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The Style of the Borgia Group of Mexican Pre-Conquest Manuscripts

The historian of art still faces in Pre-Conquest Mexican manuscript painting outstanding problems of dating and of attributing the works of art to specific places of origin. In most instances the pedigree cannot be traced beyond a first recorded sixteenth or even seventeenth century account of the appearance of the manuscript in Europe. We can make general statements saying they are Pre-Hispanic and, for instance, allocate Codex Dresden to the Maya or Codex Nuttall to the Mixtecs. Others such as the Codex Borgia, although accepted as Pre-Hispanic, still elude a convincing association with even such a broad location for their provenience. However, such an attribution can be arrived at by considering their position in Pre-Hispanic Mexico and by relating them to other works of art done in similar styles.

George C. Valliant established the intellectual framework still used to describe the civilization of Mexico at the time of the Spanish Conquest of 1521 and the immediately preceding period, calling this late phase the "Mixteca-Puebla" culture.¹ For our purposes, the important traits of this Mixteca-Puebla culture were a complex pantheon and religious rites, the tonalpohualli or ritual calendar, the use of a 52-year cycle, and a system of pictorial "writing" or mnemonic notation. Vaillant considered the Mixteca-Puebla culture as including those parts of Oaxaca occupied by the Mixtec-speaking Indians, the present-day State of Puebla including Cholula, and Tlaxcala including Tizatlán. He imagined its influence as spreading far beyond the borders of the area outlined, however, and it thus encompassed speakers of Náhuatl other than those of Tlaxcala and Puebla, for it also included the Aztecs of Mexico-Tenochtitlán, present-day Mexico City, in the Central Valley of Mexico. Vaillant's Mixteca-Puebla culture can be compared with the intellectual, political, technological and artistic upheaval of the Renaissance and the Mixtecs and Aztecs as similar to the Italian and North European manifestations of this key change of direction given to European culture from the fifteenth century on. ^{In a recent publication} Philip Dark has ~~referred to~~ called this period in the State of Oaxaca the "Mixtec Pictorial Horizon," ^{a phrase first proposed by George Kubler.}²

Traditionally the lands of the Mixtec-speaking Indians were divided into three parts. The Pacific Coast region, called the Flat Land or the Land of Maize, had as its principal city, Tututepec, ruling over a large domain. The Lower Mixteca, called the Hot Land, was seemingly of less importance. The Upper Mixteca, the heartland, was called the Venerable or the Esteemed Land. It had a series of important cities such as Coixtlahuaca and Tlaxiaco and others looming large in the content of the history manuscripts: ^{Texupan} ~~Doncepec~~, Teozacoalco, and Tilantongo.³ The Upper Mixteca consisted of small city-states in high intramontane valleys alternately linked by alliances or divided by war until conquered by the Mexicans. Our knowledge that this part of the Mixteca was of most significance in their culture and art derives from several sources: their own traditions as preserved in their pictorial history manuscripts; outside observations recorded in sixteenth-century and later written accounts; and archaeological discoveries made in the area.⁴

The series of Pre-Conquest pictorial history manuscripts has been firmly linked with the Upper Mixteca by Dr. Alfonso Caso.⁷ They preserve to us a complex and detailed account of Mixtec marriages, warfare, and religious practices. The number of examples assumed to be either Pre-Conquest or in a Pre-Conquest style is impressive but not large.⁸ The historical tradition continued into the Colonial period, and we have a total of nearly sixty according to Howard Cline, one of the small group of scholars currently studying them.⁷ Caso in his key study of the history manuscripts showed that codices Nuttall (plate 1), Vienna, Selden, Bodley, Colombino, and Becker I and II all make reference to complex dynastic successions and refer to the kings of Tilantongo and Teozacoalco. In his recent interpretation and translation of the Codex Bodley he says that in Codex Nuttall the lineage of the city of Texupan is probably also important.⁸ There is a difference of style among these manuscripts, however, that has not been studied adequately as yet. At some time in the future it may be possible on the basis of the monumental studies of Caso to relate individual styles to their places of origin. One may also be able to link them through the surviving Colonial history manuscripts now being studied intensively by Caso as well as Howard Cline and Ross Parmenter.

The history manuscripts being small in scale and finely worked are parallel to other examples of Mixtec art that have come down to us. The Mixtecs seem to have been excellent lapidaries working in jade and rock crystal.⁹ Bernal notes that 48 or so of the 50 odd Pre-Hispanic small-scale mosaics that come to us with a provenience are from the Mixtec region.¹⁰ Caso has discovered delicately carved bones and cast-gold ornaments of a virtuosity level of execution in the Mixtec tombs of Monte Albán.¹¹ It is interesting to note on the other hand that the Mixtec sites so far studied show little evidence of monumental sculpture or of the feeling for great planned cities that we find in Teotihuacán or Monte Albán.¹² It is possible that future archaeology in the Mixtec area will bring now buried examples to light, since Mixtec archaeology has really only begun, but on the basis of what is now known, we can say the Mixtecs worked in the small and the finely wrought rather than in the large and monumental.

