

Art of the Americas

Week Ten

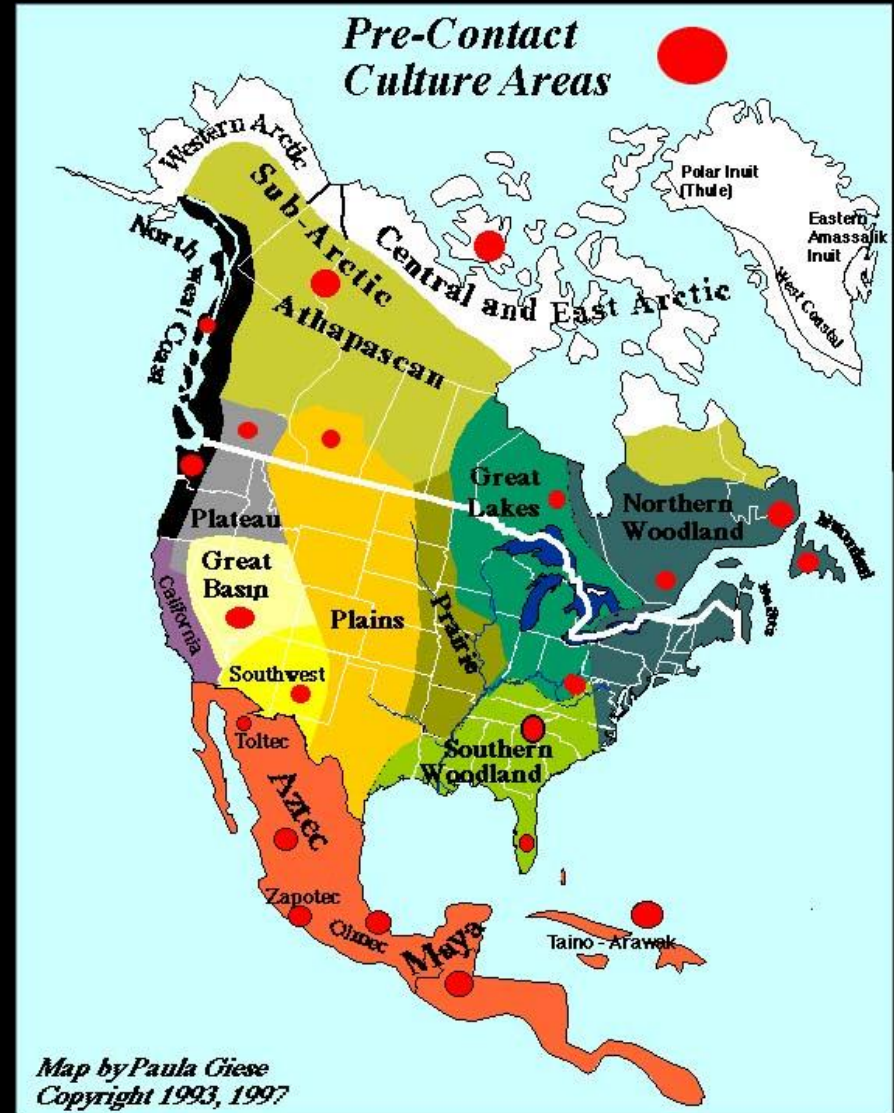
What comes to mind when we
think about American Art?

