



In the sixteenth century, the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún and a team of indigenous grammarians, scribes, and painters completed decades of work on an extraordinary encyclopedic project titled General History of the Things of New Spain, known as the Florentine Codex (1575–1577). Now housed in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence and bound in three lavishly illustrated volumes, the codex is a remarkable product of cultural exchange in the early Americas. In this edited volume, experts from multiple disciplines analyze the manuscript’s bilingual texts and more than 2,000 painted images and offer fascinating, new insights on its twelve books. The contributors examine the “three texts” of the codex—the original Nahuatl, its translation into Spanish, and its painted images. Together, these constitute complementary, as well as conflicting, voices of an extended dialogue that occurred in and around Mexico City. The volume chapters address a range of subjects, from Nahua sacred beliefs, moral discourse, and natural history to the Florentine artists’ models and the manuscript’s reception in Europe. The Florentine Codex ultimately yields new perspectives on the Nahua world several decades after the fall of the Aztec empire.

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