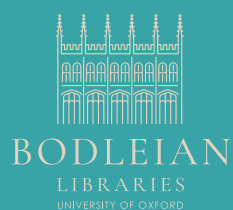


THE CODEX MENDOZA



NEW INSIGHTS

Jorge Gómez Tejada, editor



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The Codex Mendoza: new insights

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Foreword

Since its moment of origin, *Codex Mendoza* has been a document of the utmost international significance, as reflected by its early travels. Its European paper must have crossed the Atlantic twice, there and back in quick succession by the early 1540s. On the manuscript's last folio, its Spanish commentator states that the manuscript remained in Mexico less than ten days after completion, before the fleet was due to sail. After a period in Renaissance France, it came to rest in Oxford and has been kept safe here at the Bodleian Library for over 350 years.

Codex Mendoza embodies an overwhelming tragedy: the dissolution of a civilization. Yet, it also crystallizes and almost celebrates the culture of that civilization by recording and interpreting not only its history, geography (through tax returns), and everyday life, but also its art, language, and pictographic writing. All this is keyed as if to facilitate wider understanding in a European language.

Even before it was gifted to the Bodleian Library by John Selden's executors around 1659, the manuscript's intellectual content had been available for wider study through a set of woodcut images in the third volume of *Purchas his Pilgrimes* (Purchas 1625). *Codex Mendoza* took pride of place in 1831 as the first item to be fully printed in color in the first volume of the *Antiquities of Mexico*, reproduced by Lord Kingsborough in lithographic facsimile. That publication, like successive photographic facsimiles of the twentieth century, proved to be too costly for wider circulation. However, in just the last few years, digital technology has enabled the reproduction of the pages of the *Codex Mendoza* online as well as closer study of its colors through non-destructive instrumental analysis and multispectral photography.

As such, it is with the greatest pleasure that I welcome this new color facsimile of the *Codex Mendoza*, published in Ecuador with wide-ranging contributions by scholars from Latin America, the United States, and Europe. This publication meets the aim of the Bodleian Libraries of the University of Oxford to make this manuscript and all of its unique features available to be more extensively studied throughout the world.

Richard Ovenden
Bodley's Librarian

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NEW INSIGHTS



The History of the *Codex Mendoza*

Jorge Gómez Tejada

Universidad San Francisco de Quito USFQ

The *Codex Mendoza*, as it has been known since Francisco Clavijero first linked the manuscript to don Antonio de Mendoza, first Viceroy of New Spain at the end of the eighteenth century, is one of the most beautiful examples of *tlacuillo*, the Nahuatl art of painting and writing. Produced at some point between 1542 and 1552, the manuscript is also one of the most famous collaborative projects between Nahuatl artists and Spanish interpreters of the first half of the sixteenth century.¹ In the *Codex Mendoza*, the narrative that emerges from the convergence of Nahuatl pictographic writing and Spanish alphabetic writing describes the tripartite history of the Mexica world, a history that begins with the foundation of the city of Tenochtitlan in 1325 and ends with the death of its last ruling *tlatoani*, Moteuhzoma Xocoyotzin.

The first section of the manuscript (folios 1r to 18r) cogently represents the growth of the Mexica State. As Barbara Mundy shows in this volume, the *altepetl* of Tenochtitlan is the main protagonist of this narrative, which follows a dual axis composed of military conquests on one hand and brief biographies of the lords of Tenochtitlan on the other. The second section of the manuscript (folios 18v to 56r) articulates the relationship between the Mexica capital and its vassals related to the collection of tributes and taxes.² The choices made by the artists who produced the *Codex Mendoza* regarding the inclusion or omission of the types of objects involved in this process of taxation emphasize both the value allotted to finished products—highlighting a social structure based on the division and specialization of labor—and the performativity of such documents.³ In the third section of the manuscript (folios 56v to 71v), the artists charged with producing the codex depict the inhabitants of the Mexica State, creating unprecedented pictorial compositions that echo the rhetoric of order and beauty developed in the first two sections and that simultaneously humanize the events and social relations with which they are concerned.

As a whole, the pictures and texts of the three sections of the codex evoke not only traditionally Mesoamerican notions of social order, but also those imported from Spain, which became a source both of convergence as well as strain between the two societies. The Mesoamerican grid acts as the organizing principle of the manuscript and neatly overlaps with the one the first urban planners of New Spain had imported in books by thinkers such as Alberti. At the same time, the laws imposed by the lords of Mexico described throughout the first section of the *Codex Mendoza* are reflected in the notion of civility embodied in the Spanish concept of *policía*, upon which the character of New World societies would be measured and debated throughout the sixteenth century. The representation of space, which in Mexican manuscripts is traditionally two-dimensional,

contrasts with the single point perspective imported from Europe by cosmopolitan friars, thus expanding the possibilities of representation of the natural world, both for the Nahuatl artist and the European observer. All of these matters are addressed in the following chapters.

Throughout the course of its history, the *Codex Mendoza* has been presented as an object of constantly changing form and identity, partly because of its very nature—a manuscript consisting of 71 folios which is impossible to fully understand outright—and partly because of the multiple ways in which it has been analyzed by those who have studied it, seeking to answer diverse questions originating in different historical contexts, as Daniela Bleichmar suggests. In her study on the circulation and transmission of the *Codex Mendoza*, she observes that the ontology of the codex manifests itself as unstable in time and that it is created anew with every study and new interpretation, in spite of the fact that it remains static in Oxford (see Chapter 10). Likewise, in his essay for this volume, Todd Olson focuses on the manuscript's reception and interpretation in the work of Melchisedech Thévenot, identifying a process whereby the contents of the manuscript are gradually sequestered and disbanded, to the point that they basically become unrecognizable within the world of encyclopedic knowledge that took shape over the course of the seventeenth century. The work of these art historians sees beyond the *Codex Mendoza* as a historical document or primary source, and functions instead as a logical segue to the work of scholars such as H. B. Nicholson, Silvio Zavala, and James Cooper Clark, who, responding to the historicist priorities of their times, sought to bestow upon the manuscript an identity as closely anchored in their documentary research as was possible.

The present work departs from both early and recent findings on the materiality, historical context, and circulation of the manuscript as well from previous understandings of its contents, priorities, and reception. In doing so, this volume seeks to contribute to the aggregate of identities that historians have created for the *Codex Mendoza*, whether by simply changing the tempo and emphasis placed on the different episodes in the manuscript's reproduction and circulation history, or by establishing a range of time for the production of the manuscript based on the dual axis of the codex's historical context and inquiries into its materiality. Paraphrasing Daniela Bleichmar, this aggregate adds a new layer to the *Codex Mendoza's* fluid ontology. This decision invariably underscores certain aspects of the manuscript that, notwithstanding their importance to the overarching history of the manuscript, in previous studies have played second fiddle.

Such is the case of the contrasting hypotheses on how the *Codex Mendoza* came to be in possession of its first known owner, French cosmographer André Thevet. Another important aspect of the manuscript's history which has not been prioritized is Clavijero's "invention" of the *Codex Mendoza*—relying on a widely known, yet anonymous source—during the eighteenth century. The first of these has been subsidiary to a history focused on demonstrating the connection between the manuscript and the first viceroy of New Spain since Clavijero's aforementioned invention in the eighteenth century. As such, the "how" behind the *Codex Mendoza's* arrival in France was shelved, relying on an account that, as we shall see, at best lacks support for its claims and, at worst, advances false information. In this essay, I argue for an alternative route of arrival that posits that the manuscript was initially available to a European context that was far wider than the viceregal commission. However, at the same time, I acknowledge that, with the extant documentary evidence available, it is impossible to fully verify the manuscript's initial trajectory. Likewise, I suggest that Clavijero's decision owed more to his own literary agenda within the context of a proto-nationalist Mexican movement, than to the existence of any evidence tying the document to the viceroy.

The trajectory of the *Codex Mendoza* revisited

As the story goes, this manuscript was created by commission of don Antonio de Mendoza, first Viceroy of New Spain (r. 1535-1550), to be presented to Charles I of Spain. Instead, the manuscript ended up in France, where it was purchased by the cleric and

geographer André Thevet (1516?-1592), who would work as geographer for four kings of the Valois-Angouleme dynasty, beginning in 1559. In the 1580s, the manuscript was passed on to Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616), a cleric and geographer who was also a secretary to the English ambassador to France, Sir Edward Stafford, between 1583 and 1588. After Hakluyt's death in 1616, the manuscript passed on to another Englishman, Samuel Purchas (1577-1654), the first man to ever publish the texts and images in the *Codex Mendoza*, as part of his 1625 compendium of voyage chronicles *Haklyutus Posthumus: Or Purchas His Pilgrimes*. Finally, the manuscript reached its last private owner, John Selden (1584-1654), a jurist and scholar with an interest in ancient English and Hebrew laws, egyptology, and the pre-Columbian cultures of the New World (Toomer 2009). In fact, his library, which was bequeathed to the Bodleian Library after his death in 1655, included three Mexican manuscripts, the *Codex Mendoza*, which is the protagonist of this history, and two others: the *Codex Selden*, also known as *Codex Añute*, and the *Selden Roll*, also known as *The Roll of the New Fire*.⁴ Although his interest in pre-Columbian Mexico seems to have been tangential, Selden's profile is worthy of consideration, since it is similar to those of scholars who will include the *Codex Mendoza* in their works for the two following centuries: thinkers interested in Mediterranean antiquity and how it was reflected conceptually—and sometimes practically—in the New World, Judaism and its impression on the development of Western thought, and natural history.

