

Figure 7.8. Ritual cloaks. Codex Magliabechiano, f. 7v. Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Banco Rari, 232.

conquest and most likely had been educated by the same friars with whom they eventually collaborated. This aspect of Indigenous manuscript production is investigated at greater length in the next chapter dedicated to the work of Sahagún. The encyclopedic Sahaguntine project contains many images that were produced by Indigenous painters and that nevertheless played a much more ancillary and illustrative role than those in the Codices Telleriano-Remensis, Vaticanus A, Tudela, and Magliabechiano.

### 7.2.2. The tonalpohualli and the veintenas

The Codex Tudela (ff. 90r–124r) treats the 260-day calendar through elaborate pictorials and lengthy written explanations based on a four-part division of the tonalpohualli and associations with trees and pairs of patron gods (Jansen 1986, Batalla Rosado 2002, 374–385). In the text, divination and ritual activity are accorded the same importance. Day signs are noted not only in terms of the fate of whoever was born on that day but also in terms of the type of sacrifice that the person was required to make. This indicates that mantic images had equally predictive and prescriptive functions.

The corresponding section in the Codex Magliabechiano (ff. 11r–14r) beautifully but rather simply renders the twenty day signs of the tonalpohualli, each accompanied by a numeral from one to thirteen. The count begins with the day 1 Flint (Fig. 7.9) rather than the expected 1 Crocodile. While Batalla Rosado (2002, 379) considered this detail a simplification of the original section in the Codex Tudela, whose calendrics was seemingly too complex for the copyist of the Codex Magliabechiano to master, Anders and Jansen (1996a, 157) proposed instead that the manuscript was drafted on a year that began on a day Flint, which also establishes the veintena count for that year. I find this suggestion to be interesting and worthy of consideration. While the canonical reading of the calendar seems to imply that there is a first day in the calendar, the 260-day calendar does not have any fixed correlation with the solar and vague year, and day 1 Crocodile may fall at any point of the year. Among contemporary Maya K'iche' communities, no day is universally considered to be the first of the chol q'ij, although there is general agreement that 8 B'atz' (8 Monkey) may be counted as the first (Akker 2018, 33–34). The annotation in folio 13v related to this section seems to confirm Anders and Jansen's hypothesis:



Figure 7.9. The first four days of the tonalpohualli. Codex Magliabechiano, f. 11r. Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Banco Rari, 232.

These figures of this part, which are those just mentioned, which are twenty, are the twenty days of each festival, which are painted later. They had them in order to name one who was born in these days ... (Boone 1983, 177).

The annotator is clearly referring to the veintena festivals that had a close relationship with the solar year and would in fact fall on a specific set of twenty day signs in any given year, as discussed at length in this book. In the Codex Magliabechiano, the specific time of the manuscript's production had a bearing on the drafting of the calendar, while the Codex Tudela adheres to a standard depiction, beginning with day Crocodile on folio 98v. The following pages in the Codex Magliabechiano depict the xiuhmolpilli, the cycle of fifty-two years. This placement seemingly departs from the original arrangement in the Codex Tudela, in which the counting of the years is positioned at the end of the book. As for its depiction, both codices represent the entire fifty-two-year cycle from year 1 Reed to 13 Rabbit. An explanatory text in folio 14v of the Codex Magliabechiano introduces the counting of the years with another reference to the veintena ceremonies that were celebrated over the course of the solar year.

I believe that this provides sufficient proof that the painters and annotators of this manuscript had a specific narrative and content structure that they wanted to develop and that its focus was the ceremonial aspect of the Mesoamerican calendar (i.e., how days and time periods were celebrated and counted). In this respect, there is a clear shift from a divinatory function assigned to the pictograms and their arrangement to a ceremonial and descriptive one. While the illustrative purpose of these manuscripts should not be underestimated, I have argued throughout this book that the current divinatory paradigm applied in the study of the codices has perhaps wrongly underestimated other less pragmatic but more self-reflexive aspects of Mesoamerican religious pictography and the calendar—namely, a ceremonial, commemorative, or even prophetic function.

The counting of the years (xiuhmolpilli) in both manuscripts begins with the year 1 Reed, an unusual date for Nahua manuscripts, which more commonly used either 1 Rabbit or 2 Reed. The reason seems to be of a historical and transcendental nature because glosses in both codices (Tudela, f. 77v, and Magliabechiano, f. 14v) explicitly refer to the arrival of Cortés in Mesoamerica in the year 1 Reed or 1519 (*entró el Marqués del Valle a esta tierra*). Given the complete lack of historical contents in

the Codices Tudela and Magliabechiano, in contrast to the Codices Telleriano-Remensis and Vaticanus A, the religious overtones of the date year 1 Reed as a marker of a new beginning should not be underestimated. In the Codices Telleriano-Remensis and Vaticanus A, the year 1 Reed is associated with Quetzalcoatl and the tale of his return after his disappearance in the eastern sea. While all these documents offer the earliest pictographic depictions and accounts of the events surrounding the conquest, they were produced at least one generation after the fact and drafted by artists and friars who had not witnessed them firsthand. Thus, they are indicative of the perception of momentous historical events in a later period.

