

# The Florentine Codex

by Sophia



## WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial covers the "Florentine Codex." By the end of this lesson, you'll be able to identify and define today's key terms, identify pages from the "Florentine Codex," and explain how it is one of the first examples of ethnography. This will be accomplished through the exploration of:



### BIG IDEA

The "Florentine Codex" is one of the very first examples of ethnography.

## 1. Location and Time Period: The "Florentine Codex"

The "Florentine Codex" was written over the course of Fray Bernardino de Sahagun's lifetime, primarily from 1545 to 1590. This lesson's geographic focus is Mexico.



## 2. The "Florentine Codex"

The idea of a **codex**, or codices, which is the plural form, wasn't new to this region, as the Mesoamerican people had well-established codex-making traditions at the time of the Spanish conquest. In their desire to conquer and convert the native people of this region, the Spanish destroyed many of these works.

Franciscan monk Bernardino de Sahagun felt that if knowledge of the indigenous people's customs and traditions could be preserved, it would make it easier to convert them to Catholicism. This belief led to the first ethnographic efforts in the New World and the creation of the "Florentine Codex."



# Libro

## vndecimo



¶ Ay otras mariposas, que llaman tilipapalotl: son negras, y rodadas con unas pintas blancas.



¶ Ay otras de mariposas, que llaman hecocospapalotl, o quappachpapalotl: son leonadas, y reluce su color.



¶ Ay otras que se llaman isthapapalotl, son blancas y unas entre amarillo, y blando.



¶ Ay otras que se llaman chianpapalotl: son muy pintadas.

coçavia, mocucujlova, cuj  
cujlvi, flacati tehaoa, va  
paoa, patlantireni.

¶ Tilipapalotl: can noiuhqui,  
can noixqujeh, mixelpapalotl:  
iecc hiltic, istac quimo  
hisi cujehili, ic cujehic in  
atlapal.

¶ Heccoz papalotl: noyoa tiv  
ar quappachpapalotl. Inscny  
ha heccoz; ipampa achi xo  
xolla pepetca: inynacaio achi  
heltic, canpoctic, quappachtic,  
xaxolla, pepetca, pepetca,  
quappachtic, poctic, poccostic  
pocostica, poccostica.

¶ Istapapalotl: cequj achi  
vei, cequj can qualfon, cequj  
cena can velapitfon, amo  
velistac, can istalcoac, capi  
neac in coztic.

¶ Chianpapalotl: achi illoc  
in xicalpapalotl, ipampa mo  
cujcujlo, iuh quyn chien hisi  
cujcatoc in novian macaio

### Volume of Florentine Codex

Other volumes addressed their medicine and healing techniques, and their customs and festivals, such as this page referencing the Aztec calendar:





## SUMMARY

Today you learned about the **"Florentine Codex,"** which is one of the first examples of ethnography. In addition to learning how to identify and define today's key terms, you examined and learned how to identify pages from the "Florentine Codex."

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia author Ian McConnell.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### **Codex**

A book made of hand-written pages.

### **Ethnography**

A branch of anthropology that deals with scientific study of human cultures.

### **Nahautl**

Language of the Aztecs, spoken in Central Mexico and indigenous to Mesoamerica.