

Nomination form
International Memory of the World Register

title of item being proposed

2014-81

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

The work of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (1499-1590) constitutes one of the most renowned historic sources of ancient Mexico. He deserves recognition as pioneer of the **modern anthropology**, considered as one of the main examples in research from the perspective of this discipline

The *Matritense Codex* also known as *Primeros Memoriales* and *Manuscripts of Tepeapulco* are kept in the libraries of the Royal Academy of History and Royal Palace of Madrid. They are integrated by the *Primeros Memoriales; Memoriales Complementarios; Memoriales en Tres Columnas; Memoriales con Escolios* and *Memoriales en español*, as identified by Francisco del Paso y Troncoso

The Florentine Codex is hold at the Laurentian Library (Florence). This manuscript in two columns with texts in Náhuatl and Spanish is formed by twelve books bound in three volumes. Diego Panes elaborated a copy of the Manuscript in the 18th century that later on brought to New Spain. Don Carlos María de Bustamante took this version in 1830 to make the first Mexican edition "Historia General de las Cosas de la Nueva España". After then, all the editions in Spanish have that name.

Undoubtedly, in the work developed by Sahagún highlights his role as a translator in the **construction of the history, the identity and the culture of a people.**

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH)

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

The National Council for the Culture and the Arts (CONACULTA) through the INAH is the Mexican Government's institution that has among its essential tasks, **to conserve, to protect and to diffuse** the cultural and documentary heritage, guaranteeing its safeguard with the whole wealth of its authenticity. The institution also has the essential role being history promoter through **documentary cultural property.**

Before its interest of contributing to the preservation, diffusion and knowledge of the documentary heritage that give sense to the understanding of the ancient Mexico, through the exemplary work of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, which on the base of what is presented, has world significance and impact, the INAH promotes its nomination and inclusion in the Memory of the World Register.

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Dr. Francisco López Morales

Heritage Director

National Institute of Anthropology and History

2.4 Contact details

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3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

If inscribed, the exact title and institution(s) to appear on the certificate should be give

The Matritense Codex (called in the 19th century Historia General de las cosas de Nueva España) is located in two institutions: one part is guarded at the Library of the Royal Palace of Madrid (Real Biblioteca de Madrid) and the other at the Royal Academy of History (Real Academia de a Historia). They complement each other as they have different parts or books of the same work, considered encyclopedic about the people and culture of the center of Mexico compiled by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (1499-1590). It is defined as a manuscript of 617 pages product of the great ethnographic research in the New Spain of the mid-16th century.

The part of the Matritense Codex found at the Royal Library of Madrid (Real Biblioteca de Madrid) consists of the following sections: *Primeros Memoriales*, *Segundos Memoriales* (or first manuscript of Tlatelolco), *Memoriales con escolios*, *Manuscrito de Tlatelolco* or *Memoriales a tres columnas* and *Memoriales en castellano*. The manuscript of the Library of the Royal Palace of Madrid consists of 303 pages.

Real Biblioteca de Madrid (Royal Library of Madrid)

Palacio Real.
C. Bailén, s.n.
28071 Madrid 28071 España
DIRECTOR
María LUISA LÓPEZ-VIDRIERO

The Matritense Codex deposited at the Royal Academy of History is a manuscript consists of a volume with 343 pages formed by «Memoriales en tres columnas» with the text in Mexican language of four books or notebooks.

Real Academia de la Historia (Royal Academy of History)

C/ León, 21
28014 Madrid (España)
DIRECTOR
Excmo. Sr. D. Gonzalo ANES Y ÁLVAREZ DE CASTRILLÓN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Excmo. Sr. D. Faustino MENÉNDEZ PIDAL DE NAVASCUÉS

The Florentine Codex, unique manuscript, one of the world's greatest, is preserved at the Laurentian Library in Florence and is widely known as FLORENTINE CODEX. The manuscript, in three volumes, consists of 12 books devoted to different topics, "the divine, human and natural things" of New Spain. The twelve books of the Codex were originally bound in four volumes, but later rebound into three. The work is arranged in two columns: on the right hand is the original Náhuatl text, on the left is Sahagun's Spanish translation. Such codex is identified as HISTORIA GENERAL DE LAS COSAS DE NUEVA ESPAÑA, ms. Med Palat 218-220 Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana owner. Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España (General History of the things of New Spain) is the first illustrated encyclopedia of the New World. The manuscript came into the possession of the Medici no later than 1588.

Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana

Piazza San Lorenzo n° 9 - 50123 Firenze

DIRECTOR

Dott.ssa Vera VALITUTTO

3.4 History/provenance

Biography of the Author

Bernardino de Ribera is born in 1499 in Sahagún. He attended the University of Salamanca and comes to the New Spain in 1529. In his first years he devoted totally to his work as missionary. A great event that must have marked his life took place in January of 1536: after an initiative of Sebastian Ramírez de Fuenleal, President of the Second Audiencia of New Spain; of Fray Juan de Zumárraga, Bishop of Mexico and of Antonio of Mendoza, first Viceroy, the Imperial Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco was founded under the mentoring of Charles V -crowned in Bologna, in 1530, by Pope Clement VII-. Among various teachers, Fray Bernardino de Sahagún was chosen to teach Latinity.

Sahagún taught there and conducted important research for at least four periods of his long life. The first of them comprised from the foundation of the Colegio in 1536 up to 1540, when he left to work as missionary. His second stay lasted from 1545 to 1558. His research in Tepeapulco distanced him from the Colegio since the end of 1558 until the beginning of 1561. He returned once again to Tlatelolco, where he remained for almost three years. Then he passed to the convent of San Francisco where he says, "I came to live with all my writings [the Nahuatl texts that, as we will see, he had made transcribe] for three years I checked and reviewed my writings alone and amended them and divided into books, chapters and paragraphs" (Sahagún, 2001: foreword of the Book II). His last stay in Tlatelolco was from 1567 to 1589. He died in the convent of San Francisco on February 5 of 1590.

The wealth of his work as ethnographic material is enormous. It highlights, for example, the description of the great festivities of the ritual calendar (included in the *Primeros Memoriales*), which is accompanied by paintings that show and supplement quite accurately the concrete elements of the celebrations.

Work of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún:

Fray Bernardino de Sahagún is above all a **humanist** educated in the University of Salamanca. This **humanistic vision** took him to consider that the Mexican language was as important as Cicero's Latin and that it could be brought to Latin characters of representation. He marveled regarding certain elements of the indigenous culture and with the expertise of the natives about certain activities and ethical behaviors (respect to elders). Sahagún is considered father of the ethnologic studies in the

New World thanks to his method of data compilation and the widespread information gathered.

The Matritense Codex (*Primeros Memoriales* or *Memoriales de Tepeapulco*)

In 1558, Fray Francisco Toral entrusted a systematic investigation on the Náhuatl thought. On one hand, the project was the culmination of the ethnological tasks begun by Motolinía and Andrés de Olmos. On the other hand, it was also the culmination of Sahagún's humanistic interests, awakened in his years of study at Salamanca and enlivened at the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco. To undertake this task, he goes to Tepeapulco, dominion where the ancient cultural legacy of Texcoco was still conserved and where the Franciscans had a convent founded by Fray Andrés de Olmos. During three years, Sahagún and his team work here with don Diego de Mendoza Tlaltentzin, "man of great shape and skill" and with "cuatro viejos pláticos" [four talkative elders] (*Historia...* Book II, "Foreword"). He only collected the information in Náhuatl: he allows speaking, "texting" the word without translating or interpreting; he allows himself to be captivated by the voice of the culture that was registering. And to give more intensity to the cultural reality, besides the oral expression, he also collects the word, written with images and glyphs. He asks and listens, but this time he makes it according to a minute. Sahagún himself organized his findings in five chapters: the first contains the divine things, nature of gods, hymns, rituals; the second, concerning the dominion; the third concerning the things of nature, centered in the universe, in the space and in the calculation of time, taking as base the two Mesoamerican calendars, the *Xiuhámatl* and the *Tonalámatl*; the fourth deals on man's body; and the fifth, lost, contained that concerning plants and animals.