Codex Borgia is the main document of the religious manuscripts known as the "Borgia Group" and conforms to this general statement of the nature of Mixtec Art, for it too is small in scale and finely wrought (plates 3, 5 and 8).¹³ The Borgia Group includes codices Borgia, Vaticanus B, Cospì, Laud and Fejérváry-Mayer. Mexican Manuscript Number 20 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, also known as the *Culte Rendu à Tonatiuh*, is sometimes included.¹⁴ Their reason for being grouped together under the rubric "Borgia Group" seems to be merely that they are all ritual manuscripts, although the content is not exactly the same in all. Codices Borgia and Vaticanus B are linked by striking similarities of content demonstrated by Seler in his commentaries on them.¹⁵ They both begin with a tonalamatl or table of the names of the days of the native ritual year using a format found in no other pictorial source.¹⁶ In subsequent pages the tonalamatl appears closer to the form known to us in the manuscripts from the territories of Náhuatl speakers.¹⁷ Codices Laud, Cospì and Fejérváry-Mayer remain apart because of divergences in content from the other two (some passages are so obscure that even Seler, the great scholar of the material was baffled¹⁸) and because of a distinct style. The *Culte Rendu à Tonatiuh* is also different, since it is only a single large panel with a single scene rather than being a complete book of several chapters as the others are.

The Codex Borgia is a strip of animal hide (probably deer skin) made up of 14 separate pieces giving a total length of 10.34 meters and folded into 39 leaves each 26,5 x 27 centimeters.¹⁹ The smaller but related Codex Vaticanus B is composed of 10 pieces of hide with a total length of 7.35 meters, folded into 49 leaves, each 12 to 13 x 15 centimeters.²⁰ A comparison of page 9 of Codex Nuttall (plate 1)²¹ with page 21 of Codex Borgia (plate 3) and page 19 of Codex Vaticanus B (plate 4) shows the essential differences and similarities of their styles. The figures of the Vatican Codex, more coarsely done, are not so well adjusted to the areas within their frames as those of Codex Nuttall and Codex Borgia. Feet in the Nuttall and Borgia codices are drawn in profile, while the artist of the Vatican manuscript has drawn them in a more clumsy manner as though they were seen from above and at an angle. Borgia fingernails are delicate; the Nuttall and Vaticanus ones are square and blunt. The Borgia and Nuttall masters, using a projecting large nose and receding chin, create a head of greater distinction and angular precision. The Borgia page is a succession of angular and precise patterns deriving from iconographic requirements. The Nuttall page is equally angular and precise in obedience to the demands of its historical content, while the Vatican page with its lesser degree of precision makes the religious iconographic materials less clear and less well organized into a unified over-all pattern. All three, however, can be subsumed under the term "conceptual" so far as artistic style is concerned.²² The human figure is drawn as a series of parts - head, torso, arms, legs - united in additive fashion as though the design started with the head and the other parts of the body were added as quasi-independent units. The temples of codices Nuttall and Vaticanus B are similarly composed in a unitary fashion; the pyramids are in side elevation, but the staircase is a combination of elevation and side view. The temples proper are in elevation, but the support of their lintels on the side of the bird and the advancing figure have been elided so that they may make their offering uninterrupted by the wall of the temple.

The style of all three manuscripts is essentially one of a frame line with the areas defined by this line painted in flat washes, giving no illusion of three-dimensional form or light and shade. The Borgia codex uses delicate linear patterns over these areas of color as enrichments to a far greater extent than either Nuttall or the Vatican manuscript. All three manuscripts are essentially two-dimensional and seem to avoid as much as possible representing extensions back or forward into space. Representation of three-dimensional space is avoided too by the lack of either a ground line or horizon line. The Nuttall and Borgia manuscripts come nearest to implying one by the precision with which the feet are drawn, but the confusion of frame line and sandals of the Vatican manuscript is just that, a confusion, not a proper ground line. When one compares the Codex Borgia and its style to a Mixtec history manuscript such as Codex Nuttall, the similarities are thus striking.

The Codex Borgia and its somewhat less-refined companion, Codex Vaticanus B come from an undetermined place within what Vaillant called the Mixteca-Puebla culture area, although in a little-read footnote he classified the Borgia and Vatican codices as Mixtec within his larger Mixteca-Puebla culture²³ and contrasted them with the Aztec codices Telleriano-Remensis and Borbonicus. Earlier classifications made before his Mixteca-Puebla concept was published are of less significance, and all classifications made since Caso's work establishing the history manuscripts as Mixtec are more important than those made before it.²⁴ Barnet calls attention to the fact that Aztec culture, and therefore their manuscripts,

in the main dependent upon the Mixtecs.²⁵ A recent synthetic study of Mexico by Frederick Peterson drawing upon Robert Barlow's knowledge in the area of manuscript studies says, "The Mixtec (sic) codices were divided into two groups: Borgia and Mixtec."²⁶ Franco in a recent article agrees with the Peterson and Bernal allocation of a preponderant role to the Mixtecs in Aztec civilization but goes somewhat too far, we think, in making Codex Borbonicus and the Tonalamatl of Aubin Mixtec along with the Borgia Group.²⁷ He points out that Covarrubias sought non-Mixtec traits in Aztec culture and found few.²⁸ Covarrubias himself was a strong proponent of what can be called a pan-Mixtec interpretation of late Pre-Spanish Mexico and attributed the ritual manuscripts to the Mixtecs.²⁹