Table 1. Circulation, reproduction, and studies of the *Codex Mendoza*: 1625-1992

1625, Samuel Purchas includes it in <i>Haklyutus Posthumus, or Purchas his pilgrimes</i>
1630, Joannes van Laet includes illustrations after Purchas's in <i>Nieuwe Wereldt ofte Beschrijvinghe van West-Indien</i>
1633, Laet translates his work to Latin
1640, Laet translates his work to French
1644, Second Dutch edition of the work created
1652, Athanasius Kircher: <i>Oedipus Aegyptiacus</i> (featuring translations of Purchas's texts into French)
1672, Melchisedec Thevenot: Translation of Purchas's work into French in <i>Relations des Divers Voyages</i>
1696, Second edition of <i>Relations</i>
1738-41, William Warburton: <i>The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated</i> (reproduces folio 2r)
1744, Translation into French
1780-81, Francisco Clavijero: <i>Storia Antica del Messico</i> christens the manuscript as <i>La raccolta di Mendoza</i>
1831-48, Henry King, Viscount Kingsborough: <i>Antiquities of Mexico</i>
1877, Orozco y Berra reproduces Kingsborough in the 1 st volume of <i>Anales del Museo Nacional</i>
1964, the Kingsborough edition is reproduced by the Secretaría de Hacienda of México
1925, Jesús Galindo y Villa: publishes posthumously Paso y Troncoso's facsimile edition of the <i>Codex Mendoza</i>
1979, Second edition published in Mexico
1938, James Cooper Clark produces the first modern translation of the <i>Codex Mendoza</i> in English alongside a new facsimile edition.
1979, Second edition published in Mexico
1992, Facsimile edition created by Berdan and Anawalt
2014, INAH publishes a digital edition of the <i>Codex Mendoza</i> .

Despite the continuous reproduction and sustained circulation of the manuscript throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, two cardinal moments in the development of the modern history of the *Codex Mendoza* took place at the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. In 1781, Francisco Clavijero, an exiled Mexican Jesuit living in Italy, identified the manuscript as “*la colección de Mendoza*”

in his *Historia Antigua de México*. This led to the commencement of a new era of studies focused on the connection between the manuscript and the first viceroy of New Spain; these studies treated the *Codex Mendoza* as a document belonging to a foundational narrative that, even then, signals a fledgling Mexican nationalist movement. As we shall see, in the introduction to his *Historia Antigua*, Clavijero (1964) writes that his work will serve as a “first true history of Mexico, for the service of homeland and country”. In the same work, Clavijero goes on to announce that he had chosen forty-seven sources as the basis for this history, each of which had been painted by Mexican artists, written by notable colonial personages, or penned by authors whose texts fitted within a narrative with nationalist inclinations. Amongst those prominently featured, the one Clavijero identified as *la colección de Mendoza* is known today as the *Codex Mendoza*.⁵

In her analysis of Clavijero’s work, Rolena Adorno (2011, 15; see also Marchetti 1986) has highlighted that it “sought to recover the lost Mexican nation and defend it against the European Enlightenment thinkers who underestimated its worth and importance under the pretense of cultural and natural inferiority . . . often, Clavijero has been considered a precursor to Mexican independence. Doubtlessly, his ‘criollo’ patriotism and his apology of America in opposition to contemporary European thinkers have fixed the profile we recognize in his famous *Historia Antigua de México*”. In recognizing the role and ideological context of Clavijero’s works, and in particular of *Historia Antigua de México* and, consequently, of the *Codex Mendoza*, this work invariably fits within a genre of Latin American patriotic literature that Jesuit priests created towards the end of the eighteenth century (Brading et al. 2015, 34).

In 1831, Henry King, Viscount Kingsborough, brought the manuscript to the fore once more as part of a yet more ambitious narrative. Its inclusion in Kingsborough’s *Antiquities of Mexico* echoed one of the hypotheses that guided the evangelizing project of the sixteenth century: namely, the idea that the peoples of the New World descended from the lost tribes of Israel. This, in turn, led to a new era of reproductions of the *Codex Mendoza*. Accordingly, in the sixth book of *Antiquities of Mexico*, Kingsborough found reason after reason to aver that the peoples of Mexico descended from the lost tribes of Israel. If Clavijero’s actions ought to be understood against a backdrop of incipient independence movements that were beginning to take shape towards the end of the eighteenth century, the historical moment of *Antiquities of Mexico* places the *Codex Mendoza* within the context of the calls for emancipation of Catholics, Jews, and Africans within the British Empire.⁶

Throughout the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, Mexican academics, inspired by Kingsborough’s reproduction and probably by the foundational role Clavijero endowed the manuscript, used the *Codex Mendoza* as the axis for a series of political and historical publications rooted in the Mexican nationalist project that was taking shape at that time. Mexican nationalism of the era proceeded through a sequence of stages that included “criollo” imperialism, democratic sovereignty, European colonialism, and despotism.⁷ In 1877, during this last period, known as the “Porfiriato,” Manuel Orozco y Berra (1877, 185), the director of the National Museum of Mexico, inaugurated the *Anales de Museo Nacional de México* and published Kingsborough’s reproduction of the *Codex Mendoza*. In 1885, Antonio Peñafiel, working for the Dirección Nacional de Estadística de México (National Statistics Office of Mexico) and under the sponsorship of the Secretario de Fomento Mexicano (Development Secretary for Mexico), once again published the contents of the manuscript as part of his *Nombres geográficos de México*. As part of his work, he reproduced the place-name glyphs of cities and towns from the second section of the *Codex Mendoza*—which he labelled as “*municipios de la república*” (municipalities of the republic)—alongside a series of linguistic studies. In doing so, Peñafiel (1885, chap. 1) sought to arrange the political and economic geography of the modern Mexican nation around a project of recovery and reconstruction of the place-names for cities and towns of pre-Columbian Mexico.

In 1925, Jesús Galindo y Villa published the first modern facsimile of the *Codex Mendoza*. The facsimile was created after a series of photographs was commissioned by Francisco

del Paso y Troncoso, who had also served as the director of the National Museum of Mexico. Considered to be of “public value,” the commission had been part of Paso y Troncoso’s project of the recovery of national documents. He initiated this process in 1893, after securing the patronage of Porfirio Díaz.⁸ Given the preeminence bestowed upon the *Codex Mendoza* in Orozco y Berra’s work as the inaugural document in an academic serial publication, the role it plays in Peñafiel’s work as both an instrument and a vehicle for a reconstruction of the political and economic geography of the modern Mexican nation based on a pre-Columbian geographic model, and the importance with which Galindo y Villa endows it by marking it as a valuable artifact for the Mexican government, we can see the *Codex Mendoza* at the forefront of the nationalist Mexican project of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

A series of historicist studies, inaugurated with the publication of a new facsimile by James Cooper Clark in 1938, sought to ground the history of the codex in documentary and material evidence. In this facsimile, Clark focuses on two main areas: first, the materiality of the manuscript and, second, the identification of a possible author of its texts. For his analysis of the paper used for the *Codex Mendoza*, Clark (1938) uses the 1909 Briquet Catalogue. The evidence Clark discovered allowed him to safely date the production of the manuscript to the middle of the sixteenth century, thus providing the evidence necessary to historically ground the manuscript. Likewise, his discussion of the pigments used in the *Codex Mendoza*, which he based on the list of native pigments found in Book XI of Sahagún’s ([1578] 1979) *Florentine Codex*, constituted the first study that understood the manuscript as a product of the ingenuity of indigenous artists. In his attempt to name an author of the *Codex Mendoza*, Clark bases his work on the interpretation of a calligraphic gesture with which the author of the manuscript’s texts concludes folio 71v. According to Clark, the aforementioned gesture was the letter “J” and, as a result, Clark attributes the texts in the *Codex Mendoza* to Martín Jacobita, one of Sahagún’s collaborators in Tlatelolco.

The same year, two Mexican scholars published studies of the manuscript which, just as Clark had, focused on the authorship both of the texts and pictures in the *Codex Mendoza*. The first of these, Silvio Zavala (1938, 59–75) identified *tlacuilo* Francisco Gualpuyohualcal as the creator of the pictures in the codex. Zavala’s claim was based on a 1547 letter by *encomendero* Jerónimo López addressed to Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza, which had previously been published by Francisco Fernández del Castillo in 1927. The apparent connection Zavala’s study made between the manuscript and the viceroy helped substantiate what until then had been a hypothesis lacking documentary support. This claim, however, has been previously questioned, first by Nicholson in 1992 and then by me in 2012, using both physical and contextual evidence. Although the issue of patronage and commissioning of the Mendocino is the subject of another chapter in this volume, it is worth discussing briefly at this point the text Zavala (1938, 59) referred to in order to connect the manuscript to the viceroy and mention both its contribution and consequences for the construction of the history of the Mendocino:

It must have been approximately six years ago when entering one day in the house of an Indian called Francisco Gualpuyohualcal, a master of painters, I saw in his power a book with parchment covers. When I asked him what it was, he showed it to me in secret and told me that he was making it by command of Your Lordship. In it he was going to depict all the land since the foundation of this city of Mexico and all the lords that had ruled it until the arrival of the Spaniards, and the battles and clashes that they had, and the conquest of this great city, and all the provinces that it ruled and everything that was her subject, and the division of the peoples and provinces that Moctezuma did in favor of the main lords of this city, and of the tribute that each one of the encomienda-owners paid to him from the towns that he had, and the design of each one of these divisions, and how he designed the towns and provinces for this purpose, and whence came these new services, both personal and domestic, and it was not something that the Spaniards enforced once again and, after this, the division that the Marques del Valle did of said peoples and provinces and all of those who ruled.