With this name (Matritense Codex) is denominated one of those known as *Manuscrito Mayor de la Historia* of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún. These are two volumes located in Madrid, named after the city, and that are considered the oldest conserved version of the *Historia General de las cosas de la Nueva España*.

Each of them is located in a different place: Royal Palace Library (Real Palacio de Madrid) and Library of the Royal Academy of History (Real Academia de la Historia). "The Manuscript of the Royal Palace Library (Real Palacio de Madrid), rfa. 3280, is formed by 303 pages measuring around 32 x 22 cm, bound in Valencian paste toward the mid-18th century, according to Jesus Bustamante (1990: 248), moment in which he considers that it was foliated. In the first page appears written: «In this volume are contained six books of the original books *historiales de las cosas de la Nueva España* concerning the spiritual and temporary things, which in total add twelve books». This contains, for example, the first section of the *Primeros Memoriales* (ff. 250-303), where gathered the folios concerning deities and the calendar (Glass and Robertson 1975: 188).

The Matritense Codex located in the Royal Academy of History is a manuscript consisting of one volume with 343 pages formed by «*Memoriales en tres columnas*» with the text in Mexican language of four books or notebooks. It is found «with a preparation frequently with less care and faster, with more notes, corrections and appends».

Florentine Codex:

Pilar Máynez (2013)¹ affirms that the *Florentine Codex* is the culmination of a great project developed over 30 years in the area of the Mexican central plateau on the most diverse aspects that integrated the Mexica culture (deities, festivities, cosmogony (worldview), feeding, government, society, calendar, fauna and flora, ethnic origin of the peoples and circumstances of the conquest). These were gathered by Sahagún in Náhuatl. The *Florentine Codex* represents the culmination of the so-called *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, which is constituted by each and every one of the

¹ Máynez, P. & Romero, J. R. (2007). *El Códice florentino*. Su transcripción y traducción. En José Rubén Romero y Pilar Máynez (coord.), *El universo de Sahagún* (pp. 49-55). México: UNAM.

manuscripts collected by Sahagún in the region of Tepeapulco-Hidalgo (Primeros Memoriales), Tlatelolco (Segundos Memoriales) and Mexico Tenochtitlan, where he organized the information contained in those manuscripts.

The *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* consists of three parts that had different treatment in their edition and later appreciation. The *Florentine Codex*, considered by the critics as the most complete original manuscript, is integrated by the Nahuatl text, the Spanish version of that text and a collection of more than 1850 illustrations. The first version of the text was written in 1559-1561 and was revised and edited up to 1569, when Sahagún organized it into twelve books. The Spanish translation of that text concluded by 1579-1580 and it was the most disused in the 19th and 20th centuries. In 1979 Josefina García Quintana and Alfredo López Austin published the best paleographic version of that text. However, as a whole, the *Florentine Codex* was only published complete up to 1979, in a magnificent facsimile edition in which for the first time were shown the color photos of the extraordinary set of illustrations that Sahagún included to illustrate the bilingual text, and that are sample of the traditional way in which the Nahuatl people registered and told their history. The originality of the history conserved in the Florentine Codex resides in the three interpretations of the past that coexist in it.

Transcendence of Sahagún's work

The task undertaken by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún and his team of collaborators goes beyond what was meant to be the duty of a missionary. Undoubtedly, **his immense condition of humanist** and the treatment he could see from the conquerors to the natives allowed him to glimpse the threat hovering over those people. In this sense, the *Florentine Codex* must be seen as the act of rescue of a people's culture, and the *Historia general...* as a desire of showing to the western world of that time the face of the defeated, but a face just sketched with lines that their contemporaries could understand from their own canons and scale of values. Thanks to Sahagún's work; it is possible to, on one hand, reconstruct good part of the history of Mexico, and, on the other, to know more deeply the Nahuatl thought. Without it, both things would only be known from the western perspective.

