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The Ancient Mexican Codex: Zelia Nuttall's Recontextualization of the *Codex Tonindeye*

"It was during an informal reception at Casa Villari in Florence, some years ago, that I first learned of the existence of the Ancient Mexican Codex, the facsimile of which I now have the pleasure of presenting to the literary and scientific world."

"I obtained permission, not only to study, but also to publish the valuable document, in order to place it within the reach of my fellow-students."

— Zelia Nuttall, 1902

Abstract

The Mixtec pictorial manuscript, now known as the *Codex Tonindeye*, was stolen from an Italian monastery library in 1859. Several decades later, the Mexican American anthropologist Zelia Nuttall located the document after many years of searching. Determined to reinstate its historical identity, Nuttall closely studied the codex and reproduced it in a lush facsimile; it was named the *Codex Nuttall* (1902) in her honor. Using Nuttall's correspondence with her publishers at the Peabody Museum, this article investigates the role of archives and museums in nineteenth-century textual scholarship, explores how Nuttall relocated the codex and labored over creating the facsimile, and addresses the ongoing importance of the document.

Introduction

In 1859, a pre-Columbian Mixtec pictorial manuscript was stolen from an archive in the Italian monastery of San Marco in Florence. In the late 1890s, the Mexican American anthropologist Zelia Nuttall traced that codex to the British Museum, studied it, and published a facsimile known as the *Codex Nuttall*. The story of how the Mixtec manuscript

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in question—now known as the *Codex Tonindeye*, but described by Nuttall as the Ancient Mexican Codex, and also called the *Codex San Marco* or *Codex Zouche*—was uncovered and disseminated to the broader scholarly community provides insight into the history of archives, the professionalization of anthropology, and the shifting status of pre-Colombian manuscripts. By drawing on Nuttall's correspondence held at the Peabody Museum, this article explores the role of institutional archives and museums in the nineteenth century, and details how Nuttall traced the codex through her personal connections, her efforts to publish it, and the effect of its publication.[1]

Most extant Indigenous pictorial manuscripts are housed in European archives, where they typically were placed after being received as diplomatic gifts during the era of Spanish exploration and colonialism. Few of these manuscripts have been returned to Mexico.[2] In the intervening years, many of these documents were mislaid or forgotten in the archives. Throughout the early modern and modern periods, European and Mexican archives were not well organized or cataloged systematically, and the caretakers often would lose sight of even the most valuable items. Occasionally, there were no caretakers, and items disappeared from unprotected archives. Furthermore, people who had access to archives often pilfered them, and documents thus would enter into private collections.[3] Scholars such as Zelia Nuttall who sought manuscripts from Mexico often had to trace their locations through word of mouth.

The Mixtec manuscript under discussion has been transferred to a minimum of six locations since its creation in Mexico more than 500 years ago. Each relocation took it farther from the people who created it and its intended readers. Before locating and publishing the codex that would bear her name, Nuttall spent time closely studying many related codices, which she termed "sister codices," so when she finally located the Mixtec manuscript, she was prepared to contextualize, interpret, and share it.[4] The document had been gifted, stolen, and misplaced, and Nuttall felt the need to recontextualize it by creating a facsimile representative of the lush visual and narrative elements in the original document. Her purpose in creating a meticulously accurate reproduction of the document was to provide access to its pictorial impact, which she knew was inseparable from its meaning. The power and significance of the codex relies on a sensory encounter with its rich colors, vivid imagery, and the tactile experience of unfolding its pages. In the introduction she provided to accompany the facsimile, Nuttall hoped to promulgate an understanding of the history of American cultures before contact with Europe and argue for their continued importance.

Brief Biography of Zelia Nuttall

Zelia Nuttall was an amateur scholar who traveled the world in search of pre-Columbian books from Mexico to study and publish as facsimiles. She was born to Robert Nuttall, an adventurous Irish doctor, and Magdalena Parrott. Parrott had been born in Mexico to an unwed mother; her father, however, was the famous San Francisco banker John Parrott.[5] Parrott took Magdalena to the United States, where she met and married Robert Nuttall after graduating from finishing school. The couple settled in San Francisco, where their daughter Zelia was born in 1857.

During Nuttall's adolescence, her family traveled to Europe, where Zelia gained an education in seven languages while living in France, Germany, Italy, and England (Figure 1). She took classes at Bedford College in London, where she developed a particular interest in history, before returning to San Francisco.[6]

Nuttall married a man whose interest in the past paralleled her own. In 1880, she wed Alphonse Pinart, a French linguist who collected artifacts and books from Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest and Mexico. Pinart had built his reputation by collecting Aleutian masks in Alaska and Aztec sculptures in Mexico, which he then sold to the Trocadéro in France.[7]

Marriage to Pinart deepened Nuttall's interest in Indigenous culture. Within several years, however, Pinart had spent almost all of the couple's combined inheritances on manuscripts, books, and artifacts—surely a contributing factor when Nuttall chose to leave him permanently in 1882. Pregnant at the time, Nuttall wrote to Pinart, then stationed in Panama, and told him that there was no need for him to return to San Francisco. Their only child, Nadine, was born in 1882. Due to Pinart's stubborn resistance and the complex regulations about divorce in France, it was six years later, in 1888, before Nuttall won a divorce and full custody of her child.[8]

Figure 1: Zelia Nuttall, circa 1877. Frederick Starr Papers. Courtesy of the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago.

