

**VE'E YATA ÑA IYOO ÑUU ÑA NANI
MITLA ÑA NDIKAA CHI OAXACA**

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Tu'un Sávi ñuu Tikixi

This book was made possible
by
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Photographs are from author
and also from public sources.

En las últimas paginas se encontrará un breve
resumen de cómo leer el mixteco.

At the end of this book we have provided a brief
summary of how to read Mixtec.

VE'E YATA ÑA IYOO ÑUU ÑA NANI MITLA ÑA NDIKAA CHI OAXACA

Yo'o ke na ndatu'un yu xi'in ndo xa'a ve'e yata kan ra kundaa ini ndo. Ve'e kan ra chi nuu kanata ñu'u nuu ñuu Mitla, ke iyoo ña. Ra kua'a ni yuvi na kee inka xiyo xa'an ña xitondie'e na ña. Ra yachin nuu iyoo ve'e kan ra kua'a ni nuu ña'a ixiko na, ixiko na ta kuu tikoto¹ ña kunu na, ta kuu xatu, xi'in koto, xi'in tikachi, xi'in murrá ña yu'va, xi'in kua'a ni ka nuu ña'a vali. Ra ve'e kan, ra na zapoteco va kuvi na xindee ini ña, kachi na.



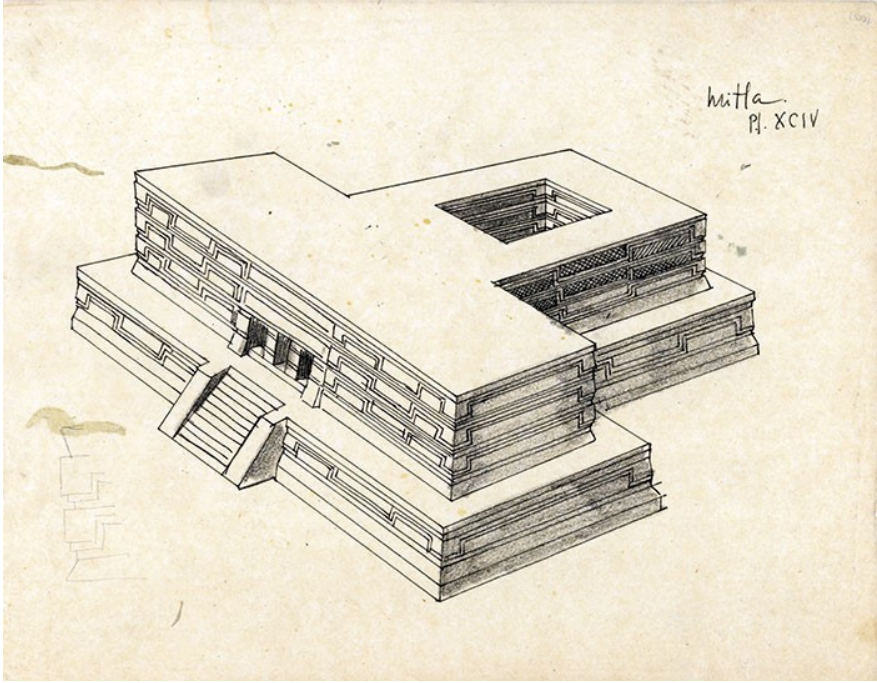
¹ tikoto kûni kachi sa'má

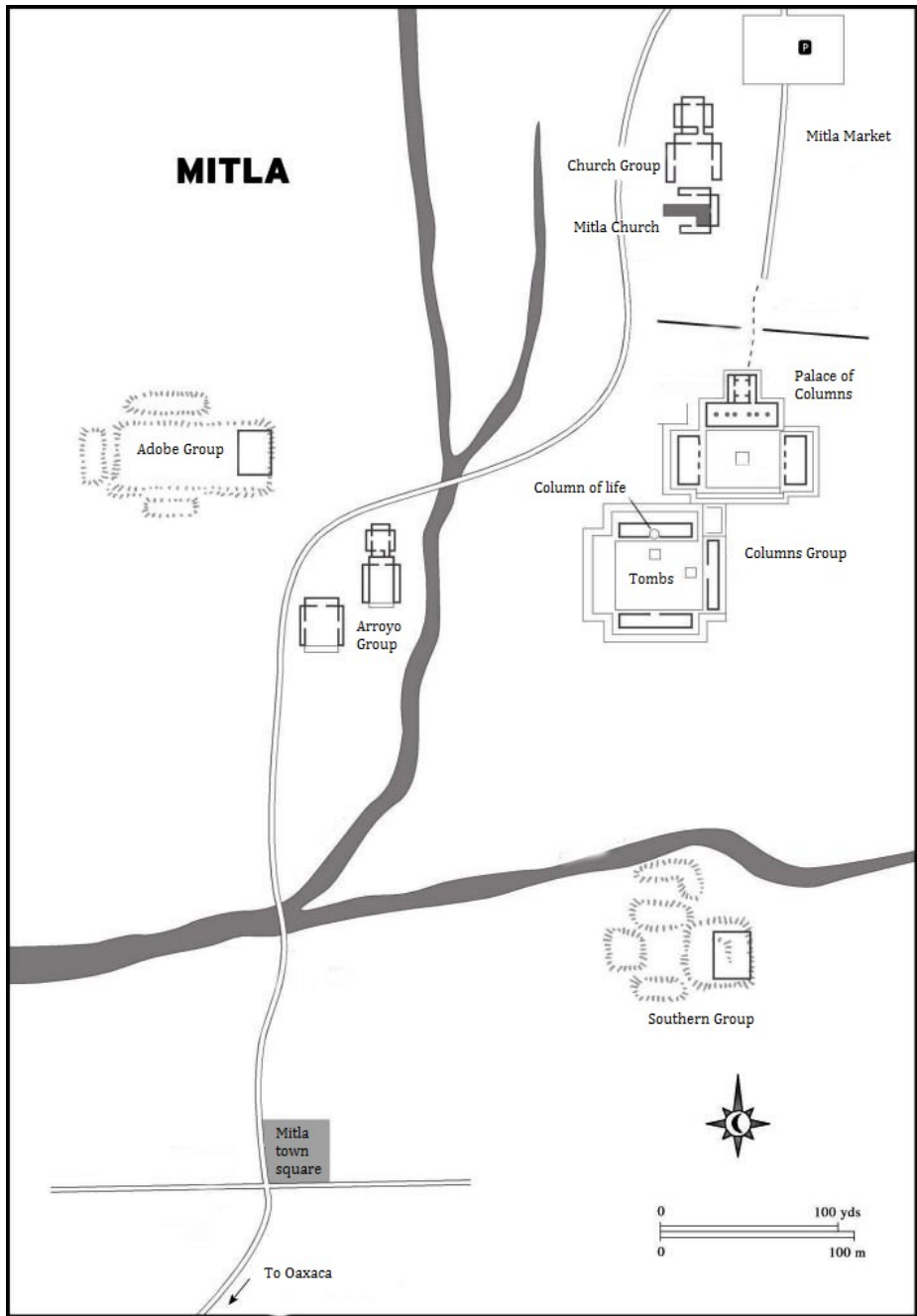
THE RUINS IN THE TOWN OF MITLA IN THE STATE OF OAXACA