The most important voice in any question concerning Mixtec manuscripts is of course that of Dr. Caso, and his attribution is not to the Mixtecs but rather what he calls "poblano-tlaxcalteca."³⁰ The basis of his attribution is three-fold: the ritual manuscripts are linked to the polychrome pottery of Cholula, near Tlaxcala; the figure of Tezcatlipoca from the painted altar found at Tizatlán, Tlaxcala, (plate 6) is similar to the same god in the ritual manuscripts (plates 3-5); and finally, this same god, so important in the manuscripts with religious content, is almost entirely lacking in the Mixtec history manuscripts.³¹

Nicholson has recently proposed "cholulteca" to denominate the Borgia style.³² He did not give a detailed explanation or concrete evidence but seems to rely upon the similarity of the manuscripts to Cholula polychrome wares (type not specified) and the fact that Cholula was a great emporium and religious center. We discuss the Cholula ceramics below. A possible definition of the Mesoamerican religious and political center as a concept is here in order. Cholula is like Rome during the Renaissance, a focus of pilgrimages from a widespread hinterland, yet Rome's main artists came from Florence, Perugia and other smaller towns in Italy. Rome itself produced few. Paris in the last century is an example of the political capital drawing upon a wide hinterland for artists, being in itself remarkably unproductive but acting as catalyst upon artists from other parts of both France and Europe. We propose a parallel of Rome to Cholula and Paris to Mexico-Tenochtitlán as possible frameworks within which to place the problem of Mexican manuscript painting.

The ceramics of Cholula are among the richest of Pre-Hispanic Mexico.³³ The polychrome wares have been studied extensively by Noguera, who treats them under several distinct rubrics, although they are sometimes carelessly lumped together as Cholula polychrome wares. His "policroma firme," for instance, with its emphasis upon the linear patterns of the painter's brush and the use of parallel lines to condition areas of color in painterly fashion, is not so close to the manuscript³⁴ style as what Noguera calls "policroma laca," sometimes referred to as "tipo códice." This codex-type pottery uses a style of painting almost identical to that of the manuscripts. Flat areas of color are applied with remarkable precision; none of the patterns due to brushwork found on most other Mexican pottery are to be seen.³⁵ The style uses a vocabulary of iconographic forms so close to the manuscripts that a relationship is inescapable on both formal as well as iconographic grounds.

The reattribution of the manuscripts to the more northern area and removing them from the Mixtec area runs counter to Vaillant and to other earlier writers. It results in breaking up a unity composed of Mixtec histories and Mixtec religious manuscripts, which is in many ways a logical one, and would associate them with parts of Mexico where less sophisticated and less refined styles dominate.

There are several possible explanations for the confusion that surrounds the study of ritual manuscripts. More recent work has been done on the history manuscripts on the basis of a firm knowledge of where they came from.³⁶ The ritual manuscripts, studied earlier in the century from the point of view of iconography and the religion of the area that Vaillant later called Mixteca-Puebla, have been treated in a somewhat indirect manner. The main pictorial information on native religion from the Pre-Hispanic period is in these manuscripts. However, the main sources preserved to us from the sixteenth century when knowledge of the religion was recorded either as a straight text or as glosses on a pictorial manuscript in European writing are not from the Mixtec area but from the Náhuatl-speaking areas of Mexico. There is thus a tendency to interpret the Borgia Group from the point of view of early Colonial writers describing the religion of an area to the north of the Mixteca.³⁷

Still another explanation lies in the fact that to understand the history manuscripts, their content by its very nature must be located in a more or less specific place as well as in a specific span of time; that is the stuff out of which history is made. The religious manuscripts, on the other hand, describe something of a much less specific nature both in terms of time (religion notoriously changes slowly) and of geography. One can assume, as Mexicanists since Selser have, that there was a great unity of theology in the Mixteca-Puebla period. It is thus not so necessary for the understanding of the religious manuscripts to know where they came from nor when they were made. They do not record unique events taking place in time and space; rather they recount the ever-reoccurring cycles of religious ritual, events that repeat over and over again at various places but presumably at the same time in the ritual year.

