

*Reception 6 September 2015 – Acceptance January 11, 2016*

# The sacred dimension among the tojolabal

Antonio de Jesús Nájera Castellanos  
anajera@unich.edu.mx

Intercultural University of Chiapas



## ABSTRACT

This article is a field research conducted from Tojolabal communities living with the municipality of Las Margaritas, Chiapas. In that it presents spirituality and sacredness from indigenous peoples manifests and is experienced in time and space lived in the divinity and the life of the subjects are developed and projected on a day to day, it is therefore a interrelation with the universe. Thus, among the Tojolabal the sacred dimension is lived in a characteristic and particularly the implications are strongly present in everyday life, for spirituality and the sacred allows the balance between the forces that populate the universe, that is, is life itself that is at stake. So, one way to maintain stable relations with earthly and unearthly multiple identities is through the visit and worship at various places and spaces that the population identifies itself as sacred. Hence, caves, springs, mountains, salt mines, archaeological sites or animals associated with the divine, as spaces become important repositories of historical memory of the people and as a cultural reference of past generations. Therefore, the sacred dimension linked to indigenous territoriality, is in correspondence to the ancestral and symbolic boundary that subjects confer upon that sacred territory and the dynamics of meaning that give the universe of real or symbolic. Hence symbols play a role in the interaction between humans and the universe.

**Keywords:** Religious, sacred, ritual, territory, caves, tojolabales.

## THE SACRED DIMENSION AMONG THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Spirituality and the sacred of the indigenous peoples manifests and lives in time and in everyday space, in which the divinity and the life of the subjects are developed and projected on a daily basis. It is an interrelation with the universe, the cosmos, in which “*everything* interacts and therefore everything has a certain standard of living and *spirit*” (Boff, 1996: 60). However, in these *turbulent times*, understanding the world is no longer a matter of being in tune with the cosmos. The world became what it is for the citizens of the modern world- a de spiritualized mechanism that can be grasped by concepts and representations constructed through reason.

Thus, in “these successive separations<sup>1</sup> are articulated with those that underlie the essential contrast that is established from the colonial formation of the world between Western or European (conceived as modern, advanced) and the “ other “ the rest of the people and culture of the world “(Lander, 2000: 249), i.e., from such coloniality of the sacred as a reading of the entire time and space of human experience starting from this peculiarity, there is built a radically exclusive universality which various indigenous peoples are facing, ie, those who have been conceived as the Others.

Among these “Others” are the Tojolabal, one of 12 indigenous peoples living in the territory of Chiapas, especially those in the border region of the state. Although its origins have become somewhat uncertain for scholars, this is not the case for them, because since pre - Columbian times they have maintained a relationship with his old friends- the Chuj Guatemalans.

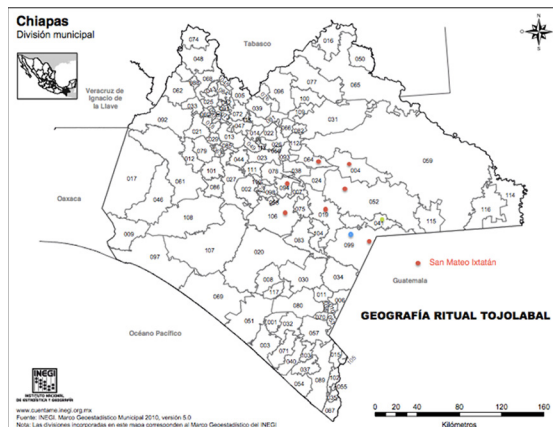
The Tojolabal people have gone through a series of socio - historical processes that have led to maintaining a territorial re-configuration constant from multiple processes of colonization, which in some cases, and for social disintegration on the other, thus in the XXI century territoriality begins to become more visible in terms of position in social spaces that for more than a century were considered Ladino or *kaxlanes* , as in the case of municipal

