

Mesoamerican Worlds: From the Olmecs to the Danzantes
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Mesoamerica's Classic Heritage: Teotihuacán to the Aztecs, David Carrasco, Lindsay Jones, and Scott Sessions
The Offerings of the Templo Mayor, Leonardo López Luján
Tamoanchan, Tlalocan: Places of Mist, Alfredo López Austin
Twin City Tales: A Hermeneutical Reassessment of Tula and Chichén Itzá,

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Aztec and European Occupation of Tlalocan

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5 The Interpretive Legacy of Conquest

This chapter begins with an examination of the life and work of Bernardino de Sahagún and its culmination as the *Florentine Codex*. Particularly important were his techniques of collecting information from Nahuatl informants, his editing of the data, and the cultural context in which he worked. All these factors come to bear on the type of ceremonial practices that can be most clearly attributed to the Aztecs. As outlined above, ritual activity dedicated to Tlaloc was most coherently expressed as a method of meaningfully relating to material conditions of existence in the Valley of Mexico. It is then necessary to relate these interpretive phases both to the interpretive legacy that the academy has inherited from colonialism and to the methodological consequences of practice. Finally, issues of how to read and authorize an interpretation of Mesoamerican and colonial worlds will be appraised as the activities of understanding that are intimately involved with current scholarship. The integration of these three phases of practice (Aztec, Sahagún, and current scholarship) does not pretend to render Aztec, Franciscan, or modern academic worlds transparent, but is discussed to acknowledge the limits of the interpretive enterprise with reference to the physical constraints of occupying a meaningful landscape.

In Mesoamerican studies, there is a constant concern over whose voice is being heard in the documents. Although recorded in Nahuatl, there is no question that the *Florentine Codex* was primarily the work of Sahagún. Therefore, it was a predominantly Spanish medieval/early modern monastic Christian world that organized what we currently know of Tlaloc and his cult. This chapter will proceed with a hermeneutics of suspicion in order to clarify the mechanisms by which Aztec religion can be rendered understandable. As a result, I intend to approach the problem of sources in a critical manner. What emerges is a larger picture of the distinct consequences of Aztec, Spanish, and contemporary hermeneutics of occupying the Americas.

Sahagún's life is known only through his work. His early life in Spain is shrouded in silence. It is remarkable that one such as Sahagún, who had such a tremendous effect on our modern understandings of Native America, is such an enigma.¹ Born about 1499 in Sahagún, Leon, his surname may have been Ribeira, perhaps a member of a *converso*, or recently converted, family of Jews.²

He had arrived in Mexico by 1529, only eight years after the fall of Tenochtitlan to Cortes. This was a time of intense European missionary activity fueled by a millennial vision of the New World. Sahagún belonged to a "second wave" of "preacher-ethnographers" whose initial focus was on linguistically capturing Nahuatl on the written page.³ A mere ten years after his arrival, Sahagún was writing sermons and translating passages of the Bible into Nahuatl. Probably through the urgings of his provincial, Fray Francisco de Toral,⁴ Sahagún began to focus on aspects of Aztec culture that did not address an immediate pastoral need. It seems that he took his cues from the ethnographic work of some of his contemporaries, including Fray Andres de Olmos, Fray Alonso de Molina, and Fray Torbio de Benavente Motolinía; all of whom had spent time at the Colegio de Tlatelolco at some point in the twenty-five years immediately following the Conquest. It was the combined linguist-ethnographer who emerged among these Franciscan intellectuals, who hoped to at once explore, expose, and eliminate Aztec religious understandings. To promote this enterprise, the inscription of the Aztec language and

practice was utilized in making Aztec ritual life public (outside of its performative context) by committing their traditions to writing.

According to López Austin, Bernardino de Sahagún developed a retrievable questionnaire used to probe his informants.⁵ It seems that not only was it Sahagún's intention to create a source for pre-Columbian culture, but also to create a repository of Nahuatl lexical items that could eventually be turned into a dictionary. In particular, Sahagún discusses the similarity of his project to the work of Ambrosio Calepino's Latin dictionary, which was built on the sayings of classical orations. His vision of a New Spain was one free from the impurities of the old. As López Austin says, paraphrasing Sahagún,

[i]t was essential to collect and record the testimonials of the old life, to separate the young Indians as much from their fathers (and hence idolatry) as from the Spaniards (and hence corruption), to initiate them into a truly Christian life, and then, after suppressing everything idolatrous in the pre-Hispanic norms and practices, to re-implant these practices for the benefit of Christ. *The land that the infidel and the heretic had alienated from the church was being recovered in New Spain*, whose men had sufficient capacity—as Sahagún was demonstrating in his work—to initiate there the Republic of Christ. For this reason, he could compare the Nahuas to the Greeks and Romans.⁶

In some respects, the land of the New World was seen as compensation for the loss of the Holy Lands during the Crusades and, through the activities of linguistics and ethnographers, was being purified for the Church.

Sahagún's first work in what was eventually to be his *General History of the Things of New Spain* was focused on the intellectual pursuits of the Aztec. What is now Book VI, *Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, grew out of his early work with Native informants in Tlatelolco while he was training Nahuatl priests at the Colegio de Tlatelolco. According to Sullivan, these texts are very close to an authentic pre-Columbian past.⁷ At Tlatelolco he sought out older, respected members of the community. It seems, however, that his most sustained contact was with members of the merchant class. According to

Clendinnen, the only ritual description that includes a specialist's perspective is that of the festival of VI-Etzalcualiztli, which presents the activity from a point of view expressed by the novice priests.⁸ In the rest of the *General History*, the voice of the priests is absent, having been eliminated by their Old World rivals and replaced by Nahuatl men of the marketplace.

Once Sahagún had secured a workable outline, he went to Tepepulco, a small village east of the present city of Sahagún. It is perhaps significant that he met there with the local inhabitants. First he laid out his intentions and asked them who would be the most qualified respondents to his questions. They answered that they would have to discuss the matter and would give him an answer another day. Later, they came back and "made a solemn speech" indicating ten or twelve elders who would be capable of telling him what he wanted to know. Sahagún's informants were thus selected by the indigenous people of the area. Given the intensity of interaction between Europeans and Indians at the time, their motives could have either been to confound his ethnographic project,⁹ or to genuinely give him the data he requested.¹⁰ In either case, his informants would have presented themselves in such a way as to promote the life of their people in light of the Conquest—the most devastating and profound transformation of Nahuatl life and culture up until that point. With four native Nahuatl speakers, whom he had trained in Latin and Spanish at Tlatelolco, he began his work.

According to López Austin, there were four primary stages to Sahagún's work.¹¹ First, there is the schematic plan identified with the work at Tepepulco and now called the *Primeros Memoriales*.¹² Second, there is the extensive document that was broken into two parts called the *Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy of History* and the *Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace*.¹³ These documents are linked to Sahagún's work at Tlatelolco. Although these could have originally been a smooth copy written in various hands, it was later split into a rough draft. Third, there is the *Florentine Codex*, whose Nahuatl column Sahagún must have considered definitive. The Spanish column, however, was not a translation of the Nahuatl but a gloss that actually can be used to supplement what is being said in Nahuatl. This was finalized at

Tenochtitlan, where the language was polished¹⁴ and it was divided into paragraphs, chapters, and books. Fourth, among the pages of the Madrid codices there are passages known as "Memoriales con Escolios," in which Sahagún translates Nahuatl text in great detail. This was the foundation for his dictionary, which was never finished. The most important data-gathering moments in Sahagún's enterprise corresponded to his time at Tepepulco and Tlatelolco—his efforts at Tenochtitlan were directed more to fine-tuning his work. Little is known of the pre-Columbian cultural distinctions between these three places. As a consequence of Sahagún's work in these separate places, the distinctions between them were undoubtedly folded into the *Florentine*. For example, although Nahuatl was the common language, evidence of the Aztec religion, dramatized by the twin temple, is only attested to at Tlatelolco. Tepepulco, in particular, could have been a very different place and almost certainly had a different history. This illustrates Sahagún's assumption that ritual life was dictated by the center (i.e., Tenochtitlan) and that religion in the New World, like religion in the Old World, was essentially a single seamless phenomenon.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, Spanish attitudes toward missionary work in Mexico were changing. Efforts to train Native priests, for example, were halted with the closing of the Colegio de Tlatelolco. While Sahagún was in the "second wave" of New Spain missionaries, who were optimistic about the possibilities of a New Jerusalem, they were being replaced by priests more concerned with their allegiances to the crown. In part, this had to do with conflicts that arose during the latter part of the sixteenth century between Catholic and Protestant countries. Illustrative of this conflict are the etchings of the exiled Dutchman Theodore de Bry, who committed to images the horrific stories of Spanish brutality in the New World.¹⁵ In addition, due to Indian rebellions in Peru, the crown was becoming more nervous about ethnographic enterprises.¹⁶ Proof that missionary work was proceeding further with the destruction of indigenous cultures and beliefs, rather than their preservation, had to be put forward in order to justify continued ethnographic inquiry. It became necessary to produce a Spanish version of Sahagún's work to legitimate this effort before the Inquisition. The

Florentine Codex was the resulting text, which was sent to Spain with Fray Rodrigo de Sequera as its advocate.

The process of interpretation that generated the *Florentine Codex* involved several mediums and required many creative movements. Sahagún utilized previous styles of writing to produce his ethnography. Several scholars over the last fifty years have been trying to unravel the resources and methodology in the construction of his work.

