

“As if His Heart Died”: A Reinterpretation of Moteuczoma’s Cowardice in the Conquest History of the Florentine Codex

Rebecca Dufendach, *Getty Research Institute*

Abstract. The first encounters between Nahuas and Spaniards from 1519 to 1521 resulted in widespread deaths in the indigenous communities of central Mexico. Although the first recorded disease epidemic is often acknowledged as a factor in the loss of rule to the invaders, Moteuczoma receives much of the blame. Historians contend that Moteuczoma’s cowardice facilitated the defeat of his people. Instead, this article argues that descriptions of the pain and fright that afflicted Moteuczoma and his people in Book XII of the Florentine Codex are references to long-standing cultural concepts of illness. This article uses colonial and modern ethnographic sources to illuminate enduring Mesoamerican concepts of health and sickness. The chaos and loss of life connected to the first epidemic in 1520 contributed significantly to the fall of Tenochtitlan. This article reveals how Nahuas remembered and understood the startling arrival of the Spaniards and the first terrifying disease epidemic during the invasion.

Keywords. Mexico, Nahuas, Nahuatl, Moteuczoma, epidemic, disease, conquest, Florentine Codex

Introduction

In the search to understand the mythic history of how a handful of Spaniards conquered the Aztec empire, as so often the conquest of Mexico (1519–21) is portrayed, we focus on the actions of the “great men,” or leaders. The *huei tlatoani* (great speaker) Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin (the Aztec ruler also known as Montezuma or Moctezuma) bears the brunt of the blame for the fall of the Mexica people. This article reexamines

Ethnohistory 66:4 (October 2019) DOI 10.1215/00141801-7683240
Copyright 2019 by American Society for Ethnohistory

depictions of Moteuczoma and the Mexica people in Book XII of the Florentine Codex through the lens of indigenous cultural concepts of illness. When viewed through Nahuatl concepts of illness, descriptions of fright should be reinterpreted as indications of failing health. This reinterpretation is crucial in framing how epidemic disease debilitated the Mexica's defensive abilities and leadership during the invasion of Tenochtitlan.

In order to place Moteuczoma's afflictions in the proper context, this article consults two sixteenth-century herbal manuscripts and modern ethnographic studies on the nature of health in indigenous communities. In both colonial and modern sources, Nahuas draw little distinction between emotional and physical ailments (see Cruz de la Cruz, this issue). Although centuries separate these two sets of sources, there are some fascinating similarities. Nahuatl speakers in the colonial period and in modern times adapted to outside influences and practices, but they also continued to rely on their own healers and methods of healing. Some of the best evidence for a continued reliance on traditional cures comes from the contemporary ethnographic record, where practices recorded in the early colonial period can be seen in contemporary indigenous communities (Huber and Sandstrom 2001). While acknowledging that Nahuas living and healing today may have adjusted or even changed their methods, their interpretations of fright illness are instructive when read alongside evidence from colonial times.¹ Only by situating Moteuczoma's afflictions in the cultural concepts of the colonial period, some of which have endured to the present day, can we understand the ruler's state of mind and body in the conquest history written by the indigenous authors of Book XII.

In their efforts to understand the conquest, scholars have portrayed a weak Mexica leader who could not bring himself to act. The infamous writings of William Prescott (1891: 223) that dominated the historical narrative of the conquest for many years referred to Moteuczoma as the leader of a "pusillanimous policy" that led to the downfall of the Nahuatl people. Prescott described the leader as "prey to the most dismal apprehensions" who "in a paroxysm of despair, shut himself up in his palace, refused food" (257). Prescott characterized Moteuczoma as a quaking and indecisive leader.

Similarly, James Lockhart (1993: 17) argued that portrayals of Moteuczoma's weakness were intended to make the tlatoani a scapegoat for the defeat of his people. Susan D. Gillespie (2008: 31) explained that "Moteuczoma was reduced to if not terror, at least profound anxiety." The figure of Moteuczoma was reduced to a weak state of emotional fragility. Gillespie detailed that Moteuczoma's frightful or cowardly actions represented methods used by indigenous authors to chronicle their resistance

and accommodation to colonial rule. In his recent book on the history of the conquest, Mathew Restall (2018: 47) addresses the legends surrounding the figure of Moteuczoma. He acknowledges that one can easily imagine why Spanish accounts of the events portray the leader in a bad light but “it may be surprising, and is therefore more interesting, to discover that in the sixteenth century there developed among Nahua accounts a version of Montezuma the Coward.” In his examination of the Nahuatl language record, Kevin Terraciano (2014: 225) finds that the negative portrayals of the leader can be attributed to the rivalry between the group to which Moteuczoma belonged, the Tenocha, and the Tlatelolcans, the group to which many of the codex authors and elders belonged. While discussing modern celebrations and the iconography of Mexican identity, Jaime Cuadriello (2009: 119) explains that “the ‘coward’ Moctezuma was altogether absent from the decorative scheme.” Such interpretations equate fright with cowardice—a term with overwhelmingly negative connotations—and assume that it meant the same thing to Nahuas writing in the sixteenth century as it does to historians writing today. There is a great deal of material in the Nahuatl-language historical record that leads us to conclude that Moteuczoma was an ineffectual leader debilitated by fright.

Many of the scholars who highlight Moteuczoma’s cowardice rely on the sixteenth-century text known as the Florentine Codex. Lockhart (1993: 17–18), in his introduction to his translation of Book XII, noted that the portrayal of Moteuczoma as “fawning and fearful” was a classic maneuver from a vanquished people searching for explanations. This article is not interested in whether the Mexica leader was or was not to blame for cowardice. More relevant are the oral traditions of Nahua elders and scholars that are recorded in the Florentine Codex, which, instead of solely illustrating cowardice, could indicate their memories of the leader as one who was suffering from poor health.

Collective Mexica memories of the Spaniards’ arrival must have been influenced by the memories of the epidemics. Before contact in 1519, the estimated population of central Mexico was between 15 and 30 million people; it plummeted to 2 million people by 1600 (Cook and Simpson 1948: 43–55; Cook and Borah 1957; Gibson 1964: 593). Although scholars have acknowledged how warfare, colonial abuses, droughts, and famines contributed to this decline, epidemic diseases were the principal cause of death (Stahle et al. 2000; Acuna-Soto et al. 2002). Epidemic diseases were a defining characteristic of the colonial period, and as Amara Solari points out, Spanish colonists often conflated them with idolatry (2016: 507–8). Nahuas who survived the epidemics also explained poor health according to their own concepts of illness, which included heart pain and fright.

