic texts, point to a long occupation of the site by the Zapotec before the Mixtec presence.

In 1888, the Selers were present at an excavation of a tomb in a field in the "neighbourhood" of Zaachila, and were able to secure some of the material retrieved from the dig (E. Seler 1904b: 304). Eduard published photographs of two large urns representing females with braided headdresses, as well as some of the associated ceramic wares, consisting of two double-spouted pots with stamped *Cocijo* faces, and two large, conical *cajetes* (E. Seler 1904a: 354, plates 85 a-c; 1904b, plates XXXIII and XXXIV) (Figure 19, shown below). In his description of these objects, he does not talk

about how they were found in the specific context, but it is likely they were all found together.



Figure 19. Objects from a ceramic assemblage found in Zaachila. In Seler (1904a: 354, plate 8c).

A comparison of these materials with similar forms that have come from more recent excavations suggests that they date to the late Xoo phase (600-800 C.E.). The two large conical *cajetes* are made of a brown paste and have hollow support legs, corresponding to the types described by Martínez López *et al.* (2000: 59-60). The doubled spouted *Cocijo* vessels, made of grey paste, are also ubiquitous during this period (*ibid.*: 143, figs. d-f).

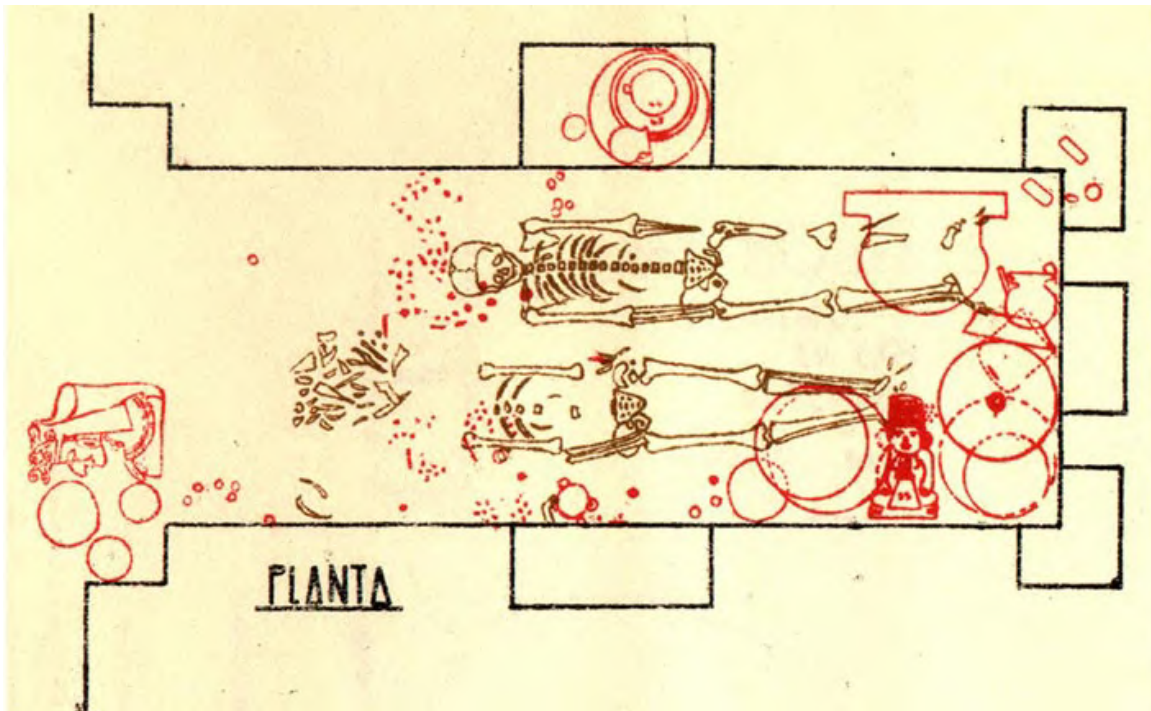
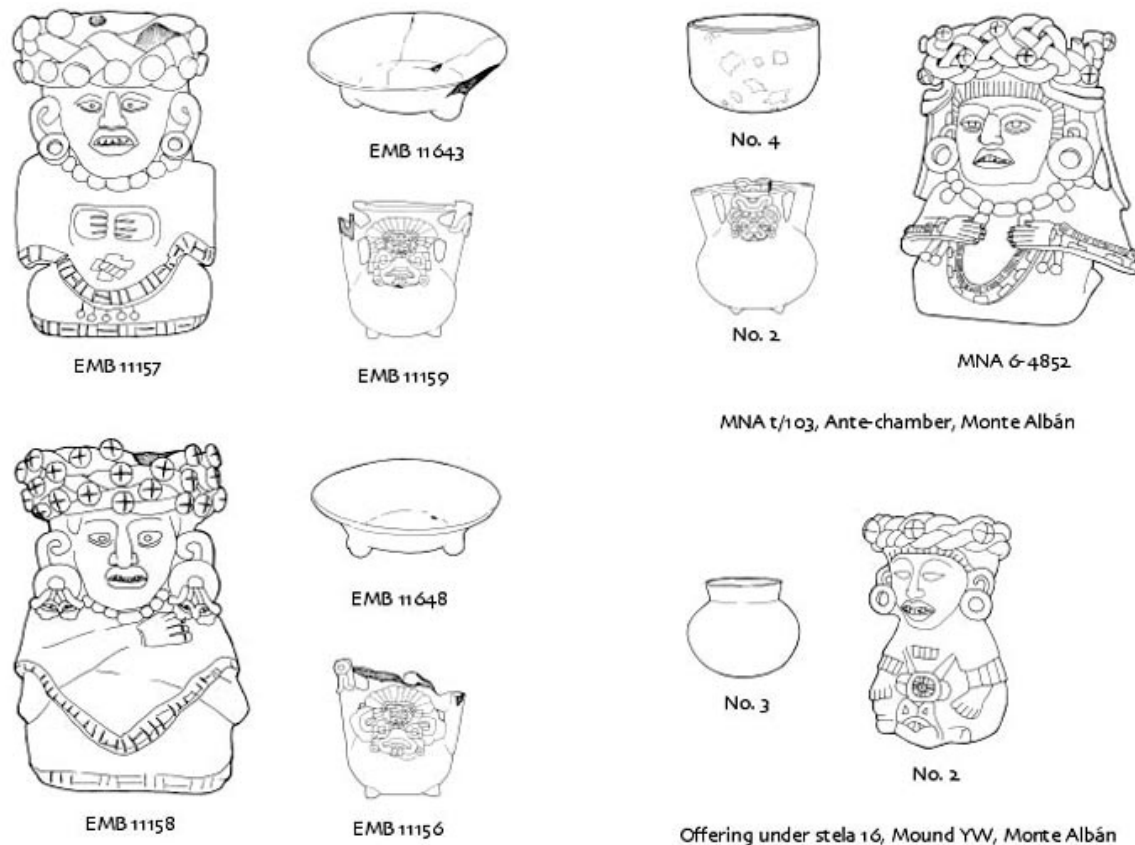