Encyclopedic works such as *Archaeology of Flavius Iosephus, History of Animals* and *Parts of Animals* by Aristotle, works by Albert of Cologne, *Natural History* of Pliny,¹⁷ and *On the Properties of Things* by Fray Bartholomew de Glanville,¹⁸ served as inspirations for Sahagún's work. Starting with ancient Greek studies of animals, which were passed through Latin natural histories, these works arrived in the New World as medieval encyclopedias in which all beings were organized into a rigorous hierarchical order beginning with the Trinity and ending with minerals. This arrangement of the world encyclopedically betrayed a European worldview.

In addition, the reformist work of Fray Alonso de la Veracruz in New Spain would have been a likely influence on Sahagún. Veracruz took to heart the intellectual challenge of the archbishop of Valencia, Santo Tomás de Villanueva, "that in the New World all things should be done anew," when he arrived in Mexico in 1536.¹⁹ Veracruz, who held a chair in philosophy at the Colegio de Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco, advocated a method of analysis that relied more on logic and empirical data and less on church authority. The scope of this revisionist view mapped out the hope of New Spain as full of new possibilities for understanding the world over and against the traditional and decadent scholarship of the Old World. In these commitments can be seen the beginnings of modern empiricism.

Many scholars have written and discussed the eschatological and humanist vision that took shape in sixteenth-century Mexico. In Valladolid, Spain, a debate took place between Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, an Aristotelian scholar, and the Dominican priest Bartolomé de las Casas, at the request of Charles V. These two, be-

fore the Council of Fourteen, were to debate the question of whether it was "lawful for the King to wage war on the Indians before preaching the faith to them in order to subject them to his rule, so that afterwards, they may more easily be instructed in the faith."²⁰ The major questions of this "great debate" centered on what was the true nature of the Indians and what were the appropriate methods for their conversion. Two philosophical/theological axes for the European occupation of New Spain were expressed by these two scholars. For Sepúlveda, Indians were ordered beneath the Spaniards in the natural hierarchy of things. Their natural condition, therefore, was social slavery. Further, any resistance on their part could be taken as a reasonable basis for using force. On the other hand, las Casas, who had served as the Bishop of Chiapas, argued that Indians demonstrated all the civilized accomplishments of Europeans. Indeed, they met all the criteria for a civil society as defined by Aristotle. For las Casas, the Indians lived in a state of primitive Christianity that could be easily developed through persuasion. He stressed an Augustinian theology that was more in line with Thomism yet contrary to Franciscan thought.²¹ When dealing with Native Americans, he argued, one must acknowledge them as full, yet underdeveloped, human beings. In his study of New World diabolism, Cervantes characterizes the Franciscan understanding as "nominalist," which, in contrast to Thomist reflection, enhanced the prestige of the Devil to be on a par with that of God. By linking Aztec religiousness, as well as material existence, with the activity of the Devil, Franciscans were able to generate an evangelical fervor that reified a dichotomy between material and spiritual life, thus transforming the Christian theological tradition.²² The Franciscan attack on Thomas Aquinas was to become particularly significant in the New World.

There is an irony expressed in both the positions of Sepúlveda and las Casas. While these scholars appear to be on opposite sides, the consequences of their interpretations had similar results. Neither cared for Native American cultures or their survival. Indeed, as Todorov has pointed out, it was Sepúlveda, in his strong statements regarding the Otherness of Native Americans, who signaled the beginning of anthropology.²³ Las Casas, the defender of the Indians, eroded differences

between all humankind with his appeal to Christian love. His vision was of a unified world that transcended cultural constraints.²⁴

For Phelan, Sepulveda and las Casas represent two of the three main philosophical/theological axes for the conquest of New Spain. Unlike the two expressed at Valladolid, the third was uniquely Franciscan. The work of Fray Geronimo de Mendieta (1525–1604) stressed the mystical interpretation of conquest. His apocalyptic, Messianic, and prophetic mysticism was rooted in the life of St. Francis and the Spiritual movement of the Franciscan order.²⁵ Mendieta saw the movement of Europeans into the New World as the unfolding of an eschatological event. He described the Discovery in apocalyptic terms, as did las Casas.²⁶ The key figure for Mendieta was Cortes—whom he saw as Moses. The twelve missionaries who arrived after the fall of Tenochtitlan heralded the coming of a divine prototype in the process of revitalizing the world. He thought of the Indian Church as the pre-Constantinian community of the primitive Christian community that lacked the defects of the European personality. It was during this period that Charles V gave considerable freedom to the friars by allowing them to create new forms of religious communities, including the “open” chapel where large groups of Native Americans would participate in an outdoor mass. His ideas were geared to isolate this nascent millennial kingdom of the New World from the contamination of the old. In this way he drew upon other utopian writers of his time, including More and Cervantes.

With Philip II, the sixteenth-century millennial vision of occupying the New World of the Franciscans became obsolete. Although Sahagún preceded Mendieta, he nonetheless drew on some components of the utopian vision. His temperament was more pragmatic in emphasis, yet it seems that he too wanted to insulate Native people from the ravages of European civilization.²⁷ In some ways Sahagún exhibited an interpretive stance that grew out of his Franciscan heritage and yet also challenged the underlying assumptions of the brotherhood through his rigorous method of the empirical collection of data. It appears that he saw his contribution to the development of New Jerusalem in working out the linguistic and ethnographic details of its occupation of New Spain.

Sahagún's world was organized by his monastic order. Central to the organization of the Franciscan movement was the life of St. Francis.²⁸ The Franciscan brotherhood, with St. Francis's exemplary life as its beacon, had a large impact on those working in New Spain. St. Francis's life's mission was to make his way back to the Father by the imitation of the Son. In this quest he put particular emphasis on transcending the “spirit-matter” dichotomy. His example was one that overcame this seeming opposition, “making him a sublime example of both the spirituality of matter and the materialization of spirit.”²⁹ Between the time of St. Francis and the beginning of the fifteenth century, the concept of Franciscan mission had changed very little. They understood that God had sent Francis and his order to renew the life of Christ and the apostles. Their eschatology compelled them toward the imitation of Christ—particularly his passion. Their missionary task was to summon all people, Christian and non-Christian, to repent and prepare themselves for the end of history and the final judgment.³⁰ As Franciscans moved into the New World, however, their traditional emphasis on erasing a dichotomy between spirit and matter was transformed. Their “nominalist” attack on Thomist theology and emphasis on the workings of the Devil in the New World were interpretive positions that theologically justified the colonial enterprise. One of its consequences seemed to have been a shift away from imitating the life of St. Francis.

Evangelism was tied to Francis's understanding of the Gospels and his own quest for perfection. Through his *imitatio crucis*, Francis strove to emulate Christ first through an evangelical perfection and second through poverty.³¹ Revelation was not only present in history but also in the natural world. Poverty became the means by which access was gained to a revealed world. The brotherhood was a community that was based on an understanding of the primitive Christian community. At least at first, unlike other monastic houses, the minor friars lived itinerate lives. Evangelical perfection and poverty were consistently expressed as key elements of the Franciscan world.

In the twelfth century, an emphasis on poverty as a religious example, however, was a consequence of the emerging power of mer-

cantilism, or a monetary economic system. The social context into which the Franciscans were born in the twelfth century was of great importance to the Franciscan movement in the New World and also to Sahagún's work in the sixteenth century. In the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, European religion was going through a crisis. Heretical movements were emerging, particularly in urban areas, that were challenging the traditional authority of the Church.³² St. Francis and his followers came very close to being identified with the Waldensians, as well as other groups condemned as heretical by Rome.³³ Their ideological proximity to one another indicated that there was a religious reaction taking shape against the social shift into an emerging profit economy. Voluntary poverty became a key element in renewed forms of religious life during St. Francis's time. Ironically, however, it was the monastic orders that paved the way for an emerging profit economy to flourish. This led to a reified categorical distinction between nature and culture.

According to Little, during St. Francis's life, medieval Europe's old economic relations were giving way to new ones.³⁴ In pre-Christian Europe, social organization was based on a gift economy that was a practice of negotiating material life based on a reciprocity between beings (e.g., fertility and ancestor cults) and was analogous to the Tlaloc cult. A gift economy was being replaced by a centralized profit economy in which abstract representations of value (i.e., money) determined how people oriented themselves to the material world. Understandings of wealth shifted from a gift to a profit economy, chiefly due to the church's bureaucratic power. Money was more and more the symbolic center of this emerging economy. Its value was guaranteed by the powerful institutions it supported.³⁵ The new profit economy raised problems involving impersonalism and economic and moral uncertainty.

Previously, the village was the prototypical integrated social system. Symptomatic of this shift, then, was the agricultural revolution in which, to increase production, there were initiated new types of deep-ploughing methods, which transformed the countryside. As agricultural products entered a profit economy in the mid-eleventh century, the resultant effect on the land was deforestation, the creation

and growth of cities, and, with that, a rising urban population. This led to even further deforestation of the land, and the depopulation of the village. The mobile wealth of a monetized economy drove people from the country to the city. The urban world of Europe came into its own due to a shift in values reoriented toward a profit economy.

St. Francis was a religious product of a new understanding of occupying the material world. Instead of conforming to his merchant class, whose ranks were growing in numbers and influence during this time, he became God's "juggler," or God's fool, who by appealing to carnivalesque folk culture created a religious order highly critical of the emerging urban reality. He shouted from the streets and in the open air. For St. Francis religion was street theater. St. Francis was responding to the shift from gift to profit economies by utilizing folk culture. In the process, however, folk life was transformed away from what I am calling an indigenous religious existence.³⁶ In the medieval city, identity was tied to the exchange of powerful symbols (profit economy) and not to the exchange of materialities (gift economy), as in the barter system of the rural fair. Negotiating new forms of wealth, which were simultaneously organized by the church and scorned by many of its influential members, created new forms of piety that understood the world in fundamentally distinct ways.