In this book I will tell you about an archeological² site so that you will know all about it. The archeological site is to the east, in a town called Mitla. There are many foreign visitors who go to see this place. It is right near the market where many people sell clothes that they weave, like pants, shirts, blankets, wall hangings, and all sorts of trinkets. The archeological site is commonly referred to as being from the Zapotec people.



² archeology is learning history by studying things people built a long time ago





Ra ña tuvi sava na ra süvi takua na zapoteco kuvi na *ndixindee ve'e kan, chi *xindee tu na savi³ va, saa chi iyoo tu ña'a ña sanaana na kan va ndika ve'e kan. Ra ña tuvi sava na, ra ña *kindiaa va na savi kuu ve'e kan nda'a na zapoteco, ña kan ke va'a sanaana na ña'a sata ña, tuvi na. Ndi su ndianii na kundäa ini a ndixa a ndixa, chi ña tuvi va na ke, ra ndi ña ka'an na ke xindee na zapoteco ra xindee tu na savi va, kachi na.



Ra yo'o ke na ndatu'un yu xi'in ndo xa'a ve'e yata kan ra kundaa ini ndo. Ve'e kan ra iin ña ndichi chi n̄ñu ña ku norte xiin veñu'u, ra inka ña ndichi chi ma'ñu ra ikan ke ndita si'in yuu, ra xiin ña kan ndichi tu ve'e nuu iyoo yavi nuu xindo'ni na ndii va.