It was at this point that Nuttall stopped signing her correspondence as Zelia Nuttall Pinart and reverted to her birth name, Zelia Nuttall.[9] To cement this identity, Nuttall also sued for the right to return to her maiden name and then began insisting that people refer to her as "Mrs. Nuttall," a title she felt conveyed a proper degree of respect. The oddity of the self-determined title confused many people, and Nuttall often had to correct proofs that identified the author as "Miss Nuttall" instead of "Mrs. Nuttall."[10] Nuttall's insistence on using this title is a keen demonstration of what her adversaries would characterize as her stubbornness; it can also be seen as an indication of her

uncompromising commitment to defining herself on her own terms, thus defying cultural expectations.

Nuttall's scholarship began in earnest after she separated from her husband. In 1884, she moved to Dresden and then began to travel around the world. In 1886, she traveled to Mexico with several family members and spent six months at the National Museum studying Aztec artifacts. Until Nuttall purchased a house in Mexico, in 1902, she was without a permanent home of her own; in the interim, she relied on friends, relatives, hotels, and apartments and houses rented for short periods to house herself, her daughter, and her mother. Despite her complaints about the exhaustion and various illnesses caused by the stress of her homelessness, Nuttall continued to work productively throughout this eight-year period. It was possibly the lack of a permanent home that gave her the freedom to travel to Mexico, Spain, Italy, Sweden, the United States, and Germany for extended periods of time in search of codices.

Nuttall's Publications

Nuttall was instrumental in publishing numerous pre-Columbian and colonial codices between 1886 and 1933. She also assisted in founding the University of California and collected items on behalf of the university's anthropology museum, including codices. Nuttall's engagement in international debates with scholars, particularly through her involvement in the International Congress of Americanists, forced those scholars to set standards for anthropological practices and highlighted the lack of archival standards in Mexico and Europe in the early twentieth century.[11]

Nuttall had ambitions to find and publish all of the pre-Columbian codices that remained to be found in both European and Mexican archives. She heard about codices by word of mouth through talking with scholars, church officials, archivists, and curators in Mexico, Germany, Spain, Italy, and England. She looked at published catalogs from archives and museums and, most important, she browsed through the archives.

The professionalization of archives trailed decades behind that of anthropology and history as academic fields. As historians have shown, many individuals from around the world—including collectors, antiquarians, art dealers, and scholars—rifled through both European and Mexican archives with little supervision and few consequences for sometimes absconding with what they found.[12] As a result, thousands of documents from the Mexican church and government archives

currently are housed in special collections libraries and private collections across Europe and the United States.

At that time, access to archives chiefly depended on personal connections and social status rather than academic credentials; only those scholars who also moved within certain social circles were commonly allowed in. Nuttall's family connections in Mexico and Europe helped in this situation. Within Mexico, Nuttall's complex identity was beneficial to her scholarship; she was regarded as a Mexican but also as someone with deep connections in the United States, which at the time allowed her to wield a certain degree of authority. Moreover, her British schooling meant that she was sometimes mistaken for an Englishwoman.

Nuttall's research required her to travel to Madrid, Florence, and London, where she not only studied codices but also sought benefactors who could underwrite their publication. Nuttall's work with manuscripts was only one aspect of her broader anthropological project, which extended to archaeological work in the field in Mexico and curatorial work with artifacts in museums—and all of these ambitious projects required financial backing. To that end, Nuttall reached out to benefactors such as Frederick Ward Putnam, Charles Pickering Bowditch, and Phoebe Hearst in an effort to fund the purchase of codices and their subsequent publication as facsimiles, and to support her archaeological excavations.

Nuttall's correspondence shows that she faced competition from other scholars interested in publishing the same materials, in addition to financial challenges and frustrations with her main publisher. These challenges were exacerbated by her status as a female scholar whose relationship to academic and scholarly institutions was often ambiguous. Nuttall was not employed by any institution, but she did enjoy a supportive, if ill-defined, relationship with the Peabody Museum in Cambridge, which gave her the title of Honorary Assistant in Mexican Archaeology; this title allowed her entry into a world of scholarship that normally would have been inaccessible to amateurs (or perhaps even to other women scholars).[13] For a researcher with some college training but no serious academic experience other than that acquired through her own scholarship, this relationship was a beneficial one that she was able to maintain for several decades. However, as the fields of archaeology and anthropology professionalized, holding an advanced degree gained in importance, and the Peabody Museum eventually began providing Nuttall with less funding and support.

Nuttall characterized her motivation for seeking out pre-Columbian writings in these archives as altruistic, and she often asserted that she conducted this work purely in the interest of science. Not content to

simply uncover these neglected manuscripts, however, she also sought to share these materials through publication. Over the course of her career, Nuttall was involved in publishing the *Codex Nuttall*, the *Codex Magliabechiano*, and several primary sources related to Sir Francis Drake. She also attempted to publish the manuscript now known as the *Florentine Codex* but was never able to complete this work. Despite a few great successes, Nuttall was often frustrated by the laborious and protracted process of working with the Peabody Museum to print facsimiles and other essays.