Some light can now be shed on Franciscan notions of evangelism and poverty. The life of St. Francis was a reaction to a monetized world. His revelatory stance toward the world attempted to overcome the symbolic abstractions by engaging directly in what he deemed a "natural" world. His natural world always stood in opposition to, and was therefore defined by, an urban reality. Poverty only has meaning within a particular economic context, and in the Franciscan case this was the monetary context. "Nature" was a sphere of life that, for the most part, remained outside human life. It was the enrapture of gaining access to the Otherness of "nature" that led to revelation. In the case of evangelical perfection, the Otherness of a human object was approached as the Same.³⁷ The early Franciscans emphatically rejected a profit economy that was tied to the Church by promoting a zealous confidence in the significance of nature outside of human habitation. Evangelical perfection was a reaction against human symbolic appro-

riations of matter. At the same time, the Franciscans exhibited an extreme confidence in what the natural world revealed. Likewise, the Aztecs were conceived as being natural or primitive Christians who exhibited, simultaneously, a point of access to God through the fashioning of the utopian understanding of the New Jerusalem and a potential threat to this apocalyptic vision by their veneration of Satan, God's nemesis.³⁸

In contrast, for the Aztecs themselves there was no "nature" conceptually separate from themselves. There was no word for or concept of nature, and it was not an important ideological construct. There were various evaluations of matter, however, which, using Little's categories, were engaged at the level of the gift rather than the profit economy. The Aztec empire flourished through a flow of tribute rather than money, or some other wholly symbolic representation of matter. Ritual expressed a material reciprocity that covered all levels of the human occupation of Mexico. European religious identity was, to a significant degree, a reaction to a novel economic understanding of matter inherited from the Middle Ages.

In the time that followed, indigenous material understandings often survived in Europe as "folk" or "pagan" traditions. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a renewed interest in subduing these cults in Europe. There are accounts of personal cosmologies,³⁹ folk festival life,⁴⁰ and local devotions.⁴¹ Access to accounts of indigenous varieties of religious devotion are quite varied. Some come from Inquisitional documents,⁴² histories of pilgrimage sites,⁴³ various kinds of scientific and dramatic writings,⁴⁴ and ethnographical analysis.⁴⁵ While Spain seemed to form a distinct reaction to these popular religious devotions, this seems due, in some measure, to a renewed self-confidence in Christendom after the reconquest of 1492.⁴⁶ Another type of analysis presents itself when religious and ethnic identity are tied to material realities.⁴⁷ After 1492, Spain was forging an imperial identity that redefined the significance of the material world.⁴⁸ Spanish efforts toward material domination were closely tied to religious identity. The Franciscan-utopian vision of evangelical perfection and monied poverty secured a place for European expansion, which was universal in scope yet connected to no-

where in particular. What emerged was a tremendous effort to utilize materials from all parts of the world to be used exclusively for the liberation from a material existence. As we will see, this spiritualism was opposed to an indigenous religious strategy, on both sides of the Atlantic, that saw the meaning of the material world, and human life, as being intimately involved with bodily existence.

Although Sahagún, like many humanists of his time, worked diligently for the survival of Indian populations, ironically he drew on the hermeneutics of world domination just as had the conquerors who preceded him. The colonial enterprise required an ethic of occupying lands, in a meaningful way, that were not traditionally one's own. As we will see, the colonial ethic was distinct from the indigenous understanding that propelled the Aztecs.

Most of the studies that hope to illuminate aspects of an Aztec world must use Sahagún's work. On one level, the investigator must proceed with some confidence in the accuracy of Sahagún's method of collecting data. At another level, less addressed in the literature, these texts used for Mesoamerican studies express a deep cultural bias and therefore cannot give us an accurate and authentic picture of Aztec realities.⁴⁹ The large numbers of Indian converts to Christianity during the first years of contact has led some scholars to conclude that Mexico was not only physically conquered but spiritually conquered as well.⁵⁰ More recently, however, scholars have been using the writings of Sahagún to dramatize a rhetoric of contact in which indigenous ideas come to be expressed in the context of a European worldview.⁵¹ For those intrigued with a pre-Columbian worldview, the task is how to overcome the distance between cultures and bridge the conditions of history. One way to accomplish this is to examine these writings as dialogues between indigenous and colonial peoples. A consequence of this approach for Mesoamerican studies is that there are no clearly distinguishable voices to separate. The Nahualized Christianity (or Nahualized ethnography) that emerges from these documents undermines a strict separation of Native and European influences. The methodological strategy offered here, therefore, is to understand cultural formation as a process in which vari-

lap with an idea of damage, but they are not synonymous. While sin is tied intrinsically to human existence for Christians, this is not a necessary attribute of *tlatlacolli*. Damage was a consequence of *activity* deemed inappropriate for continued existence and therefore contrary to life. Choosing this term to represent Christian ideas ironically served to promote and perpetuate Native categories with Church sanction.⁵⁷ In its Native usage, sin was a way of acting in the world and not a state of being. There are accounts in which Nahua people concluded, for example, that to overcome misfortune or sickness it was appropriate to make offerings to the Devil rather than to God.

Even though a dialogical understanding of the Nahua worldview is preserved in colonial documents, the context of the dialogue was limited. To textualize dialogue is to overdetermine its outcome—the outcome of the conversation is already assumed. The dialogue that is recorded in doctrinal writings stands in marked contrast to a dialogue that takes risks involving one's identity and the meaning of the world due to an openness to other cultural forms.⁵⁸ Sixteenth-century monks already knew what the world meant, and in their self-confidence they attempted to reconfigure Native categories to fit their vision. Fundamentally, there was no curiosity regarding the Otherness of Aztec existence or of Tlalocan.

Sahagún's unique response to his situation was to apply confessional techniques to his fieldwork. He thereby created the "confessor-informant."

His method required that confession-like practices be applied systematically outside their sacramental context and that the informants be imbued with the ideological framework of self-examination that permits the self to be both subject (narrator) and object (the subject matter of the narration) at once.⁵⁹

Sahagún's questions required informants to examine themselves as both inside and outside their community, thereby making them willing and able to relay those reflections to the investigator. Sahagún had to rely on an interpretation of confessional data, which rearranged the traditional modes of discourse. Simultaneously, Sahagún was collecting data and destroying Aztec culture. Just as the informant was required

ous places are meaningfully negotiated by distinctive cultural worldviews.⁵²

The friars had to constantly defend their Indian charges from other colonial forces that sought to exploit them. Monks were sometimes pressured by secular priests within the Church who generally represented the exploitative views of the colonists. Ironically, however, while they objected to the abuses of conquest and colonization in theory, their efforts supported colonialism. The New World was seen as a land of children waiting to be gathered unto God. Dialogue between these cultures flourished in Mexico during a fragile forty-year period (1536–1579). This was the time of the Franciscan Colegio de Tlatelolco, which opened in 1536 to train young Indian nobles in theology and the liberal arts. Among other critical documents that were generated was the New World's first book, a Nahuatl catechism, printed in 1539.⁵³

In his missionary writings, Sahagún tried to create a way of presenting Christianity to a Nahua audience. This is analogous to his ethnographic attempts of presenting the Nahua people to a European audience.⁵⁴ He was committed to the activity of translating cultural ideas at the particular level of language. While he held to the millennial Franciscan view, he expressed a more practical temperament. His primary objective was to create a mode of discourse of Christian concepts in Nahuatl. As a result, Aztec views necessarily influenced his doctrinal writings as he attempted to forge an indigenous Christian language.

For Burkhart, it was of utmost importance that the Franciscans find some way of expressing key Christian concepts in Nahuatl—such as "sin" (*pecado*, from the Latin *peccatum*). Sahagún chose the Nahuatl word *tlatlacolli*, which literally means "something damaged," as a synonym for sin.⁵⁵ Burkhart suggests that damage may have served as a unifying moral principle for Aztec life (as did the medieval Christian sense of sin), and that that was the reason it was chosen. "To behave immorally is to disrupt order, to promote decay over cohesion, randomness over continuity. Entropy is the essence of immorality."⁵⁶ Morality expressed itself, for the Aztecs, as living morally in the face of chaos (the "slippery earth"). Sin, on the other hand, may conceptually over-

to disengage himself from his community, likewise Sahagún (as well as other contemporary ethnographers) was put in the position of being a passive observer, being present and inside but never *acting* like an insider. Klor de Alva links this asymmetrical relationship explicitly to a European technique of domination that reconfigured an understanding of Self as simultaneously introspective and also open to public scrutiny. This mode of domination, however, had consequences for both the indigenous informant, whose world constituted the object of scrutiny, and the colonial-investigator, whose world was indefinitely suspended, thus eliminating the subject.⁶⁰

There is a tragic irony embedded in doing ethnography, according to Fabian.⁶¹ While experience of another culture in the field is necessarily participatory in nature, this experience is transformed through writing into primary data. Through various machinations, an experience of "coevalness" is transformed to ethnography. Literary devices, such as the "ethnographic present" and uses of the third person, function to artificially distance the subject and object who were once colleagues in the field. There are direct consequences of this activity. For Fabian, ethnography, as a means of knowing the Others, perpetuates a colonial project that reinforces their "primitive" status at both temporal and spatial distance from the civilized world.⁶² Another consequence of this construal of knowledge, however, is directly tied to the investigator. Clearly, the sociopolitical effects for indigenous people were devastating. But the investigator's forced disengagement from the world results in an analogous loss of meaningful relationships. Likewise, in the case of Sahagún, any objectification of his world would require that it (or they) become unrelated to his life.