It is evident that the *Codex Mendoza* lacks some of the cardinal elements López references. We know from Bruce Barker-Benfield's study of the paper and binding of the manuscript (included in this volume) that there is no internal evidence that the manuscript was bound before the 1600s. Likewise, the contents of the manuscript López describes—including the battles between Spaniards and the Mexica, the delineation (urban planning) of towns and provinces, or the apportioning of these and its contributions amongst the Tenocha nobility—do not reflect that of the *Codex Mendoza*. Finally, while we know through several sources that the viceroy wished to compile information on New Spain, such as the letters that Mendoza sent to his brother, don Diego, and which were published by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo in his *Historia natural y general de las Indias*, he had not merely commissioned texts to send to Spain, but hoped to author something which surpassed the reach and scope of the *Codex Mendoza*. Fernández de Oviedo ([1532] 1959) twice quotes the viceroy's writings on the history of Mexico,

He [Viceroy Mendoza] writes to his brother don Diego that the foundation of Temistitan occurred in this manner: At the time of the war between the Mexicans and the Tlaxcalans came from the north in direction to the Province of Panuco, a captain named Orchilobos together with four hundred well-trained men with gold and silver weapons. They intervened in the war in aid of the Mexicans and by their effort and labor they were victorious. And, realizing that the appropriate place for settling down was in a nearby lake, which had a thin entrance of small mounds that lead to a small island or rock that was almost at the center of the lake, he began to inhabit the place with his people. He thus made a small stone tower that afterwards became Orchilobos's Templo Mayor, consecrated to his name, and thenceforth little by little he dominated and subjugated the neighboring towns until he became lord of Mexico, and in nearby provinces he sent settlers until the population grew to become a city. (4:103-4)

... In regards to the report that you say they sent you from Venice and which I had originally sent to His Majesty of some things of this land, and that among them I said that the Mexicans came from Perú, it is true that I have written some things that I seemed to notice; but not this one, because I am of the contrary opinion and I think that they came from the north. Ancient buildings and names of the places through which they came attest to this. ... I have tried to collect a report of the things of this land and be very particular about it and I have found a diversity of opinions because since there were many lords in every province, they all tell things in their own manner. I am collecting and verifying them and once I have done so I will send them to you; because it seems to me that it would be a very shameful thing if I sent you a relation of which you deemed me to be the author and it were not but completely truthful. The things of this land are not so little that you will not be able to make a book from them, and the book will not be small either, because even though Moctezuma and Mexico have become famous among us, Caçonçi of Mechuacan was no less of a lord, just as were others who did not recognize either one or the other. (4:117-18)⁹

There appears to be no concrete evidence in these texts that the manuscript we know as the *Codex Mendoza* was either the first report sent to the emperor and to Mendoza's brother (the account of Huitzilopochtli's ascent) or the second promised report, the historical scope of which goes well beyond that of the *Codex Mendoza* (particularly regarding Quetzalcoatl). Moreover, the history of the foundation of Tenochtitlan as told in the first report is notably different than that rendered in the *Codex Mendoza*. Meanwhile, the second report was apparently informed by the *Relación de Michoacán*, which Viceroy Mendoza had commissioned in 1539-40, in which the contents of the *Codex Mendoza* became but a chapter in a more comprehensive history of the peoples of New Spain.

Alongside studies that sought to ratify the link between the manuscript and the viceroy, a group of academics continued their research on the possible authors of the *Codex Mendoza's*

text. In 1938, Wigberto Jiménez Moreno (cited in Nicholson 1992, 2) suggested that bishop Juan González was the author of the texts in the *Codex Mendoza*, basing his conclusion on a reference to the years and duration of the rules of the lords of Mexico in the *Florentine Codex*. In 1941, after performing a calligraphic analysis similar to Clark's, Federico Gómez de Orozco (1941) ratified Jiménez Moreno's hypothesis after concluding that the final mark in folio 71v was a "G". Finally, in 1963, Woodrow Borah and Sherburne Cook (1963, 31) concluded that the aforementioned mark was a "Q" further complicating the already exigent task of finding the author of the manuscript's texts.

Twenty-one years after Cooper Clark's study, interest in the *Codex Mendoza* as an object of Mexica artistic ingenuity was rekindled. In *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period*, published in 1959, Donald Robertson crafted an artistic-historical context for the classification of pre- and colonial manuscripts that had survived into the twentieth century, similar to that used for the study of Early modern art. Thus, Robertson divided the manuscript according to schools and styles that, to a greater or lesser degree, incorporated elements traceable to the metropolitan areas of pre-Columbian Mexico or to European artistic influences. Robertson ([1959] 1994, 82–106) classified the *Codex Mendoza* as an "initial manuscript" of what he denominated the "second stage in the school of México Tenochtitlan" due to the presence of stylistic and formal elements which he deemed peripheral, such as the substitution of the traditional screen format in favor of the codex form or the use of European paper instead of *amatl*.¹⁰

In 1992, after a series of studies focused on particular elements of the *Codex Mendoza* or on its contextualization within a corpus of Mexican manuscripts, the next milestone work in the history of the codex's scholarship was published: a facsimile of the codex. This work was fruit of the labor of two anthropologists, Frances Berdan and Patricia Anwalt, who rescued the project after it had been forsaken by the University of New Mexico Press in 1986. Hitherto, this edition is the most influential study of the codex, both because of its purview and depth. It is here that we find the last of the great historical, documentary summaries of the *Codex Mendoza*. Penned by H. B. Nicholson, it not only sought to contextualize the essays that make up the 1992 edition, but it also offered initial thoughts regarding the place the *Codex Mendoza* had in the bibliography of Thevet and other scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, it is the first study of the codex to bring to light references that Thevet himself made regarding Mexican manuscripts, thus allowing for what theretofore had been certainties pertaining to the identity and itineraries of the *Codex Mendoza* to be questioned.

The sum total of studies on the *Codex Mendoza*, beginning in 1625 and continuing to this day, weave a narrative of the concerns that have guided successive generations of scholars of the *Codex Mendoza*. The aggregate of these studies effectively reflects the central themes and preoccupations of the scholars' essays, be it in the case of utilitarian reproductions, positivistic documentary studies, or phenomenological treatises. Combined, these have allowed projects such as this one to appear, and they emphasize the essential instability both of historical inquiry and of the object they study. Two episodes concerning the construction of the *Codex Mendoza's* history continue to add to the discussion of the manuscript's identity and purpose, despite a myriad of investigations. The first of these is the *Codex Mendoza's* itinerary between its departure from Mexico and Thevet's acquisition of it; the second is Francisco Clavijero's christening of the manuscript after Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza. Because of the complexity, importance, and unavoidable degree of speculation surrounding these events, I will address them at length in the remainder of this essay.

The problem of the *Codex Mendoza's* itinerary in the construction of its history

Among Mexican manuscripts, the *Codex Mendoza* has received the most attention over the last four centuries, having been reproduced and studied continuously from 1625 until the present day. However, regardless of the multiple theories on how the codex's history

began, this continues to be a matter for debate. The best known and most widely accepted hypothesis avers that, after the manuscript departed from New Spain, it was stolen by French pirates as it crossed the Atlantic and taken to France, where Thevet procured it in 1553. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that Thevet signed and dated the manuscript on its upper sleeve as well as in folios 1r, 2r, 70v, and 71v. A parallel hypothesis, advanced by Nicholson in 1992, but which he subsequently discarded inasmuch he did not pursue it further, suggests that the manuscript might have reached Thevet by way of Queen Elizabeth de Valois (1545-1568), third wife of King Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) and daughter of King Henry II of France (1519-1559). Both hypotheses are problematic, for they impose the burden of great speculation even by the standards of the most lenient of historians.

The first of these hypotheses, which, as I previously mentioned, has become part of the historical tradition of the manuscript, can be first found in Samuel Purchas's encyclopedia of exploration, *Hakluytus Posthumus: Or Purchas, His Pilgrimes*, published in 1625. In it, Purchas (1625, 1065–66) presented the manuscript in the following way:

Reader, I here present unto thee the choicest of my Jewels. ...Such an one we here present, a present thought fit for him whom the senders esteemed the greatest of Princes, and yet now presented to thy hands before it could arrive in his presence. For the Spanish Governour having with some difficultie (as the Spanish preface imports) obtained the Booke of the Indians with Mexican interpretations of the Pictures (but ten daies before the departre of the Ships) committed to the same to one skillful in the Mexican language to be interpreted ... this Historie thus written, sent to Charles the fifth Emperour, was together with the Shippe that carried it taken by Frenchmen of war, from whom Andrew Thevet, the French King's Geographer, obtained the same: after whose death Master Hakluyt (then Chaplaine to the English Embassadour in France) bought the same for 20 French crownes.¹¹

Almost four centuries after Puchas brought the *Codex Mendoza* into public view, we can esteem the anecdotal constructions and inaccuracies upon which the manuscript's history has been constructed. Its importance in the *Codex Mendoza's* history notwithstanding, what is perhaps most relevant about Purchas's text is that it allows us to better illustrate his narrative priorities as well as the context in which he operated as a compiler of geographical and exploratory material.

