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CHAPTER 1

Ordering the "Indian" Archive

What threatens white people is often dismissed as myth.
I have never been true in America. America is a myth.

—Natalie Diaz, "The First Water is the Body," 2018

Thus they have come to tell it,
Thus they have come to record it in their narration,
And for us they have painted it in their codices,
The ancient men, the ancient women.
They were our grandfathers, our grandmothers,
Our great-grandfathers, great-grandmothers,
Our great-great grandfathers, our ancestors.
Their account was repeated,
They left it to us;
They bequeathed it forever
To us who live now,
To us who come down from them.
Never will it be lost, never will it be forgotten,
That which they came to do,
That which they came to record in their paintings:
Their renown, their history, their memory.

—Alvarado Tezozómoc with Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin,
Crónica Mexicayotl (c. 1600)

IN 1601, JUAN DE OÑATE Y SALAZAR, the conquistador and colonial governor of Santa Fe de Nuevo México, led an entrada (expedition of conquest) across the prairielands currently known as Kansas and Oklahoma.[1] Three years before, Oñate—whose wife was a direct descendant of both Hérnan Cortés and Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin—traveled northward from the Kingdom of New

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Spain, looking to make his fortune by finding a city as prosperous as México.[2] As early as 1529 another Spanish conquistador had learned—likely from the Nahua soldiers under his control—of seven northern cities where the cotton-clothed inhabitants were all rich in turquoise and gold.[3] In the 1540s, conquistador Francisco Vásquez de Coronado attempted to locate those cities; he voyaged as far as a river now called Arkansas. In the 1560s, another conquistador crossed what is currently the state of Chihuahua to continue the search, noting ruins of "casas grandes" (great houses) but no golden cities.[4] The impulse for these entradas likely grew stronger due to Nahua accounts of the Aztlán migrations and the seven caves of Chicomoztoc, locales the conquistadors sought under names including "Cíbola" and "Quivira."[5] Three decades later, by brutally crushing opposition in lands optimistically dubbed "New Mexico," Oñate's forces occupied regular outposts among the extensive pueblos (Indigenous villages), while the conquistador continued his search for gold. After ordering the siege and destruction at Acoma Pueblo—but before Spanish officials banished him for his cruelty—Oñate and his soldiers pushed east.[6]

Beyond the mountains, plateaus, and mesas of the Puebloans, and across the Llano Estacado and shortgrass prairies of Apachería, Oñate's forces eventually came to a "Gran Población" (large settlement) called Etzanoa, located at the confluence of rivers now called the Arkansas and Walnut in what is currently Kansas. Oñate's forces raided a nearby rival settlement; there he abducted a "Quiviran" man of Kitikiti'sh (Witchita) heritage, who was afterward sent to New Spain for questioning.[7] In Mexico City, Spanish authorities instructed "Mjguel Yndio" to draw a map of his homelands and to calculate distances between towns and landmarks.[8] Communicating with kernels of dried corn and a form of Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL), the captive complied. He drew lines for roads and rivers, "some of them winding and others straight," signified pueblos with shapes resembling Wichita council circles, and he placed the great Etzanoa at the center.[9] But Miguel's map confused his Spanish interrogators. The map was not a territorial survey as expected but instead a depiction of relationships between different council houses, with Mexico City placed in relation to Miguel's birthplace and the rest of the world he knew. He had been expected, however, to provide directions to the Seven Cities of Gold.

Not only did Miguel's map indicate no golden cities, but it made no sense to the Spanish interrogators, with their European conventions of time and space. Nonetheless, they included the *Mapa diseñado por Miguel* in their report about Oñate's genocidal acts against the Pueblo peoples, Miguel's handiwork retained almost as an afterthought rather than as documentation of Indigenous

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history.[10] More interested in gold and souls than Plains history and cartography, the Spanish officials misinterpreted the map in 1602 and their archival heirs would continue to do so for centuries. Over the years, settlers came to believe that Miguel's homelands were empty grasslands "plagued" by violent migratory peoples and lacking in the signs of "civilization" denoted by permanent structures such as those in Mexico and Peru. When the United States took the Great Plains in the nineteenth century, and Miguel's Wichita and Caddoan relations were chased from their homes—bison, gardens, and lives destroyed—their history was dismissed as the insignificant legends of wandering "wild Indians."[11] Almost four centuries would go by before Miguel's knowledge would outweigh settler perceptions of the area as terra nullius (empty land), although his map had made clear—even if the settlers could not understand—that the Plains were far from "empty."

Recently, using the resources of PISL and Indigenous cartography, retranslated Spanish documents, and remote sensing technology, US archaeologists followed Miguel's map to a site, likely Etzanoa, that was once a twenty-thousand-person metropolitan area near current Arkansas City, Kansas. The scholars date the city to the middle of the last millennia—roughly the same period as Tenochtitlan—about six hundred years before the present. One account explained that the findings "would make Etzanoa the second-largest prehistoric settlement ever found in North America after Cahokia," located across the Mississippi from St. Louis.[12] Almost overnight, "rural Kansas" transformed from a "fly-over" location littered with arrowheads and potsherds into an important site of World Heritage.[13] "Everything we thought we knew" about Plains antiquity, summarized the lead archaeologist in 2018, "turns out to be wrong."[14]

While Miguel's map may have reordered history for Kansans, the update changed little in the daily lives of Wichita and Affiliated Tribes members, who warily watched the activity in their homelands from two hundred miles away at their tribal headquarters in Anadarko, Oklahoma. While settler Kansans boasted about a grand past no longer just "a vast empty space populated by nomadic tribes following buffalo herds" and looked forward to increased tourism, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes' Cultural Program planner Gary McAdams, quite modestly, hoped his "ancestors may finally receive their due for the accomplishments of the great civilization they were able to establish in the present state of Kansas during the 14th and 15th centuries."[15] McAdams's careful optimism was tempered by the fact that, for hundreds of years, settlers have ignored the past that Kitikiti'sh people have always known, even when it was documented in their own settler archives.

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The story of Miguel's map is not only about archaeological success, the joy of archival recovery, or the affirmation of traditional Kitikiti'sh history: it also tells of the epistemological and material consequences of an archival structure of settlement in which *what* counts as a source, *where* it is located, *who* interprets those sources, and *how* they do so have profound, intergenerational effects on real human lives. It demonstrates a history in which Indigenous knowledge—even when fixed into settler forms (the dictated map)—was rendered unbelievable or invalid until confirmed by settler scholarship.[16] That Miguel's reinterpreted map and its archaeological outcomes have suddenly repopulated the distant-era Plains also shows the power of Indigenous-authored texts to transform not only the dominant narratives of the past but also the circumstances—epistemological, political, economic—of the present. How many similar stories are contained by the settler archive?

This and the following chapter examine key "Indian" archives built by criollos and creoles in the mid-to late-eighteenth-century Spanish and British worlds, collections created at a time when competing Atlantic powers were looking to expand and consolidate their bases of colonial knowledge. Just as Crown officials had hoped to access and transform Miguel's knowledge into a literal treasure map, eighteenth-century criollos and creoles worked to compile and transform Indigenous knowledge into settler forms, eventually weaponizing that knowledge by making it into evidence of American—not Indigenous—"antiquity," their idea of the time before Europeans invaded the "New World." Recent scholarship has focused on the roles of Indigenous and Spanish or criollo agents in assembling what has variously been termed the "creole" or "criollo archive," the "cacique-criollo archive," and the "annals of Native America."[17] The focus of the current chapter is on the "Indian" archive, that is to say, the compilation of past-related materials that came to constitute—for eighteenth-century settlers in New Spain—"Indian" rather than European history. In both this chapter and the next, I suggest that the "Indian" archive's structure of settlement was defined by a misappropriation of serial migration histories and a preoccupation with creating settler connections to the land.

This chapter shows the importance that Spanish officials and clerics—as well as Nahua individuals and communities—placed on narratives of origin, migration, and home when selecting and creating archival materials. Indeed, the first step in the process of weaponizing American antiquity was the identification of certain Indigenous "monuments"—a flexible term—as records of history, and as items worthy of inclusion in their "Indian" (as opposed to Indigenous) archive. Europeans and Americans amassed Indigenous-produced items of all

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kinds—including documents such as Miguel's map—into this "Indian" archive, and from these they also began to write their own "Indian" histories. Early colonial histories, which regularly included references to Azteca pasts and were often composed in conversation with Nahua collaborators, provided the frameworks into which later criollo historians would archive and interpret American antiquity. For example, Franciscan missionary Toribio de Benavente (called Motolinía) identified a series of ancient peoples supposed to have migrated to Central Mexico before the Mexicas—including the "barbarian" Chichimecas—in his *Historia de los indios de la Nueva España* (1565).[18] Similarly, Jesuit missionary José de Acosta noted in his *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590) that the Chichimecas were the "ancient and first residents of the province we call Nueva España," explaining that subsequent settlers had issued from a "very remote land to the north, where a kingdom that has been called Nuevo México was recently discovered." This included one province called "Aztlan, meaning Place of Herons, [and] the other Teuculhuacan, meaning Land of Those Having Divine Grandfathers."[19] This context of migration was important to Miguel's map as well as so many other monuments included in the "Indian" archive. If the first step is compilation, then the second step in transforming Indigenous knowledge into American "antiquity" was the fixing of Indigenous sources into European-style chronological migration histories, stories of sequential replacement that ultimately aided settlers' inter-imperial struggles.