Moteuczoma's Fright and Heart Failure in the Florentine Codex

Nahuas wrote their history of the conquest in Book XII of the Florentine Codex under the supervision of the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún. The codex consists of twelve books on a variety of topics, from Nahua cosmological beliefs and society to natural history and a history of the Spanish-led invasion of Tenochtitlan. Today the history found in Book XII is known as one of the most extensive indigenous accounts of the Spanish-led war on Mexico-Tenochtitlan (Terraciano 2010: 51). The text for the books resulted from a collaboration between Nahua elders and Nahua scholars trained to read and write in Nahuatl, Spanish, and Latin in the first European-style college in the Americas (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 1, bk. XII, unmarked folio, note to the reader). The Nahua scholars Antonio Valeriano, Alonso Vegerano, Pedro de San Buenaventura, and Martín Jacobita sat with ten or twelve elders from Tlatelolco, a neighboring *altepetl* (ethnic city-state), to Tenochtitlan to understand their version of the invasion (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 1, bk. II, fol. 1v). Sahagún explained that some of these men were alive during the war. Another set of Nahua scholars served as scribes for the project: Diego de Grado, Bonifacio Maximiliano, and Mateo Severino. The Nahua scholars, some elders, and Sahagún worked periodically from 1547 until 1577 to complete the texts that form the manuscript today known as the Florentine Codex.²

In Book XII, the Nahua elders and scholars depicted the suffering of Moteuczoma in a uniquely indigenous manner. The text explains that he sent a group of messengers to learn more about the Castilians, who arrived in boats at the coast. The Nahuatl text refers specifically to the health of Moteuczoma when the messengers returned and entered Tenochtitlan at night. The leader is said to have declared *vel patzmique in noiollo*, “my heart is squeezed to death” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 10v). The Nahua authors explained that Moteuczoma's heart suffered greatly. In addition to a crushed heart, Moteuczoma felt as though his heart had been doused with chili water, *chilatequilo* (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 10v). The text explained that his heart was burned and tormented. The torment only increased as the messengers relayed their findings on the threatening visitors.

The leader of Tenochtitlan received the contaminated messengers with appropriate caution. Moteuczoma ordered that two captives be slain and that their blood should be sprinkled using a small brush or broom on the messengers to cleanse them. The Nahua authors wrote in an uncharacteristic aside to the reader: “(The reason they did it was that they had gone to very dangerous places and had seen, gazed on the countenances of, and spoken to the gods)” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 10v).³ This rare use of parentheses suggests that the explanation was needed to

understand the serious nature of the messengers. The Nahuatl text uses the word *ohuican*, a word with several definitions according to the sixteenth-century *Vocabulario* written by an expert in Nahuatl, friar Alonso de Molina. Molina ([1571] 1977: 78 [second numeration]) defined it as “a dangerous place” or “a dark and scary place” (cf. Karttunen 1992: 177). The messengers experienced terrifying events and they were capable of spreading their contagion to others without proper cleansing. The Nahua authors took pains to explain why such protection was necessary for their leader. Moteuczoma was initially protected from the dangerous effects of the Spaniards.

The messengers, after the ceremony, related news that aggravated Moteuczoma’s condition. The threatening news of the Spaniards and their powerful weapons caused him to faint, or, employing the Nahuatl verb *quiolmicti*, “it made his heart die” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 114). The authors of Book XII repeated their interpretations of Moteuczoma’s reaction in the concluding paragraph. When he heard the news, he “seemed to faint away, he grew concerned and disturbed” (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 114). The phrase contains three verbs referring to the state of Moteuczoma’s heart. First, “it was as if his heart died” (*ihquin iolmic*), a term often translated as fainting. Second “his heart was troubled” or afflicted (*moioltequipacho*), referring to pain and anxiety ([1571] Molina 1977: 105v [second numeration]; cf. Karttunen 1992: 232). Third, his heart was disturbed (*moiollocoma*) (39v [second numeration]). When the leader learned that the Spaniards desired to meet him, “to see his face,” Moteuczoma experienced severe pain. The Nahuatl text employs two parallel expressions: *ihquin patzmiquia yiollo* and *iolpatzmiquia*, which can be translated literally “as if his heart was killed by crushing or bruising,” referring to his anguished state (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 13v). The Nahua authors thus recorded that even before any physical interaction with Spaniards had occurred, the arrivals caused harm to the tlatoani.

As Moteuczoma learned about the powerful invaders, he attempted to send sickness, or *cocoliztli*, to the Spaniards. Instead of sending his best warriors to attack them, he assembled several formidable men, specialists who possessed magical powers to be used against the approaching Spaniards. The men sought to cast spells on the invaders “so that they would take sick [*cocolizcuique*], die, or turn back” (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 12v). The men returned from their mission, however, admitting “we are not their match; we are as nothing” (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 13). The powerful men lamented that the ability of the Spaniards to cause sickness and death far outmatched their own. When Moteuczoma heard that the men could not stop the invaders by inflicting sickness or death on them, he hoped to heal himself.

The health-threatening nature of Moteuczoma's malady is revealed in another part of Book XII, a chapter that describes his heart. Moteuczoma discussed his pain with those closest to him, his trusted advisors. He decided to search for a remedy by retreating to a purifying cave (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 14v). The cave retreat was a form of healing. The Nahuatl text confirmed its therapeutic nature. The purpose of the cave retreat was to find a cure (*inic vmpatiz*) (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 14v). The Nahuatl text used the verb *patia* meaning to cure or heal a sick person (Molina [1571] 1977: 80 [second numeration]; cf. Karttunen 1992: 184). His advisors were not able to help him find a remedy, however, and the leader braced himself for the approaching Spaniards.

In another instance, the Nahuatl text directly addressed the fright experienced by the leader. An additional set of messengers sent by Moteuczoma failed to meet the Spaniards and instead encountered a drunk Chalcan, the god Tezcatlipoca in disguise. In his translation Lockhart wrote that the deity ranted at the dumfounded group, and decrying the actions of Moteuczoma he asked, "Has he just now become a great coward?" (Lockhart 1993: 100–102). The question is translated by Anderson and Dibble as "Is he then perchance now overcome by a great fear?" ([1975] 2012: 33). The scholars translated the Nahuatl term *momauhticapul* differently as a combination of the verb *mauhtia* (having fear) (Molina [1571] 1977: 54 [second numeration]) with the preterit agentive (*-tica*) (the person carrying out the action of the verb) and the suffix *-pul* (big), which had derogatory connotations. Although the term coward is a valid translation, it does much to erase the condition of fear and adds a tone of blame. The Nahua authors of Book XII remembered a deeply troubled leader of Tenochtitlan. As Moteuczoma awaited the arrival of the Spaniards, he referred repeatedly to his ailing heart. But the Nahuatl text tells us that Moteuczoma eventually mastered his heart (*moiollotechiuh*) (Molina [1571] 1977: 92v [second numeration]). Two more phrases referred to Moteuczoma's heart and health before the arrival of the Spaniards. One phrase, *quioalcentlanqua in ihollo*, indicates that he managed to master his heart, in spite of his struggles. The descriptions of Moteuczoma's suffering heart draw attention to his failing health. But the Spanish translation of the Nahuatl text suggests weakness or cowardice, instead.

