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Mexicanidad La Conformidad de Danza Azteca-
Chichimeca de Conquista

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Tlatoani¹ Cuauhtemoczin, el barrio de Analco, y la Mexicanidad
La Conformidad de Danza Azteca-Chichimeca de Conquista
Albuquerque, Aztlan, New Mexico
Reviewed 03/29/2019

Este documento fue preparado para compartir con los habitantes de Analco en Santa Fe donde por mas de 10 años se llevo acabo la danza de la celebración a Cuauhtémoc. Esto fue escrito por Jorge García del grupo Coatlicue de la Mesa de Nuestra Señora de la Luz con la guía y apoyo de los Jefes Capitanes Jose and Elga Garza capitanes de la mesa. Enero 29, 2009.

In 1521 the Mexica-Tenochca people from Mexico-Tenochtitlan took their last stand against the invasion of the Spanish army and their native allies. The story tells us that during this confrontation the Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin addressed the people and gave them their last command. He told them that “our sun has concealed itself. Our sun has hidden itself and has left us in darkness. However, we know that it will return. It will come forth again and once again give us light. But while it remains in the house of resting and transformation, we should unite, concealing deep within our hearts all that we love” and “let the fathers and mothers become the teachers and guides that will lead their children while they live.” After addressing his people for the last time, the Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin met Hernan Cortez with dignity for his duty to protect his people had ended. At that very moment a new chapter in the history of Anahuac² had begun. At that precise moment of confrontation between the young leader and the Spaniard a new Mexicanidad³ emerged. This new Mexicanidad meant a religious syncretism that intended to safe guard the spiritual beliefs of the Mexica people by ingraining them into the beliefs of the Catholic Church.

As the Spaniards continued conquering territories across Mexico; alongside them other indigenous peoples (tlaxcaltecas, tecuaneros, and otomies, among others) accompanied them in their incursions. As new territories were conquered, these indigenous allies settled close to the Spanish villages and formed communities that are still present from Central Mexico all the way to what is now known as the US Southwest. One of these settlements is El barrio de Analco en la Villa de Santa Fe, New Mexico. Our purpose is to share the

¹ Tlatoani, in the Nahuatl language, means “he who speaks well”. The title was given to the one who was chosen to speak for the people

² Anahuac means the land between the waters, and prior to the formation of the republic of Mexico and the invasion of the Spaniards, Mexico was known as the Anahuac territory

³ For Mexicanidad we refer to the preservation of the culture, knowledge, and ceremonial rituals that still preserve the spirituality of the original peoples of Anahuac, now known as Mexico

connection of these historical facts with the people in our communities. This journey is threefold.

First, it is our purpose to share with the public about whom Cuauhtemoc was and why after 487 years, the Mexican people still pay respect to their young leader and his legacy.

Second, because it is known that El barrio de Analco de Santa Fe was built by indigenous people from Central Mexico, it is our purpose to emphasize the history of those who built the barrio de Analco.

Finally, because the Tlatoani Cuauhtémoc and el barrio de Analco represents the strength, persistence, and the will of the people to transcend over time; our purpose is to stress how we live our mexicanidad today.

In the 516 years since the arrival of the Spaniards, much has been forgotten and new identities have been forged, but in the deep consciousness of people; we still have in our collective memories our origins and our connection to our ancestors. The existing codices, our oral history, the ceremonial calendars, and our foods inform us of our connection with our past and our ancestors. This is a journey from Mexico to the heart of Aztlan and into the being of the Mexican people as we know and see ourselves today. It is also a tribute to the pilgrimage depicted in the tira de la peregrinación (Codex Boturini) that the Aztecs from Aztlan took from northern Mexico and the US Southwest to central Mexico. In essence, this is a journey back to our origins.

Cuauhtemoc, the last Tlatoani of Mexico-Tenochtitlan

Who was Cuauhtemoczin and why is he such a spiritual force among the Mexican people? Cuauhtémoc was born in c.1495. His father was Ahuitzol, 8th Tlatoani of Mexico-Tenochtitlan. His mother was Tlilancapatl. He was educated in the Kalmecac, a place where people from Central Mexico received their highest forms of education. Because of his dedication, he became a



Tlacatecutli, a high-ranking officer in the Aztec legion of warriors, and also the Cuahutlatoani (“Eagle ruler”) of Tlatelolco. Later when Cuitlahuac, 10th Tlatoani of

Tenochtitlan, died from smallpox during the invasion of the Spaniards; Cuauhtemoczin was chosen as the 11th Tlatoani of the Mexica-Technoca nation. His primary task was to reconstruct the city of Tenochtitlan and organize the people to resist the invasion of the Spaniards. In 1521, Mexico-Tenochtitlan was sieged and destroyed. Our oral history tells us that in his pursuit to find the treasure of Moctezuma, Hernan Cortez burned Cuauhtémoc's feet as part of his quest to find these treasures, which for him it meant gold and jewels. Cuauhtémoczin stoically never complained nor said anything when Cortez burned his feet because although for Cortez treasure was gold and jewels, for the Tlatoani