As Ana Rita Valero exemplarily develops it in the book "Entre Códices"², with foreword of Dr. Miguel León Portilla, in the concerning to the Florentine Codex, "toward 1546, seventeen years after his arrival to Mexico, Sahagún was very interested in the indigenous culture and with the advantage of being in contact with the indigenous of the Colegio de la Santa Cruz, he began working an **anthropologic project**".

With this intention, he designed a methodology that still today, four centuries later, is still in use. It is the questionnaires elaborated to obtain information directly from the indigenous sages: from those elders who were still alive and that being formed in the prehispanic time, had the knowledge of the old worldview, of the history and of the daily life of the world of their youth; of what had flourished before the crisis of the conquest.³

We owe to Sahagún the outburst of the project, the idea, the methodology, the research, the amendments, the explanations, the revisions, the corrections and the general direction of the task: the *Florentine Codex* is his work.⁴

² Universidad Anáhuac [et al.](#) Entre Códices. Texts: Ana Rita Valero de García Lascuráin. Foreword: Miguel León Portilla. Page 125.

³ **Study about the research method of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún.** Alfredo López Austin. (www.mesoweb.com/about/articles/879.pdf)

⁴ **Ethnographic Codices: The Florentine Codex.** Manuel Barbero Richart (University of Cuenca)

The manuscript is a bicultural work as a result of two great sources of knowledge, the European from overseas, and the local of Mesoamerica. Making it took almost four decades, from 1547, when started gathering the first materials in Tlatelolco, up to 1585, when finished the XII book, of the conquest, with which this great work ends.”⁵

4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

Name	Address
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SEE POINT 4.2

Telephone	Facsimile	Email
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4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

Name	Address
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Real Biblioteca de Madrid

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Telephone	Facsimile	Email
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Tel. +34 91 454 87 00

<http://www.realbiblioteca.es>

Real Academia de la Historia

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SEE ANNEX 1 AND 2

4.3 Legal status

Provide details of legal and administrative responsibility for the preservation of the documentary heritage

The legal and administrative responsibility of the preservation of Sahagún's work, proposed in this nomination, is of the Royal Academy of Madrid and of the Royal Academy of the History in the case of the Matritense Codex and of the Laurentian Library in what refers to the Florentine Codex. These institutions have the copyright of the documents and have developed policies concerning their safeguard, diffusion and preservation. They also promote policies of accessibility for the consultation of the work with educational purposes, of research and academic, under diverse conditions.

During the development of the nomination process contact was kept with these authorities, which not only expressed their agreement but their total support and approval so that Mexico, through the CONACULTA, by means of the INAH, present the nomination.

SEE ALSO THE POINT 2.5

⁵ Title: **Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España** by fray Bernardino de Sahagún: the Florentine Codex. Book II: The Ceremonies.

4.4 Accessibility

Describe how the item(s) / collection may be accessed

Access conditions

In the case of the institutions that preserve the work of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún included in the nomination, it can be **consulted in site or in digitized version**, by electronic means.

The Digital World Library - WDL - (from who received a support letter for the attached nomination) and the Mexican Digital Library - BDMX - have in their digital platform the Florentine Codex and the Matritense Codex, respectively. The Mexican Digital Library (BDMX) has published the Matritense Codex in its site, a manuscript of 617 pages that gathers part of the ethnographic research carried out by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún in the New Spain of the mid-16th century and that led to his *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* and to the *Florentine Codex*.