One effect of this difference between history and ritual manuscripts is that the data of history, being a series of unique events, do not repeat themselves and thus need to be specified in terms of persons, activity, place, and time. The history manuscripts record this kind of data for the history of the Mixtec area from the seventh to the late sixteenth century or even into the seventeenth century when the history tradition dies out. Codex Bodley, for instance, records dated historical events from 692 A.D. to 1466 A.D., covering a span of 774 years on a strip of skin only slightly over 21 feet long, painted on both sides.³⁸ One of the characteristics of the history manuscripts is this concentration of information, and it dominates the dense, compressed layout of their pages. The religious manuscripts, on the other hand, order their materials in a more open and graphic format to help the reader follow its complexity, similar to the difference between a page from Toynbee and a page from the Roman Missal or Book of Common Prayer. This distinct organization of materials creates a difference in the gross appearance of the manuscripts sufficient to support another attribution of style for each type were only this aspect of pictorial style to be taken into account.

The fresco paintings of Tizatlán (plate 6) are of more value in locating the Codex Borgia from the point of view of iconography than from that of artistic style, for the iconographic similarities are unquestionable. Tezcatlipoca was a trickster god known from Toltec Tula by literary sources and an important figure in the tonalamatl of both the Náhuatl and Borgia manuscripts. His name means "He of the Smoking Mirror," because his lost foot was replaced by a smoking mirror.³⁹

Tezcatlipoca in the Borgia manuscript and in the altar of Tizatlán exhibits significant style differences. The Borgia figures of the god (plates 3 and 5) show the more consistent and successful use of linear patterns to enrich areas of color applied within the outlines of the figures. This is apparent in such details as the feathers of the headdress, weapons, even feet and sandals. In details such as the ear plugs the superior readability of the Borgia forms is immediately clear. The Tizatlán artist, by drawing the mouth closed and omitting the teeth shown by the Borgia master changes the whole expression of the face from one of determination to one approaching the "archaic smile." This difference is further reinforced by the rectangular shape of the eye and lowness of the headdress. By raising the knee bands too high he has created an area of confusion where the Borgia artist makes the articulation of the two parts of the leg quite clear. These differences indicate the Tizatlán figure as being derivative in the face of the more completely understood and detailed manuscript model; surely the Borgia figure has the assurance of an original work.

The Cholula pottery implied as evidence for a Cholula or "cholulteca" attribution would be more convincing if we knew more about the source of the policroma laca wares of Cholula. Surely the resemblance to manuscript painting is there and unmistakable. Noguera, the main authority on the Cholula pottery, however, admits that it is difficult to tell Cholula laca ware from Mixtec laca ware (plate 2).⁴⁰ In this he is borne out by Paddock currently working in the field.⁴¹ Noguera furthermore seems to favor Cholula as the place of origin but admits that it may have been introduced from the Mixtec area.⁴² The Mixtec pottery which can usually be distinguished from Cholula pottery is equally similar to the manuscripts in its designs. Association of the manuscripts with the pottery then can be used for either a Cholula or a Mixtec attribution. It is only by a study, not made as yet, of the details of the Mixtec and Cholula iconographic vocabularies and a minute comparison with the studies by Seler of the iconography of the Codex Borgia that results could be obtained which would be useful in this investigation. It is very possible that even such a detailed study would not give a conclusive answer. On the basis of information now available to us we can dismiss the pottery as a clue to provenience; it would work for both attributions and thus is not valid for either at the exclusion of the other.

Fresco paintings, unlike manuscripts, are not easily moveable, although fresco artists like manuscript artists can migrate, taking their styles with them. The degree of sureness that we can apply to a fresco painting in this investigation, then, is greater than that to be had from those moveable objects such as pottery, carved bones, cast gold, or mosaics. We have demonstrated that the Tizatlán fresco is of questionable value in locating the Borgia manuscript; we propose those of Mitla instead. There is agreement that the frescoes of Mitla, on the opposite border of the Mixtec area, are Mixtec. Seler published versions of them which can still be checked against the remains to demonstrate the accuracy of his publication.⁴³ They differ from the manuscript painting in that they are red and white rather than using all the colors of the native palette, although this may be only underpainting, the overpainting having been of more fugitive colors.⁴⁴ They are similar in that they have a religious subject matter, which Seler has analyzed in detail, pointing out similarities between the murals and the Borgia manuscript itself. He finds in our illustration of the Mitla frescoes (plate 7), for instance, that Fragment 1 shows "the death god ... whose face is painted like that of Tezcatlipoca, and who wears the stone knife as an ear plug and throws a lance with one hand."⁴⁵ In Fragments 6 to 9 he sees variants on the form of Quetzalcóatl as

war and hunting deities. Fragment 10 is a similar series of variants upon the theme of the sun god. The content of the Mitla murals thus is like the Codex Borgia - religious. The forms are comparable to the Borgia manuscript as well.