The present chapter centers on what is arguably the most influential archive of Indigenous knowledges assembled in the eighteenth century: the "Museo Histórico Indiano" (Indian Historical Museum) of Milanese lawyer Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci. His enormous collection would be referenced by most of the eighteenth century's succeeding scholars.[20] Now frequently called the foremost scholar of colonial Indigenous documents, Boturini had initially sought to compile an altogether different kind of archive during in his voyage to New Spain, one that would document the Moctezuma family encomienda (colonial land and labor grant) and help recover lapsed income.[21] The present chapter also examines how Boturini's composite "Indian" archive was used by later historians, especially by the exiled Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero, to create American—neither "Indian" nor Indigenous—history.

Unlike Clavijero's writings, Boturini's "Indian" archive is inflected with what historian Danna Levin Rojo has called an "Indian imaginary," meaning that its contents maintain Indigenous experiences and conceptualizations of the past and present in addition to settler colonial ones.[22] This is due, in part, to the fact that the early Spanish settlers looked to their Nahua students and congregants

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to learn how to place American antiquity within their universal Christian cosmology: much of Boturini's collection comes directly out of these interactions. Moreover, given that the repossession of encomienda lands provided this structure for the collection, it is no wonder that Boturini's museum was used in the service of imperial—and then criollo—land claims. The "Indian" archive's structure of settlement—both Mexica and Spanish—adheres in both Boturini's Museo as well as in the historical narratives that issued from it, such as Clavijero's, revealing the archive's enduring dispossessive power in New Spain and its afterlives of dispossession elsewhere.[23]

Settling the Hispanic Civitas

The main structure of Indigenous communities in pre-invasion central Mexico was the altepetl (pl. altepeme). This spatial arrangement, glossed by historian James Lockhart as a "territorial metaphor," both references a sovereign polity (city-state) of bounded territory as well as an ethnic community.[24] When the Spanish arrived in the Mexica capital of Tenochtitlan in 1519, they witnessed the height of the "Triple Alliance" or "Aztec Empire," the political union of the altepeme Texcoco, Tlacopan, and Tenochtitlan, dominated by the latter.[25] The vast capital was laid out according to Mexica spatial and social principles; the new architectural and epistemic ideals that Cortés and his Spanish entourage brought with them—in which cities were arranged orthogonally to promote good moral and civic order—became the rule after 1521, however, when the victorious conquistador ordered a gridded colonial city built atop the Mexica site.[26] The earliest Spanish settlers were made encomendados by the Crown, which awarded them encomiendas (land grants) along with the unlimited labor of the Indigenous populations there. At this time, the new cabecera (head town) and cacicazgo (Indigenous leadership) systems still resembled the altepetl in terms of land distribution, leadership, and the rotation of public duties.[27] Although the encomienda system was largely phased out in the mid-sixteenth century, Indigenous laborers were still required to work for "public benefit" and paid small wages.[28] All across the lands they called New Spain, the Spanish forced Indigenous peoples and spaces into similar colonial structures.

With these changes came a strenuous civic and social separation of Spanish and Indigenous worlds known as the "república de españoles" and "república de indios."[29] The Law of the Indies' codified system of spatial segregation resulted in different trazas (zones) for Spanish and Indigenous residents, different parishes, and different legal and financial structures, among other things. For

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example, Indigenous residents of Mexico City were not allowed to live in the central Spanish traza, which was fortified and separated from the Indigenous neighborhoods by a canal and ditch.[30] By the late sixteenth century, formerly separate pueblos (Indigenous towns) across New Spain were resettled into reducciones (congregations); new cities for the congregations were arranged in grids, with "left-over" lands parceled out to other Indigenous or castas (mixed-race) families.[31] This system targeted Indigenous spatial and indentity practices by condensing Indigenous communities and relocating them elsewhere, resulting in mixed-ethnicity pueblos.[32] Especially in the seventeenth century, congregations were relocated into the rural cities that had been established next to presidios (forts) or mission towns.[33] Forcing Indigenous peoples into condensed "urban" settlements was meant to bring the otherwise "barbarous" subjects to "reason" through physical reconfiguration. Indeed, the Hispanic model of civitas, which worked according to a deterministic logic wherein "indios bárbaros" (barbarous or noncooperative Indigenous subjects) became "indios de razón" (civilized or Hispanicized), was supposed to be the best way to control the spirituality, labor, reproduction, health, and tribute of the Crown's new Indigenous subjects.[34]

Not only did this system of spatial control change Indigenous peoples' relationships to their homes and home communities, it also altered patterns of land use and land occupancy, thereby likewise changing the environment and creating a new "emptiness" across landscapes where that had previously not been the case. Moreover, it meant that conquistadors like Coronado and Oñate or even mendicant Franciscan priests imagined the Indigenous present as having declined from an urban and "civilized" past as represented by places like Tenochtitlan and Quivira into a nomadic, "barbarous" one.[35] Despite the fact that European incursions into Native homelands had created the conditions of "barbarism"—wars, abductions, expulsions, and campaigns of annihilation—America's Indigenous peoples were often designated as "barbarians," a term that was also relative to a group's allegedly "nomadic" (as opposed to "settled" or "civilized") lifestyle.[36]

Spanish spatial practices were not only about territorial acquisition: they were also meant to divest Indigenous peoples from their specific identities and sovereignties. This process of dispossession was assisted, intellectually, by the labeling of some Indigenous groups as "civilized"—and potential Spanish subjects—whereas others became barbarous enemies of the state to be "pacified" or annihilated. Scholars Alfredo López Austín and Leonardo López Luján point out that sixteenth-century Spanish documents frequently used the term "Chichimeca" for peoples from lands to the northwest of the Mexico Valley—areas

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locally referred to as "Chicimecapan, Teotlalpan, Mictlampa, or Tlacochcalco"—and by extension Spanish colonists employed it as a pejorative catchall synonymous with "bárbaros" (barbarian) rather than as an ethnically specific term.[37] Although all "unpacified" Native groups were designated as "indios bárbaros"—and the peoples to whom it and "Chichimeca" referred changed according to currents of continental trade and war—terming those lands in the north "Grand Chichimeca" by drawing from Nahua migration histories both followed the idea of Hispanic civitas and indexes the particular political and historiographical battles of the first two hundred years of colonization.

Because the Triple Alliance had been led by Nahuatl-speakers—which the Spanish-allied Tlaxcalans were as well—the settlers spatially "civilized" these groups first. While so doing, they also assumed some Nahua biases, such as the presumption that Nahuatl-speaking peoples were superior to "Otomí" (meaning generically Oto-Pamean-speaking) and Maya groups. As a result, non-Nahua pupils were largely excluded from the early colonial educational structure.[38] For this reason, most of the documentation settlers initially collected related to the lives of "civilized" Nahuas from the Valley of Mexico.[39] These Indigenous groups largely became known to the settlers as "indios de razón"; this was in contrast to the "uneducated" others, usually located outside central Mexico.

Unlike the indios de razón—mainly central Mexico Nahuas—whose "progress" toward Hispanicization supported the success of New Spain (especially in the frontier colonies), Chichimecas or bárbaros were seen as a threat to the Catholic kingdom. When Spain invaded the northern areas often referred to as "el Gran Chichimeco"—present-day Sinaloa, Sonora, Durango, and Chihuahua—it sent "pacified" central Mexico groups (e.g., Hñähñus) as well as indios de razón as frontline fighters and colonists.[40] Those groups who resisted Spanish rule—especially those in the north like the Yoeme (Yaqui), Yoreme (Mayo), Akimel O'odham (Pima), and Ndé (Apache)—were all referred to as indios bárbaros, a term that indexed their "enemy" status.

The forced processes of relocation and resettlement furthermore echoed, in Spanish and criollo ears, the migration stories they were learning from Indigenous scribes and nobles. Spanish and criollo scholars learned from marveling at the glories of Tenochtitlan that the Nahuas' "Chichimeca" ancestors had eventually became "civilized," confirming the processes of conversion and declension[41] These migration histories helped settlers to distinguish the "civilized" from the "barbarous," and it was easy enough to describe the process of Hispanicization as parallel to the Nahuatl-ization of the Chichimecas: that is to say, Indigenous sources were made to speak to Spanish concepts of civility and

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barbarism, which were recoded as predictions of Hispanicized indios de razón defeating or converting the "wild" indios bárbaros who refused to live according to Spanish models.[42] While this solidified the promise of transformation, it also reified the contemporary hierarchy of "civilized" over "savage" groups, thereby giving cover to the ever-expanding ambition of settlers who, by the sixteenth century, had already pushed far into northern and southern lands filled with resistant "enemies."

