Painting the Aztec Past in Early Colonial Mexico: Translation and Knowledge Production in the *Codex Mendoza*

DANIELA BLEICHMAR, *University of Southern California*

The "Codex Mendoza" is one of the earliest, most detailed, and most important postconquest accounts of pre-Hispanic Aztec life. Nahuas and Spaniards manufactured the codex through a complex process that involved translations across media, languages, and cultural framings. Translations made Aztec culture legible and acceptable to nonnative viewers and readers by recasting indigenous practices, knowledge, ontology, and epistemology. Following a stratigraphic approach that examines the process through which natives and Spaniards created a transcultural manuscript, the article examines the multiple interpretations and negotiations involved in producing images, books, and information about the indigenous world in early colonial Mexico.

INTRODUCTION: THE *TLACUILO* AND THE PAINTER

IN MEXICO CITY, perhaps in the 1540s, an Aztec painter depicted two men gathered around the very act that occupied him: the creation of a painted manuscript (fig. 1).[1] He unmistakably identified the men as indigenous. Each wears

My thanks to Frances Berdan, Davide Domenici, Jorge Gómez Tejada, Florence Hsia, Dana Leibsohn, Camilla Townsend, and Corinna Zeltsman for their helpful feedback and suggestions. This research was assisted by a Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship for Recently Tenured Scholars from the American Council of Learned Societies.

[1] In this essay, I follow the standard anglophone scholarly conventions of using the terms *Aztec* and *Mexica* interchangeably to refer to the people of Tenochtitlan; *Nahua* to refer more broadly to the indigenous group that included them and other communities; the adjective *colonial* (rather than *viceregal*, a term more commonly used in Spanish than in English); *Mexico* for the urban region formerly occupied by Tenochtitlan (rather than the modern nation-state); and *New Spain* for the kingdom as it existed in the sixteenth century, rather than the larger viceroyalty. I use the word *codex* as is customary in Latin American studies: to refer not to a specific format (the Western-style book) but, rather, to a manuscript connected to Amerindian traditions of pictorial writing and understood to have involved indigenous makers, regardless of its format, support, date, the absence or presence of European elements, or the use of alphabetic text. For Nahuatl terms, I use the translations provided in the *Gran Diccionario Náhuatl* (http://www.gdn.unam.mx/) and the *Online Nahuatl Dictionary* (https://nahuatl.uoregon.edu/). All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

Renaissance Quarterly 72 (2019): 1362–415 © 2020 Renaissance Society of America.
doi:10.1017/rqx.2019.377

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 1. Aztec *tlacuilo* (painter-scribe) at work in preconquest times, from the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 70^{r} (detail).

a simple white *tilmatli* (cape or cloak), tied with a knot over one shoulder. Their ethnicity is also indicated by their bare feet, lack of facial hair—as Spaniards were regularly portrayed with the short, pointy beards fashionable at the time—and straight black hair cut in a bob below the ears, all visual markers of indigeneity in pictorial sources of the time. The man on the left sits on a reed mat (*petatl*), indicating his seniority or higher status. He is an indigenous *tlacuilo* (pl. *tlacuiloque*), a Nahuatl word that modern scholars often translate as "artist-scribe" or "painter-scribe" to capture the dual nature of Mesoamerican pictorial script. He holds in his right hand a reed pen and in his left hand the square surface that he is painting, the shape and scale of which suggest a pre-Hispanic indigenous screenfold manuscript comparable to surviving examples such as the codices in the Borgia group, the *Codex Bodley*, or the *Codex Zouche-Nuttall* (fig. 2).[2]

The *tlacuilo* depicted in this painting has traced a square frame and within it painted two large volutes (comma shapes) originating diagonally from opposite corners. This design, known as *ihuitl* (feather or small feather), had great meaning in Mesoamerican visual culture, where it could represent "the days of the

[2] For the tool: Elizabeth Hill Boone notes that the Mixtec painter in the *Codex Vienna* (48b) is depicted using a brush, while the Aztec painters in the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis* (30^{r}), *Codex Xolotl* (4, 5), and *Mapa Tlotzin* are shown using reed pens; see Boone, 2000, 252n22. On the Borgia group, see Nowotny; Boone, 2007.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 2. Screenfold format used in pre-Hispanic codices. Photograph of the facsimile edition of the *Codex Vienna*: Otto Adelhofer, ed., *Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus 1* (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1974). Image © Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

ritual calendar and their prophetic forces—the days and the fates attached to them."[3] The symbol's significance is heightened by the choice to paint it in black and red, a concrete representation of the diphrasis "in tlilli, in tlapalli" ("the black ink, the red ink" or "the black ink, the colors"), which the Nahuas used to refer to pictorial writing, to painted books more generally, and, more broadly still, to knowledge or wisdom.[4] The paired figures on the painted document are echoed by the small volutes that emerge from the men's mouths, unfurling toward each other. These are the Nahua glyphs for speech, illuminated in the vivid turquoise used to denote something particularly valuable or precious.[5] They indicate that the two men are engaged in conversation. What they discuss is picture making itself: this is an art lesson, with the father training his apprenticing son in the art of painting indigenous books.[6]

[3] Boone, 2016, 41. See also Boone, 2000, 32, 253; Boone, 2007, 88–95.

[4] On "in tlilli, in tlapalli," see Johansson; Magaloni Kerpel, 2011, 56–57, 69; Magaloni Kerpel, 2014, 18; Gómez Tejada, 2013, 29–30. The diphrasis, a central technique in Nahua figurative language, is the formulaic juxtaposition of two words or phrases to refer to a third concept not comprised by either individually. The term was introduced and discussed in Garibay, 1:18–19, 67; see also Leander, 62–65.

[5] On turquoise color (Maya blue) as a symbol of value, see Magaloni Kerpel, 2011, 72; Gómez Tejada, 2013, 116; Magaloni Kerpel, 2014, 42.

[6] On the *tlacuiloque*, see Boone, 2000.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

This vignette appears on the penultimate painted page of a document known as the *Codex Mendoza*, one of the most important sixteenth-century Mexican codices.[7] It is one of several scenes of indigenous male artisans educating their sons in the trade they practice (fig. 3). Written glosses in Spanish identify each figure. The *tlacuilo* and his son are labeled with the Spanish terms *pintor* and *hijo del pintor* (painter; son of the painter). Other figures in the bottom half of the page include a carpenter (*carpintero*), a stoneworker (*lapidario*), a silversmith (*platero*), and a featherworker (*amanteca*) glossed as "master of adorning with feathers." The top half of the page features other types, among them a messenger (*mensajero*), a singer (*cantor*) playing a large drum, a ball player (*jugador de pelota*), and a "player of patol, which is like dice."[8] Through the images, the manuscript provides a view of selected aspects of Aztec society; through the written glosses, it gives Spanish translations—linguistic and cultural—that make the figures legible to viewers unfamiliar with indigenous society.

The indigenous painter who crafted these figures did not depict scenes from contemporary life. Rather, he presented the trades and traditions of the pre-Hispanic past, a world of artistic practices, technologies, and social and cultural meanings that had undergone drastic transformations since the arrival of Spaniards to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, in 1519, and the fall of the Aztec Empire two years later. Indigenous experts who worked with paint, wood, stone, metal, and feathers continued to thrive in the colonial world, transforming their practices in response to changed political, social, and cultural circumstances. They combined old and new materials, techniques, formats, and iconographies. The *tlacuilo* shown in the *Codex Mendoza* exists at an unspecified time previous to the Spanish incursion and creates a pre-Hispanic screenfold manuscript. The Nahuas called this type of object *amoxtli*, a term that literally means "glued sheets of [*amatl*] paper," as it is composed of the roots *amatl* (paper made from the bark of a native fig, the *amaquahuitl*, or paper tree) and *axtli* (glue).[9] *Amoxtli* thus refers to the support and the format rather than to the inscriptions on it. Sixteenth-century Spanish sources, however, without exception translate *amoxtli* as "book" (*libro*), an interpretation that is both linguistic and conceptual, as the category *amoxtli* is analogous but not

[7] The manuscript is held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford University, MS Arch. Selden A. 1 (hereafter Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*) and is fully available in a splendid online edition that includes transcriptions and translations of all the text, http://codicemendoza.inah.gob.mx/inicio.php?lang=english. The indispensable studies are *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992; and Gómez Tejada, 2013. A new facsimile edition with accompanying essays is in preparation: *The Codex Mendoza*, forthcoming. In this article I use the English translation and Spanish transcription (with modernized spelling and punctuation) from the 1992 edition.

[8] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 70r; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:226–34, 4:144–45.

[9] Boone, 2007, 19, citing León Portilla, 1992, 317.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

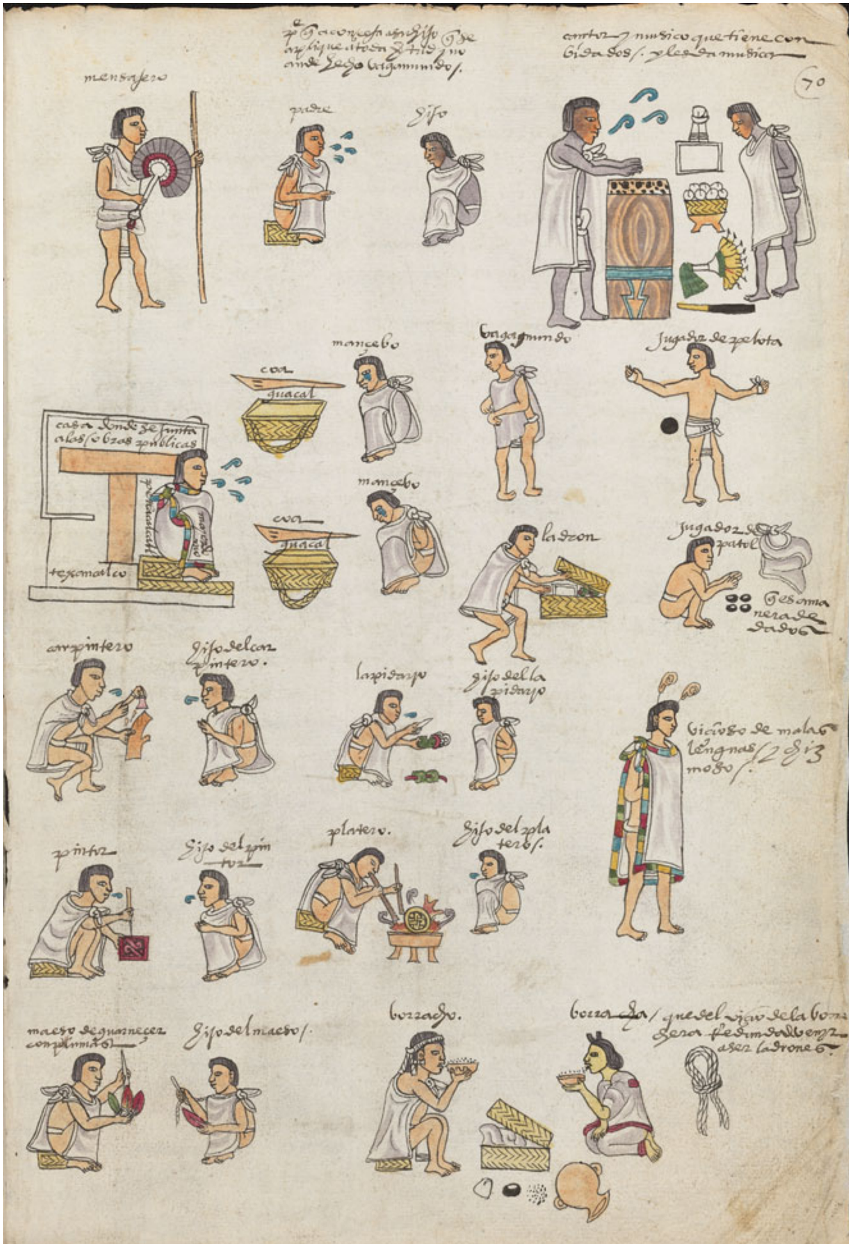


Figure 3. Various occupations in Aztec preconquest society, in the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 70r.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

equivalent to the category *book*. While the *tlacuilo* shown painting an *amoxtli* inhabits an indigenous world devoid of Europeans, the *pintor* who crafted this image lived in a colonial society and contributed to the production of a Western-style manuscript book. He used both native and European materials and elements, anticipating in his work Spanish interventions—most notably the written word—as well as Spanish viewers. This is decidedly not a self-portrait: he was a *pintor*, not a *tlacuilo*. The new self painted the old self.[10]

The Spanish labels annotating the figures, however, both suggest and negate this transformation. Although the presence of alphabetic writing is a conspicuous sign of the colonial context, the written inscriptions characterize the pre-Hispanic characters not as *tlacuiloque* but as painters, using a Spanish category that had not existed for them and that elides the enormous changes that took place following the conquest. The written words translate indigenous practices, techniques, materials, and meanings into colonial ones. While such translation made pre-Hispanic categories visible and legible in postconquest New Spain, it also fundamentally altered indigenous practices, categories, ontologies, and epistemologies. Translation both conveyed and transformed.

In this essay, I propose a new approach to the celebrated *Codex Mendoza*. Studies of colonial Latin American art and culture revolved for many decades around discussions of hybridity, often with the goal of rescuing forms that had previously been derided as poor copies or imitations of superior European originals. Scholars carefully untangled and parsed the intertwined strands of bicultural objects and forms, celebrating them as new hybrid or mestizo mixtures that emerged out of two separate and distinct cultures. The concept of hybridity, however, carries so many problems that it can obscure more than it illuminates.[11] More recently, scholars have turned to a focus on processes of mediation, transculturation, and translation.[12] Alejandra Russo has argued that the production of images and objects in postconquest New Spain depended on a two-way translation whose operation and results always remained visible, yielding objects that are at once translated and untranslatable. The new form always contains the echo of the old form, signaling at once its conversion and the impossibility of that conversion.[13]

Building on such scholarship and on approaches from the history of science and the history of the book, I use the *Mendoza* to analyze the creation of transcultural objects and the production of knowledge in early colonial Mexico. How did indigenous and Spanish participants coproduce new objects and new

[10] My thanks to Corinna Seltzman for this apt phrase.

[11] Many important problems are discussed by Dean and Leibsohn.

[12] For instance, Burghartz, Burkart, and Göttler; Bleichmar, 2016; Göttler and Mochizuki; Grasskamp and Juneja; Gerritsen.

[13] Russo, 2014b.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

interpretations? How were indigenous practices and concepts translated into colonial categories, by both natives and Europeans? What were the implications of such translations—of transmuting indigenous pictorial script into Western painting, of rethinking the *tlacuilo* as a *pintor*? How did images operate as knowledge forms in this context? I consider the codex not as a depository of information but as a site of cultural negotiation and mediation; not as a collection of indigenous raw data that can be mined for information about the Aztec world but as an already interpreted series of statements that can be analyzed for insights into the colonial world. I focus my analysis on process, examining the sequence of steps through which indigenous and Spanish painters, speakers, interpreters, and scribes related images and words to coproduce legible and credible statements. Rather than studying the manuscript as a finished work, reading its pages sequentially, from first to last, I begin with the blank page and follow the various actions and layered traces that yielded the document. Given that the images were created by indigenous painters and the text penned by a Spanish scribe, the focus on process illuminates the negotiation of visual and textual elements in the production of knowledge, and the ways in which natives and Spaniards made sense of Aztec history and culture in the decades immediately following the conquest. Both indigenous and Spanish individuals produced meaning, for and in response to each other. As a result of this process, native practices and categories were recast as colonial ones: native *tlacuilolli* (pictorial writing) became colonial *pintura* (painting); the image maker of the indigenous pre-Hispanic past (*tlacuilo*) was recast in the postconquest present as a painter (*pintor*). Such reinvention of indigenous traces and practices resulted from multiple acts of translation and interpretation, with profound ontological and epistemological implications.