To look at what remains of the Mitla frescoes is to see a manuscript design transferred to the wall and painted as though it were hung as a decorative frieze. The figures are finely drawn with the linear quality of Codex Borgia rather than the more painterly quality of the Tizatlán frescoes. Large areas of the design are elaborated with linear patterns in details such as feathers or fur and costume, while double outlines are commonly used throughout. The world of forms is thus composed of the flat areas of the general Mixteca-Puebla conceptual style with the added delicate and linear patterned enrichment of the Codex Borgia.

One feels the absence of Tezcatlipoca, god of chance among the peoples of the Mixteca-Puebla culture, from the history manuscripts may very well be the result of one of his attributes - chance. An argument from an absence can always be answered by considering the missing trait might very well have appeared in manuscripts not preserved to us. Another factor of importance is that the main bulk of material in the history manuscripts concerns people who once lived and acted; religious material is essentially extraneous or at most an addendum to the secular world of human beings. That one of the gods is not represented in such circumstances is not at all unlikely. In the list of names tabled by Caso in the recent edition of the Codex Bodley as few as five names of gods appear as the names of people.⁴⁶ The Mixtec pantheon of the people represented in Codex Bodley was certainly larger than this small listing would imply. Tezcatlipoca was one of the important gods of the tonalamatl as we know it from a wide variety of sources. The Mixtecs are assumed to use the tonalamatl also; therefore, Tezcatlipoca's absence from the history manuscripts is not an indication that the Mixtecs did not know him but merely that he does not appear often in the history manuscripts.

The negative evidence from the absence of a trait, however, can be used in another context to throw light on the Borgia Group and its relation to the Náhuatl-speaking areas in the north. The extant religious pictorial manuscripts and the written sources of our knowledge of the tonalamatl and the calendrics of native America are rich from the north.⁴⁷ These sources both pictorial and written, however, do not prepare us for the sophisticated elaboration and richness of the ritual content of the Borgia manuscript and its related Codex Vaticanus B. Seler had recourse to a "Venus Cycle" to interpret much of the content of our manuscripts, a Venus Cycle to which the Náhuatl sources make scant reference.⁴⁸ The difference between the religious content of Codex Borgia and Codex Telleriano-Remensis is such that they can logically be related in terms of a major work from the seat of the religious cult and a simplified, almost adulterated version from a provincial center; the same sort of relationship we imply for the Tizatlán frescoes and the Borgia manuscript.

Another point of similarity linking the Mixtec history manuscripts with the Borgia Group and also separating them from those coming from the area of Náhuatl speech is the fact that they are painted on animal skins. The tradition of manuscript painted on skins seems, on the basis of the Mixtec histories, to have been a Mixtec tradition which continued even into the Colonial period. For examples, we have the map from the Relación of Amoltepec from the group of Relaciones Geográficas of 1579-1581 and the Códex Gomez de Orozco, both from the

Mixtec area and both continuing the Mixtec tradition into the sixteenth century.⁴⁹ It is of interest to note that all of the Borgia Group are painted on skins, while even the earliest of the Aztec manuscripts are on native paper including the Plano en Papel de Maguey, Codex Borbonicus and the Matrícula de Tributos.

There is a growing tendency in Mexican studies to divorce such things as art styles and archaeological divisions from linguistic associations. In many cases this clarifies issues; in some it tends to blur edges. For instance, a Náhuatl word for book is amatl as in tonalamatl or Sun Book, and the Náhuatl word for paper is also amatl. The usage of the Náhuatl speakers is thus conveyed to us by the language and indicates that paper was the appropriate material for books among them, borne out by the fact that paper was used for the more natively-oriented books of the Colonial period. Colonial writers not only refer to paper, but the first books seen by the Spaniards at Cempoala on the Gulf Coast according to Bernal Díaz were of paper.⁵⁰ The use of skins seems to have been a more limited method of book production, and indications are that it was Mixtec.

The Náhuatl manuscript tradition in both Tlaxcala and Cholula has left no trace of being an important enough art in the Pre-Conquest period to have produced the Codex Borgia. The main manuscript from this region, the Lienzo of Tlaxcala, indicates in the versions that have come down to us an art style very heavily acculturated and far removed from the tradition of the Codex Borgia, especially considering that it is dated as early as ca. 1550.⁵¹ In this respect we propose the Tlaxcala-Cholula area as being in the same relation to the Mixtec area as Mexico-Tenochtitlán was to Texcoco; they were places where the manuscript tradition was newer and less important and thus more susceptible to influence from Spanish art than the cities with an older and more vital artistic tradition.⁵² It is interesting to note in this connection that Ixtlilxóchitl says:

"...there came from the provinces of the Mixtecs two nations [i.e., families] whom they called Tlailotlaques and Chimalpanecas...they were skilled in the art of painting and making histories...."⁵³

Manuscript painting came to Texcoco from the Mixteca; he does not mention Cholula or Tlaxcala.