Compiling the Nahua Archive

Before the sixteenth-century European invasion, Mexica tlacuiloque (artist-scribes, s. tlacuilo) recorded aspects of their solar and sacred calendars, their annals, and other civic records on paper, cloth, and vellum.[43] The tlacuiloque who made and elites who used these manuscripts did not separate out "calendrical" from "historical" or "devotional" genres but instead employed their own conceptual categories for recording and performing knowledge.[44] After the invasion, however, the Spanish named the documents by material and generic form, using terms such as tira (cloth strip), lienzo (canvas), codex (if considered book-like), or mapa (any Indigenous-made manuscript).[45] Although many Indigenous documents were recognizable to Europeans as "Bookes," they were also perceived as potentially dangerous because intrinsically related to non-Christian religions.[46] Thus alongside the wooden and stone carvings they identified as "idols," sixteenth-century Spanish agents destroyed most documents of paper and animal hide; those few spared were largely sent to Europe as curiosities. Because the Spanish invasion began on the Gulf coast but was centralized in the Valley of Mexico and on the southern plateau, the cultural monuments in those communities that the Spanish invaders encountered first—largely Maya, Mexica, Ñuudzahui (Mixtec), and Hnãhñu (Otomí)—suffered heavily. In fact, only a few Maya and Ñuudzahui documents made before the invasion still exist; no Mexica ones do.[47]

Because Indigenous cosmologies do not operate in ways familiar to settlers, correlating Mexica timekeeping systems with European ones became a specific concern of the scholars interested in documents of Indigenous history and religion. Manuscript calendars—tlapohualli (meaning both count and story)—were of particular interest to Atlantic scholars because of their own efforts to establish a universal chronology, although the documents were also eyed with suspicion for their supposed connection to Indigenous religions.[48] Often these were round documents inscribed with days and years—and which appeared to

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resemble Greco-Roman zodiac charts and medieval wheels of fortune—called calendáricas, calendarios, or sometimes ruedas (wheels) by the Spanish.[49] One of the first "wheels"—in actuality more of a square—seen in Europe appeared in the mid-sixteenth-century *Codex Mendoza*, a written compilation that also included Mexica tribute records and annals, which English antiquary Samuel Purchas reprinted in 1624 with the explanation that seeing the "weeke of yeares after the Mexican computation" made it easier to understand the "Mexican historie[s] in pictures."[50] Atlantic scholars were especially attentive to two temporal concepts: the fifty-two year xiuhtlapohualiztli ("half-century" bundle) and the longer cycle of ages.[51] In his *Historia natural* (1590), for example, José de Acosta wrote that the "New Fire ceremony" celebrated the turn of the tlapohualli (wheel count and story) and ended the cosmic fifty-two year cycle, noting that the "wheel" itself was an expression of the Indigenous "cleverness and skill" that enabled their knowledge of antiquity.[52] Settlers like Acosta, however, largely saw the tlapohualli only as counting devices or "cuentas" enabling accounts of "their antiquities," but not as documents integrated with other genres and uses. In fact, many of the calendarios collected by Europeans and criollos were cosmic account books inherently related to other topological, embodied, and inscribed sources, including "quotidian" texts like genealogies, land documents, and civil transactions.[53] Indeed, Mexica tlapohualli—often but not always in wheel-shaped forms—did not keep time (or history) on their own but were instead part of a multimodal, performance-based system for maintaining knowledge of the past.[54]

The Mexica world, writes historian Camilla Townsend, was "a shifting, constantly altering world, one in which Mexica peoples had to work to keep balance."[55] This movement is reflected in the cyclical intertwining of the 365-day solar year and 260-day sacred year that form the xiuhtlapohualiztli or fifty-two year "bundle."[56] Each individual year within the xiuhtlapohualiztli is named with a combination of the "trecenas" (thirteen-day cycles) of the tonallapohualiztli (ritual year) and the four "year-signs," Tochtli, Acatl, Tecpatl, and Calli (Rabbit, Reed, Flint, and House).[57] These years all work in tandem with the ceremonial cycles of the eighteen vientenas, the twenty-day cycles or "months" of the cempohuallapohualli (solar year). Although each date within the "bundle" is unique, regardless of their position on the calendar, all dates with the same names—day names, vientena names, or year names—are connected to dates of previous and future eras.[58] The overall sense is one of mobility, and Mexica experts relied on "books" and "wheels" to guide their understanding of the cosmos and keep it in balance with proper observances; i.e., the position of celebrations depended on what the tonalamatl (book of feasts) or xiuhámatl (book of years)

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advised. Understanding the outlines of Mexica temporality provides a better sense of the dispossession inherent in the misappropriation "calendar wheels."[59]

Prior to invasion, youths from the nobility were trained to become scribes and leaders at specialized calmecac academies. Afterward, when Spanish missionaries established colleges and seminaries as part of evangelization, they drew from the pool of calmecac pupils, meaning that the missionaries largely interacted with Nahuatl-speaking (Nahua) students of noble Mexica, Acolhua, Tepaneca, and Talaxcalteca descent. At the Franciscan Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco—founded in 1533—multilingual students from Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco translated Spanish texts for Indigenous audiences and taught Nahuatl to the faculty, their efforts enabling the friars to compile vocabulary lists and grammars as well as extensive information on Nahua lifeways.[60] Most of the resulting Franciscan texts were bilingual and often tri-scriptural; that is, scribes and interpreters frequently translated iconic script into alphabetic words—in Nahuatl and Spanish—on the same page.[61]

Even after Spanish schools replaced the Indigenous ones, Nahua pupils continued to train as tlacuiloque, becoming skilled in writing both iconic and alphabetic Nahuatl.[62] Thus Indigenous scholars of the sixteenth century and beyond retained their representational practices and continued to make historical records—albeit ones reinterpreted for the new colonial situation—during the Spanish occupation.[63] Moreover, some of the destroyed documents were remade. Indeed, Indigenous intellectuals produced and compiled records—including genealogies and land records—both on their own and in collaboration with Spanish settlers, and these writings helped in some ways to mitigate the transformation of Indigenous identities in the early colonial period. These multicultural Nahua scholars thus became the intermediaries between the Spanish and greater Indigenous worlds.[64] Indigenous intellectuals who spoke Spanish, were baptized with Spanish first names, and adopted Spanish dress—indios de razón—frequently sought to maintain their leadership status within the new colonial hierarchy by becoming caciques (Indigenous governors) of the separate Indigenous pueblos and cabeceras and even produced new documents to ensure their position within the colonial system.[65] Some of these sixteenth-century bilingual documents remained at the Spanish colleges and seminaries where they had been produced. Others, like the *Oztotipac Map* of Texcoco, were legal documents and were therefore kept in the court files.[66] Still others were given as gifts or accepted in lieu of payment.[67]

During the first century of Spanish rule, Nahua and mestizo leaders commissioned "dynastic genealogies, histories, and maps, for themselves as well as

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for the Spaniards."[68] These were iconic and alphabetic, and sometimes, both. For example, during the sixteenth century Mexica noble Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc and Tlaxcalan mestizo Diego Muñoz Camargo produced important alphabetic histories, such as the document now called the *Crónica mexicayotl*.[69] In the next generation of scholars was the Tenocha-Tetzcocatl mestizo historian Fernando de Alva Cortés Ixtlilxóchitl, who was commissioned by the Spanish Viceroy to write local histories and who collected and authored an array of documents to do so.[70] One of these became known as the *Relación histórica de la nación tulteca* (c. 1600), written about a people to whom Ixtlilxóchitl traced his own descent. His contemporary, Chalco noble Domingo Francisco de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin, maintained a diary, annals, and first-person testimonies in alphabetic Nahuatl as well as a version of *Historia de las Indias y conquista de México* (1552) by the Spanish chronicler Francisco López de Gómara.[71] These and other Indigenous elites were the hands behind the sixteenth-and seventeenth-century Indigenous documents that later ended up in criollo libraries and museums.

Assembling the Altepetl Archive from the Ground Up

One effect of the spatial practices of encomienda and reducción was a proliferation of land-claim records in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as Indigenous pueblos sought relief through the courts.[72] Under the two republics system, caciques, nobles, and entire pueblos adopted the legal tools of the "Indian Courts" in a "pragmatic response to dispossession and disempowerment."[73] Early lawsuits often had to do with patrimony and inheritance and, not infrequently, one Indigenous claimant opposed another. Sometimes claimants came from different ethnic groups, and sometimes pueblo sued pueblo, the latter suits tending to revolve around disputed land or communal labor rights.[74] This "indigenous juris-practice"—as historian Yanna Yannakakis calls it—frequently incorporated traditional practices including the use of oral testimony and iconic documents as evidence.[75]

Many of the genealogies and títulos de tierras (land documents) submitted in these legal proceedings had been created to secure the Indigenous elite's hold on community leadership and the administration of pueblo lands, roles they had adopted to succeed within the colonial order.[76] Nahua nobles frequently made their claims on the basis of título primordial, that is, possession held since time immemorial as recognized by the larger community. The term "título primordial" (primordial title) itself implies a claim that has always existed, and indeed

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claimants often attempted to demonstrate their lineage and patrimonial holdings dated to the beginning of time. From this example, other claimants also learned that the most successful land suits were those that traced landholdings by descent (in the case of nobles) or altepetl (in the case of pueblos) and included documentary evidence.[77] Indigenous documents, including primordial titles and geneologies, frequently narrated how an altepetl came to be, which is to say, how particular communities came into their identity and became embedded in their place.

Traditionally, land records were written in iconic script, compiled with reference to oral tradition and the affirmation of the huehuetque (elders) or groups of respected citizens. Individual possession and inheritance were guaranteed by oral histories and also recorded in ink.[78] Colonial officials often confirmed possession by consulting community members and iconic records.[79] They tended to trust the latter, at least in the sixteenth century, because they were written iconically—not alphabetically—and therefore assumed to have been made without clerical oversight.[80] Crown authorities also believed—incorrectly—that iconic documents were the least "Hispanicized" and therefore most ancient. Paradoxically, the same iconic Indigenous texts used in colonial courts could also be seen as signs of failed or unfinished conversion, suggesting barbarism, apostasy, and even sedition.