READING FOR CONTENT: MAKING AZTECS LEGIBLE

The *Codex Mendoza* is a pictorial manuscript in the format of a European-style book created in Mexico City not long after the Spanish conquest. It is composed of seventy-one folios of European paper, folded and cut to form quarto pages measuring roughly 30 x 21 centimeters (12 x 8 ¼ inches). Of the total 142 pages, 73 are primarily pictorial and 63 are textual. Seven were left blank, for unknown reasons. The juxtaposition of pictorial and textual material is a result of the work's coproduction by indigenous and Spanish makers: native painters created the images; a Spanish scribe wrote the Spanish-language text and annotated the images with textual glosses. However, the names of the painters, scribe, or patron are not inscribed in the manuscript, which does not include a title, date, title page, or frontispiece.[14]

[14] Those paratextual elements may never have existed, or they may have been produced but removed from the manuscript at some point. Samuel Purchas alludes to a "preface" (Purchas,

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Scholars have long attempted to establish the identity of the document's makers and patron, as well as the date when it was created. Between the mid-sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries the manuscript remained unnamed despite being well known and much studied. For almost two and a half centuries, authors described it as a "Mexican history in pictures" (or similar phrases).[15] In 1780 the Mexican Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731–87) first linked the document to the illustrious first viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Mendoza (1495–1552; r. 1535–50), referring to it as "la raccolta di Mendoza" ("Mendoza's collection").[16] That attribution was repeated in 1813 by the renowned traveler and scholar Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), cementing the connection to Mendoza.[17] In the late 1930s and early 1940s, historians Silvio Zavala and Federico Gómez de Orozco used archival documents to support the idea that Mendoza commissioned the manuscript. They suggested that the codex was created around 1541 by Francisco Gualpuyogualcal (dates unknown), an indigenous "master of the painters," who worked in collaboration with the author of the Spanish text, "a modest and virtuous canon of Mexico called Juan González."[18] Although the Zavala–Gómez de Orozco hypothesis was widely accepted, I find these claims inconclusive. I share the doubts regarding authorship expressed in 1992 by Henry Nicholson and more recently by Jorge Gómez Tejada. Also in question is the manuscript's dating: Gómez Tejada has proposed it may have been created ca. 1547–52; analyses conducted by Davide Domenici and collaborators,

---

1625, 3:1065) but this may be a mischaracterization of the concluding address to the reader at the end of the manuscript given that the information Purchas cites is almost identical to that offered there (Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 71^{v}; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 4:148). No other source on the *Mendoza* mentions a preface.

[15] As first described in Purchas, 1625, 3:1065–117.

[16] Clavijero appears to have based the attribution on Purchas's claim that the manuscript had been commissioned by "the Spanish Governor" and intended for Charles V, though Purchas did not identify that governor by name. See Clavijero, 22; Purchas, 1625, 3:1065. Mendoza did commission an illustrated manuscript, the *Relación de Michoacán* (1540). He also wrote to Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés that he had "tried to collect a report of the things of this land," as cited in Gómez Tejada, 2013, 304. This suggests that the viceroy would have been very interested in a document such as the *Codex Mendoza.* However, it is hard to believe that his patronage would not be acknowledged if he had commissioned the manuscript. The *Relación de Michoacán* includes a title page prominently announcing Mendoza's patronage, as well as a painting that depicts the viceroy receiving the work from a Franciscan friar (Jerónimo de Alcalá) and indigenous men. See Afanador Pujol, 17–20.

[17] Humboldt, 284–91 (on plates lviii and lix).

[18] Quoted in Nicholson, 1–2.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

while not definitive, extend the possible dates of manufacture from the 1530s to the 1560s.[19]

The manuscript is organized in three thematically distinct sections, clearly identified at their openings and closings through inscriptions written in a different handwriting from that used throughout the manuscript, which could indicate the presence of another scribe and, perhaps, the insertion of these minimal paratextual elements at a point following the composition of the majority of the written work.[20] The first section occupies a total of sixteen folios, representing roughly a fourth of the manuscript. It charts the military history of the Mexica (Aztecs) from the founding of the city of Tenochtitlan in 1325 (year Two House in the Aztec calendar) (fig. 4) to the end of the reign of Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin (Motecuhzoma II, ca. 1466–1520; r. 1502–20).[21] History is organized as a sequence of emperors (*huey tlatoque*, sing. *huey tlatoani*), the years they governed, and the communities (*altepeme*, sing. *altepetl*) they rendered tributaries through military conquest. The second section of the manuscript presents economic information: the taxes that various communities paid to Tenochtitlan, specifying both objects and quantities (fig. 5).[22] This is the longest of the three parts of the book, extending over thirty-nine folios—almost exactly twice as long as the first section and almost 60 percent of the entire manuscript.[23] The third and final section, like the first one, occupies sixteen folios. It provides a detailed account of Aztec life and customs from birth to old age, describing such aspects as the upbringing of boys and girls until they turned fifteen, when girls would marry and boys would enter a trade or attend specialized academies (fig. 6); various occupations, with depictions of military orders and their uniforms; and practices of governance and the justice system.[24] It thus provides a unique glimpse of precontact "private and public rites from the grave of the womb to the womb of the grave"—to use the evocative words of a seventeenth-century commentator—at a time when they were being dramatically transformed under Spanish rule.[25] These three parts

[19] Gómez Tejada, 2013, 306–20; Domenici et al. To indicate this uncertainty, I date the manuscript as "ca. 1540s." I continue to call it the *Codex Mendoza* for the sake of clarity, despite the lack of conclusive evidence to support this name.

[20] On each of the three sections, see Boone, 1992; Berdan, 1992; Calnek.

[21] Fol. 2r may be the most studied and reproduced page from the codex: see *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:3–7, 4:8–9; Mundy, 3–5.

[22] On fol. 47r, see *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:116–19, 4:98–99.

[23] The second section occupies 78 out of the total 135 painted or written pages. Scholars have commonly described the contents of this section as "tribute" (a direct translation of the Spanish term *tributo*) rather than "tax"; this idea is challenged by Smith.

[24] On fol. 61r, see *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:166–71, 4:126–27.

[25] Purchas, 1625, 3:1066. I have modernized the original spelling.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 4. The foundation of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, in 1325 (year Two House), painted as a depiction of historical events and geographic place, in the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 2^{r}.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

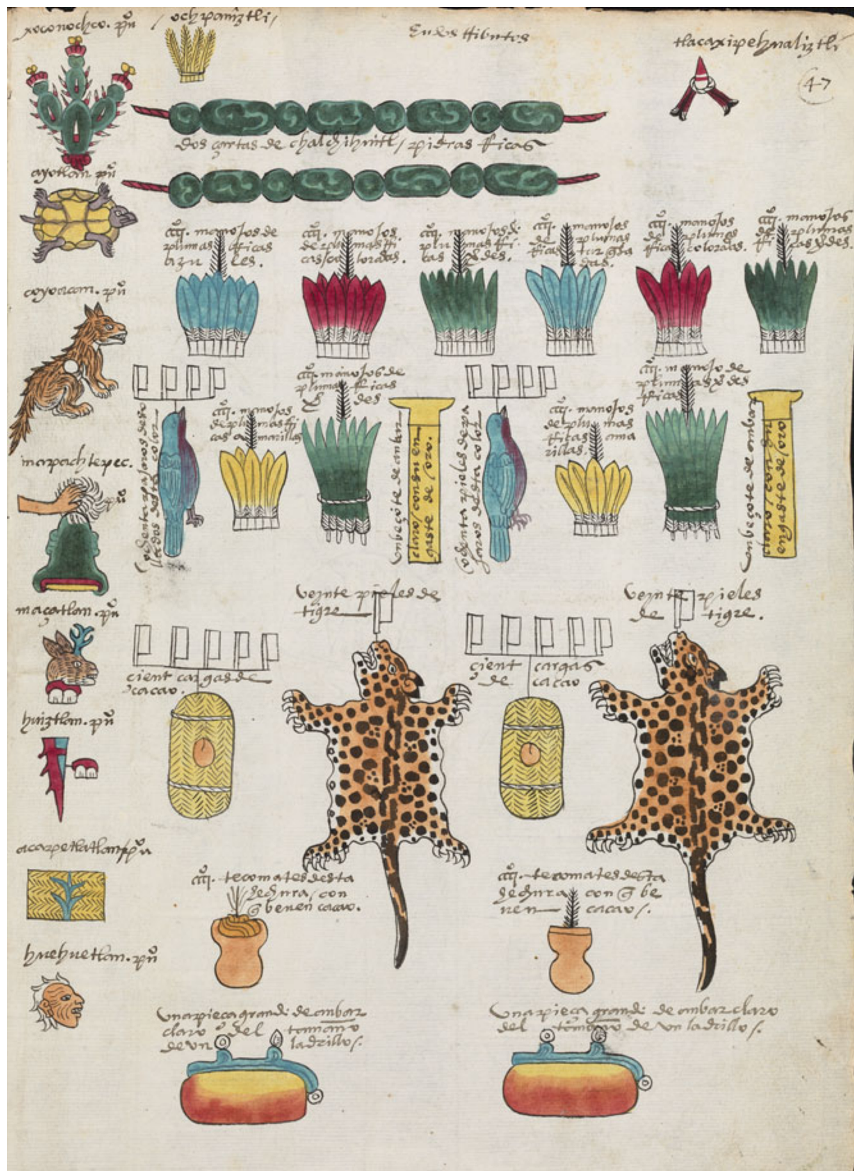


Figure 5. Taxes paid to Tenochtitlan by eight towns in the province of Xoconochco, including strings of fine green stones (*chalchihuitl*), bundles of rich feathers of different colors, bird skins, loads of cacao, gourds for drinking cacao, two large pieces of clear amber decorated with gold, and jaguar skins (mistranslated as "tiger skins"), in the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 47r.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 6. Wedding ceremony (bottom) and the education of young men at specialized schools for religious and military leaders called *calmecac* and *cuicacalli* (house of song), in the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 61[r].

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

represent both continuity and transformation. The first section relates to a standard Mesoamerican genre of dynastic history; the second is closely connected to a surviving Aztec document, the *Matrícula de tributos*; and the third is not related to any known precedents and likely represents an innovation.[26]

Although the *Codex Mendoza* was produced with a Spanish audience in mind, its circulation was much wider than its creators could have anticipated.[27] The manuscript ended up not in Spain but in Paris, later traveled to London, and eventually made its way to the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford, where it remains to this day. This trajectory placed it in the hands of important authors and collectors, all of whom were connected to French or English interests in the Americas and beyond: André Thevet (1516–90), Richard Hakluyt (ca. 1552–1616), Samuel Purchas (ca. 1577–1626), and John Selden (1584–1654). The codex also circulated in printed versions. In 1625, Purchas published a fifty-two-page chapter reproducing almost the entire pictorial content of the *Mendoza* as well as an English translation of the Spanish text, with additional commentary. This is the longest and most heavily illustrated chapter of Purchas's four-volume, widely read *Hakluytus posthumus or Purchas his pilgrimes*.[28] Using Purchas's chapter—rather than the original manuscript—as a source, no fewer than seven other titles in ten different editions reproduced portions of the material over the next two centuries. Thanks to Purchas, the *Mendoza* was the most reproduced and analyzed Mexican object in early modern Western publications. It may well be the non-European object most studied by Europeans before the nineteenth century. It was, without question, the most significant source for the study of the Mexica for centuries, and the object of a remarkable and sustained degree of attention from the sixteenth century to the present.[29]

Purchas memorably called the *Codex Mendoza* "the choicest of my jewels" and proposed that "perhaps there is not any one History of this kind in the world

[26] On the *Matrícula de tributos*—once believed to be an early postconquest document but now thought to be pre-Hispanic—see Berdan and Durand-Forest; Castilló Farreras and Sepúlveda y Herrera; Berdan, 1976, 1992, and forthcoming; Batalla Rosado. Johansson, 85, suggests that the third part may be linked to a pre-Hispanic genre, though there are no known examples.

[27] I know of no evidence documenting that the manuscript arrived in Spain; Gómez Tejada suggests it could have: Gómez Tejada, 2013, 316.

[28] Purchas, 1625, 3:1065–117. Purchas briefly alluded to what he called a "Mexican historie" and "Mexican picture historie" in the 1614 second, revised edition of his original (1613) collection of travels, but did not reproduce the codex until 1625. See Purchas, 1614, 803–04, 811.

[29] On the codex's history and reproductions, see Bleichmar, 2015; Nicholson; Olson, forthcoming.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

comparable to this, so fully expressing so much without letters."[30] For Purchas, the Mexica images made the document unique and remarkable. Running headers printed at the top of the page encapsulate what he found most salient, describing the manuscript as "Mexican historie in pictures. Chronicle without writing" (fig. 7) and "Mexican Pictures, or Historie without Letters."[31] But the manuscript does indeed include alphabetic writing, and quite a bit of it. Every single one of the hundreds of figures is annotated with a written gloss in Spanish; additionally, every single page of pictorial content is complemented by a page of Spanish writing. It is this writing, in fact, that made the Mexica paintings legible to most viewers.

Scholars and collectors who examined pre-Hispanic codices in early modern Europe, unable to decipher indigenous pictorial writing, often had to shrug their shoulders in befuddled incomprehension. A 1667 publication describes the *Codex Cospi* as a book of "Mexican hieroglyphs, which are most extravagant figures and for the most part depict men and animals that are strangely monstrous." Although the book includes woodcuts reproducing some of these figures, the author did not know what to make of them (fig. 8). "What these mean," he noted, "I do not know, nor do I know of others in Europe who know it." He considered the "hieroglyphs" both fascinating and inscrutable, a "literary mystery, not yet explained," and their eventual decipherment "a beautiful and curious undertaking."[32] Purchas used almost identical terms to describe his inability to interpret the characters on a Chinese map he discussed in the same 1625 volume in which he reproduced the *Codex Mendoza*.[33] By contrast, the Spanish text allowed early modern Europeans to access the *Mendoza*, making it an exceptional source. Combining indigenous paintings and Spanish text, this unique document allowed scholars—at that time and ever since—to read Mexica pictographic writing. It made Aztecs legible to Western audiences. Thus, while modern scholars have cherished the *Mendoza* for the enormous amount of detailed information it provides about Aztec history, economy, and culture; for its artistic quality; and for its early date of manufacture, the document's significance is in part due to its status as a primer for the study of Mexica pictorial writing and a kind of Rosetta Stone for its interpretation.