Figure 20. Plan of tomb 103, Monte Albán (Caso 1938: 71).

Alfonso Caso made a similar find in front of the stone slab door leading to tomb 103 on Monte Albán (Caso 1938: 71) ([Figure 20](#), shown above). Here, four objects were deposited, a large urn representing a female with a braided headdress (Caso and Bernal 1952: 285, 288, fig. 437), a doubled spouted vessel with a *Cocijo* face (ibid.: 40, fig. 47), a vessel with vestiges of stucco decoration (Caso, Bernal and Acosta 1967: 369, fig. 305), and some fragments of a painted *cajete*. The style of the urns from tomb 103, that Caso and Bernal designated Monte Albán IIIb, corresponds to the Pitao phase (350-500 C.E.). A find by Caso on Monte Albán dating to the Peche phase (500-600 C.E.), uncovered another small urn representing a female with a braided headdress. It was found as an offering under stela 16, mound YW, and beneath the urn was a small grey pot (Caso, Bernal and Acosta 1967: 122, fig. 78) ([Figure 21](#), shown below).





**Figure 21. Female effigy vessels with associated ceramics.**

Taken together, we can see a pattern emerging for offerings involving female urn effigies in conjunction with distinct ceramic forms such as globular pots, some with stamped Cocijo faces and some without, as well as plates. The data on this assemblage is sparse, but considered chronologically, suggests that this type of deposit had a very long tradition among the Zapotec (350-800 C.E.). Future finds may confirm it as an established pattern of offering.



Figure 22. Map showing location of Zimatlán and La Ciénega, Oaxaca (Herrera Muzgo and Winter 2003: 2).

### La Ciénega, district of Zimatlán

Travelling a few kilometres south of Zaachila, one finds the neighbouring towns of La Ciénega and Zimatlán. Recently, Herrera Muzgo and Winter (2003) explored three Post Classic tombs by the bus stop *El Sabino*, one kilometre outside of the town of Zimatlán and due south of La Ciénega (Figure 22, shown above). Little has been reported from La Ciénega itself. In 1880, Fernando Sologuren discovered a tomb with rich offerings in these environs, but it is unclear exactly where this structure was in relation to the town. However, using Sologuren's inventory of his collection, and cross-referencing these entries with Seler's drawings of three objects from the tomb, it is possible to piece together a partial picture of the objects that were found and their general context.

### **Artefacts registered from La Ciénega in Sologuren's inventory list:**

- 404. Funerary sculpture, 40 cm from a tomb in La Ciénega, district of Zimatlán.
- 405. Funerary sculpture, somewhat broken, 29 cm. It was found in the same place as the previous one. This one and the one described before were found with a carved stone, no. 1554.



588. Head in the form of an animal painted white, companion to the numbers 404 and 405.
1554. Tomb stone, found in La Ciénaga, District of Zimatlán. It was found with the funerary sculptures 404 and 405

**The objects Sologuren lists are presently in three museums in México:**

404. Museo de las Culturas de Oaxaca (MCO), cat. 6-838.
405. Museo Nacional de Antropología (MNA), cat. 6-837.
588. Museo Regional de Antropología, Carlos Pellicer Cámara (CPC).
1554. Stone CIE-1, Museo Nacional de Antropología.