Of particular importance, the Peabody did not publish Nuttall's work on the Mexican Calendar System, which she believed would be her masterpiece, despite producing several iterations of proofs. Nuttall sent multiple drafts to her supporter and publisher, Frederick Ward Putnam, which included numerous complex charts and illustrations; however, after a number of years, the museum finally abandoned the project.[14] Nuttall managed to salvage part of the work and in 1894 published it as a lengthy article in the *Congress of Americanists* volume that followed its conference in Stockholm.[15]

Description of the Codex

The Mixtec manuscript from Mexico, formerly known as the *Codex San Marco* and now called the *Codex Tonindeye*, was created before contact with Europeans. It was removed from its original context and audience and sent to Europe at an unknown date, which is generally assumed to have been during the colonial period. The original manuscript was created between 1200 and 1521 by the Mixtec people. The screen-fold manuscript is painted on deer skin and has forty-seven leaves. It measures 19 cm by 113.50 cm. Painted on gesso on both sides, the document tells the history of the Mixtec ruler Eight Deer Jaguar-Claw and that of the Mixtec region.[16] The artist is unknown, but it is evident that this pictorial manuscript was executed as a practice piece. Faint erasures reveal areas where the scribe corrected earlier mistakes, and the document is unfinished.[17]

It may have been because the document was not finalized that it was deemed suitable to serve as a gift from Mixtec leaders to the Spanish, although the circumstances of its acquisition are only conjectural. Also unknown are the specifics of how the codex was shipped, where it was sent, or who was meant to receive it, although Nuttall speculated that Dominican friars originally sent this document and one other pictorial manuscript to Europe; they were lost in a raid on the ship.[18] In any case, it was almost certainly the Spanish who sent the material to Europe. We do not know how the document arrived at the archive at

San Marco or how long it was there before it was stolen.[19] Documents are often traced via library stamps and book plates, but in this case, no previous owner marked the book. Once Nuttall had identified the manuscript, however, she was able to piece together the way in which the document left the archive of San Marco and was eventually deposited in the British Museum.

Codex Nuttall

When Mexican documents in European archives were brought to light, they often received new titles. Formerly, they were named in honor of the people that had first received them, but in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they were named in honor of the people who studied and published them, or were given names derived from the archives that held them.[20] At this time, the role of the Mexican documents changed. They had once been considered gifts or legal documents, whereas during this period, they became objects of study that would provide a window into life in the pre-Colombian and early colonial eras. Scholars used these documents to support new interpretations informed by emerging academic fields, such as anthropology and history. In doing so, they increased the pressure on archives to organize and professionalize to keep pace with the needs of these emerging scholarly disciplines, although most archives were slow to evolve and adapt to the changing demands.

Indicative of its complicated history, the Mixtec codex was known by many different names at different times. Nuttall referred to it as the *Ancient Mexican Codex*. It was also known as the *Codex San Marco*, then the *Codex Zouche*, and still later was called the *Codex Nuttall* or *Codex Zouche-Nuttall.* In 2004, the scholars Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez suggested that, insofar as multiple histories are recorded on both sides of the manuscript, it should be given a name reflective of its original purpose. They wrote, "Because of its composite character, we call this pictorial manuscript *Codex Tonindeye* after the Dzaha Dzaui term for 'lineage history'."[21] Laura Osorio Sunnucks from the British Museum has said that the museum was persuaded by this argument and adopted the name "Tonindeye" as a way of reconnecting the codex to the community from which it originated. The new name honors the origins of the *Codex Tonindeye* and indicates that it is both a chronicle and a genealogy.[22]

Nuttall first heard about the codex that in many ways would define her career in 1890, at a reception in Florence. During a discussion with Pasquale Villari (a family friend, professor, and historian, who was also a senator and former Minister of Public Instruction), Nuttall learned

that in the mid-nineteenth century he had seen "an Ancient Mexican Codex" in the Library of the Monastery of San Marco in Florence.[23] Villari told Nuttall that the document had confounded the monks at the monastery and, when they consulted the Propaganda Fide in Rome, they were told "the document was probably intended for the amusement of children, but was so foolish that it could only bore them."[24] However, Villari's description of Spanish inscriptions on both the document and its case struck Nuttall as being similar to those found on the *Codex Becker*, which led her to suspect that this document could be an unknown Mexican manuscript.[25]

In 1859, when the monastery archive at San Marco was converted into a public library, many documents went astray. When Villari returned to the archive, he was told that the manuscript had vanished.[26] Nuttall was not able to locate the codex in any of the archives in Italy in which she was sporadically working.[27] She and Villari eventually found it by keeping their ears attuned to gossip about the black market, learning that the codex had been secretly sold from the monastery of San Marco, despite Italian policies forbidding such documents being sold to private individuals.