---

1 It is interesting to emphasize that such separations or partitions of the world and of the cosmo-experiences has to do with a closed, hegemonic and colonizing system, as mentioned by Leonardo Boff “ *the division between biotic and abiotic, living and nonliving things, obeys another conception of reality, valid only for a closed system of apparently conscious and permanent beings, like stars, mountains and physical bodies that are opposed to complex, dynamic and alive beings. There is the justification. But if we break that barrier and draw back the veil of relationships and interactions that are underlying all of them, we realize that consistency and permanence evaporate. We find an open, not closed system. All beings are also at the mercy of the inter-tretro-relationships, the energies and fields* “ (1996: 61).

capitals like Las Margaritas, Comitán and Altamirano starting from the armed conflict 1994. From there we can find Tojolabal population centers in the municipalities of Las Margaritas, Altamirano, Comitán, Independencia, La Trinitaria and recently Maravilla Tenejapa.

Therefore, speaking of the sacred refers to the sacred that postulates human existence in its multiplicity of cultural forms, translated into prayers to the hills, springs, caves, in pilgrimages, materializing in a relationship of respect and harmony with mother earth and Mother Nature.



**Map 1.** Territories that make up the Geography Ritual Tojolabal.

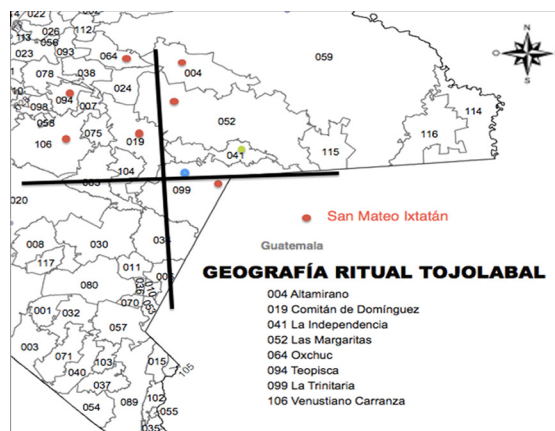
Source: authors.

Thus the concepts of space and sacred territory are based and give sustenance to the essence of indigenous thought, since the sacred space has the effect of highlighting an area of the surrounding cosmic environment and make it different (Eliade, 1957). That is, space and time are configured in such a way that allows us to understand that the epistemic textile that is constructed precisely to recognize the spaces which are collectively recognized and are also a sacred intentionality linked to the temporal dynamics that have been established from the experience of previous generations and which generates sense in daily work.

Therefore, the sacred dimension between Tojolabales can be experienced in many ways and expressions, since the relationship expressed with divinity can be done from prayer and visiting the cornfields, prayers in the chapel, participation as a standard bearer, drummer, rocketeer, *rezador* or pilgrim to waterholes, hills or caves to which he has taken some gift as part of the sacred dimension. While the panorama of the sacred dimension is broad, in this article we aim to approach this dimension from a first proposal of Tojolabal ritual geography and configuration of spaces and sacred deities for

this contemporary Mayan people. From this, the Tojolabal ritual geography is presented and linked to places and sites considered sacred among Tojolabales.

In an effort to locate the different territories where Tojolabales maintain relations of ritualism and coexistence, we can propose the following ritual geography from several municipalities that are part of the border state of Chiapas.



**Map 2.** Municipalities that make up the Tojolabal Ritual Geography .

Source: authors.

We found that Tojolabales maintain ritual relations with other cultures in the region, with at least three contemporary Mayan villages, including Tseltales such as in the case of Oxchuc; Tsotsiles in Venustiano Carranza and Chujes in San Mateo Ixtatán in Guatemala. Among the multiplicity of spaces and places considered sacred in Ritual Tojolabal Geography that are presented here include: hills, caves, salt mines and archaeological sites. Likewise, the sacred precincts of patron saints which are important for Tojolabales are visited.