Translating Nahua Cultural Concepts of Illness

Many sections of the Florentine Codex on health and the human body reveal a fundamental divergence between Nahua and Spanish concepts of illness. In the Nahuatl text of Book XII, during the initial stages of contact,

Moteuczoma “neither slept nor touched food. . . . He was tired and felt weak. He no longer found anything tasteful, enjoyable, or amusing” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 10). The Spanish column translates these conditions simply as sadness and fatigue “*sino estava muy triste . . . estava con grande congoxa*” (vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 10). The Nahuatl describes symptoms of poor health that are translated into Spanish as a general state of weariness. The translation does not adequately explain the nature of his pain. The overlap between the different meanings attached to the word “heart” in European contexts often occludes what it may signal to Nahuas.

Nahuatl-language explanations of health and illness appear in metaphorical terms that often corresponded with physiological descriptions. Nahua authors used specific language to communicate ideas of physical and emotional states that were based on their cultural concepts of disease. Louise Burkhart’s (1989: 99) research on the “Nahuatization” of Christian concepts in *The Slippery Earth* writes that “Christianity treated the symbolic relationship between physical and moral pollution primarily as metaphor, while Nahua ideology treated it primarily as metonym.” Her research confirms that whereas Spaniards acknowledged a divide between physical and emotional/moral states, Nahuas believed in no such boundary. Nahua authors used physical and emotional descriptions to indicate the status of health of the human body. Therefore, in their descriptions of Moteuczoma’s heart, the authors refer to a physical ailment.

Although Christian thought symbolically valued the heart, evidence from Nahua art reveals the importance of the organ independent of any interaction with Spanish friars. Several pre-Columbian statues display hearts, particularly stylized sacrificial hearts. In one famous statue of Coatlicue, the female deity wears a necklace composed of alternating hearts and human hands. The statue formed one part of a group of statues, according to Elizabeth Boone (1999: 192); another featured a figure wearing a skirt made entirely of human hearts. The statue, commonly called Yolotlicue (her skirt is hearts), represented a powerful woman goddess who, along with several other women, sacrificed themselves to light and heat the world. In her examination of the Coatlicue statue, Cecelia Klein (2008: 233) clarifies that it represented an “important creator goddess who along with several other deities (all of whom, according to one source, were likewise female) long ago gave up their lives to give birth to and energize the fifth and present sun.” Klein (237) draws attention to the form and red color of the tuna nopal cactus fruit and how the Aztecs associated it with the human heart. The links between the human heart, light, energy, and life itself are vested in the symbolic and figural representations found in the

Yolotlicue and Coatlicue statues. The importance of the heart for heat and life is found in pre-contact forms of sacrifice and a postcontact focus on the heart as an indicator of life and health.

Several sections of the Florentine Codex reveal the importance of the heart in the memories of colonial Nahuas. The heart was an important sacrifice during the ceremony of Tlacaxipeualiztli. In one part of the ceremony, the Nahuas removed the hearts of captives to make offerings to the sun and the eagle. The Nahuas priests called the human hearts “precious-eagle-cactus-fruit,” explaining their important status (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. I, bk. II, f. 18v).⁴ The heart represented a treasured life-sustaining thing, the ultimate offering from human beings. In making offerings to the Mexica patron god Huitzilopochtli, priests formed the god’s body from amaranth dough and then ate the body, reserving the heart for Moteuczoma (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. I, bk. III, fol. 4v). The descriptions of hearts in connection with the fates of humans, their personalities, and their emotions in Book IV exemplify it as the signifier of personal volition (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 1, bk. IV, fols. 14–44). Similarly, descriptions of vices and virtues in Book X consistently refer to a person’s heart as the seat of their disposition and health. For example, the lewd youth who was very sick was called a person who lost his heart or had an evil heart (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. X, fol. 24v). Clearly, the heart served as a vital bodily organ and a moral compass. The Nahuas likely viewed the heart as the seat of a life force, as evidenced by the pre-Columbian iconography and their ceremonies that continued during the colonial period.

Nahuas living during the colonial period may have easily identified their understanding of the heart with the Spanish concept of the human soul. Molina defined the soul with the Nahuatl terms *teyolia* and *teyolitia* (Molina [1571] 1977: 8v [first numeration]). Molina also supplied the Spanish-language loanword for soul, *anima*, with the Nahuatl *te-* prefix: *teanima*. The same definition appears in the Nahuatl-language section of the dictionary. Removing the indefinite possessive prefix *te-*, the Nahuatl section of the dictionary defines *yoli* as a living thing (39v [second numeration]). As a verb, *yoli* signified “to live, revive, or incubate an egg,” definitions that reinforce a general sense of life. A related noun, *yollotli*, is defined as the heart, linking Nahuas ideas of a life force to a physical bodily location (41). Alfredo López Austin (1984: 252–57) observed that the human heart was the seat of the life force of the *teyolia*. According to Frances E. Karttunen (1992: 340), author of the modern analytical dictionary of Nahuatl based on several sixteenth-century sources, the prefix *yol-* indicates “an extended sense that encompasses emotion, volition, strength, valor, and heart.” When Nahuas used the prefix *yol-* they indicated a thing’s

physical and spiritual elements. The repeated references to Moteuczoma's heart indicated his physical and spiritual ailment.

The Nahua authors of the Florentine Codex consulted with sixteen different Nahua healers to create the sections that describe the functions of the human body and cures for ailments (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. X, fol. 113v; fol. 106). In the text they created, they described the heart as round and hot, “that by which there is life, it makes one live . . . it sustains one” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. X, fol. 91v). A section focused on body organs described heart death or *njiolmiquj*. Molina defined the suffering of heart death as “to faint, die away, have unease/itch, or to be frightened” (Molina [1571] 1977: 41 [second numeration]). Nahuas used descriptions of heart afflictions to indicate poor health. Fright was a common cause for heart afflictions. Fright had severe physical and spiritual consequences that affected the heart, long-term health, and the emotional well-being of the victim. In the definition for the term *mauhcatlacayotl* or cowardice—*covuardia*—Molina adds that it also could be defined as a lack of spirit or *falta de animo* (Molina [1571] 1977: 54 [second numeration]). Evidence from colonial and contemporary sources reveals heart-death from fright as a long-standing Mesoamerican concept of illness.

Heart-Death and Fright in Colonial Herbals

Nahuas writing in the sixteenth century considered fright an illness, evident from its listing as a type of illness in two herbals from the colonial era. Colonial sources on herbal remedies confirm that fear required treatment. One herbal, known as the *Cruz-Badiano Codex*, written in 1552 by indigenous physicians and scribes, documents indigenous plants and their medicinal uses (Badiano, Cruz, Treviño [1552] 2008). Martín de la Cruz, a Nahua physician, composed an illustrated herbal in association with colleagues at the College of Santa Cruz, Tlatelolco. Intended for King Carlos I of Spain, the herbal was translated into Latin by another Nahua scholar, Juan Badiano. Each page of the codex is illustrated with images of plants, whereas the text describes the therapeutic qualities of plants, animals, and minerals. The text documents many bicultural concepts of health but also several distinctly Nahua cultural concepts such as a description of fright illness (Gimmel 2008: 169–92).

