

# The Social Mapping of Self and Other: Cross Purposes and Double Mistaken Identity in Colonial Mexico and Europe

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The growing field of global Renaissance studies seeks out the points of encounter between two or more cultures and redefines the experience separated from its traditionally limited understanding.<sup>1</sup> The work of social historian James Lockhart represents such a project. Lockhart focuses on the Nahua people of ancient Mexico and their relations with their Spanish rulers and finds that many institutions in colonial Mexico operated with the conjoined participation of both the Nahua and the Spanish, even if they were ultimately working toward different results. The convergence of cultures in many of these instances, he states, was due to “Double Mistaken Identity,” a construct in which each participant of an exchange assumes their own cultural hegemony over the project and its results.<sup>2</sup> This paper examines the *Codex Mendoza*, a colonial Mexican manuscript produced in 1541-2, as a syncretic product, with both a Nahua and a Spanish history. Beyond its initial context as a colonial art object produced a generation after the Spanish Conquest of Mexico, the global impact of such works of art will also be considered, and how, once removed from their original setting, objects like the *Codex* helped to construct identity both at home and abroad. Central to this exploration is the format of the map, which according to Barbara Mundy, “by definition, arises out of a particular culture’s understanding of space, which in turn is presaged on a culture’s own construction of reality; when cultures both understand and encode space differently, their maps will vary as well.”<sup>3</sup> The

*Codex Mendoza* can be linked to the respective concepts of mapping both in Mexico and Europe because of the ways in which each culture understood and used such texts. Such an exploration, that examines the *Codex*’s function and purpose from more than one perspective, helps to illuminate the cultural differences and constructions of identity inherent within each understanding and ultimately widens the scope of Renaissance knowledge and culture.

When the Spanish conquistadors set foot in Mexico in 1519, they discovered a people with a highly impressive tradition of manuscript production. Housed in libraries within each Nahua community were large collections of historical, familial, and social texts.<sup>4</sup> Soon after arriving in the ‘new world,’ the Spanish began shipping indigenous objects to the King of Spain as records and prizes of the contact; a small number of pre-Conquest manuscripts were included, of which only 12-15 survive today.<sup>5</sup> In 1520, a campaign to rid New Spain of “pagan worship” put a colony-wide stop to indigenous production by closing the Nahua schools and subsequently destroying existing materials, including manuscripts.<sup>6</sup> A few years later however, production resumed under new circumstances. As early as 1523, Charles V began commissioning new works so that he might familiarize himself with his new subjects.<sup>7</sup> The manuscripts produced under direction of the Spanish crown represented a “new ‘colonial’ kind of writing,”<sup>8</sup> which, according to Elizabeth Hill Boone, drew from

<sup>1</sup> In order to locate means of representation with respect to each cultural aspect that contributed to its making, it is essential to flesh out these sites of convergence in Renaissance times. For according to Cecilia Klein, “we can only identify and fully understand the nature and range of colonial-period representational processes if we can locate those points at which Renaissance representations both resembled and differed from indigenous modes of conceptualization.” Cecilia Klein, “Wild Woman in Colonial Mexico: An encounter of European and Aztec Concepts of the Other,” *Reframing the Renaissance*, ed. Claire Farago (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1995) 246.

<sup>2</sup> James Lockhart, *Of Things of the Indies* (Stanford: U of Stanford P, 1999) 99. Lockhart defines “Double Mistaken Identity” as a cultural construct of convergence within which “each side of the cultural exchange presumes that a given form or concept is functioning in the way familiar within its own tradition and is unaware or unimpressed by the other sides’ interpretation.” Lockhart primarily focuses on social, political, and economic organizations in the colonial period in order to expound upon this phenomenon. However, extending this construct into the visual arts can perhaps be fruitful in exploring how certain works of art took affective roles in the construction of societal identity and ordering for both the Nahua and the Spanish.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain: Indigenous Cartography and the Maps of the Relaciones Geograficas* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996) xii-xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Miguel León-Portilla, *The Aztec Image of Self and Society: An Introduction to Nahua Culture* (Salt Lake City: U of Utah P, 1992) 43; Elizabeth Hill Boone, “Pictorial Documents and Visual Thinking in Postconquest Mexico,” *Native Traditions in the Postconquest World*, eds. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Tom Cummings (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998) 183.

<sup>5</sup> Donald Robertson, “Mexican Indian Art and the Atlantic Filter: Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli, vol. 1 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 491.

<sup>6</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *Painting the Conquest: The Mexican Indians and the European Renaissance* (Paris: Flammarion, 1992) 16.

<sup>7</sup> Boone 156.

<sup>8</sup> Stuart Schwartz, *Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2000) 23.

Nahua subjects and forms in order to comply with a European audience.<sup>9</sup>

The *Codex Mendoza* is one example of this type of hybrid object. It was commissioned by Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza, working under the direction of Charles V, who demanded a census to ascertain the financial holdings of the Nahua and to create a cultural survey of the area.<sup>10</sup> The codex, created in 1541-2, consists of three sections each in Nahuatl pictographic form supplemented by Spanish translations.<sup>11</sup>

The first section contains historical annals, the most common pre-contact theme, which delineates the historical succession of Tenochtitlan rulers from the city's founding in 1325 C.E. to the time of Moctezuma, who ruled at the time of contact (Figure 1).<sup>12</sup> The second section of the codex is a tribute roll, which outlines the taxation of Nahua outposts by the councils of Tenochtitlan, representing the yearly toll each town was expected to pay to the governing center (Figure 2). These two sections are both common pre-Conquest depictions, and it is probable that they were based on earlier codices.<sup>13</sup> The third section, however, contains a format that was virtually unknown before this time, an ethnographical account of Nahua daily activities.<sup>14</sup> This section outlines, year by year, the life and instruction of male and female children, beginning at birth, up until the point of marriage, followed by a representation of the role of the warrior within society, and ending with the rewards of a long and moral life (Figure 3).

