

THE CODEX RAMIREZ: COPY OR ORIGINAL?

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Introduction

Although long used as a basic source on Aztec history, the *Codex Ramirez* Manuscript (MNA Mexico 35-100) has never been subjected to close textual analysis to determine its relationship to other sixteenth-century historical documents in the native tradition.¹ It has generally been presumed to be an abridged version of Diego Durán's *Historia de las Yndias de Nueva España* (BN Madrid VT 26-11), with some minor additions which include the introduction of a series of errors regarding the reigns of the Aztec emperors.

Although its author had the Madrid Durán manuscript in his possession and used it as his basic source, he also used a number of other sources, probably including pictorial manuscripts, written documents, and informants from both the Spanish and Indian communities. Further, the author of the *Codex Ramirez* was not simply a copyist or compiler of sources. There is a clear authorial voice in the work that lends it a unique character that has not previously been recognized. Although the author was an educated European, almost certainly a regular cleric, he adopted a point of view that was in many ways aligned with the native community, just as Durán did in his own work.

The *Codex Ramirez* comprises three sections or treatises, similar to Durán's *Historia*. These are an Aztec imperial history; a book about deities and their festivals; and a very brief account of the native calendar. The most important section is the first treatise, which chronicles the rise of the Aztec empire and the Spanish conquest.

Although lacking internal divisions, close analysis shows that this historical treatise has two parts. The first is a digest of a portion of

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Durán's historical text; the second part is an original work, not taken from Durán or any other extant source. The true nature of the *Codex Ramirez* can only be understood when this division of the historical text is recognized.

Both in his abridgement from Durán and in his original writings, the author of the *Codex Ramirez*, shaped a work that diverges from Durán's in characteristic ways. First, he removed parallels that Durán had drawn between the Aztecs and the Jews. Second, he added etymologies and explanatory phrases on native society not found in Durán. Third, he went beyond Durán's text in his praise of the statecraft of Tlacaellel, the Cihuacoatl under Moteuczoma Ilhuicamina. Finally, in his original account of the Conquest, he accepts Aztec accounts over Spanish testimony and harshly criticizes missionaries with a clear authorial voice that is personal, and not derived from Durán's similar writings.

When properly understood, the *Codex Ramirez* can be one of the keys to revealing the oral traditions that lay behind this group of Colonial manuscripts. If the *Codex Ramirez* were just a copy of the Durán by another European, its value in the study of native oral traditions would be minimal. However, because part of [treatise 1] is a redaction of native oral traditions found in no other manuscript, it is a primary source in its own right.

The Manuscripts of the Cronica X Group

The *Historia de las Yndias de Nueva España* of Diego Durán and the *Codex Ramirez* are part of a group of manuscripts whose origins, sources, relationships, and even value as historical documents have been debated since the nineteenth century. Their study has been complicated by the slow pace of publication and lack of critical and facsimile editions. The Durán was published in the mid-nineteenth century, the *Codex Ramirez* and the *Crónica Mexicana* in the late nineteenth century, and the full text of the *Tovar Manuscript* (a copy of the *Codex Ramirez*) only in 1976. Publications of the texts and scholarly studies have led to the identification of four related manuscripts. The nature of the debate over these works was clarified, though the issues left far from resolved, by Robert Barlow (1945). He suggested that a single manuscript, written in Nahuatl and recording one version of Aztec history, lay behind all these documents. He named this manuscript the Cronica X.

The major challenge to Barlow's hypothesis has been provided by Colston (1973a and b). Rather than positing a single lost manuscript, Colston observed that it was possible for various groups within Aztec society to have had different oral traditions — traditions that might have led to varied recitations from the same pictorial manuscripts. Colston identified the *Cronica X* not with a specific written manuscript, but with "an oral historical tradition, a tradition that was noticeably partisan to the *Cihuacoatl* Tlacaclél... which was put to writing on different occasions" (1973a: 62).