Nuttall and Villari learned that the San Marco codex was sold to an English collector, John Temple Leader, who was then living in Italy. Leader then gave the document as a gift to Robert Curzon, Lord Zouche, in England. In anticipation of receiving the manuscript, Lord Zouche wrote to Leader that he would smuggle the book out of Italy with the assistance of various English lords. Lord Zouche referred to the book as a "he" and instructed Leader to "pack him up in swaddling clothes of water proof stuff and tell him to be quiet, and not to quarrel with the other dispatches in the bag."[28] Lord Zouche considered the manuscript to be incomprehensible and also representative of the "horrible Aztec image."[29] Nonetheless, he stated that it would become the glory of his library, and he hoped to make a facsimile of it so scholars could eventually decipher it. Many years later, in July 1890, Leader wrote to an acquaintance explaining that he had been trying to acquire the manuscript since 1854 but had not managed to do so until 1859.[30]

In 1873, Lord Zouche died without having arranged for the publication of a facsimile. His son, Sir Robert Curzon, the 15th Baron Zouche, was not interested in his father's library. Much of it, including the codex from San Marco, was loaned for an indefinite period to the British Museum. The manuscript was officially donated to the museum in 1917.[31]

Conveniently, Nuttall happened to be friends with the curator responsible for the care of the piece, Sir Edward Thompson, a noted paleographer who was then the director and head librarian at the

museum. She was able to persuade him to temporarily transfer the codex to the Bodleian Library in Oxford, where she was allowed to work closely with the manuscript throughout 1898 and 1899.

> It was in June 1898, at the British Museum, that the long sought for Codex was finally laid into my hands, for inspection, by its custodian, Sir Edward Maunde Thompson. As I eagerly scanned its pages, I found that, whereas the explanatory notes did not fulfil my hopes and expectations, the Codex itself far surpassed them. I soon realized that it was the most superb example of an Ancient Mexican historical manuscript I had ever seen, which, in wealth of detail and interest even excelled its sister, the Vienna Codex ... In order to afford me the desired opportunity of studying it during my stay in Oxford, the Codex was subsequently transferred, temporarily, to the Bodleian Library and deposited there for my particular use. [32]

Nuttall found that the visual elements exceeded her expectations. She paid particular attention to variations in the shades of paint, which she would later seek to reproduce:

> The surfaces of both sides of the skin are covered with a thick layer of a white substance which presents a smooth, slightly glazed surface. On this, the artist first drew the outlines of his figures in black, and subsequently filled these in with color. A careful study of the original reveals that the artist prepared small quantities of each color at a time, and that he did not always succeed in obtaining exactly the same shade twice. The scheme of color on the obverse is, moreover, different from that on the reverse, which presents a greater profusion of detail. The paints employed were so fine and skillfully prepared, that for nearly four centuries they have preserved, undimmed, their exquisite beauty and delicacy.[33]

While Nuttall was in London examining the codex, Charles Pickering Bowditch, an American financier who was a generous benefactor for the Peabody Museum, was also there; he had an opportunity to visit Nuttall while she was working on the manuscript.[34] This viewing ignited Bowditch's desire to have the document published as a facsimile, and he volunteered funding for the project through the Peabody Museum. Nuttall, in turn, "offered to assume the responsibility and work of carrying out the publication."[35]

Bowditch suggested that the *Codex Zouche*, as it was then known, should be renamed after Nuttall on publication.[36] This act of renaming the codex after a scholar, rather than after a collector or library, can be seen as indicative of the recontextualization of these manuscripts as objects of scholarly attention at a time when interpreting Indigenous

history was becoming the province of scientists rather than antiquarians. Nuttall knew, however, that it could potentially be controversial to alter the name of the document and that the new Lord Zouche might well not be in favor of it. However, when asked whether he objected to renaming the codex after Nuttall, Zouche willingly gave his consent. Nuttall was relieved that Zouche did not seem to mind that the book was being renamed after her, but others apparently did; in one of her letters, Nuttall told Putnam that Charles Hercules Read, the British Museum's Keeper of the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography, was opposed to the idea, but she dismissed him as "not very bright."[37] When the facsimile was published, Putnam entered a note before the introduction explaining why the Peabody Museum had decided to name the facsimile after Nuttall, "As an acknowledgment of Mrs. Zelia Nuttall's indefatigable researches, one of the results of which has been the discovery of the long lost manuscript here published in facsimile, and in recognition of her high attainments in Mexican Archaeology, the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology has given to this ancient Mexican book the name of *Codex Nuttall*."[38]

At the same time, an effort was made to name another document after Nuttall. While Nuttall was studying the Mixtec codex, she received a letter from Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, the Director of the National Museum in Mexico. He was in Florence studying the *Florentine Codex* by Bernardino de Sahagun, which he offered to rename after her. She declined the offer because she knew that the codex at the British Museum was to be named after her; however, she was secretive about revealing what document she had located. She was wary of telling Paso y Troncoso of her discovery because she feared that he or someone else would try to step in and publish the codex themselves. It was not common knowledge that the Mixtec codex was in the British Museum; the museum had not publicized the acquisition, particularly because of the dubious legality of the circumstances through which Zouche had originally acquired the codex.[39] Those circumstances did not become public until Nuttall published the facsimile and her accompanying introduction.