Historian Ethelia Ruiz Medrano has shown that scribes in pueblos throughout the colonial period frequently copied or remade historical documents to support land-holding rights and sovereignty claims.[81] Indeed, the practice of making colonial titles for court sparked an iconic revival, as scribes sought to evoke the earlier iconic writing style and thereby index the authenticity of pre-invasion documents strategically set in a primordial, indefinite past."[82] Into the later part of the sixteenth century, many of the iconic texts would contain multilingual or multiscript glosses. The colonial archive is filled with documents used to settle lawsuits, including genealogies, tribute documents, and property descriptions, some of which even included explicit calculations, measurements, and boundary delineations.[83] These forensic documents went through the institutionalized steps of production, translation, and notarization, only to be stored in colonial court records offices, private hands, and pueblo archives.[84] These were also the kinds of documents eventually held in Boturini's museum.[85]

After a conspiracy in the 1560s and a failed rebellion led by the grandson of Motecuhzoma Xocoyoltzin in 1576, Philip II prohibited all "superstitious"—that is to say, Indigenous—texts in the viceroyalty.[86] Spanish authorities considered them anti-Catholic and, therefore, seditious. For their own safety, the

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Indigenous scribes and historians drew hard generic lines between the "mythic" past of origin stories—narratives that Spanish authorities might consider "diabolical"—and the "historic" past documented by land transactions. Indigenous scribes and historians also maintained their histories by adopting forms that the Spanish more readily identified as secular: migration histories, tribute rolls, and historical relaciones.[87] Calendar "wheels" and land-related mapas—some of the most interesting records in Spanish eyes—were also seemingly safely secular.[88]

Late-sixteenth-century prohibitions and adaptations—alongside changes to the Indian courts, the renewed power of the Inquisition and, especially, a series of devastating epidemics that significantly limited the number of trained tlacuiloque and nahuatlatos (interpreters)—created a scarcity of new iconic documents after the sixteenth century. According to literary historian Anna More, these documents were increasingly regarded as esoteric after this period.[89] Yet in the face of strengthened anti-Indigenous regulations in the late seventeenth century, select criollo scholars—like Carlos de Sigüenza y Gongora and Augustín de Vetancurt—still continued to collect and write about Indigenous history.[90] This next generation saw the "calendars," in particular, as important astronomical texts and evidence of important scientific accomplishment on the part of the Mexica, evidencing extremely detailed understandings of time and the heavens. The criollo antiquary Sigüenza was so interested in the question of Indigenous time and astronomy that he dedicated an entire work to the calculations of the "Mexican calendar."[91] In his unpublished *Ciclografía Mexicana* (c. 1680s), Sigüenza described the process by which he determined European dates for Indigenous historical events by observing astronomical occurrences—comets and eclipses—and using these to correlate the timekeeping systems. In this way he not only provided a European-style chronology for Indigenous histories, he also gained insight into the workings of Mexica calendrics.[92] *Ciclografía* is an example of criollo scholars' interests in Indigenous history, astronomy, and timekeeping, as is Sigüenza's voluminous library of Indigenous documents.[93] Sigüenza, who died in 1700, willed his massive archive to the Jesuit Colegio Máximo de San Pedro y San Pablo in Mexico City, where his collection remained unseen for decades.[94]

Aside from those willing to risk the Inquisition, only a limited number of scholars in New Spain would consult the sixteenth-and seventeenth-century Indigenous materials again—the títulos, genealogies, histories, etc.—before the middle of the eighteenth century. By then, most settlers regarded Indigenous documents, in their alleged rarity, as antiquarian curiosities rather than reliable historical records. Yet after the Neapolitan traveler Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri—to whom Sigüenza showed Indigenous documents during his visit to

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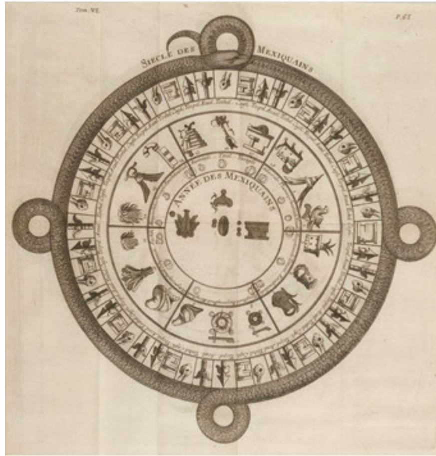

FIGURE 5. Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri, "Siècle des Mexiquains," *Voyage du tour du monde*, t. 6 (1719). Courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

New Spain in the 1690s—included an approximation of Sigüenza's calendario or "Mexican Century" in the sixth volume of his *Giro del Mondo* (1699), this would change.[95] Published first in Naples then London (1704) and Paris (1719), Gemelli's "Mexican Century" marked an important moment of European engagement with Indigenous time and heralded the beginning of concentrated criollo attention not just to Mexica calendrics but also to the "Mexican" history preserved in similar "monuments."

Making Paper Monuments into an Archive of the Antique Past

Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci, a lawyer from Milan—a Duchy then ruled by Spain—originally traveled to New Spain in 1736 to collect lapsed payments for a descendant of Motecuhzoma and to evangelize with the monies he recouped.[96] While in New Spain, however, Boturini became intrigued by the adoration of the Virgin of Guadalupe and began to research its origins and champion its wider adoption. Within his first year he was also compiling documentation in support of another project: writing a new history of America "founded on the indisputable Monuments of the very Indians."[97] His identification of Indigenous records as "monuments" implied that they were "pieces or types of histories that have come down from the ancients about past events," valuable for their ability to recall the past.[98] In the place of more conventional comparative philological, legal, or religious methods, he "found no other light, no other calm, no other

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FIGURE 6. *Codex Boturini* (c. 1530), detail. Courtesy of El Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), Mexico. Detail shown is from the beginning "episode," in which the Nahua ancestor paddles from Aztlán to Colhuacan in year 1 Flint.

port than in the histories of the Indians themselves."[99] Boturini's pledge to address the question of Indigenous origins "according to the same monuments of the Indians that they left us in their histories" reveals an almost heretical admiration and preference for Indigenous texts, a sentiment shared by few of his contemporaries.[100]

Mapas comprised the bulk of what Boturini believed to be "the histories of the Indians themselves." Yet to most European and many criollo eyes, mapas were nonsensical and far removed from the useable documents required to write proper histories: an early Spanish dictionary even defined the term as "anything outlandish and bizarre in its [out]line."[101] "Mapa," a word used by Europeans for all nonalphabetic manuscripts, is an extension of "map" or "chart" in the European cartographic sense, but it was deployed whether or not the documents in question were cartographic (indeed, cartographic "maps" are only one particular kind of nonalphabetic mapa).[102] The majority were made by anonymous scribes, elders, and other community record-keepers. These included annals, landholding records, songs, and property petitions as well as "mapas genealógicos" and "mapas geográficos."[103] One that appeared to be a combination of the latter was the *Tira de la Peregrinación* (also known as the *Codex Boturini*), which depicted Mexica origins over twenty-three pages of carefully delineated sequential "episodes." Boturini described it as a "pictorial document on Indian paper with folds like those of a piece of cloth" when "stretched out like a strip," and it contained tribute and geographical as well as cosmic information.[104] Other

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important records of Mexica migration accounts such as the *Mapa Sigüenza* and *Codex Azcatitlan*—which Gemelli likewise reproduced—also served to establish genealogies, identities, and sometimes tributary rights.[105]

Boturini collected "calendars" as well—although he was not restricted to round ones—including the Tlaxcalan *Tonalamatl de Aubin,* a rendering of divinities and feast days that takes a screen-fold form.[106] Some mapas also seem to be largely prosaic records of daily life: for example, the *Códice del Tecpan de Santiago Tlatelolco*, c. 1580, is a proposal and sketch for a new tecpan (Indigenous government building or palace) in Mexico City, an ordinary administrative document, albeit with Nahuatl glosses and Nahua aesthetics.[107] Boturini's collection also included "maps" in the cartographic sense, such as the *Plano de Tenoxtitlan*, a partial map of Tenochtitlan made on amate paper c. 1565 that shows land parcels, chinampas (floating gardens), and canals as well as buildings and the identities of landholders in each calli or "house" plot.[108] Not merely about spatial organization, one side of the *Plano* depicts a lineage of tlatoque (rulers) from Itzcoatl (reign 1427–1440) to don Luis de Santa María Cipactzin (reign 1563–1565), showing the Mexica city's organization not only spatially but politically and ethnically as well.[109] If, as art historian Barbara Mundy has surmised, this document was produced to support Indigenous rulers' attempts to maintain their hold on tribute lands, the combination of land and dynastic information demonstrates the document's necessary multimodality.[110]

Textual evidence hints that Boturini knew the Mexica system of chronology to be inseparable from the way Mexica history was both understood *and* recorded, and suggests he had some sense of the mapas' mobility and multimodality.[111] Boturini also seems to have taken some of "their own concepts" to heart in dividing American time into three ages: "Divine," "Heroic," and "Human." Although he wrote of the similarity to the "Egyptian" and "Roman" divisions of time, the structure is also reminiscent of the cyclical Five Ages of the Five Suns.[112] He recognized the inseparability of the structure of ages from that of the histories—as well as the correspondence of "well-ordered chronology" to geography—even if this was masked by the conventionality of his generic organization, some of which reflected the protective measures of Indigenous scholars.[113] Subsequent criollos routinely missed the importance of the "calendar" to the very form of the Mexica past and violated the Mexica value of movement by attempting to locate absolute beginnings and endings rather than explicating an event's cosmic typology.