There are four manuscripts that contain historical texts recounting the story of Tlacaclél. The two most important are Durán's *Historia* and Alvarado Tezozomoc's *Crónica Mexicana*. The *Codex Ramírez* has been viewed as an abridgement of the Durán, and the *Tovar Manuscript* is an exact copy of the *Codex Ramírez*. A descriptive list of the manuscripts' contents follows.

1. Durán's *Historia de las Yndias de Nueva España*, a folio volume with 344 folios, comprising three treatises (BN Madrid VT 26-11). The untitled Treatise 1 (ff. 1-221r) concerns the history of the Mexica Aztecs from the migration and founding of Tenochtitlan through the Conquest. According to Durán, it is largely a Spanish translation of a Nahuatl "historia" or "historia mexicana", which he describes as a written document and which he must have discovered and translated between 1579 and 1581.

2. Hernando Alvarado Tezozomoc's *Crónica Mexicana* (1598), a folio volume of 150 folios (LC Kraus 117), is substantially the same history, also in Spanish. Its language preserves the "rhythm and repetitions" of Nahuatl to a greater degree than does Durán's (Barlow, 1945), with many more Nahuatl words and phrases inserted in the text (Garibay, 1953-54:299-305). There is no further text than this history.

3. The anonymous *Codex Ramírez* manuscript, is a quarto volume of 169 folios (MNA Mexico 35-100). The manuscript volume includes three works, one complete and by a single author — this work is usually called the *Codex Ramírez* — and two fragments. *Codex Ramírez* Fragment 1 (ff. 150r-156v) is an account of the reign of Moteuczoma Ilhuicamina centered on Tlacaclél.

4. The John Carter Brown Library *Tovar Manuscript* (Indies 2), a quarto volume of 158 folios, is primarily the work of the Jesuit Juan de Tovar, a cousin of Durán. The manuscript has been shown by Lafaye to be a copy taken directly from the text of the *Codex Ramírez* with very minor editorial changes and scribal errors (1970 and 1972). The

fragments were not copied by Tovar; the volume includes a separate work, the Tovar Calendar, not written by Tovar (Kubler and Gibson, 1951).

Durán's *Historia*, Alvarado Tezozomoc's *Historia Mexicana*, and the *Codex Ramírez* Fragment 1 are clearly original, if related works. The *Codex Ramírez* and *Tovar Manuscript* have been considered two copies of the same abridgement of Durán. This article demonstrates that the *Codex Ramírez* should be considered at least in part an original work as well.

The texts of the *Codex Ramírez*: Treatise [1]

Comparison of the text of the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1], the "Relación del origen de los Indios. . .", with that of Durán's treatise 1, the *Historia*, shows that there are three major differences between them. The first is the removal of almost the whole of Durán's chapter 1, which attempts to demonstrate that the Aztecs were descended from the ten lost tribes of Israel. The second is the use the author of the *Codex Ramírez* made of material taken from Durán's chapters 2 through 12. For the most part, he quoted or carefully abridged Durán's text. However, he also added explanatory material, including not only the well-known etymologies, but also clarifying passages for readers unfamiliar with New Spain.

The third and most important distinction, and one that has not been described clearly in the literature, is that the second half of the *Codex Ramírez* is not taken directly from the Madrid Durán manuscript, but derives from another source, or from several sources which may include the Durán. It has been noted that the dynastic history in the *Codex Ramírez* alters the traditional order of Mexica rulers, placing Tizoc before Axayacatl (e.g., Beauvois, 1885; Kubler and Gibson, 1951: 17). However, this is only the most striking of many differences between the imperial histories of [treatise 1] of the *Codex Ramírez* and of Durán.

A detailed comparison of the text of the *Codex Ramírez*, [treatise 1], with Durán's *Historia* indicates that it comprise two parts of nearly equal length. The first part, some 115 quarto pages was abridged or quoted directly from the Madrid Durán manuscript. The remaining 87 quarto pages were taken from another source or sources, possibly including the Durán.