In its present form, the *Codex Mendoza* has no preface. Additionally, Hakluyt could not have acquired the manuscript after Thevet's death, since he returned to England in 1588 and the Frenchman died in 1592; such speculations prevent us from giving credence to Purchas's claims.¹² Likewise, in referring to the manuscript as "the choisest of my Jewels" and by turning it into a present from the viceroy to the emperor—even if no evidence, either within the manuscript, or without it in the form of any previous reference made by Hakluyt or Thevet—Purchas elevates the value of the manuscript as a source of information. Likewise, it is untrue that Mendoza "with some difficultie obtained ... the book from the Indians" (Pennington 1997, sec. introduction). By means of a careful analysis of the manufacturing process of the manuscript, I have shown that the *Codex Mendoza* was the result of a collaborative process between Mexican artists and a (possibly Spanish) interpreter (Gómez Tejada 2012, chap. 1; chap. 5 of this volume). Moreover, the narrative priorities of the manuscript show us that, beyond it being an exotic curiosity or a purely informative document, the artists who collaborated in making the *Codex Mendoza* conceived of it as a politically charged and ideologically important document. By means of carefully composed pictures and texts, it demonstrated the just and civilized nature of the Mexica world (Gómez Tejada 2018). Notably, both the chronological and geographical separation between Thevet and Purchas and the fact that it was only after Hakluyt's death that Purchas acquired his documents—among which was the *Codex Mendoza*—cast further doubt upon Purchas's narrative.

That being said, it is necessary to mention the value a manuscript such as the *Codex Mendoza* had for Purchas's corpus, who devoted himself to popularize the exploration narrative genre for what is nowadays known as "armchair travelers." A prolific writer and a successful proponent of the colonization of the Americas, Purchas has been characterized in two main ways. Several scholars with a historicist inclination have deemed him to be an irresponsible and careless writer, prone to rely on literary license to embellish his narratives when convenient in order to enhance specific elements of them (Pennington 1997, sec. Introduction). As a counterpoint, authors such as James Helfers (1997, 160–86) have pointed to the fact that, for Purchas, as the titles of his works suggest, exploration was a religious, rather than a secular, activity. In other words, in the act of exploring, an individual set out on a pilgrimage and, in doing so, unveiled the work of God. Discovery by means of exploration was synonymous with becoming acquainted with God. It is precisely in these terms that Purchas (1625, xxxix) talks about his *Pilgrimes*,

Naturall things are the more proper Object [of this work], namely the ordinary Workes of God in the Creatures, preserving and disposing by Providence that which his Goodnesse and Power had created, and dispersed in the divers parts of the World, as so many members of this great Bodie.

In this context, the narrative of discovery need not be restricted by what is factual, but it instead strives towards the visualization of transcendence. From the perspective of Protestantism, this narrative becomes a metaphor for personal growth rather than a travel-guide for a physical journey. Purchas's editorial comments (often used to instigate an emotional response on the part of the reader) were not necessarily grounded in real events. The presentation of the *Codex Mendoza* in Purchas's work, then, calls for a certain degree of skepticism when it comes to dating the manuscript and establishing its itinerary. However, this in no way diminishes the text's usefulness to understand Purchas's priorities as an author.

The second hypothesis that might explain how Thevet came to be in possession of the *Codex Mendoza* is found only in the testimony of a lone French geographer, penned in 1588 in an unpublished manuscript titled *Grande Insulaire et Pilotage*. Published and translated into English for the first time in 1986 by Schlessinger and Stabler, the *Grande Insulaire* was used for the first time as a source of information for the *Codex Mendoza's* trajectory by H. B. Nicholson in 1992,

two books about the idols writ by hand containing the genealogy and history of the kings and great lords of that country, and the pictures of the idols they adored, painted and pictured in two books, written by hand by a monk who lived there around thirty-four years, excercising the charge of bishop of that country ... these books came into my hands after having been presented to the late Queen of Spain, daughter of King Henry II of France ... The reader who might be curious and wants to go thoroughly into the matter will have patience, if it please him, to wait until I have published these books, which will be soon with God's help. Still, if he were too famished [to wait], I would advise him to come see me and I will show him something that will be able to satisfy him. (Thevet cited in Schlesinger and Stabler 1986, 218–19).

Based on the contents to which this passage refers—which include the genealogy and history of the lords of Mexico, painted and written by a monk, and which notably resemble those of the first part of the *Codex Mendoza*—it appears the passage offers a first reference to the manuscript by Thevet's hand, even if indirect, to the *Codex Mendoza*. Nevertheless, the possibility that the manuscript had ended up in France by way of Queen Elizabeth of Valois leaves many questions unanswered. If one accepts that Thevet in fact acquired the manuscript in 1553, then it reached Thevet six years before the queen married Philip the II and even before he became king. If, on the contrary, one takes the passage from the *Grande Insulaire* as a reference to the *Codex Mendoza* based on accurate reminiscences, then the 1553 date becomes problematic. The solution to these problems might lie within Thevet's own library.

Purchas was not the only geographer of the time who manipulated facts in order to prompt an emotional response on the part of his audience, or that handled his sources in a way that would help him compose an enticing narrative arc. Both during his lifetime and after, Thevet has been criticized for what at first glance could be deemed slapdash work as compiler and narrator.¹³ The date Thevet stamped on the manuscript is not necessarily the same date it came into his possession. Frank Lestringant has convincingly proven that Thevet's memories, references, and even his biographical annotations should not be taken at face value. In his biography of Thevet, Lestringant has explored the visible imprecision and even the outright fabrication of facts that plague the Frenchman's oeuvre. In fact, Lestringant (1991, 40–43) has identified a process he labeled “retroactive autobiographical fiction” by means of which Thevet manipulated both facts and dates such that his narratives would fit those of other published sources or commemorate events in his life that were relevant to any particular work. Thus, Thevet signed and dated a copy of Sebastián Münster's *Universal Cosmography* on the title page as 1562, even when on the very same page we can read that it had been published in 1565. Later, on page 1337, Thevet once again dates the book, this time as 1558 (Lestringant 1991, 40).

In the case of the *Codex Mendoza*, its dating seems to group it with other manuscripts connected by Thevet's interest in the New World: Jean Alfonse's *Les Voyages Aventureux*, first published in 1558, and Antonio Pigafetta's *Le voyage & navigation, faict par les Espalgnolz*, published in 1537 (Lestringant 1991, 42–43). Thevet assigned all of these a 1553 date, thus grouping them together. Additionally, even though the latter's publication date was earlier than this, the dating of Alfonse's book to one earlier than its own publication recalls what Thevet had done with Münster's book.

One last piece of evidence regarding the 1553 date comes from the *Codex Mendoza* itself. In his report on the paper and binding of the *Codex Mendoza*, Bruce Barker-Benfield (Chapter 3 of this volume) proposes that the paper with which one of the folios onto which Thevet stamped his signature dates from the 1570s. Even if Thevet does not write down a specific date in this folio, the very gesture of signing the manuscript over and over again between the 1550s and 1570s marks the action as part of the process of autobiographical revisionism that Lestringant identifies. This same process can be patently observed in Münster's *Universal Cosmography*, with its two dates of 1562 and 1558. Considering this and the second hypothesis for the *Codex Mendoza*'s itinerary vis-à-vis, we must question and problematize one of the traditionally irrefutable elements of the codex's history: the fact that it was procured by Thevet in 1553. In order to understand the role and context of the 1553 date, it is useful to recount Thevet's voyages between the 1540s and the 1570s.

Between 1549 and 1553 Thevet travelled through the Middle East, aided by his benefactor, Cardinal Jean de Lorraine. During his travels, Thevet joined the French Embassy in the Ottoman Empire. He returned to Europe towards the end of 1553 and, by 1554, he published his *Cosmographie de Levant*. That very same year, Thevet was appointed chaplain to Vice-Admiral Nicolas Dourand de Villegaignon. Thevet accompanied him in an expedition that would come to be known as the “*France Antarctique*,” through which France sought to invade Brazil in an attempt to launch a colonial campaign in the New World. The mission, which Thevet chronicled in his *Singularites de la France Antarctique* (1574), was a failure. By 1559, Thevet was back in France. In 1559, he secured the courtly position of chaplain to Queen Catherine de Medici, mother of Elizabeth of Valois.¹⁴ Both Lestringant and Nicholson have noted that Thevet developed a close relationship with the queen, from whom he received all sorts of presents and curiosities that could contribute to his work as cosmographer. Some of these, according to Thevet's remembrance registered in his *Grande Insulaire*, could have been Mexican manuscripts and may have included the *Codex Mendoza*.