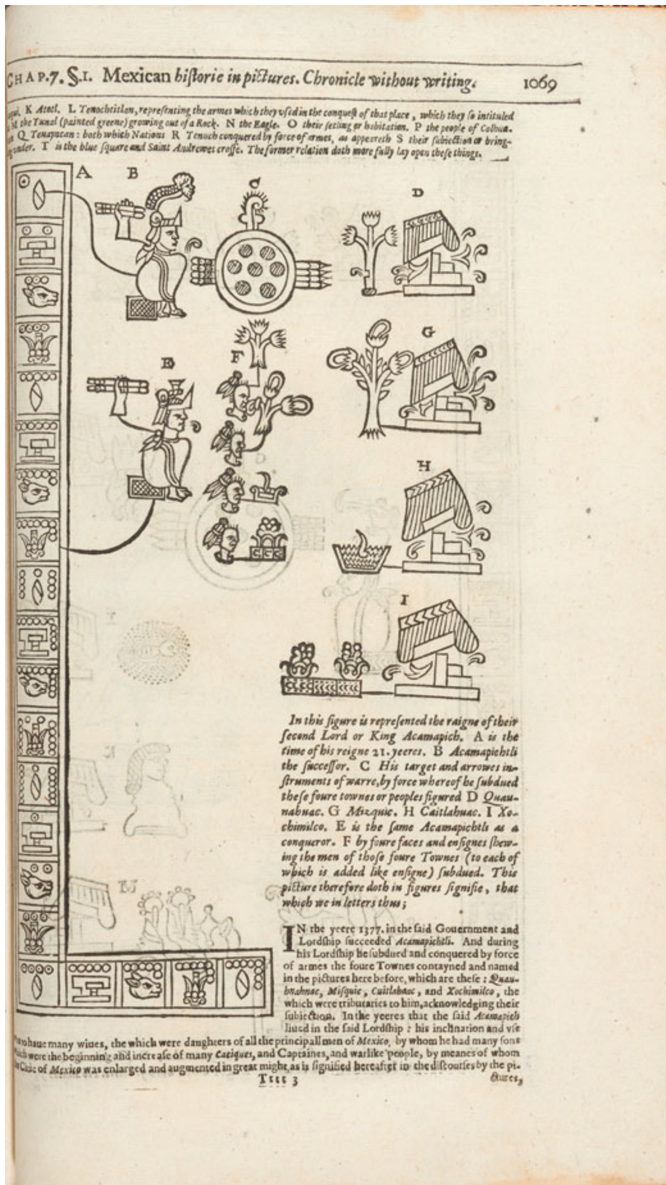
[30] Purchas, 1625, 3:1065, 1066.

[31] Purchas, 1625, 3:1069–72, 1074, 1076–79, 1075.

[32] Legati, 191, 192. On Mexican codices in early modern European collections, see especially Laurencich-Minelli; Domenici and Laurencich-Minelli; Domenici, 2014 and 2016; Toorians, 1983 and 1984. On the idea of Mexican hieroglyphs, see Hamann, 2008.

[33] Purchas, 1625, 3:401. My thanks to Florence Hsia for alerting me to this passage.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press



CHAP.7. §.1. Mexican *hiſtorie in pictures. Chronicle without writing.* 1069

…K Atetl. L *Tenochtitlan, repreſenting the armes which they vſed in the conqueſt of that place, which they ſo intituled … M the Tunal (painted greene) growing out of a Rock.* N *the Eagle.* O *their ſeting or habitation.* P *the people of Colhua. … Q Tenayucan: both which Nations* R *Tenuch conquered by force of armes, as appeareth* S *their ſubiection or bring- …vnder.* T *is the blue ſquare and Saint Andrewes croſſe. The former relation doth more fully lay open theſe things.*

In this figure is repreſented the raigne of their ſecond Lord or King Acamapich. A *is the time of his reigne 21. yeeres.* B *Acamapichtli the ſucceſſor.* C *His target and arrowes inſtruments of warre, by force whereof he ſubdued theſe foure townes or peoples figured* D *Quaunahuac.* G *Mizquic.* H *Caitlahuac.* I *Xochimilco.* E *is the ſame Acamapichtli as a conqueror.* F *by foure faces and enſignes ſhewing the men of thoſe foure Townes (to each of which is added like enſigne) ſubdued. This picture therefore doth in figures ſignifie, that which we in letters thus;*

IN the yeere 1377. in the ſaid Gouernment and Lordſhip ſucceeded *Acamapichtli.* And during his Lordſhip he ſubdued and conquered by force of armes the foure Townes contayned and named in the pictures here before, which are theſe: *Quauhnahuac, Miſquic, Cuitlahuac*, and *Xochimilco*, the which were tributaries to him, acknowledging their ſubiection. In the yeeres that the ſaid *Acamapich* liued in the ſaid Lordſhip: his inclination and vſe … to haue many wiues, the which were daughters of all the principall men of *Mexico*, by whom he had many ſons … which were the beginning and increaſe of many *Caciques*, and Captaines, and warlike people, by meanes of whom … Citie of *Mexico* was enlarged and augmented in great might, as is ſignified hereafter in the diſcourſes by the pictures,

Tttt 3

Figure 7. “Mexican historie in pictures. Chronicle without writing”: running header identifying the *Codex Mendoza*, in Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus posthumus or Purchas his pilgrimes* (London, 1625), 3:1069. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, RB 3341.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

192 MVSEO COSPIANO

Ne' margini poi delle ſudette undici pagine egli ſegnò alcuni Geroglifici Minimi, che parimente ſembrano ſpiegazione de' Geroglifici Maſsimi, a' quali fanno corona. Ad ognuno de' quali Geroglifici Maſſimi ſottoſcritti ſi mirano alcuni caratteri neri rotondi, che ſembrano zeri, diviſi a due a due, riga per riga con una linea ſola; e condue, quando ſono ad uno ad uno, come qui ſi vede.

17 Che coſa ſignifichino, non m'è noto, nè sò che ſia noto ad altri nell' Europa: non havendo per anco trovato chi li mentovi, e ne dia lume alcuno: e poſſo dirne con l'eruditiſſimo Vormio, il quale nel ſuo Muſeo publicò, mà non iſpiegò (e così pure haveva fatto il *de Laët*) una Tavola di ſimil Caratteri *HIEROGLYPHICA MEXICANA, miris conſtantia figuris vario colorum genere depictis, ex quibus vix quiſpiam quidquam collegerit*. Sò che s'accingerebbe ad una bella, e curioſa impreſa, chi prendeſſe ad illuſtrare le tenebre di queſti miſterii letterarii, non per anco ſpiegati nell' Europa.

Io. de Laet. l. 5 c 10 de ſcript. Ind. Occident. Vorm. l 4. Muſ. c. 12 p. 383. 384.

18 Serbaſi queſto ſingolariſſimo libro in una caſſa quadrata di nobile artifizio, con il coperchio di criſtallo, eſſendone li XVI. Decembre del MDCLXV. ſtato fatto un regalo al Muſeo dalla mano corteſe del virtuoſiſsimo Sig. Co. Valerio Zani, Nipote di Monſignor Coſtanzo Zani Veſcovo d'Imola, e Riſtoratore dell' Accademia de' Gelat (di cui ne raccolſe, e publicò le Memorie, & un Volume di Proſe, mentre n'era Principe gli anni MDCLXX. e LXXI.) il quale donò poi al Muſeo dell' Aldrovandi quella Verga di legno, che vi ſi vede con la ſuperfizie tutta figurata di ſimili geroglifici con particolare induſtria intagliativi, in ogni ſua parte indorata.

19 VOLVME di SCORZA INTERIORE d' ALBERO, forſi di Tiglia, ſcritto con caratteri Barbari, di notabile antichità, i quali però tengono qualche ſimiglianza co' Latini. Si diſtende a pochi palmi, mancandoli il fine. Per eſſere fatto di quella materia, che diceſſimo chiamarſi da Latini propriamente *Liber*, poteva, con molto maggior ragione, che i noſtrali, chiamarſi *Libro*. Contuttociò non è per lui nome improprio quello di *Volume*, che li conviene

aſſai

Figure 8. “Mexican hieroglyphs, which are most extravagant figures and for the most part depict men and animals that are strangely monstrous”: woodcuts reproducing figures from the *Codex Cospi*, in Lorenzo Legati, *Museo Cospiano* (Bologna, 1677), 192. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, CA, 85-B1671.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In divorcing image and word, Purchas responded to a crucial aspect of the codex: it combines elements from different hands and perspectives, bringing together Mexica and Spanish components that were crafted in relation to one another. Concerned above all with the indigenous component, Purchas considered the images the true—indeed, the only—content. He viewed the alphabetic writing as a mere supplement, a commentary on the pictorial writing that made the images legible, but not an object of study in itself. This approach has proved remarkably long-lived. From the seventeenth century to the present, scholarship on the *Codex Mendoza* has focused on interpreting the pictographs in order to study Nahua pictorial writing, mining the document as a unique and immensely rich source of empirical data on preconquest Mexica society. For Purchas and for later scholars, isolating the indigenous images from the Spanish text has often been an unquestioned maneuver.

In what follows, I use a different approach: I consider the images and texts as inextricably imbricated. Moving away from the content that is legible in the finished product, I begin with the blank page and examine the complex process through which indigenous and Spanish makers coproduced the codex, as well as the context in which they produced it. Investigating the making of the object sheds light on the creation of meaning in early colonial Mexico.

CREATING MEANING: PROCESS AND CONTEXT

One can read and look at the *Codex Mendoza* following a standard approach: turn the cover, open to the first page, start at top left, and move on from there, left to right, top to bottom, page after page, from beginning to end. Encountering the codex in this conventional and linear manner, from front to back, is a perfectly good way to get at its content. Political-military history comes first, followed by economics, and ending with sociocultural information—a coherent and completely unremarkable sequence. Dynastic history begins with the foundation of Tenochtitlan and moves in a linear fashion, year to year and ruler to ruler, until the end Moctezuma II's reign and the city's so-called "pacification and conquest."[34] This vision of history connects time to place, with the city's establishment anchored in both space and time and the pictorial representation of each emperor's reign relating years of rule to the towns or communities he brought into the imperial fold—what Federico Navarrete has termed the "imperial chronotope."[35] The second section details the tax obligations of individual towns, region by region. It is thus a logical continuation of the first, as it presents the material consequence and spatial distribution of military history. In the final

[34] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 15v; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:24–25, 4:35–36.

[35] Navarrete, 179.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

section, customs are presented along a temporal axis, from birth to death. The document thus moves from spatialized imperial chronology to spatialized imperial economics to an account of how individual life cycles form part of the imperial social order. The codex yields wonderful and valuable information about the Aztec world. That is its explicit purpose, and that is how it has been used.

The manuscript, however, presents another possible way of encountering and decoding it: not from front to back, from first to last page, but, instead, from bottom to top, from the blank page to the finished document. This stratigraphic approach focuses on the sequential layering of elements and the multiple acts of translation and interpretation involved in producing the *Codex Mendoza*—the process, not the content; the making of meaning, not the information.

This possibility is suggested by the document itself. The very last page of the codex does not form part of the third and final section, nor does it contain indigenous paintings. It is a stand-alone textual addendum, in which a Spanish scribe addresses the reader directly to detail some aspects of the manuscript's production:

> The reader must excuse the rough style in the interpretation of the drawings in this history, because the interpreter did not take time or work at all slowly; and because it was a matter neither agreed upon nor thought about, it was interpreted according to legal conventions. Likewise, it was a mistake for the interpreter to use the Moorish words *alfaqui mayor* and *alfaqui noviçio*; *saçerdote mayor* should be written for *alfaqui mayor*, and *saçerdote noviçio* for the novice. And where *mezquitas* is written, *templos* is to be understood. The interpreter was given this history ten days prior to the departure of the fleet, and he interpreted it carelessly because the Indians came to agreement late; and so it was done in haste and he did not improve the style suitable for an interpretation, nor did he take time to polish the words and grammar or make a clean copy. And although the interpretations are crude, one should only take into account the substance of the explanations that explain the drawings; these are correctly presented, because the interpreter of them is well versed in the Mexican language.[36]

This note illuminates three elements that are crucial to understanding the meaning and significance of the *Codex Mendoza* in mid-sixteenth-century New Spain: (1) the process through which various participants composed the manuscript, (2) the context in which they created it, and (3) the importance of translation to its making. In terms of the manufacture process, the text outlines a sequence of steps that began with indigenous men painting figures on paper; these images then served as the basis of an oral account given by indigenous informants in Nahuatl; their speech was in turn translated into spoken

[36] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 71^{v}; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 4:148.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Spanish by an interpreter (a *nahuatlato*, or Nahuatl-Spanish translator); and a scribe set down the Spanish oral interpretation as a written text. While both natives and Spaniards worked as interpreters in this period, the characterization of the interpreter as being "well versed in the Mexican language" suggests that in this case the *nahuatlato* was Spanish. At some point during this process, corrections were made to the text, crossing out specific factual statements—such as dates in the historical section—and replacing them with new information. Finally, a scribe added the concluding statement.

This process is directly related to the context in which the codex was created. The scribe explains that the enterprise had not been carefully prepared or thought through and, because of time pressure, the manuscript had to be compiled at breakneck speed. This necessitated working "in the legal manner" ("a uso de proceso"). In other words, the paintings were interpreted in a legal context rather than in a missionary context, as some scholars have proposed.[37] In fact, the series of steps outlined above was precisely the one followed at the time in court proceedings: indigenous painters created images that were then brought into a legal setting, where indigenous witnesses provided an oral testimony that was then orally translated by a court interpreter and set down as Spanish written text. Many contemporaneous pictorial manuscripts emerged as part of legal proceedings, among them codices *Huexotzinco* (1531), *Tepeucila* (1543), *Tepetlaoztoc* (also known as *Kingsborough*, 1554), and *Osuna* (1565), which present many intriguing correspondences with the *Mendoza* in the legal context, the use of native images as evidence, and the relationship between image and writing.[38]

This legal setting makes the *Codex Mendoza* distinctive from other important manuscripts from that period, such as the *Relación de Michoacán* (1540), the *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano* (1552), or the *Florentine Codex* (ca. 1577), all of which involved the participation of Franciscan missionaries as well as indigenous painters and learned men, and all of which were created as books in the

[37] Suggestions of missionary involvement were initially offered by Federico Gómez de Orozco in 1941; see Nicholson, 2. See also Berdan and Anawalt, xiii; Gómez Tejada, 2013, 27, 178–82, 267–321. Gómez-Tejada has pointed out that the *Codex Mendoza* offers a view of the Mexica that resonates with the writings of friars Bartolomé de las Casas, Andrés de Olmos, and Toribio de Benavente (known as "Motolinía"). For the moment, lacking solid evidence to demonstrate incontrovertibly the participation of a friar in the composition of the manuscript, the idea remains a conjecture.

[38] These manuscripts were submitted as evidence by indigenous communities involved in legal cases against *encomenderos* and administrators accused of extracting excessive goods from the communities, among other abuses of power. This is an important difference with the *Codex Mendoza*, which was not part of a legal process. On these documents, see Cummins; Herrera Meza and Ruiz Medrano; Russo, 2014b, 95–99; Valle Pérez.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Western tradition. In mid-sixteenth-century New Spain, Western books carried connotations of learning, prestige, and privilege. The Franciscan Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, inaugurated in 1536 to educate the native male elite and supported by Viceroy Mendoza, held a substantial library. Three years later, the printer Juan Pablos began operating the first press outside of Europe, a Mexico City branch of the important Seville printing house of Cromberger. Books and prints also arrived from Europe. The indigenous men of the Colegio were trilingual—fluent in Nahuatl, Spanish, and Latin—and bicultural. Their studies included grammar, rhetoric, and logic, the trivium of humanist education; they read scripture, the writings of the church fathers, and classical and modern authors.[39] They mastered the elegant Italic hand preferred by humanists and spread through printed manuals, as can be seen from the handwriting in the *Cruz-Badiano* and *Florentine* codices.[40] Thus, although natives and Spaniards repeatedly collaborated on the production of manuscript books, and although printed books and images were available in select circles in Mexico City at the time, the *Codex Mendoza* was created within the context of legal processes and indigenous painted and oral testimony rather than that of missionary activity or book production.