Mixtec is the use of the interlocking "A" and "O" to indicate one of the calendrical dates refers to the year and not a day in the calendar or the name of a person. This is found in Codex Borgia (plate 8, page 71, left of center), the paintings of Mitla (plate 7, Fragment 4, upper right), and the history manuscript Codex Nuttall (plate 1, lower right corner). It also appears on pages 51 and 52 of Codex Borgia. This device for separating one of the important uses of the system of calendrical signs from the other usages is not known in the area of Náhuatl speakers during the Mixteca-Puebla period, although possible traces of it have been seen earlier at Teotihuacán and some Mayan sites. It is so common in the Mixtec manuscripts that it can be considered as one of the traits separating the Mixtec part of the Mixteca-Puebla culture from the other manifestations of this phase of Pre-Columbian culture.

In summary we can say that this demonstration has placed the locus of origin of the Codex Borgia in the Mixtec area along with the Mixtec histories. It seems also probable that since Borgia and Vaticanus B are so close in content that Vaticanus B also comes from the same area. This is another indication of the importance of the Mixtecs in the Mixteca-Puebla concept that Vaillant proposed and gives support to the idea that from the point of view of the art of late Pre-Conquest Mexico the Mixtecs were the source of the high art Cortes found in Mexico-Tenochtitlan when he visited that great metropolitan center. Mexico City drew upon its subject Mixtec city-states for artists and for artistic inspiration rather than exporting its artistic ideas and techniques to its southern provinces. Cholula was merely a station on the way.

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PLATE CAPTIONS

- Plate 1. Codex Nuttall, page 9 (London, British Museum)
- Plate 2. Mixtec policroma laca tripod from Nochistlan, Oaxaca (Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropologia)
- Plate 3. Codex Borgia, page 21 (Rome, Vatican Library)
- Plate 4. Codex Vaticanus B, page 19 (Rome, Vatican Library)
- Plate 5. Codex Borgia, page 17 (Rome, Vatican Library)
- Plate 6. "Tezcatlipoca," Altar of Tizatlan, Tlaxcala (after Caso)
- Plate 7. Mitla, Oaxaca, Palace 1, Painting Fragments 1-10 (after Seler)
- Plate 8. Codex Borgia, page 71 (Rome, Vatican Library)

FOOTNOTES

1. George Clapp Vaillant, Aztecs of Mexico: Origin, Rise and Fall of the Aztec Nation (Garden City, New York, 1947). Henry B. Nicholson, "The Mixteca-Puebla Concept in Mesoamerican Archeology: a Re-Examination," Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Philadelphia, September 1-9, 1956: Men and Cultures (Philadelphia, 1960), pp. 612-617. Research support for this paper came from a grant of the American Council of Learned Societies, which is gratefully acknowledged. I want also to thank John Glass for bibliographic help on the Borgia Group manuscripts and Professor R. M. Alford of the Newcomb College Art Department for making money available for complete kodachrome copies of several manuscripts from the Borgia Group.
2. Philip Dark, Speculations on the Course of Mixtec History Prior to the Conquest, Boletín de Estudios Oaxaqueños, Bulletin No. 10 (Oaxaca, November 15, 1958), p. 10, **based on conversations with George Kubler in 1957.**
3. Léon Diguet, "Contribution à l'étude géographique du Mexique précolombien: le Mixtécapan," Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris, new ser. 3, No. 1 (Paris, 1906), pp. 15-43, 1 map.
4. The Mixtec history manuscripts include codices Nuttall, Colombino (also Dorenberg), Selden, Bodley, Waecker-Götter or Egerton, Vienna, Becker I (also du Cacique), and Becker II. For later accounts see: Papeles de Nueva España, segunda serie: Geografía y estadística (Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, ed.; Madrid, 1905-1906), vol. 5; Fray Antonio de los Reyes, Arte en lengua mixteca (Mexico, 1593); Fray Francisco de Burgoa, Geográfica descripción de la parte septentrional del polo ártico de América (Publicaciones del Archivo General de la Nación, XXV-XXVI; 2 vols.; Mexico, 1934). For archaeology of the Mixteca see: Ignacio Bernal, Archeology of the Mixteca, Boletín de Estudios Oaxaqueños, Bulletin No. 7 (Oaxaca, June 1, 1958) and his "Exploraciones en Coixtlahuaca, Oaxaca," Revista mexicana de estudios antropológicos, X (Mexico, 1948-1949), pp. 5-76; Gabriel de Cicco and Donald Brockington, Reconocimiento arqueológico en el suroeste de Oaxaca (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Dirección de Monumentos Pre-Hispánicos, Informes 6; Mexico, 1956); Excavations at Yagul - I (Tom Swinson, ed.) Mesoamerican Notes, 4 (Mexico, 1955); Excavations in the Mixteca Alta (John Paddock, ed.), Mesoamerican Notes, 3 (Mexico, 1953); Eulalia Guzmán, "Exploración arqueológica en la Mixteca Alta," Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, V, 1 (Mexico, 1934), pp. 17-42; John Paddock, "Exploración en Yagul, Oaxaca," Revista mexicana de estudios antropológicos, 16 (Mexico, 1960), pp. 91-96. See also the following archaeological reports by Dr. Alfonso Caso, Las Exploraciones en Monte Albán, temporada 1931-1932 (Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia 7; Mexico, 1932); Exploraciones en Oaxaca, quinta y sexta temporadas 1936-1937 (Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia 34; Tacubaya, D.F., 1938); "Resumen del informe de las exploraciones en Oaxaca, durante la 7a y la 8a temporadas 1937-1938 y 1938-1939," Vigesimoséptimo congreso internacional de americanistas, actas de la primera sesión, celebrada en la ciudad de México en 1939, II (Mexico, 1947), pp. 159-187; and Caso and D. F. Rubín de la Borbolla, Exploraciones en Mitla, 1934-1935 (Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia 21; Mexico, 1936). For a recent synthesizing work see: Barbro Dahlgren de Jordan, La Mixteca, su cultura e historia prehispánicas (Cultura mexicana 11; Mexico, 1954).