³ na savi kûñi kachi na yuví ká'an tu'un ndá'vi

However, it turns out that it wasn't just the Zapotec people who lived in this place, but Mixtec people as well, and there is archeological evidence to support this. Some experts say that when we Mixtecs conquered the Zapotecs, we took control of Mitla. It seems that it is likely, and we know for sure that Mixtecs and Zapotecs both lived there, according to experts.

Now I'd like to tell you about two different parts of the site. One group of buildings is called the Church Group, or North Group. The other group is called the Columns group, because it has standing stones. To one side there are entrances to the tombs.



Ve'e yata ña íin chi n̄inu ña kuu norte xiin veñu'u

Ve'e kan ra nina yuu va ke kuva'a ña, ra kumi kuu tutun ña, ra chi ini va ña iyoo nuu ke'e ña ra kumi ku tu tutun nuu ke'e va ña. Ra kua'a va nuu yuu ke xiniñu'u na ña xava'a na ña, saa chi xiniñu'u na yuu ko'ndo vali, ra saa tu yuu ña tuxi va na, ra ta iin yoso saa iin ña; ra xiniñu'u tu na yuu ña na'nu va'a ña ku'va iin nda'a sava va.



Ra nduvi ni xava'a na ña, saa chi tiañu yuu kan ra taan na yuu vali ña ndana'a na kuu ita, xi'in koo, xi'in ndila'la³, xi'in ndiakua⁴, xi'in ko'ndo, ra sava tu mii yuu kan kaan na sata va ña sanaana na ita, xi'in kua'a ni ka nuu ña'a vali nduvi. Ra itun va kuvi nu xindo'ni xini ve'e kan, ra ve'e ña xindee va na ke ndixiyo ña, kachi na.

⁴ ndila'la k̄un̄i kachi t̄ikó íf ⁵ ndiakua táká ña yó'o — ΛΛ

Ruins of the North Group, also called the Church Group

This building is made entirely of stone. It is a rectangular building with a large rectangular patio within. They used many stones of great variety such as brick-shaped stones and stones they had carved into flat pieces. They used rock carving techniques similar to those used today to make mealing-stones⁶. They also used a large number of stones as big as 1.5 meters in length. They built this with great attention to detail,

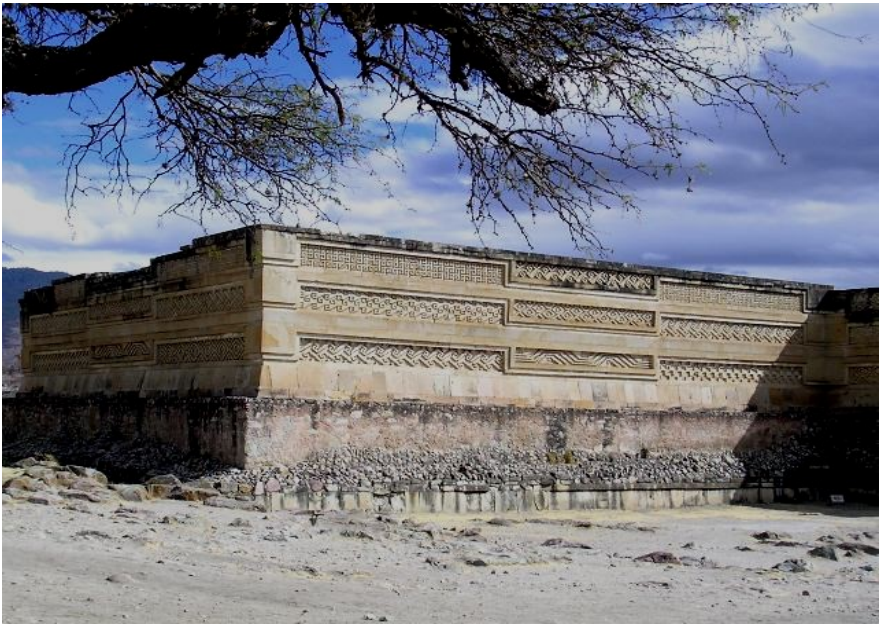


each stone fitting perfectly with the next. Cut stones were placed together to make shapes such as flowers, snakes, snails, zig-zags, and knots. Some stones were placed further back from others to make designs such as flowers and other intricate⁷ designs. According to experts, the roof was likely made of wood beams.