Unlike the Durán, the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] is not divided into chapters, being without numbered or named internal divisions. Nor

does the division between the two parts of the manuscript appear to fall at a point equivalent to a chapter division in the Durán. Material taken directly from the text of the Durán appears on pp. 1-115 (ff. 1r-57r) of the *Codex Ramírez* (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 1-58). The material in this first half of the treatise is clearly taken from chapters 2 to 12 of Durán's treatise 1, the *Historia* (1967, II: 21-104), and appears to extend to his chapter 12, paragraph 26 (1967, II: 105-110). Thus, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* paraphrased or quoted material from eleven of the seventy-eight chapters of Durán's treatise 1, with only a few relatively minor additions. The 115 quarto pages (57 leaves) of the first part of the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] were abridged from the first 38 folio-sized leaves (i.e., 76 pages) of Durán's manuscript.

The second part of the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] diverges sharply from Durán. It includes material on the imperial history of Mexico and an account of the Conquest. The preconquest imperial history, from the reign of Itzcoatl to the reign of Moteuczoma Xocoyotl (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 59-77; ms. pp. 116-172, ff. 57v-85v), differs in so many particulars from that found in Durán that it must have been taken from another source, or from several sources (which may have included the Durán). The account of the Conquest, although not paraphrased or abridged from Durán (Durán 1967, II: 459-576), does show some similarities to his work (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 77-91; ms. pp. 172-204, ff. 85v-101v). It may have been based in part upon Durán, or upon sources also used by Durán.

The greatest single change from Durán in the first part of *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] is the elimination of almost all material from Durán's chapter 1. Other changes are relatively minor, but of some significance. Additions made to the quoted or abridged text are of two principal types. The first is etymologies of native words, added where they do not occur in Durán, or expanded or altered from Durán's. The other consists of explanatory phrases. Together, these additions suggest that the text was prepared for a European audience, or for Europeans newly arrived in the colony.

The abridgement of Durán's text was executed with some care. Paraphrased sections do not alter the sense of the original. The number of quoted speeches is somewhat reduced. Durán's personal asides are omitted (though in one striking case Durán's first person statement on the excellence of the phrasing and metaphors of native oratory be-

comes third person). Another simplification of the text is the elimination of Nahuatl names of persons, places, or local items of secondary importance to the narrative (Leal 1953: 21).²

The etymologies are the most frequently noted difference between the two texts. Ramírez, remarking that the work included "varias etimologías y traducciones que se dan de los nombres mexicanos, aunque algunas son erradas" (1878: 10), deduced that it was written by a native author. Kubler and Gibson noted that the *Codex Ramírez* differs from the Tovar manuscript "by the inclusion of some etymological passages and a few textual discrepancies" (1951: 14).³ While Tovar gives etymologies for native names wherever these are found in the *Codex Ramírez*, he simplifies some of them, particularly the extensive etymologies for the names of the seven tribes of the Aztec migration myth (cf. 1878: 19-20 and Tovar 1976: 10-11).

The etymologies added to the *Codex Ramírez* have not been a subject of inquiry. Many more appear in the first half of the *Codex Ramírez* than in the portion of the Durán from which it was abridged. Twenty-six have been added to the material taken from twelve of Durán's chapters. Etymologies are given only for the names of personages, deities or geographical locations; there is an etymology for almost every Nahuatl proper noun found in the first half of the text. The most extensive concern the names of the seven tribes of the Aztec migration myth. The author identifies the meaning of each syllable of the tribal names, demonstrates how these syllables are combined, and gives the meaning of the full name. An original passage explains the general principles behind the derivation of native names:

Todos estos nombres y dictados son tomados de sus antepasados, unos derivados de sus lugares, otros de sus caudillos, y otros de sus dioses, y ésta es la costumbre que estos indios tenían en imponer sus nombres (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 19).

