text itself leaves the readers wanting and the historiography still in need of an English translation of the Nahuatl account.

Schmidt views the early evangelization of New Spain through the lens of violence, particularly "a form of brutal epistemic violence" that friars forced Nahua youth to participate in (p. 168), and woven throughout the work and its exposure of the Nahuatl text's contributions are proposed evidence and impacts of such. Certainly, physical violence has accompanied Christianity's conversion efforts, even long before New Spain (think of Charlemagne and the Saxons). And certainly the friars' "tactics exposed children to violent reprisals" (p. 10) and even used violence on the children themselves. Yet, as unfortunate as this is, and as Haskett originally noted in his article, violence employed in the education of young children existed within precolonial Nahua culture as well. And Bautista's collaborators were certainly aware of the many forms of violence that accompanied Mexica conquest, even the use of boys—roughly the same age as the boy martyrs—as porters on the battlefield. While obviously not condoning violence, its ubiquitous presence in both cultures warrants caution when inferring what Bautista's Nahua collaborators may or may not have inserted in their account of the child martyrs in reaction to the violence of early evangelization efforts.

That said, the role of Nahua youth in evangelization and the violence exercised both on and by them deserves scholarly attention. And herein lies the important contribution of Schmidt's work. True, it offers readers different narratives full of new insights and possibilities of meaning. Yet it also places children at the center of the evangelization narrative and gives needed attention to those who often go overlooked.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-12488131

Historia mexicana. By JUAN DE TOVAR. Edited by JAIME MARROQUÍN ARREDONDO and JOSÉ LUIS NOGALES BAENA. Madrid: Iberoamericana; Frankfurt: Vervuert; Seville: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 2025. Figures. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 428 pp. Paper, €52.00.

Jesuits penned many histories in New Spain that they never printed because of either censorship or costs. Among these works is the Codex Tovar (ca. 1587), an illustrated account of the origins, wanderings, customs, and calendrical systems of the Mexica. Written by Juan de Tovar, the text is currently accessible online via the Internet Archive and is physically housed at the John Carter Brown Library. Even though there are several modern transcriptions of the Codex Tovar, *Historia mexicana* is the first complete edition that includes both the full text and all the accompanying illustrations. Editors Jaime Marroquín Arredondo and José Luis Nogales Baena have produced a highly accessible version of the Codex Tovar for a wider audience, one that is indispensable for anyone interested in manuscript cultures, Indigenous histories, and early historical writing in colonial Spanish America.

The textual archaeology of the Codex Tovar is complicated because it must be read together with other colonial manuscripts, not all of which have survived. As the editors

explain in their introduction, Tovar prepared a history of the Mexica that, for reasons unknown, was eventually confiscated and lost. Before colonial authorities seized Tovar's manuscript, Diego Durán used it to write his *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de Tierra Firme* (1581). Later, Tovar drew on Durán's *Historia* to draft a second history of the Mexica. He made a clean copy of this draft—which is the Codex Tovar—for José de Acosta, who needed it to finish his *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590). After this, Tovar sent his draft to a scribe to produce a second copy, which today is known as the Codex Ramírez and is preserved in Mexico's National Library of Anthropology and History.

The editors' hypothesis that the Codex Tovar and the Codex Ramírez are copies of the same draft is more credible than the more common view that one is a copy of the other. Not only this, but the editors' approach to colonial manuscript cultures is more nuanced than previous scholarship. In a nutshell, nineteenth-century Mexican scholars posited that Tovar, Durán, and Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc drew on one common source in Nahuatl. Robert H. Barlow named this source the Crónica X, which many after him have sought to decipher. But as the editors explain, the quest to find one work by a sole Indigenous author is misguided. Without disregarding the possibility of a Crónica X, the editors place more emphasis on the collaborative nature of colonial scholarship. Jesuits like Tovar turned to teams of Indigenous intellectuals who communicated their histories of the Mexica in textual, visual, and oral forms.