The Mexican Digital Library was founded in November of 2010 with the aim of gathering in its site (<http://bdmx.mx>) documents “unpublished or very rare” and of special interest, related to the history and the culture of Mexico

In the case of the institutions that guard the documents, the access conditions are universal. There are schedules and requirements established for the consultation in room or some specifications in case of every Library. These are marked in the annex corresponding to Accessibility.

Royal Library of Madrid (Real Biblioteca de Madrid):

In the case of this library, is subject to regular hours for the public. Consisting of researcher room also with established schedules.

Royal Academy of History (Real Academia de la Historia):

For consultation of codices and some other manuscripts, it is necessary to request the authority of the Academy by means of a letter addressed to the Academic Librarian.

Laurentian Library :

It is specialized in the conservation, improvement and protection of its manuscripts and rare book collections. Due to the specific nature of its holdings the Library is not organized to provide access to all those who request admission.

Access

Reader passes can be issued to scholars who can prove they are conducting scientific research requiring access to manuscripts or rare books or their reproductions. Direct consultation of originals can be granted only for justified reasons.

4.5 Copyright status

Describe the copyright status of the item(s) / collection

The Royal Library of Madrid (Real Biblioteca de Madrid), the Royal Academy of History (Real Academia de la Historia) and the Laurentian Library are the legal custodians of the documents of the work mentioned in this nomination.

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity.

Is the documentary heritage what it appears to be? Have identity and provenance been reliably established?

Experts, specialists in the topic, historians and investigators of diverse disciplines that have studied the Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Matritense Codex and Florentine Codex have reliably determined their authenticity (as it is demonstrated in the sources of historic research included in the document) and original provenance.

5.2 World significance

Is the heritage unique and irreplaceable? Would its disappearance constitute and harmful impoverishment of the heritage of humanity? Has it created great impact over time and/or within a particular cultural area of the world? Has it had great influence (positive or negative) on the course of history?

Sahagún gave diverse forms to his works written as evangelizer, **historian and linguist**, correcting, appending and editing them as different books. He wrote in Náhuatl, language that knew to the perfection, and in Castilian, adding Latin. He started researching in 1547 and to gather data about the culture, beliefs, arts and manners of the ancient Mexicans. To carry out his task with success, he invented and started a **modern research method**:

- a) He deployed questionnaires in Náhuatl, with the aid of the students of the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco advanced in “romance”, this is, in Latin and Castilian, at the time that were experts in Náhuatl, their mother language.
- b) These questionnaires were read to the Indians that headed the neighborhoods or partialities that sent him elders that lent him invaluable help and are known as Sahagún's Informants.

The wealth of this ethnographic material is huge and it has an universal value. It highlights, for example, the description of the great festivities of the ritual calendar (included in the *Primeros Memoriales*), which is accompanied by paintings that show and supplement quite accurately the concrete elements of the celebrations.

5.3 Comparative criteria:

Does the heritage meet any of the following tests? (It must meet at least one of them.)

1 Time

Is the document evocative of its time (which may have been a time of crisis, or significant social or cultural change? Does it represent a new discovery? Or is it the “first of its kind”?

The conquest of America brought within the imposition of the catholic religion to the Amerindian natives. During this process of acculturation arose a series of questions about the relation of otherness: Who was this "other"? Did he have the same rational and physical capacity, or not?, Which were the procedures to carry out the labor of religious catechizing? The friars who undertook from 1523 this task came from the Renaissance world.

For the history of Mexico the period known as the Colony or Viceroyalty begins in the **16th** century, when the Spaniards commanded by Hernán Cortés conquered the former Mexico-Tenochtitlan. This way they **founded the New Spain**, name that the conquerors gave to the present city of Mexico. This stage is also known as viceroyalty because the country, during the time that lasted, was governed by a representative of the king of Spain who had the title of Viceroy.

The manuscripts of the work contain the ethnographic research of the New Spain of the mid-16th century carried out by the Franciscan missionary Fray Bernardino de Sahagún.