5. Alfonso Caso, "El Mapa de Teozacoalco," Cuadernos americanos, XLVII, No. 5 (Sobretiro al XXIX Congreso internacional de Americanistas, New York, 1949; Mexico, 1949), pp. 3-40.
6. For the list of eight manuscripts see note 4 above.
7. Personal communication to the author.
8. Alfonso Caso, Interpretation of the Codex Bodley 2858 (boxed with facsimile in color; Mexico, Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología, 1960), p. 18.
9. Frederick A. Peterson, Ancient Mexico (New York, 1959), p. 276; Miguel Covarrubias, Indian Art of Mexico and Central America (New York, 1957), pp. 306-307.
10. Bernal, Archeology of the Mixteca, p. 8.
11. Caso, Las Exploraciones en Monte Albán.
12. See note 4 above.
13. Il manoscritto messicano Borgiano del Museo etnografico della S. Congregazione di Propaganda Fide; riprodotto in fotocromografia a spese di S. E. il Duca di Loubat a cura della Biblioteca Vaticana (Rome, 1898). Codex Borgia: Eine altmexikanische Bilderschrift der Bibliothek der Congregatio de Propaganda Fide Herausgegeben auf Kosten Seiner Excellenz des Herzogs von Loubat, erläutert von Dr. Eduard Seler (3 vols. in 1; Berlin, 1904-1909), hereinafter referred to as Seler Borgia Commentary.
14. Il manoscritto messicano Vaticano 3773; riprodotto in fotocromografia a spese di S. E. il duca di Loubat a cura della Biblioteca Vaticana (Rome, 1896) and Codex Vaticanus No. 3773 (Codex Vaticanus B): An Old Mexican Pictorial Manuscript in the Vatican Library Published at the Expense of His Excellency the Duke of Loubat, Elucidated by Dr. Eduard Seler (A. H. Keane, trans; Berlin and London, 1902-1903), hereinafter referred to as Seler Vaticanus B Commentary. Descripción del Códice Cospiano manuscrito pictórico de los antiguos Náhuas que se conserva en la Biblioteca de la Universidad de Bolonia reproducido en fotocromografía a expensas de S. E. el Duque de Loubat (Rome, 1898). Carlos Martínez Marín, Códice Laud, introducción, selección y notas (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Investigaciones 5; Mexico, 1961). Codex Fejérváry-Mayer: An Old Mexican Picture Manuscript in the Liverpool Free Public Museum, 12014/M, Published at the Expense of His Excellency the Duke of Loubat, Elucidated by Dr. Eduard Seler (A. H. Keane, trans.; Berlin and London, 1901-1902). Le Culte Rendu au Soleil (Tonatiuh) in Eugène Boban, Documents pour servir à l'histoire du Mexique (Paris, 1891), 1, pp. 329-348; Atlas, pl. 20.
15. Seler Borgia Commentary, p. 17; Seler Vaticanus B Commentary, p. 5.
16. A similar presentation of the tonalamatl appears at the beginning of Codex Cospi too but with the addition of an extra figure in each of the "boxes." See Seler Borgia Commentary, p. 17; Seler Vaticanus B Commentary, p. 5.
17. For pictorial documents see the Tonalamatl of Aubin, Codex Borbonicus, and the related codices Telleriano-Remensis and Ríos.