Formally, the manuscript exhibits aspects of both indigenous and European art. It relies on the Nahua pictographic code by using five distinct classes of glyphs: numerical, calendrical, pictographic, ideographic, and phonetic, which

are evenly distributed across the page without background and demonstrate the characteristically native sharply-defined expanses of color, with little or no shading, and dark linear boundaries.<sup>15</sup> But the codex also exhibits European elements.<sup>16</sup> Instead of an accordion-folded manuscript meant to be read in a circular motion, the organization of the *Codex Mendoza* conforms to European books with bi-fold pages, at times organized into registers that read from the top down. With the Spanish writing opposite each page of native glyphs, the codex appears as a book of text complemented by illustration plates (Figure 2).<sup>17</sup> To the European eye, the juxtaposition of the text and image would appear as two separate entities, each complementing the other. This differs from the Nahua understanding as no such distinction between painting and writing was made.<sup>18</sup>

The *Codex Mendoza* resists categorization as either an indigenous manuscript or European book; as such, it is a hybrid object. It can be argued that the codex format served separate purposes for each party involved, a fact that attests to its continued production long after the Conquest. For the Spaniards, the codices were a way to understand and ultimately subordinate the natives; for the Nahua, colonial codices served as sites for self-identification and the continuation of a culture being suppressed in the wake of physical and cultural war.

Historically, the codices had always served a self-identifying purpose for the Nahua. Filled with their histories, beliefs, and ways of life, they were, according to Miguel León-Portilla, the vehicles of their most "significant doctrines,... [and] the means by which the masses of the people were linked

<sup>9</sup> Boone 160. The Spanish commissioned manuscripts containing Nahua histories, religious beliefs and rituals, as well as calendars. Specific instructions were given regarding the actual format of the codices, since the Spanish provided the native painters with European paper and "requested that the painters leave room for alphabetic annotations that would clarify the images for European readers." According to Boone, even though the native painters drew from their own pictorial traditions and almost certainly even copied images from earlier codices, they were creating manuscripts that "were essentially European in their audience, purpose, and conception, documents that satisfied a European thirst for cultural information."

<sup>10</sup> Boone 157. The commission was reportedly handed down to Mendoza so that Charles V would be able to determine the amount of tribute or tax that could be drawn from the indigenous peoples of Mexico and also to create a "relation of things of the land." The mandate was passed from Mendoza to Francisco Gualpuyogualcatl, who was at that time the director of the Mexico City painter's guild, who in turn, hired native *tlacuilos*, or artist-scribes, to execute the codex, Gruzinski 107; Schwartz (2000) 21. Peter Mason, however, points out some difficulty in definitively identifying the particular *Codex* in question as the same one commissioned by Mendoza himself, despite the fact that it is now commonly regarded as the *Codex Mendoza*. According to Mason, Mendoza's commission was to contain the years of the Conquest within the historical annals; the *Codex Mendoza* does not contain these years. See Peter Mason, "The Purloined Codex," *Journal of the History of Collections* 9.1 (1997): 2-3.

<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive description of the contents of the *Codex Mendoza*, see Frances F. Berdan and Patricia Rieff Anawalt, *The Codex Mendoza*, vol. 1-4 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1992) and Berdan and Anawalt, *The Essential Codex Mendoza* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1997). Berdan and

Anawalt provide a page-by-page description of the *Codex* along with detailed discussions of the historical, conventional, and stylistic significances of the individual glyphs and pages as a whole.

<sup>12</sup> Lockhart 230-31.

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Hill Boone discusses a tradition of recopying earlier painted information into post-Conquest codices, as typical pre-Conquest information was "reworked for Spanish authorities," 169.

<sup>14</sup> Berdan and Anawalt (1997) xii.

<sup>15</sup> León-Portilla 44; Robertson 484-85.

<sup>16</sup> Gruzinski speculates that the indigenous painters of the codex were probably between the ages of thirty and forty years old, having lived the first half of their lives during the pre-Conquest period and having had European contact for at least 15 years, during which time the Spanish were bringing European art, in the form of prints, to New Spain, Gruzinski 160. For more detailed iconographical and stylistic studies of the *Codex Mendoza* specifically, see Berdan and Anawalt (1992) vol. 1; for a more general iconographical discussion of colonial Mexican manuscript painting, see Donald Robertson, "Mexican Indian Art and the Atlantic Filter: Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli, vol. 1 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 483-494.

<sup>17</sup> Gruzinski 110.

<sup>18</sup> Gruzinski 15.

to and educated about the ancient ideals of their religion and culture.”<sup>19</sup> They served sometimes as political sites of identity. León-Portilla discusses a “double orientation” to the codices by the Nahua, who were not opposed to using them opportunistically. Native peoples often drew from the achievements and successes of the past to emphasize legitimacy. At the same time, they were also aware of the impact that the codices could have on their future image. This is why, at times, they rewrote their history to privilege certain events over others.<sup>20</sup> Whether used for recording or revisionist purposes, the codices nonetheless share an innate recognition of the command of the painted image that derives from the processes of self-identification.