⁶ mealing-stones are called yōso in Mixtec or metates in Spanish

⁷ intricate means very detailed or complicated

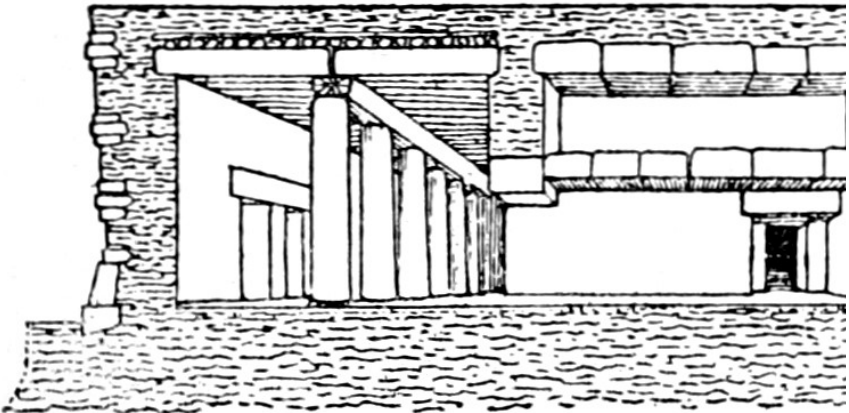




Ve'e nuu ndita si'in yuu

Nuu íin ve'e nuu ndita si'in yuu kan, ra ku'va uni nda'a vi ke sakua'nu na yuu, ra ikan vi ke xava'a na ve'e kan. Ra chi nuu iyoo ye'e ña ra xava'a na kuato ña ndaa yo. Ra ta xa na ki'vi yo ye'e kan ra mii kan ke ndita yukun iñu saa si'in yuu chee ña na'nu ni kan va, ra xika xika va ndita ña xi'in ta'an ña. Ra ta íin ndasa saa íin ña, ra ku'va uvi nda'a ya'a vi kuvi ña, chi nuu sukun ña, ra iin ta ku'va ndu'u toko iin tuxa chee tun ndu'u ni, saa vi ke ndu'u toko ña.

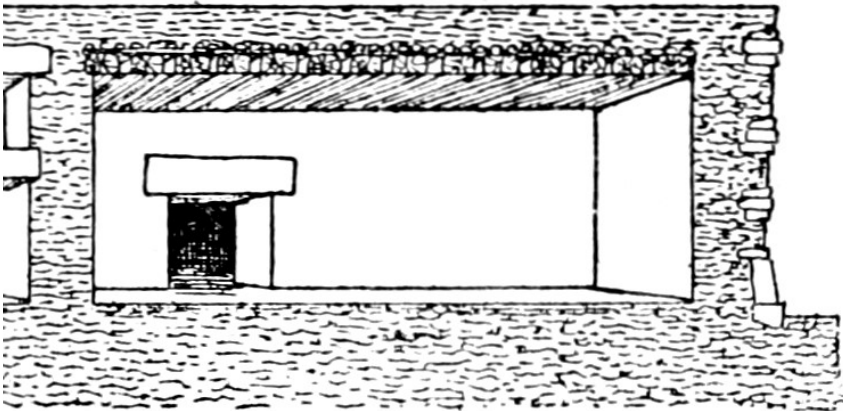
Ra sukun ve'e kan chi ke'e nuu iyoo ye'e nuu ndiki'vi na, ra nina yuu ña nduvi ña ndana'a na kuu ita vali va ke xava'a na ña, ra nduvi ni ña. Ra ve'e kan, ra ve'e nuu xindee na sutu, xi'in na rey va ke ndixiyo ña, kachi sava na.



The Columns Group

In front of this building are standing stones that are carved to be approximately 3 meters in height. At the front of the building is a grand entrance with steps (see picture on page 5). It is impressive to enter the corridor⁸ and see the six columns, standing in a perfect line, each exactly spaced with geometrical precision⁹. The stones are set up with about 2 meters of space between them, they are quite tall, and they are about as big around as a fully grown pine tree.