Handcrafting the Facsimile

In a series of letters, Nuttall updated Bowditch and Putnam on the details of printing the facsimile and related expenses. In August 1899, Nuttall wrote to Putnam that she had acquired all of the necessary guarantees to reproduce the codex. Nuttall, Bowditch, and Sir Edward Thompson all would need to approve the final proofs.[40] Nuttall found

her ideal printer in Gilbert Whitehead in London. She had great faith in Whitehead's abilities because he did everything by hand. As she told Bowditch, "I am confident that no pains or skill will be spared to make the colours perfectly correct." Whitehead's artist traced the original codex rather than photographing it; this approach pleased Nuttall, who believed that photography was an inferior means of textual reproduction because it created shadows. Nuttall wrote, "Whitehead has so completely grasped the matter as we would [and is] so deeply interested and keen about obtaining a perfect facsimile that I think we can feel at ease about his success." The original contract states that the printer, Gilbert Whitehead and Co., would produce 500 copies of all of the plates by the middle of 1899, and Nuttall hoped the book could be released by Christmas 1899.[41] Her estimate was optimistic; Adolar Röhl, the binder that Nuttall found in Germany, actually received the proofs two years later, in May 1901.[42]

Nuttall stayed in England and took the lead in supervising the reproduction, lavishing enormous attention on every detail of the printing. When Bowditch and the Peabody Museum had any objections to the colored reproductions, for example, Nuttall would go to London herself to make certain that any issues were resolved. She satisfied herself that the paper was the right texture and color, and that the images were matte and not glazed. She received a full set of test proofs and spent three days reviewing the outlining and coloring before declaring she was satisfied with them.[43] Receiving official sets of proofs ten months later, she wrote to Bowditch excitedly, "I hasten to send them to express my delight at the successful rendering of the mottled appearance of the background and the dead surface of the colours which has been very difficult to obtain. I am enchanted with these proofs and am sure that you will share my enthusiasm."[44] She was so pleased that she gave her own copy of the proofs to Adolar Röhl to create a mockup of the mounting and the binding and give her an estimate for 300 copies. She implicitly trusted Röhl's work because she had been working with him for many years. She was also pleased with the pricing that Röhl gave her. His estimate for mounting, binding, and building cases was less than the price an English binder had quoted her for the mounting alone.

In early March 1900, when Nuttall was expecting Whitehead to send the final proofs to Röhl, Sir Edward Thompson went to review the final plates one last time. Nuttall had earlier expressed confidence in his taste and assistance when it came to checking the proofs, writing that "we can count on him and the British Museum experts."[45] During the final check, however, Thompson noticed that Whitehead's work had gone awry and the coloring was completely off. Nuttall guessed that Whitehead had acquired a new artist, and she planned to return to

Figure 2: The Peabody Museum published 300 copies of the accordion fold edition of the *Codex Nuttall: Facsimile of an Ancient Mexican Codex Belonging to Lord Zouche of Harynworth England* in 1902.

London to oversee the new coloring. She wrote, "I enclose Sir Edward Thompson's last letter—you can see that he is doing all that he can for us. I cannot understand how it is that Whitehead went all wrong with the colours after I left, because the samples he submitted to me were quite satisfactory, also to Sir. T. He must have changed artists and I am anxious to get back there to see for myself and to put some pressure upon him."[46] After Thompson spoke to Whitehead about the necessary corrections, the printer haggled over the price of the reprinting, and Nuttall instructed Thompson to persuade Whitehead to accept the payment. If he did not do so, all of the prints would need to be burned in a "dire desecration—an auto-de-fe," presumably so that he could not resell them for use in some other publication.[47]

Four hundred ninety-eight copies were printed, and 300 of them were bound in a style that mimicked the accordion fold of the pictorial manuscript (Figure 2). This binding required 51,000 linen strips, which were dyed by Whitehead and sent to Röhl to mount the book. Röhl's workshop was in his residence, and he had little assistance in his work.[48] The illustrated plates are mounted on both sides of thin pieces of cardboard so the facsimile is double-sided (Figure 3.) Nuttall was determined that the book should be light but durable.

Nuttall delighted in deciding on the finishing touches. She told Bowditch, "You will see, dear Mr. Bowditch that I am giving the matter my best attention and it certainly gives me intense pleasure to do so."[49] Nuttall kept Bowditch apprised of all the details to ensure his continued patronage; each new element she added increased the cost

of production. Nuttall's attention to these details gives us a clear sense of the materiality of the original document, particularly because this edition reflects the exact dimensions of the original.

Nuttall wanted dyed parchment or vellum to be used on the covers of the presentation copies, and she eventually acquired antique parchment for this purpose. She then tried out two different printers in Germany before she was satisfied with the work of the German printer Wilhelm Hoffmann, who she asked to print a date symbol from the pictorial manuscript on the cover (Figure 4). Nuttall wrote, "The date of 1 Acatl and 1 Cipactli, the first of the MS. ... recurs in various sizes and forms, one of which is quite large and decorative and would look splendidly reproduced on the cover."[50]

Nuttall felt personally responsible for any errors that might emerge, and she labored over the introduction, where she explained how she located the manuscript, how to read the pages, and even how to handle

Figure 3: Linen strips bind the edges of the cardboard that holds the mounted plates. Photograph by the author. Private collection.

the facsimile. "The text of the Codex reads from right to left, therefore, when the book lies closed, with the conventionalized ray of the year-sign pointing upwards, the left end of the cover is to be raised and carried over to the right, thus disclosing page 1, which begins in the lower right-hand corner."[51]

The quality of the reproduction is exquisite, and the materials used in it have withstood 120 years. Surviving copies of the book reflect the efforts that Nuttall and Whitehead took to retain the remarkable coloring of the original in the facsimile.[52]

Figure 4: Zelia Nuttall chose the date 1 Acatl 1 Cipactli for the cover of the codex. The date occurs throughout the original manuscript. Photograph by the author. Private collection.