² It should be noted that the author does add one native word to the text. In a list of foodstuffs offered by the Mexica as tribute to king Tezozomoc of Azcapotzalco, the author provides the native name for amaranth: "las semillas de que ellos usaban para su sustento, que por acá llaman maíz, chile, frizoles, y unos bledos que se dicen *huautli*" (1878:37) Durán uses only the Spanish word (1967, II: 58).

³ Kubler and Gibson also note that the same differences are found in the *Codex Ramírez* and the *Tovar Manuscript*: "Both manuscripts contain certain materials not present in Durán's published text. Not all the etymologies are in Durán, and the differences between Durán's account of the conquest and that contained in the second history of Tovar are often great" (1951: 15).

The author also explains his reasons for including these extensive etymologies at the beginning of the text:

Heme detenido en explicar las etimologías destes porque adelante se han de repetir muchas veces, y porque en muchos nombres que en el progreso desta historia se han de ofrecer, no se dirán las etimologías tan por menudo, porque estas bastan para entender el modo de todas ellas, que ponerlas todas desta manera seria gran prolijidad (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 19).

Through his extensive etymologies of these tribal names, the author intended to alleviate the difficulties his European readers would have with the many native names in the text.⁴

Durán's text is not lacking in etymologies and definitions, but most of them clarify infrequent or relatively obscure words or names.

In contrast to Durán's selective use of definitions and etymologies, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* provides etymologies for the most widely known names of Central Mexican geography and preconquest history. Etymologies or translations are given for Azcapotzalco, Tlaxcala, Chapultepec, Mexico, and most of the Aztec ruler's names.⁵ Durán's etymology for "mexicanos" is expanded considerably by the author of the *Codex Ramírez* (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 22). Very extensive etymologies are provided for the name Huitzilopochtli, both in [treatise 1] (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 22) and treatise [2] (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 103).

The *Codex Ramírez* —with its provision of etymologies for even the most common indigenous names, explanation of their construction, and

⁴ In his transcription of the text of the *Codex Ramírez*, Tovar gave very abbreviated etymologies of the seven tribal names. He included the original passage explaining the principles behind their derivation, but omitted the explanation for including etymologies (Tovar, 1972: 10).

⁵ Etymologies are added to the first half of the *Codex Ramírez* [Treatise 1] for the following names: Nahuatlaca (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 17); Teuculhuacan (1878: 18), for the names of tribes that migrated from Aztlan, the Xuchimilcas, Chalcas, Tepanecas, Culhuas, Tlalhuicas, and Tlaxcaltecas (1878: 18-19); Xochimilco (1878: 20); Azcaputzalco (1878: 20 and 25); Tetzcuco (1878: 20); Quauhnhuac (1878: 20); Tlaxcallan (1878: 21); Huitzilopochtli (1878: 22); Michhuacan (1878: 22); Cohuatepec (1878: 24); Tula (1878: 24); Chapultepec (1878: 25); Huitzilihuitl (1878: 25); Atlacuihuayan (1878: 27); Tizapan (1878: 27); Mexico (1878: 31); Tenuchtitlan (1878: 31); Tlatelulco (1878: 34); Huitzilihuitl (1878: 39-40); and Itzcohuatl (1878: 45). Three etymologies are found in the second half of the *Codex Ramírez* [Treatise 1]: huehue Motecuczuma (1878: 72); Motecuczuma (1878: 2); and Tultecas (1878: 82).

the reduced use of Nahuatl words —suggests that it was written for an audience completely unfamiliar with New Spain. Ramírez noted that some etymologies are incorrect; perhaps the demonstrations of the method for breaking native names down into their component words and particles reflects the author's own struggle to learn Nahuatl.

In addition to the etymologies, a number of explanatory phrases have been added to the text of the first half of the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1]. These phrases clarify the geography of Central Mexico, local customs, and the history presented in [treatise 1].