**Figure 23. Objects in Sologuren's collection from a tomb in La Ciénaga, Oaxaca. Photos courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.**

Eduard Seler drew pictures of three of these objects when they were in Sologuren's collection, and he also took a paper mould of the stone ([Figure 23](#), shown above). He wrote notes on the drawings in German and in Spanish, and numbered the pages as they appeared in his sketchbook.<sup>6</sup> In German, he stated that the two urns MCO 6-838 and MNA 6-837 had similar surface treatments, and mentioned that CPC was "from the same grave as [numbers] 20 and 21, and like these, smeared with mortar over the red colour".<sup>7</sup> Seler adds further information about the context in Spanish, stating that both the urns MCO 6-838 and MNA 6-837 were found "*sobre la cripta*" (on top of the tomb), implying that all three ceramic artefacts were discovered on the roof of the structure. This pattern of deposit is not out of keeping for Zapotec burials.

<sup>6</sup> At a later date these pages were cut up and pasted onto grey coloured boards, with no apparent concern for their original order.

<sup>7</sup> Translation of the German: *Aus der selben Grube, wie 20 u 21, und wie diese, über der rothen Farbe mit mezcla beshmiert.*

Martínez Gracida illustrated and described the circular carved stone in his unpublished catalogue of Oaxacan artefacts. He mentioned that the tomb was found in 1880 and that the stone was covering the doorway.

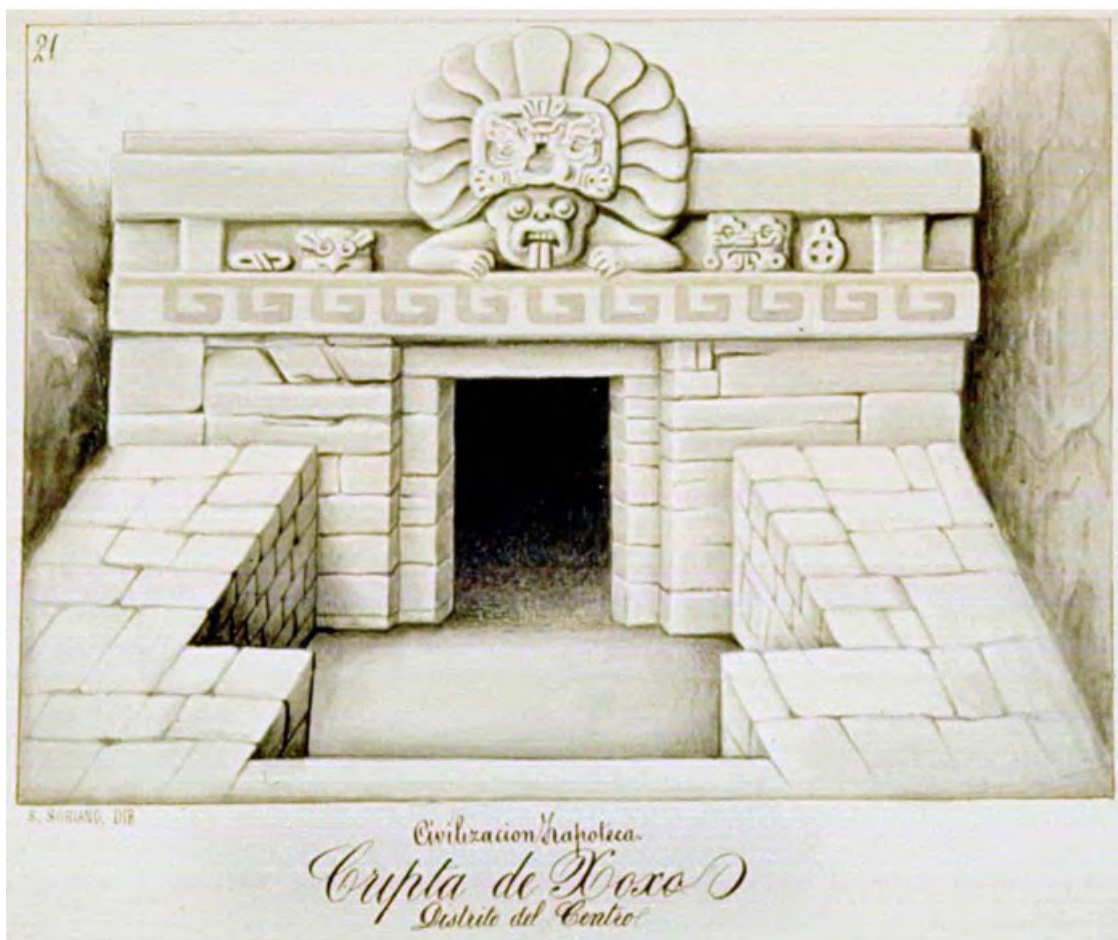


Figure 24. Drawing of tomb A, Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by S. Soriano c. 1886. Photo courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