Francisco Florescano textually indicates that: "The information gathered in Tepeapulco and the other collected in Tlatelolco (1561-1565) was compiled in the so called *Primeros Memoriales* and in the set of documents called *Códices matritenses de la Real Academia de la Historia* and *Códices matritenses del Real Palacio*.

This task was carried out for over 20 years, from 1559 up to 1580. Sahagún's work during this time was focused to define the questions of the questionnaire and to organize the answers that the indigenous sages provided him, later he revised, corrected and requested once and again materials in Náhuatl, until he obtained a satisfactory text. Then concentrated on the partial translation of those materials from Náhuatl into Spanish, culminating in his most known work: *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, whose first edition was made up to 1829-30.

As Florescano affirms, Sahagún did not adjust to the rigid classic or medieval outlines, because in the *Historia general* he included a story of the conquest of Mexico elaborated by his collaborators of Tlatelolco, and a novelty: the **outstanding pictography collection** that reproduced the ancient indigenous forms of registering the past.

It is considered that its importance transcends the limits of time and culture and that it should be preserved for the present and future generations and in some way to achieve its accessibility to all the peoples of the world.

2 Place

Does the document contain crucial information about a locality important in world history and culture? For example, was the location itself an important influence on the events or phenomena represented by the document? Does it describe physical environments, cities or institutions that have since vanished?

Discovering the work of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún as primary source on the Aztec civilization has given the possibility of projecting, sharing and spreading the need to understand the indigenous worldview, of a zone of America that is significantly relevant from the historical and cultural aspect, as part of the world.

The religious, administrative and academic activities developed by the Franciscan and that are part of his work, date from his arrival in 1529 until his death in 1590, in the central part of Mexico

Contextually, his work has relation with three places: **Tepeapulco (1558-1560)**, where produced the

Primeros Memoriales; **Tlatelolco (1564-1565)**, where produced the *Memoriales con escolios* (both versions are identified as *Matritense Codex*); and **City of Mexico (1566-1571)** where Sahagún organized a new version, more complete than the previous, always helped by his team of scholars of Tlatelolco.

3 People

Does the cultural context of the document's creation reflect significant aspects of human behavior, or of social, industrial, artistic or political development? Or does it capture the essence of great movements, transitions, advances or regression? Does it illustrate the lives of prominent individuals in the above fields?

Fray Bernardino de Sahagún that developed his activity in the New Spain **during the 16th century**, can be considered as the most important investigator of all that concerning the Nahua culture, dedicating his entire life to the compilation and later writing about the traditions, ways of life, places, manners, deities, language, science, art, feeding, social organization, etc., of the so-called Mexicas (Mexica culture). Without the research of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún would have lost great part of the cultural inheritance of Mexico and protection in the world.

The task undertaken by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún and his team of collaborators goes beyond what was meant to be the duty of a missionary. Undoubtedly, **his immense condition of humanist** and the treatment he could see from the conquerors to the natives allowed him to glimpse the threat hovering over those peoples. In this sense, the Codices (*Matritense y Florentino*) must be seen as the act of rescue of a people's culture, and the *Historia general...* as the desire of showing to the western world of that time the face of the defeated, but a face just sketched with lines that their contemporaries could understand from their own canons and scale of values. However, much of that face remained unveiled. Maybe because Sahagún knew that the purpose of the Spaniards was not to *discover* but to *conquer* the Mexican people.

Now then, the *Florentine Codex* is also a legacy to the posterity, mostly unknown until today by the western world. How much information contained in it and not registered in the *Historia general...* is left to be discovered? What is the content of those parts in Náhuatl that were not translated by the author because he considered them lacking of general interest or extremely idolatrous, and, in consequence, dangerous for the natives themselves? How valuable may be for a fair understanding of the prehispanic world, for example, the hymns to the deities that he refused to translate due to the "devilish" language, dark, difficult, cryptic? Discovering it continues being up to now a pending subject.⁶

4 Subject and theme

Does the subject matter of the document represent particular historical or intellectual developments in the natural, social and human sciences? Or in politics, ideology, sport or the arts?