The possibility that the *Codex Mendoza* might have come to Thevet not by way of pirates, but as one of many gifts that the queen bestowed upon him during his years of service, takes away from the romantic aura and the status of treasure that the manuscript has

achieved over the course of the past four centuries. This hypothesis allows for the possibility that the *Codex Mendoza* did indeed reach Spain; if this were true, then the codex can be inserted into a wider context. Furthermore, although it is hard to accurately pinpoint the route, precise moment, and context in which the manuscript arrived to Spain, this possibility supports my hypothesis that the manuscript was commissioned by the surviving Mexica elite as well as its role as a document for the apology of the sovereignty of the peoples of the New World in the context of the indigenist movement of the sixteenth century. Both of these topics are explored at a greater depth in the following chapters by Barbara Mundy and me.

Between 1559 and 1592, Thevet remained in the French court and wrote several volumes on exploration, three of which are relevant to the New World in general, and two of which are relevant to the *Codex Mendoza*: *Cosmographie Universelle* (1575), *Vrais portraits et vies des homes illustres* (1584), and *Grande Insulaire* (1588). The contents of these books have been employed by scholars to identify the *Codex Mendoza* within Thevet's bibliography. In 1971, Benjamin Keen (cited in Nicholson 1992, 5) quoted the following passage from the *Cosmographie Universelle*,

I have in my cabinet, engraved on two disks of ivory, or of other wild beasts, that I have recovered from the taking of a ship that came from those countries; in the middle of the said disks can be seen certain letters made like frogs, or toads, and some other animals, both terrestrial as well as aquatic, around the said letters.

As Nicholson (1992, 5) has already noted, while Thevet's passage describes Mexican objects from his personal collection, it is highly unlikely that one of these was the *Codex Mendoza*. However, in his *Vrais portraits*, Thevet does reference Mexican manuscripts that hint to the *Codex Mendoza*,

I will confess that the Mexicans. In order to express their ideas, use characters resembling divers terrestrial and aquatic animals and the head, feet, arms, and other limbs of a man, just as the Egyptians and Ethiopians did formerly in their hieroglyphic letters—a subject which I have treated amply in my *Cosmographie*. Two such books I have by me, written by hand in the city of Themistitan, and filled with their characters and figures and the interpretations of them. (5)

When considered alongside the previously quoted excerpt from *Grande Insulaire*, this passage seems to refer not only to the *Codex Mendoza*, but also to at least one more Mexican manuscript in his possession. It is both more important and baffling that both texts were written in the 1580s, which indicates that Thevet planned to publish the Mexican manuscripts he owned in the near future. Nevertheless, by 1587, as is suggested by the English inscription in the flyleaf immediately before folio 1r which reads “d. yourselfe in gold rydinge to london ye 7th of september 1587/v,” it seems clear that the *Codex Mendoza* was no longer in Thevet's possession. It had found a new owner, English geographer Richard Hakluyt.

A notably capable man, Richard Hakluyt remained in Paris between 1583 and 1588. A cleric by training, Hakluyt's wide range of activities encompassed everything from the secretaryship to Sir Edward Stafford to translation, chaplaincy, authorship of political texts, and, probably, espionage. As a matter of fact, we know that during his mission to France, he had been deputed by Sir Francis Walsingham and Sir Robert Cecil to procure as much information as he could concerning the Spanish and French courts and their ultramarine enterprises. The goal of this information gathering was to ascertain whether an English colonization of the New World was possible (Hakluyt 1850, sec. Introduction).

Between 1583 and 1586, Hakluyt wrote several works that underscored what the New World could offer England. Noteworthy among these are *A Discourse on Western Planting* (1584) and a translation of Pedro Martyr of Anghiera's *De Orbe Novo Decades Octo*, which Hakluyt ([1584] 1993) dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh.¹⁵ It was in this period that Hakluyt

met Thevet and received from him the *Codex Mendoza*. In Nicholson's opinion, the quoted phrase "d. yourselfe in gold rydinge to londen ye 7th of september 1587/v" indicates not only that the *Codex Mendoza* had switched owners but that, by then, the manuscript was in London or making its way to England. Hakluyt returned to England in 1588 and from his arrival onwards he devoted himself to promoting an English colonization of the New World. However, there is no reference to or material derived from the *Codex Mendoza* in any of his works. After Hakluyt's death in 1616, Samuel Purchas collected his papers, amongst them the *Codex Mendoza*, which he published in 1625. This publication turned it into the most widely circulated and most commonly translated Mexican manuscript of the following two centuries.

At this moment, we return to the beginning of this discussion. The precise circumstances for the *Codex Mendoza's* arrival in Europe are still a mystery and, rather than pursue certainty, it behooves us to embrace the possibility that the manuscript's initial trajectory might have included a stay at the Spanish court. As I have suggested elsewhere and reiterate throughout this volume, the contents of the manuscript might have been aligned with the indigenist movement spearheaded by Bartolomé de las Casas (Gómez Tejada 2012, 269–306; 2018). Beyond being a viceregal commission or a report, its *raison d'être* might be as an apology of the pre-Columbian world and as a demonstration of its just and legitimate government and social structure. This would have thus set the stage for the role that both Clavijero and Kingsborough bestowed upon it in subsequent periods marked by emancipatory politics.

The birth of the *Codex Mendoza*: Francisco Clavijero's *Storia Antica del Messico* (1781)

Despite the continuous reproduction, circulation, and study of the *Codex Mendoza* between the sixteenth and twenty-first centuries, the construction of the manuscript's history was defined in two instances. The first of these was its publication as part of Samuel Purchas's 1625 compendium of exploration *Hakluytus Posthumus: Or Purchas His Pylgrimes*, which we covered in the previous section. The second came about in 1781, when Jesuit historian Francisco Clavijero included it as one of his bibliographic sources for his *Storia Antica del Messico*, identifying it as *la colección de Mendoza*. This gesture itself is a powerful one.

On one hand, by naming the manuscript after Mendoza, Clavijero took a manuscript whose importance was indisputable but whose patronage and authorship had remained anonymous, and linked it with one of the major figures in Mexican history. That figure was the first viceroy of New Spain, whose reputation as a statesman, benefactor, and maker of the vicerealty were widely known (Matienzo [1567] 1967, 207; Alcalá [1540] 1980, 5–6; Tovar de Teresa, León-Portilla, and Zavala 1992).¹⁶ Likewise, the concept of collection ("*raccolta*" in the original Italian) made Mendoza's role an active one. He was not a mere patron or benefactor of someone else's work; instead, he had personally collected the object that bore his name. The specific form that this gesture took as part of Clavijero's bibliography establishes an axis around this decision which betrays an unspoken purpose in the construction of his narrative. In this narrative, the *Codex Mendoza* is presented as the turning point between pre-Columbian histories and written sources and, as a consequence, between pre-Columbian and Modern Mexico. As such, the *Codex Mendoza* became a foundational document.

In this section, I wish to explore Clavijero's gesture of connecting the manuscript with the first viceroy of New Spain. I will also study the manuscript within his bibliographical production and in the context of what Rolena Adorno has identified as the Jesuit's objective of recovering the Mexican nation. Clavijero's connection of the manuscript with the first viceroy of New Spain exemplifies a process of cognitive dissonance in which, absent conclusive evidence of this connection, historians find that they wish to find and create an identity for the manuscript that could validate their own goals.

The *Storia Antica del Messico*

A mere five years after the creation of the United States of America's Declaration of Independence, Francisco Clavijero's *History of Ancient Mexico* was published in Italy as the *Storia Antica del Messico*. In 1767, the Company of Jesus was expelled from all territories under Spanish rule. When the book was published, Clavijero and a large group of Jesuits thus relocated to Bologna. With the patronage of notable secular and ecclesiastic sponsors (whose names he included in the beginning of his book), Clavijero was finally able to publish his work in Italy.

The organization of the ten books that make up the *Storia* followed the norms and precepts of Enlightenment-era historical writing. It sought to maintain objectivity, to be grounded in wide documentary foundations from authoritative sources, and to structure narrative as a progressive evolutive sequence beginning with a description of Mexico's natural environment and ending with a group of "dissertations." In these dissertations, Clavijero discusses the virtues and, more frequently, the defects of the works that learned foreigners had written about Mexico. He particularly focused on those of the Scottish author William Robertson. In order to contextualize Clavijero's identification of Antonio de Mendoza as the man responsible for creating the *Codex Mendoza* and in order to understand the function of the now-attributed manuscript in Clavijero's work, in this section I pay special attention to Clavijero's explicit and implicit proclamations on the *Storia*'s title page, dedication, introduction, and bibliography.

In Clavijero's dedication of the *Storia* to the Pontifical University (1780, 2:iii–iv, vii), the historian explicitly declares that, as a Mexican, he has the authority to speak about his nation's history; having studied this history firsthand, he declares that he can weigh the merits of the works written on the subject and correct their mistakes. Likewise, Clavijero characterizes his work as a gallant effort that he undertook for the benefit of his homeland regardless of the calamities that had befallen him. Finally, he states that his work evidences the sincere love and veneration he feels for his native land. Clavijero reiterates this in his introduction to the book, explicitly stating he seeks to use the *Storia* to restore the splendor of his land, which a mob of contemporary historians of the Americas had besmirched (2:1). Clavijero casts himself in the role of defender of the truth of his land; this understanding of himself is key to understanding his decisions in the making of his history, such as his selection of sources and the establishment of a narrative arc. As such, it is important for us to pay special attention to one of Clavijero's claims, which can easily be overlooked, but which shed light on his process.