The results of such process and context are visible throughout the *Codex Mendoza*. One significant consequence, as the scribe noted, concerns the prose style. The *Codex Mendoza* lacks the polished, refined narrative with careful attention paid to wording and compositional choices that would befit a history or chronicle, as seen in many texts produced in the decades following the conquest.[41] It was penned by a working legal scribe (a *notario* or *escribano*), not a grammarian (*gramático*)—the term that Bernardino de Sahagún and other Franciscans used to identify their learned indigenous collaborators.[42] As a result, notarial conventions appear throughout the document, such as the constant use of the term *ydem*, indicated by the customary abbreviation, before the start of many paragraphs and before each item in a list, as was the norm when recording inventories or testimony. Another standard notarial scribal practice evident throughout the *Codex Mendoza* consists in the inclusion of a validating statement at the bottom of the page to register and certify cancellations, additions, or corrections to the original text, using set formulas such as "it is attested that . . . is marked out" ("va testado o diz . . . no enpezca"), "where it says . . . let

[39] Duarte, esp. 89–90; Mathes; SilverMoon.

[40] On design elements in the *Florentine Codex*, see Garone Gravier; Peterson, 1988. On the connection between the library and design, see Peterson, 2017.

[41] On the conventions, stakes, and impact of histories of the conquest, see in particular Adorno; Restall, 2004; Terraciano, 2011.

[42] Sahagún, 1950, 1:54–55.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

it stand" ("o diz . . . vala"), and "it is corrected" ("va enmendado").[43] This legalistic, testimonial approach is also seen in the frequent use of terms that convey the presentation of evidence and the faithful transcription of reported speech, including the verbs "mean," "declare," "demonstrate," and "show" (*significar*, *declarar*, *demonstrar*, *mostrar*) and phrases such as "so that it may be understood" ("para que se entienda"). Other marks of notarial practice include the use of a pragmatic handwriting style common to official documents (*letra cortesana*), rather than the elegant Italic of learned humanists; the constant recourse to abbreviations common in notarial work; and the hurried quality characteristic of handwriting produced at a fast clip to capture the spoken word.[44]

Another notable difference involves the manuscript's design. It lacks the paratextual elements conventional to Western books at the time, such as title page, frontispiece, dedication, index, and (at times) table of contents. The layout of text on the page eschews standard design elements such as rubrication, large decorative capital letters or headers, and the visual design of text in columns or inverted triangles. These conventions were well known to indigenous painters and writers in sixteenth-century New Spain, within and beyond Tlatelolco, as can be seen in the aforementioned manuscripts produced there, as well as in other mid-sixteenth-century documents, such as the *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca* (fig. 9). This work, commissioned ca. 1560 by a native patron named don Alonso de Castañeda of Cuauhtinchan, includes painted images and alphabetic text written in Nahuatl. Word and image are arranged on the page according to standard elements of Western book design. The manuscript's makers used rubrication, enlarged the initial capital letters, organized the text in columns, and framed the images with a thick, black, solid line in the manner of woodcuts.[45] In other words, paratextual and design elements clearly establish that manuscripts such as the *Relación de Michoacán*, *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano*, *Florentine Codex*, and *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca* were conceived and created as illustrated books in the European tradition. This is not the case with the *Codex Mendoza*. Although it is normally called an illustrated manuscript, it would be more accurate to describe it as a copiously annotated collection of paintings.

The third noteworthy point about the final passage in the *Codex Mendoza* is the writer's keen awareness of the central role that translation and interpretation played in the making of the manuscript. In the midst of justifying the rushed manufacture and inelegant style of the prose, the scribe both certifies the translator's linguistic

[43] Such corrections appear on almost every single textual section in the first part of the manuscript but are not included for corrections and additions in the second and third parts.

[44] On notaries in the Spanish Americas, see Burns, 2005 and 2010; Herzog; Kellogg, esp. 3–82.

[45] Leibsohn; more broadly, see Townsend, 2017.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 9. Icxicoatl and Quetzaltehueyac flank a stylized place-name glyph for Tula (Tollan, translated as "Place of Reeds"), in *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca*, ca. 1560. Pigment on European paper, ca. 11¼ x 7⅞ in. (28.5 x 20 cm). Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Mexicain 46–58, fol. 2r.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

competence and derides some of the *nahuatlato*'s choices. The scribe criticizes the use of the term *alfaquí*, a Spanish word of Arabic origin denoting a Muslim cleric or an expert in Islamic law, rather than the more suitable *sacerdote* (priest) when referring to Aztec spiritual experts. He voices the same objection to the term *mezquita* (mosque), suggesting instead *templo* (temple). The critique signals the scribe's attention to the intertwining of linguistic and cultural translation. It had been a poor choice to use "such words," he explained, as they "are Moorish" ("tales nombres . . . son moriscos"). This objection is intriguing because, as is well known, many sixteenth-century Spanish authors did not hesitate to refer to Mesoamerican temples as mosques—including, most famously, Hernán Cortés. In doing so, they explicitly related New World *conquistas* to the Old World *reconquista*, and the fight against Native American religions to the Spanish combat against Islam.[46] As Anthony Pagden has perceptively suggested, "ideologically the struggle against Islam offered a descriptive language which allowed the generally shabby ventures in America to be vested with a seemingly eschatological significance."[47] In this context, the scribe's objection signals his attention to the connections between linguistic and cultural translation, as well as his awareness that the choice of a particular Spanish term to convey an indigenous category would carry with it specific associations. The use of Islamic terms would situate Mexica religion within discourses of combat against infidels; the use of more generic words without those associations would instead present the Aztecs as convertible pagans.[48]

TRANSLATIONS

Guided by the scribe's attention to process and translation, I now turn to an examination of the five steps through which the *Codex Mendoza* was composed, in order to suggest that they represent a series of translations across media, languages, and cultural framings. I follow a stratigraphic approach, tracking the vertical layering of content and approaching the final manuscript as the accumulation of distinct deposits of medium, voice, and meaning. Throughout the process, translation was continual and left traces. As a result, the manuscript is not only a source of knowledge about the Aztec world but also a record of knowledge in the making, providing evidence of the decisions, the frictions, and the

[46] Others drew analogies between Aztec gods and the Greco-Roman pantheon; see, for instance, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (hereafter Laurenziana), MS Med. Laur. Palat. 118–120 (hereafter Laurenziana, *Florentine Codex*), book 1, unpaginated figures before text and chapters 1–22, fols. 1^r–23^v.

[47] Pagden, 74. See also Fuchs; Johnson.

[48] My thanks to Davide Domenici for helping me refine this point.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

telling details that allow one to explore the cultural interpretation and negotiation involved in making and looking at images, books, and knowledge.

First Step: Painting

The *Codex Mendoza* began as a stack of blank sheets of European paper folded and gathered into eight booklets. Mexica painters then worked on 73 of the 142 total pages, using American pigments rather than European ones.[49] They left blank pages in between painted ones in anticipation of the Spanish text that would follow.[50] The painters' work involved both Mesoamerican and European elements, among them materials, format, technique, iconography, style, and understandings of the role of the painter and the function of images.

In sixteenth-century New Spain, Spanish and indigenous painters, scholars, and litigants commonly used European paper. This is demonstrated by numerous roughly contemporary instances of indigenous paintings on paper, which were produced within administrative, legal, and missionary contexts. Indigenous painters quickly adopted this imported material, which, though different from pre-Hispanic supports, could function in ways comparable to native surfaces for painted books (such as prepared animal skin or *amatl* paper). The use of European paper does not appear to have been related to a scarcity of native paper. The second section of the *Codex Mendoza* indicates that the Aztec empire received 16,000 reams of *amatl* paper every year from tributary towns, and production of *amatl* continued well into the sixteenth century, as described, for instance, by the Spanish physician Francisco Hernández in the 1570s.[51] Some postconquest codices continued to be produced on *amatl* paper, among them the *Codex Huexotzinco* (1531), *Codex en Cruz* (ca. 1557–ca. 1569), and *Codex Mexicanus* (ca. 1600s). But European paper seems to have been favored by Spanish patrons and for works created in imperial contexts. Some scholars have suggested that in sixteenth-century New Spain, *amatl* paper stirred suspicions of idolatry given its numerous and important uses in

[49] The pigments are identified in Domenici et al. Their study reveals a single instance of the use of a nontraditional Mesoamerican material in the entire manuscript (the smoke volutes on fol. 63^{r}, lower left, were painted using lead); it also shows that traditional materials were being used in new ways.

[50] On codicological aspects, see Gómez Tejada, 2013, 28–138; Ruwet, esp. 15–17, 19; Barker-Benfield, 2000. See also Barker-Benfield, forthcoming.

[51] On preconquest production, see Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fols. 23^{v}, 25^{r}. Fol. 23^{v} specifies "8,000 pliegos" ("sheets"); fol. 25^{r} has the same alphabetic gloss, with "pliegos" crossed out and corrected to "resmas" ("reams"). Scholars have tended to refer to "480,000 sheets"; see Sandstrom and Sandstrom, 7. On postconquest production, see Hernández, 1:259. On indigenous paper before and after the conquest, see Lenz, 1950 and 1990.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mesoamerican rites, many of which were documented in the *Florentine Codex* and in the works of Spanish writers.[52]

The new support involved a major change in format that affected practices of painting, viewing, and reading. Pre-Hispanic manuscripts often took the form of square screenfolds that opened accordion-like, with images flowing from page to page in a long stream that could be viewed in smaller or larger portions depending on the exact manipulation of the document. Historical and dynastic pre-Hispanic codices allow viewers to encounter multiple generations of a ruling family at once, in an uninterrupted sequence that presents the past as a continuous stream. Calendrical and divinatory pre-Hispanic codices have a less fluid flow of content from page to page, but they still operate as screenfolds, whose articulated format can support the simultaneous viewing of multiple pages and openings. By contrast, the *Mendoza* is a Western-style book (thus literally a codex), with a rectangular format and, most significantly, a succession of pages that can only be viewed sequentially and in fixed ways. Any opening of the book presents a single possible pairing of verso, on the left, and recto, on the right. The format thus required painters to organize figures within a rectangular frame and to anticipate a staccato sequential viewing animated by the turning of the page. This interrupted viewing is amplified by the fact that the manuscript alternates between pictorial and textual pages, making it impossible for the image to exist as an independent and self-sufficient element—a major shift from pre-Hispanic conventions.[53]

Based on a meticulous stylistic analysis of the paintings, Jorge Gómez Tejada has concluded that at least two painters are responsible for the figures.[54] It is extremely challenging to establish the number of individuals who worked on this document and to attribute specific figures to different hands, as they worked in a tradition that prized uniformity, regularity, and standardization rather than the distinctive, unique expression of an artist's mind or hand (the leading paradigm in Western art at the time, expressed in concepts such as *inventio*, *disegno*, and *colorito*).[55] It is worth noting that European influences are evident in terms of painterly technique and choices but not through the copying of European iconography or formats, as is the case in other, especially

[52] Sandstrom and Sandstrom, 6–18, esp. 10–12; Lenz, 1950, esp. 13–45 and 115–19.

[53] On pre-Hispanic manuscripts, see Boone, 2000 and 2007. On their physical structure and associated viewing practices, see Boone, 2007, 18–19, 66–81; Hamann, 2004; Bakewell and Hamann, 182–87.

[54] Gómez Tejada, 2013, 139–58.

[55] On the enormous degree of uniformity in the pictorial elements, see Gómez Tejada, 2013, 28–138, esp. 76–80. The problem of using European categories for approaching Spanish American art is explored in Mundy and Hyman; see also Russo, 2014a.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

later, works—take, for instance, the use of book design elements including calligraphy, text layout, and page format in the *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano* or the copying of European prints frequently seen in manuscripts such as the *Florentine Codex* as well as in mural painting.[56]

In terms of iconography and stylistic choices, the painters deployed numerous native pictorial conventions, including the use of symbols standard in Nahua pictography; the manner of combining figures to provide the names of individuals and places; the inclusion of pictorial metaphors such as speech glyphs to denote power and rule, or burning temples to signify conquest; and the connotations implied by specific colors, such as the use of a bright turquoise (Maya blue) to mark something as precious. The indigenous elements in the painted figures are so salient to Western eyes that many viewers, in the early modern period as well as more recently, have approached the document as a record of an indigenous world unmarked by European aspects. But there clearly exist many European elements in the paintings in the *Codex Mendoza*: a less abstract and more naturalistic rendering of the human figure, including its proportions; the use of black lines and a grayish-purplish wash to indicate the draping of fabric; the layering of translucent color washes to provide a sense of depth; and the perspectival depiction of the palace of Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin, among others.[57] The *Codex Mendoza* thus demonstrates how early and deftly indigenous painters began to combine elements from two distinct pictorial traditions.

Second Step: Singing the Book

In the second step of the process, these drawings were used as the basis for an oral narrative in Nahuatl. The scribe's final statement, which blames the rushed production of the codex on the time it took "the Indians" to come to agreement (*acordar*), suggests the participation of multiple indigenous speakers, at times in disagreement with one another.[58] If there were multiple indigenous voices and perspectives, their statements would have required not only translation from

[56] Examples of sixteenth-century works whose composition is based on European prints include the feather painting *Mass of Saint Gregory* (1539), Juan Gerson's biblical scenes painted for the undercloister of Xochimilco in 1562, and many murals painted throughout the sixteenth century in conventos and other buildings. See Escalante Gonzalbo; Peterson, 1993 and 2017.

[57] The palace is depicted on Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 69ʳ; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:222–25, 3:145. The classic account of the transformation of native painted manuscripts in the decades following the conquest is Robertson. On such changes in the *Codex Mendoza*, see Robertson, 95–107; Howe.

[58] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 71ᵛ; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 4:148.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Nahuatl into Spanish but also coordination to compose a single text. What the manuscript does not make clear is whether the painters provided the oral recitation themselves or whether other speakers came in to perform the images through the spoken word.

This move from a visual to an oral register represents the continuation of a long-standing indigenous practice. Although pre-Hispanic codices recorded information in painted form, the pictorial register did not function on its own. Those who had access to codices would unfold the works in order to perform the paintings as spoken word or song.[59] Books were meant to be performed and heard as much as they were meant to be looked at. The visual-oral nature of Mesoamerican codices is clearly expressed in Nahua poetry, which often relates painted image and sound (and was itself recited as song, an oral rather than a written form).[60] One poem, to give one example among many, addresses the *tlacuilo* as both a "painter of books" and a singer, comparing a musical instrument to a screenfold book as it is opened:

> my drum is a book that unfolds,
> my word is song,
> my thought, a flower. . . .
> You have arrived, you are singing here,
> You arrive, painter of books.[61]

In Nahua culture, the painted image and the spoken or sung word were closely connected to knowledge, both conceptually and in practice. Temple priests and sages known as *tlamatinime* (wise ones) kept, interpreted, and performed the most-meaningful painted books: divinatory codices, calendars, histories, books of song, and books of dreams. Through these books, these powerful men held and preserved *in tlamatiliztli* (knowledge), precious information about both the past—in the form of historical memory—and the future—in the form of calendrical and divinatory information. They were leaders with spiritual, political, and social authority. The *Libro de los Coloquios*, an indigenous-

[59] On the performance of screenfolds, see King; Monaghan; van der Loo.

[60] Gary Tomlinson has convincingly argued that modern scholars, guided by conventions that privilege literary form over musical form, have used the term *poetry* to characterize Nahua works that were set down in writing after the conquest but had originally existed as songs or sung poems.