The codices also served as a site for self-identification because of the interactive way in which they were read. Because of the coded system of representation, the pictorial glyphs were somewhat limiting to narrative and situational development; the glyphic representations could not easily clue the ‘reader’ to specific details or nuances.<sup>21</sup> In order to supplement this lack, the codices were accompanied by an oral tradition. Thus, the Nahua taught a discipline known as “the art of memory,” which sought, through rhythmic language, “to fix in the student’s mind the commentaries that deciphered the narratives signaled by the inspirations and paintings in the codices.”<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the histories and beliefs of the Nahua culture were situated within human memory itself, which relied on the codices as a catalyst for release.

With the arrival of the Spanish, the understanding of the codices was somewhat altered. According to Serge Gruzinski, the foreign encounter affected the self-awareness of the Mexicans, forcing them to look at themselves in terms of their difference to their invaders, giving the codices a new slant: “Whereas before lectures and warnings accompanying the stages of life had a basically moral tone, the details of the codex now reveal an acute eye for everyday incidents.”<sup>23</sup> The new positioning of the natives, who were in danger of losing their way of life to outside suppression, sought within the colonial codices a form of nostalgia and order, a way visually to

perpetuate and guarantee the continued existence of their civilization.<sup>24</sup>

The ethnographic section of the *Codex* serves as an example of this nostalgia. The new subject attests to, from a Nahua point of view, an attempt to reformulate fundamental elements of civilization, most noticeable in the yearly account of daily life. Beyond the birth, and beginning with age three, the following pages outline the instruction of a boy and a girl, represented side by side, each shown with an adult who tutors and punishes them in order to instill in them the values of their people. The emphasis here is on education, on the passing down of information from one generation to the next, reflecting a strong appreciation of instruction and obedience. The Nahua sought to assimilate their young into their cultural roles from an early age through a system of education that was universally enforced and that emphasized the importance of the unified community above all else.<sup>25</sup> This instruction ends with the marriage of the figures at the age of 15, surrounded by their parents, each with words of advice to offer to the young couple who, by community standards, have just graduated into adulthood.<sup>26</sup>

The significance of this section can be understood in several ways. Primarily, as a step-by-step manual for living, it represents a way to communicate a charge for the continuation of a group of people who were by the time of production, twenty years after the initial conquest, already dwindling in numbers.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps the heterosexual ordering, as well as the ultimate marriage, is also significant. According to Cecilia Klein, this education included specific gendering of each child, steering them towards the “stable and productive marriage of a fully feminine woman to an entirely masculine man [which] represented the hallmark of social maturity and formed the basis of the socioeconomic order.”<sup>28</sup> In addition to a general desire for social stability, perhaps the call for procreation was even more strongly felt during this time.

*The Codex Mendoza* then, although created with the European audience in mind, functioned in a way that was beneficial to its creators as well. As an object that contained glyphic

<sup>19</sup> León-Portilla 202.

<sup>20</sup> León-Portilla 202. Rewriting their history sometimes also included destroying their own manuscripts. León-Portilla offers an historical account of the ruler Tlacaélel who, after he assumed the rule of Tenochtitlan as the result of war, enacted an “ideological reform” during which he burned the ancient codices and pictures of both the people he had conquered and also those of his own people. He had his own codices burned for fear of being identified as weak because of what was pictured within them. Beginning with a new history and a new identity, Tlacaélel ordered “new images of self-importance” for the people of Tenochtitlan by emphasizing his new reign and establishing an order of legitimacy that connected him to the ancient Toltecs and various other peoples known to be powerful, León-Portilla 100.

<sup>21</sup> León-Portilla 70.

<sup>22</sup> León-Portilla 70.

<sup>23</sup> Gruzinski 124-28.

<sup>24</sup> Boone echoes Gruzinski’s statement that the people of Tenochtitlan would have found both nostalgia and self-identification within the post-Conquest manuscripts as many “were painted out of a ... fundamental desire for self-identification, to keep the old memories and to preserve what remained of one’s position. The genealogies were important in reestablishing lines of descent at a time of high mortality. The histories, too, reconnected people with their ancestors, and they glorified a polity’s past stature,” Boone 190.

<sup>25</sup> León-Portilla 189-90; Gruzinski 128.

<sup>26</sup> Gruzinski 132.

<sup>27</sup> Gruzinski 132.

<sup>28</sup> Cecilia Klein, “None of the Above: Gender Ambiguity in Nahua Ideology,” *Gender in Pre-Hispanic America*, ed. Cecilia Klein (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001) 189. For further discussions of gender relations in pre-Columbian society, see also Rosemary Joyce, *Gender and Power in Prehispanic Mesoamerica* (Austin: U of Texas P, 2000).

representations of the history, religion, and functions of the Nahua, as well as the key to unlocking the complementary memories of such aspects of culture, it was a site for the nostalgic recreation of a time that had forever been changed.

The Spanish crown, Charles V, had specific reasons for commissioning colonial objects such as the *Codex*. Financial and cultural curiosity were primary; however, colonial art objects soon found other purposes in European collections. There, these same images had a larger, more global impact by adding to a growing ethnographical trend that would socially order newly ‘discovered’ peoples of the world, and be utilized in the construction of new notions of racial and ethnic difference.<sup>29</sup>

The *Codex Mendoza* left Mexico on a ship headed to Spain in 1542. It did not, however, reach its intended destination. French sailors intercepted the ship and claimed its contents for the crown of France. The *Codex* remained in the possession of the king for over a decade, before being passed to Franciscan André Thevet, a Frenchman who actively studied the Amerindian people through collected Aztec antiquities.<sup>30</sup> From Thevet the codex moved into the possession of a succession of English archivists who eventually prepared a translation that was published as a set of “crudely” copied woodcuts along with an erroneous English text, a version that was subsequently republished in both Dutch and French editions in the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>31</sup> The codex eventually made its way into the collection of Oxford’s Bodleian Library, where it remains today.<sup>32</sup>

The provenance situates the *Codex* within Renaissance European interest in colonial objects from around the world.