Cuauhtémoc treasure was something totally different; it was the love and the ability to speak to his father the sun and his mother the earth. This he considered his treasure. The Mexican people regard his stoicism as the highest example of discipline and spiritual strength and resistance. On February 26, 1525 under the orders of Cortez, Cuauhtemoczin was hung somewhere in the South of Mexico. After his death, his body was taken back to Ixcateopan, Guerrero where his remains were buried inside a church. In the 1960's, his remains were uncovered and ever since

the Mexican people pay tribute to the last Tlatoani by conducting ceremonial dances across Anahuac and the United States to commemorate the man who preserved the dignity and the spiritual strength that over the years have allowed the Mexican people to preserve the cultures and traditions that existed way before Mexico became how we know it today.

El Barrio de Analco

In spite of the fact that in New Mexico everything relates to its hispanidad, we have to ask ourselves why is Santa Fe's downtown also known as the barrio de Analco? Analco, in the Nahuatl language means "on the other side of the river," and it usually refers to the communities that settled alongside the Spanish villages. There are, for example, barrios de Analco in Puebla, Durango, and Jalisco. Likewise, we know that by the time (1610) the Spaniards reached the US Southwest, almost 100 years after the encounter between Hernan Cortez and Cuauhtemoczin took place, close to 700 Tlaxcaltecas lived in el Barrio de Analco in Santa Fe, NM and only about 250 Spaniards, 170 of which were soldiers,⁴ who themselves were already a second generation mestizos, including many of the wealthy families. Also, by the time the Spaniards and the natives that came with them reached the

⁴ This date and numbers came from Jack Forbes from Deganawida-Quetzalcoatl university in the Yolo county from 1971 as a personal note

North, many of the natives identified themselves as “españoles.” Does this mean that they were Spaniards? Of course not, they were people from central Mexico who understood that self-identifying as español brought them the opportunity to get access to land, resources and privileges that they would not be able to receive if they claimed their indigenous identity. Apart from that, because by then the dominant society was the Spanish society, it is possible that it was mandated that the Other ceased to identify themselves by their ethnic identity and forced them to self-identify as the Spaniard society mandated. The same thing happened to the Mexican after the conquest of the northern territories of Mexico by the Anglos after 1848. Their new identity became that of an “American” and if they did not embrace that identity, then they were not able to receive the benefits afforded to those who were “Americans.”

Tlaxcaltecas that came with the Spaniards to the Pueblo, Apache, and Comanche territories of New Mexico settled el barrio De Analco in 1610. The inhabitants of these communities served as laborers for the Spaniards. They built their houses, churches, and the irrigation systems (acequias) that we have today. It is known for example, that the Brito families were Tlaxcaltecas who built the historic church of San Miguel in Santa Fe. As society changed and the Spanish became the dominant society, many of the indigenous people that came with the Spaniards chose to call themselves españoles to acquire land and perhaps as a form of protection from the laws imposed by the *españoles*.⁵ This is the reason why most people in New Mexico call themselves españoles. Although most people see themselves as españoles, there are many who still preserve and recognize that somewhere in their past ancestry they were other than españoles and although they might be a minority among the current population of Hispanics; their ways and understanding about themselves have been preserved throughout time. This collective memory is important in changing times because it reinforces one’s sense of dignity and belonging. This sense of belonging is what Analco represents today for all the Mexicano and Chicano people the Southwest of the United States.

La Mexicanidad

In New Mexico, as well as in every corner of the US, the Mexicano people continue to preserve their family ties and cultural roots. Family and cultural roots did not cease to be

⁵ The Mexicano people had to do the same once the Anglos set in and began to change and demand that people considered themselves other than what they were. Along with this came the corporal punishment to children who spoke Spanish, and adults were degraded as well for being Mexican.

important when we try to understand the struggle for cultural survival that the mexicano has experienced. One way in which this culture is expressed is through what is known as the Danza Azteca-Chichimeca de Conquista. The Danza Azteca-Chichimeca de Conquista represents the strength and the spirituality of the Mexican people. Some say that the Danza de Conquista was born after the conquest, and specifically in the battle of the Cerro de Sangremal in Queretaro between Chichimecas and Aztecs . Others say that it is a dance that predates the invasion. Regardless of what it might be and how far it goes back, for many families and individuals; it represents a form of unity and respect for our culture and traditions. It brings people together and it allows us to create healthy families. Most important of all, it represents the spirit of resistance that the Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin personalized when he resisted the Spanish army.

Our hope is that through the ceremonies, traditions, culture, ceremonial calendars, and oral stories presented through workshops, lectures, and presentations that we will be able to share our culture and infuse the sense of dignity and belonging that the Mexicano and the Chicano people should feel every time they hear the name Analco and Cuauhtemoczin as part of their mexicanidad. We also hope that through this process of re-learning our history that we (the Mexicano and the Chicano) understand that we have more in common and that we come from the same cultural roots.