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The Mesoamerican codex re-entangled : production, use, and re-use of precolonial documents

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Propositions

1. Making a precolonial Mesoamerican codex was a complex cross-craft process, involving a set of raw materials that only became available through complex regional interaction.
2. The pattern of wear on codex Iya Nacuaa (Colombino-Becker) can be explained as an indigenous tactic to protect the document in the new colonial situation.
3. High-quality digital reproduction, including 3D-technology, is a next logical step for the dissemination of the precolonial Mesoamerican codices.
4. The Añute palimpsest contains sections of the Mixtec historical narrative which are not found in the other known codices.
5. Although non-invasive investigation is generally preferable, the present day state of the codices and the technological capabilities would warrant the taking of micro-samples to answer pressing research questions.
6. Based on the current knowledge of the material composition of the codices, a unified handling, conservation, and display guideline can and needs to be established.
7. Experimental replication is a research strategy which needs to be used to complement non-invasive investigation of materials, as it reveals more material properties and interactions than those recovered with chemical or physical investigation alone.
8. The Cultural Biography approach should be applied more in research focussing on Postclassic and early colonial Mesoamerican archaeology, as it allows for a better understanding of both parties involved in the transformations that took place during colonisation.
9. In order to address the moral obligation of reconnecting indigenous heritage with descendant communities, which is felt by a growing number of researchers and guardians of that heritage, the creation of an online platform is in the present economic climate the best option.
10. The increased specialisation needed to investigate the (material) properties of artefacts requires researchers to engage in a modern scientific version of cross-craft interaction.
11. Advanced computational techniques such as pattern recognition and machine learning need to be developed for hyperspectral imaging scans of cultural heritage objects, in order to fully utilize the information they contain and to establish a measure of scientific control over reconstructions made based on this information.
12. Medieval European demonology has even today a large impact on the interpretation of precolonial Mesoamerican cultures.