The *Cruz-Badiano* dedicated an entire page to remedies for the illness of fright. The remedy for fright appears after the remedy for warts and before a section on eliminating armpit stench, a placement suggesting the mundane nature of fright illness. The text recommended an herbal concoction of *tonatiuh-yxiuh*, *tlanextia-yxiuh*, and *tetlahuitl* along with the

flowers of the *cacalo-xochitl*, *cacaua-xochitl*, and *tzacoub-xochitl* and a poultice made with several more ingredients. The text, in Latin, explained that the cure was appropriate for a person who had fright or was “fear-burdened” (Badiano, Cruz, Treviño [1552] 2008: fol. 53). Two images of herbs are drawn above with Nahuatl-language labels that correspond to one of the herbs mentioned in the recipe. The remedies prescribed in the *Cruz-Badiano* offer material solutions to what the Nahua considered a physical and spiritual affliction.

The herbal section of the Florentine Codex found in Book XI confirms the link between fright and illness. One section on healing plants lists an herbal remedy for someone suffering from certain conditions of fright. The text recommends a treatment made from the herb *oquichpatli* to treat a person who had been frightened during sex and suffered from the experience. The text states that “even if she or he has been sick already one year, or even already four years, [treatment] is required” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 173). Such information reinforces the long-term illness associated with fright, a characteristic unique to Nahua cultural concepts of illness.

Fright beyond Moteuczoma in Book XII

The tendency to blame Moteuczoma does not account for the fact that regular Nahuas also suffered similar symptoms during the invasion of their altepetl. The common people depicted in Book XII also experienced fright and poor health. For example, when the messengers rushed back to Tenochtitlan, they described their news as very terrifying or *cenca temamauhti* (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 10). Accurately, Molina’s *Vocabulario* ([1571] 1977: 97 [second numeration]) defines *temamauhti* as a frightening or fearful thing. However, consider how a similar entry on the same page, the noun *temauh*, is relevant here: *temauh* is defined as an infectious thing, something that gives sickness to others. The following entry, *temauh cocoliztli*, refers to contagious sickness. After these two words related to disease, the *Vocabulario* lists *temauhti* as something that scares or puts fear into others. These nouns come from two different verb roots that share the same form in the preterit tense, *omauh* (97). The similarities between the words suggests a direct connection between fear and illness in Mesoamerican culture. The polluting consequences of the frightful encounter destroyed the leader’s health and, ultimately, the health of his people.

The health of the Nahua leaders was thought to have a direct impact on the welfare of their people. Miguel Pastrana Flores has noted how the

failures or bad behaviors of leaders could leave the city in grave danger (Pastrana Flores 2004: 133–5). Book VI of the Florentine Codex, on rhetoric and philosophy, confirms this connection with two adages linking the health of the leader to the condition of his people. One proverb admonished the rulers to ignore their suffering and eat well because “anguish will become a grave sickness” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 2, bk. VI, fol. 210). Another described the results of a bad leader’s behavior as pain, sickness, or famine. It likened the punishment of sickness to the leader throwing cold water on the people. This connection between the health of the *tlatoni* and the condition of his people sheds light on how the authors of Book XII imagined Moteuczoma’s health in light of the welfare of his people. The Nahua authors connected the health and comportment of the leader with the well-being of the common people.

The idea of Moteuczoma as a scapegoat does not adequately explain the fact that the Nahua authors of Book XII also describe the common people as debilitated by fear. The Nahua authors of Book XII explained the imminent health disaster by focusing on the conditions of fright in the *altepetl*. In the introduction to his translation of Book XII, Lockhart (1993: 5) objected to scholars who concluded that the Nahua were “a people shocked out of its senses, amazed, bewildered, overwhelmed, benumbed by intruders, paralyzed, fate-ridden, prepared for imminent doom and disappearance.” Lockhart qualified his disbelief in the image of the cowardly Nahuas by admitting that it is not possible to consult immediate postconquest Nahuatl documents. I argue that the fright documented in Book XII should be considered an early symptom of the diseases that would devastate Tenochtitlan a year later, in 1520.

It was not only the leader who suffered. When Moteuczoma processed the news about the new threat to his *altepetl*, he began to weep. According to the text, when the leader suffered his people suffered too, found in Book XII as “he told the troubles of the *altepetl*” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 13). At that point, everyone experienced tremendous fright. During that time “fear reigned, and shock, laments, and expressions of distress” prevailed (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 13v). Even the enemies of the Mexica, the Tlaxcalans, endured the oppressive fright inspired by the Spaniards. When the Tlaxcalans heard about the massacres committed by Spaniards as they marched inland, the Nahuatl text explains, “they became limp with fear, they were made to faint, and fear took hold of them” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 15). The Tlaxcalans, weakened with sickening fright, decided to ally themselves with the Spaniards, perhaps to avoid the massacre of their own people.

The fright of the Mexica people intensified after the first meeting between Moteuczoma and Cortés, despite the calm words spoken. The text recounts that the Spaniards entreated the Nahuatl leader to “be at ease, let him not be afraid” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 26). The phrase for being at ease is *ma moiollali*, which can be translated literally as “let his heart be composed” (Molina [1571] 1977: 40r, 40v, 124 [second numeration]). The people also suffered heart pains when the Spaniards took their leader captive and occupied his palace. Once again, the people witnessed a major upheaval of the natural order. It was a time when “everything became confused. . . . Fear reigned, as though everyone had swallowed his heart . . . everyone was terrified, taken aback, thunderstruck, stunned” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 11). The Spanish translation adds another interesting layer to the intense nature of fear, stating that “both those present and those absent conceived a mortal fright (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 11). The fright was not confined to those who witnessed Moteuczoma being taken captive. The fear spread to all the people of the altepetl. The Nahuatl text includes everyone in their descriptions; these descriptions of widespread fear sound more like an infectious disease rather than an emotional affliction.

The text takes pains to point out the infectious nature of the fright. As the Spaniards looted the palace and demanded food, the Nahuas continued to suffer. During Moteuczoma’s captivity “Fear greatly prevailed; it spread about” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 29; (Molina [1571] 1977: 106 [second numeration]). The Nahuatl phrase contains another facet of the fear during the time of the conquest. In the phrase for “it spread about,” *maviztli moteteca*, the first term, *mauiztli*, means fear or something worthy of respect or awe (Molina [1571] 1977: 54v [second numeration]). The noun sheds light on another element of terror for Nahuas writing in the sixteenth century: fear always existed in relation to respect. They knew that anything worthy of marvel and respect was also a force to be feared. The fear invoked by the actions of the Spaniards spread the fright illness from the Mexica leader to his people. These precipitating terrifying events were perhaps how the Nahuatl authors explained the impending disease epidemics.