For example, the death of Copil (from whose heart sprang the cactus marking the city's location) forms an important prelude to the myth of the founding of Tenochtitlan. In adapting Durán's account, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* omits the Nahuatl name of the place where it occurred, but adds the explanatory phrase, "que hoy en día llaman los Españoles el Peñol" (1878: 26; cf. Durán 1967, II: 38).⁶

Similarly, in describing the tribute paid by the Mexica to Azcapotzalco, the *Codex Ramírez* expands Durán's description of "floating gardens" or *chinampas*:

y así mismo hiziesen una sementera en la superficie de la laguna que se moviese como balsa, y que en ella sembrasen las semillas de que ellos usaban para su sustento, que por acá llaman maíz, chile, frizoles, y unos bledos que se dicen *huautli*, calabazas y chia, etc. (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 39; cf. Durán 1967, II: 58).

The author explains not only antive practices which he could have observed, but also adds details about preconquest customs. In describing the coronation of Huitzilihuitl, he explains that the same ointment was used for both rulers and idols:

la uncion que acostumbraron siempre para ungir á los Reyes, que ellos llamaban uncion divina por ser la misma con que untaban á su Dios Huitzilopuchtlí (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 39; cf. Durán 1967, II: 78).⁷

⁶ Other examples of geographic references in which the author of the *Codex Ramírez* provided more details than did Durán include those to Acatzintlan ("por donde entraba un gran río á la laguna"); Mexicatzinco ("por donde se bañaron y recrearon algo tanto"); San Antonio ("otro lugar á la entrada de esta ciudad donde agora está una hermita"); and San Pablo ("un barrio que es agora de la ciudad") (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 30; cf. Durán, 1967, II: 43-44).

⁷ Similarly, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* added a phrase to a speech in which Itzcoatl instructs Tlacaelle to present a martial challenge to the king of Azcapotzalco. It clarifies the significance of the acts customary at such occasions:

Among the most interesting additions are those concerning historical and political matters. The importance of the Mexica victory over Azcapotzalco (previously the dominant community in the Valley of Mexico) is clarified by phrases that highlight the latter community's importance. An incident that sparked the conflict was a demand by the Mexica ruler that the Tepanecs assist in building an aqueduct from Chapultepec; the author indicates that the Tepanec king and his court found this impertinent: "les pareció muy atrevida y osada para Azcapotzalco, siendo el supremo lugar á quien reconocia toda la tierra" (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 43; *cf.* Durán 1967, II: 70). Later he notes the new importance of the Mexica after their victories over Azcapotzalco and Coyoacan:

Con esta victoria y la de Azcapotzalco quedó la gente Mexicana muy ensalzada, y temida de todos los demas por haber ya rendido y avasallado la nacion Tepaneca, que como queda referido, era la mas valerosa y en quien estaba el señorío de toda esta tierra (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 57; *cf.* Durán 1967, II: 97).

Similarly, the importance of Tlacaelel is highlighted by added phrases. As has been noted, Tlacaelel's role is the diagnostic feature of *Crónica X* materials; in the first half of the *Codex Ramírez*, the author goes beyond Durán by praising him in a number of places. After describing the election of Itzcoatl as king and the growing hostility of the Tepanecs, the author mentions for the first time:

un valeroso mancebo llamado Tlacaellel, sobrino del Rey Itzcohuatl, el qual fué despues Principe de los ejércitos, y el mas valeroso y valiente y de mejor parecer y consejo en las cosas de guerra, que jamás se ha hallado en toda la nacion Mexicana, como en todo lo que se sigue se verá (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 47; *cf.* Durán 1967, II: 76).

In describing the division of the lands of Coyoacan after its conquest, the author states that Tlacaelel deservedly received the largest share:

siendo siempre el mas preferido el valeroso Tlacaellel, á quien con razon tenian por total causa y autor de la prosperidad y ensalzamiento de su nacion (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 57; *cf.* Durán 1967, II: 96).

"emplumale la cabeza... en señal de que ha de morir" (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous, 1878: 49; *cf.* Durán, 1967, II: 78).