### Tomb A, Mogote 5, Xoxocotlán

On the 14th of May, 1886, a farmer by the name of Pablo Villanueva discovered evidence of a tomb structure while digging one of the mounds on his property in Xoxocotlán, a town 5 kilometres southwest of the City of Oaxaca. He quickly informed the local doctor and collectors of antiquities, Fernando Sologuren, of his discovery. Sologuren gave Villanueva funds to continue the excavation, and the next day, the crypt was uncovered. Inside the mound, they found a tomb with an elaborate façade that consisted of an imposing stucco bust flanked by two stucco glyphs in relief. The entrance to the tomb was sealed by a large slab, carved in relief on one side with hieroglyphics. The local historian, Martínez Gracida, appeared at the site with the artist,

Soriano, a few days after the event. He measured the tomb and made a detailed verbal description, while Soriano made a good quality drawing of the façade (Figure 24, shown above). The find generated great excitement in the local news, and one report reached the national press on the 28th of May, where it was said that a number of idols, including one of "great size", had been found by Dr. Sologuren (Lombardo Ruíz 1994: vol. I, 125-126).

The excavations at Xoxocotlán mark a watershed in the history of Mexican archaeology and tomb A was the first major archaeological discovery in the Republic to receive public monies for its conservation. Scholars have assumed that this site was Mitla (Shavelson 2002: 27; Robles García 2004), but documentary evidence I have found recently in the *Archivo General de la Nación* (AGN) in México City, contradicts this view. Why this is generally unknown is perhaps because the conservation of the tomb failed, and by 1920, it had been obliterated.

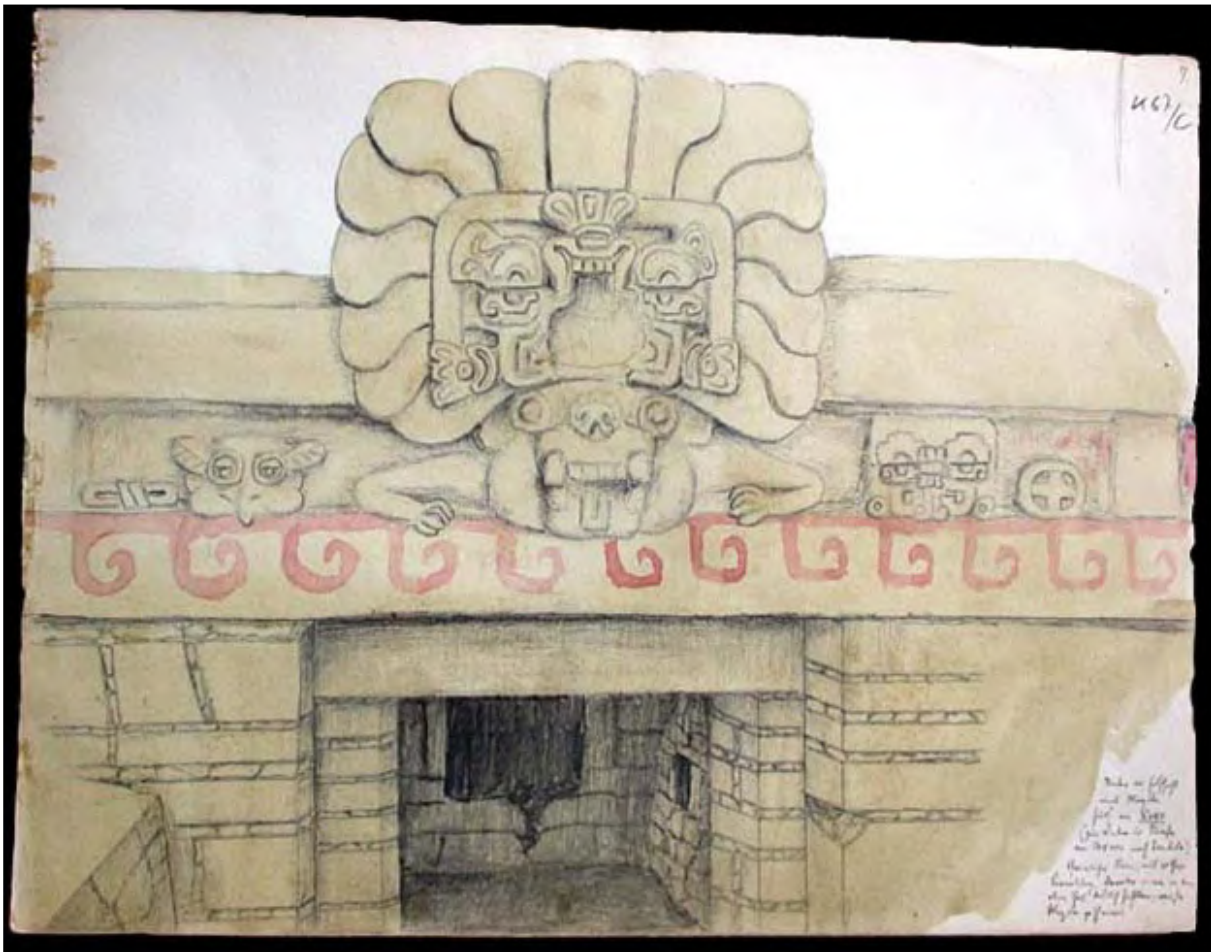


Figure 25. Drawing of the façade of tomb A, Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by Eduard Seler 1888. Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.