Goals

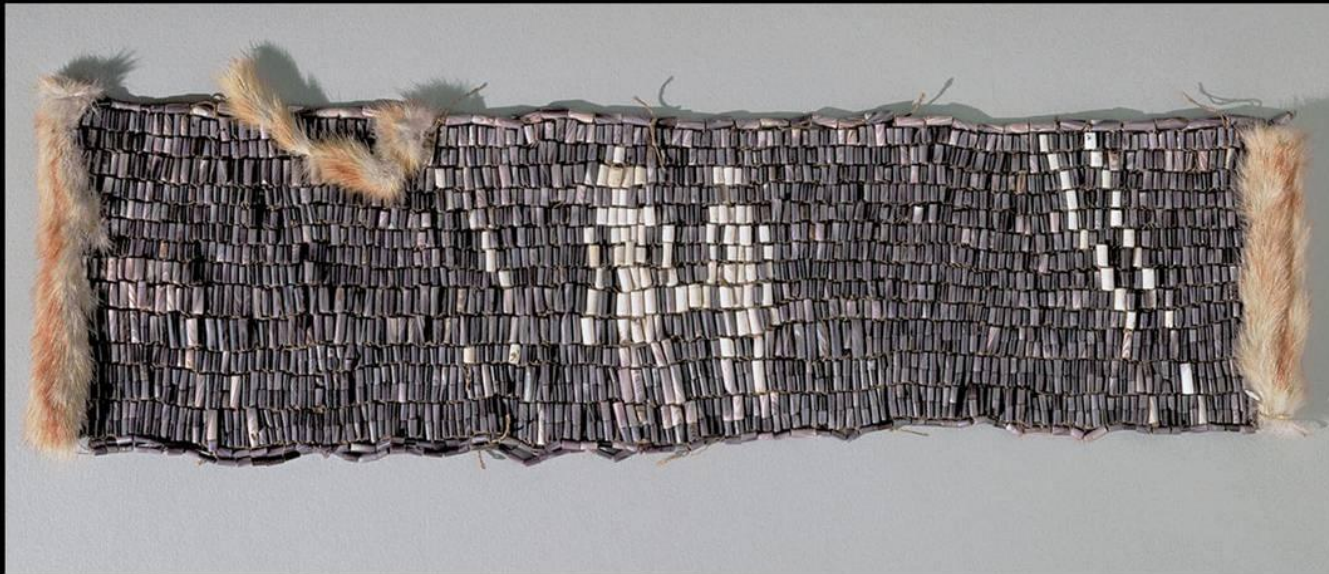
- Discover the material culture of the Native Americans of North America
- Refine our concept of art vs. craft vs. tool when talking about non-Western cultures
- What do the artifacts of the Aztec people tell us about their world? How did the Aztecs understand their world?
- Explore Machu Picchu and the Incan Civilization. What can we see of their beliefs, engineering know-how through the ruins of Machu Picchu.

Art of North America

- Native Americans had completely populated the land
- Eastern Woodlands
- Great Plains
- Southwest



Wampum Belt, Traditionally called William Penn's Treaty with the Delaware. 1680s. Shell bead. 17 3/8" x 6 1/8" (44 x 15.5 cm)



What is in it?



Note the two figures who are more or less the same size
(hierarchical scale and its implication)



How was it made?



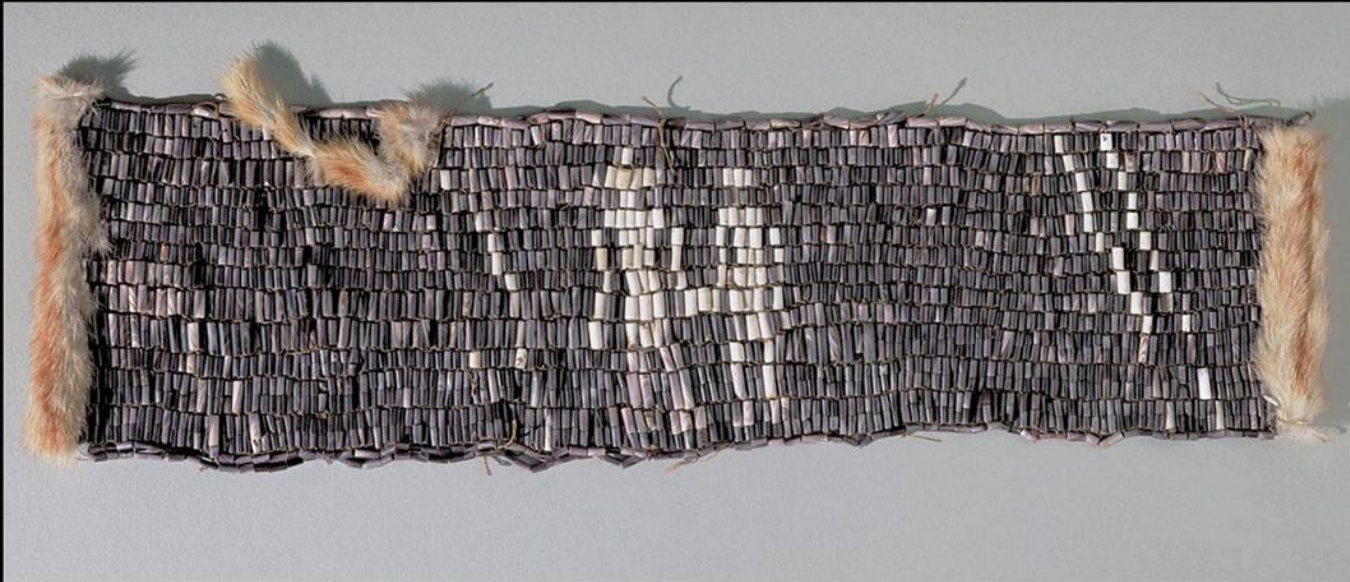
How was it made?