From the beginning, we can see that Clavijero claims to speak from an objective perspective. The title of the first iteration of the book is *Storia Antica del Messico* with the subtitle *Cavata da' migliori storici spagnuoli e da manuscritti, e dalle pitture antiche degl' indiani* (*The Ancient History of Mexico, obtained from the Spanish and Mexican historians, from manuscripts, and ancient paintings of the Indians*). Here, I wish to highlight the Italian word *cavata*, which literally translates to "taken from," but can also mean "extracted" or "obtained."¹⁷ By "extracting" or "taking from," the author represents himself as the medium through which the audience can obtain a historical object. In this case, that which can be obtained is a source, and so Clavijero intimates that there has been no manipulation or interpretation of the source. Thus, over the course of the ten books of the *Storia* (with the exception of the dissertations in which Clavijero openly offers his own arguments), the language the author uses and his writing style give the illusion that the relationship he establishes with his sources is that of a vehicle through which these can transmit their content, unmediated by the author. In his phrasing, we can always identify that the ideas presented in his collected sources take precedence, not his own. Thus, we can consider the profusion of footnotes, charts, maps, and comparative lists offered by Clavijero as more than mere receptacles of marginal reflexions or an acknowledgement of authorship; instead, these elements allow us to descry the very structure of the work itself, thereby establishing the true authorial *locus* of the work. It is the sources that are important, not the compiler.

This is an important point inasmuch as we see Clavijero establish a conscious difference between the nature of his actions and those of the authors of the sources he references. Then, when Clavijero decides to connect the manuscript with Antonio de Mendoza, he uses a verb that intimates a more active role regarding the contents of the codex. In the title Clavijero gives the manuscript, *La raccolta di Mendoza*, the active word is *raccolta*, which translates into English as “collection.” The act of *racogliere*, which translates into English as “collect, gather, or harvest,” implies a different relationship than *cavare*, since it implies that the individual performing the action chooses and composes that which has been *raccolto*, “collected.” Thus, *la collezione de Mendoza* is not simply an assortment of texts and images that the viceroy received or acquired, but a document upon which he exerted influence, as Clavijero (1780, 2:22) announces when he claims that,

La Raccolta di Mendoza. Così chiamiamo la collezione di 63 pitture messicane fatta far dal primo Vicerè del Messico D. Antonio Mendoza, alle quali fece aggiungere da persone intendenti la loro interpretazione nelle lingue Messicana, e Spagnuola per mandarle all’Imperatore Carlo V.

The roles Clavijero and Mendoza play in the creation of their respective manuscripts could not be more different. The former is the intermediary of a bibliographical enterprise that seeks to transmit the truth about his land, which had been soiled by foreign authors. As such, he acts as a vehicle that allows the voices of truthful authors to be heard, thus restoring the splendor of his nation’s history. On the other hand, the latter is an active subject in the collection of information about Mexico; he is the author of a primary source. This idea allows us to consider the *Codex Mendoza* in the context of the bibliographical sources which Clavijero lists at the beginning of the *Storia*, and to suggest that the function of the document goes well beyond that of a mere work to be cited.

The bibliography

Immediately after the introduction, Clavijero lists forty-seven sources that he divides into two categories: the first is comprised of histories written by European and Mexican authors and the second includes collections of paintings (pictographic Mexican codices). The *Codex Mendoza* belongs to the latter.

As we can observe in table 2, Clavijero organizes his textual sources chronologically. Hence, he begins with Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo, two prominent authors who participated in the conquest of Mexico, and ends with the texts of Boturini, a famous eighteenth-century historian and collector. However, the way in which Clavijero organizes the Mexican pictographic manuscripts in his bibliography corresponds to a different logic. In this list, Clavijero (1780, 2:22) cites five pictographic manuscripts, which he refers to as collections of paintings useful for writing the history of Mexico. Four of these were introduced as pre-Columbian antiques when, in fact, they contain colonial elements. This sheds light on Clavijero’s bias in approaching this material and the value he sought to bestow upon it in the context of his bibliography: primary sources whose authority, because of their origin, was incontrovertible.

The fifth source on this list is the *Codex Mendoza*. Although Clavijero grouped it alongside documents of pre-Columbian origin, he never pretended that the *Codex Mendoza* was anything other than a colonial manuscript. Once more, what interests us here is not just the *what* but the *how*. Contrary to the way in which Clavijero organized his historical sources, by presenting the *Codex Mendoza* atop his list of pre-Columbian materials, he consciously reverts the chronological principle that had apparently guided the presentation of his bibliography, effectively enhancing the colonial manuscript he had just christened.

Thus, the bibliography for Clavijero’s *Storia* functions as a mirror in which textual sources are organized following a chronological progression from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, while pictographic manuscripts are organized in reverse chronological order. In

Table 2. The bibliographic sources of the *Storia Antica del Messico*

Written Sources	
SIXTEENTH CENTURY	EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
Fernando Cortés	Pedro Fernandez del Pulgar
Bernal Díaz del Castillo	Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci
Alonso de Mata	Anonymous indigenous authors collected by Botoruni that must be included because of the importance of the subjects they cover:
Alfonso de Ojeda	-Annals of the Toltec Nation from the Foundation of Tollan until 1547.
El conquistador anónimo	-Historical Commentaries on the Mexican Nation from 1066 to 1316 and others equally Mexican from 1367 until 1509
Francisco López de Gómara	-Mexican History in Nahuatl until 1406 which places the arrival of the Mexicans in Tollan in 1196.
Toribio de Beavente	Does not include the antiquities of Michoacan, Yucatan, Guatemala, and New Mexico because they did not form part of the Mexican empire.
Andrés de Olmos	
Bernardino de Sahagún	
Juan Tovar	
José de Acosta	
Fernando Pimentel Ixtlixochitl	
Antonio de Tovar Cano Montezuma Ixtlixochitl	
Tadeo de Niza	
Gabriel de Ayala	
Juan Ventura Zapata y Mendoza	
Pedro Ponce	
The Lords of Colhuacan	
Cristobal del Castillo	
Diego Muñoz Camargo	
Fernando de Alba Ixtlixochitl	
Don Juan Bautista Pomar	
Domingo de San Antonio Muñoz Chimalpain	
Fernando Alvarado Tezozomoc	
Barnolomé de las Casas	
Agustín Dávila y Padilla	
Doctor Cervantes	
Antonio de Saavedra Guzmán	
Pedro Gutierrez de Santa Clara	
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	COLLECTIONS OF PAINTINGS
Antonio de Herrera	Colección de Mendoza
Enrique Martínez	Vatican Collection: used by Acosta
Gregorio García	Vienna Collection: pre-Conquest manuscripts presented to Pope Clement VII by the king of Portugal
Juan de Torquemada	Collection of Siguenza
Arias Villalobos	Boturini Collection
Cristóbal Chávez Castillejo	
Carlos de Siguenza y Góngora	
Agustín de Betancourt	
Antonio Solís	

this way, the *Codex Mendoza*, a colonial document that incorporated textual and pictographic materials and which was commissioned by the first viceroy of New Spain, acts as the bibliographical equivalent of a hinge between European and pre-Columbian histories. The *how* of this presentation is important. In the same way that Purchas had presented the manuscript a century earlier as an anonymous, but immensely valuable source (“the choicest of my Jewels”), Clavijero also sets the manuscript apart from the group to which he assigns it by ignoring the order he had already established for the presentation of his sources and by attributing it to Antonio de Mendoza. For the purposes of nominally considering the inclusion of this manuscript in the *Storia’s* bibliography, the order in which it appears is irrelevant. However, when considered in conjunction with the name

bestowed upon the manuscript, the historical context in which Clavijero's work appears, and the function Clavijero assigns it in his *Storia* (as a vehicle for his nation-building project), the gesture cannot be ignored.

On one hand, by incorporating both textual and pictographic materials, the *Codex Mendoza* functions as a desirable transition between colonial and pre-Columbian sources and hence fulfills a practical role in the presentation of the bibliography. On the other, by actively linking the manuscript with the first viceroy of New Spain, calling it “the collection (*raccolta*) of Mendoza,” and keeping in mind the viceroy's reputation as a humanist and a statesman, whether consciously or unconsciously, Clavijero bestows upon him responsibility over the contents of the manuscript, even if he had not been their material author. The identification of Mendoza as the man responsible for the manuscript marks it as a preeminent, quasi-foundational document. By making Antonio de Mendoza responsible for the manuscript, Clavijero sets up a narrative arc for his bibliography around the historical moment in which ancient, pictographic Mexico converges with modern, textual Mexico, and identifies him with the birth of the Viceroyalty of New Spain as a political structure that could serve as the foundation for the modern Mexican nation. Henceforth, scholars of Mexico could access specific truths pertaining ancient Mexico by means of a “return to the origin” of New Spain, which combined royal authority embodied in the figure of the viceroy and indigenous voices articulated in the manuscript's images and texts. This, however, raises several questions: Why Mendoza? Why did Clavijero not attribute the patronage of the manuscript to Luis de Velasco, Hernán Cortés, Vasco de Quiroga, or any other notable figure of the period whose authority could have been equally desirable for enhancing the value of the manuscript as a primary source of unquestionable reputation?