Fright Illness and the First Disease Epidemic

The chapter in Book XII that describes the first epidemic comes after the expulsion of the Spaniards from the city but before the Spaniards remount an attack. The Nahuatl text explains “before the Spaniards appeared to us, first an epidemic broke out, a sickness of pustules” (Sahagún [1575–79]

1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 53v). The authors identified the sickness of pustules as *cocoliztli totomoniliztli*. The noun *cocoliztli* conveyed a meaning that is not represented in Spanish words for disease. For the Nahuatl authors, *cocoliztli* signified a major social disruption or great pain. Molina’s *Vocabulario* defined *cocoliztli* simply as sickness. But in a Mesoamerican world devoid of widespread epidemic diseases, I infer that the word had a meaning closer to the verb on which it is based, *cocoa*. Molina defined *cocoa* in different ways, depending on its prefix, as being hurt or sick, and when transitive, to hurt another person. Karttunen (1992: 38) acknowledged the intersection of meaning between hurt and sickness. In an attempt to address the separate entries with similar meanings, she includes under the entry for *cocoa*, “the sense of ‘to be sick’ may arise from confusion with *cocoy(a)*, or it may derive from the shared sense of pain.” The applicative form of the verb, *cocolia*, means to “hate or wish someone ill” (Molina [1571] 1977: 23v [second numeration]). The term possesses a semantic range from physical disease to hatred, suggesting that Nahuatl concepts of illness and hatred are much the same.

In contrast to the Spanish terms *viruela* or *pestilencia*, the Nahuatl term for disease, *cocoliztli*, indicated the social conditions of disaster, along with the physical suffering from disease. The text explains that the “pustules that covered people caused great desolation; very many people died of them” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 53v). The result of the diseases was written succinctly in the Nahuatl column. It reported that due to *cocoliztli* many indigenous people died: “many local people died” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 53). The Nahuatl column carefully denoted that the disease afflicted indigenous people, but not the Spaniards, with the phrase “*nican tlaca*.” Lockhart (1993: 13) translated this phrase as “here people,” one of the only Nahuatl terms in the text that “indicated the local, native inhabitants of central Mexico.” The authors recognized that the first epidemic disease largely affected indigenous communities.

The negative social aspects associated with *cocoliztli* are clear when comparing it to other words used for disease. These terms have meanings clearly related to the physical appearance of lumps or swelling of sections of skin. Many of the Nahuatl words for disease were descriptive terms lacking broader meanings. For example, *totomoniliztli* is a noun that refers to pustules or blisters (Molina [1571] 1977: 150v [second numeration]). Another common noun was the word *zahuatl*, pox or rash (Siméon 2010: 71; Karttunen 1992: 345). The words describing the physical symptoms were often used in combination with *cocoliztli*, indicating that widespread deadly disease consisted of more than bumps on the skin.

The noun based on the verb *cocoa*, *cocoliztli* refers to widespread pain, including all types of hatred and suffering. The explanations of harmful acts causing suffering found in the Florentine Codex reveal the moral judgment of the authors. Burkhart argues that “moral discourse operated not on the assumption that acts had polluting effects but on the assumption that the pollution resulting obviously and directly from the act would bring with it a host of other nasty effects” (Burkhart 1989: 99). The Nahuatl authors of Book XII documented social disruptions in their choice of language; they chose to describe the first epidemic with the term *cocoliztli*.

In their discussion of the consequences of the epidemic disease, the Nahuatl text confirms that “the Mexica warriors were greatly weakened by it” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 54). Here, the Nahuatl authors make an explicit connection between the debilitating diseases and their ability to defend their city. The translation matches the Nahuatl nearly word for word until the last sentence about the weakened warriors. Ironically, the final sentence of the Spanish-language column remarks that the Nahuatl “resisted them strongly” (Sahagún [1575–79] 1979: vol. 3, bk. XII, fol. 53v). Of these radically different versions of events, scholars have largely relied on the Spanish-language version. Only by examining the Nahuatl-language text and delving into the cultural concepts of disease of the Nahuatl scholars and elders who wrote Book XII can we analyze their perspective. Disease, heart afflictions, fright, and the conquest must have been intertwined in the minds of the authors of Book XII.

Although this analysis of Nahuatl disease terminology in colonial-era *vocabularios* and herbals illustrates how Nahuatl speakers may have thought of fright illness, more illuminating information can be found in modern ethnographic studies. Native Nahuatl speakers today continue to refer to the heart as essential to the living nature of a being. For example, in their dictionary, Nahuatl speakers from the Huasteca in Veracruz refer to a person’s health in their first example listed under the term *yollotl*, “heart” (Sullivan et al. 2016: 613). Modern-day Nahuatl speakers continue to consider the health-threatening nature of fright illness and its long-term effects.

Soul Loss, Fright Illness, or *Susto* in Modern Ethnographic Studies

Both colonial and modern sources regard fright to be an illness with long-term implications and cite a similar set of symptoms. Modern ethnographic research has documented the symptoms of and treatments for fright illness often referred to as *susto*. Several studies in medical anthropology recognize *susto* in Mexico. In their research on communities in southern Mexico,

anthropologists find *susto* to be a widely known concept with a well-established etiology, diagnosis, and regimen of healing. The research of Arthur J. Rubel, Carl W. O’nell, and Rolando Collado-Ardón (1984: 43) shows that although “the element of fright . . . is always present in the people’s account of events to which *susto* is attributed, probing uncovers that it is not the fright itself” that creates the long-term suffering of the individual. Similarly, while working with the Nahuatl-speaking peoples of the Huasteca, Alan Sandstrom (1991: 301) confirms that Nahua medicine “tends to look for the ultimate causes or conditions that led that particular patient’s body to become vulnerable to disease in the first place.” Thus, according to modern research, Nahuas related the origin of many forms of illness referred to as *susto* to a frightening experience.

Indigenous people of the Americas, especially in Mexico, associate fright with subsequent illness. In most cases, the precipitating event or fright experience occurs independently; it could be separated by weeks or years from the onset of symptoms or eventual illness. In a study among the Zapotecs of Oaxaca, Carl O’nell (1975: 52) found that “most *susto* experiences are characterized by a period of considerable delay between attributed fright and the emergence of the symptoms of the illness.” Most studies mark a clear separation between the frightening event and the full-blown appearance of a pathological disease. These findings may explain why the Nahua authors of Book XII chose to describe the experiences of the messengers and Moteuczoma long before they described the onset of the first epidemic.