### 7.2.3. Xochihuitl and the pulque gods

One of the most interesting aspects of the Codices Tudela and Magliabechiano are the godly and ceremonial scenes that follow the veintenas section. At the closing of the yearly ceremonies (depicted in folios 29r–30r in the Codex Tudela and 46v–48r in the Codex Magliabechiano), Xochipilli, the god of flowers and feasting, is celebrated (Fig. 7.10). He holds a *yollotopilli* (a heart stick), one of his known attributes. A flowered plant is depicted in front of him, along with his day sign, 7 Flower, and a few eggshells that, according to the annotator of the Codex Magliabechiano, were scattered on the street to celebrate the gods who provided an abundance of eggs. The same manuscript further explains that this occasion was a movable feast (*fiesta extravagante*), a celebration tied to the tonalpohualli that occurred at different points of the solar year. However, in the following folio in both codices, another day, 1 Flower, is added to the celebration

of Xochipilli. 7 Flower and 1 Flower occur twenty days apart, which suggests that this celebration was akin to a veintena.

The day 1 Flower, which corresponds to the fourth trecena of the tonalpohualli, is a day dedicated to artists and musicians. In the case of the Codex Borbonicus, for example, Quiñones Keber (1987, 191–192) proposed that the explicitly ritual and festive character of the trecena 1 Flower presided over by Huehuecoyotl may indeed be the representation of the festival of flowers (Sahagún 1950–1982, bk. 2, 36, bk. 5, 25–27) in the tonalamatl section of the manuscript. In the Codices Tudela and Magliabechiano, there appears to be a close relationship between this particular movable feast and the previous section devoted to the veintenas. In this light, Xochihuitl (the Feast of Flowers) paradigmatically becomes a feast dedicated to feasting. Moreover, as noted in Section 3.3, the presentation of the feast of 1 Flower as a movable feast right after the “fixed” solar celebrations of the veintenas also seems to suggest that the relationship between solar or seasonal phenomena and the tonalpohualli was noteworthy. The xihuitl and the tonalpohualli were one calendar, rather than two working in sync. In a few sources, namely Cristóbal del Castillo’s Nahuatl chronicle (Castillo 2001, ch. 71, 167–168) and the Códice de Huichapan (Caso 1967, 222), which hails from the Otomí town of the same name in the modern state of Hidalgo, Xochihuitl is mentioned as a veintena that falls in December, replacing Izcalli or Tititl. In the Codices Tudela and Magliabechiano, Xochihuitl is placed right after Tititl.

Several representations of the pulque gods, which are disparagingly described as “gods of drunkenness”

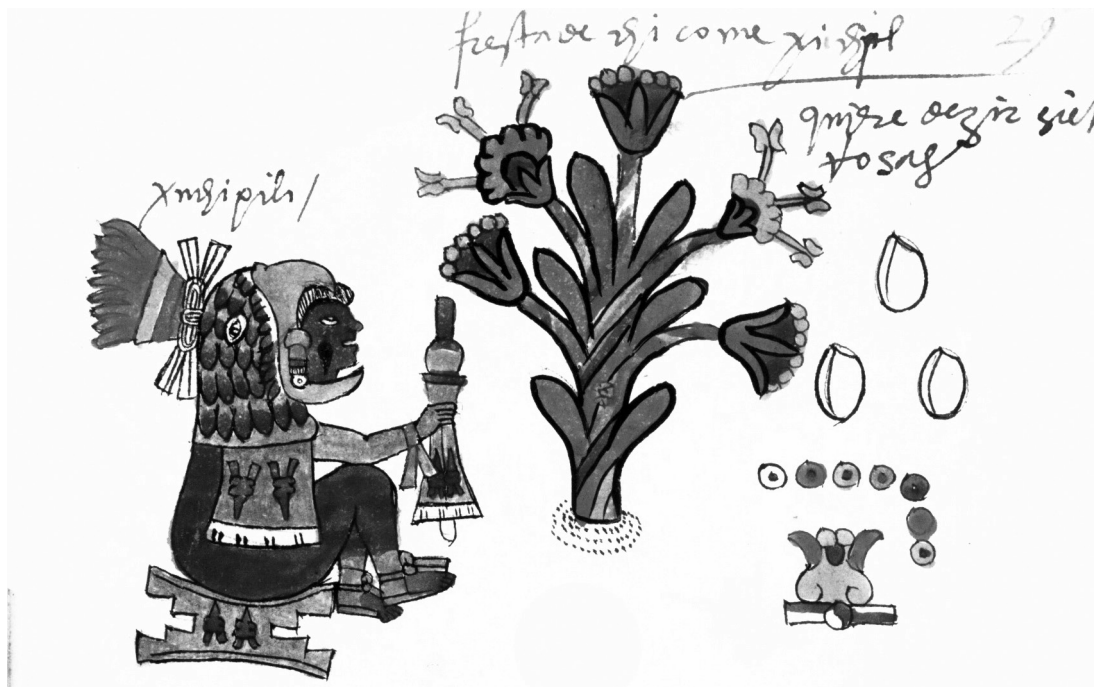


Figure 7.10. Xochipilli celebrated during 7 Flower. Codex Tudela, f. 19r. Museo de América, Madrid.