Access and Distribution

Nuttall compiled a list with more than 100 names of individuals who were to receive complimentary copies of the accordion-fold edition. Among these recipients were Mexican politicians, diplomats, and scholars, such as President Porfirio Díaz; the Minister of Education, Justo Sierra; and Professor Nicolás León.[53] Nuttall hoped to carry copies with her when she went to Mexico in January 1902, but delays in printing meant she was unable to obtain any copies before she embarked on the trip.[54] While in Oaxaca, she appealed to the Peabody Museum for copies to give to the archaeologist Marshall Saville and the explorer Alfred Maudslay.[55] This request speaks to the fact that social relationships, established and maintained through the exchange of such gifts, remained an important element of Nuttall's scholarly activities and ability to network.

In late February 1902, Nuttall was visiting with Saville in Oaxaca when they encountered Leopoldo Batres, the Mexican Inspector General and Conservator of Archaeological Monuments. Batres was a cantankerous fellow who did not get along with most of the archaeologists working in Mexico, regardless of their national origin. He did not hesitate to inform Nuttall that he had expected her to send him a presentation copy of the *Codex Nuttall* facsimile, and he made it clear that he was disappointed not to have received such a gift. Batres's comment illustrates that scholars and archaeologists often used their publications as a form of diplomatic and political currency. It might be expected that Nuttall would send the Mexican Inspector General a copy of her reproduction of a Mexican book, and earlier in her career, Nuttall had sent copies of her essays to Batres. In the intervening time, however, Nuttall had developed a strong dislike for Batres because she had heard that he had mistreated Saville. Saville had left Mexico without completing his excavations at Palenque because Batres had interfered constantly.[56] Having heard these stories from Saville, Nuttall bristled when Batres demanded a copy of her book. She resented

it even more when Batres went further and threatened the Peabody Museum. As Nuttall told the story to Putnam, Batres warned that, if the Peabody Museum did not send him four copies of the book, "he would not be good to your museum!"[57]

Courtesy copies may have been politically important, but few people wanted to purchase a copy of the book, which was quite expensive to produce. In total, Whitehead's portion alone had cost more than $3,125.00; therefore, printing and binding costs probably exceeded $4,000.00.[58] The Peabody offered the codex to subscribers for the elevated price of $20.00. Nuttall felt the price was justified. She told Putnam, "I am glad that the Codex will be sold for $20, for it is well worth it."[59] Inexplicably, the resale value of the facsimile in 1910, priced at little more than £3 from a British vendor, suggests that the book was being sold at half price despite its fine quality.[60] Many copies had been distributed, but Nuttall lamented that the Peabody Museum was not successful in convincing libraries to purchase copies. At that time, the museum did not even print a catalog to advertise its publications. As the Peabody Museum published journals and books on a subscription basis in 1902, it is unlikely that it had any mechanisms in place for advertising and distributing what was essentially an artisan product. As of September 1902, only nine copies of the book had been sold, and Nuttall declared to Putnam that she was "disgusted."[61] The expense of the facsimile is possibly one of the reasons the Peabody Museum failed to follow up on subsequent projects with Nuttall. Although museum officials did not tell her so directly, her correspondence throughout 1902 demonstrates that they let her work on the *Florentine Codex* languish at a time when she was trying to publish competitively on the document.[62]

Conclusion

Nuttall's ability to trace the provenance of this codex and gain access to it for scholarly purposes depended on her access to a largely informal network of friendships, confidential conversations, gossip, and quasi-legal dealings. Nuttall was uniquely positioned to move between a world of amateur collectors and antiquarian enthusiasts on the one hand, and academic institutions, museums, and professional scholars on the other. In a time of increasing professionalization and transition for both archives and pre-Columbian scholarship, Nuttall and her work served as an important bridge.

Although the facsimile was not an immediate commercial success, Nuttall achieved her ambition to share the manuscript. In the decades following initial publication of the facsimile, the manuscript

was reproduced numerous times, with introductions in English, Spanish, and German. Perhaps the most democratic of these print reproductions is the richly colored paperback edition, a facsimile of Nuttall's facsimile (with corrections), issued by Dover Publications in 1975 and still widely available in the used book market.[63] The technology for reproducing facsimiles in the twenty-first century has shifted. The Internet Archive now hosts a photographic version of Nuttall's introduction and facsimile online.[64] The British Museum, still the caretakers of the original document, hosts a photographic copy and provides some interpretation on its own website.[65]

Scholars continue to consider the *Codex Tonindeye* to be one of the most important remaining Indigenous pictorial manuscripts. Because Nuttall was the first to contextualize the document, trace its history, and track its movements, she was able to use the act of publishing the facsimile to highlight that culturally significant Indigenous documents had been removed from Mexico as gifts or loot, only to languish forgotten in European archives. Nuttall's ability to recognize the importance of the document and begin to read and interpret it allowed her to provide a context for a manuscript that had long been displaced in space and time. Her perseverance in bringing the codex to a wider audience reflects the immeasurable value that she placed on both the manuscript itself and the cultural knowledge it so beautifully embodies and preserves. Through manuscripts like the *Codex Tonindeye*, ancient civilizations chronicled their own histories and dynasties. As the first scholar to uncover this codex and share it with the world, particularly scholars in Mexico, Nuttall's work provides an early, crucial example of how Indigenous manuscripts found in European archives can regain their voices, reclaim their historical identity, and continue to tell their story.[66]