[61] Leander, 109–11. Bierhorst, 195, translates the passage thus: "Pictures blossom: they are my drums. My words are songs. Flowers are the misery I create. . . . Ah! my songs, are a multitude of paintings." Other instances of Nahua poems ("songs") referencing painted books and painting more generally can be found in Leander, 89, 94–95, 107, 133–35, 137, 145, 155, 167–69, 197; see also Johansson, 89–90. On the relationship between the oral and the painted in Mexican codices, see León Portilla, 2003.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Franciscan source from the 1570s that reports on the earliest exchanges between missionaries and Nahuas in 1524, provides the following indigenous characterization of the *tlamatinime*: "Those who observe [read] the codices, those who recite [tell what they read]. Those who noisily turn the pages of the illustrated manuscripts. Those who have possession of the black and red ink [wisdom] and of that which is pictured; they lead us, they guide us, they tell us the way."[62] The conceptual connections between knowledge, speaking, and power are also suggested by the Nahuatl terms for a ruler (*tlatoani*) or emperor (*huey tlatoani*, great ruler), from the verb *tlatoa* (to speak) and related to the noun *tlatolli* (word, speech, language). The ruler was thus, literally, the one who speaks—the one with the word, the authority, the knowledge. In the *Codex Mendoza*, as in other manuscripts, the Mexica emperor is portrayed with a speech scroll emanating from his mouth, as a sign of his power and authority. The sole exception in the codex is the vanquished Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin, whose defeat is signaled by his lack of speech (fig. 10). Thus, *tlacuiloque* could use the painted speech scroll both literally, to indicate the act of speaking, and metaphorically, to connote knowledge and authority—as possessed above all by the emperor or, to a lesser degree, by master artisans instructing their apprentices (see figs. 1 and 3). Speech scrolls could also represent song and prayer, powerful ritual acts, and even the creation of the world.[63]

The *Codex Mendoza* is a rare Mesoamerican document that provides both indigenous paintings and a version of the oral recitation that the images elicited. It is not an unproblematic record. The oral account was preserved, as I have noted, through a double translation: spoken Nahuatl first rendered by the *nahuatlato* into spoken Spanish and then set down as written text. In addition, the indigenous men who provided the oral account were speaking for Spanish ears, decades after the conquest, at a time when indigenous elites were enmeshed in complicated sociopolitical negotiations with the new regime. And they also spoke in a legal context—in other words, in a highly charged setting associated with debate over competing claims, the cross-examination of witnesses, and the scrutiny of evidence. These factors surely affected their account, as well as its rendering into spoken and then written Spanish. The indigenous oral narrative not only enacted the picture into spoken word but also served as a form of self-fashioning, conveying Mexica culture in terms appropriate for the colonial context. Controversial elements connected to native rituals are notable for their absence. The text consistently uses the third-person plural rather than the first-person plural, distancing the narrator from the

[62] Boone, 2007, 22–24, quotation on 23. See also Boone, 2005. On the *Coloquios*, see Díaz Balsera, 15–50. The Nahua original and an alternate English translation are provided in Sahagún, 1980; this passage on 108–10.

[63] On painted speech, see Boone, 2016, esp. 38–41, on the speech scroll.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 10. The reign of Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin (Motecuhzoma II), in the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 15v.

people represented in the manuscript. It is also written in the past tense, although it is unclear whether this presents the point of view of indigenous people in the colonial present, describing indigenous people in the pre-Hispanic past, or that of a Spanish voice talking about indigenous people. Despite these conditions, the *Codex Mendoza* provides fascinating insight into the relationship between painted images and spoken words in indigenous tradition.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

And, precisely because of these conditions, the codex sheds light onto the complex processes of transcultural knowledge production in the decades following the conquest.

Given the complexities of Nahua pictorial writing—in which glyphs can denote both words (logograms) and sounds (phonograms), and can be open to multiple interpretations—decoding the information presented in painted form required a profound knowledge of both indigenous pictorial writing and indigenous history and culture.[64] The paintings in the *Codex Mendoza* at times function as data, providing concrete information about dates, quantities, objects, and the names of places or people. In cases where paintings present data, the text records Nahua speech that elucidated the meaning of specific figures, succinctly stating in words what each painted image depicts: a specific number of loads of cacao or beans, a quantity of textiles of a certain design, etc. The individuals who provided the oral account of the images had the knowledge required to understand, for example, that an image showing arrows (*mitl*) and a shield (*chimalli*) is a literal painting of the diphrasis *in mitl, in chimalli*, a metaphorical locution for war; that eyes on a dark background stand for the nighttime starry sky; that tortillas symbolize food rations rather than individual pieces of flatbread; that specific hairstyles indicate a woman's marital status; and so on.[65]

In some instances, the text notes elements that are not registered pictorially, meaning, presumably, that they originated in the oral account the paintings elicited. Such passages suggest the workings of Nahua historical memory and oral traditions. In the historical section, although the pictorial depictions of Mexica rulers are highly standardized and do not provide any details or identifying personal information beyond an individual's name, the textual entries include supplemental statements not contained in the images. Some are formulaic in content and wording, suggesting, perhaps, conventions in Nahua recitations of dynastic history. All of the entries on emperors, for instance, begin with their lineage and mention their military valor and victories in almost identical language. All contain almost identically worded passages stating that the individual under discussion had many wives of noble birth and fathered numerous sons who became noted warriors and added to the glory and power of the Mexicas, "because," as one entry summarizes, "they considered it a sign of greatness" ("porque lo tenían por grandeza").[66] The wording could come from either Nahua or Spanish rhetorical conventions, or combine both.

[64] Nahua writing is succinctly explained in Whittaker; see also Boone, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2007, 2016, and 2017; Boone and Urton.

[65] On the complexities of interpreting the glyphs in the *Codex Mendoza*, see Berdan, forthcoming; Berdan, 1992; Berdan, 2014, 254–55.

[66] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fols. 3r, 4r, 5r, 6v, 8v, 9v, 11v, 12v, 14v (quotation on fol. 5r; my English translation).

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Some entries, however, include very specific extra-pictorial information that intimates Mexica historical tradition. For example, the entry for Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina (Motecuhzoma I, ca. 1398–1469; r. 1440–69), an important ruler in Tenochca history, celebrates him thus:

> Huehue Motecuhzoma was a very serious, severe, and virtuous lord, and was a man of good temper and judgment, and an enemy of evil. He imposed order and laws for the conduct of life in his land and on all his subjects, and imposed serious penalties for breaking the laws, ordering execution without pardon to any who broke them. But he was not cruel. He was kind to his subjects and jealous of their welfare. He was moderate with women, had two sons, and was very reserved in drinking; during his lifetime he was never affected by drunkenness, although the Indians generally are much inclined to drinking. He ordered offenders to be corrected and punished, and by his severity and good example, he was feared and respected by his subjects.[67]

None of this content is presented on the page in pictorial form. The entries for his successors, which occasionally refer to this famous ruler, include shorter but comparable accounts of their strong moral character and good governance, characterized by law and order that bolstered the stature and power of the Mexicas and their allies. Some entries provide detailed accounts of significant military conflicts, and at times brief mentions of emperors' personal traits—noting, for example, that Emperor Ahuitzotl (1440–1502; r. 1486–1502) had a "cheerful nature" and that "his subjects continually entertained him in his residence with diverse kinds of feasts and music with singing and instruments, so that in his houses the music never ceased, day or night."[68] All of this content emerged from the oral recitation, pointing to the use of well-established conventions for both painting and recounting the past, and, perhaps, to the use of preexisting narratives.[69] In some entries, there is an added layer of Spanish commentary, as for instance the remark about native drinking in the passage on Motecuhzoma I cited above.

The final entry in the historical section discusses Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin, whose rule ended when Hernán Cortés (1485–1547) seized him as a prisoner. He was killed soon after, although the circumstances remain unclear—Spanish sources blame the disgruntled indigenous populace, and native sources blame the Europeans. This is the longest textual entry in the first section, extending over two pages, rather than the customary single page. The text praises the emperor lavishly, celebrating his "great seriousness and gravity . . . bravery and leadership in

[67] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 8^{v}.

[68] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 12^{v}.

[69] Gómez Tejada, for instance, has pointed out similarities with the work of Jerónimo de Mendieta, suggesting a connection to Andrés de Olmos; Gómez Tejada, 2013, 27, and personal communication.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

war . . . gravity, demeanor, and power." The passage underscores the respect and fear that military leaders and nobles showed the sovereign, noting that as a sign of fealty they dared not look the emperor in the eye, and they always addressed him with a bowed head "out of respect to his majesty."[70] It mentions his lawful and efficient administration of a vast and continually growing empire as well as the plentiful taxes paid by subject communities, prefiguring the topic of the following section of the codex. Whether or not this elaborate articulation of Motecuhzoma II's imposing standing can be taken as an accurate reflection of indigenous perspectives at the time the document was created, to European readers it would emphasize the stature of the Aztec ruler and, by extension, his empire, as well as the magnitude of the Spanish achievement of conquering such a formidable opponent. At the bottom of the second page, two paragraphs composed in a smaller and compressed handwriting were squeezed onto the sheet of paper, suggesting an editorial intervention—there is no comparable handling of the text anywhere else in the codex. While the document up to this point presents Mexica imperial history and follows preconquest indigenous historiography (as suggested by comparison with other accounts), this brief textual addendum represents a sharp turn to a Spanish postconquest perspective. The text announces the arrival of "Spaniards, discoverers of this New Spain," a shift regarding both the protagonists of the historical narrative and the conception of the territory. The entry goes on to note, with studied circumspection, that "in the eighteenth year of said reign Motecuhzoma ended his rule and died and passed from this present life." The passage briskly concludes: "Then in the following year . . . the Marqués del Valle [Cortés] and his companions won and pacified this city of Mexico and other neighboring towns. Thus was won and pacified this New Spain."[71] The text makes no mention of the brutal war of conquest, or of the short reigns of the two indigenous rulers who succeeded Motecuhzoma II before the Spanish takeover, Cuitlahuac (1476–1520; r. 1520) and Cuauhtemoc (1496–1525; r. 1520–21).

This textual addition corresponds to a change in the painted history, where three year glyphs were inserted to prolong the year count for Motecuhzoma's reign (fig. 10). An initial revision increased the year count by two, extending the previous account to the "end and death of Motecuhzoma." A further, third year count was then added and labeled "pacification and conquest of New Spain."[72] The choice of the word "pacification" to describe the end of the war of conquest and the transition from indigenous to Spanish rule is not only a glaring case of rewriting native history from a Spanish perspective but also a reference to classical sources that used this term—a framework not without its critics both in

[70] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 14v; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:24–25, 4:34.

[71] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 15r; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:24–25, 4:35.

[72] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 15v; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:24–25, 4:36.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the classical tradition and in the new genre of Spanish conquest literature.[73] These are the only instances in the document in which pictorial year glyphs were annotated with Spanish textual glosses. They are also the only year glyphs left in black on the white page, without the standard addition of Maya blue. In this way, the painted book and the oral narrative were both supplemented and adjusted to provide an alternate ending to the codex's historical section, one that gives pride of place to the Spanish conquest and suggests just how crucial the Spanish interventions—oral translation, written text, and scribal revision, to which I now turn—were in the creation of the *Codex Mendoza* and the production of colonial knowledge.[74]

Third and Fourth Steps: Spanish Words, Spoken and Written

The next steps in making the codex involved overt acts of translation: the person identified as *el interpretador* (the interpreter) turned the spoken Nahuatl into spoken Spanish while a scribe, listening carefully and working quickly, set down this oral account to compose the written document. Given the length of the manuscript, this process must have taken place over the course of days. Close paleographic examination suggests the work of a single scribe.[75] Although the sequence of events involved (at least) two separate participants, the acts of translating from one language to another and from oral to written register appear to have occurred simultaneously: as the *nahuatlato* spoke, the scribe wrote.

[73] Although the idea of imperial victory as pacification is presented unproblematically in various Roman sources, Tacitus's *Agricola* denounces: "To plunder, butcher, steal, these things they misname empire: they make a desolation and they call it peace": Tacitus, 80–81. By the time of the *Mendoza*'s creation, this critique had already been picked up and deployed in the American context—for instance, by Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés. My thanks to Nicolás Wey-Gómez for this point about Oviedo. See Myers, 567.

[74] The role of documents in writing and rewriting history was not unknown to the Mexica. According to the *Florentine Codex*, roughly a hundred years before the making of the *Codex Mendoza*, Emperor Itzcoatl ordered the destruction of historical accounts and their replacement with new versions as an empire-building strategy, with the idea that painted knowledge could be dangerous: "It is not necessary for all the common people to know of the writings; government will be defamed, and this will only spread sorcery in the land; for it containeth many falsehoods," as translated from the Nahuatl in Sahagún, 1950, 10:191. See Diel, 2017, 80–83.

[75] This is based on consistent and characteristic handling of certain letters throughout the manuscript, among them a somewhat idiosyncratic *a* (particularly at the beginning of words), the letters *u* and *r* at the beginning of words, the *y*, the *ch* in a single swoop, the use of *Cc* to indicate a cedilla (as in *saCcerdote* or *noviCcio*), and the way of writing *etc.* and of handling abbreviations. My thanks to Carla Rahn Phillips for offering her thoughts on the paleography.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Linguistic translation was far from new to indigenous communities. The far-flung Mexica empire included communities throughout Mesoamerica, incorporating multiple languages, ethnicities, and local cultures. As Frances Berdan has noted, the *Codex Mendoza*'s second portion registers tributary provinces to the south of the Basin of Mexico, where the languages spoken included Mixtec, Tlapanec, Nahuatl, Otomi, Matlatzinca, Chontal, Mazatec, Yope, Popoluca, and Chocho, as well as provinces in the northern Gulf Coast, whose inhabitants spoke Huaxtec, highland and lowland Totonac, Otomi, and Tepehua, as well as Nahuatl.[76] The Mexica translated town names in those languages into Nahuatl, and the indigenous painters and speakers involved in making the *Codex Mendoza* used these Nahuatl names both in the pictorial glyphs and in the oral account (as set down in translation). Thus, to name just one among many examples, people who called themselves tay Ñudzahui (People of the Rain Place) and lived in a town they called Ñuu ndaa (Blue Land) became, in Nahuatl translation, Mixtecah (Cloud People) living in Texopan (On the Blue Color).[77] The painters of the *Codex Mendoza* also translated the town's name pictorially by using the Aztec glyph, a blue patch with a footprint above it, rather than the Mixtec glyph, a hill with a turquoise jewel inside.[78] Other colonial manuscripts also show the long reach of Nahuatl as an imperial language, among them the *Relación de Michoacán* (1540) and the *Relaciones geográficas* questionnaires of the 1580s.

Though not a new concept, translation became a crucial, defining element of contact between indigenous peoples and Europeans. Interpreters facilitated and mediated the earliest encounters between natives and Spaniards. Cortés's initial foray into Mexico relied on the help of not one but two interpreters: the Spanish Franciscan Jerónimo de Aguilar (1489–1531), who translated Spanish into Maya, and the native woman who, in turn, translated Maya into Nahuatl. While her original name is not known, Spaniards renamed her Marina and later added the honorific *doña* in recognition of her important work. Nahua speakers translated "Doña Marina" as "Malintzin," replacing the *r* with an *l*, as was common practice, and adding the honorific suffix *-tzin* to account for the Spanish *doña*. This moniker then became Hispanized as "Malinche" (ca. 1500/03–ca. 1529).[79] Perhaps the best-known and most infamous of early interpreters, she

[76] See Berdan, forthcoming; Smith and Berdan. This linguistic diversity is captured in the map of "Native Languages of Mesoamerica" in Paxton and Cicero, 5.

[77] On the colonial Mixtecs, see Terraciano, 2004.

[78] Berdan, forthcoming.