Although the Florentine Codex was written long before modern studies, the symptoms of *susto* are strikingly similar. In one study based on work with Spanish-speaking populations, Janice Klein (1978: 23) summarizes that in the examined cases of *susto*, there is a “common thread of helplessness and inability to act and remove the cause of the fear.” Symptoms include restlessness, lack of sleep, listlessness, loss of appetite, and depression.

The frightening experience, or the cause of *susto*, held severe consequences for long-term bodily and spiritual health. Proceeding from the accepted definition of *susto* as “soul loss through magical fright or simply fright,” the anthropologist Avisi Mysyk (1998: 187) directly links the suffering from fright to a form of the soul. I argue it could be the vital force associated with the heart. Loss of a person’s vital force due to fright caused illness far beyond the initial frightening event. The Spanish term for soul, *ánima*, is a poor translation for what indigenous groups considered to be the vital forces of the body. In Sandstrom’s words (1989: 357), the Nahua pantheistic worldview considers that “the universe itself is a sacred,

indivisible whole and everything in it is an aspect of deity. All things, including human beings, plants, and everyday objects have a spirit presence. . . .” It is impossible to divide intangible life forces from the material world. One early study made a distinction between how people of different cultural backgrounds interpreted the cause of *susto*. Arthur J. Rubel (1964) found that people from indigenous groups stressed that soul loss was caused by contact with supernatural beings, whereas people with mestizo backgrounds diagnose soul loss as caused by a fright. That soul loss and/or fright ailments continue to be found in research among Spanish-speaking populations in the United States demonstrates the long-term relevance of the illness.

Susto, or Fright Illness, as Understood by US Medical Practitioners

Medical doctors are asked to understand folk illnesses such as *susto*, which can be found in Mexican and Mexican American culture, highlighting the enduring remnants of a non-Western medical culture. They are encouraged to practice cross-cultural medicine; during their time with a patient they “should elicit the patient’s perception of the illness and any alternative therapies he or she is undergoing as well as facilitate a mutually acceptable treatment plan” (Juckett 2005: 2267). Patients’ perceptions of illness and cultural concepts of disease remain important for researchers today, although some authors prefer the phrases “culture-bound syndromes” or “folk illness”—that is, a combination of psychiatric and somatic symptoms that are considered to be a recognizable disease only within a specific society or culture (Simons and Hughes 1985; Ortiz de Montellano 1989: 3). For Latino or Hispanic patients, one research article encourages, health care providers should “consider discussing these illnesses in a non-judgmental manner with patients who present with symptoms that are consistent with these syndromes” (Bayles and Katerndahl 2009: 28). Today, US doctors can take courses focused on lay health beliefs or read articles on folk illnesses that are part of cultural heritage.

Significantly, English-language articles on the phenomenon of fright illness retain the Spanish term *susto*. Several recent authors maintain the Spanish term even in the titles of their articles, revealing it to be a well-recognized affliction (Durà-Vilà and Hodes 2012; Weller et al. 2008; Mendenhall et al. 2012). In other words, modern medical researchers choose not to translate from Spanish to English an illness that at one time was found primarily among the indigenous inhabitants of Latin America. Their findings attribute *susto* to a set of standard biomedical conditions. Some link it to depressive disorders, others to a somatoform disorder [a category

of mental disorder], and still others to hypoglycemia. In his 2005 article on cross-cultural medicine, Dr. Gregory Juckett (2005: 2270) places *susto* in a list of traditional Latino diagnoses. He explains it consists of fright-induced “soul loss,” which he diagnoses as post-traumatic illness (e.g., shock, insomnia, depression, anxiety). He continues that the traditional treatment for the illness is a sweeping purification or *barrida* ceremony (that is repeated until the patient improves). In his study of cleansing ceremonies in Mexico, Alfonso Julio Aparicio Mena (2009: 5) records that according to the people he consulted that “being upset can cause *susto*. A cleansing is necessary to unblock the consequences of the emotion.” Mena’s research links the importance of the cleansing treatment for *susto* that resonates with scenes of the codex. The descriptions of cleansing recall the ceremony performed on Moteuczoma in Book XII, when he suffered his first heart and fright afflictions. In his description of the sweeping purification ceremony, Dr. Juckett identifies an illness unique to Mexican and Mexican American populations and explains a cleansing ritual to an audience of American doctors who seek to communicate better with their patients.

In his attempt to characterize a distinctly Mesoamerican illness, Dr. Juckett paid little attention to how Latinos themselves define *susto*. Latinos define *susto* radically different than depression, much like Nahuas defined fright radically different than cowardice. In their study of *susto*, Megan Lemly and Lori A. Spies (2015) find that Latinos associate it with another type of illness: type II diabetes. Several symptoms of type II diabetes include irritability and fatigue, symptoms that are consistent with descriptions of *susto* in Book XII. Conducting research with Mexican American inhabitants of the US-Mexico borderlands, Jane Poss and Mary Ann Jezewski (2002: 368) found that “nearly all of the participants could pinpoint a specific episode of fright (which they termed *susto*) or a profound emotional experience as the contributing factor in the development of their own diabetes.” In their 2016 article on the causes that Spanish-speaking patients attribute to diabetes, Dr. Jeannie B. Concha et al. (2016) explain that understanding cultural diabetes causation beliefs such as *susto* can improve communication with Hispanic/Latino patients. The gulf between what some diagnose as a psychiatric disorder to type II diabetes reveals that when we pay close attention to how people in a cultural community define illness, we arrive at profoundly different conclusions about the nature of an ailment.

Apart from sweeping ceremonies, the cures found in the research of Lemly and Spies include the herbal remedies of *sabila* (aloe vera) and *nopal* (prickly pear cactus), two products widely used in Mesoamerica. The authors call attention to research that confirms the efficacy of the plants in

lowering sugar levels. The authors' attention to traditional methods of curing encourages a bicultural understanding of healing methods. The authors continue to argue that awareness about "susto beliefs . . . and development of culturally sensitive communication skills are essential for nurse practitioners to effectively assist patients in this population to achieve their glycemic goals" (Lemly and Spies 2015: 185). These research articles claim that medical professionals are more effective when they blend cultural understanding and medical research. Their research on *susto*, an illness with undeniable roots in Mesoamerican indigenous cultures, speaks to the cultural longevity of Mesoamerican cultural concepts of illness in Mexico and the United States.

Medical sources from colonial and contemporary times present a clear picture of the cultural concept of *susto*. It is a condition often but not always linked to soul loss and causes long-term suffering. Precipitated by a terrifying experience, it causes the victim to withdraw from normal activities and cease to function in society. Although Western doctors often link it with mood disorders such as depression, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Latinos cite it as the cause for the long-term bodily illness of diabetes. Although we may never determine how Nahuas conceived of the soul, the heart seems a likely candidate for the vehicle of a life-giving force. The Nahuatl authors of Book XII indicated that Moteuczoma suffered from *susto*, not cowardice.

