

A
castle
for
Temixco

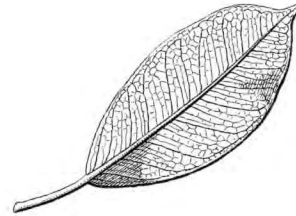
7 Cuauhtémoc Street | Center of Temixco | Morelos
18°50'51.2"N 99°13'27.0"W

The
author

The castle can be seen from
the Parish of Our Lady of the Assumption
on Emiliano Zapata Street.
18°50'50.9"N 99°13'26.1"W

Two blocks away from Solidarity Park
(20 Benito Juárez Street).
18°50'54.8"N 99°13'29.8"W

If you walk from the former Hacienda of
Temixco on Emiliano Zapata Street in 6 minutes
you will face the castle as you arrive to the
intersection of Cuauhtémoc
and Francisco I. Madero streets.



It's been several years now.
I built it according to my way of thinking;
I did the design. It took me about fifteen to
twenty years to build the castle. I did it with
one thing in mind: the fundamental idea
of the castle was to have a reference point
for Central Temixco. Because when
the amate tree was removed, it hurt me
deeply. I thought, I have to make a new
reference point. And the reference point
I wanted to make was a castle-shaped
construction. The castle stood alone
for many years, but later on the people who
lived next to it, well they had to use their land.
It is a monument, really; the person,
the mason, he was someone with a lot of
talent for making things. In Paseos del Río
neighborhood you can ask anyone
"Where's the Japanese house?" they'll tell you.
There's an entrance that is shaped
like a pagoda,

a Japanese pagoda, right there in that area.
Everyone knows that house because,
well, it's like a mole, it stands out.
That same mason made all this for me [the
castle]. So the idea was to have a landmark
that would distinguish Central Temixco.
Throughout time I've tried to establish
landmarks for us here. I was one of the driving
forces behind the garden.
I was the one who, when Antonio Riva Palacio
López was in power, I presented them
a municipal development plan. I said there
that Temixco's center needed a garden
for locals and foreigners. And they moved
the school that was there to a piece of land
they have here, where it currently stands.
That's when Solidaridad Park was built.
During Salinas de Gortari's time I drafted
that municipal development plan. In it I told
the president of the municipality that it was
very necessary to implement a

solidarity plan in Temixco where the community and government would contribute.

For example, the government would provide the materials and the people would provide the labor. That's how I created the solidarity plan. I don't know how Mr. Carlos Salinas de Gortari became aware of this plan and took it and created the solidarity plan. From that municipal development plan I drafted at that time, Mr. Carlos Salinas de Gortari got the structure of his national Solidarity Plan, from that plan in which I stated that it would be implemented with the government's collaboration on the one hand and the population's collaboration on the other. The municipal development plan I drafted, the ideas I put together through my thinking went national. Then I received a letter from the president of our republic acknowledging my contribution to that development. As a citizen, I have served my community. First, because no one wanted to be president

of the Temixco Centro pro-construction committee, no one.

So I said, well, if no one wants to, I'll be the one, and several comrades nominated me. Among them, this gentleman, who has since passed away, Mr. Juan Caspeta, he was the owner of the Rosita butcher shop. That's how the garden was achieved. That monument is there because I needed to place a landmark once the amate tree was removed. They removed the amate tree, which was the Japanese doctor's amate tree. So I said, well, I'm going to build a castle. It took me many years. But all the people passing by, and many who aren't from here, they care about seeing the castle. I'm from Temixco; I was born in the year fifty-four, on July 9, 1954. I love Temixco because I was born in Temixco, I devoted myself to studying and that's why I'm a doctor. My aspirations were to make Temixco a place to live in a dignified manner,

where there would be a garden
and a monument for locals and foreigners alike.

But above all, for locals, so they would know
and say: "... you know what, see you later
at the castle..." "Which castle?"

"The one in front of the church."

"Oh, wow, where is that?"

"Well, just look for it and you'll for sure find it."

Temixco claims it; people already know
where the castle is and that it's in downtown
Temixco. The tree was in the house where my
father lived, here in the center of Temixco.

There, he would play his harmonica and
remember Japanese music and Japan,
and there he would get melancholic and play
his harmonica and then at times he would cry.

It was a landmark.

"There at the Japanese doctor's amate,"
that's what they called it. That ancient tree

is gone; it was a huge tree
that was about five meters wide

and very large.

The castle, well, is a monument
designed to be a landmark for downtown
Temixco, where people can say,
"See you in downtown Temixco,
where the castle stands."

If they removed the Japanese doctor's amate,
a castle had to be built. I believe that
the personality of a human being
is embodied in the structure one creates,
that's right.

Notes from a conversation with
Dr. Alfredo Hiromoto,
author of the monument.
Summer 2021.

The
tree



Morelos is a place where, nine or ten species of amates [*figus*] naturally grow. Morelos generated as tribute for the Aztecs a very significant amount of amate paper. And to speak of amate paper is to speak of a fundamental element of the historical record of those times. Dr. José Vázquez Sánchez registered a *figus* in Temixco, a *figus cotinifolia*, if I recall correctly. And so, he collected it and deposited this information in his herbarium that he built. He conducted a research project in the state for more than ten years and classified organisms, including the amates. There's also the one my student collected, which belongs to the *Moraceae* family; the scientific name is *figus pertusa*. She collected that specimen in Temixco, privately, in that house. It turns out that *figus* are a key species in the dynamics of the ecosystems.

Because in addition to being an element that helps to regulate the climate and reduce soil erosion, amates feed many species with the fruits they produce.

These fruits are actually unopened inflorescences, figs, or syconia.

They are closed inflorescences that are only pollinated by a specific group of wasps. They arrive, penetrate, and there, inside, they carry out fertilization.

An evolutionary history spanning millions of years has been built between these wasps and the amate trees. There are no other species that pollinate these amates besides these tiny wasps.

Just as there is this link with the pollinators, bats are very important dispersers of amates. So, on the one hand, the amate provide them with food, and on the other, they disperse amate seeds. It turns out that the tiny seeds can't germinate very easily.

They require passage through a digestive tract, and once the excrement is generated, then it is possible for the seed to germinate. We find amate trees in the state of Morelos from Cuernavaca to the south.

They provide food when the dry forest loses most of its biomass, when its leaves are lost. Few elements are bearing fruit at these times, and that's where the amate trees, with their different species, provide the food contained in their syconia. They are consumed by some groups such as bats, squirrels, birds, and other insects.

The small wasps only pollinate them. It turns out, the amate tree is a very important element in the survival dynamics of the low deciduous forest, when the jungle goes through the dry season. On one occasion,

when my student and I
happened to be in the community of
Xochipala in front of an amate tree,
we were trying to bring down a species,
and a man approached us and stared at us.
Then he said, "What are you doing?"
"Well, here we are trying to find out what kind
of tree this is," I replied.
"That is a prodigious plant," he told us.
"That plant bears fruit
without having flowered."

Notes from a conversation with
Dr. Rolando Ramírez, director of the
Center for Biodiversity & Conservation
Research (UAEM).
Fall 2021.

A castle for Temixco

<https://annabelcastro.org/Castillo-Temixco/>

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