Boturini was not entirely iconoclastic. Like his predecessors, he retained a thoroughly Catholic understanding of the structure of universal history.[114]

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Accordingly, he identified and arranged the contents of his museum according to conventional European genres such as "Histories" and what he called "Kalendarios," even though this was a profound misunderstanding of the documents' interdependence and a misreading of how the texts were used in their social context. Misinterpretations on the part of future scholars, however, can partly be attributed to how Boturini arranged his museum—where the calendars were categorized separately as "Natural," "Civil," "Astronomical," and "Ritual"—which masked how they worked together. Boturini's catalog also specified categories as "European" or "Indian" separated out by ethnicity ("Mexican history," "Toltec history," "Chichimeca history," etc.). The "Indian" group was largely comprised of materials written by Nahua intellectuals such as Ixtlilxóchitl, Tezozómoc, Muñoz Camargo, Chimalpahin, and Cristóbal del Castillo and their elite origins meant that Boturini's museum privileged the pasts of their own ancestors (such as the Tolteca, Chichimeca, Tepaneca, Mexica, Tlatilulca) over other aspects of "Indian" history, lending Boturini's museum a decidedly pro-Nahua, indios de razón bias that later historians were unable to detect and would misappropriate as "Mexican."[115]

Some mapas were well traveled before coming into Boturini's hands. He described, for example, a "Chicimeca mapa" from Sigüenza that originated with Fernando de Alva Cortés Ixtlilxóchitl, who apparently had "used it to write the history of the same empire," his *Historia chichimeca*.[116] Boturini's critics, however, sneered at the fact that many were written on European-made paper, causing them to question whether they were even "ancient" or "indisputable monuments" at all.[117] But what mattered most to Boturini was the records' content, not necessarily their authenticity. Indeed, while Boturini did collect original documents, he also made copious copies—and helped himself to more than a few—of manuscripts in the Catholic libraries, particularly the Ixtlilxóchitl-Sigüenza collection at the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo.[118] Boturini's move away from European antiquarianism—which focused on debating the existence and legitimacy of Indigenous documents—toward an understanding of them as "monuments" and archival records in and of themselves signals the change in historiographical practice that his work made possible for later criollo historians.

Boturini's project was not merely one of recovery and reappraisal: it also instigated a vast epistemological shift in these documents' framing. Turning iconic accounts into interpretable alphabetic narratives relied on processes of sorting, arranging, and ordering, a fixing of Indigenous texts into European cosmological frameworks to enable authoritative interpretations.[119] These frameworks, in their prioritization of chronology and progressive linearity, tended to miss

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the Indigenous "cosmovision"—especially the importance of continual movement and multimodality—transforming the records into something other than what they were originally meant to be and do.[120] Nonetheless, it was through his Museo Histórico Indiano—and not only its collection—that Boturini made it possible for later historians to use Indigenous documents to construct new histories of the American past because he made these documents legible as interpretable sources.[121] Boturini's collection and his understanding of mapas as interpretable enabled one of the most important historiographic innovations of the period: the reevaluation of Indigenous documents as historical materials, a return to the way these documents had been seen by Europeans in the sixteenth century.

ALTHOUGH NOT CRIOLLO himself (but still a Spanish subject), Boturini engaged in two projects that became seen as the very essence of criollo patriotism: the championing of Guadalupe and the appreciation of Indigenous documents.[122] Madrid, however, saw Boturini's work as a challenge to the Crown's authority: he was imprisoned in 1743 and his property was impounded in Mexico City's Caja Real.[123] By the time he was arrested, Boturini had amassed 319 items for his collection. It included rare texts in Nahuatl and Spanish as well as the kinds of Indigenous documents already popular in Europe: maps, calendarios, and "*otros diferentes monumentos*."[124] At the insistence of the Crown, Boturini made an inventory of his collection—from memory—while in prison. The result became his *Catálogo del Museo histórico indiano del cavallero Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci*, appended to the outline of his projected fifteen-volume history of North America, *Idea de una nueva historia general de la América septentrional* (1746).[125] He hoped the descriptions of riches would persuade the king to return his valuable "Indian Historical Museum."[126] But the materials never were restored to Boturini, and his museum only ever existed again in printed form. It would be almost four decades before the usefulness of these documents registered with the Crown, at which point authorities in Madrid repeatedly requested Boturini's collection, still housed in Mexico City.[127]

Boturini stands as a liminal figure, neither fully operating according to colonial nor criollo archival practices. Yet his Museo Histórico Indiano demonstrates a crucial initial stage in criollo historical thinking: it shows an understanding that, with assiduous collecting and interpretive efforts, the historical information held by Indigenous "monuments" could become knowable to non-Indigenous experts.[128] Thanks to his *Catálogo*, successive historians on both sides of the Atlantic would possess concise descriptions of extant Indigenous texts; thanks to

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the confiscation, historians in Mexico City had an expanded archive of "Indian" records for reference. Boturini's work began a change in historical methodology that would influence a generation of criollo historians to come.

Mapping Meaning and Migrations across New Spain

During the 1730s, when the non-Indigenous population of New Spain was booming, the new Bourbon monarchy encouraged programs of privatization and Hispanicization, thereby increasing the pressure on hard-defended Indigenous lands. Concurrently, the viceregal government was shrinking communal holdings and dissolving or privatizing church assets (which often were Indigenous assets) in the name of modernization, placing additional financial stresses on Indigenous communities. The increasing pressure meant pueblos' more active reliance on historical documents—some of which had been made under similar conditions two centuries before—but these circumstances also meant that land-related documentation was no longer adequate to keep patrimonial lands and pueblos intact.[129] At this same time, a series of events prompted the mass movement of Indigenous populations from rural pueblos into the cities or, alternately, farther out beyond Spanish influence, leaving some settlements to seem "abandoned" or "empty," an effect long attributed to disease alone.[130] Modernization efforts and the previous century's reducciones as well as a series of droughts, epidemics, and other crises all challenged pueblo self-sufficiency and altered demographics across New Spain.

Pueblos faced particular pressure from settlers who wanted their lands and waterways for agriculture and mining; as cattle ranching became economically profitable and mines closer to the capital ran dry, settlers eagerly looked to seize lands in Sonora and northward. During the period lasting roughly 1700–1740, the Crown entered into a "pax colonial" with whichever northern Indigenous communities would provide miners and fighters for wars with the omnipresent indios bárbaros; it encouraged the founding of satellite communities across the contested frontier.[131] These Hispanicized Indigenous colonies were deliberately installed to serve as buffers against the broncos (wild ones) and the resulting "peace" afforded settlers increased ease of movement outside the capital. Moreover, Spanish (and Hispanicized Indigenous groups') encroachment into the "empty" interior lands extended the networks into and through which additional settlers could move.

Boturini obtained many of his materials as a direct result of travels through New Spain's countryside in the late 1730s and early 1740s. Indeed, when

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Boturini traversed the "extensive lands" of New Spain, caciques would allegedly show the "ancient pictures" to him during his visits, as he reported they did at Huejotzingo.[132] Some offered them as gifts or for sale. Boturini later boasted of his ability to obtain such documents, explaining in 1746 that there were still "many more by Indians" available for collection.[133] Given this timing, it is highly likely that many of the records Boturini acquired were originals or copies of documents already used (or never used) to defend patrimonial landholdings or pueblo status. The mapas about land and genealogy by far outnumbered calendars or other kinds of iconic documents Boturini held. In fact, in his attempt to convince the authorities to return his collection, Boturini had underscored its value to the empire by recalling that his mapas had once been used to settle land claims. It is "on a genuine understanding of the said pictorial documents, [that] many acts of possession and property and frequent verdicts depend," he insisted on the final page of *Idea*.[134] His very collection was the result of Indigenous dispossession and Indigenous efforts to stop it, its very structure defined by the project of settlement.

Unlike his successors, Boturini had visited the sites where many of these texts originated—witnessing the context of dispossession that provided the archival structure of settlement—which also gave him a specific appreciation of the Nahua conceptions of space and time as they related to interpretation. In his later outline, Boturini would provide a prolonged explanation of the counting, naming, and cycling of Mexica time because he found it so crucial to understanding the monuments he collected.[135] Indeed, it was the "Indian solar cycle," Boturini insisted, that made Mexican history so "excellent," with its precise arrangement that reiterated the different ages (or Suns) of the past.[136] It was also during his years spent among Indigenous communities that Boturini learned that the documents themselves did not hold entire histories: they were only outlines to be filled by scribes and performers. But Boturini did not have access to those meanings, for knowing Nahuatl was not enough: whether or not he spoke or read Nahuatl, he would not have been able to "arrive at their true meaning" without Indigenous collaborators because he had not been trained in the scribal traditions as taught in the elite calmecac schools or, later, passed down in families.[137] Nonetheless, Boturini's experience had helped him learn how to read the documents somewhat, and he became certain of his own ability to translate them into European-style histories.[138]

The very first step in translating mapas was to transform iconic script into alphabetic words and Arabic numbers. At its simplest level, this meant identifying what the Nahuatl images *seemingly* looked liked to him—for example,

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a serpent, a hill, a headdress—and assigning an assumed Spanish equivalent. After tracking patterns through processes of collation and comparison, more complex meanings emerged: a feathered headdress in proximity to a human figure, for example, translated as "ruler" and not simply "headdress." For numbers and dates Boturini followed Sigüenza's chronological system, which depended on matching events from the "cartographic histories" with those appearing in the "calendars."[139] He similarly identified specific locations by translating altepetl names—often denoted by the calli (house sign) modified by a name-bearer sign—and matching indicated features to known geographies.[140] In this way, Boturini translated the mapas' imputed meanings into European chronological, cartographical, and narrative concepts.

Following the mapas, Boturini compiled an account of ancient American history. He explained that the documents relayed that the Nahua people were part of a series of migrants from the north who came into lands occupied by the Toltecs—the latter the first peoples to cross to the Americas from Asia and whose descendants retained memories of the Flood and Tower of Babel, which they commemorated by constructing the "famous hill" of Cholula.[141] The migrants had thereby left proof of the historical truth of their journey across the land.[142] The *Codex Boturini*, for example, shows "the departure of the Mexicans from the island of Aztlán and their arrival at the continent of New Spain, with the dwellings they constructed in each place, and their years signified with their characters, and at the end, the wars that they waged in the service of Cocoxtli, king of Culhuacan."[143] The mapas instructed Boturini to cross-reference and prioritize names, geographic features, and the built environment in his translation efforts.