The author praises as extraordinary foresight Tlacacléel's introduction of a system of titles and honors for the Aztec nobility:

Tlacacléel... proponiéndolo al Rey Itzcohuatl con la traza que se había de hazer, porque las tenía muy buenas, que demas de ser tan animoso era en igual grado ingenioso y hábil, y por esto mientras vivió (que fue mucho tiempo) siguieron infaliblemente sus consejos, teniéndole todos los Reyes que alcanzó por oráculo y coadjutor de su gobierno (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 57; cf. Durán 1967, II: 97-98).

Finally, in describing the war against Xochimilco, the author praises Tlacacléel's mastery of the arts of war:

y assí hizo reseña el valeroso capitán general Tlacacléel, de todos sus soldados y capitanes, á los quales puso en órden, diziéndoles una plática de mucha elegancia (como él lo sabía bien hazer) dandoles avisos y ardidés grandes de guerra, que en esto fué muy ingenioso y astuto (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 59; cf. Durán 1967, II: 110).⁸

A final minor change appears in the dates given for the reigns of the Mexica rulers (Beauvois 1885: 156-57). The author of the *Codex Ramírez* assigns only four Christian dates in all of [treatise 1], and no native dates for any events.⁹ Three dates are given for the accession of rulers —Acamapichtli (1318), Huitzilihuitl (1359), and Itzcoatl (1424)— and one for the first sighting of Spanish ships (1518) (see Table 1). Only the date of the accession of Itzcoatl agrees with Durán (1967, II: 75). Durán gives the date 1318 for the foundation of Mexico-Tenochtitlan. Although referring to an earlier event, the date appears in his text after a description of the selection of Acamapichtli as Mexica ruler (an event for which he does not give a date) (Durán 1967, II: 51-53, 55). The author of the *Codex Ramírez* could have assumed that the foundation date was also the accession date for Acamapichtli (Leal 1953:

⁸ A number of other added minor phrases also emphasize Tlacacléel's role in political and military affairs: (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous, 1878: 50, cf. Durán, 1967, II: 80-81; 1878: 51, cf. Durán, 1967, II: 81; 1878: 52, cf. Durán, 1967, II: 83).

⁹ The *Codex Ramírez* was written between 1581, the date of completion of Durán's work, and 1586-87, when it was copied by Juan de Tovar. During this period, the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendars occurred gradually in Mexico: "The civil year was not changed officially until October, 1583, in some areas; October, 1584, in others; and unquestionably still later in others" (Kubler and Gibson, 1951: 21, n. 127).

21-22). Durán gives 1404 for the accession of Huitzilihuitl (1967, II: 63). Perhaps the discrepancy in the accession dates is due to the use of another source by the author of the *Codex Ramírez*. However, the *Codex Ramírez* indicates that Acamapichtli ruled for forty years (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 38). If he acceded to the throne in 1318, the accession date of his successor Huitzilihuitl would be 1358, a discrepancy of only one year from the date given by the *Codex Ramírez* (Leal 1953: 22). Thus, the discrepancy may be due to the author's calculations, and not to his use of another source.

No accession dates appear in the second half of the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1], but a chronology can be constructed using the length of reign given for each ruler. As can be seen from Table 3.5, such a chronology is inconsistent with the text, placing the death of Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin in 1509. The lengths given for the reigns of the emperors do not agree with those given in Durán.

In contrast to Durán who stated plainly that he was primarily translating a native document and who referred to a number of other sources, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* makes few references to sources. In the first half of [treatise 1], the author three times uses the phrase "cuenta la historia" (1878: 34, 36 and 54). Although Durán frequently used this same phrase in reference to the document he was translating, none of these three passages copies him (*cf.* Durán 1967, II: 50, 56 and 93). The last use of the phrase occurs in a description of the siege of Coyoacan, when the Mexica cooked delicacies outside the city to madden the defenders. The phrase, "[c]uenta la historia con mucho encarescimiento. . ." was substituted for Durán's list of the foods (1967, II: 93). In these references, "la historia" is clearly Durán's work.