The first visit that is performed is for the ritual cycle *k'u'anel*<sup>2</sup> and is located northwest of the ritual geography that has been presented, is the visit to St. Caralampio in Comitán de Domínguez. The devotion of this patron saint of the city is linked to protection against pests and diseases that afflicted the population at some time. Subsequently, the second visit acquires a substantial importance among the Tojolabales and is made to San Mateo Ixtatán in the neighboring country of Guatemala. This pilgrimage has a sense and

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish translation of *k'u'anel* is "the pilgrimage".

symbolic meaning for Tojolabales because they come back to their center of origin in Guatemala according to oral tradition. Hypothetically it is reported that following a dispute over the salt mines that exist in San Mateo, Chujes Mateanos and Tojolabales held a “fight”, which led the latter being somehow gradually expelled from Chuj Guatemalan territory and began to form the first Tojolabal settlements in the lake region of the Comitecan valleys.

Throughout the pilgrimage in San Mateo Ixtatán, the Tojolabales perform a series of visits to places considered sacred and of historical importance—in other words, the places that form part of the historical memory of this town. So, the first site to be visited is the salt mines, a place of great symbolic and historic meaning for this people in addition to being a prehispanic shrine. Immediately afterwards there is a visit to the archaeological site called *Wajxaklajunhe* (Temple 18) which is a sacred place and linked as a space in which Tojolabales and other nearby groups coexisted for some time (Mateanos, Chujes, Coatanecos and probably Q’anjobales) is made. All of this pilgrimage undoubtedly allows an approach to the worldview of these people and for interethnic relationships established with Guatemalan groups, particularly the Chuj.

Moreover, in the month of April the next ritual site that is visited by the Tojolabales is the municipality Oxchuc, whose presence mainly of Tseltales becomes a space of building relations between these two peoples. In this process of cross-cultural re-understanding, there are visits to the holy places as in the case of the hill where according to oral tradition appeared the patron saint, St. Thomas.

In this ritual geography, the presence of Tojolabales with Tsotsil neighbors of Venustiano Carranza is also present from the pilgrimage or procession in honor of San Bartolo who is believed to be the caretaker of the heart of basic seeds, hence the importance of going to visit this holy and principal hill as part of the ritual Tojolabal geography.

Moreover, the visit that the Tojol Winik-ixukotik made to the Eternal Father in the municipality of La Trinitaria, shows the relationships established by Tojolabal pilgrims with Tseltales *rezadores* of this municipality and the mestizo population, where they have created alliances and recognition of both groups. As for Tojolabales, the *Zapalutas* or *rezadores* of La Trinitaria are those who know the ritual language in order to carry out the petitions to patron saints such as the Eternal Father or Saint Matthew, for it is in this ritual language that requests for rain, abundant harvests and prosperity for families are made, gaining meaning in their sacred dimension.

The municipality of Altamirano and Las Margaritas are two territorial areas where the Tojolabal pilgrims walk to venerate Saint Charles and Saint Margaret of Antioch respectively. Without doubt, both populations

of Tojolabal descent are part of this ritual geography that have charted Tojolabal people by generations, with the intention of making clear its sacred dimension through primarily the sense of agricultural rituals.

### THE CULT OF THE CAVES AS SACRED SPACES

The cult of the caves considered sacred spaces remained widespread as a cultural understanding between Mesoamerican peoples, and has continued even today in many contemporary indigenous peoples. Therefore, the “mountain and cave are an important factor in the Mesoamerican hydraulic worldview. The temple itself was regarded as a sacred hill covering groundwater that manifests through bodies of water and springs in the caves. The relationship that links Tlaloc with caves and hills is personified by Tepeyollotl, the heart of the hill, a jaguar deity personified that summarizes the pre - classical aspects of the cave, rainforest, and land “(Montero, 2004: 27).

Here is a sample of the embodiment of Tepeyollotl in the Borgia Codex.