The building is quite tall and there are large passageways that lead to the patio, which is decorated entirely in beautiful patterned stonework, with repeating shapes of flowers and other designs. This was the building of the priests, as well as where the king lived, according to experts.



⁸ a corridor is like a hallway

⁹ mathematically perfect





Yavi nuu xindo'ni na ndii

Ra yavi ndii, ña iyoo nuu ke'e ve'e ña ndichi chi xi'in ve'e nuu ndita si'in yuu kan, ra ndichi ni va xava'a na ña, saa chi ini ñu'u va xava'a na ña. Ra ye'e ña nuu ki'vi yo ra ta iyoo yavi xitun ña kuxitun xini sindiki va saa iyoo ña, ra ña iyoo tutun va kuvi ña. Ra xava'a tu na uxa kuato¹⁰ ña kuañu yo nuu va yo ini yavi kan, ra ta xa na nduxinu yo, saa ra ikan ndundaku va, ra iin vivi'i lo'o ku'un yo, saa ra ndachituvi tuku va yo, ra saa vi ke xaa yo nuu iyoo yavi kan.



¹⁰ kuato kûnj kachi steps

The tombs

The tombs are located in the patio area of the main building in the Columns Group. The architects¹¹ who designed these buildings were highly skilled and designed the tombs as underground chambers. The entrances to the tombs are large rectangular pits. They were built with seven steps going down into the actual passageways. At the base of the steps is a short passageway to another set of steps leading up and into the tombs.



¹¹ architects are experts in the math and art of designing buildings

Ra yavi kan, ra ta kaa cruz va, saa kaa ña. Ra ku'va uvi nda'a vi ke ña sukun ña, ra saa tu chi nuu ndika va ña, ra ndu'u iin ña'ñu yuu ña tiuvi ini yavi kan, ra yuu kan ke xindi'i xini na ndii, tuvi sava na.



The tombs themselves are in the shape of a cross. They are about 2 meters high and about the same in depth. There are stone slabs that appear to have been carved to be headrests for the deceased person.



Ña'a ña sanaana na savi

Yo'o ke na ndatu'un xi'in ndo xa'a ña'a ña sanaana na savi ra kundaa ini ndo. Na savi na xindee ve'e yata ña ndichi chi n̄iñu ña kuu norte, xiin veñu'u nuu ñuu Mitla kan, ra ndichi ni va ndixiyo na, saa chi takundi'i chiñu ña xa na, ra sanaana ndi'i va na ña ndika ve'e ña va'a na kundaa ini inka yuvi xa'a ña, ra ña'a kan kuvi: ta kuu ña ka'an xa'a na ña ndixiyo na, xi'in ña ka'an xa'a na ta nditanda'a na, xi'in ña ka'an xa'a ña ndixi'i ta'an na, xi'in ña ka'an xa'a na ña kanita'an na xi'in inka yuvi.



What the Mixtecs wrote

In this chapter I'll explain to you what we know about the Mixtec kingdoms. The Mixtecs who were in the palace at Mitla were very skilled and well-educated, which we can see not only in the architecture, but also in the fresco writings they made on many of the walls. They documented many historical events, especially the marriages and deaths of royalty and information about battles fought against other kingdoms.



Ra ña'a ña sanaana na kuvi ña ka'an xa'a chiñu ña xa na, ra ña kan kuvi ta kuu isu, xi'in ndiva'yu, xi'in kuiin, xi'in ndika'a, xi'in yuvi, xi'in inka nuu ña'a. Ra takundi'i na'na ña sanaana na kuvi ña ka'an xa'a ña *kuu, ra ka'an ña ndia yoo ke *kuu ña, ra ka'an tu ña ndia kuiya ke *kuu va ña, kachi na.

Ña yo'o ke *sanaana na savi na xindee ve'e yata ña iyoo chi ñuu Mitla, Oaxaca. Ra ndia salo'o va na'a ña saa chi xa kua'a ni kuiya ke sanaana na ña, ra ña kan ke xa ndoo va iin ña'ñu ña, ra ndia siin ña'ñu va ña na'a vichin.



The Mixtecs wrote about how they did many things and they wrote using hieroglyphs in the forms of deer, coyotes, tigers, lions, humans, and many other classes of things. They were able to write about anything and everything using hieroglyphs and are known for their calendars, writing about the months and the years that various historical events happened, according to experts.