Exploration undoubtedly challenged the worldview of many Europeans, and in order to come to terms with the diversity that was becoming known worldwide, the exotic Other was often approached in an encyclopedic manner. In attempts to understand and define their new global neighbors, Europeans collected as much knowledge as possible about them, giving rise to the well known *Wunderkammer* and *Kunstzimmer*, the curiosity cabinets that claimed to microcosmically represent the world through the juxtaposition of extraordinary objects, both natural and artificial. These collections, although often arbitrary and flawed in their systems of classification and organization, were nevertheless believed to have represented a structured global perspective, since they were seen as “the allegorical mirror reflecting a perfect and completed picture of the world.”<sup>33</sup> Manuscripts like the *Codex Mendoza*, along with other pre-Columbian and colonial objects from Mexico, also often ended up in European collections where they were, according to Peter Mason, considered “curiosities” themselves and very often “recontextualized” within their new settings.<sup>34</sup> It was within early collections such as these that these New World objects began to take on new meanings, very often divorced from the significance they originally carried.<sup>35</sup> These works, nevertheless, added to the growing body of knowledge about recently “discovered” areas and peoples of the world. Characterizations of Amerindian people became based on amalgamated stories, rumors, drawings made first, second and even third hand, and primary source material such as art works themselves, including the codices; such descriptions were largely exaggerated and generalized, formed with little regard

<sup>29</sup> Valerie Traub, “Mapping the Global Body,” *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, Empire in Renaissance England*, eds. C. Hulse and P. Erickson (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2000) 44.

<sup>30</sup> Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought* (New Brunswick, NJ: Yale UP, 1991) 149. Thevet, whose signature the original *Codex* now bears in several places, owned the *Codex* for a number of years and is known to have amassed a significant collection of New World objects from both his own travels to the Americas as well as having purchased from others.

<sup>31</sup> Keen 206-7; the designation “crude” is given by Keen in describing the historical accuracy of the images as well as the quality of the woodcut prints; nevertheless, he credits the *Codex* with “[opening] a new era in the appreciation and study of ancient Mexican civilization.”

<sup>32</sup> An extended provenance is as follows: From the collection of Thevet, the *Codex* was sold to Richard Hakluyt, chaplain to the English ambassador in France and an acquaintance of Thevet who came to study in Paris between the years of 1583 and 1588. It was during this time that he purchased the *Codex*. Hakluyt transported the text to England and hired translators to prepare an English version of the Spanish text with hopes of publishing it in print form in England. Before this task could be carried out, however, Hakluyt died and at some point after 1616, the *Codex Mendoza* fell into the possession of Samuel Purchas, who compiled travel books. It was Purchas who carried out Hakluyt’s plan by having the *Codex* published in several editions. Purchas’ son later sold the manuscript to another collector of New World texts, John Selden. Five years after Selden died in 1654, the *Codex Mendoza* entered the collection of the Bodleian. Provenance provided by Patricia Rieff Anawalt and Frances F. Berdan, “The *Codex Mendoza*,” *Letter Arts Review* 11.4 (1994): 45 as well as Mason 3 and Keen 170-71, 207-8.

<sup>33</sup> Anthony Alan Shelton, “Cabinets of Transgression: Renaissance Collections and the Incorporation of the New World,” *The Cultures of Collecting*, eds. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1994) 185. According to Shelton, it was not until the collections passed into public ownership or the audience was somehow widened, that attempts at cataloguing and classification became more rigorous and methodical, 186.

<sup>34</sup> Mason 14. According to Detlef Heikamp, the largest number of such objects were found in collections within Italy and German-speaking countries, Heikamp, “American Objects in Italian Collections of the Renaissance and Baroque: A Survey,” *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli, vol. 1 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 456.

<sup>35</sup> Peter Mason, in “The Purloined Codex,” discusses the specific transformation in meaning through which the *Codex Mendoza* progressed once it entered into André Thevet’s collection of New World objects. Thevet is known to have used the documents and objects that he owned to inform his own publications about historical kings and world leaders. Mason looks specifically at the iconographical similarities between glyphs found within the *Codex Mendoza* and some of the portraits found within Thevet’s *Les Vrais Portraits et Vies des Hommes Illustres Grecz, Latins, et Payens Recueilliz de Leurs Tableaux Livres, Medalles antiques, et Modernes*, “a collection of portraits and lives of dead popes, bishops, warriors, poets and others, published in Paris in 1584.” Beyond Thevet’s own appropriation of the images, Mason also notes the influence that Thevet’s publications had on later writers of natural history who were known to have widely used Thevet as an important source on the Americas. Mason traces a lineage of meaning as the images within the *Codex Mendoza*, copied by Thevet, subsequently republished and even later recopied by various other illustrators, began to take on a life of their own as they became further and further removed from their original context. Mason 3-13.



to geographic or ethnographic specificity.<sup>36</sup> The growing knowledge about people of the Americas was, then, riddled with misconceptions.<sup>37</sup> According to John Elliot, attempts to approach people in this manner often failed in terms of true ethnographic study, the collections having “[debased] facts into mere curiosities to be collected,” for it was “easier to marvel at diversity than attempt to explain it.”<sup>38</sup>