Don Antonio de Mendoza

The first viceroy of New Spain is one of the most famous personages of Spanish colonial history. The son of Íñigo López de Mendoza, Captain General of Granada, don Antonio received a privileged education. He was tutored by the notable chronicler Pedro Mártir de Anglería, and his family's close connections to the Castilian crown allowed him access to the most intimate circles of the Spanish court (Aiton 1927). Among other prestigious positions he held throughout his life in Europe, Mendoza was a gentleman of the king's chamber to Charles I and ambassador to Vienna, one of the most important European capitals of Habsburg Europe. However, it is not only his lineage or his position as the first viceroy of New Spain that set him apart from other administrators of the crown in the New World, but also his reputation as a humanist. Together, these conditions single him out in early colonial history, thus making Clavijero's attribution of the manuscript to him, rather than to any of the other notable personages of the period, all the more beneficial for the codex that bears his name.

Mendoza's particular profile as the viceroy and a man of letters is underscored by contemporary authors including Friar Jerónimo de Alcalá and Juan de Matienzo. In his prologue to the *Relación de Michoacán*, Alcalá ([1540] 1980, 5–6) calls Mendoza “elected by God” to rule, and highlights Mendoza's virtues of magnanimity, prudence, affability, severity, and zeal for the implementation of the Christian faith he embodied. These epithets appear to echo the style in which Juan de Matienzo speaks of Mendoza in his *Gobierno del Perú*, in which he describes him as a “light and mirror for all future viceroys” (Matienzo [1567] 1967, 207). In speaking of Mendoza in these terms, both authors implicitly refer to widely known and well-established ideas regarding the practical and symbolic role of the Castilian viceroy. Quoting legal treatises of the period by authors such as Rafael de Vilosa, Juan de Solórzano, Erasmus of Rotherdam, Mercurino Gattinara, and others, Alejandro Cañeque's *The King's Living Image* (2004, 25) and Manuel Rivero Rodríguez's *La edad de oro de los virreyes* (2011) highlight several of the fundamental elements of the viceregal ideology. For example, the viceroy was not only considered a high-ranking administrator, but also the king's alter ego; the viceroy's decrees, favors, and commissions were considered to be of the king himself. The attribution of the commission of the manuscript to the

viceroys with the goal of elevating its value is a gesture that even Purchas seems to have intuitively understood, as is demonstrated by the well-known text in which he explains the way the manuscript reached Thevet, and which Clavijero deemed desirable when he included the manuscript as one of his sources. In attributing the manuscript to Mendoza over other viceroys, Clavijero endowed the manuscript not only with the reputation reserved for viceroys' commissions, but with that of Mendoza's own reputation, whose excellence as a governor and an intellectual were unmatched by his successors.

In the aforementioned text of the *Relación de Michoacán*, Alcalá mentions the desire that united him and the viceroy for writing a history of the peoples of Michoacán. This chapter in Mendoza's history is brought to life in the following letter to his brother; the letter, published by the chronicler Fernández de Oviedo, illustrates his interest in history and particularly in writing it,

I have tried to collect a report of the things of this land and be very particular about it and I have found a diversity of opinions because since there were many lords in every province, they all tell things in their own manner. I am collecting and verifying them and once I have done so I will send them to you; because it seems to me that it would be a very shameful thing if I sent you a relation of which you deemed me to be the author and it were not but completely truthful. The things of this land are not so little that you will not be able to make a book from them, and the book will not be small either, because even though Moctezuma and Mexico have become famous among us, Caçonçi of Mechuacan was no less of a lord, just as were others who did not recognize either one or the other. ([1532] 1959, 4:117–18).

Texts such as this shed light on Mendoza's intellectual facet as well as the way he was understood both by his contemporaries and by writers working over the following two centuries. They also allow us to understand the political role texts such as the *Relación de Michoacán* and possibly the *Codex Mendoza* might have had at the time they were produced. A connection between the *Codex Mendoza* and Viceroy Mendoza would have been desirable to support the composition of an authoritative history of ancient Mexico with nationalist overtones, as is the case of Clavijero's *Storia*.

The connection between the manuscript and the viceroy drawn by Clavijero not only illustrates the historical understanding he had of Viceroy Mendoza and his humanist inclinations, but also sheds light on the historical moment in which Clavijero established it. Michel Foucault has explored the importance of the attribution of responsibility for texts that emerges in the eighteenth century as a result of a change in paradigm regarding historical writing as well as of the understanding of individual agency in recording history. In this new context, history was not solely important regarding what was written, but also depending on who was writing. From the moment in which Clavijero attributed the authorship of the manuscript to don Antonio de Mendoza, he did more than elevate the value of the manuscript to that of a commission by a specific viceroy; Clavijero's attribution allowed the document, which had been an isolated object, to become part of Mendoza's oeuvre, thus enhancing its function as a foundational document.

The present volume

Conceived as a contribution to the continuous construction of the identity of the *Codex Mendoza*, the present volume is organized around three axes: material analysis, textual and stylistic interpretation, and reception and circulation studies. The works of Barker-Benfield and MOLAB further our objective of understanding the manuscript's materiality. The re-binding and conservation process registered by Barker-Benfield has allowed us to do away with speculation regarding the method of production used to create the manuscript and its previous bindings. This, in turn, has allowed heretofore accepted connections, such as the authorship of Francisco Gualpuyogualcal, to be reexamined. Similarly, the analysis undertaken by the MOLAB team and headed by Davide Domenici has settled the debate on the nature of the pigments used in the production of the manuscript. This

has added additional layers of nuance to previously held interpretative hypotheses on the meaning of specific pigments and the strictness of their application in the *tlacuillo*. While color holds meaning for the *tlacuilo*, color is not inexorably linked to its materiality. These observations have the potential to inspire a new generation of interpretative studies, based on ever more accurate data regarding the material nature of the *Codex Mendoza*.

Interpretative studies of the manuscript in this volume represent a line of inquiry that, by considering the manuscript from the complex perspectives of the work of art, literature, and bibliography, complement previous anthropological and historical readings of the *Codex Mendoza*. My essays as well as those by Diana Magaloni and Daniela Bleichmar reconsider the number and style of the artists who produced the manuscript in order to understand both the process by which it was created as well as the place it occupies in the artistic context of the early viceroyalty. Far from entering a binary relation between subjugator and subjugated, the decisions made by these artists and intellectuals manifest the forms of thinking and seeing time and space in the Mesoamerican world. I demonstrate that the pictures in the *Codex Mendoza* were painted in a workshop in which one, two, or more individuals collaborated on each page to create a single composition; as such, the creation of these pictures took on an air of rituality and functioned as “an instrument to recreate, reactualize, and make coherent the historical becoming linked to territory with cosmic patterns” (Magaloni, this volume). This last observation complements and reinforces Joanne Harwood’s proposed reading of the third section of the manuscript. For Harwood, notwithstanding the originality of the visual solutions used to compose this section of the manuscript, the *Codex Mendoza*’s pre-Columbian model resonates with a Mesoamerican religious genre: the *teoamoxtli*.

The tension arising from the contraposition of pre-Columbian models and imported resources created formal solutions with which the *tlacuiloque* expressed themselves within the widened artistic vocabulary of the early viceroyalty. As such, these are better understood when considered to be solutions to essential problems that surfaced from the reconfiguration of Mexican society. Such is the case of the novel composition of folio 69r, in which the artists use single point perspective to depict the throne room where a lonely and vigilant Moteuhczoma sits, wrapped in his turquoise cloak and bereft of his war council. The *tlatoani* is represented as a dispenser of justice, presiding over his court from above, but no longer ruling or warring. As Mary Miller shows, Mexican subjects, always dressed in white, no longer enjoy the chromatic wealth of yore, but instead are apparently garbed in white whilst waiting for their baptism and, hence, for their transition into this new world in which individuals no longer form part of a hierarchical order but are instead grouped together under the homogenizing label of *indio*.

The contributions made by Barbara Mundy and Claudia Brittenham to this volume evince the deeper significance of the construction of the *Codex Mendoza*. Focusing on the concept of the *altepetl*, the traditional organizing unit for social, political, and cartographic order in Mesoamerica, Mundy reflects on the very nature of this concept. She presents the *altepetl* of Tenochtitlan as the main protagonist in the *Codex Mendoza*’s narrative and discusses the role of Tenoch’s descendants as patrons of the arts during the first four decades of the viceroyalty. Meanwhile, Brittenham discusses the social, economic, and ritual relationships with this *altepetl*, which became an increasingly dominant one in the Mesoamerican landscape over the course of the two centuries prior to the Spanish invasion. Focusing on the importance of what was omitted in the second part of the *Codex Mendoza*, Brittenham explores the rhetorical dimension of the representation of tribute in terms of a performativity that transcends the pre-Columbian–colonial dichotomy whereby the act of presenting a manuscript to a ruler “was a protocol which indigenous nobles easily embraced, fully appreciating the political nuances possible within the gesture” (Brittenham, this volume).