This shows some of the hieroglyphs that Mixtecs painted on the walls of the palaces at Mitla, Oaxaca. This is only a small part of what were originally large frescoes. Today only a few pieces remain on some of the walls.





This book is about the ruins of Mitla, Oaxaca, Mexico.

The ruins of Mitla are divided in three groups, which are: the group that is to the North, next to the church, the columns group, and the tombs group.

This book talks about who constructed the ruins, about the details of its architecture, the designs, and Mixtec heiroglyphs.

Many people visit these ruins each year and learn about the history of the Zapotecs and the Mixtec Empire. Now you can learn about the ruins and the fascinating history of indigenous civilizations.

A review of reading Mixtec

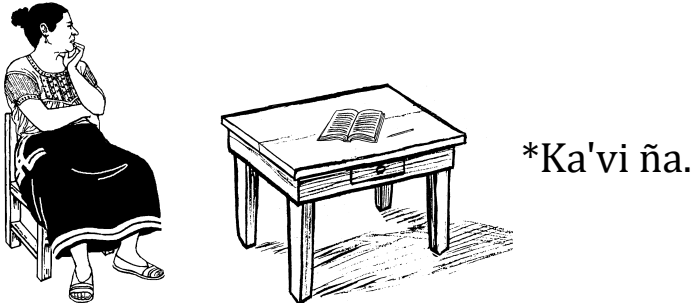
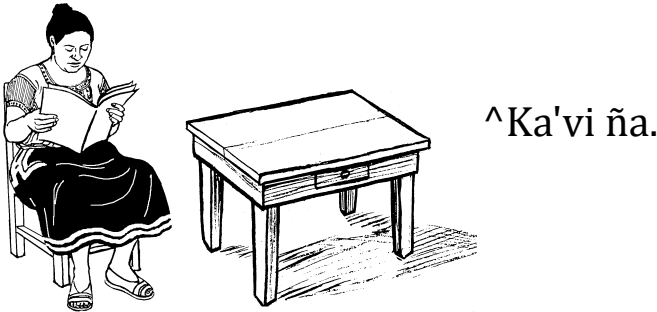
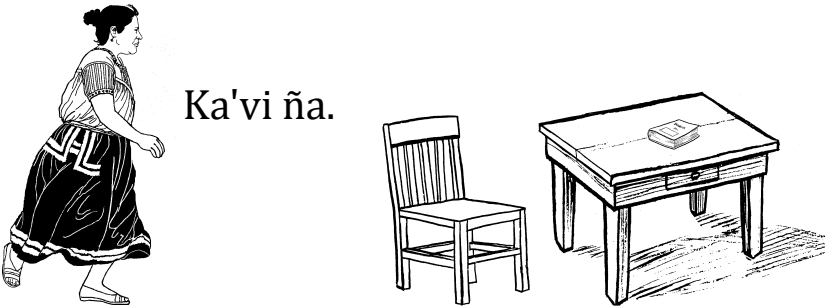
In Mixtec every vowel has one or two tones. Tones are “*the melody*” that we use to say words. Tones are very important in Mixtec. In fact, some words can only be told apart by their tone. For example:



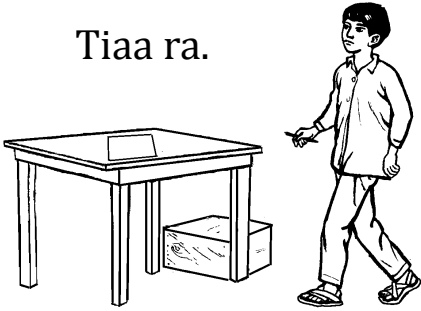
yuku ‘plant’ yukú ‘mountain’ yúku ‘yoke’

These three words in Mixtec are written using the same three letters: y-u-k-u. However, they are pronounced with different tones.

Not all Mixtec languages are written in the same way. In the municipality of Tiata'nu, also called Metlatonoc, in Guerrero, Mixtec is written differently. They don't mark the tone on most vowels. They also use symbols that we don't use. Look at the following examples.



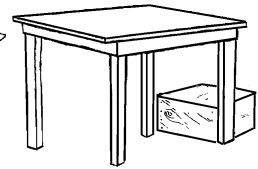
Tiaa ra.



^Tiaa ra.