Two references to unspecified "historias" are found in the second half of [treatise 1], as well as two references to painted manuscripts. All these references occur in the section of the work dealing with the Conquest (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 77-91). The account of the Conquest in the *Codex Ramírez* begins with a listing of the portents of the coming disaster: "De las señales y prodigios que entónces hubo, lo que las historias cuentan son los que se siguen" (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 77). In describing the Alvarado massacre, the author notes: "afirman todas las historias que hubo hombre que con una destas [espadas] con los filos de navaja cercenó el cuello á un caballo" (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 89).

The author of the *Codex Ramírez* also refers to pictorial manuscripts. However, the context makes it clear that these were manuscripts described to him by others, not works he had seen and used himself.

The first half of the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] derives directly from the Durán manuscript. In the second half, the preconquest imperial history, from the conquest of Xochimilco in the reign of Itzcoatl to the portents of the Conquest in the reign of Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin, is so different from Durán that it could not have derived from his work. Although he makes no reference to it, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* must have turned to another source or sources in the *Crónica X* tradition for this material. A few examples will suffice to show the striking differences between the preconquest imperial history in the second half of *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] and that found in Durán and Tezozomoc.

The divergence of the text of the *Codex Ramírez* from that of Durán at a point equivalent to Durán's chapter 12 is quite sudden and striking (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 59; ms. p. 116, f. 57v). The account of the conquest of Xochimilco by the Mexica is characteristic of the departures from Durán's text found throughout the second half of [treatise 1]. The *Codex Ramírez* account includes a colorful speech by the ruler of Xochimilco which has no parallel in Durán:

que verguenza era que quatro gatos [the Mexica council of state] como los Mexicanos, gente vil y de poca estima, hubiessen prevalecido contra los mayores señores y mas lucida gente de la tierra, deudos y parientes suyos [i.e., the Tepanecs of Azcapotzalco], y que allí delante dellos y en su presencia se estuviessen gloriando dello, por tanto, que cobrassen ménos ánimos y corajes de fieras, y destruyessen á toda aquella nacion (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:59).

In contrast to Durán (1967, II:105-112 and Tezozomoc (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:272-77), the *Codex Ramírez* describes the burning of the temple at Xochimilco, the flight of the defenders to the mountains, and their surrender to the Mexica (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:59-60).

Both Durán (1967, II:127-130) and the *Codex Ramírez* (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:61-62) include an account of a feigned war in which, following a suggestion by Tlacaélel and with Nezahualcoyotl's agreement, the Mexica appear to conquer Texcoco. However, this is the first chronological disagreement between the two sources. Durán states that this "was the first war waged by the elder

Moteuczoma . . . even though it was feigned" (1964:90; 1967, II:130), while the *Codex Ramírez* places it just before the death of Itzcoatl.

The account of the reign of Moteuczoma Ilhuicamina in the *Codex Ramírez* is extremely brief; the many chapters of conquests found in Durán and Tezozomoc are "summarized" briefly, at the beginning:

el qual conquistó gran trecho de la otra parte de la sierra nevada y de estotras partes casi de mar á mar, haziendo hazañas dignas de gran memoria por medio de su general Tlacaellé, á quien amó muy mucho (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:63).

The war with Chalco, the reorganization of the empire, and the rebuilding of the temple of Huitzilopochtli are the only accomplishments of his reign that are discussed (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 63-66). Even the devastating famine of the year 1 Rabbit is not mentioned.