ENDNOTES

1. Sections of this research were presented at the Durham History of the Book Conference, "Organizing and Disorganizing Knowledge," on 8 September 2021. Many thanks to the organizers Sare Aricanli, Laura Leon Llerena, and Luke Sunderland. Thanks also to Marie Wasnock and Katherine Meyers Satriano (Peabody Museum), Suzanne Karr Schmidt (Newberry Library), and Kathleen Feeney (University of Chicago Library) for their help in finding sources, information, and photographs. I am grateful to all who read drafts of this article and provided suggestions and comments. A portion of this research was funded by a research grant from the Arizona State University Library.

Epigraph from Zelia Nuttall, "Introduction." In *Codex Nuttall; Facsimile of an ancient Mexican Codex belonging to Lord Zouche of Harynworth, England* (Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1902), 1, 4; alternate names for the codex include Ancient Mexican Codex, *Codex San Marco, Codex Zouche, Codex Zouche-Nuttall, Codex Nuttall, and Codex Tonindeye.*

2. The *Maya Codex of Mexico* was previously known as the "Grolier Codex" because it was housed at the Grolier Club in New York. It was repatriated to Mexico more than six years ago. Erin Blakemore, "New Analysis Shows Disputed Maya 'Grolier Codex' Is the Real Deal," Smithsonian Magazine 15 September 2016. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/maya-codex-once-thought-be-sketchy-real-thing-180960466/.
3. Miruna Achim, *From Idols to Antiquity: Forging the National Museum of Mexico* (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2017), chap. 2.
4. Nuttall's list of "sister codices" included the Vatican, the Borgian, the Cospi, the Fejérváry (Mayer), the Laud, the Bodleian, and the Selden codices. Nuttall, "Introduction," Codex, 6.
5. Alfred M. Tozzer, "Zelia Nuttall (obituary)," American Anthropologist 35, (1933): 475–481; Ross Parmenter, "Zelia Nuttall and the Recovery of Mexico's Past," 1–3, Ross Parmenter Papers (unpublished MSS, Latin American Library at Tulane," undated), 13–29.
6. Amanda Adams, "Mexico's Archaeological Queen: Zelia Nuttall 1857–1933," in *Ladies of the Field: Early Women Archaeologists and Their Search for Adventure*, ed. Amanda Adams (Berkeley: Greystone Book, 2010), 69.
7. Sven D. Haakanson, Jr. and Amy F. Steffian, *Giinaquq like a Face: Sugpiaq Masks of the Kodiak Archipelego* (Château-Musée de Boulogne-sur-Mer: Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, 2009), 31–41.
8. Ross Parmenter, *Explorer, Linguist and Ethnologist: A Descriptive Bibliography of the Published Works of Alphonse Louis Pinart with Notes on His Life* (Los Angeles: Southwest Museum, 1966), 2.
9. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 23 May 1888. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.
10. Letters from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 10 January 1901; 20 April 1901. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.
11. Seonaid Valiant, *Ornamental Nationalism: Archaeology and Antiquities in Mexico, 1876–1911* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), chap. 6 and 7.
12. Achim, From Idols to Antiquity, chap. 2.
13. Tozzer, "Zelia," 476.
14. Seonaid Valiant, "First in the Archives: Zelia Nuttall and the Mexican Manuscripts" (MLIS thesis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2019), 16–18.
15. Zelia Nuttall, "Note on the Ancient Mexican Calendar System" (Proceedings of the International Congress of Americanists, Stockholm, 1894), 1–41.
16. British Museum, "The Tonindeye Codex." https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Am1902-0308-1.
17. Laura Osario Sunnucks, "The Tonindeye Codex," in "Made in Latin America," British Museum Podcast, date unknown, last accessed 19 August 2022, https://www.sdcelarbritishmuseum.org/blog/listen-to-the-new-sdcelar-podcast-made-in-latinamerica/.
18. Davide Domenici, "The Dominicans as Conveyors of Mesoamerican Objects to Italy and Europe," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedias, Latin American History* (31 August 2021), 2. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.013.967. Last accessed 22 July 2022.
19. Lauren Toorians explores pathways that may have landed the Mixtec codex in the Italian archive. Lauren Toorians, "Codex Zouche-Nuttall: Some Observations Concerning its History." *Mexican* 17, no. 4 (August 1995): 74–75.
20. Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez, "Renaming the Mexican Codices," Ancient Mesoamerica 15 (2004): 267.
21. Jansen and Pérez Jiménez, "Renaming," 269.
22. Sunnucks, "The Tonindeye."
23. Davide Domenici documents that there were many Mexican artifacts and documents transferred from the Americas to Italy. Domenici, "The Dominicans," 1–19.
24. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 1.

25. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 1–3.
26. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 1–2.
27. Zelia Nuttall, *The Book of the Life of the Ancient Mexicans, Containing an Account of their Rites and Superstitions: An Anonymous Hispano-Mexican Manuscript Preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale* (Berkeley: University of California, 1903), "Preface," iii.
28. The scholar Nancy P. Troike, in her 1987 introduction to a facsimile of the codex, published these letters between Leader and Curzon regarding the theft of the codex from Italy. Nancy P. Troike, "Introduction," *Codex Zouche Nuttall* (London: British Museum, 1987), 19.
29. Troike, "Introduction," 20.
30. Troike, "Introduction," 22.
31. British Museum. "The Tonindeye Codex." https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Am1902-0308-1.
32. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 4–5.
33. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 6.
34. Alfred M. Tozzer, "Charles Pickering Bowditch (obituary)," *American Anthropologist* 23 no. 3 (1921): 353.
35. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 5.
36. Parmenter, "Zelia Nuttall," 727.
37. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 27 May 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
38. Frederick Ward Putnam, "Note," in Zelia Nuttall, *Codex*, no page number.
39. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 30 November 1898. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
40. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 5 August 1899. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
41. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 30 November 1898; contract between Gilbert Whitehead and Company, Art Colour Printers, 29 November 1898. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
42. Letter from Adolar Röhl to Zelia Nuttall, 22 May 1901. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
43. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 30 November 1898. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
44. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 11 March 1900. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
45. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 14 September 1899. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
46. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 11 March 1900. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
47. Letters from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 11 March 1900, 22 June 1901; letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 5 August 1899; 1902 (no other date given). Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
48. Letter from Adolar Röhl to Charles Bowditch, 7 October 1901. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
49. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 21 January 1900. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
50. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Bowditch, 21 January 1900. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University. Zelia Nuttall, *Codex*, cover, 9. Including a cover is one of Nuttall's contributions to the facsimile.
51. Nuttall, "Introduction," *Codex*, 7.
52. Another set of copies was printed on different paper and bound as a more traditional European book. The quality of the reproductions in this edition is durable but poor compared to the accordion-fold edition. In OCLC, this edition is often miscataloged as the accordion-fold edition.

53. Zelia Nuttall, List of recipients, Folder: Nuttall Correspondence, PM Papers, volume II, "mailing lists for complimentary..." Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 11 January 1902; 8 February 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
54. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 11 January 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
55. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 16 February 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
56. Marshall H. Saville, "Bibliographic Notes on Palenque, Chiapas," *Indian Notes and Monographs* (New York: Museum of the American Indian Heyes Foundation, 1928), 155–167; letter from Zelia Nuttall to Miss Mead (Francis Harvey Teobert Mead) at the Peabody Museum, 16 February 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
57. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, February 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University. Nuttall assisted the Mexican student Manual Gamio so he could study anthropology at Columbia University with Franz Boas. Nuttall explicitly told Boas that he should train Gamio to replace Batres as the national archaeologist and head of the National Museum of Anthropology. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Franz Boas, 27 September 1909. Franz Boas Papers. American Philosophical Society; Zelia Nuttall, "Island of Sacrificios," *American Anthropologist* 12 (1910). Note 1: 280; Seonaid Valiant, "Zelia Nuttall," in *Women that Changed the World*, edited by Candice Goucher (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 2022), 916.
58. Estimate sent from Gilbert Whitehead to Zelia Nuttall. Undated; Bill from Gilbert Whitehead for linen strips, 28 March 1901; receipt from Adolar Röhl to Zelia Nuttall for $404.25 marks, January 1901; estimate from Wilhelm Hoffman for printing the cover for $12.5 marks, 25 May 1900; letter from Zelia Nuttall to Charles Pickering Bowditch, 11 March 1900. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
59. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 16 February 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
60. Edward E. Ayer, a trustee of the Newberry Library, purchased a copy of the book from a British bookseller in 1910 for £3, 4 shillings, 3 pence (minus a 10% discount). This information is written on the back inside cover of his copy, held at the Newberry Library.
61. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnam, 25 September 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.
62. Valiant, "First," 24–27.
63. Nuttall, Zelia. *The Codex Nuttall: A Picture Manuscript from Ancient Mexico, the Peabody Museum Facsimile*. Arthur Miller, ed. (New York: Dover Publications, 1975). Mesolore documented the following editions of the original document: Akademische Druk-und Verlagsanstalt in 1987, Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario, the Akademische Druk-und Verlagsanstalt, and the Fondo de Cultura Economica in 1992. http://www.mesolore.org/tutorials/learn/4/Introduction-to-the-Codex-Nuttall/23/History-and-Publications. Last accessed 20 July 2022.
64. *Codex Zouche Nuttall*. https://archive.org/details/codex-zouche-nuttall. Last accessed 21 July 2022.
65. British Museum. "Tonindeye Codex." https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Am1902-0308-1.
66. Ferdinand Anders, Maarten E.R.G.N. Jansen, Pérez Jiménez, Gabina Aurora. Crónica Mixteca: el rey 8 Venado, Garra de Jaguar, y la dinastía de Teozacualco-Zaachila: libro explicativo del llamado Códice Zouche-Nuttall, Ms. 39671 British Museum, Londres (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica; Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1992), 11, 21.

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