According to Boturini, the Nahua people were part of a fourth wave of northern migrants into the lands first occupied by the Toltecs, who founded the powerful "empire of Tula" in the Toluca Valley. Based on his translations, Boturini believed most Toltecs had abandoned the valley after a great catastrophe.[144] After their demise, Boturini explained, only a few survivors stopped in central Mexico, while the rest continued to Guatemala and the Yucatán.[145] The second arrivals were the "Olmec and Xicalanco Indians," who initially settled near Puebla but according to Boturini later "abandoned the land [near Puebla], perhaps going to the kingdoms of Peru and the other windward islands."[146] The next were "the settled Chichimeca nations (as distinguished from the nomadic Chichimecas who nowadays live in the mountainous area and make continuous raids against peaceful Indians and Spaniards and eat the human flesh of their enemies)," who migrated because "there was no room in the ancestral territory because of its

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large numbers."[147] The "settled" Chichimeca leaders soon sent their children to learn "Toltec" ways, including how to "speak clearly" in Nahuatl, the Toltec language, after which they became Tolteca-Chichimecas.[148] After displacing Nahuatl-speaking "Toltecas" but learning their language and culture, all subsequent Chichimec groups in the Mexico Valley spoke Nahuatl.[149] The processes of migration, displacement, and language change differentiated the groups as they migrated: in Aztlán the Aztecas were originally chichimecoytl, "barbarian language-speaking" (as opposed to Nahuatl- or "clear language"-speaking).[150] Finally, while the Chichimeca prospered in the Toluca Valley and elsewhere, the Mexica, "another warlike and glory-seeking nation reached the lake of Chapultepec, which . . . would rule the others."[151] The entire narrative was based on dispossession and replacement through successive settlement cycles.

Boturini's wave theory of migration—Toltec, Olmec/Xicalanco, Chichimec, and last Mexica—reflected the importance that Nahua history placed on locating its Toltec-Chichimec ancestors in a direct lineage through language and the built environment, but it also related to the ethnic and linguistic differences he encountered on his travels.[152] That Boturini located Toltecs in the Yucatán and Guatemala (Maya homelands) and Olmecs/Xicalancas in the Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley (Tlaxcala, Mixtec, Zapotec, and others' homelands) indicates some level of sensitivity to the great diversity of peoples living within the lands nominally claimed by Spain in the eighteenth century. Moreover, his emphasis on the centrality of migration, displacement, and language change provides a longer, imperial history responsive to the acculturationist pressures of mid-eighteenth-century New Spanish expansionism by pointing northward and toward the violence inherent in Spanish searches for Mexica origins.

Locating Barbarians in the North

At the time Boturini was analyzing his documents, the viceroyalty was attempting to maintain its settlements in the "interior provinces" of Coahuila, Tejas, Sonora, Sinaloa, and Nuevo León against the indios bárbaros. Although these groups were a changing array of peoples affected by the larger currents of continental trade and war, their commonality was their opposition to the Spanish invasion and settlement in their homelands. Throughout the early eighteenth century, peoples such as the Akimel O'odham (Pima), Comcáac (Seri), Yoeme (Yaqui), Nʉmʉnʉʉ (Comanche), and Ndé (including Gileño, Mescalero, and Lipan Apache groups) repelled Spanish domination. Their resistance required the conscription of more and more "pacified"—allied Indigenous—fighters into

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the Crown's forces.[153] Indigenous groups who sued for peace were forced to relocate to the presidios, where they were surveilled and forced to labor and fight other Indigenous groups.[154] As the century advanced and more settlers moved to the north, the Spanish and allied fighters and the Indigenous peoples they designated as indios bárbaros increasingly came into conflict, triggering an even greater militarization of the northern lands.[155]

Boturini knew nothing of the northern lands or peoples in the place he believed to be Aztlán: across the Gulf of California near the Colorado River delta. This area included the O'odham homelands then also called Pimería Alta (currently Sonora and southern Arizona) and parts of Apachería and Pueblo lands then and now called New Mexico. The constant warring meant Boturini would not travel there, despite his clear interest, but that did not stop him from pursuing his Mexica history. Instead, Boturini relied on old Franciscan texts to supplement his narrative, including an unpublished manuscript, *Luz de tierra incognita de la América septentrional* (c. 1720)—written by a military captain who had been on northern entradas in the early 1700s—and diaries from the Jesuit father Eusebio Kino—who led an entrada in 1697—that documented his "discovery of the [source of the] Río Grande [Colorado River], adjacent to the Sea of California, and the peaceful state of the provinces of Pimería and Sonora."[156] Combining these Spanish records with what he had already learned of Mexica migrations from the mapas convinced Boturini that he could demonstrate a clear trajectory from Aztlán to "California," Sonora, and New Spain:

> In all the pictorial documents of the Mexican nation and others that accompany them, which I have in my archive, their first arrival is depicted at the town of *Culhuacan*, which means *the town of the serpent*, which is the first on the continent and is situated in front of the said California in perspective almost to the end of the peninsula itself, only separated from it by a branch of the South Sea. The Mexicans crossed this strait with other nations in boats. . .and that is how they depict it on their pictorial documents.[157]

Even though the migration narrative he wrote was one he allegedly read on the mapas, his framework for understanding it was necessarily triangulated through Christian and European cartographic and aesthetic epistemologies. That the calli for Culhuacán—which looks bent over on the *Codex Boturini,* perhaps like a snake—should more correctly translate to "place of those with ancestors" and not "town of the serpent" as he wrote reveals the limits of Boturini's Nahuatl and his knowledge of Nahua history (the town in question is now Culiacán, in Sinaloa).

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Nonetheless, Boturini's work enabled the study of Indigenous materials as evidence to argue for (or against) the relative civilizational status of descendant communities in the north.[158] The extreme emphasis on *some* Indigenous groups' alleged degrees of "civilization" or "barbarism"—the latter always portrayed as lawless cuthroats posing a threat to national peace and security—reveals the inextricability of the civilized/barbaric concept from the settler colonial project. Using the same civilized and barbaric binary, criollos continued to contrast "ancient" Mexicans—not in time but in supposedly "civilized" behavior—with the "uncivilized" foil of indios broncos from "the north."[159]

After France turned nominal control of "Louisiana" over to Spain in 1763, the Crown suddenly faced an even larger territory of bárbaros, including Wazhazhe (Osage) groups.[160] In 1776 Carlos III carved the northern frontier lands into a military-controlled semi-autonomous administrative jurisdiction answering directly to the Crown, the "Provincias Internas del Norte"; its new comandante-general Brigadier Teodoro de Croix spent four months in Mexico City examining documents relating to the north in the viceregal archives—including the "Indian" archival materials—in preparation for his mission.[161] His studies no doubt shaped his understanding of tribal differences and diplomatic alliances and likely led him to encourage war against Ndé (Apache) groups and coerce alliances with others.[162] For, by the second half of the eighteenth century, Spain considered Apaches "the most ferocious, vindictive, and irreconcilable" of all northern Indigenous groups, and they formed their policy accordingly.[163] No matter the new enemy, New Spain's answer to its "wild Indian problem" in the eighteenth century was military reinforcement of the presidial line, the violent repression of uprisings, cultural denegration, and "systematic extermination" of the alleged "barbarians."[164]

During this time of increasing Spanish-Indigenous conflict the Franciscan priest José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez wrote his *Tardes Americanas* (1778), which staged a dialogue between an "indio" and "español" to insist, via the splendor of the Indigenous past, on the importance of the social unity of European and "Indian" (that is to say, the composite and largely imaginary) populations to the colony's success.[165] *Tardes Americanas* referenced "various monuments" of "Historia Indiana"—including the writings of Ixtlilxóchitl and other seventeenth-century Mexicanists—and included illustrations of a calendar wheel and Mexica migration narrative, the latter contrasting sedentary "Tultecas" with nomadic "Chichimecas."[166] It is hard to miss the contrast of "barbarous" and "civilized" in this account of history or its lessons on the present importance of uniting criollos and indios through Hispanic "civilization," all enabled by Boturini's earlier work.

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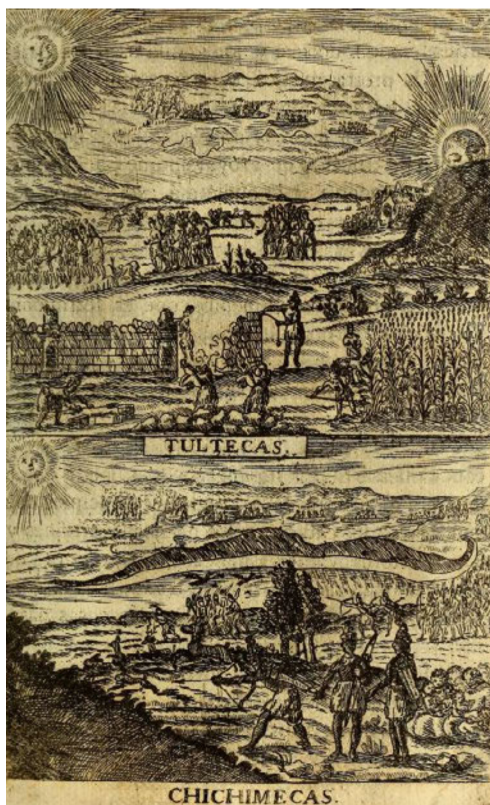

FIGURE 7. José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez, *Tardes Americanas* (1778), pl. 1. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.