The reversal of the sequence of rule of Axayacatl and Tizoc is one of the most often noted features of the *Codex Ramírez*. It contradicts most other sources on Aztec history, including the *Codex Mendoza*. As Orozco y Berra (1878:167-72) and Kubler and Gibson (1951:17) have shown, this version of the dynastic history, transmitted through Acosta's published work, is found in a group of writers, including Herrera and Lorenzana, and was criticized later by Torquemada. Beauvois suggested that the inversion of reigns "may be explained by the fact that the writer possessed two sources: he chose the worse" (1885: 157).¹⁰ The inversion of the accounts of the two rulers is not simple; there is an interweaving of the events of their reigns and of that of the succeeding king Ahuitzotl, as recounted in Durán and Tezozomoc. The events leading up to the coronation of Tizoc in the *Codex Ramírez* (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:66) are those given before Axayacatl's elsewhere, including the offering of the crown to Tlacaellé, and his refusal (Durán, 1967, II:249-50; Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:372-73).¹¹ Special mention of placing an emerald ornament in the nose of the king is retained (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:67 and 430; Durán 1967, II:301) as are other events of his reign.

¹⁰ "... on se l'explique par le fait que cet écrivain puisait à deux sources: il a choisi la mauvaïse."

¹¹ Tezozomoc includes the offering of the crown to Tlacaellé in his account of the election of Tizoc (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878: 437). Durán states that, at the suggestion of Nezahualpilli of Tezcoco, the crown was offered to Tlacaellé prior to the election of Ahuitzotl (1967, II: 314-15).

Similarly, in the *Codex Ramírez* account of the reign of Axayacatl, the events of his reign are interwoven in a complex fashion with those of the succeeding king, Ahuitzotl (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:67-70). Major events of Axayacatl's reign, as recounted by Durán and Tezozomoc, were the civil war with Tlatelolco and the failed attack on the Tarascan empire. The *Codex Ramírez* includes a detailed account of the civil war, but omits the Tarascan defeat. Also included as events of his reign are the death of Tlacaellel, and the extension of the empire to the southeast—into the Tehuantepec area—events that, according to Durán and Tezozomoc, occurred under Ahuitzotl. The accounts of the reigns of Ahuitzotl and of Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin prior to the arrival of the Spanish, differ in details from those of Durán and Tezozomoc, but agree regarding the major events.

As noted above, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* refers to two "historias" which he consulted in writing about the Conquest. These were probably documents written by natives. The point of view of his account of the Conquest is native, giving the actions and motivations of Moteuczoma Ilhuicamina; like the dynastic history, it includes many speeches.

The Conquest section begins with a series of portents of the impending calamity. Although not quoted or abridged directly from Durán, the two accounts are not greatly divergent. Of the dozen portents given in the *Codex Ramírez*, only four do not appear in the Durán. The closeness of the accounts may be due to the fact that both writers used similar sources—Durán used several written native sources in composing his account of the Conquest (Colston 1973:66).¹²

In addition to unspecified written sources, the author of the *Codex Ramírez* may have used oral testimony in preparing the section on the Conquest. In discussing the Alvarado massacre, he notes that "[a]lgunos dijeron que entonces echaron los grillos á Motecuczuma" (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:89). In his account of the death of Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin, the author apparently compared native and Spanish testimonies, finding the former more reliable:

Dizen algunos que entonces dieron una pedrada á Motecuczuma en la frente, de que murió, pero no es cierto segun lo afirman todos los indios... dizen que le hallaron muerto á puñaladas, que le mataron los españoles a el y a los demas principales que tenían consigo (Alvarado Tezozomoc and Anonymous 1878:90-91).

¹² Compare also the list of omens given by Sahagún (1950-82, book 12:1-3).

However, it is possible, as Leal suggests, that the words “‘dizen’ y... ‘entienden’ pueden referirse a alguna otra historia o a algún otro historiador” (1953:25).

Conclusions

Rather than being simply an abridgement of Durán's *Historia*, the *Codex Ramírez* [treatise 1] is in reality two separate works. The first is an abridgement of the first part of Durán's text. The abridgement from Durán has many striking and original qualities that have not previously been described. Particularly noteworthy is the focus on Tla-caellé, making him even more of a central figure in imperial history than in Durán's version.

The second is an original work, not taken from Durán or any other extant source. It contains a dynastic sequence that is historically incorrect, as well as speeches and historical details not found in other sources. Thus it should be considered an independent source document.

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