Tomb A could not be saved from the vicissitudes of the elements and human intervention, but we can preserve its memory by piecing together the documents that refer to its discovery. With this information, it is possible to partially reconstruct the structure and assemble the objects that came from the find.<sup>8</sup> The documents in the Seler archives play an important role in this process because the German scientists visited the tomb in 1888, barely two years after it was unearthed. At the site, they made a series of watercolours of the tomb's façade and two maps of the area. A few of these illustrations were later converted into ink drawings and published in a report that detailed contextual information that they had gleaned from the visit with Sologuren (Seler 1888 and 1904a: 338, fig. 61). These drawings are adequate, but the original colour illustrations give a much better idea of the structure ([Figure 25](#), shown above). The map establishes the mound (marked #5) where Sologuren found the tomb in relation to the other mounds on the site ([Figure 26](#), shown below).

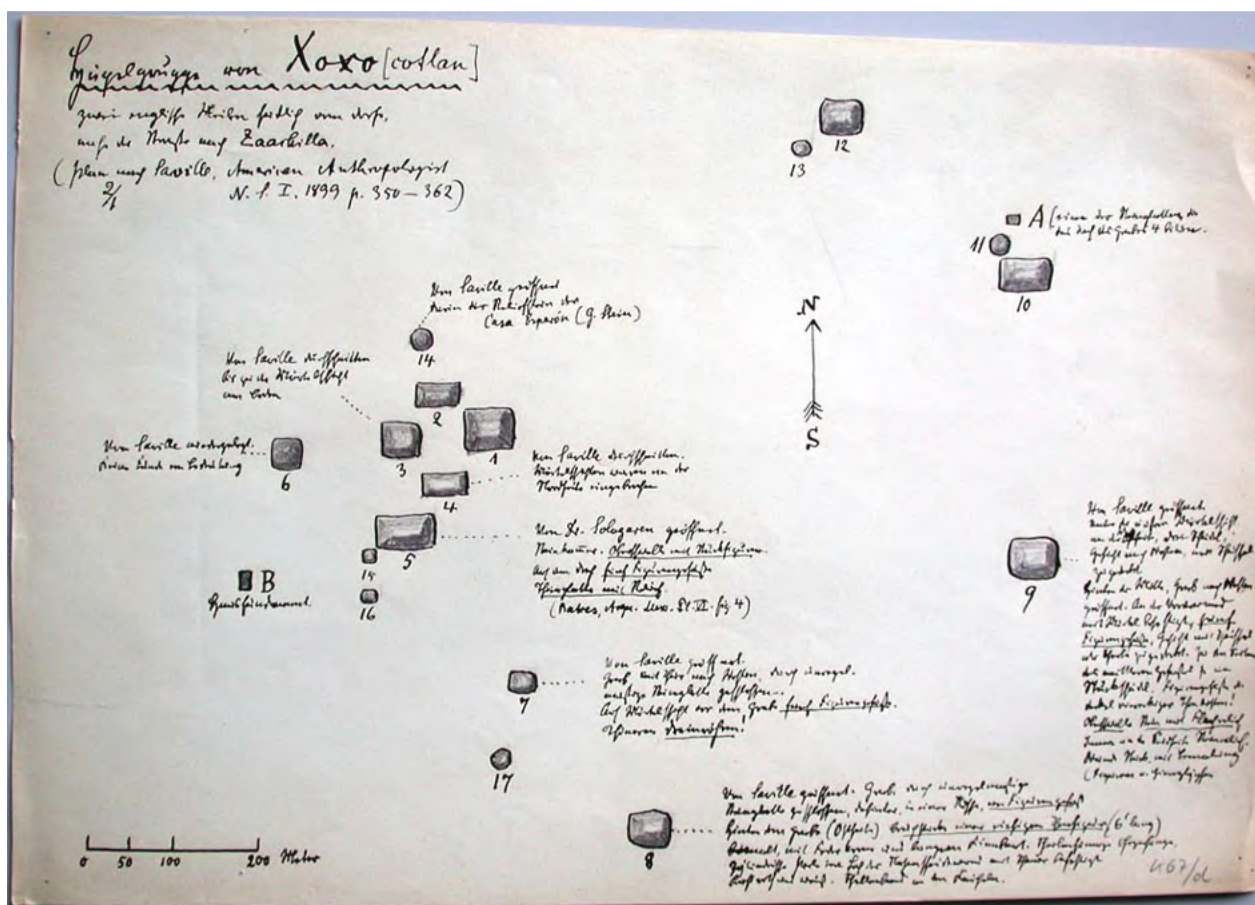


Figure 26. Map of the archaeological site of Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by Eduard Seler, 1888. Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

<sup>8</sup> Javier Urcid and the author of this report discuss the particulars of the tomb find, as described by Martínez Gracida and other subsequent explorations, placing the site and archaeological materials in a more comprehensive context (manuscript in preparation).