**Image 1.** Representation of Tepeyollotl in the Borgia Codex.

Figure taken by Montero, 2004.

Now, our intention is to approach the sacred dimension among the Tojolabales from spaces and territories considered sacred, which leads us to understand that according to the Mesoamerican tradition “the universe is composed of different time-spaces and for two kinds of substances. Both time and space are coexistent; but one of them-the divine-was-is cause of the other- the mundane- and will continue to exist after its disappearance. The two substances are different for the first being fine, subtle, and indestructible; the second heavy, dense and perishable”(Lopez, 2012: 3).



The sacred dimension linked to the indigenous territoriality is in correspondence with the ancestral and symbolic boundaries that subjects confer upon that sacred territory and the dynamics of meaning that they give the universe in a real or symbolic way. Hence the symbols play an important role in the interaction between the universe and human beings, which is manifested practically in the worship of places considered sacred such as mountains, caves, grottos, springs, lakes, ponds, stones, archaeological sites or Catholic saints.

In this interactive process between the earthly and the unearthly, the symbolic relations that ritualism conduce as a petition process in some cases and are “paid” in others for the benefits that are received. Hence, these relationships are interwoven between sacred sites and rituals which are performed by the subjects, and constitute the necessary correspondence between the cosmos and life itself.

It is also true that “since Europe invaded american territory, indigenous peoples have defended their ancestral lands through the law of origin, in which the territory is part of a sacred geography, where the world order is saved by an operational series of rituals “(Zapata, s / f: 1), hence the importance of sacred sites focus on maintaining the balance of forces and energies that populate life and the actions and reactions that subjects have in their territory.

Therefore, against this perspective:

*“Sacred sites should not be viewed as specific geographical points, but as the expressive dimension of a form of cultural understanding and relationship with nature. These are areas that concentrate power in the history of this relationship: both the past and the present and even the future as desire and vindication. They are places, then, where knowledge and learning, dialogue and encounter, revelation and confession, offering and promise, pilgrimage and lodging; are enclosures for prayer, contemplation, reverence and humility” (Lemon et al, 2015: 8).*

Caves and hills are considered sacred spaces for multiple indigenous peoples in Mexican territory, thus the Tojolabal consider these spaces as repositories where the heart (*k'ujol*) or soul (*altsil*) of the main seeds that make up the basic food of this contemporary Mayan people is kept stored. Thus we have the caves which are the hearts of the corn (*ixim*), beans (*Chenek*), pumpkin (*k'um*), chile (*ich*) and *tsilacayote* (*mayil*), and it is conceived as well as the home where a metaphysical and symbolic entity that has the status of a deity among the people of this town, i.e. lightning or *chawuk*, dwells.

Lightening, as an unearthly entity, is present in many Mesoamerican peoples. An example is the Tseltales of Petalcingo who “report that St. Francis of Assisi is called *Ktatik*, in Tzeltal language means” Father protector of the



goods that his children consume. Within his being are *naguales*, with one of them being the lightning bolt “(Oseguera and Sanchez, 2011: 23).

In other words, from these reflections the lightning bolt (*chawuk*) from the Tojolabal perspective would be the personification of the old Chaak which is considered as the “God of ... water, thunder and lightning” (Barrera, 1980: 77).

Therefore, as Bassie and Hopkins state “In Chol and other Mayan Languages, the concepts of thunder , sheet lightning , and lightning bolts are interrelated and sometimes used interchangeably. This overlap in usage and meaning derives from the common origin of all these phenomena: the deity Known as Chajk in Ch’ol and as Chahk in the Classic Period. Chahk has been loaned to Yucatec Maya as Chaak “(2015: 123) and therefore the classic Chahk might still be in keeping with Chawuk<sup>3</sup> (lightning bolt) Tojolabal in the XXI century, hence the importance that this entity has kept among the Tojolabal as a major element in the sacred dimension of these people.