As in Brittenham’s and Mundy’s work, the veiled permanence of traditions, modes of expression, and notions of communication that transcend what is made explicit by text or images articulates the context in which Frances Berdan discusses Mexican glyphic writing

in regards to the *Codex Mendoza*. The codex is not only a document charged with the politics of redemption in the context of the early viceroyalty, as I have suggested. The codex's pictographic interweaving also reveal the Mexica-Huasteca-Mixteca cultural and political relations of the pre-Columbian world—a world in which dominion is expressed both by means of the representation of conquest and by the translation and appropriation of the geographical names for the conquered territories. The *Codex Mendoza* is a colonial document that takes on many forms. It is colonial in the immediate context of its production (the 1540s and 1550s), but it is also a document that registers Mexica colonialism, which gestures and resources seem to echo each other. Tamapachco, “the place of palms” in Huastec, becomes, by means of Nahuatl pictographic adaptation, the “place of seashells,” thus detracting from the ancestral specificity of its name (Mundy and Magaloni, this volume). Similarly, Tenochtitlan is phonetized and distorted when rendered in sixteenth-century Spanish—becoming “Temistitan” in the most egregious of cases and, even when its name is correctly alfabetized, it loses both its semantic equivalence and its cultural, historical, and ritual specificity. Simultaneously, the Tenochtitlan wherein the *Codex Mendoza* is produced is, on one hand, the *altepetl* that claims for itself the title of center of the world. As Diana Magaloni shows, this is the place where notions of cosmic centrality dating back to the Olmec mid-formative period are embodied. On the other hand, the indigenous *cabildo* of this colonial city are governed by a surviving Tenocha elite striving to retain their land and influence. The double axis of text and images in the tripartite history of the *Codex Mendoza* negotiates this complexity and articulates a narrative that transcends the 1325-1521 period, and intelligibly inserts the Mexica world into the multicultural context of the early viceroyalty.

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Endnotes

1 In this volume, Davide Domenici and the MOLAB team suggest a date range between 1530 and 1560 based on pigment analysis and other material evidence; the team strongly emphasizes the period around 1550 due to the presence of the orpiment pigment, which appears in Mexican manuscripts around that time. Similarly, based on a reading of the political context of New Spain during the 1540s, Barbara Mundy suggests that the *Codex Mendoza* was created around 1547 as part of the Huanitzin family's strategy to secure power as the legitimate descendants of Moteuhczoma. My analysis of the *Codex Mendoza*'s narrative priorities suggests that the manuscript was inserted into the context of the defense of the indigenous peoples of the Americas promoted by Bartolomé de Las Casas between 1547 and 1552.

2 In her chapter of this volume, Claudia Brittenham proposes that we should not think of the objects of interest of the second section of the *Codex Mendoza* as elements of tribute, but rather as units of tax. Furthermore, Brittenham suggests that this section may have gone beyond informational purposes by highlighting the value of the manuscript itself as an object of symbolic subjection.

3 See the chapters of Mary Miller, Gómez Tejada and Brittenham in this volume.

4 These three manuscripts are part of the study on pigments that MOLAB carried out in European libraries which began 2012 and continues during the present time. The results of this study have been presented in Jansen, Lladó-Buisan, and Snijders (2018).

5 "La colección de Mendoza. This is the name of the collection of 63 paintings ordered by the first viceroy of Mexico, D. Antonio de Mendoza, to which he also ordered to make their respective explanations in Mexican and Spanish language, and thus send them to Emperor Carlos V" (Clavijero 1964, 51).

6 The period between 1829 and 1835 saw the enactment of several bills in the British Parliament that emancipated the Catholic (1829), African (1834) and Jewish (1835) peoples of the Empire.

7 After having gained its independence from the Spanish Empire in 1821, Mexico became the empire of Agustín de Iturbide. In 1823, the execution of the emperor gave way to the first presidency led by Guadalupe Victoria. The 1830s saw the multiple appearances of General Santa Ana, under whose possession Mexico lost Texas following a shameful defeat. During the 1840s and 1850s, Mexico maintained hostile interactions with the United States. In this period, Mexico lost New Mexico and Arizona also under the failed leadership of General Santa Ana. In 1862, the empire of Maximilian I of Habsburg was established in Mexico; it lasted just five short years. The brief restoration of democracy under Juárez gave way to the coup d'état led by Porfirio Díaz in 1876, which plunged Mexico into a dictatorship that lasted the next thirty years. After a final attempt to establish his power, the elections called by Díaz in 1910 started the Mexican Revolution, resulting in the octogenarian dictator's exile and, after several civil wars and coups during the 1920s and 1930s, Mexico saw the rise of an authoritarian state.

8 “Paso y Troncoso marched to Spain in 1892 to represent Mexico in the celebration of its fourth centenary and was commissioned, as director of the museum, to review the archives and libraries of Europe, all the codices, manuscripts and rare prints relating to Mexico that exist there and to undertake their palaeographic deciphering and methodical publication. The 34 packages left by Paso y Troncoso weigh eight thousand seven hundred and eighty two kilograms and were all made available to the Mexican government... the legacy of the illustrious missing [object] is extremely valuable, both for its intellectual and material value, as it is worth many thousands of pesos for what it has taken to print some of them and for the large sums that Mr. Troncoso received in so many years” (Paso y Troncoso 1988, fols. 150–151).

9 “In regards to the report that you say they sent you from Venice and which I had originally sent to His Majesty of some things of this land, and that among them I said that the Mexicans came from Perú, it is true that I have written some things that I seemed to notice; but not this one, because I am of the contrary opinion and I think that they came from the north ... I have tried to collect a report of the things of this land and be very particular about it and I have found a diversity of opinions because since there were many lords in every province, they all tell things in their own manner. I am collecting and verifying them and once I have done so I will send them to you; because it seems to me that it would be a very shameful thing if I sent you a relation of which you deemed me to be the author and it were not but completely truthful. The things of this land are not so little that you will not be able to make a book from them, and the book will not be small either, because even though Moctezuma and Mexico have become famous among us, Caçonçi of Mechuacan was no less of a lord, just as were others who did not recognize either one or the other” (Fernández de Oviedo [1532] 1959, 4:117–18).

10 For Robertson ([1959] 1994, 82–106), the first stage of the school comprehends the period between 1519 and 1541 and deals with manuscripts that maintain elements associated by contemporary scholarship with pre-Conquest traditions, such as the screen-fold format. The second stage comprehends the period between 1541 and 1601 and, as mentioned in the text contains manuscripts made by indigenous artists but which reveal traits associated with the process of acculturation to Spanish traditions and techniques.

11 Nicholson and other scholars have noted that this reference to gold may state the price at which Hakluyt acquired the *Codex Mendoza*. However, since the middle of 1587 on, the tensions and aggressions between Spain and England that resulted in the attempt to invade England in 1588 constantly increased. Given the position of the English cleric as a close observer of the actions of Sir Edward Stafford, who was believed to be selling information to the Spanish, one cannot dismiss that said inscription could have been meant as a code or related to a need for imperious communication with England.

12 Richard Hakluyt (1850, sec. Introduction) returned to England in 1588 escorting Lady Stafford, the wife of the English ambassador to France, this is to say four years before Thevet died.

13 In André Thevet’s *North America*, Schlessinger and Stabler (1986) have discussed at length the problems that André Thevet’s liberal use of material and the unreliability of his testimonies pose to modern scholarship. Indeed, as the aforementioned authors state, Thevet’s reputation for sloppy scholarship is not a modern phenomenon. Both Jean de Lery and François de Belleforest attacked Thevet’s work on the basis of its unreliability. Even Richard Hakluyt (1986, xxiii), who visited Thevet in Paris in 1586–87 and from whom he received the *Codex Mendoza* qualified Thevet’s *Cosmographie* as “wearie volumes bearing the titles of universall *Cosmographie* which some men that I could name have published as their owne, beyng in deed most untruly and unprofitable ramassed and hurled together”.

14 Lestringant (1991, 20–21) has noted the relevance of the *Cosmographie de Levant* for Thevet’s career, as it was through the dedicatee of this work, François III de la Rochefoucault, that the geographer was admitted to the French court in 1559.

15 That same year, Hakluyt presented Queen Elizabeth with his treatise, *A Discourse on Western Planting* ([1584] 1877), a secret document to be read only by the queen, Walsingham, and a couple other high-ranking court officers (Scammell 2016). In this work, Hakluyt “outlined a new approach to colonial expansion, unlike that of the Spanish. Instead of concentrating on the conquest of indigenous peoples and the commandeering and feudal administration of their wealth and land, as in the Spanish approach, Hakluyt proposed exporting the discontented and underemployed of England to new and relatively empty lands, with their abundance of raw materials. The colonists would harvest these resources, which would feed the growing manufacturing capability of England” (Helfers 1997, 160–86).

16 In Juan de Matienzo’s ([1567] 1967, 207) *Gobierno del Perú*, the author exalts Mendoza’s qualities as statesman and elevates him to the position of archetype for Spanish viceroys. Likewise, in the dedication of the *Relación de Michoacán*, Fray Jerónimo de Alcalá ([1567] 1967, 5–6) refers to Mendoza in lofty terms that evoke the language reserved for monarchs, particularly the idea that Mendoza had been “elected by God” to govern over the peoples of New Spain. Contemporary works like *La Utopía Mexicana del Siglo XVI*, by Guillermo Tovar de Teresa (1992), read Mendoza’s tenure through the lens of a statesman who was creating a vicerealty based on an intellectual exercise grounded in philosophical and historical reflection and not only responding to practical needs of immediate effect.

17 Many editions, in some of which the full title is included and in some of which it is not, we can see the 1844 Mexican edition of Joaquín de Mora that presents this translation of the word.