Embedded in the field experience at the level of practice, however, are deep and significant spheres of interaction. In actuality, Sahagún's *Florentine Codex* exhibits a practical mastery of relationships in approximating knowledge of the "map" of the Aztec world. According to Bourdieu, a science of practice is the means by which human beings meaningfully negotiate their way through relationships.⁶³ The colonial enterprise, in its most optimistic light, fosters meaning by a reciprocity between cultures in dialogue. Knowledge, as Fabian and Burkhart have pointed out, is always in the process of exchange, and

yet ethnographies such as Sahagún's deliberately misconstrue the activity of interaction, as if the reader can peer unhindered into an Aztec reality. This elimination of practice, or autobiography,⁶⁴ disintegrates the sustaining relationships between Self and Other, subject and object. Practice is replaced by the text, and with this substitution comes an overconfidence in expressing culture as an objective reality that is essentially the same everywhere.

Other aspects of Sahagún's work required a deep hermeneutical analysis. At the same time he was being affected by Aztec cultural expressions, he strove to find modes of articulating indigenous realities in his own terms. Detailed drawings in the *Florentine*, as well as other texts, underscore his strenuous efforts to translate Aztec lifeways. Sahagún's ethnography at Tepepulco was also based on information gathered through an engagement with pre-Columbian pictorial documents. These drawings served as the basis of interaction between ethnographer and informant. As he says, "All the things we discussed they gave to me by means of paintings, for that was the writing they had used, the grammarians saying them in their language and writing the statement beneath the painting."⁶⁵

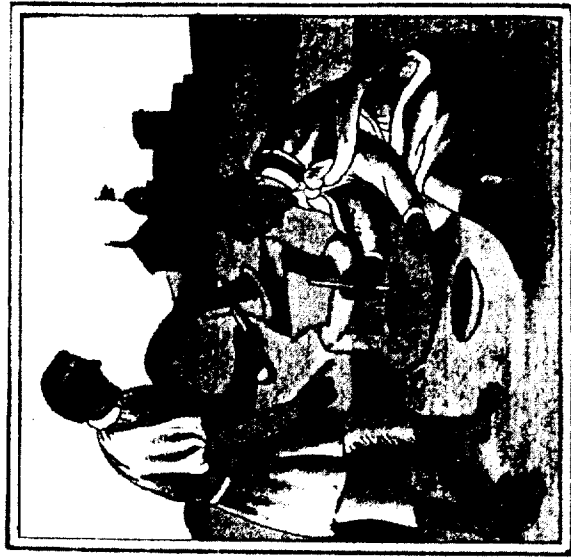
Interpreting pictorial representations dramatizes the difficulties that were presented to Sahagún and to his project. First, Nahua information was not a transparent reality to him. For him to accomplish his task required that there be difficult periods of negotiation between him and his informants in which cultural modes of expression be bridged to promote understanding. Second, the process of writing these cultural negotiations down would have required an enormous investment of hermeneutical labor. Sahagún's genius lay in the tenacity with which he engaged in this process of translating pictorial and oral experiences into written information: effectively a transition from Aztec to European culture. In the passage above we can see some of the difficulties that Sahagún may have faced in committing a performative medium (pre-Columbian images) to writing. He goes on to say that these people were illiterate and communicated solely by means of these images "in such a way that they knew and had memory of the things their ancestors had done and had left to their annals, more than a thousand years before the arrival of the Spanish in this land."⁶⁶ Clearly, Sahagún had

The Interpretive Legacy of Conquest

his work cut out for him. The transformation of Aztec life from pictorial documents to Latinized script was analogous to the transformation from ritual activity to "the book." This transformation was one that signaled the beginning of ethnography, as we will explore, and had particular consequences for European occupation of the Americas.

It is often pointed out that most of the pre-Columbian documents were burned within the first decade of the Conquest. Some have survived, which now stand as primary source material for current Mesoamericanists.⁶⁷ The nature of the documents that Sahagún had access to is a subject of debate. It seems likely, however, that there were indigenous documents that Sahagún appropriated in various ways. While the primary objective in the *Florentine Codex* was to commit Nahua culture to writing, Sahagún also captured elements in drawings.⁶⁸ Clearly, drawings in the *Florentine* were not meant to record a pre-Columbian style. However, an analysis of these images reveals more evidence of Sahagún's working hypotheses.

According to Baird, the use of illusionistic space in the *Florentine* depictions betrays a particular lineage in the Franciscan tradition.⁶⁹ Uses of three-dimensional space were one of the hallmarks of European Renaissance art and can be traced to the fourteenth-century Florentine architect Filippo Brunelleschi. Baird traces this "linear" perspective to new emphasis in the mathematical ordering of space. While the *Florentine* illustrations are less strict in their application of a mathematical perspective, on the whole they were inspired by the Renaissance tradition. Western interest in geometric ordering of the natural world was closely linked with the Franciscans of the thirteenth century, particularly Roger Bacon, John Pecham, and Robert Grosseteste.⁷⁰ Bacon, in his *Opus Majus*, dedicated to the pope, states his aims on geometrical space clearly.⁷¹ Geometrical ordering of space was not tied to revelation of the physical world, *per se*, but instead would reveal the structural dimensions of God's master plan of the universe. Baird argues that the use of illusionistic space functioned as a Christian theological construct in the *Florentine*. As she says, "[t]he use of framed, illusionistic, perspectival spaces in which to present indigenous customs, religion, and life breaks with the indigenous past and links it instead with the European present."⁷² For example,



5.1 and 5.2. Gold-working scenes, redrawn from the *Florentine Codex*, Sahagún (1951).

the gold-working scenes in Book IX of the *Florentine* depict Aztec cities in the drawings that seem to more accurately represent the walled city of Jerusalem rather than Tenochtitlan. These images reveal, at once, the hope of the reconquest of Jerusalem, as well as the promise of the New World as revealing the New Jerusalem, within the structured space of the Franciscan tradition.

In translating understandings of landscape from indigenous to colonial contexts, Sahagún drew on inspirations from deep within his Franciscan and European traditions. What comes to us in the *Florentine* through these drawings is not only an attempt at representing Aztec life and custom but, more significantly, the transformation of an Aztec cosmology into a Franciscan vision of revelation. Conversely, pre-Columbian representations of landscape adhered directly to their medium. Depth was negotiated in the context of their *use* in divinatory contexts and not, strictly speaking, to their physical construction (as in illusionistic space). In the *Florentine*, there is the opposite movement of meaning. Depictions of landscape could, in and of themselves, unfold mysteries of God's plan, and the observer participated in this drama through the eyes, rather than through the activity of interpretation itself. The interpretive labor that lies behind the construction of images in the *Florentine* is formidable; *yet silent*.

Aztec representations of the landscape addressed the material attributes of their lives through their being ritually engaged. For the Franciscans, structural dimensions of a transcendent reality were revealed through the correct rendering of the landscape. In the first case, meaningful articulation of space originated from an immediate environment. In the second, meaningful articulation of space originated from another place (transformation into a New Jerusalem)—or no place (utopia) in particular.

"PRIMACY" AND THE IRONY OF INTERPRETATION

A pedestrian understanding of what constitutes a primary source could be that it is a text that somehow stands close to its point of origin. Implied, therefore, is that these texts occupy a privileged status because they more accurately and authoritatively describe the

world from which they were engendered. The primary text stands the closest of any texts to the authentic nature of the world they portray. Secondary sources, conversely, are more "interpretive" in character, meaning that they are generally seen as more corrupted by other, "contaminating" influences that appropriate the text for their own reasons. The distinction between primary and secondary sources is seen, therefore, as a distinction based on a proximity of text to the thing and/or the intellectual world to which it refers. Implied in the "primacy" of the primary text is the gradation of authority based on its relative position to a more pure utterance. Ironically, as will be discussed, there is no way of attaining entrance to pre-Columbian primary texts. A few are present, but meaningfully remote.

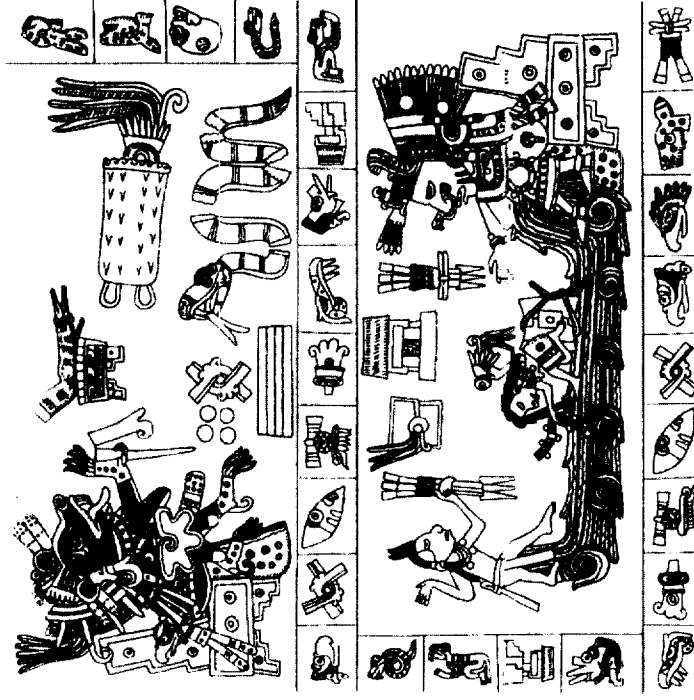
Controversy over a textual record is one of the more engaging aspects of Mesoamerican scholarship.⁷³ There are currently sixteen primary sources in existence.⁷⁴ These are defined by their being produced previous to European contact. Although these books, sometimes called picture or story books, are uniformly considered the most authentic representations of a Mesoamerican worldview, there is sustained debate as to their specific meaning. This is partly due to their method of construction, partly due to their function and application, and partly due to the nature of the interpretive enterprise.