The *chawuk*, then, is seen as the guardian of the caves and main promoter of rain and fertility. The lightning bolt has its representation in both a physical entity as in metaphysics, first occurring through individuals who have acquired the gift or whose *wayjelal* or nahual is lightning. However, it is not an easy task. Not just anyone can access such a responsibility since the lightning bolt is a kind of intercessor with the deities for both the request for enough rain to moderating them if they are exceeded.

Faced with this need for requests for enough rain and good harvests of food commodities, corn and beans, the Tojolabal people have been characterized as avid organizers of processions or pilgrimages known in the Tojol-ab’al language as *k’u’anel*, understood as propitiatory rituals of the search for a good agricultural season. Even though it is a ritual with great agricultural sense, it should be noted that within the requests made by the principal or ritual specialist, there can be found the welfare of families and communities that are involved, domestic animals and the preservation of the sites identified as sacred, particularly the springs, waterholes, caves and mountains.

Given this ritual process, it should be noted that every place you visit on a pilgrimage has an “owner” and therefore should be given an offer and revered

---

3 In this manner we have the form of the lightning bolt which was represented in multiple forms from which “the word Chahk, “ **lightening** bolt” , is represented in classic period hieroglyphic texts by a portrait of a zoomorphic deity wearing a shell earring. Post classic versions of these Chahk deities are known by the Shellhas designation of God B. The Maya believed that a lightning bolt was either the serpent from of a Chahk deity or the ax of a Chahk that had been hurled through the air” (Bassie y Hopkins, 2015: 124).

in the tradition of those who preceded current generations. Offerings and promises, become complementary elements in order to build the relationship with the deity. Therefore, as a Tojolabal elder mentioned the “caves and hills are places of prayer; of forgiveness- they are sacred places to meet the master of life”<sup>4</sup>. In this sense, the meaning that people give to these places is transcendent and links with the sacred. Thus, during the visit to the various points and sacred spaces, multiple devotees and faithful who made a series of requests and acknowledgments congregate; However, is the principal or *rezador* who is in charge and the “gift” of being able to communicate with deities, whether saints or physical entities. Hence, the *rezador* among the Tojolabales is considered as *lightning bolt man*, who is destined to become the intermediary between the gods and the needs of the people and the pilgrims, because the *lightning bolt man* is the one who knows how to ask for the right amount of rain, the abundance of crops and health for people and animals involved in everyday life in communities.

Therefore, understanding the sacred dimension from the culture of the Tojolabales understands part of the cosmos, nature and the life of this people. They are not confined only to the prayers and shrines of the Catholic or evangelical religions, but rather the sacred of the Tojolabales is closely related to practices that give sense and meaning to their lifestyles, among which include the spaces that are recognized as sacred. These spaces are conceived as codes and collective signs that form a mythical spatial territoriality, which gives cohesion and historical memory of the people and also designed as “territorial portions representing the fusion, full of meaning, between nature and culture “( Limón et al, 2015: 7)..

Somehow the pilgrimage among Tojolabales becomes a space of liberation and cultural positioning such as suggested by Dussel when he said that “the whole procession, somehow, is” to occupy “space of the dominator: his city, his square, his temple, and his streets. It is the symbolic earning of his space “(1983: 579-580).

#### The Tojolabal RITUAL EXPERIENCE: THE CULT OF “LA PILETA” CAVE

The property known as “Nuestra Señora “ (Our Lady), is a farm located in the Chihuahua ejido in the municipality of La Trinitaria, Chiapas. It has been a tradition for decades for Tojolabales from different communities in the

---

<sup>4</sup> Fragment of an interview made with Juan Gomez on April 18th, 2014, Las Margaritas, Chiapas.

municipality of Las Margaritas, to make a pilgrimage to visit this town with the intention of making a series of requests for the benefit of their families and community. Undoubtedly, the visit to the patron saint of the farm remains as a mere pretext to visit and worship the large cave (grotto) called La Pileta located halfway up the peregrination trail.