Valerie Traub states that one way in which Europeans sought to deal with aspects of difference was to order them visually in terms of appearance and location, specifically on maps. Traub explains that the representation of figures within maps takes on new significance during the Renaissance because of the widespread availability of voyage illustrations, descriptive accounts of Americans, and art works.<sup>39</sup> Traub discusses the development of an “ethnographic idiom” as figural representations from around the globe were repositioned from within geographical maps, superimposed over the land, to the margins of such documents. Mimicking the profusion of longitudinal and latitudinal lines that geographically chart the globe, human bodies were similarly placed in regimented grid-like spaces along the borders, implying that “bodies themselves may be terrain to be charted.”<sup>40</sup> According to Traub, this process ultimately reduced actual colonial experiences of human variety into standardized types, creating a uniform fig-

ural system of representation that “[encouraged] classification and comparison.”<sup>41</sup> Indeed, the movement of these figures onto maps allowed for even more comparison when figures from many countries, continents and cultures were depicted side by side. However, these worldly comparisons led to the establishment of a formal hierarchy of representation that was aided in its legitimacy by form with “consistency of scale, stable orientation, and isolation... [producing] the body as a rational object of knowledge.”<sup>42</sup> Traub ultimately argues that the figural representations on maps in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were integral to the construction of racial difference as it would come to be understood from the Enlightenment forward, clarifying, through this process of comparison and classification, the global Other as defined by the intertwined notions of ethnic, racial, national, and geographical difference inherent in the visual markers of dress and appearance.<sup>43</sup> In doing so, European maps carry much more than simply territorial designations; through the embodiment of race and culture, they might also be seen as social maps as well, ordering the inhabitants of the globe into neatly contained, and controlled, bodies of information.<sup>44</sup>

The use of figures superimposed on maps is not a wholly European notion. In a moment of “accidental convergence,” it appears that the use of figures within Mexican maps oc-

<sup>36</sup> Mason 4-8. Thevet himself is guilty of this generalization of the Americas; Mason argues that Thevet’s portraits of not only Motecuhzoma [Thevet/Mason spelling] of Mexico, but also those of the kings of Peru and Florida were all derived in part from glyphs in the *Codex Mendoza*.

<sup>37</sup> Both first-hand accounts, as well as European collectors who published reports, led to a dominant negative stereotype of the Amerindian in the European mind. This misconception labeled the Nahua as savages, barbarians, devil-worshippers, prone to the vices of drinking, gluttony, and sodomy. One account by a Dominican friar who studied among the Nahua attempted to classify them scientifically in terms of an evolutionary status; in this instance, it was deemed that the native peoples of Mexico were not as fully developed as Europeans, lacking the proper cultural understanding that would put them on par with Europe. Keen 94-98, 141, 172.

<sup>38</sup> John H. Elliott, “Renaissance Europe and America: A Blunted Impact?” *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli, vol. 1 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 19.

<sup>39</sup> Traub, 50-51; 61-64. Traub draws connections between narrative accounts and textual products such as costume books and other voyage-oriented publications. As she explains, costume books were widely used as references for the appearances of global figures; many mapmakers copied nearly directly from costume books, which were, in many instances, copied or drawn from voyage illustrations and primary New World sources. Peter Mason briefly discusses the popularity of Thevet’s publications among costume book authors and artists and believes that this influence would have included images derived from the *Codex Mendoza* as well, although he states that further research must be done to examine more specific links between the *Codex* and specific costume illustrators and publications, 13. The widespread availability of such images and accounts is also discussed by Wayland D. Hand in “The Effect of the Discovery on Ethnographical and Folklore Studies in Europe” *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli, vol. 1 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 45-55. Hand states that after 1492 and well into the sixteenth century information about the New World was passed through word of mouth, and not necessarily limited to “discourse at court,” “deliberations of secular and religious councils, nor to people connected with mercantile houses and other

more or less public agencies,” and instead was undoubtedly discussed by nearly all levels of European society, 46.

<sup>40</sup> Traub 49.

<sup>41</sup> Traub 64.

<sup>42</sup> Traub 63.

<sup>43</sup> Traub 57-8. It is interesting, however, that alongside the developing concepts of racial, ethnic, national and cultural difference, Traub argues that gender is used conversely to unite the figures from around the globe. Noting the dominance of figures arranged in male-female pairs, she believes that these maps imply the global appearance of the husband-wife relationship, and in some instances a nuclear family with the inclusion of children, as a universal normative construct. This, Traub argues, is another instance of containing and ordering racial difference as it promotes “domestic heterosexuality” and guards against interracial marriage, creating clear racial distinctions between each couple or “family,” 80-84. Within this discussion of “domestic heterosexuality,” perhaps another comparison presents itself, between the representations discussed by Traub and another Mexican art form, the *castas* paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As an art genre that gave rise to constructed notions of racial and ethnic difference within Mexico, the link between Traub’s argument and *castas* paintings seems to be an avenue that could give rise to further discussions of social ordering and “mapping” that unfortunately lie outside of the scope of this paper. For more detailed discussions of the *castas* genre see Magali M. Carrera, *Imagining Identity in New Spain: Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings* (Austin: U of Texas P, 2003) and Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2004).