Mesoamerican primary sources are not easily categorized into a single form of human expression. Generally, these documents traverse conventional boundaries of art (and cartoon), astronomy (or more accurately, perhaps, astrology), geography, and writing, to name only a few. In content, these texts cover areas from mythical exploits of ancestors, to kingly propaganda and cosmological temporal cycles, which were all associated with the activities of deities. Their ability to categorically defy interpretive boundaries is one reason for there being a plurality of readings. Intrinsic to the pre-Columbian production of texts was the arbitrary character of meaning as generated between text and interpreter. Given such a diversity of images and the fluidity of their formal points of reference, it could be said that a plurality of interpretations is intrinsic to these texts. There is a closer proximity, however, between these texts and the cosmologies they depict than between the texts and the interpreter.

In contrast, alphabetic writing, which was introduced with the coming of the Spanish, stressed more and more the proximity of text to interpreter, and therefore the ambiguity of the world to which the text refers. For example, Saussure's first principle is the arbitrary nature of the sign.⁷⁵ This is the bedrock upon which he builds his general linguistics. While he is primarily interested in the relationship of an aural sign to an idea, the interpersonal and intrapersonal emphasis of his theory requires that there be no necessary linguistic relationship to the world. Linguistic concepts, such as "table," "mesa," "Tisch," etc., are not necessarily tied to their objects.

Conversely, Ricoeur maintains that, at a semiotic level (that is, at the level of the activity of making meaning) there is an "ontological condition of reference."⁷⁶ In a given dialogue, language must indicate a reality beyond itself and the terms of its own construction. This view is born out in Nahuatl. *Tlacuiloayan* means "table" in conventional usage.⁷⁷ Literally, it means "place where one eats it," referring to the activity of sitting at a table rather than directly to the table as an object.⁷⁸ Nahuatl nouns often express things as sites of activity. Emphasis in the Nahuatl is consistently placed on an appropriate activity at a particular location. Thus the perspective of language changes from Saussure's semantic emphasis to Ricoeur's semiotic emphasis. Meaningful existence in the world requires that a necessary relationship exist between the symbol and the world to which it refers. To exclude the arbitrary nature of this performative relationship means either that one strains to have no connection with existence at all, or that one has an omniscient view of the world in all its plural representations.

Mesoamerican texts had to be performed in order to be understood. For example, on the first eight plates of the *Codex Borgia* there is depicted the *tonalpohualli*, which was the divinatory calendar used to map the significance of events. This calendar consists of fifteen figures that successively represent days, which are arranged into twenty 13-day "weeks," making the *tonalpohualli* "year" 260 days long. According to Selser, each group of five 13-day weeks was dedicated to a cardinal direction.⁷⁹ A deity involved in penitential activity would



5.3. Page 5 of the *tonalpohualli*, redrawn from the *Códice Borgia*.

oversee the first days of the five weeks dedicated to a particular direction, then on to the second, third, fourth, etc. For example, the days corresponding to the east, which fell on the first days of the 5-day interval, were alligator (*cipactli*),⁸⁰ reed (*acatl*), serpent (*coatl*), movement (*olin*), and water (*atl*). On the top and overseeing these days are a penitent seated inside a temple and, on the bottom of the page, the priest Quetzalcoatl. This example dramatizes how the *Borgia* situates time and space with reference to particular deities and their actions. Each day is also associated with a specific character embodied by their names.

The *tonalpohualli* was used to divine the character of humans born on a particular day, or what the most appropriate course of action to be

pursued should be on a given day. While the *Borgia* clearly marks the forces that influence each of the days, a simple reading of the text was not enough to get all the information. Rather, the *Borgia* had to be *performed* by people whose abilities would allow them to “read” signs other than those strictly associated with the document. These readings were associated with the functioning of their bodies and the events of their surroundings.

Tedlock gives a contemporary example of divinatory activity. Among the Maya of Momostenango, Guatemala, diviners (*curanderos*) also use the 260-day calendar, which roughly corresponds to the human gestation period. Knowledge of the human condition is gathered by people who have an ability to “read” the lightning in their blood. Usually these people are called in their sleep through their dreams. Lightning moves in the blood, tissue, and muscle of the body, and is associated with the movement of sheet lightning in the four corners of the world. While offerings are given to the earth at specific shrines, the diviners feel the lightning in their blood in order to understand a message. In this way, a correspondence is established between the body and the cosmos that allows a given reality, intrinsic to the cosmos, to be known. Following the pulses of the blood in the curandero’s body corresponds to the mapping of shrines in the landscape. Water from particular lakes of the high sierra is brought back to these shrines just as the circulation of blood is encouraged to divine knowledge. “As one priest-shaman explained it, ‘These shrines are like a book where everything—all births, marriages, deaths, successes, and failures—is written down.’”⁸¹ Divinatory knowledge thus requires that human events, like all others, be meaningfully located in the landscape.⁸²

Likewise, the significant factor of Aztec knowledge was not so much encoded in a textual artifact itself but in the manner in which it was “read.” This was essentially a phenomenological concept of representation, and it expressed an emphasis on the conditions of material existence. Soon after their arrival, however, the Spanish employed Native artists to generate depictions of their material surroundings. The subject of these “post-Columbian” drawings, as with pre-Columbian drawings, was in the valley geography. Always with an

eye toward exploitation of their newly acquired subject lands, the Spanish required that artists depict a literal view of the environment in the illusionistic Renaissance tradition described above. The result was a pictorial tradition distinctly different than that of pre-Columbian texts.⁸³ Spanish maps depicted a material world as a sensual reality objectified and outside of one’s “participatory universe.”⁸⁴ In pre-Columbian texts, landscape was an interactive reality within an intrinsically meaningful space upon which human life was materially based. In post-Columbian depictions, the relational quality of the landscape was discarded for a near-photographic image of objects as discrete, and therefore transparent, autonomous realities. A landscape of living relations was transformed into abstract space through its being rendered in texts.

Robertson has described the Aztecs’ locative sense in pre-Columbian writing as using “signs of nature,” which were then transformed by the Conquest into “cartoonish” depictions by Spanish colonial interests into “images of nature.”⁸⁵ A pre-Columbian concept of an interactive landscape, in which each element stands in relationship to all other elements as a living organism, was stylistically transformed through conquest into “Nature.” Previous to this time, it was inconceivable for the Aztecs to have understood the world as an entity that stood apart from human activity. Through the colonial experience, however, landscape was transformed into an abstraction (cartography and geography) in which insulated entities in the physical world could be catalogued on paper. This movement was analogous to the economic shift in Europe from gift to profit economies. The shift simultaneously expressed an overconfidence in a European interpretation of “Nature” as well as their creative disengagement with the world.

While Mesoamerican primary sources stand most proximate to the cultures that generated them, the lives of these texts have been erased. Without the appropriate performative linkages, primary sources are uninhabitable. The interpretation of primary Mesoamerican sources requires “readers” who enlist the attributes of their own bodies in order to reveal their meaning. Since the Conquest, the authority invested in the lives of divinatory experts to reveal mean-

ing through these texts has been limited. Instead, expert knowledge and interpretation of these documents have been reformatted. No longer is it the priest who interacts with an image of the cosmos revealing at once his or her intimate connection to the world and community, but rather it is the scholar, whose primary expertise is in an ability to disengage him- or herself from their cultural vestments in the pursuit of collecting various data and arranging the data in a coherent order. The movement of these various hermeneutical enterprises flows in opposite directions. In the case of the Aztecs, a link with the text is formed through bodily, or interior, knowledge in order to draw upon the necessary connections that exist between the text and the cosmos to which it refers. Conversely, scholarship delivers its interpretive authority by pulling apart the text from its points of reference and then reifying the connection between the text and its scholar-reader. For the ethnohistorian, a Mesoamerican world presents itself as a set of transparent images. Ironically, in Mesoamerican studies, the denial of a scholar's task as being an *active and creative* interpreter, replaced with that of an *objective and authoritative* interpreter, obfuscates the hermeneutical activity of any connection to the cosmos through pre-Columbian texts.

It is ironic that while these texts are more proximate to the Mesoamerican world that produced them, and in this sense seen as more authoritative than those that were generated later, they can never be fully comprehensible from our current hermeneutical vantage point. This is not to say, however, that they are not worth the trouble of interpreting. Indeed, even a brief overview of the history of Mesoamerican scholarship, beginning with the efforts of the first generation of priests in the Valley of Mexico, reveals that there was a constant and corporate effort (perhaps even a need) to meaningfully locate these depictions of pre-Columbian cosmology within a modern understanding.⁸⁶ While the texts have remained the same, the "primary readers" have changed.