18. Codex Fejérváry-Mayer, pp. 74 and 209.
19. Walter Lehmann, "Les Peintures Mixtéco-Zapotèques et quelques documents apparentés," Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris, 2 (Paris, 1905), p. 251.
20. Ibid., p. 253.
21. Codex Nuttall: Facsimile of an Ancient Mexican Codex Belonging to Lord Zouche of Harynworth, England, with an Introduction by Zelia Nuttall (Cambridge, Mass., 1902).
22. Donald Robertson, Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period: The Metropolitan Schools (Yale Historical Publications, History of Art 12; New Haven, 1959), p. 23.
23. Vaillant, Chapter 9, note 14, p. 291.
24. For an early significant attempt at classification see Lehmann.
25. Bernal, Archeology of the Mixteca, pp. 8-9.
26. Peterson, p. 237.
27. José Luís Franco C., "La Escritura y los códices," Esplendor del México antiguo (Mexico, 1959), 1, pp. 361-378.
28. Ibid., p. 377.
29. Covarrubias, Chapter 9, "The Mixtecs," pp. 293-311.
30. Alfonso Caso, "Las Ruinas de Tizatán, Tlaxcala," Revista mexicana de estudios históricos, 1, No. 4 (Mexico, 1927), pp. 139-172, 4 plates showing frescoes restored. See also UNESCO, Mexico: Pre-Hispanic Paintings (Jacques Soustelle preface; Ignacio Bernal introduction; UNESCO World Art Series; New York, 1958), plates x and xi for colored photographs of the present state of the frescoes.
31. The bulk of Caso's demonstration is the iconographic study. His references to Cholula pottery in connection with the manuscripts are more en passant than Nicholson's (see next note). The pottery comparison is used more for understanding the iconography of the altars than in discussion of the manuscripts themselves; however, the relationship is strongly implied by the article.
32. Nicholson, "The Mixteca-Puebla Concept...." For a contrary opinion to the following explanation of the role of Cholula, see Henry B. Nicholson, "The Use of the Term 'Mixtec' in Mesoamerican Archaeology," American Antiquity, 26, No. 3, Pt. 1 (Salt Lake City, January, 1961), pp. 431-433.
33. Eduardo Noguera is the main student of Cholula ceramics, and his investigations are published in the following items: La Cerámica arqueológica de Cholula (Mexico, 1954); "Cerámica y estratigrafía," Esplendor del México antiguo (Mexico, 1959), 1, pp. 411-438; "Relaciones de Oaxaca con Puebla y Tlaxcala; culturas cholulteca, mixteca y zapoteca," Revista mexicana de estudios antropológicos, 16 (Mexico, 1960), pp. 129-135.
34. Noguera, La Cerámica arqueológica de Cholula; the polychrome wares are described on pages 120-142.

35. Ibid.; see illustrations passim.
36. See note 5 above.
37. See especially the works of Seler cited above.
38. Caso, Interpretation of the Codex Bodley 2858, pp. 79 and 81.
39. Alfonso Caso, La Religión de los Aztecas (Mexico, 1936), p. 20.
40. Noguera, La Cerámica arqueológica de Cholula, pp. 297 and 299; Noguera, "Relaciones de Oaxaca....," pp. 129-130.
41. Letter from Paddock to Robertson, July 24, 1961.
42. Noguera, "Cerámica y estratigrafía," p. 419.
43. Eduard Seler, "Wall Paintings of Mitla: A Mexican Picture Writing in Fresco," Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 28: Mexican and Central American Antiquities, Calendar Systems, and History (Washington, D.C., 1904), pp. 243-324, 3 plates of the frescoes.
44. Philip Dark with Joyce Plesters, "The Palimpsests of Codex Selden: Recent Attempts to Reveal the Covered Pictographs," Actas del XXXIII Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, San José, 20-27 julio, 1958 (San José, 1959), 2, pp. 530-539. The authors show the history manuscripts use a red under-painting, are then colored, and the original red lines gone over with black.
45. Seler, "Wall Paintings of Mitla....," p. 318.
46. Caso, Interpretation of the Codex Bodley 2858, pp. 79-84.
47. See Caso, La Religión; and Vaillant, Aztecs of Mexico, Chapters 10, "Religion," and 11, "Ritual."
48. Seler Borgia Commentary, 1, pp. 238-280, 327-336; 2, pp. 1-75, 136-157. Seler Vaticanus B Commentary, pp. 87-121, 195-203.
49. Donald Robertson, "The Relaciones Geográficas of Mexico," Actas del XXXIII Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, San José, 20-27 julio, 1958 (San José, 1959), 2, p. 544, fig. 3. Alfonso Caso, Interpretación del Códice Gómez de Orozco (Mexico, 1954).
50. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España por Bernal Díaz del Castillo, uno de sus conquistadores, única edición hecha según el código autógrafo (Genaro García, ed.; Mexico, 1904), 1, p. 126: "hallamos las casas de ydolos y sacrificaderos y sangre derramada, y Ensenjos y de piedras, Con que sacrificavan, y plumas de papagayos, y muchos libros de su papel, cogidos a dobleces, Como a manera de paños de Cast^a"
51. Charles Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century (New Haven, 1952), p. 165.
52. Robertson, Mexican Manuscript Painting...., pages 134, 143, and 196, discusses the Texcoco and Mexico-Tenochtitlán relationship.
53. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Historia chichimeca (Obras históricas, 2; Mexico, 1892), pp. 69-70: "...vinieron de las provincias de la Mixteca dos naciones que llamaban tlailotlaques y chimalpanecas...los cuales eran consumados en el arte de pintar y hacer historias...."