<sup>44</sup> Traub 53. The social hierarchy implied by such representations is also discussed by Traub as it was used to not only come to terms with the new global perspective but also to maintain European superiority through the Orientalist notions of the Other that were produced and reproduced on published maps.

curred pre-Conquest.<sup>45</sup> The frontispiece of the *Codex Mendoza* is a map of Tenochtitlan, which includes this precise mode of representation (Figure 4). The outer blue band represents a calendar; the inner band represents the water surrounding the islands of Tenochtitlan, the blue that crosses from corner to corner indicates the canal systems that were employed across the island. Each of the figures represents a section of the city, a specific neighborhood, or in the case of the two lower figures, neighboring towns. Each specific area of the map is designated by a body, which is accounted for by a certain amount of overlap between the disciplines of mapmaking and the self-identification in manuscript painting.<sup>46</sup> The notion of space and distance in native Mexico was inherently dependent upon the body, since “long distances were measured by...the rest that the human body needed en route.”<sup>47</sup> The Nahua also created what are now called ‘social settlement maps,’ which represented geographical areas not by typological markings, but according to the social hierarchies that existed within the area.<sup>48</sup> This self-identification distinguished Nahua mapmaking from European mapmaking at the time, a difference attested to by the account that during colonial times, “the Spanish commission to paint a map of the town was quickly (and somewhat mistakenly) translated by indigenous painters into a bid to paint a map of the community.”<sup>49</sup> Viewed with regard to this concept of social mapping, the *Codex Mendoza*, as a whole,

can be seen as a manuscript that outlines both the territorial and the communal aspects of society, a social map of Tenochtitlan that defined a sense of Nahua self. Once in Europe, the *Codex Mendoza* continued to define the culture from which it came, although from a different perspective. In Europe, the *Codex* became part of a corpus of new information that helped to define the global Other through nascent forms of racial and ethnic difference.

By focusing on such colonial documents as the *Codex Mendoza*, “Double Mistaken Identity” is carried into the visual arts by way of an ambiguous art form that was used towards specific purposes for each culture involved, which, despite the inherent differences, were somewhat aligned in their pursuit of a visual ordering. Each culture sought to maintain their own separate identities: the Nahua by nostalgically recreating their culture in visual (and therefore oral) form, and the Europeans by creating visual hierarchies that allowed them to incorporate newly-discovered Others into their world on their own terms. In examining the *Codex Mendoza* from several perspectives, the multivalent character of such works of art becomes more apparent and can lend insight into the nature of a time period that stood in the midst of monumental global change.

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<sup>45</sup> Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001) 28-9. The term “accidental convergence” was first used by George Kubler and is discussed by Bailey as one model of fusion and correspondence between differing cultures who come into contact with one another. In his discussion of the varying degrees of cultural convergence and syncretism, Bailey identifies “accidental convergence” as a convergence of form and/or content that occurs between two or more cultures that have not had previous contact. As such, it is a construct not unlike Lockhart’s own “Double Mistaken Identity.”

<sup>46</sup> Mundy 93.

<sup>47</sup> Mundy 112.

<sup>48</sup> Mundy 118.

<sup>49</sup> Mundy 91. For a more detailed discussion of the differences between Nahua mapmaking and European mapmaking, see the preface of Mundy’s *The Mapping of New Spain*, xii-xix. Mundy compares the frontispiece of the *Codex* to a map known as the Cortés map of Tenochtitlan, 1524, made by an anonymous European draftsman, that conforms to a mapping format commonly used to represent European cities in the early sixteenth century.