[79] Restall, 2018, xiii. An alternative account suggests that her Nahuatl name was Malinal or Malinalli, which with the addition of the Nahuatl honorific became Malinaltzin, in turn Hispanized as Malinche, and the latter translated into Spanish as Marina. See Cortés, 464n26.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

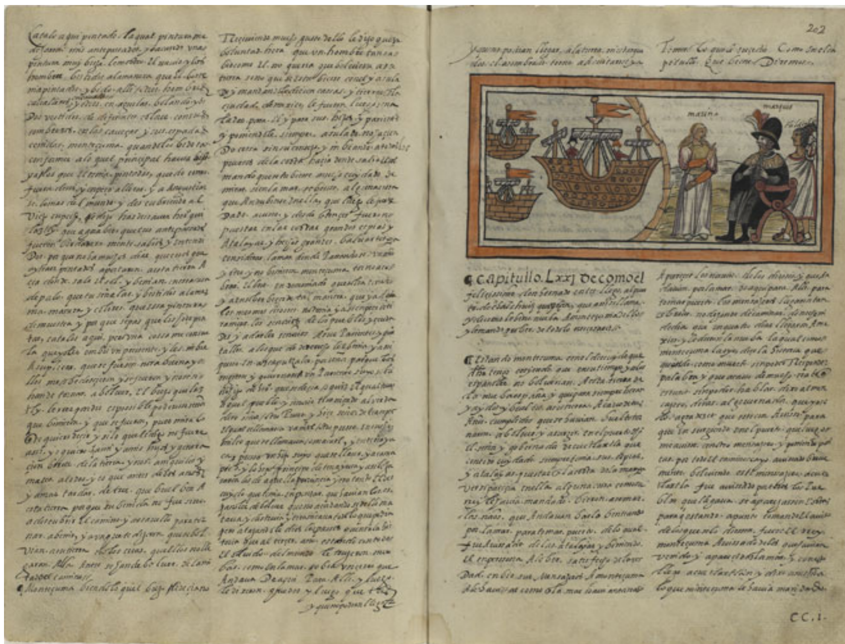


Figure 11. Marina (a.k.a. Malinche, Malintzin) translating the exchange between Hernán Cortés and an indigenous interlocutor, in Diego Durán, *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de la Tierra Firme* (a.k.a. *Codex Durán*), 1579–81. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Fondo Reservado, VITR/26/11, fol. 202^{r}.

was both a performer of translation and herself its object. She appears as a central protagonist in numerous illustrated manuscripts created in the decades after the conquest that present history from various indigenous perspectives, among them the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* (ca. 1552), the *Codex Azcatitlan* (ca. 1500s), the *Florentine Codex* (ca. 1577), and the *Codex Durán* (ca. 1579–81). In the latter she is depicted with a Spanish name, European clothes, and blond hair, thus pictorially translated from an indigenous to a European woman (fig. 11).[80] Translation was also central to the work of missionaries and preachers, who learned indigenous languages and authored books about them. Almost three-quarters of the first hundred titles printed in New Spain, which appeared between 1539 and 1580, related to evangelization and to facilitating communication with indigenous converts. They include fourteen vocabularies, *artes de la lengua* (grammars), and bilingual

[80] See, for instance, Bakewell and Hamann, 177 and esp. 187–89. On Malintzin more generally, see Peterson, 1994; Karttunen; Townsend, 2006.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

confessionals.[81] As I have noted, many sixteenth-century pictorial manuscripts involved the participation of Franciscans.

After the conquest, interpreters were central protagonists in administrative and legal contexts. They held tremendous political and social power, serving as intermediaries between indigenous people and the Spanish rulers and courts. Aware of the potential for abuse of power, Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza included in his 1548 compilation of ordinances several prescriptions for *nahuatlatos*, who were forbidden to accept gifts or bribes from natives or from Spaniards, to hear cases in their houses, and to act as solicitors (*procuradores*). Ordinances from the early 1560s repeated these guidelines—the need to reiterate them suggests that they must have been habitually breached—and added that interpreters should not receive food or jewelry as rewards. In 1579, officials forbade interpreters from building houses or trading in building materials and basic food items.[82] The *Codex Osuna* (1565), with images by indigenous painters and written text in both Nahuatl and Spanish, was produced as part of a legal investigation (*proceso*) of the administration of the second viceroy of New Spain, Luis de Velasco (1511–64; r. 1550–64). The manuscript contains numerous mentions of individual interpreters and the important and at times controversial roles they played in local governance and negotiations among factions. One of the paintings shows the viceroy personally deputizing indigenous constables (*alguaciles*), who had oversight over indigenous commoners (*macehuales*), with the assistance of a *nahuatlato* (fig. 12).[83] The interpreter is portrayed as a bearded Spaniard dressed in black European-style clothes identical to those worn by the viceroy; the only distinguishing mark between the two is the governor's sword. Although the interpreter stands behind the other participants in the scene, his presence is necessary and his authority evident.

Translators and scribes held an extraordinary level of authorial power in early colonial manuscripts. Indigenous and Spanish participants alike inhabited a world suffused with linguistic, cultural, and political translations and mistranslations. Old World military-religious battles provided the framework for interpreting New World encounters, with the Reconquista a constant referent for Spaniards and with Amerindian spiritual practices often misrepresented through terms imported from Islam. Old indigenous gods were at times translated into what Spaniards called idols or demons, at times into versions of European classical pagan figures. The *Florentine Codex*, for example, opens with depictions of Aztec deities, which the Spanish-language text characterizes as American versions

[81] López de Mariscal, 8; the fourteen titles are detailed in López de Mariscal, 9.

[82] Kellogg, 23–24.

[83] Although this interpreter is depicted as a Spaniard, many *nahuatlatos* at the time were mestizos, and some were indigenous leaders: see Connell, 68.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

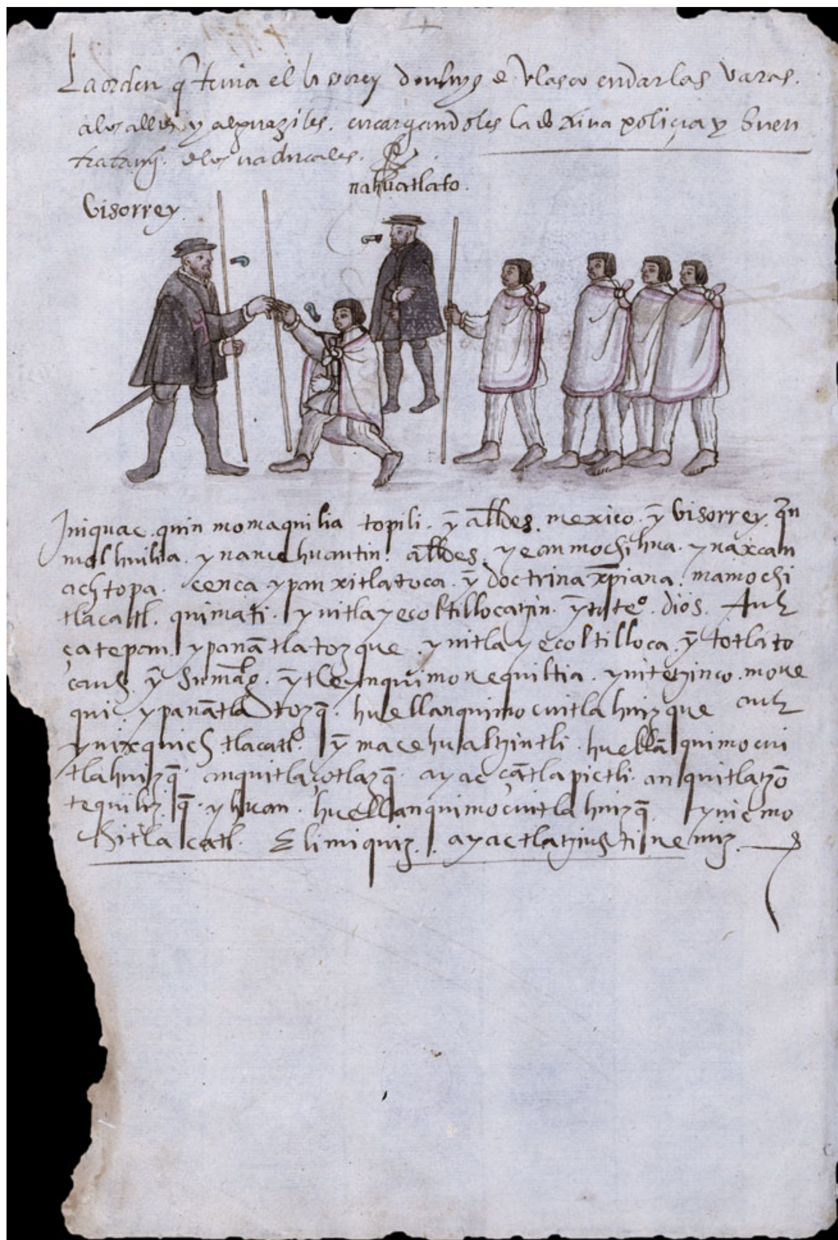


Figure 12. Viceroy Luis de Velasco (r. 1550–64) deputizing indigenous constables with the aid of an interpreter (*nahuatlato*), in the *Codex Osuna*, ca. 1565. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Fondo Reservado, VITR/26/8, fol. 9v (detail).

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of Greco-Roman heroes and gods: Huitzilopochtli is presented as "another Hercules," Tezcatlipoca as "another Jupiter," Chicomecoatl as "another goddess Ceres," Chalchiuhtlicue as "another Juno," Tlazolteotl as "another Venus," Xiuhtecutli as "another Vulcan," and Tezcatzoncatl as "the god of wine, another Bacchus." The Nahuatl text, however, does not make these analogies.[84]

In the *Codex Mendoza*, the Nahuatl-Spanish interpreter and the scribe were as involved in the production of knowledge and meaning as the indigenous painters and speakers. The manuscript is in effect the result of a series of translations: from the image to the spoken word, from the spoken word to the written word, from Nahuatl to Spanish, and from pictographic writing to alphabetic writing. It is also the result of hermeneutic translations that interpreted the information about the Aztec past within the new colonial context.

Because of its early date and its manufacture process and context, the *Codex Mendoza* may be the postconquest manuscript most visibly concerned with translation. The focus on translation is explicit from the document's very beginning. At the opening of the codex, on folio 1^v, a paragraph explains the meanings of the Mexica year glyphs that appear so prominently throughout the first section as well as the basics of the indigenous calendrical system. This description is illustrated by a strip with thirteen year glyphs, each one annotated with bilingual glosses that provide the textual translation of the image in Nahuatl (above, in red) and Spanish (below, in black). The manuscript thus opens with both the historical account of the foundation of Tenochtitlan and a primer in the basics of Nahua painted dates, which allows the reader to decipher the Mexica paintings. In the second section, the reader finds the textual translations for glyphs denoting quantities, learning, for example, that a banner indicates the number twenty; a symbol that looks like a feather (also described as hairs or a pine tree), the number four hundred; and an incense bag, the number eight thousand.[85] In the third section, most of the textual descriptions begin with the statement: "explanation of the drawings" ("declaración de lo figurado").[86] The paintings are not illustrations of the text. Rather, images and words provide information encoded in two separate systems, a Mexica one of pictorial writing and a Spanish one of alphabetic writing. The Spanish text translates both the content, conveying in written words the information that the images present, and also the system of Mexican pictorial writing itself. The dual translation offered in the *Codex Mendoza* has made this manuscript enormously valuable

[84] Laurenziana, *Florentine Codex*, book 1, unpaginated figures before text and chapters 1–22, fols. 1^r–23^v.

[85] *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 2:40, 43, 49, 65, 71 (on *pantli*, twenty); 61, 179 (on *tzontli*, four hundred); 179 (on *cenxiquipilli*, eight thousand).

[86] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fols. 57^v–70^v; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 4:120–46.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 13. The palace of Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin (Motecuhzoma II), in the *Codex Mendoza*, ca. 1540s. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1, fol. 69[r].

to readers from the sixteenth century to the present, allowing them to learn to read Aztec pictorial writing.

The translation is incessant, repetitive, even redundant. Every single figure is annotated with an alphabetic gloss that translates it, and the text on the facing page repeats the same information, so that in effect every image is translated not once but twice. In addition to this repetition, each glyph is translated every

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

single time it appears, even if it recurs repeatedly from folio to folio, or within the same folio. The translation never stops—it is never assumed that the reader already knows that a banner stands for twenty or that a burning temple denotes conquest, even if there are dozens and dozens of nearly identical figures. Every single one of them is identified with an alphabetic label, something that suggests the professional, obligatory precision of the legal scribe who recorded the translation. More than information, this is evidence.

Translation is not only linguistic but also cultural—for instance, when the jaguar is rendered as "tiger" (see fig. 5). Another, more significant type of cultural translation involves the framing of Nahua culture in ways that were relevant in the colonial context and in particular for Spanish audiences in both New Spain and Europe. Take, for example, the depiction of Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin's palace (fig. 13). Art historians have noted that this image provides the only perspectival view in the *Codex Mendoza*, demonstrating the painter's engagement with European artistic techniques and providing a Europeanized vision of Aztec rule.[87] A comparable maneuver is evident in the text, which, like the image, presents the Aztecs as an example of a civilized people. It does so by celebrating their "order," "good governance," and "good rulership" ("orden," "buen gobierno," "buen regimiento")—these were the precise Spanish words used to connote *policía* and *civitas*, critical categories for Spanish and, indeed, European political philosophy at the time. These terms would have clearly communicated to a European reader, in recognizable categories, that the Aztecs were highly civilized people.[88] As the revision to the history of the reign of Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin shows, acts of cultural translation involved revision, reinterpretation, and transformation. At stake was the reconfiguration of indigenous painting, and indigenous culture more broadly, in ways that made them legible and assimilable within colonial and imperial frames of interpretation.

[87] Gómez Tejada, 2013, 113, 121–23; Olson, 2011.

[88] On the *Mendoza*'s insistence on Mexica moral virtue, order, and good governance, see Gómez Tejada, 2013, 267–99; Gómez Tejada, 2018. Roughly half a century after the *Mendoza*'s creation, the indigenous Andean author Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala aptly deployed notions of "order and good governance" to address the Inka past and colonial present, using part of this phrase as the title of his manuscript. See Guama Poma de Ayala, *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615), available online: The Guaman Poma Website, http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/frontpage.htm. On *civitas* and *policía* in the Hispanic empire, see Kagan, 1–44.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

CONCLUSION: REINVENTING BOOKS AND PAINTING

In sixteenth-century New Spain, painting a book about indigenous history and society was no simple matter. At the time, the status of indigenous books and paintings was being fiercely contested and negotiated, as were indigenous knowledge and belief more broadly. The complex process of manufacturing the *Codex Mendoza* took place in the midst of European suspicion and enormous violence toward indigenous peoples and their cultures.

From the earliest encounters, conquistadores and missionaries alike understood the connection between painted books and native rituals. An account of the Spanish forces' very first incursion into an indigenous village after disembarking on the Gulf Coast, written by conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo (1492–1584) decades after the events took place, explains: "We found the houses of idols, the places of sacrifice, the spilt blood, the incense they used for perfuming, other things relating to idols, stones they used for sacrifices, parrot feathers, and many books of their paper folded like handkerchiefs from Castile."[89] Europeans in the New World considered indigenous codices, like indigenous religion, to be idolatrous and horrifying, the work of the devil.