**Figure 27.** Drawing of a box and lid effigy vessel from the roof of tomb A, Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by Eduard Seler 1888. Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

Back at Sologuren's home and in his private museum, Eduard Seler sketched the objects that were associated with the find. One of those pieces is a large box and lid type urn ([Figure 27](#), shown above). Caso and Bernal (1952: 17, fig. 1) illustrated a picture of the box and lid urn from Xoxocotlán ([Figure 28](#), shown below). Unfortunately, they placed the effigy-lid on the wrong box. The box they should have matched with the lid is illustrated in their same work, on page 45, fig. 59.



Fig. 1. *Cocijo* en su pedestal (6-661 y 6-793). Altura 0.38 y 0.18. Xoxocotlán. Museo de Oaxaca.

**Figure 28. Box and lid effigy vessel presented by Caso and Bernal (1952: 17, fig. 1).**

In his report, Seler stated that Sologuren had retrieved five of these urns from the tomb, and that they were all found on the upper left-hand side of the façade. He specified that there were quantities of mortar covering parts of the red paint on the surface of the tomb, and surmised that the urns must have been cemented on the roof. A later explorer of the tomb, the American archaeologist, Marshall H. Saville, also mentioned that Sologuren had taken five large funeral urns in a row, "of the box and cover variety", off the roof of the tomb (Saville 1899: 353). Today we know there is nothing unusual about this type of ceramic assemblage in a Zapotec burial context. Box and lid urns have been found in sets of two, three, four, and five, in a variety of placements in relation to tombs and burials.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> For example, three box and lid urns were found in the antechamber to tomb 7, Monte Albán (Caso 1932: 20); Three were found inside tomb 5 at Cerro de la Campana; Five urns were found associated with tombs 116 or 117, Monte Albán (Winter *et al.* 1995: 191); Five lids were found cemented in the niche of the mantle of the tomb in mound 9, Xoxocotlán, and Saville speculated that the corresponding boxes were broken and thrown into the fill covering the tomb (Saville 1899: 359); In the same mound, on the eastern side, another complete box and lid urn was found (*ibid.*: 360); One urn was re-deposited in association with the grave of an adolescent, Monte Albán (Winter *et al.* 1995: 137).

The picture presented by Seler and Saville is slightly different when we read Martínez Gracida's description of one of the box and lid urns taken from the site. After a lengthy discussion of its iconography and significance, he wrote:

"This sculpture was found on the roof of the Xoxo crypt on the 15th of May, 1886, with *three* [my italics] others serving as merlons and that were broken during the excavation. The urn described belongs to Dr. Fernando Sologuren" (Martínez Gracida 1910: Vol. I, *Cerámica*, plate 82).<sup>10</sup>

This account contradicts both Seler and Saville who claimed that five urns were found, not four. We may want to privilege Martínez Gracida's version of events over those of later itinerant travellers, as he was much closer in time to the discovery event. To verify the different accounts, one could simply locate the corresponding box and lid urns in the MNA's collections and count them. Unfortunately, over time, the collections at the MNA have been dispersed as a result of a regrettable museum practice that splits up identical sets of Zapotec urns with trades and loans to museums in both México and abroad.<sup>11</sup> This practice means that the individual pieces from the Xoxocotlán urn set could be in any number of locations in México, North America, or Europe. My analysis of Sologuren's inventory list, as well as a revision of the Selers' photographs of the all the objects as they appear on the shelves in the collector's house, suggests that Martínez Gracida's version is the correct one.

### **Ejutla, district of Ejutla**

In the southern part of the Atoyac valley, 60 km distance from Oaxaca de Juárez, is the town of Ejutla. Over the last decade, a comprehensive archaeological project has been carried out in the area that has focused on settlement patterns and specialized craft production (cf. Feinman and Nicholas 1990, 1995, 2001). Much excavation and analysis has been done, but little attention has been given to the early archaeological antecedents in the region, although Feinman and Nicholas do mention a published report by Diguet (1905). My own work into the archaeological history of Ejutla has uncovered some spectacular effigy vessels recovered from the mounds in the centre of the town (cf. Sellen 2005b), and the Seler archival materials add more richness to the overall picture.

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<sup>10</sup> Author's translation of: "Se encontró esta escultura encima del techo de la Cripta de Xoxo el 15 de Mayo de 1886, con otras tres, sirviéndole de almenas y que fueron rotas al practicarse la excavación. Pertenece la descrita al Dr. Fernando Sologuren."

<sup>11</sup> I think the justification for this procedure is based on the premise that it is not necessary to store four or five identical objects when one will suffice. In my opinion, this view is wrong, and we should consider these sets as single artifacts. The stewards of these objects should make every attempt to keep them together and where possible reunite artifacts to their original configurations.