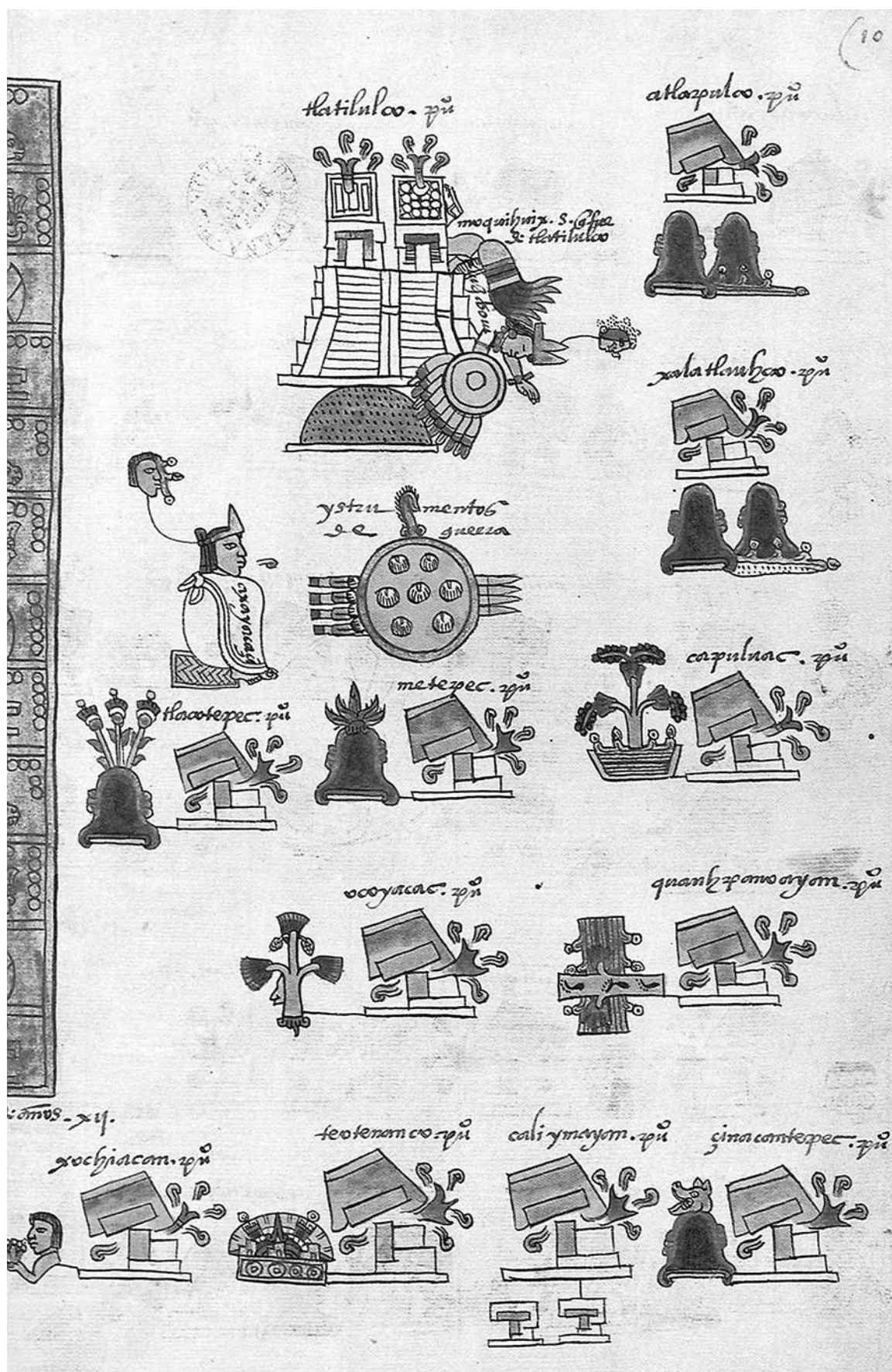


Figure 1. *Codex Mendoza*, folio 10r, Axayaxatl. Image courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS. Arch. Selden. A. 1.



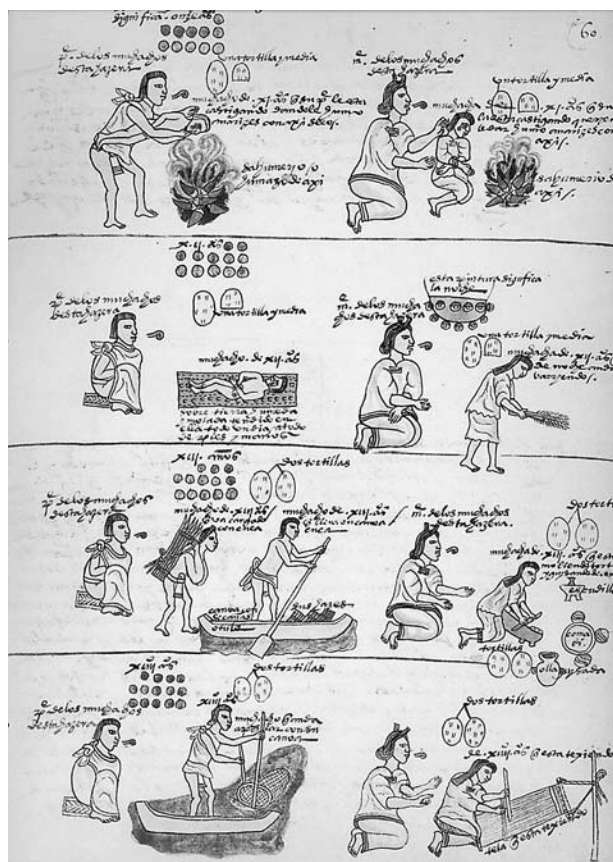
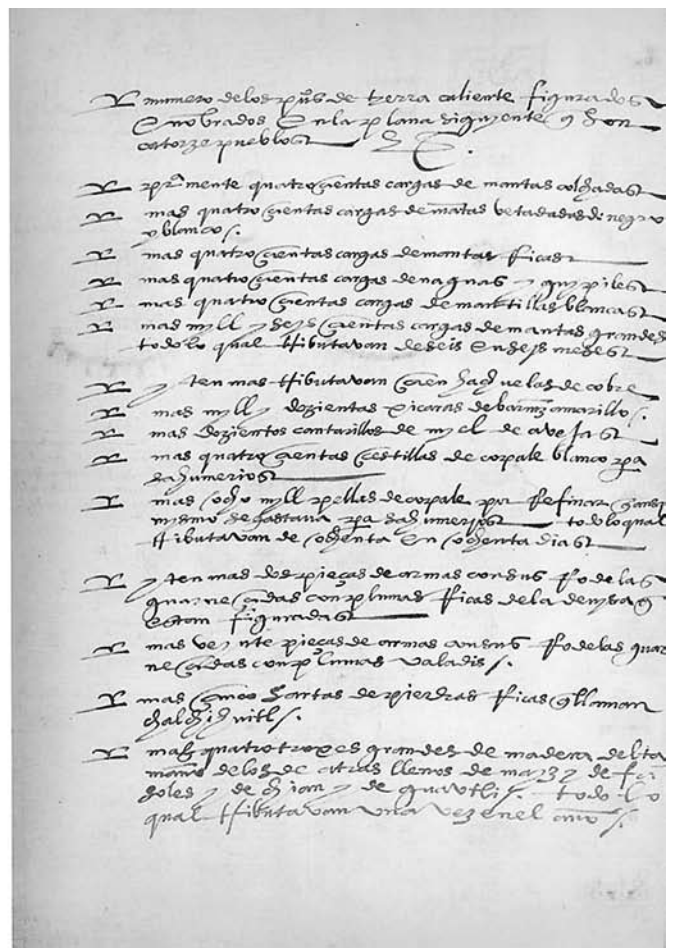
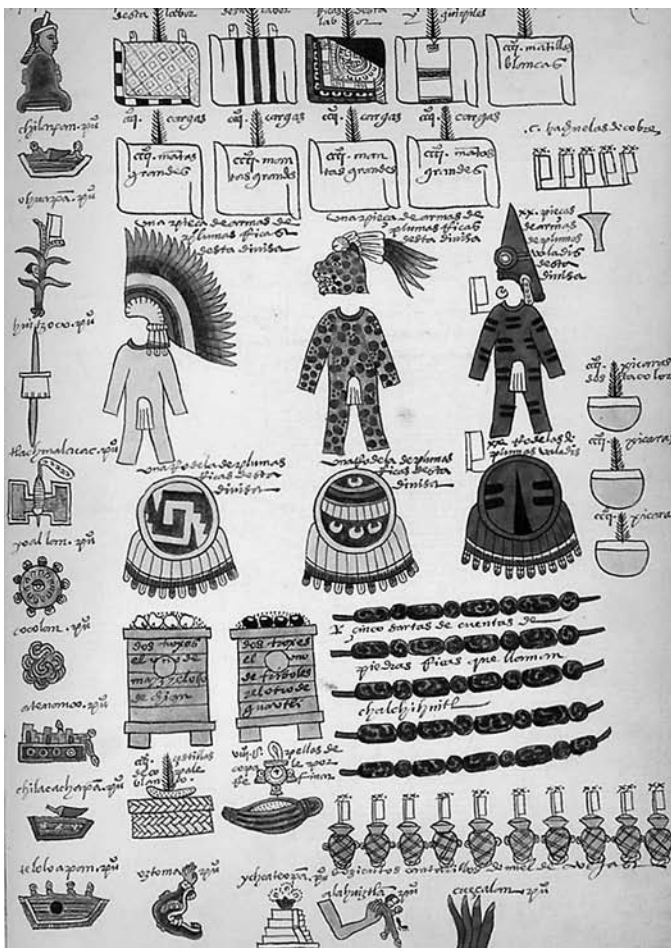