Conclusions

This article reinterprets the memories of Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin's leadership with the use of Nahuatl cultural concepts of illness. I argue that the leader suffered from fright illness, an ailment defined in colonial sources that survives as the etiological entity *susto* in modern indigenous communities. By recognizing that Moteuczoma suffered from illness rather than cowardice, we can understand how the Nahuatl authors of the Florentine Codex remembered their *huei tlatoni* and, by extension, the reaction of their community to the invasion and subsequent epidemics.

The Nahuatl text in Book XII of the Florentine Codex repeatedly refers to fright and heart afflictions in descriptions of Moteuczoma. Nahuas recounting history in the sixteenth century did not distinguish between physical and emotional ailments. For many Nahuatl, the heart was an organ that influenced physical and emotional health. It had the power to sustain life and affect the fate or general state of the person, as something akin to a soul. The unpredictable and violent acts perpetrated by the Spaniards traumatized Moteuczoma, but he suffered alongside his people.

The broader Nahua community experienced severe fright at the news and actions of the Spaniards. Poor health spread easily from the leader to his people during the turbulent events of the conquest. Much like their leader, the illness experienced by the common people was expressed in fright and heart afflictions. The complicated nature of how Nahuas understood the bodily implications of fright, soul loss, and heart-related afflictions was partially documented in colonial herbals. Modern ethnographic studies add to our understanding of culture-bound syndromes.

Descriptions of heart afflictions and fright in the text of Book XII closely mirror symptoms of fright illness or *susto* found in contemporary ethnographic accounts. Although diagnosis and treatments have changed for traditional healers and doctors since the colonial period, a comparison between colonial and modern evidence reveals the widespread acknowledgement of the *susto* illness and its long-term effects. People living in modern indigenous communities and Nahuas writing during the colonial period described afflictions quite distinct from the morally fraught condition of cowardice.

Cultural concepts of illness were often lost in the translation from Nahuatl to Spanish in the codex. The differences between the texts reveal that Nahua concepts were translated into Spanish as fear or anxiety. Also, the varied definitions of the general term for illness, *cocoliztli*, represent diverse notions of disease that are not found in the Spanish translation of the Book XII. Even the various methods for translating fear-related terms from the Nahuatl text are informed by Western notions of emotions. Instead of blaming their leader, the Nahua authors logically focused on representing their cultural concepts of illness, because they remembered the devastating impact of the first epidemic during the invasion and the subsequent waves of disease as they composed drafts of the codex.

It is not coincidental that the Nahua authors distinctly remembered fright illness introduced by the Spaniards as a prelude to the epidemics that swept through their communities. Nahuas relied on their cultural concepts of health and illness to understand the conquest's destruction, in which disease was a major factor. They may have thought of disease and conquest as one and the same. Clearly, disease directly impacted the health of the Mexica and debilitated its traditional defenses. Nahuas who survived the colonial period wrote about illness in ways we have yet to decipher according to their own concepts of illness. Only through an understanding of Nahua concepts of illness can we begin to glimpse their perception of the Spanish-led invasion and widespread epidemic diseases that afflicted their communities in the sixteenth century.

Building on this work, future research on Moteuczoma's suffering during the conquest should interrogate notions of masculinity and how they inform judgment of the leader. Future research should reconsider gendered responsibilities in the face of violence and their connections to Western ideas of cowardice. Especially helpful is what James M. Taggart called "relational masculinity" in his ethnography of Nahua oral narrations and cultural traditions. In this conception of masculinity, "a man should act carefully lest he disrupt the fragile order of his body, his family, and his cosmos" (1997: 243). Remembering Moteuczoma's actions as careful and not cowardly, especially considering that his body, family, and cosmos were under threat, would aid the continued reinterpretation of the leader's role during the conquest.

Notes

I would like to thank Kevin Terraciano, Louise Burkhart, John Schwaller, Kim Richter, Pamela Munro, Mary Terrall, Sabina Cruz de la Cruz, Kathryn Renton, and the anonymous reviewers from *Ethnohistory* for their support and time dedicated to improving my research.

- 1 For more on ethnographic upstreaming and downstreaming, see Fenton 1962; Axtell 1979; White 1991; Galloway 2006.
- 2 See Anderson and Dibble 1950–82 for a full history of the twelve books of the Florentine Codex.
- 3 Lockhart (1993: 20) explained that we are still very far from understanding the true meaning of "god," or *teotl* in Nahuatl.
- 4 An image of an eagle eating the sacrificial heart held aloft by a priest is found in Book XI: Sahagún (1575–79) 1979 vol. 3, bk. XI, fol. 47v.

References

- Acuna-Soto, Rene, David W. Stahle, Malocom K. Cleaveland, and Mathew D. Therrell, 2002. "Megadrought and Megadeath in Sixteenth-Century Mexico." *Emerging Infectious Disease* 8, no. 4: 360–62.
- Anderson, Arthur J. O., and Charles E. Dibble, trans. [1975] 2012. *Book 12 — The Conquest of Mexico of Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain*. 13 vols. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research and the University of Utah Press.
- Anderson, Arthur J. O., and Charles E. Dibble, trans. [1982] 2012. *Introduction and Indices of Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain*. 13 vols. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research and the University of Utah Press.
- Aparicio Mena, Alfonso Julio. 2009. "La Limpia en las etnomedicinas mesoamericanas." *Gazeta de Antropología* 25, no. 1. hdl.handle.net/10481/54702.

- Axtell, James. 1979. “Ethnohistory: An Historian’s Viewpoint.” *Ethnohistory* 26, no. 1: 1–13.
- Badiano, Juan, and Martín de la Cruz. [1552] 2008. *Codice de la Cruz-Badiano*. Serie Códices de México 7. Carlos Viesca Treviño, ed. Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes and The National Institute of Anthropology and History.
- Bayles, Bryan P., David A. Katerndahl. 2009. “Culture-Bound Syndromes in Hispanic Primary Care Patients.” *International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine*, May 22.
- Boone, Elizabeth H. 1999. “The ‘Coatlicues’ at the Templo Mayor.” *Ancient Mesoamerica* 10, no. 2: 189–206.
- Burkhardt, Louise. 1989. *The Slippery Earth: Nahua-Christian Moral Dialogue in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Concha, Jeannie B., Sallie D. Mayer, Briana R. Mezuk, and Danielle Avula. 2016. “Diabetes Causation Beliefs among Spanish-Speaking Patients.” *Diabetes Education* 42, no. 1: 116–25.
- Cook, Sherburne Friend, and Lesley Byrd Simpson. 1948. *Ibero Americana* 31. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cook, Sherburne F., and Woodrow Borah. 1957. “The Rate of Population Change in Central México 1550–1570.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 37, no. 4: 463–70.
- Cuadriello, Jaime. 2009. “Moctezuma Through the Centuries.” In *Race and Classification: The Case of Mexican America*, edited by Illona Katzew and Susan Deans-Smith. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 119–150.
- Durà-Vilà, Gloria, and Mathew Hodes. 2012. “Cross-Cultural Study of Idioms of Distress among Spanish Nationals and Hispanic American Migrants: Susto, Nervios, and Ataque de Nervios.” *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatry Epidemiology* 47, no. 10: 1627–37.
- Fenton, William. 1962. “Ethnohistory and Its Problems.” *Ethnohistory* 9, no. 1: 1–23.
- Few, Martha. 2008. “Indian Autopsy and Epidemic Disease in Early Colonial Mexico.” In *Invasion and Transformation: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico*, edited by Rebecca Parker Brienen and Margaret A. Jackson, 153–66. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.
- Galloway, Patricia. 2006. *Practicing Ethnohistory: Mining Archives, Hearing Testimony, Constructing Narratives*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Gibson, Charles. 1964. *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Gillespie, Susan D. 2008. “Blaming Moteuczoma: Anthropomorphizing the Aztec Conquest” in *Invasion and Transformation: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico*, edited by Rebecca Parker Brienen and Margaret A. Jackson, 25–56. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.
- Gimmel, Millie. 2008. “Reading Medicine in the Codex de la Cruz Badiano.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69, no. 2: 169–92.
- Huber, Brad R., and Alan R. Sandstrom. 2001. *Mesoamerican Healers*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Juckett, Gregory. 2005. “Cross-Cultural Medicine.” *American Family Physician*. 72, no. 11: 2267–74.