*Tiaa ra.



Ndakava ra.



^Ndakava ra.



*Ndakava ra.

As you saw in the previous examples, Mixtecs in Tiata'nu use two symbols that we don't use. The circumflex, or hat (^) is written before a word to show that something is happening. The asterisk, or star (*) is written before a word to show that something is finished.

The apostrophe (') indicates a brief pause in a word. Read these examples:



ve'e



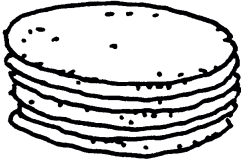
kə'ó



sa'má

You might notice that this sounds a lot like the pause in the English word, “uh-oh.” In Mixtec we always write this with an apostrophe ('), not with a hyphen (-) like we do in English.

In Mixtec, the letter **x** sounds like the **sh** in English. Read these words:



xitá

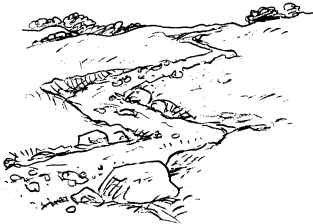


xiyo

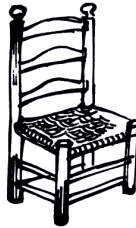


xa'á

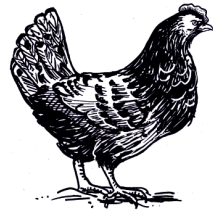
The letters **ku** is pronounced like the **qu** in the English word “queen.” The letters **ti** and **ndi** are sounds we don't have in English. Read the words below to hear how we pronounce these letters.



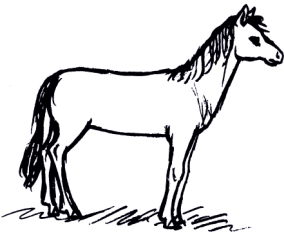
itia



tiayu



ndiuxí



kuáy



tikuíti



ndiaka

Now we will review how we write the tones that indicate the negative form. When we write the negative form, we use the umlaut (") over the first vowel of the word.

When we want to say that something is good or not good, we just change the tone of the word:

va'a 'good' and **vä'a** 'not good'. Look at these other examples:

xatu	<i>spicy</i>	xîni	<i>knows</i>
xätu	<i>not spicy</i>	xîni	<i>doesn't know</i>
u'vi	<i>difficult</i>	kûni	<i>wants</i>
ü'vi	<i>not difficult</i>	kökûni	<i>doesn't want</i>
vee	<i>heavy</i>	kûxi	<i>rusting</i>
vëe	<i>not heavy</i>	kökûxi	<i>not rusting</i>
kuë'e	<i>fierce</i>	kútóo	<i>likes</i>
kuë'e	<i>not fierce</i>	kökútóo	<i>doesn't like</i>

Un breve resumen

En mixteco cada vocal tiene uno o dos tonos. Los tonos son “*la melodía*” que se usa para decir las palabras.

En mixteco los tonos son muy importantes, ya que algunas palabras se diferencian de otras sólo por el tono. Por ejemplo:



yuku ‘planta’



yukú ‘monte’



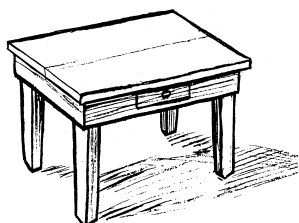
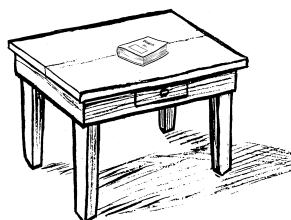
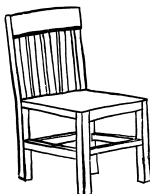
yúku ‘yugo’

Estas tres palabras en mixteco se escriben usando las mismas letras: y-u-k-u. Sin embargo, se pronuncian con tonos distintos.

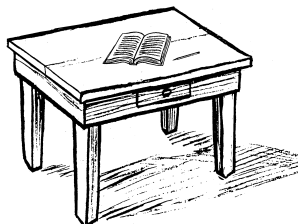
No todas las lenguas mixtecas se escriben igual. En el pueblo de Tiata'nu, también llamado Metlatonoc, en Guerrero, se escriben diferente el mixteco. Ellos no ponen signos en muchas vocales. Usan algunos signos que nosotros no usamos. Lee las siguientes oraciones.