The presence of Tojolabales in this pilgrimage is evident, who year after year participate in the entire journey that starts from the house of the *rezador* to the church of the farm. It should be mentioned that trail also counts with the presence of the Tzeltal and mestizo population of the municipality of La Trinitaria.

From early on, commissions or brigades leave communities from at least two regions of the municipality of Las Margaritas (the Valleys and Mountains) and head to the house of the principal or *rezador* in the municipality of La Trinitaria, Chiapas. Today this position is under the responsibility of Don Jaime, because only a couple of years ago Don Teofilo Santis was the *principal* or *olomal*<sup>5</sup> in most pilgrimages made by Tojolabales of Las Margaritas and communities of La Trinitaria, however after his death the role was taken with profound responsibility by Don Jaime, since taking over as the principal and at the same time the *gift of the rezador* becomes a lifelong commitment. It is he who performs the prayers in the holy language, since it is considered that only they know the language ( it is probably a kind of old Tzeltal, although Don Jaime mentioned that prayer is done in the Coxoh language).

On one hand there is the odd relationship established between Tojolabales with Tzeltal *rezadores* which speaks of a relationship between the two cultures that existed long before the arrival of the Spaniards to the lands that would become Chiapas and particularly in the region of Los Llanos de Comitán. While on the other hand, the process of colonization and subjugation suffered by the Tojolabal people during the colonial period and most recently the rancher period, produced a weakening in certain cultural elements such as prayers in their language, calendrical names, and in rituals and can be also seen in Tojolabal organizational structures.

Following this ethnographic experience, there usually comes one day before the house *manager or principal*, either in the afternoon or evening, and this is where they spend the night. Among the Tojolabal brigades participating in the pilgrimage are the drummers, singers and flag bearers

---

<sup>5</sup> He was given the connotation of Olomal, exactly because he was an important person for the majority of the pilgrimages performed by the Tojolabales of Las Margaritas and communities in the municipality of La Trinitaria. He then served as the *rezador* and sage of sacred places (caves and springs) where requests were made for good rains and abundant harvests. An interesting detail in the gift of the *rezador* of Don Teofilo was the ability to make prayers and petitions in the ritual language (a kind of ancient Tzeltal language with certain additions from Spanish, not in Tojolabal).

who arrive playing different musical pieces at the principals house, who is the one who welcomes and fraternally invites them to go and get comfortable, usually in the backyard. Once they have entered the house, drummers, flag bearers and pilgrims visit the family altar, which highlights the image of San Mateo and other saints. After they have *greeted* the saints, they proceed to leave their offering in order to rest, which is composed of candles that will be used at different points that will be visited the next day, or to be blessed by the saints and sacred places and carried as relics to the communities from which they originate.

At dawn, the group of drummers and singers start playing the first tunes while pyrotechnic rockets announce preparations for those who would like to accompany the pilgrimage and join along it along its path. From the principals house, the drummers leave while playing, followed by the singers and the flag bearers with banners of each participating community and among them, the principal, *rezadores* and the faithful.

The first stop is at the Church of San Sebastián of the municipal seat of La Trinitaria, Chiapas, where the pilgrims (including flag bearers, *rezadores*, drummers and singers) perform a set of Catholic prayers and incorporate for the first time a plea in the ritual language by the *principal*.

The next point for praying and beginning a process of preparation for the journey of approximately eleven hours, is the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe located in the neighborhood Guadalupe Yalixao in La Trinitaria. After a couple of prayers, the pilgrims begin a process of spiritual preparation starting with walking along paths and mountains, which without a doubt becomes an experience of coexistence and collective learning. While in the town, the rezador with the contingent performs the ritual prayer, and permission is sought from Mother Earth and the process called “undressing flags” starts the walk.