The documentation available to Boturini in the middle of the century—as well as the increasing interest in documenting Mexican "civilization"—was directly connected to the barbarity-civilization binary, which itself was borne out of attempts to expand the lands and resources of the Spanish Empire, while shrinking the power of alternative configurations of territory such as the altepetl and Kónitsaahii gokíyaa (Apachería).[167] In compiling, documenting, and describing his museum, Boturini made available an archive not of Indigenous history but one of "Indian" history; that is, his archive is structured by the settler colonial struggles over land and sovereignty that led to the creation of a racialized "Indian" identity in New Spain. And by the time the Crown finally called up Boturini's collection—in the 1780s—violence was no longer the Viceroyalty's lone tool for seizing control of territory: thanks to Boturini's efforts in the 1740s, the new weapon was ancient American history.

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Transforming Indigenous Knowledges into Settler Forms

Throughout the centuries of colonial expansion, Spain held information about its colonies close.[168] It was Boturini's inventory and a few other eighteenth-century publications—mainly from Mexico City—that finally afforded the non-Spanish world a glimpse of ancient America. Using these, the Scottish historian William Robertson became one of the most important English-language disseminators of Indigenous texts.[169] His *History of America* (1777) drew not only from published accounts and European archives but also descriptions provided by Boturini. Although partial, Robertson's *History* set a standard for using Indigenous-authored materials in European accounts.[170] But, laden with anti-Spanish "Black Legend" tropes, the work unsurprisingly was received unfavorably in Madrid and Mexico City.[171]

In response, the Royal Geographer of the Indies Juan Bautista Muñoz y Ferrandis was tasked with writing a "historiographical defense of Spain and Spanish colonialism."[172] For his new American history, Muñoz asked to see all of Spain's related records. The results laid the basis for what became the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, which continues to serve as the central repository for historians of the Spanish Empire.[173] Muñoz's work spanned the 1780s and 1790s, and he admitted sparing "neither time nor pains, to amass, and digest all the materials that could possibly be collected."[174] When *Historia del Nuevo Mundo* (1793) appeared in English in 1797, Muñoz's translator predicted it would overtake Robertson's *History*, due to Muñoz's unparalleled "access to a vast number of documents and original papers, which lay buried in dust and oblivion, unknown to the Doctor [Robertson], or to anyone else, till our author called them into light and order."[175] Yet much like his rival Robertson, Muñoz also discounted the Indigenously-produced records, preferred Spanish authors, and did little to reclaim ancient America for Spain.[176]

The criollo historian Francisco Javier Clavijero, who lived in New Spain for the first half of his life, also intended to write a new history of America. In Mexico City he consulted the growing "Indian" archive, including Sigüenza's library, still housed at the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo. In 1759 Clavijero described its contents as "paintings, containing chiefly the penal laws of Mexicans."[177] He also viewed many of the materials amassed by Boturini which, still impounded, were then held at the Royal and Pontifical University in the viceregal palace.[178] Clavijero was expelled from the continent in 1767 along with his brother Jesuits, and he ended up in the Papal States surrounded by other exiled clerics from Spanish America.[179] Far from the subject matter he had studied for so long, Clavijero turned to Boturini's paper museum to continue his work.[180] Thirteen

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years later, Clavijero published a four-volume history of ancient Mexican history in Italian, *Storia antica del Messico* (1780).

Unsurprisingly, Clavijero's text drew Spain's instant condemnation, largely for its unauthorized, pro-Indigenous perspective. Like Robertson's *History*, it was banned across the empire, although by 1784 copies of *Storia antica del Messico* appeared in Mexico City. Three years later, an English translation was published in London.[181] There, reviewers portrayed Clavijero's work as a "necessary companion" to Robertson's and "the most correct and probable relation which has been published."[182] Robertson, however, critiqued Clavijero's *Storia* as derivative, claiming that it relied too much on the writings of Franciscan chronicler Fray Juan de Torquemada and Boturini's *Idea*.[183] Yet Robertson's assessment overlooked what Clavijero's text did *differently* from its predecessors: not only did this new narrative of ancient America rely on primary Indigenous sources, it also brought Spanish and Indigenous sources together in a way that gave voice to the latter in explicitly patriotic criollo tones.

Not only had this criollo historian learned to read Indigenous documents—aided by having learned Nahuatl while teaching at Jesuit seminaries—Clavijero even claimed to "have read and examined every publication which has appeared hitherto on the subject."[184] "I have studied many historical paintings of the Mexicans; I have profited from their manuscripts, which I read formerly in Mexico [City]," he recounted.[185] This material came from "histories and memoirs written by the Indians themselves," not from European authors.[186] Clavijero also claimed to have previously "conversed with the Mexicans, whose history I write," which allowed him an intimacy unparalleled by his European counterparts. Histories written by non-Americans, he complained, were riddled with "a thousand blunders in the interpretations, arising from total ignorance of antiquity, and the Mexican [Nahuatl] language."[187] Clavijero's *Storia* aimed to amend the errors of American histories composed without reference to ancient Indigenous pasts.[188] He singled out Robertson for his especial ire, firing back at the Scottish historian's dismissal of Indigenous texts by charging that they were only useless to "those who do not understand the characters and figures of the Mexicans, nor know the method they used to represent things," as texts in English or Spanish would be to those who did not know the language.[189]

Clavijero transformed the narration of American history by applying to it the category of "ancient" (antica), rather than collapsing all preinvasion past into an empty moment awaiting European fulfilment.[190] But of course, as much as Clavijero was an American apologist, and as familiar as he was with Nahua sources, his own understandings were shaped by the "Indian" archive and its

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structure of settlement. Indeed, Clavijero's entire construction of "ancient Mexico" relied on proving Mexican "civilization" and providing foils of "barbarism." That is to say, Clavijero had to demonstrate not only that Indigenous records were useable as historical documents but also that the documents reflected a high level of social sophistication on the part of their authors. To do so, *Storia* prioritized accounts written by elites of Nahua lineage, emphasizing the noble, reliable, and *alphabetic* origins of much of his information.[191] Evident as it had been to Sigüenza, Gemelli, and Boturini, it was also clear to Clavijero that the Indigenous documents sometimes called "calendar wheels" were proof of Mexica "civilization."[192] But whereas Boturini had narrated the five-age structure of Mexica history in his *Idea* to demonstrate its "excellence," in *Storia* Clavijero explicitly connected the cosmological structure provided by the calendrical and cartographic documents to the history of Mexica settlement.[193] The wheels and books of days also served as evidence of the indios de razóns' transformation; for criollos, explicitly, it proved the significance of the Mexica people whose home they claimed and whose own conversion to Spanish "civitas" perfected their migration to "civilization."

Ultimately, it was Clavijero's ability to produce a chronological, linear narrative from the mapas that made his method so useful to settler historiography. In particular, the migration accounts Clavijero consulted facilitated his plotting of the "Migration of the Mexicans to the country of Anahuac" across space and time in the orthogonal terms of the Spanish Empire.[194] Following Boturini's lead, Clavijero translated the *Codex Boturini*'s toponymic images into the alphabetic place names of ethno-national settlements—Azcapotzalco, Xochimilco, Chalco, etc.—which were also extant Central Mexico cities and neighborhoods, locatable on eighteenth-century maps. Likewise, Mexica chronologies became linear ones. With the help of Sigüenza's *Ciclografía Mexicana*, Clavijero translated the year of departure from Aztlán—Ce Tecpatl or 1 Flint—into the Julian calendar, writing that the "Aztecas or Mexicans . . . lived until about the year 1160 of the vulgar era, in Aztlan, a country situated to the north of the gulf of California, according to what appears from the route they pursued in their migration, and the conclusions made by the Spaniards in their travels towards these countries."[195] The result was a cohesive, chronological migration narrative written in European historiographic and cartographic form.

Clavijero emphasized the importance of the migration framework through his terminology. The word "Azteca" adapts the Nahuatl plural, aztecah (s. aztecl), meaning peoples from Aztlán, the Mexica homeland. Clavijero, however, applies it as a name for all of the different Nahuatl-speaking groups who

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migrated to Central Mexico in the twelfth century regardless of the national identifiers (Tolteca, Chichimeca, Mexica, etc.) employed in the traditional histories.[196] These tell that when the "Aztecas" arrived in Anáhuac, they were instructed by their patron god Huitzilopochtli to rename themselves "Mextli," denoting their separate ethnicity; later, the Mexica group would split into Tenocha and Tlatelolca factions, founding México-Tenochtitlan and México-Tlatelolco. Yet, in *Storia*, Clavijero uses the terms Mexica(n) and Azteca interchangeably.[197] Clavijero's "ancient Mexicans" were thus synonymous with all of Aztlán's people, who themselves were synonymous with the subjects of the temporally determined "Aztec" political regime (1428–1521), a choice which extinguishes Nahua political and ethnic difference and forecloses a deeper timeline. Moreover, his synonymous use of "Azteca" and "Mexican" for "indio" effectively erased non-Nahuatl-speaking groups from the political category of "Indigenous." Whereas his predecessor Boturini had effectively retained "indio" as a political rather than an ethnic category—i.e., Hnãhñu (Otomí), Ñuudzahui (Mixtec), Maya, etc. were all "Indian"—with Clavijero non-Nahua pasts disappeared from ancient history.