Ka'vi ña.



^Ka'vi ña.



*Ka'vi ña.

Ndaki'in
ña ndivi.



^Ndaki'in ña ndivi.



*Ndaki'in ña
ndivi.

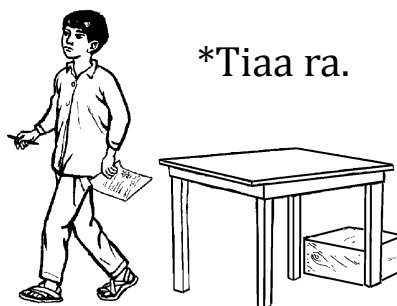
Tiaa ra.



^Tiaa ra.



*Tiaa ra.



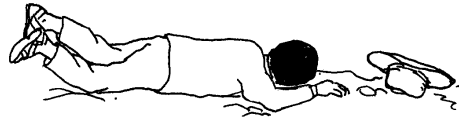


Ndakava ra.



^Ndakava ra.

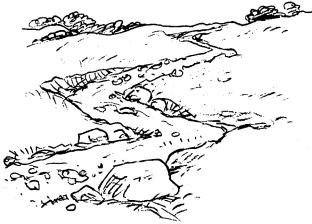
*Ndakava ra.



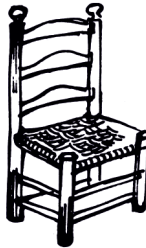
Como ha observado con los ejemplos, los mixtecos de Tiata'nu usan dos signos que nosotros no usamos para diferenciar entre acciones que no han empezado, que están en proceso, o que ya se han terminado.

El acento circunflejo, o copete (^), se escribe al principio de una palabra para mostrar que algo está en proceso. El asterisco, o estrellita (*), se escribe al principio de una palabra para indicar una acción ya completa.

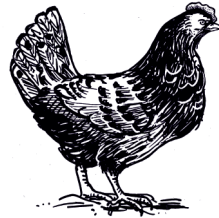
Hay palabras en las que se unen dos vocales diferentes. Observa estos ejemplos:



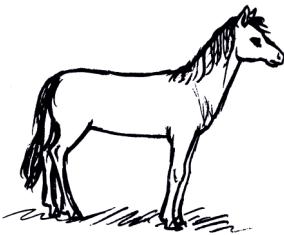
itia



tiayu



ndiuxí



kuáyu



tikuíti



ndiaka

El saltillo (') es el signo que indica un breve corte de voz en la pronunciación de las palabras. Lee las siguientes palabras que se escriben con saltillo.



ve'e

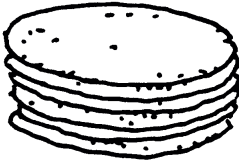


ko'ó



sa'má

En mixteco, la letra **x** se pronuncia como la combinación **sh** de inglés. Lee estas palabras.



xitá



xiyo



xa'á

Ahora vamos a repasar cómo se escriben los tonos que indican la forma negativa. Cuando escribimos la forma negativa, usamos diéresis (¨) sobre la primera vocal de la palabra.

Cuando queremos decir en mixteco que algo está bien o que no está bien, nada más cambiamos los tonos de las palabras:

va'a 'está bien' y **vä'a** 'no está bien'.

Observa otros ejemplos:

x <u>a</u> <u>t</u> <u>u</u>	<i>picante</i>	x <u>î</u> <u>n</u> <u>i</u>	<i>sabe</i>
x <u>ä</u> <u>t</u> <u>u</u>	<i>no picante</i>	x <u>ï</u> <u>n</u> <u>i</u>	<i>no sabe</i>
u ' <u>v</u> <u>i</u>	<i>difícil</i>	k <u>û</u> <u>n</u> <u>i</u>	<i>quiere</i>
ü ' <u>v</u> <u>i</u>	<i>no difícil</i>	k <u>ö</u> <u>k</u> <u>û</u> <u>n</u> <u>i</u>	<i>no quiere</i>
vee	<i>pesado</i>	k <u>ú</u> <u>t</u> <u>ó</u>	<i>le gusta</i>
vëe	<i>no pesado</i>	k <u>ö</u> <u>k</u> <u>ú</u> <u>t</u> <u>ó</u>	<i>no le gusta</i>