And so, as part of their war against the devil, conquistadores and missionaries burned the vast majority of pre-Hispanic codices. The destruction that began in 1519 went on for decades, spreading as Spaniards moved across Mesoamerica and beyond. The burning of indigenous codices is a commonplace of histories of conquest and evangelization. The Franciscan Diego de Landa (1524–79), one of the fiercest fighters in this religious war, wrote of his experience with the Maya in Yucatán in the early 1560s: "These people also used certain characters or letters, with which they wrote in their books about the antiquities and their sciences. . . . We found a great number of books in these letters, and since they contained nothing but superstitions and falsehoods of the devil we burned them all, which they took most grievously, and which gave them great pain."[90] Landa claimed to have overseen the burning of twenty thousand statues and forty Maya pictorial manuscripts.[91] In the 1580s, the mestizo historian Diego Muñoz Camargo (ca. 1529–99) composed a history of the region of

[89] Díaz del Castillo, 76–77. Díaz del Castillo completed his manuscript in 1568; the book first appeared in publication in 1632. On sixteenth-century European assessment of Mesoamerican pictorial works as books (*libros*), see Coe. On their description as codices from the seventeenth century onward, see Byron Hamann, http://mesolore.org/tutorials/learn/10/Mesoamerican-Screenfolds/125/Notes, 3 and 4.

[90] Landa, 82.

[91] Landa's destruction proved controversial in Spain and for later generations of missionaries; see Chuchiak; Russo, 2014a, 25–26, 34–35.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 14. "Burning of all the clothing and books and apparel of the idolatrous priests, which the friars set on fire," in Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Relación de Tlaxcala*, ca. 1581–85. Glasgow University Library, Sp Coll MS Hunter 242, fol. 242r.

Tlaxcala since the arrival of Spaniards. One of the drawings illustrating his manuscript depicts Franciscan friars "burning . . . all the clothing and books and apparel of the [native] idolatrous priests" six decades earlier (fig. 14).[92] Muñoz Camargo criticized the destruction of historical accounts among the burned documents, noting that the communities had recorded history "through

[92] Muñoz Camargo, 286.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

characters and paintings which, by mistake and without understanding what they were, the first missionaries who came to this land ordered burnt, with Catholic zeal, believing [*entendiendo*] that these were books of their ancient rites and idolatries. And it was thus that among those books were burned great histories of their origins and deeds, of their wars and towns."[93] As scholars including Serge Gruzinski, Walter Mignolo, and José Rabasa have noted, the fury of this violence against indigenous pictographs was in part a result of European notions of what exactly counted as writing, as literacy, as a book, and as legitimate knowledge. The effort to conquer territories, bodies, and souls extended to colonializing epistemologies and imaginaries.[94] It is impossible to know how many indigenous documents existed before the arrival of Europeans, but almost none managed to survive the ferocious battle against Mesoamerican culture. Today, the entire corpus of extant pre-Hispanic documents consists of eight Mixtec codices, four Maya codices, and a single Aztec codex, the *Matrícula de Tributos*.[95]

In the midst of this destruction and in a period of dramatic, often vexed cultural transformation, indigenous painter-scribes (*tlacuiloque*) reinvented themselves and were reconfigured into colonial painters (*pintores*). They continued to paint, adding to their repertoires new materials such as European paper and pigments, as well as new pictorial techniques, style, and iconography. In the decades following the conquest, manuscript painters combined indigenous and European traditions and continued to produce pictorial manuscripts for multiple uses by indigenous communities and by the viceregal administration, and in some cases for export to Europe.[96] The conquest in fact spurred the creation of new manuscripts, some in response to Spanish demand, others as products of legal or administrative records, and yet others commissioned by indigenous communities to make claims about their histories and rights to lands. Postconquest codices recorded and communicated native history and traditions at a time when that history was changing rapidly and dramatically, and when those traditions were being ferociously persecuted. This was also a period of horrifying suffering caused by the spread of epidemic diseases among the

[93] Muñoz Camargo, 98; an almost identical passage on 111–12.

[94] See, for instance, Gruzinski, 2001 and 2002; Mignolo, 1994 and 1995; Rabasa. Some of this literature tends to oversimplify Spanish attitudes toward native painting; helpful correctives are offered in Cañizares-Esguerra; Hamann, 2008.

[95] Boone, 1998, 150, names twelve; Boone, 2000, 23, names eleven. There is some uncertainty about whether the *Matrícula de Tributos* was created before or after the conquest: see Berdan and Durand-Forest; Castilló Farreras and Sepúlveda y Herrera; Berdan, 1976, 1992, and forthcoming; Batalla Rosado.

[96] The foundational study of colonial codices is Robertson; see also Nowotny. Recent noteworthy studies include Leibsohn; Afanador Pujol; Douglas; Diel, 2008.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

indigenous population. The indigenous painters who worked on the *Codex Mendoza* may have been old enough to have survived the conquest, perhaps having lived themselves through the dramatic and horrifying three-month siege in which the city's native population was decimated through starvation and smallpox. They survived the devastating epidemics of the early and late 1530s and created their work around the time of the terrible epidemic of 1545–48, a plague of unprecedented morbidity that brought a level of suffering and death that shocked the Spanish chroniclers who reported its devastation of the native population.[97]

As I have detailed, making the *Codex Mendoza* involved a complex process of translations of multiple kinds. These took place not only across media, languages, genres, and cultural categories but also at important conceptual levels. The transformation of the indigenous painted manuscript (*amoxtli*) into a Western-style book (*libro*) was one among many profound epistemic and ontological translations that took place in sixteenth-century New Spain. In the case of the *Codex Mendoza*, translation involved not only the reinvention of the book but also the reinvention of image making, image makers, and painted knowledge. The native image was neither inconsequential nor safe. It became circumscribed by words, restricted to certain topics, and requiring translation to become legible.

These changes are clarified by returning to the image with which this essay opened: the depiction of an Aztec *tlacuilo* and his son making an *amoxtli*, annotated with a Spanish gloss that labels them as painters (*pintores*; see fig. 1). Translating *tlacuilo* as *pintor* is as conceptually inadequate as the mistranslations criticized by the *Mendoza* scribe: *alfaqui* for *spiritual leader*; *cue* for *temple*. The two men are not painting, exactly, nor are they painters in the Western sense of that word.[98] This is a misrepresentation of the epistemic implications of pictorial knowledge in the preconquest world. The image shows the making of a codex that is painted in black and red—a clear allusion, as noted earlier, to the Nahuatl diphrase "in tlilli, in tlapalli" ("the black ink, the red ink" or "the black ink, the colors"). This diphrase was how the Nahuas referred not only to pictorial writing but also, more broadly, to knowledge itself. *Tlacuilolli*, most often described as picture writing, was considered "part of the sacred body of knowledge possessed by sages before the beginning of time."[99] For the Mexica, to paint was not to represent but, instead, to invoke and materialize the most-precious sacred knowledge about the natural and the

[97] Cook and Lovell.

[98] On the reconceptualization of indigenous painting according to European categories, see Russo, 2014a.

[99] Nowotny, 3.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

supernatural, with the potential to awaken what they termed "the flowery song" (*xochicuicatl*). The image was not a mere symbol or sign, a representation; it could also be the incarnation of powerful forces (*ixiptlah*), with its own agency and point of view.[100] The *Codex Mendoza*, however, sheds no light on indigenous understandings of images and image makers. The Spanish text that comments on the figure of the *tlacuilo/pintor* mentions painting within a list of various artisanal trades, briefly noting that fathers instructed their sons in their craft and advised them to be industrious and to avoid idleness and bad behavior.[101] This is a Spanish perspective, not an indigenous one. Translation has transformed the *tlacuilo* into a painter, knowledge making into representation, and *tlacuilolli*, or sacred knowledge about the natural and the supernatural, into an exclusively aesthetic practice.

With this move, the status and epistemic possibility of the image have been reconfigured. If Aztec pictorial writing was not representation but the very embodiment of sacred knowledge, in the *Codex Mendoza* (as in other documents of the time) paintings instead became evidence used to record legal testimony and establish proof. In the decades immediately after the conquest, there were two dominant settings in which Europeans and native peoples came together around native images. Both of them involved suspicion. One, already mentioned, was the image as a locus of idolatry, demanding for Spaniards its negation and annihilation. The other was a legal setting, in which indigenous peoples submitted pictorial evidence to the *audiencias* (law courts). One of the earliest known postconquest codices, the *Codex Huexotzinco* (1531), consists of eight sheets of indigenous paintings on European paper. These figures were created by indigenous painters and submitted as legal evidence in a lawsuit brought by Hernán Cortés against three other prominent Spaniards regarding goods and labor provided by the indigenous inhabitants of Huejotzingo. The lawyer for the defendants discounted the oral testimony presented by indigenous witnesses with a paramount ad hominem argument, stating, "All Indians in general are bad Christians, drunks, liars, idolaters, eaters of human flesh, vile persons, who for anything whatsoever will perjure themselves."[102] But, in addition to providing oral testimony, the Huejotizngas submitted eight paintings depicting the goods they had provided. Thomas Cummins has discussed this case to argue that, in a climate of profound mistrust and uncertainty in which paintings served to authenticate oral

[100] Magaloni Kerpel, 2014, 12–13. For a related discussion of ideas of embodiment rather than representation in the Andes, see Dean. On poetry and song, see Tomlinson, 2007, 39–40.

[101] Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*, fol. 69^{v}; *The Codex Mendoza*, 1992, 4:144.

[102] As quoted in Cummins, 157–58. There is a modern facsimile: see *Códice de Huexotzinco*.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and written testimony, the images and the shared act of looking at them provided the necessary epistemic certainty to distinguish truth from lies. Images, Cummins suggests, became cultural meeting places, spaces of possibility.[103]

The *Codex Mendoza* was also produced *a modo de proceso*, with indigenous informants supplying pictorial evidence and an oral account in Nahuatl that a legal interpreter translated into Spanish and a legal scribe wrote down. In such cases, images functioned as evidence, and making pictures was closely involved with making knowledge. But knowledge was located neither in the image itself nor in the act of looking. Rather, it emerged through a complex series of acts of translation, each of which created and shaped meaning. Images operated within highly charged, contested, and at times litigious cultural settings. Looking was not sufficient to interpret images or to resolve conflict. European viewers routinely misunderstood, misinterpreted, and mistranslated indigenous images. Many times, they found them not only suspicious or horrifying but also illegible. In sixteenth-century New Spain, an enormous amount of work went into determining the meanings and uses of native images. This work involved persecution and expurgation, gauging their reliability, investigating their potential, actively selecting some aspects, and denying others. It often entailed multiple translations. As the painters and scribes who produced the *Codex Mendoza* demonstrate, historical actors were finely attuned to acts and standards of translation. In this way, the *Codex Mendoza* reveals the shifting epistemologies involved in the transcultural production of knowledge in early colonial Mexico. The codex functioned as a site of cultural transactions, where makers and interpreters wrestled with various possible ways of thinking about Aztec history, society, and culture. At a fraught time of intense and often harrowing cultural transformation, they set down their different conceptions of the possibilities of images and words for capturing and transmitting knowledge.

[103] Cummins. See also Russo, 2014b, 96–99.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adorno, Rolena. "The Warrior and the War Community: Constructions of the Civil Order in Mexican Conquest History." *Dispositio* 14.36/38 (1989): 225–46.

Afanador Pujol, Angélica. *The "Relación de Michoacán" (1539–1541) and the Politics of Representation in Colonial Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015.

Bakewell, Elizabeth, and Byron Ellsworth Hamann. "Painting History, Reading Painted Histories: Ethnoliteracy in Prehispanic Oaxaca and Colonial Central Mexico." In *A Companion to Mexican History and Culture*, ed. William H. Beezley, 163–92. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2011.

Barker-Benfield, Bruce. "The Bindings of *Codex Mendoza*." *Bodleian Library Record* 17.2 (2000): 96–105.

Barker-Benfield, Bruce. "Report on Repairs of 1985–6, Watermarks, and Collation of *Codex Mendoza* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden A. 1)." In *The Codex Mendoza* (forthcoming), chapter 3.

Batalla Rosado, Juan José. "The Scribes Who Painted the *Matrícula de Tributos* and the *Codex Mendoza*." *Ancient Mesoamerica* 18.1 (2007): 31–51.

Berdan, Frances F. "A Comparative Analysis of Aztec Tribute Documents." In *Actas del XLI Congreso Internacional de Americanistas*, 2:131–41. Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1976.

Berdan, Frances F. "The Imperial Tribute Roll of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:55–79.

Berdan, Frances F. *Aztec Archaeology and Ethnohistory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Berdan, Frances F. "Aztec Glyphic Writing in the *Codex Mendoza* and Other Pictorials: Some New Thoughts." In *The Codex Mendoza* (forthcoming), chapter 8.

Berdan, Frances F., and Jacqueline de Durand-Forest, eds. *Matrícula de Tributos (Códice de Moctezuma)*. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1980.

Berdan, Frances F., and Patricia Rieff Anawalt. Preface to *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:xiii–xv.

Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Med. Laur. Palat. 118–120. Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, known as *Florentine Codex*. Mexico, ca. 1577. Cited as Laurenziana, *Florentine Codex*.

Bierhorst, John, trans. *Cantares Mexicanos: Songs of the Aztecs*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985.

Bleichmar, Daniela. "History in Pictures: Translating the *Codex Mendoza*." *Art History* 38.4 (2015): 682–701.

Bleichmar, Daniela. "Translation, Mobility, and Mediation: The Case of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *Sites of Mediation* (2016), 240–69.

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Arch. Selden A. 1. *Codex Mendoza*. Ca. 1540s. Cited as Bodleian, *Codex Mendoza*.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. "The Aztec Pictorial History of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:35–54.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. "Pictorial Documents and Visual Thinking in Postconquest Mexico." In *Native Traditions in the Postconquest World*, ed. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Thomas

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Cummins, 149–99. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. *Stories in Red and Black: Pictorial Histories of the Aztecs and Mixtecs*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. "*In Tlamatinime*: The Wise Men and Women of Aztec Mexico." In *Painted Books and Indigenous Knowledge in Mesoamerica: Manuscript Studies in Honor of Mary Elizabeth Smith*, ed. Elizabeth Hill Boone, 9–25. New Orleans, LA: Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, 2005.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. *Cycles of Time and Meaning in the Mexican Books of Fate*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. "Pictorial Talking: The Figural Rendering of Speech Acts and Texts in Aztec Mexico." In *Sign and Design: Script as Image in Cross-Cultural Perspective (300–1600 CE)*, ed. Brigitte Miriam Bedos-Rezak and Jeffrey F. Hamburger, 31–50. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill. "Aztec Pictography and Painted Histories." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Aztecs*, ed. Deborah L. Nichols and Enrique Rodríguez-Alegría, 117–27. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Boone, Elizabeth Hill, and Gary Urton, eds. *Their Way of Writing: Scripts, Signs, and Pictographies in Pre-Columbian America*. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2011.

Burghartz, Susanna, Lucas Burkart, and Christine Göttler. "Introduction: 'Sites of Mediation' in Early Modern Europe and Beyond. A Working Perspective." In *Sites of Mediation* (2016), 1–20.

Burns, Kathryn. "Notaries, Truth, and Consequences." *American Historical Review* 110.2 (2005): 350–79.

Burns, Kathryn. *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Calnek, Edward E. "The Ethnographic Content of the Third Part of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:81–91.

Cañizares-Esguerra, Jorge. *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Castilló Farreras, Víctor M., and María Teresa Sepúlveda y Herrera, eds. *La Matrícula de Tributos*. Mexico City: SEP, 1991.

Chuchiak, John F. IV. "*In Servitio Dei*: Fray Diego de Landa, the Franciscan Order, and the Return of the Extirpation of Idolatry in the Colonial Diocese of Yucatán, 1573–1579." *The Americas* 61.4 (2005): 611–46.

Clavijero, Francisco Javier. *Storia antica del Messico*. Cesena, 1780.

The Codex Mendoza. Ed. Frances F. Berdan and Patricia Rieff Anawalt. 4 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

The Codex Mendoza. Ed. Jorge Gómez Tejada. Quito: Universidad de San Francisco de Quito Press; Oxford: Bodleian Library, forthcoming.