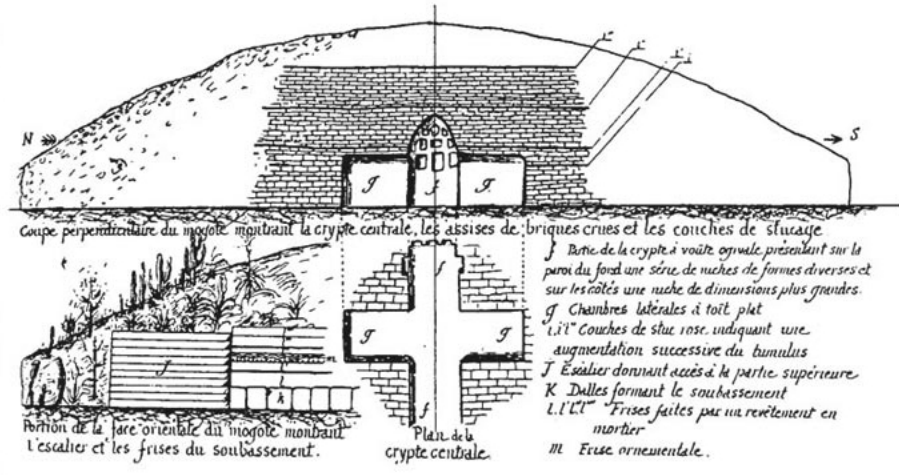
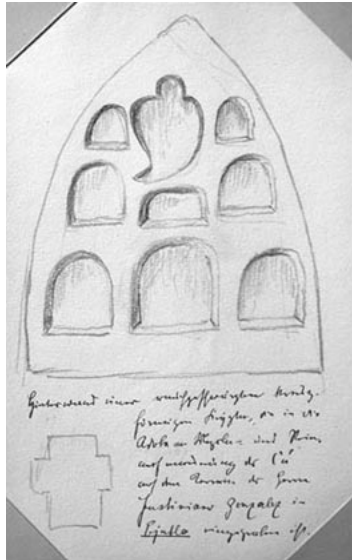


Fig. 3. — Mogote d'Ejutla.

Figure 29. Drawing of tomb niche in Ejutla by E. Seler (1888) compared with overall plan of the same tomb by Diguët (1905: 113, fig. 8). Photo on left courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

The Selers made many notes, drawings, and photographs of Ejutla and its environs. One of those drawings illustrates the niches at the back of a large cruciform tomb discovered on the land of Justisiano González. This feature was also documented by Diguët (1905: 133, fig. 3), but within a much larger plan. E. Seler's drawing gives a more precise idea of what the niche was like (Figure 29, shown above).



Figure 30. Two views of an eroded mound in Ejutla by Caecilie Seler-Sachs. Photos courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

C. Seler also took two photographs of an Ejutla mound located on the land of Valente Altamirano. In the photos, the structure of a pyramid sticks out from a severely eroded mound ([Figure 30](#), shown above). We can see the top floors of stucco caving in (left photo), as well as an exposed stairway and part of a stucco frieze (right photo). This last detail is the most interesting because the undulating decoration in the frieze corresponds to the glyph V. Similar representations of the glyph V have been found on effigy vessels and carved stones ([Figure 31](#), shown below). From a series of stone fragments in a museum context, Urcid (2001: 211) surmised that the imagery of glyph V was used extensively in the decoration of public architecture. The Seler photograph of the frieze in Ejutla confirms that hypothesis.



**Figure 31. Comparison of the frieze on a building in Ejutla, with the same motif on an effigy vessel and carved stone. Drawing on right by Urcid (2000: 222, fig. 4.122, no. 3).**

## Conclusion

The Seler materials in Berlin represent a first person testimony of archaeological explorations in Oaxaca in the late nineteenth century. They provide an excellent opportunity to bring into sharper focus not only the Selers' experience in the area, but also that of the local Oaxacan collectors with whom they had contact.

The notes, photographs, and drawings in these archives are a key source for determining provenience and contextual associations for ancient artefacts now in museum collections in México, the United States, and Europe. Placed together with other documents of the period, they underline the importance of the role the nineteenth-century collections played in forming our current archaeological knowledge, with such basic principles as classifying according to type and culture, and the careful recording of origin. Evidence of these principles is in later works such as Caso's and Bernal's *Urnas de Oaxaca*, where the collector's original data was heavily relied upon, and I have demonstrated that one-fourth of the effigy vessels used in their sample were from a single collector's holdings. Although overlooked in the academic literature, the Oaxacan collectors were the first to advance this important groundwork for the archaeological discipline. Furthermore, I have posited that the quality of archaeological information the

Selers recorded, and later synthesized, was largely dependent on what they could obtain from local collectors who had already established an archaeological method.

To illustrate the importance of this archival material for present day archaeology, I have placed some of the objects from the older collections into a more comprehensive context, using our present knowledge of ancient culture. The sample focuses on a number of sites that are not well known archaeologically today. The gap in our knowledge about some of these areas in the Valley of Oaxaca is so vast that any information we can glean from historical sources or archaeological collections is a highly productive way of filling in gaps, even if the material we are dealing with was not elaborated using the standards employed today. After viewing the Seler materials in Berlin, I am more convinced than ever of the constructive role older documents will play in explaining the early history of archaeological exploration, but more importantly, in contributing to our present knowledge of the ancient cultures of the region.