Among some Mesoamericanists, due to a persistent uneasiness with the interpretability of primary sources,⁸⁷ a larger reliance has generally been placed on secondary sources, and particularly on Sahagún. This is because Sahagún's work is closer to a modern

worldview. This demonstrates Sahagún's importance in bridging a distance between distinct cultural worlds. The irony of "primacy" is that it is not primary texts that constitute our greatest opportunity for understanding Aztec realities, but a nuanced reading of secondary materials such as the *Florentine Codex*, which embody a moment of contact that could therefore reveal our place in it.

NOTES

1. According to Munro S. Edmonson, "Introduction," in *Sixteenth Century Mexico: The Work of Sahagún*, edited by Munro S. Edmonson, School of American Research (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), pp. 1-15, various aspects of Sahagún's early life could be clarified if access to Franciscan archives could be gained. I assume that although some have tried this tactic, they remain off-limits to curious outsiders. Also see the background work of Luis Nicolau D'Olivier (*Fray Bernardino de Sahagún: 1499-1590*, translated by Mauricio Mixco [Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987]), upon which much of Edmonson's work is based.

2. This is a very interesting facet of Sahagún's background that could be more completely explored by looking at it in the general context of the *converso* phenomenon in Spain at the time. For example, it would be very interesting to examine the degree to which Sahagún's Jewish past fueled his fervor not only to convert Native Americans but also to understand them and perhaps even appreciate them. Other rumored *conversos* were Columbus and Bartolomé de las Casas. See Benjamin R. Gampel, *The Last Jews on Iberian Soil: Narraresse Jewry; 1479/1498* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), and Deirdre Green, *Gold in the Crucible: Teresa of Avila and the Western Mystical Tradition* (Longmead, Shaftsbury, Dorset, England: Element Books, Ltd, 1989). In a more general manner, the contributions of Jewish Spain have been looked at by Joseph F. O'Callaghan in *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975) and Julio Valdeón, José M.ª Salrach, y Javier Zabalo, *Historia de España*, volume 4, *Feudalismo y consolidación de los pueblos hispánicos (siglos XI-XV)*, series edited by Manuel Tuñón de Lara (Barcelona: Editorial Labor S.A., 1983).

3. According to J. Jorge Klor de Alva ("Sahagún and the Birth of Modern Ethnography: Representing, Confessing, and Inscribing the Native Other," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, edited by J. Jorge Klor de Alva, Henry B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quiñones Keber [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988], pp. 31-52), the primary method of Christianization in New Spain among these early evangelicals was through linguistic work that was used to create Bibles and sermons in indigenous languages. This tactic of conversion from the fruits of close scrutiny of a people was a particular favorite of the Franciscans in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Also see J. Jorge Klor de Alva, "Religious Organization and Colonial Epistemology," in *To Change Place: Aztec Ceremonial Landscapes*, edited by David Carrasco (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1991), pp. 233-245, for a detailed analysis of postconquest phases. A similar approach is also in operation today, although more ecumenical in design. The Summer Institute of

Linguistics has trained generations of people for fieldwork to translate the Bible into Native languages. Ironically, much of the best work in contemporary Nahuatl, for example, is generated by this program.

4. See Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain*, 12 books, 13 parts, edited and translated by Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, Monographs of the School of American Research, number 14 (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1951-1982), "Introductory Volume," pp. 53-54, where the editors attribute the genesis of his work to the vision of Toral. Also see Klor de Alva, "Sahagún and the Birth of Modern Ethnography," p. 34.
5. Alfredo López Austin, "The Research Method of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún: The Questionnaires," in *Sixteenth-Century Mexico: The Work of Sahagún*, edited by Munro S. Edmonson, School of American Research (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), pp. 111-173.
6. In this passage, López Austin is paraphrasing from passages in Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's, *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España*, 2 vols., edited by Angel María Garibay (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1967). See López Austin, "The Research Method of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún," pp. 114-115 (emphasis added).
7. See Thelma Sullivan, "The Rhetorical Orations, or Huehuetlatolli, Collected by Sahagún," in *Sixteenth Century Mexico: The Work of Sahagún*, edited by Munro S. Edmonson, School of American Research (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), pp. 79-109.
8. Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs, an Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 130-132.
9. The world of ethnography has come under sharp criticism in regard to its accuracy in representing the Other's culture. Pierre Bourdieu (*Outline of a Theory of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977]), among others, has implicated the ethnographer in the process of colonialism. His solution has been to move the referents of writing away from a purely formal analysis of the text toward an ethnography of practice. The activity of working in the field is then seen as a reciprocal interaction between ethnographer and subject. In particular, for Bourdieu, the political and material dimensions of fieldwork come to the fore. In the case of Sahagún, given the turmoil of the times, it is not difficult to imagine that the selection of elders to answer his questions, from the Native side, would be done keeping in mind the consequences of such an exchange in knowledge for the Indians. For an analysis of the consequences of ethnography, also see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).
10. On the other hand, desperation due to illness and poverty may have been seen by the Nahuas as a signal to grant fully Sahagún's requests. In this it would be helpful to know his reasons for choosing Tepepulco. For example, was he already known to this community? Or had he achieved some standing with these local inhabitants that would have put him in a position to make such a request? See Arthur J. O. Anderson, "Sahagún's Informants on the Nature of Tlalocan," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, edited by J. Jorge Klor de Alva, Henry B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quimones Keber (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), pp. 151-161.

11. López Austin, "The Research Method of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún," pp. 117-118.
12. See Sahagún, *Primeros Memorials*, edited by Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, vol. 6 (Madrid: Fototopia de Hauser y Menet, 1905).
13. Facsimile editions of both of these works exist under the names *Códice Matritense de la Real Academia de la Historia*, vol. 8, edited by Francisco del Paso y Troncoso (Madrid: Fototopia de Hauser y Menet, 1907), and *Códice Matritense del Real Palacio*, vol. 7, edited by Francisco del Paso y Troncoso (Madrid: Fototopia de Hauser y Menet, 1905).
14. My comparison of the passages of the ceremony I-Atl cahualo in the *Códice Matritense*, the facsimile of the *Florentine Codex* (Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *El Códice Florentino de Sahagún*, 3 vols. [Mexico City: Secretaría de Gobernación, 1979]), and the English translation of the *Florentine Codex* suggest that, at least when discussing the ceremonies considered here, the differences between the Nahuatl columns is very slight.
15. The works of Theodor de Bry include *Discovery of the New World, 1594-95*, facsimile of engravings, text by Gerolamo Benzoni (Amsterdam: van Hoeve, 1979), and *Conquistadores, Aztecs and Incas: 1596*, facsimile of engravings (Amsterdam: van Hoeve, 1980), and are very interesting in the present context. Even with sketches of various travels, as in the case of the travel accounts of Girolamo Benzoni (*History of the New World*, translated by Rear Admiral W. H. Smyth [London: The Hakluyt Society, volume 21, 1857]), he chose to depict the Natives as tansured classical pagans whose bodies were set in stark contrast to the civilized Europeans. Due to the enormous success of his images on the Age of Discovery, de Bry's work has survived. His themes generally tend to vilify the Spanish, particularly in his depictions of the "Black Legend," in which the Catholic Spanish are seen murdering scores of innocent New World pagans.
- Bernadette Bucher in *Icon and Conquest: A Structural Analysis of the Illustrations of de Bry's Great Voyages*, translated by Basia Miller Gulati (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), gives a structural account of de Bry's work. She focuses closely on the various images of bodily mutilation and cannibalism to conclude on their effectiveness in legitimizing the colonization of the Americas, while at the same time vilifying particular European groups. In addition, several juxtapositions in these engravings between young and old, civilized and Native, etc., seem to have been deliberately employed by the de Bry family. The popularity of the images at once signal their importance as interpretive devices for people in Europe trying to conceptualize the Americas and demonstrate the concerns and opinions of certain people at the time. For an analysis of the consequences of the emerging vision of the New World from several points of view, also see Fredi Chiappelli, ed., *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).
16. See Edmonson, "Introduction," p. 9.
17. Angel María Garibay, *Historia de la literatura Náhuatl*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1953-1954), vol. 2, pp. 57-71.
18. Donald Robertson, "The Sixteenth Century Mexican Encyclopedia of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún," *Cuadernos de historia mundial* 9, no. 3 (1966): 617-628.