Códice de Huexotzinco. Ed. John R. Hébert, Luiz Lobao, Xavier Noguez, et al. Mexico City: Coca-Cola de México, Ediciones Multiarte; Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1995.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Coe, Michael D. *The Royal Fifth: Earliest Notices of Maya Writing*. Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing, no. 28. Washington, DC: Center for Maya Research, 1989.

Colors between Two Worlds: The "Florentine Codex" of Bernardino de Sahagún. Ed. Gerhard Wolf and Joseph Connors. Florence: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut and Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2011.

Connell, William F. *After Moctezuma: Indigenous Politics and Self-Government in Mexico City, 1524–1730*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011.

Cook, Noble D., and W. George Lovell, eds. *Secret Judgments of God: Old World Disease in Colonial Spanish America*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

Cortés, Hernán. *Letters from Mexico*. Ed. and trans. Anthony Pagden. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001.

Cummins, Thomas. "From Lies to Truth: Colonial Ekphrasis and the Act of Crosscultural Translation." In *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America, 1450–1650*, ed. Claire Farago, 152–74. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

Dean, Carolyn. *A Culture of Stone: Inka Perspectives on Rock*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Dean, Carolyn, and Dana Leibsohn. "Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America." *Colonial Latin American Review* 12.1 (2003): 5–35.

Díaz Balsera, Viviana. *The Pyramid under the Cross: Franciscan Discourses of Evangelization and the Nahua Christian Subject in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005.

Díaz del Castillo, Bernal. *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*. Trans. Janet Burke and Ted Humphrey. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2012.

Diel, Lori Boornazian. *The Tira de Tepechpan: Negotiating Place under Aztec and Spanish Rule*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008.

Diel, Lori Boornazian. "From Orderly Past to Chaotic Present: The Transition to Spanish Rule in Aztec Pictorial Histories." In *Constructing Power and Place in Mesoamerica: Pre-Hispanic Paintings from Three Regions*, ed. Merideth Paxton and Leticia Staines Cicero, 77–94. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017.

Domenici, Davide. "Cose dell'altro mondo: Nuovi dati sul collezionismo italiano di oggetti messicani tra XVI e XVII secolo." In *L'Impero e le Hispaniae: Da Traiano a Carlo V; Classicismo e potere nell'arte spagnola*, ed. S. De Maria and M. Paradas López de Corselas, 471–83. Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2014.

Domenici, Davide. "Nuovi dati per una storia dei codici messicani della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana." *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae* 22 (2016): 341–62.

Domenici, Davide, Chiara Grazia, David Buti, et al. "The Painting Materials of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *The Codex Mendoza* (forthcoming), chapter 2.

Domenici, Davide, and Laura Laurencich-Minelli. "Domingo de Betanzos' Gift to Pope Clement VII in 1532–1533: Tracking the Early History of Some Mexican Objects and Codices in Italy." *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* 47 (January–June 2014): 169–209.

Douglas, Eduardo de Jesús. *In the Palace of Nezahualcoyotl: Painting Manuscripts, Writing the Pre-Hispanic Past in Early Colonial Period Tetzcoco, Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Duarte, Rocío. "The Colegio Imperial de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco and Its Aftermath: Nahua Intellectuals and the Spiritual Conquest of Mexico." In *A Companion to Latin American Literature and Culture*, ed. Sarah Castro-Klarén, 86–105. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008.

Escalante Gonzalbo, Pablo. *Los códices mesoamericanos antes y después de la conquista española: Historia de un lenguaje pictográfico*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010.

EurAsian Matters: China, Europe, and the Transcultural Object, 1600–1800. Ed. Anna Grasskamp and Monica Juneja. Cham: Springer, 2018.

Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, Gonzalo. *De la natural hystoria de las Indias [Sumario]*. Toledo, 1526.

Fuchs, Barbara. *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Garibay, Angel María. *Historia de la literatura náhuatl*. 2 vols. Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1954.

Garone Gravier, Marina. "Sahagún's Codex and Book Design in the Indigenous Context." In *Colors between Two Worlds* (2011), 157–97.

Gerritsen, Anne. "Transcultural Objects, Movements, and Bodies." In *EurAsian Matters* (2018), 239–46.

Gómez Tejada, Jorge. "Making the *Codex Mendoza*, Constructing the *Codex Mendoza*: A Reconsideration of a 16th-Century Mexican Manuscript." PhD diss., Yale University, 2013.

Gómez Tejada, Jorge. "Conquest, Growth and Evolution: Indigenist Discourse in the *Codex Mendoza*." In *Mesoamerican Manuscripts: New Scientific Approaches and Interpretations*, ed. Maarten Jansen, Virginia M. Lladó-Buisán, and Ludo Snijders, 120–33. Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Göttler, Christine, and Mia Mochizuki, eds. *The Nomadic Object: The Challenge of World for Early Modern Religious Art*. Leiden: Brill, 2017.

Grasskamp, Anna, and Monica Juneja. "Introduction." In *EurAsian Matters* (2018), 3–33.

Gruzinski, Serge. *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to Blade Runner (1492–2019)*. Trans. Heather MacLean. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001.

Gruzinski, Serge. *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Hamann, Byron Ellsworth. "Seeing and the Mixtec Screenfolds." *Visible Language* 38.1 (2004): 67–121.

Hamann, Byron Ellsworth. "How Maya Hieroglyphs Got Their Name: Egypt, Mexico, and China in Western Grammatology since the Fifteenth Century." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 152.1 (2008): 1–68.

Hernández, Francisco. *Historia natural de la Nueva España*. 2 vols. Mexico City: UNAM, 1959.

Herrera Meza, María del Carmen, and Ethelia Ruiz Medrano. *El Códice de Tepeucila: El entintado mundo de la fijeza imaginaria*. Mexico City: INAH and CNCA, 1997.

Herzog, Tamar. "Los escribanos en las Américas: Entre memoria española y memoria indígena." In *El nervio de la república: El oficio de escribano en el Siglo de Oro*, ed. Enrique Villalba and Emilio Torné, 337–49. Madrid: Calambur, 2010.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Howe, Kathleen Stewart. "The Relationship of Indigenous and European Styles in the *Codex Mendoza*: An Analysis of Pictorial Style." In *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:25–33.

Humboldt, Alexander von. *Vues des cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810.

Johansson, Patrick. "La imagen en los códices nahuas: Consideraciones semiológicas." *Estudios de Cultural Náhuatl* 32 (2001): 69–124.

Johnson, Carina L. *Cultural Hierarchy in Sixteenth-Century Europe: The Ottomans and Mexicans*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Kagan, Richard. *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493–1793*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.

Karttunen, Frances F. "Rethinking Malinche." In *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, ed. Susan Schroeder, Stephanie Wood, and Robert Haskett, 291–312. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.

Kellogg, Susan. *Law and the Transformation of Aztec Culture, 1500–1700*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.

King, Mark. "Hearing the Echoes of Verbal Art in Mixtec Writing." In *Writing without Words* (1994), 102–36.

Landa, Diego de. *Yucatan before and after the Conquest*. Trans. William Gates. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1978.

Laurencich-Minelli, Laura. "From the New World to Bologna, 1533: A Gift for Pope Clement VII and Bolognese Collections of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries." *Journal of the History of Collections* 24.2 (2012): 145–58.

Leander, Birgitta. *In xochitl in cuicatl, flor y canto: La poesía de los aztecas*. Mexico City: Institution Nacional Indigenista, 1991.

Legati, Lorenzo. *Museo Cospiano annesso a quello del famoso Ulisse Aldrovandi e donata alla sua Patria dall'illustrissimo Signor Ferdinando Cospi*. Bologna, 1677.

Leibsohn, Dana. *Script and Glyph: Pre-Hispanic History, Colonial Bookmaking and the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Lenz, Hans. *El papel indígena mexicano, historia y supervivencia*. Mexico City: Editorial Cultura, 1950.

Lenz, Hans. *Historia del papel en México y cosas relacionadas, 1525–1950*. Mexico City: Porrúa, 1990.

León Portilla, Miguel. "Dioses." In *Azteca-Mexica*, ed. José Alcina Franch, Miguel León Portilla, and Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, 313–32. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario and Lunwerg Editores, 1992.

León Portilla, Miguel. *Códices: Los antiguos libros del Nuevo Mundo*. Mexico City: Aguilar, 2003.

López de Mariscal, Blanca. "La imprenta en la Nueva España: Un arma para la conquista espiritual." *Hispanófila* 174.1 (2016): 3–12.

Magaloni Kerpel, Diana. "Painters of the New World: The Process of Making the *Florentine Codex*." In *Colors between Two Worlds* (2011), 47–78.

Magaloni Kerpel, Diana. *The Colors of the New World: Artists, Materials, and the Creation of the* Florentine Codex. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2014.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mathes, W. Michael. *The America's First Academic Library: Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco*. Sacramento: California State Library Foundation, 1985.

Mignolo, Walter. "Signs and Their Transmission: The Question of the Book in the New World." In *Writing without Words* (1994), 228–70.

Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995.

Monaghan, John. "The Text in the Body and the Body in the Text: The Embodied Sign in Mixtec Writing." In *Writing without Words* (1994), 87–101.

Mundy, Barbara E. *The Death of Aztec Tenochtitlan, the Life of Mexico City*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015.

Mundy, Barbara E., and Aaron M. Hyman. "Out of The Shadow of Vasari: Towards a New Model of the 'Artist' in Colonial Latin America." *Colonial Latin American Review* 24.3 (2015): 283–317.

Muñoz Camargo, Diego. "Descripción de la ciudad y provincia de Tlaxcala de las Indias y del Mar Océano para el buen gobierno y ennoblecimiento ellas." In *Relaciones geográficas del siglo XVI: Tlaxcala*, ed. René Acuña. 2 vols. Mexico City: UNAM, 1984.

Myers, Kathleen Ann. *Fernández de Oviedo's Chronicle of America: A New History for a New World*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007.

Navarrete, Federico. "Writing, Images, and Time-Space in Aztec Monuments and Books." In *Their Way of Writing: Scripts, Signs, and Pictographies in Pre-Columbian America*, ed. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Gary Urton, 175–95. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2011.

Nicholson, Henry B. "The History of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:1–11.

Nowotny, Karl Anton. *Tlacuilolli: Style and Contents of the Mexican Pictorial Manuscripts with a Catalog of the Borgia Group*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005.

Olson, Todd. "Reproductive Horror: Sixteenth-Century Mexican Pictures in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." *Oxford Art Journal* 34.3 (2011): 449–69.

Olson, Todd. "Abduction: The Reception and Reproduction of the *Codex Mendoza* in France and England (1553–1696)." In *The Codex Mendoza* (forthcoming), chapter 11.

Pagden, Anthony. *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c.1500–c.1800*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

Paxton, Merideth, and Leticia Staines Cicero. *Constructing Power and Place in Mesoamerica: Pre-Hispanic Paintings from Three Regions*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017.

Peterson, Jeanette Favrot. "The Florentine Codex Imagery and the Colonial Tlacuilo." In *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, ed. Jorge Klor de Alva, Henry B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quiñones Keber, 275–94. Albany, NY: Institute of Mesoamerican Studies, 1988.

Peterson, Jeanette Favrot. *The Paradise Garden Murals of Malinalco: Utopia and Empire in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.

Peterson, Jeanette Favrot. "¿Lengua o Diosa? The Early Imaging of Malinche." In *Chipping Away on Earth: Studies in Prehispanic and Colonial Mexico in Honor of Arthur*

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, ed. Eloise Quiñones Keber, Susan Schroeder, and Frederic Hicks, 187–202. Lancaster, CA: Labyrinthos, 1994.

Peterson, Jeanette Favrot. "Translating the Sacred: The Peripatetic Print in the Florentine Codex, Mexico (1575–1577)." In *The Nomadic Object: The Challenge of World for Early Modern Religious Art*, ed. Christine Göttler and Mia Mochizuki, 187–214. Leiden: Brill, 2017.

Purchas, Samuel. *Purchas his pilgrimage*. 2nd. rev. ed. London, 1614.

Purchas, Samuel. *Hakluytus posthumus or Purchas his pilgrimes*. 4 vols. London, 1625.

Rabasa, José. *Tell Me the Story of How I Conquered You: Elsewheres and Ethnosuicide in the Colonial Mesoamerican World*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

Restall, Matthew. *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Restall, Matthew. *When Montezuma Met Cortes: The True Story of the Meeting That Changed History*. New York: HarperCollins, 2018.

Robertson, Donald. *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period: The Metropolitan Schools*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959.

Russo, Alessandra. "*De Tlacuilolli*: Renaissance Artistic Theory in the Wake of the Global Turn." In *Art History in the Wake of the Global Turn*, ed. Jill H. Cassid and Aruna D'Souza, 20–39. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014a.

Russo, Alessandra. *The Untranslatable Image: A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500–1600*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014b.

Ruwet, Wayne. "A Physical Description of the *Codex Mendoza*." In *The Codex Mendoza* (1992), 1:13–20.

Sahagún, Bernardino de. *Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain*. Trans. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble. 13 vols. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research; Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1950.

Sahagún, Bernardino de. "The Aztec-Spanish Dialogues of 1524." Trans. J. Jorge Klor de Alva. *Alcheringa: Ethnopoetics* 4.2 (1980): 52–193.

Sandstrom, Alan R., and Pamela Effrein Sandstrom. *Traditional Papermaking and Paper Cult Figures of Mexico*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986.

SilverMoon. "*The Imperial College of Tlatelolco and the Emergence of a New Nahua Intellectual Elite in New Spain (1500–1760).*" PhD diss., Duke University, 2007.

Sites of Mediation: Connected Histories of Places, Processes, and Objects in Europe and Beyond, 1450–1650. Ed. Susanna Burghartz, Lucas Burkart, and Christine Göttler. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

Smith, Michael E. "The Aztecs Paid Taxes, Not Tribute." *Mexicon* 36.1 (2014): 19–22.

Smith, Michael E., and Frances F. Berdan. "Appendix 4: Province Descriptions." In *Aztec Imperial Strategies*, ed. Frances F. Berdan, Richard E. Blanton, Elizabeth Hill Boone, et al., 265–349. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996.

Tacitus. *Agricola; Germania; Dialogue on Oratory*. Trans. M. Hutton and W. Peterson. Loeb Classical Library 35. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914.

Terraciano, Kevin. *The Mixtecs of Colonial Oaxaca: Nudzahui History, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Terraciano, Kevin. "Competing Memories of the Conquest of Mexico." In *Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World*, ed. Ilona Katzew, 55–77. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

Tomlinson, Gary. *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Toorians, Lauran. "Some Light in the Dark Century of Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus 1." *Codices Manuscripti* 9.1 (1983): 26–29.

Toorians, Lauran. "Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus 1, Its History Completed." *Codices Manuscripti* 10.3 (1984): 87–97.

Townsend, Camilla. *Malintzin's Choices: An Indian Woman in the Conquest of Mexico*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006.

Townsend, Camilla. *Annals of Native America: How the Nahuas of Colonial Mexico Kept Their History Alive*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Valle Pérez, Perla. *Memorial de los indios de Tepetlaoztoc o Códice Kingsborough*. Mexico City: INAH, 1993.

van der Loo, Peter Lodewijk. "Voicing the Painted Image: A Suggestion for Reading the Reverse of the Codex Cospi." In *Writing without Words* (1994), 77–86.

Whittaker, Gordon, "Nahuatl Hieroglyphic Writing and the Beinecke Map." In *Painting a Map of Sixteenth-Century Mexico City: Land, Writing, and Native Rule*, ed. Mary E. Miller and Barbara Mundy, 137–56. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012.

Writing without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes. Ed. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Walter Mignolo. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994.

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.377 Published online by Cambridge University Press