## **Acknowledgements**

During the visit, my German hosts were accommodating and accessible, and without their help, and the generous support of FAMSI, this project would not have been possible. I am particularly indebted to Viola König, director of the Ethnologisches Museum, for her enthusiasm for the project, for giving her generous time and information, and for seamlessly facilitating my stay in Germany. Also I extend my appreciation to Maria Gaida, the curator for the Mesoamerican collection at the Museum, who tirelessly provided me with objects to see. Dr. Gregor Wolff, Head of Special Collections at the Ibero-American Institute, kindly allowed me to photograph the materials for my research and afforded me every courtesy. Eckhard Dolinski was very helpful in sharing his deep knowledge of the Selers' legacy and lending his expertise to translate Eduard's cryptic script. I also thank Peter Kroefges, who helped me out of a jam when my computer went kaput, and Andrea Nicklisch for showing me the mummy collection from Peru – unrelated to the project, but amazing! Finally, I thank Javier Urcid and Marc Winter for their continued support of the goals of this project.

## **List of Figures**

[Figure 1](#). Map of the sites mentioned in this article.

[Figure 2](#). Eduard Seler (1849-1922). Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 3](#). Caecilie Seler-Sachs (1855-1935). Photo in Dolinski (1998).

[Figure 4](#). *Eine Landpartie auf dem Monte Albán* (Seler-Sachs 1900: plate VII). Key to identify the persons in the photo: 1. Fernando Sologuren, 2. Eduard Seler, 3. Caecilie Seler-Sachs, 4. Abraham Castellanos, 5. Manuel Bustamante, 6. Francisco Belmar?, 7. Manuel Martínez Gracida.

[Figure 5](#). Dr. Fernando Sologuren (1850-1918). Photo courtesy of Lucerna Topete Vargas.

[Figure 6](#). Dr. Fernando Sologuren's archaeological collection circa 1902. Photographer probably C.B. Waite. Photo courtesy of the Museum Library of the University of Pennsylvania.

[Figure 7](#). Source of documents related to the Sologuren collection.

[Figure 8](#). Proportion of objects from collections used to illustrate Caso's and Bernal's *Urnas de Oaxaca* (1952).

[Figure 9](#). Manuel Martínez Gracida (1847-1924). Photo in Brioso y Candini (1910).

[Figure 10](#). Objects from Martínez Gracida's collection now in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum. Left: Tripod vessel, ca. 28943; Provenience: Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca; Period: Niza 100 B.C.E.–200 C.E.; Collection: Martínez Gracida; E. Seler. Right: Bowl, ca. 28962; Provenience: Cuicatlán, Oaxaca; Period: Xoo 600–800 C.E.; Collection: Martínez Gracida (1897); E. Seler. Photographer: Adam Sellen.

[Figure 11](#). Two carved stones on display in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum. (Left) ca. 29281 (Right) ca. 29282; Provenience: San Pablo Huitzo, ETLA; Period: Peche 500-600 C.E.; Collection: Agustín Robles Arenas (1894); Martínez Gracida; E. Seler. Photographer: Adam Sellen.

[Figure 12](#). Drawing by S. Soriano. In: Martínez Gracida, *Los Indios Oaxaqueños...Tomo I Artefactos de Piedra, Losas Sepulcrales*, plate 59, 1910. Photo courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

[Figure 13](#). Eduard Seler with archaeological collection. Hacienda del Cacique, San José el Mogote, ETLA. Top photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 14](#). Ceramic assemblage corresponding to the Tani phase (250-350 C.E.), Provenience, San José el Mogote, ETLA.

[Figure 15](#). Artefacts corresponding to the Tani phase (250-350 C.E.) (Left) ca. 35338 (Right) ca. 35350, Provenience, San José el Mogote, ETLA. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum. Photographer: Adam Sellen.

[Figure 16](#). Summary of provenience for the Sologuren collection.



[Figure 17](#). Summary of provenience for the Belmar collection.

[Figure 18](#). Summary of provenience for the Martínez Gracida collection.

[Figure 19](#). Objects from a ceramic assemblage found in Zaachila. In Seler (1904a: 354, plate 8c).

[Figure 20](#). Plan of tomb 103, Monte Albán (Caso 1938: 71).

[Figure 21](#). Female effigy vessels with associated ceramics.

[Figure 22](#). Map showing location of Zimatlán and La Ciénaga, Oaxaca (Herrera Muzgo and Winter 2003: 2).

[Figure 23](#). Objects in Sologuren's collection from a tomb in La Ciénaga, Oaxaca. Photos courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 24](#). Drawing of tomb A, Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by S. Soriano c. 1886. Photo courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

[Figure 25](#). Drawing of the façade of tomb A, Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by Eduard Seler 1888. Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 26](#). Map of the archaeological site of Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by Eduard Seler, 1888. Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 27](#). Drawing of a box and lid effigy vessel from the roof of tomb A, Xoxocotlán, Oaxaca, by Eduard Seler 1888. Photo courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 28](#). Box and lid effigy vessel presented by Caso and Bernal (1952: 17, fig. 1).

[Figure 29](#). Drawing of tomb niche in Ejutla by E. Seler (1888) compared with overall plan of the same tomb by Diguët (1905: 113, fig. 8). Photo on left courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 30](#). Two views of an eroded mound in Ejutla by Caecilie Seler-Sachs. Photos courtesy of the Ibero-American Institute.

[Figure 31](#). Comparison of the frieze on a building in Ejutla, with the same motif on an effigy vessel and carved stone. Drawing on right by Urcid (2000: 222, fig. 4.122, no. 3).

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