Along the walk the contingent, on paths and hills, is accompanied by traditional Tojolabal music of drums and reed flutes, by those who are leading the pilgrimage. The first point is the arrival to the cave called La Pileta, whose route is approximately 4 to 5 hours away. At this point, the contingent pauses to rest and prepare for the start of the ritual of asking for rain and gratitude.

The rezador and the managers prepare the candles and bouquets that are to be offered up in the cave, and pairs of candles are used and are distributed among managers who help the rezador. The latter is the one who started this ritual cleansing process of the miraculous cross that is at the entrance of the cave, followed immediately by the main prayer in the ritual language by the rezador. Undoubtedly, this is a founding moment of the cosmos-human, deity-subject relationship, as they have entered the cave once they have asked the necessary permission from the entities that protect it.

When they have finished the main prayer, they begin to give the necessary instructions to begin the descent into the cavern. Once the descent has begun, the rezador, with the principal, the pilgrims begin to help the rezador and the managers to place and light a candle in each water drip or source that they find inside the cave. When they find rock formations with greater signs of water, a couple of candles are lit and a couple of bouquets stand as a kind of offering, with the intention to continue preserving this vital liquid and to ask the deities to provide the necessary rain for crops. Also, some believe that the waters deposited in these cave formations have healing powers, as many pilgrims touch the water and make the sign of the cross over their heads or body parts that need to be healed.

They also have the belief that it is in these places where the hearts of the main seeds that make up the daily basic diet are maintained, which are usually corn, beans, peppers, squash and tsilacayote. Therefore such visits are important to the Tojolabal people, as they are a founding act for the survival of their sacred dimension and thus the meaning of life of each of the participants at the family and community levels.

Finally the sacred dimension between Tojolabales is set largely in visiting places that have been collectively considered as sacred and also maintain a collective memory of previous generations, creating meaning in the lives of the subjects.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barrera Vázquez**, Alfredo (1980). *Diccionario Maya Cordomex*. Ediciones Cordomex. Mérida, México.
- Bassie-Sweet**, Karen and Nicholas A. Hopkins (2015). *Ancient Thunderbolt and Meteor Deities*. En Bassie-Sweet, Karen et al. *The Ch'ol Maya of Chiapas*. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman. U.S.A.
- Boff**, Leonardo (1996). *Grito de la tierra, grito de los pobres. Hacia una ecología planetaria*. Ediciones Dabar. México, D.F.
- Dussel**, Enrique (1983). *Historia General de la Iglesia en América Latina*. CEHILA Ediciones Sígueme.
- Eliade**, Mircea (1957). *Lo sagrado y lo profano*. Traducción de Luis Gil. Editorial Labor, S.A. Hamburgo.
- López Austin**, Alfredo (2012). *Cosmovisión y pensamiento indígena*. Conceptos y fenómenos fundamentales de nuestro tiempo. Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales/ Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). México D.F.
- Lander**, Edgardo (2000). Ciencias Sociales, saberes coloniales y eurocentrismo. En Lander, Edgardo (comp.). *La colonialidad del saber, eurocentrismo y Ciencias Sociales, perspectivas latinoamericanas*. Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO)/ Unidad Regional de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas para América Latina y el Caribe (UNESCO). Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Limón Aguirre**, Fernando et al (2015). *Sitios sagrados y conservación de la naturaleza*. En Ecofronteras, vol. 19, núm. 53. San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas.
- Montero García**, Ismael Arturo (2004). *Atlas Arqueológico de la Alta Montaña Mexicana*. Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT)/ Comisión Nacional Forestal (CONAFOR). México, D.F.
- Oseguera Arias**, Fátima E. y Julio Cesar Sánchez Morales (2011). Los lenguajes de la naturaleza en la narrativa tseltal de Petalcingo, Chiapas. Revista Elementos, No. 81.
- Zapata Torres**, Jair (s/f). Espacio y territorio sagrado. Lógica del ordenamiento territorial indígena. Síntesis conceptual de la tesis de grado para obtener el Título de Magister en Estudios Urbano-Regionales. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.