In their transcription, the editors seek to offer the Codex Tovar as Tovar intended it for Acosta by comparing it with the Codex Ramírez. For example, they incorporate Tovar's marginal notes, eliminate word repetitions, and correct the text when there were omissions of vowels or even entire words. To avoid excessive footnotes, they only reference a portion of these changes and provide a helpful list of others at the end of the transcription. Beyond cleaning up the Codex Tovar for greater readability, the editors modernized the punctuation and divided it into paragraphs. While I agree with their editorial decisions, it would have been helpful to have two parallel footnoting systems, one for marginal notes by Tovar and Acosta and the other for critical commentary. I also would have appreciated the folio numbers in brackets given that the Codex Tovar is available online.

Historia mexicana is visually stimulating, both the introduction and the transcription. The editors were wise to include images of the title page and the text, especially those with marginalia. Missing are reproductions of the spine, binding, and other endpapers with markings, all of which would have nicely complemented the discussion of provenance in the introduction. Since the illustrations from the first two parts appear in a separate section of the original manuscript, the editors decided to incorporate them within the text of their transcription as Tovar had indicated with folio numbers in the margins. All the illustrations, including those from the Codex Ramírez featured in an appendix, are accompanied by extensive descriptions and commentary. This feature is unique and rooted in the editors' respect for the *tlacuiloque* (painter scribes), whose work they claim is just as important as the text.

Other helpful tools in *Historia mexicana* are the bibliography and index for the footnotes. Having said this, there is no index for either the introduction or the transcription. I

also would have liked a separate section in the bibliography for all the editions and translations of the Codex Tovar reviewed in the introduction. But these are minor quibbles that do not take away from a model example of how to prepare a critical edition of a colonial manuscript.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-12488187

Eighteenth–Nineteenth Centuries

La presidencia de José Ballivián (1841–1847): Construcción del Estado e imposición de un proyecto nacional en Bolivia. By POL COLÀS. La Paz: Plural Editores, 2024. Maps. Figure. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 355 pp. Paper, $21.55.

On the morning of November 18, 1841, José Ballivián commanded the Bolivian army that defeated its Peruvian counterpart in the fields of Ingavi, in the department of La Paz. Although he had been sworn in as president at the end of September, this victory marked the beginning of his term and, in the long run, meant more than a mere defense of the territory and national honor, becoming the "asiento" on which his legitimacy in power rested, at least in his early years. Based on this argument, Pol Colàs analyzes Ballivián's presidency to investigate the facets involved in the construction of the state during his term in office and the foundations and proposals of his national project.

Colàs begins *La presidencia de José Ballivián (1841–1847)*, partly based on his doctoral thesis presented at the University of Barcelona in 2023, by leaning toward the renewed current of political history. Thus his work is among recent scholarship (by Marta Irurozqui and Víctor Peralta, to name two) that discusses the concept of *caudillismo* and the idea of military caudillos as holders of absolute power, an idea first forwarded about Ballivián by authors such as Alcides Arguedas in the early decades of the twentieth century. On the one hand, Ballivián submitted to democratic institutions, such as elections, and other forms of republican order, which in some ways gave his mandate legitimacy. On the other hand, although he made use of the political capital that he had built up through his participation in the Battle of Ingavi, the actions of his administration were not entirely the work of the executive branch, much less the result of individual effort. In chapter 1, Colàs suggests a more complex framework involving a dispute between two centers of power: La Paz in the north and Potosí and Sucre in the south, whose representation in executive and legislative positions, respectively, generated heated debates and had an impact on the plans that were implemented.

This did not prevent his government program during these years from having various aims. Thus Colàs analyzes the relationship between the state under construction and the main governmental forces, the control of institutions linked to the executive branch, the efforts to dissolve local powers, and the implementation of reforms related to education and the military (in chapter 2); Ballivián's economic policy, which sought to address pressing fiscal needs by seeking sources of financing and combating excessive