Figure 3. Codex Mendoza, folio 60r, Ethnographic section displaying, top to bottom, years 11-14. Image courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS. Arch. Selden. A. 1.



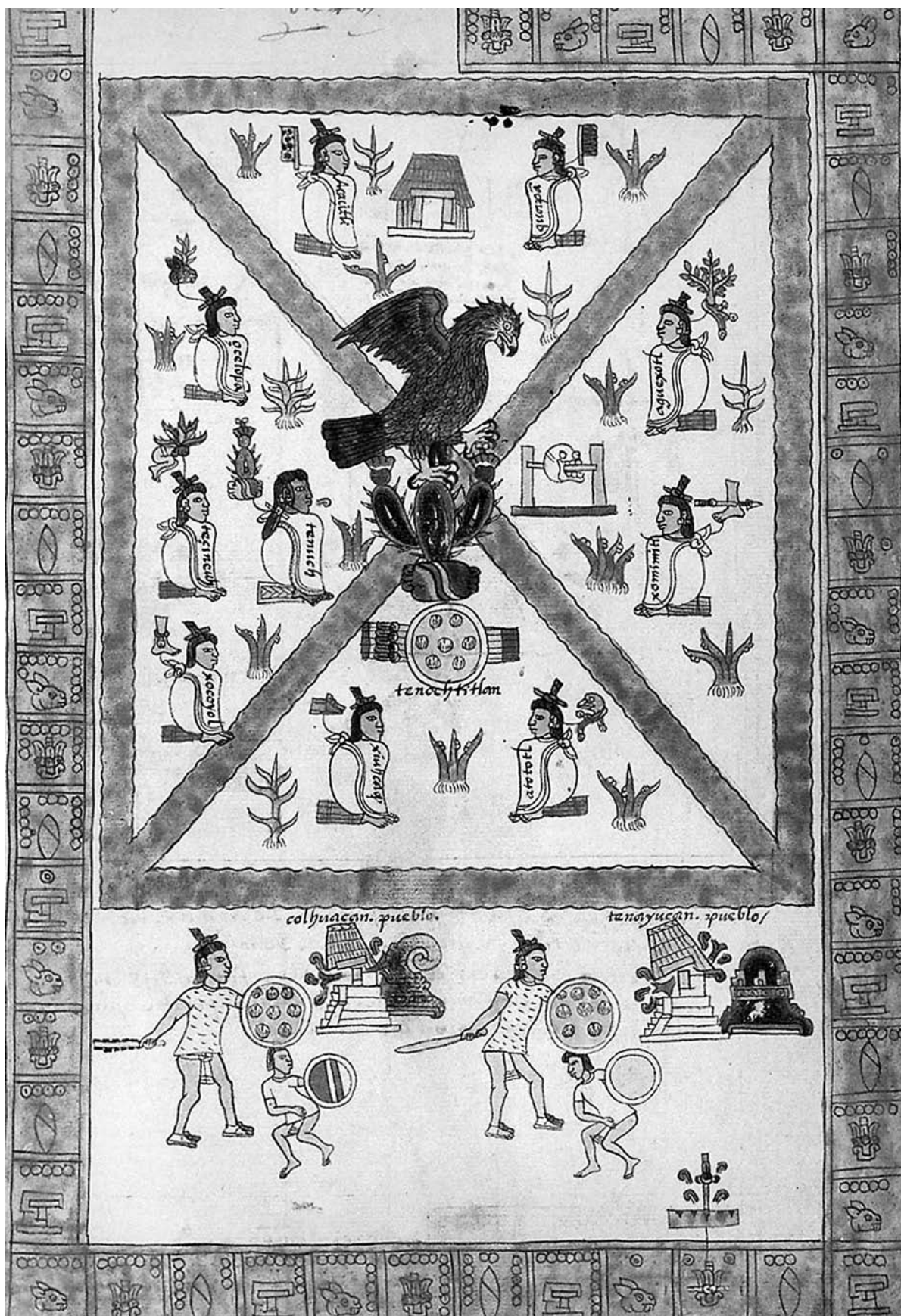


Figure 4. *Codex Mendoza*, folio 2r, The Founding of Tenochtitlan. Image courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS. Arch. Selden. A. 1.