19. See Klor de Alva's provocative analysis of the ties between Sahagún and Veracruz in "Sahagún and the Birth of Modern Ethnography," p. 36.
20. Lewis Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), p. 38, and cited in David Carrasco, *Religions of Mesoamerica: Cosmology and Ceremonial Centers* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1990), p. 7. Since its drafting in 1514, the *requerimiento* was read in Latin to Indians before they were engaged in battle. For standard histories of colonial Mexico, see Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1964), and R. C. Padden, *The Hummingbird and the Hawk: Conquest and Sovereignty in the Valley of Mexico, 1503-1541* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967).
21. See Fernando Cervantes, *The Devil in the New World: The Impact of Diabolism in New Spain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 33.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19: "[A] central and essential feature of the devil in Christian thought is his complete subordination to the will of God . . . Hermas, Polycarp and Plutarch taught that the devil had no power over the human soul . . . that evil was not an independent principle was to be reinforced by the Alexandrians, especially Clement and Origen [and would] prepare the ground for St. Augustine's classic definition which denied evil all ontological existence . . . If evil had no substance, no actual existence, no intrinsic reality, if nothing was by nature evil, then a principle of evil—an evil being independent of God—was an absurdity . . . It would seem that this conviction about the impotence of Satan against God and his Church was badly shaken in the early modern period."
23. See Tzvetan Todorov, "Equality and Inequality," and "Enslavement, Colonialism, and Communication," in *The Conquest of America*, translated by Richard Howard (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1984), pp. 146-181.
24. See Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Only Way*, translated by Helen Rand Parish and Francis P. Sullivan (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992), for a full treatment of his world vision.
25. See John Leddy Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World: A Study of the Writings of Gerónimo de Mendieta (1525-1604)*, University of California Publications in History, vol. 42 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956), pp. 14-20. The most influential of what would later be called the Spiritual Franciscans was Joachim of Fiore. For a full treatment of Joachim in the context of western intellectual history, see Bernard McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1985). In addition, see Bernard McGinn, ed., *Apocalyptic Spirituality: Treatises and Letters of Lactantius, Adso of Montier-en-dar, Joachim of Fiore, the Franciscan Spirituals, Saonmarola* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979). This contains a collection of the significant writings of Joachim of Fiore as well as other Spiritual Franciscans.
26. This was not unusual for the period. The only remaining copy of Columbus's first voyage, which was abstracted by Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Diary of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America: 1492-1493*, transcribed and translated by Oliver Dunn and James E. Kelly Jr. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), describes the taking of the "Indies" as not just enhancing Spain's prestige in the

- spice trade, but primarily extending Christendom. Las Casas was captivated by Columbus's vision of the New World and created his own edited version of his diary. For an examination of Columbus's own millennial vision, see Pauline Moffitt Watts, "Trophy and Discovery: On the Spiritual Origins of Christopher Columbus's 'Enterprise of the Indies,'" *The American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 73-102.
27. John Keber's, "Sahagún and Hermeneutics: A Christian Ethnographer's Understanding of Aztec Culture," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, edited by J. Jorge Klor de Alva, Henry B. Nicholson, and Elsie Quinones Keber (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), pp. 53-63, concludes that Sahagún, through his ethnographic approach to Aztec culture, argued for their having a distinctive moral tradition in order to counter the Sepulveda arm of the debate that they were completely outside Christian values, which would therefore have justified their subjugation and exploitation.
28. See Kajetan Esser O. F. M., *Origins of the Franciscan Order*, translated by Aedan Daly O. F. M. and Dr. Irma Lynch (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970), p. 18, and Raymond Bucher O. F. M., "Francis of Assisi," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Mircea Eliade, vol. 5 (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1986), p. 409, for the importance of Francis's biography to the Franciscan movement.
29. Bucher, "Francis of Assisi."
30. See E. Randolph Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1975), pp. 12-13.
31. Duane V. Lapsanski, *Evangelical Perfection: An Historical Examination of the Concept in the Early Franciscan Sources* (New York: Franciscan Institute Publications, St. Bonaventure University, 1977), pp. 1-5.
32. According to R. I. Moore in *The Origins of European Dissent* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1985), p. 40, heresy in the middle to late Middle Ages was generally tied to a turn toward the scriptures. There were two main groups that challenged the church: 1) the literati, whose private visions had priority over the church's, and 2) the *rustici*, *idiotae et infacundi*, who were uneducated men with some knowledge of the scriptures who thought the priests were incapable. Both of these types of heretics should be regarded as conservative and as reacting to the changing conditions of society. The Franciscans could have easily been seen as belonging to either of these groups.
33. The biography of Waldes of Lyon has several striking parallels to the story of St. Francis, and yet while the former was tied to a heretical movement, the latter was integrated into the Church almost from the beginning. Both shared a hatred for money (for Francis it was "filthy lucre" and linked to excrement) and had similar backgrounds in the urban industrial society. See Lester K. Little, *Origins of the Franciscan Order of Medieval Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 146-152. In his "Forward" to *Origins of the Franciscan Order*, Esser maintains, however, that Francis had in mind from the beginning that he and his followers would not be set against the workings of the world Church, but rather be committed to its purification. While he talked like a heretic, he understood himself as being at the center of the Church.
34. Little, *ibid.*, pp. 3-18.

35. Little, in *Origins of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 5-6, maintains that in what has been referred to as the Dark Ages the reconversion of treasure into another form of treasure was typical of the "gift economy." Gifts, contrary to profit, were not calculated according to set values until the eleventh century, which were dictated by the Church. For example monks campaigned vehemently against the pagan German practice of burying gold and other riches with the dead. The last known German burial of this kind happened in the 1160s, which corresponds with the date of the first minted coins.
36. See Mikhail Bakhtin's discussion of St. Francis in *Rabelais and His World*, translated by Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1984), p. 57. Also see his discussion of the degradation of folk culture in "Rabelais and the History of Laughter," *ibid.*
37. See Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, pp. 185-201.
38. For example, Anthony Pagden, in *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), examines the conceptual shift of "natural man" in light of contact with the New World.
39. See Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, translated by John and Anne Tedeschi (New York: Penguin Books, 1982).
40. See Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft & Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, translated by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), for a description of agrarian cults of the Friuli people of northern Italy, which, according to him, became incorrectly labeled by Inquisitional authorities as witch covens. Instead, he sees these cults as having strong shamanic ties. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Carnival in Romans*, translated by Mary Feeney (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1979b), gives a stirring account of Carnival in Romans of southern France during the sixteenth century.
41. See William A. Christian Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), about the local cults of Spanish indigenous groups. In the end it was the Inquisition that would insist on legitimating these cults, thereby judging their authenticity or not.
42. *Ibid.*, and Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, for example.
43. See William A. Christian Jr., *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981). For a look at the modern significance of pilgrimage, see Mary Lee Nolan and Sidney Nolan, *Christian Pilgrimage in Modern Western Europe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989). For the origins of pilgrimage and its ties to the circulation of body parts of the "glorious dead," see Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
44. See Ioan P. Couliano, *Eros and Magic in the Renaissance*, translated by Margaret Cook (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), for an examination of the place of the imaginative sciences of the Renaissance, which linked the workings of a world of phenomena to the inner life of the humors. Also see the extraordinary work of

- Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, on the effect of folk culture on the work of Rabelais. His analysis of this author sets him in the context of village life in which an arrangement of matter is adjudicated with reference to the open and gigantic body, and its associated openings. Bakhtin ties a literary convention to folk festivals such as the feast of fools, carnival, and the marketplace. For a full treatment of the history of play in the medieval European tradition, see Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950).
45. See Timothy Mitchell, *Passional Culture: Emotion, Religion, and Society in Southern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), for a treatment of contemporary society in Andalusia. His thesis is that in this geographical region, religious devotion has a marked pitch of devotion that is unique in Spain. This is historically significant in that perhaps as many as 80 percent of the New World settlers originated from this part of Spain. Also see Julio Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*, translated by O.N.V. Glendinning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), for an attempt at "reading back" from a contemporary context.
46. For historical overviews leading up to the reconquest, see Valdeón, et al., *Feudalismo y consolidación*, and O'Callaghan in *A History of Medieval Spain*.
47. Oftentimes an economic analysis, which brings together structural sociological and historical approaches, is tied to the "Anales school." For a working example, see Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Territory of the Historian*, translated by Ben and Sián Reynolds (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979). Also see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Phillip II*, 2 vols., translated by Sián Reynolds (London: Harper & Row, 1972), for a geographical analysis of cultural movements around the Mediterranean. Also see Huguette Chauuu and Pierre Chaunu, *Seville et l'Atlantique de 1504 à 1650*, 8 vols. (Paris: A. Colin, 1955-1957), for a history of economic relationships between the port of Seville and the Atlantic geography.
48. See John Mohawk, "Discovering Columbus: The Way Here," *Northeast Indian Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1990): 37-46, for a treatment of the structural/historical attributes that lay behind Columbus's voyage.
49. See Louise M. Burkhart, *The Slippery Earth: Nahuatl Christian Moral Dialogue in Sixteenth Century Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), p. 5.
50. See Robert Richard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, translated by Lesley Byrd Simpson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).
51. See Klor de Alva, "Sahagún and the Birth of Modern Ethnography"; J. Jorge Klor de Alva, "European Spirit and Mesoamerican Matter: Sahagún and the 'Crisis of Representation' in Sixteenth-Century Ethnography," in *The Imagination of Matter: Religion and Ecology in Mesoamerican Traditions*, edited by David Carrasco (Oxford: B.A.R. International Series 515, 1989), pp. 17-29; and Louise M. Burkhart, "Aztecs in Limbo: The Harrowing of Hell in Nahuatl-Christian Literature," paper presented at the 47th International Congress of Americanists (Tulane University, New Orleans, 11 July 1991).
52. Analogous to the negotiation of meaning between Native American and European views is the negotiation of spaces between a Mesoamericanist and his/her object of study. Given this reality of our documents, how is it best to overcome the historical and cultural distances between twentieth- and sixteenth-century worlds?