Because the archive from which Clavijero worked was primarily comprised of accounts written by Nahua nobility, it was structured to overlook other histories. Clavijero even confessed to "not here mention[ing] those authors who wrote on the antiquity of Michuacan, of Yucatan, of Guatemala, and of New Mexico; because, although many at present believe all these provinces were comprehended in Mexico, they did not belong to the Mexican empire, the history of which we write."[198] Recognizing a popular misunderstanding—that "Mexico" and "New Spain" were synonymous—Clavijero insisted instead on a smaller political territory for "ancient Mexico." In emphasizing the historical context of the terms, however, Clavijero exacerbated the problem: the history of the "Mexican Empire" (Triple Alliance) became the only ancient American history there was. Moreover, by making all "Aztecas" into "Mexicans," Clavijero gave Mexico City's residents—whether Indigenous or criollo—a particular stake in this partial account.[199]

Traveling from Mexico to California

Migration and land was central to criollo historiography in the eighteenth century in part because criollos traced themselves to the first Spanish settlers of New Spain—the "pobladores antiguos" or "old settlers" of 1521—and they saw parallels to their own history in these migration narratives. For Clavijero,

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tracing the Mexica migration from Aztlán to the Anáhuac Valley was a central concern, key to which was the ability to locate Nahua ancestral landmarks within a geographical framework that Europeans understood.[200]

Most of the traditional sources pointed northward, but Clavijero, like Boturini, was short on northern Indigenous sources. Even from exile, Clavijero lamented "the furious incursions of the Apachas and other barbarous nations [that] had kept him from investigating any further.[201] Much like Viceroy Gálvez had seen Apaches as obstacles to the future of New Spain so did Clavijero view alleged indios bárbaros as obstacles to writing Mexica history. Nonetheless, Clavijero managed to plot the migration route through exactly those northern lands the Crown was struggling to take or defend. For Clavijero, as for agents of the Spanish Crown, patriotic progress was as inseparable from Indigenous annihilation as the history of ancient America was inseparable from histories of Indigenous dispossession and struggles over sovereignty.

As Boturini had done almost forty years earlier, Clavijero also turned to Spanish reports of "travels from New Mexico towards the North" to supplement the missing records and geographies.[202] These sources included sixteenth-century "charts" as well as writings by Torquemada, Boturini, and Robertson, diaries from Father Kino and a map he made in 1701 that, unconventionally, depicted Baja California as a peninsula rather than an island.[203] Published widely in Europe, Kino's map had great influence on Clavijero's understanding of Pacific geography. Clavijero also referenced Boturini's description of the *Codex Boturini*—which showed "the departure of the Mexicans from the island of *Aztlan* and their arrival at the continent of New Spain, with the dwellings they constructed in each place"—and this source, if not the document itself—informed his attention to the position of rivers, water, and built environment when determining physical locations.[204]

Clavijero implied that, like the "civilized" people they were, the Aztecas had left permanent structures along the way to Lake Texcoco such as the "Casas Grandes" in the Sonoran desert, noted by Kino in 1694. Indeed, a location marked "Casa Grande" is clearly depicted on Kino's 1701 map of New Mexico—at the banks of the Gila River near areas marked "Sobaipoxis" (O'odham Sobaipuri) and "Apaches"—and located "more than two hundred and fifty miles distant from the city of Chihuahua" on the eastern side of the Gulf of California.[205] The constructions there, Clavijero later remarked, were in the style of "the inhabitants of New Mexico," which suggested Puebloan peoples also somehow comprised the Nahua narrative, although Clavijero does not make the connection with descendant peoples clear.[206] By Clavijero's time, Casa Grande (Great

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House)—today a US national monument within the borders of Arizona—was located closest to the defensive presidio San Felipe y Santiago de Janos, by the 1760s an important anti-Apache campaign base in Chihuahua province.[207] Only five years before Clavijero's *Storia*, Juan Bautista de Anza (later governor of New Mexico) had stopped to measure the Casa Grande ruins on his way to Alta California—amidst Spain's violent war against Apaches—because it had been so widely discussed as a stop on the Mexica migration route.

Clavijero produced the following section of the migration history by locating the narrative on a grid of parallels and meridians, enabling anyone to trace the path across European maps and effectively bringing Mexica history—as well as all of the northern lands—into Hispanic civitas:

> Having passed, therefore, the Red [Colorado] River from beyond the latitude of 35, they proceeded towards the south-east, as far as the river Gila, where they stopped for some time; for at present there are still remains to be seen of the great edifices built by them on the borders of that river. From thence having resumed their course towards the S. S. E. they stopped in about 29 degrees of latitude, at a place which is more than two hundred and fifty miles distant from the city of Chihuahua, towards the N. N. W. This place is known by the name of *Case grandi*, on account of an immense edifice still existing, which, agreeably to the universal tradition of these people, was built by the Mexicans in their peregrination.[208]

Clavijero integrated the spatiality of the mapas within the 1701 map: it provided specific landmarks for the itinerary—the Colorado and Gila Rivers, Chihuahua, "Case Grandi"—as well as standardized distances and precise cardinal and latitudinal directions. His account of the migration continues over Quechan (Yuma), Yoeme (Yaqui), Yoreme (Mayo), Opata, Rarámuri, and O'odham lands, although these peoples are unremarked. Clavijero does narrates the Aztecas' three-year stop at "Huicolhuacan, at present called Culiacan" where the Mexica patron Huitzlipochtli appeared; he also recalls the fissuring of the "seven tribes" at Chicomoztoc, twenty miles south of Zacatecas.[209] At that place Clavijero noted the "remains of an immense edifice" referred to as "La Quémada." This site was supposed by "the ancient inhabitants of that country" to be "the work of the Aztecas in their migration," who from thence crossed the mineral rich altiplano to Tula and on to Anáhuac.[210] Clavijero's entire narrative inscribed ancient Mexica history over most lands then claimed—and under siege—by Spain without giving any mention to the ancestors of Spain's current enemies.

As contests over land and sovereignty with imperial and tribal rivals peaked toward the end of the century, so did criollos' interest in causal chronology and

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migration, especially those journeys that traced to Aztlán. Not incidentally, tracing the migration route also illustrated that ancient Mexicans—and therefore current-day Nahuas—were not indigenous to the Anáhuac Valley. By then, however, the "Indian" archive already contained all of the materials criollos needed to create a new ancient history for their continent. Boturini's museum had built this "Indian" archive on the grounds of colonial relocation, settlers' wealth-driven curiosity about Aztlán, and both Nahua and settler interest in migration and settlement histories.

As the authorized "monuments" of an enlightened Mexican past were created, organized, and then celebrated by criollos, they became tools for criollo dominance, particularly in the glorification of a civilized "Azteca" past versus a vilified, "barbarous" Indigenous present. That is to say, Boturini's discussion of altepetl origins and Clavijero's mapping of Mexica migration over time and space provided entry points for criollo successors who were more explicitly interested in the imperial dimensions of lands to the north, where nomadic "barbarians" had displaced their civilized predecessors. Following Clavijero, New Spain's next generation of criollos would lay claim to their patria by representing Indigenous peoples either as "pacified" remnants of "ancient" settlers or threatening "barbarians." By creating and controlling the alternative historical monuments from which New Spain's history was written—and authorizing only these—criollos represented their homeland not as a place of insignificant "wild Indians" but one of significant, world-historical value.

In the 1780s and 1790s, as imperial competition between Spain and Britain came to a head with the "Nootka Affair," and with US-Spanish disputes over Mississippi navigation and access to the lands and waters of Florida and Louisiana, New Spain's criollos helped the Crown exert its sovereignty through recourse to Mexica history. Criollos' recourse to history helped the Crown's agents—like Anza or Croix—understand the geography and peoples they attempted to subdue. In establishing further chronological histories, these next historians would emphasize civilizational seriality in their attention to migration: descendants replacing ancestors, migrants replacing locals, empires replacing kingdoms. This sequence disguised settler acts of anti-Indigenous violence as necessary acts of imperial defense.

Conclusion

In 1785, with Spain still interested in securing the Pacific, New Orleans's governor general Esteban Rodríguez Miró proposed holding the Missouri River as the easiest way to ensure Spanish dominance. He sent the Crown a description

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of regional geography that brought together New Mexico, Quivira, and a place he called "Teguayo"—near Aztlán on the West Coast—which made it seem as if these locations were close to each other and easy to conquer. He explained that by tracing the chain of mountains "that starts from Santa Fe, a little to the east of it and which goes to the province of Quivira"—retracing Oñate's route—the Spanish could reach the Missouri, which flowed "as far as the other chain of mountains which passes between the Colorado River and the province of Teguayo."[211] In other words, from a base at Quivira Spain's forces could line the Missouri west to the Rocky Mountains and on to the Pacific, forming a natural presidial line across almost half of the continent. While his unrealistic geography implies that the Plains, Rockies, and Great Basin were empty and far smaller expanses than they are, it also reveals that Miró's sense of spatiality was, in 1785, still shaped by Mexica migration and the search for Aztlán.

Over two centuries later, Kansans would be shocked to learn that their homelands had been a center of "civilization" at the turn of the last millennium. Thanks to a historical inheritance largely traced to New Spain and Mexico, it has been the US Southwest—not the Midwest—that is consistently identified with "ancient" Indigenous glories in the United States. Yet when the conquistadors arrived on Mogollon, Hohokum, and ancestral Puebloan lands, they imagined them filled with Nahua ancestors. They had envisioned discovering a new México and sought to replace the local indios bárbaros with indios de razón living Spanish lives in Spanish cities. Today, maps of the Four Corners region testify to that enduring history, with places named "Aztec Ruins" in New Mexico or "Montezuma Castle" in Arizona. That there is also a Montezuma, New York, and a Toltec, Arkansas signals that British and US creoles too came to understand Indigenous history in terms of "ancient Mexico."

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