- Karttunen, Frances E. 1992. *An Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Klein, Cecelia F. 2008. "A New Interpretation of the Aztec Statue Called Coatlicue, 'Snakes-Her-Skirt.'" *Ethnohistory* 55, no. 2: 229–50.
- Klein, Janice. 1978. "Susto: The Anthropological Study of Diseases of Adaptation." *Social Science and Medicine* 12: 23–28.
- Lemley, Megan, and Lori A. Spies. 2015. "Traditional Beliefs and Practices among Mexican American Immigrants with Type II Diabetes: A Case Study." *Journal of American Association of Nurse Practitioners* 27, no. 4: 185–89.
- Lockhart, James, ed. and trans. 1993. *We People Here: Nahuatl Accounts of the Conquest of Mexico*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- López Austin, Alfredo. 1984. *Cuerpo humano e ideología: Las concepciones de los antiguos nahuas*. Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas.
- Mendenhall, Emily, Alicia Fernandez, Nancy Adler, and Elizabeth A. Jacobs. 2012. "Susto, Coraje, and Abuse: Depression and Beliefs about Diabetes." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 36, no. 3: 480–92.
- Molina, Alonso de. (1571) 1977. *Vocabulario en lengua castellana y mexicana y mexicana y castellana*. Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa.
- Mysyk, Avisi. 1998. "Susto: An Illness of the Poor." *Dialectical Anthropology*. Vol. 23, no. 2: 187–202.
- O'neil, Carl. 1975. "An Investigation of Reported 'Fright' as a Factor in the Etiology of Susto, 'Magical Fright.'" *Ethos* 3, no. 1: 41–63.
- Ortiz de Montellano, Bernard. 1989. *Syncretism in Mexican and Mexican-American Folk Medicine*. College Park: University of Maryland at College Park.
- Pastrana Flores, Miguel. 2004. *Historias de la Conquista: Aspectos de la historiografía de tradición náhuatl*. Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Poss, Jane, and Mary Ann Jezewski. 2002. "The Role and Meaning of Susto in Mexican Americans' Explanatory Model of Type 2 Diabetes." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 16, no. 3: 360–77.
- Prescott, William. 1891. *History of the Conquest of Mexico*. London: Swan Sonnenschein.
- Restall, Matthew. 2018. *When Montezuma Met Cortés: The True Story of the Meeting that Changed History*. New York: Ecco.
- Rubel, Arthur J. 1965. "The Epidemiology of a Folk Illness: Susto in Hispanic America." *Ethnology* 3: 268–83.
- Rubel, Arthur J., Carl W. O'Neil, and Rolando Collado-Ardón. 1984. *Susto: A Folk Illness*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Sahagún, Bernardino de. (1575–79) 1979. *Códice florentino*. Mexico City: Secretaría de Gobernación.
- Sandstrom, Alan. 1989. "The Face of the Devil: Concepts of Disease and Pollution among Nahua Indians of the Southern Huasteca." *Enquêtes sur l'Amérique moyenne: Mélanges offerts à Guy Stresser-Péan*, edited by Guy Stresser-Péan and Dominique Michelet, 357–73. Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, and Centre d'études mexicaines et centraméricaines.

- Sandstrom, Alan. 1991. *Corn Is Our Blood: Culture and Ethnic Identity in a Contemporary Aztec Indian Village*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Siméon, Rémi. 2010. *Diccionario de la lengua Náhuatl o Mexicana*. Iztapalapa, Mexico: Mújica.
- Simons, Ronald, and Charles Hughes. 1985. *The Culture-Bound Syndromes: Folk Illnesses of Psychiatric and Anthropological Interest*. Boston: Kluwer Academic.
- Solari, Amara. 2016. “The ‘Contagious Stench’ of Idolatry: The Rhetoric of Disease and Sacrilegious Acts in Colonial New Spain.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 96, no. 3, 481–515.
- Stahle, David W., Edward R. Cook, Malcolm K. Cleaveland, Matthew D. Therrell, David M. Meko, Henri Grissino-Mayer, Emma Watson, and Brian Henry Luckman. 2000. “Tree-Ring Data Document Sixteenth-Century Megadrought over North America.” *Transactions American Geophysical Union* 81, no. 12: 121–25.
- Sullivan, John, Eduardo de la Cruz Cruz, Abelardo de la Cruz de la Cruz, Delfina de la Cruz de la Cruz, Victoriano de la Cruz Cruz, Sabina Cruz de la Cruz, Ofelia Cruz Morales, Catalina Cruz de la Cruz, and Manuel de la Cruz Cruz. 2016. *Tlahtolxitlahucayotl: Chicontepec, Veracruz*. Warsaw: IDIEZ/University of Warsaw.
- Taggart, James M. 1997. *The Bear and His Sons: Masculinity in Spanish and Mexican Folktales*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Terraciano, Kevin. 2010. “Three Texts in One: Book Twelve of the Florentine Codex.” *Ethnohistory* 57, no. 1: 51–72.
- Terraciano, Kevin. 2014. “Narrativas de Tlatelolco sobre la Conquista de Mexico.” *Estudios de Cultura Nahuatl*. 47: 211–35.
- Weller, Susan C., Roberta D. Baer, Javier Garcia de Alba Garcia, and Ana L. Salcedo Rocha. 2008. “Susto and Nervios: Expressions for Stress and Depression.” *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 32, no. 3, September: 406–20.
- White, Richard. 1991. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*. New York: Cambridge University Press.