Subject: The Nahua culture in process of disappearance, which Sahagún exemplary rescues with his Work (manuscripts and pictographs).

Fray Bernardino de Sahagún lived in a time of transition of two cultures, and he could notice that the Mexica would disappear absorbed by the European. He deepened in the complexities of the indigenous world with singular commitment, reticence and intelligence.

The three categories: the **divine thing, the human thing and the mundane thing**, of deep medieval tradition inside the historical conception, are all present in Sahagún's work.

⁶ Serrano, Coronado Tomás. El silencio del traductor. Departamento de Traducción e Interpretación. Centro de Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. *Mutatis Mutandis*. Vol. 6, No. 1. 2013. pp. 113-125.

5 Form and style

Does the document have outstanding aesthetic, stylistic or linguistic value? Or is it a typical exemplar of a type of presentation, custom or medium? Is it an example of a disappeared or disappearing carrier or format?

The scholars of the monumental encyclopedia of the Náhuatl culture observed that in its composition was present “the scholastic and medieval, hierarchy, adapted of course, to the religion and the customs of the ancient inhabitants of New Spain.” This way Sahagún structured his work starting with the gods, following with religious cosmology, the earthly kingdom and concluded with a relation of human and natural things.

His *Historia* that is an encyclopedia of medieval type, modified by the **Renaissance knowledge** and those of the **Náhuatl culture**, presents the work of several hands and several styles, since his team of students intervened from at least 1558, up to 1585. In it their filiation is clearly perceived, with **pictographic tendency**, in the way of the so called School of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, of the mid-**16th** century, with an "Aztec revival" style.

It is an extraordinary example, unique and of universal value that developed a methodology, in Nahua language that rescued the vision of a people, of a culture that is part of the millenary roots of Mexico.

6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance:

Application of this criterion must reflect living significance – does documentary heritage have an emotional hold on people who are alive today? Is it venerated as holy or for its mystical qualities, or revered for its association with significant people and events?

(Once those who have revered the documentary heritage for its social/ spiritual/ community significance no longer do so, or are no longer living, it loses this specific significance and may eventually acquire historical significance.)

- Undoubtedly, the work of Sahagún is one of the most renowned historic sources of the ancient Mexico.
- Fray Bernardino de Sahagún can be considered as the most important investigator of all that concerning the **Nahua** culture, dedicating his entire life to the compilation and later writing of the traditions, ways of life, places, manners, deities, language, science, art, feeding, social organization, etc., of the Mexica people.
- Thanks to the transcendence of Sahagún's work, it has been possible to have a better knowledge on the Nahua culture
- The Codices are *exceptionally rich* in terms of linguistic and highly aesthetic concerning pictography and texts.
- By the decade of 1540, Sahagún had such a dominion of the Náhuatl language that he was able to speak, write, preach and thoroughly talk with his collaborators about the most varied subjects.
- The **Florentine Codex** must be seen as the act of rescue of the culture of a people, and the **Historia**

general de las cosas de Nueva España as a desire of showing to the western world of that time the face of the original culture, but a face just sketched with lines that their contemporaries could understand from their own canons and scale of values.

- According to the Dictionary of the Franciscans: “Brother Bernardino de Sahagún, besides being an exemplary Franciscan missionary, stands out among his partners mainly for his great work in the field of the Mexican history and ethnography.”

6.0 Contextual information

6.1 Rarity

The documents integrating the Work of Sahagún, present in this nomination, are unique, they contain a universe in itself and they are sample of the construction of a mind like that of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, visionary and a sage ahead of his time.

Likewise are *exceptionally rich* in terms of linguistic and highly aesthetic concerning pictography and texts.

6.2 Integrity

The nature and content of the preserved copies of Sahagún's work: Matritense Codex and Florentine Codex, make them unique in their category and their time “*entire corpus*”. They have been conserved complete and they have not been altered, damaged or mutilated.