53. See Burkhardt, *The Slippery Earth*, p. 20. It was at the Colegio that the first American press was established. See John Frederick Schwaller, "A Catalogue of pre-1840 Nahuatl Works Held by the Lilly Library," *Indiana University Bookman* 11 (1973): 69-88. Also see Lynn Glaser, *America on Paper: The First Hundred Years* (Philadelphia: Associated Antiquaries, 1989).
54. See Burkhardt, "Aztecs in Limbo." Also see Louise Burkhardt, "Doctrinal Aspects of Sahagún's *Colloquios*," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, edited by J. Jorge Klor de Alva, Henry B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quiñones Keber (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), pp. 65-82.
55. According to Frances Karttunen in *An Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), p. 263, this should be written *tlahtliacōlli*.
56. Burkhardt, *The Slippery Earth*, p. 29.
57. Other interesting Native categories that translated back into Christian ideas were good and evil, translated similarly to the sin/damage pair as order and chaos. The "semidualist" religious tone of Christianity was not a feature of the Nahua. Even more distinct from Aztec conceptions was the linking of evil to matter (as in materialism); however, a certain engagement with matter could result in a chaotic condition for the Aztecs.
58. In *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1987), David Tracy discusses the risks of a dialogical method of religiousness. Plurality is a reality that addresses adjudicating the distance between Self and Other and always requires the transformation of individual and world.
59. From Klor de Alva, "Sahagún and the Birth of Modern Ethnography," p. 39. He goes on to say that Franz Boas, among other modern ethnographers, also led the framing of information gathering in analogous ways.
60. Ashis Nandy describes a similar transformation as a consequence of the colonization of India in his *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).
61. See Fabian, *Time and the Other*.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 31. Fabian discusses this as a "denial of coevalness" that disrupts communication. "By that I mean a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse."
63. See Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, particularly chapter 1, "The Objective Limits of Objectivism."
64. The reinvention of autobiography into ethnography is one of the ways that Fabian in *Time and the Other*, suggests a more authentic, and less exploitive, connection can be attained with the Other. Autobiography has been used recently as another mode of doing ethnography, as in Paul Stoller and Cheryl Olkes, *In Sorcery's Shadow: A Memoir of Apprenticeship Among the Songhai of Niger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Ann Grodzins Gold, *Fruitful Journeys: The Ways of Rajasthani Pilgrims* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); and Michael Jackson, *Baraua and the Ways Birds Fly in the Sky: An Ethnographic Novel* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986). In addition, a biographical method of analysis has been used by Clifford Geertz, *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), and Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Other People's Myths: The Care of Echoes* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1988). The difficulties of this type of approach in Mesoamerican studies are more extreme given the distance from the material alluded to above. However, Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs, an Interpretation*, pp. 4-6, has recently made the attempt at "getting inside the experience of being Aztec."

65. Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, book 1, pp. 105-106.

66. *Ibid.*, book 2, p. 165.

67. According to David Carrasco in *Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire: Myths and Prophecies in the Aztec Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 24-28, and in *Religions of Mesoamerica*, pp. 11-19, based on the work of a number of ethnohistorians, there are currently sixteen of these pre-Columbian "picture books" in existence. There are, however, known to be many more held within individual Native communities and these texts seem to be closely guarded by traditional people. Generally, texts that are kept by village Nahua still exist at the center of a community ritual life, and therefore at the center of their indigenous identities.

68. The *Florentine Codex* is the last version produced of the *General History of the Things of New Spain*. It contained a Spanish gloss to accompany the Nahuatl, as well as including drawings. For an update on the work on Sahagún since the mid 1970s, see Henry B. Nicholson, "Recent Sahaguntine Studies: A Review," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Mexico*, edited by J. Jorge Klor de Alva, Henry B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quiñones Keber (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), pp. 13-30. For a bibliography of Sahagún's extant work, see Eloise Quiñones Keber, "The Sahaguntine Corpus: A Bibliographic Index of Extant Documents," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún*, *ibid.*, above, pp. 341-345. From this point forward, I will refer to Sahagún's *General History* as either one of the two surviving documents: the *Códex Matritense* or the *Florentine Codex*.

69. See Ellen Taylor Baird, "Sahagún's *Primeros Memorables* and *Códex Florentino*: European Elements in the Illustrations," in *Smoke and Mist: Mesoamerican Studies in Memory of Thelma D. Sullivan*, edited by J. Kathryn Josserand and Karen Dakin (Oxford: B.A.R. International Series 402 [J], 1988), pp. 15-40, and "The Illusion of Space and the Perception of History in Sahagún's *Códex Florentino*," a paper presented at the 47th International Congress of Americanists (Tulane University, New Orleans, 11 July 1991).

70. For an extensive study of the history of linear perspective, see Samuel T. Edgerton, Jr., *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975).

71. As quoted in Baird (1991, n. 69 above), p. 6, from Edgerton's citation of Bacon's *Opus majus* (*ibid.*, pp. 17-18), the full passage reads:

Now I wish to present the . . . [purpose] . . . which concerns geometrical forms as regards lines, angles, and figures both of solids and surfaces. For it is impossible for the spiritual sense to be known without a knowledge of the literal sense. But the literal sense cannot be known, unless a man

knows the significations of the terms and the properties of the things signified . . . Oh, how the ineffable beauty of the divine wisdom would shine and infinite benefit would overflow, if these matters relating to geometry, which are contained in Scripture, should be placed before our eyes in their physical forms! . . . I count nothing more fitting for a man diligent in the study of God's wisdom than the exhibition of geometrical forms of this kind before his eyes . . . without doubt the whole truth of things in the world lies in the literal sense, as has been said, and especially of things relating to geometry, because we can understand nothing fully unless its form is presented before our eyes and therefore in the Scripture of God the whole knowledge of things to be defined by geometrical forms is contained and far better than mere philosophy could express it.

72. Baird, "The Illusion of Space," p. 8.

73. For example, see Gordon Brotherston, *Image of the New World: The American Continent Portrayed in Native Texts* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978).

74. See Carrasco, *Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire*, p. 24.

75. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 67-70.

76. Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), p. 21. Also see Bourdieu's critique of Saussure as an intellectualist/structuralist construction of language that can only conceive of language as "execution" and never practice. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, p. 24.

77. Karttunen, *An Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl*, p. 257.

78. This interpretation is supported by Alonso de Molina, *Vocabulario en Lengua Castellana y Mexicana y Castellana* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1977), p. 85r, as he translates this word as "mesa, donde comemos."

79. *Códice Borgia*, facsimile, commentary by Eduard Selser, 3 vols. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1963). These weeks would be dedicated to directions following the path of the sun. Beginning in the east, they would then go to the north, west, and south.

80. This word is only found in René Siméon, *Diccionario de la lengua Nahuatl o Mexicana* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno editores, 1977), p. 111, who describes it as a shark, or a fish that is extremely ravenous.

81. Barbara Tedlock, *Time and the Highland Maya* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), p. 80.

82. Also see Joseph W. Bastien, *Mountain of the Condor: Metaphor and Ritual in an Andean Ayllu* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1978), and "Qollahuaya-Andean Body Concepts: A Topographical-Hydraulic Model of Physiology," *American Anthropology* 87 (1985): 595-611, for examples of divination among the Aymara of Bolivia. The human body directly corresponds to the mountain body, where knowledge is acquired through offerings at earth shrines and messages that come to people through the pulsing of various fluids through their bodies.

83. See Edward Calnek, "The Localization of the Sixteenth Century Map Called the Maguery Plan," *American Antiquity* 38, no. 8 (1973): 190-195, for an analysis of the "maguery plan" and for a comprehensive treatment of a pre-Columbian map and how it relates to geographical features.

84. The use of the term "participatory universe" comes originally from F. Helitzer, "The Princeton Galaxy," *Intellectual Digest* 3, no. 10 (1973): 25-32, and expresses interstellar dynamics in astronomy. However, Johannes Wilbert, in "Eschatology in a Participatory Universe and Destinies of the Soul Among Warao Indians of Venezuela," in *Death and Afterlife in Pre-Columbian America*, edited by Elizabeth P. Benson (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1975), pp. 163-189, adapts the term to apply to travel of the soul in the afterlife among the Warao Indians. My sense of this phrase is the understanding that orientation within a dynamic space is an activity. Phenomenological reality is not stationary, but is made up of an ongoing process of interactions between various types of living beings.

85. Donald Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Paintings of the Early Colonial Period: The Metropolitan Schools* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 185-186. A treatment of the transformation of the depiction of space is found in Carrasco, *Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire*, p. 18.

86. See Brotherston, *Image of the New World*, as a detailed example of the utilization of Native American texts to dramatize a history and cultural continuity.

87. There are very important exceptions to this feature of Mesoamerican studies. For example, art historians have tended to prefer, particularly in recent scholarship, to focus interpretations on various iconographic attributes and trace those attributes thematically in an assortment of mediums and contexts. See, for example, Cecilia F. Klein, "Who Was Tlaloc?" *Journal of Latin American Lore* 6, no. 2 (1980): 155-204, whose treatment of the history of Tlaloc follows his manifestations through an assortment of archaeological and graphic contexts. Another study in this vein is Esther Pasztory, "The Aztec Tlaloc: God of Antiquity," in *Smoke and Mist, Mesoamerican Studies in Memory of Thekla D. Sullivan*, edited by J. Kathryn Josserand and Karen Dakin (Oxford: B.A.R. International Series 402[i], 1988), pp. 289-327, and her examination of the consequences of Tlaloc iconography throughout Mesoamerican history. There is also the esteemed tradition, which was initiated with the monumental work of Eduard Selser, in which primary documents are painstakingly analyzed in minute detail. For examples of Selser's work, see *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Amerikanschen Sprach- und Altertumskunde*, 5 vols. (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1960-61), and *Códice Borgia*. Boone's interpretation of the *Códex Magliabechiano*, *The Book of Life of the Ancient Mexicans* (2 vols., edited and interpreted by Elizabeth Boone [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983]) is a fine contemporary example of this type of scholarship. A recent notable effort to grapple with these thorny issues of interpreting various sorts of Mesoamerican texts is Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo, eds., *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994).