What was its purpose?

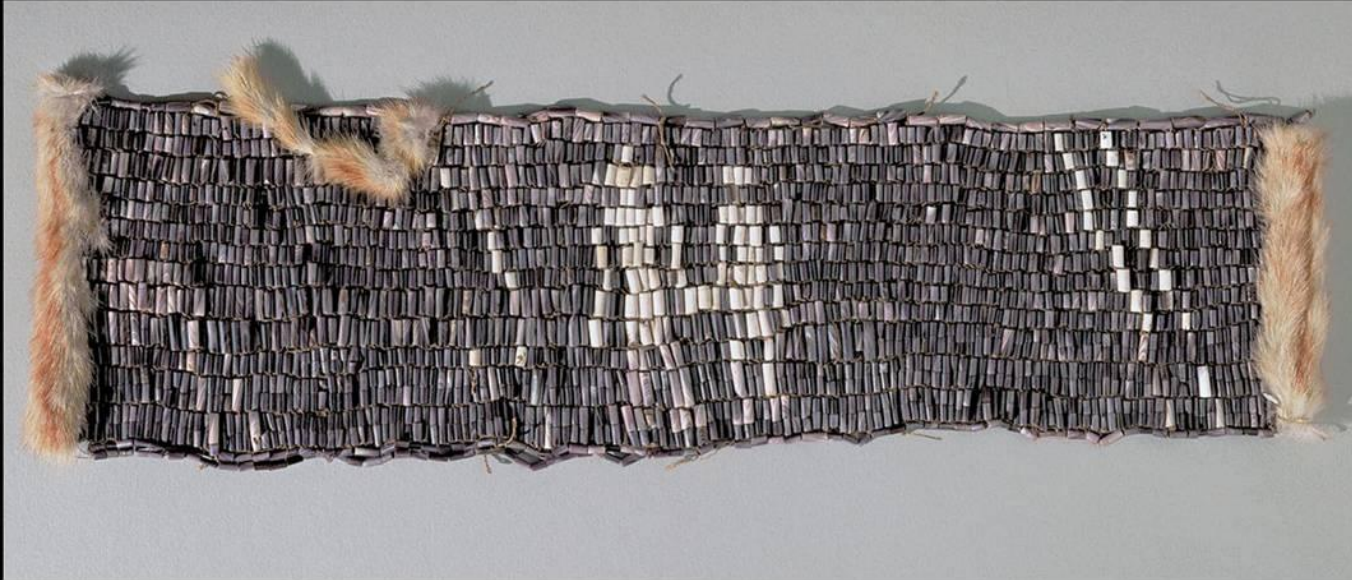


A record of the (unofficial) Treaty of 1682 between William Penn and the Delaware people. Connecting lines show alliances.



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Not usually worn because it was big. Used by speakers to tell stories.



Art vs. Craft vs. Tool

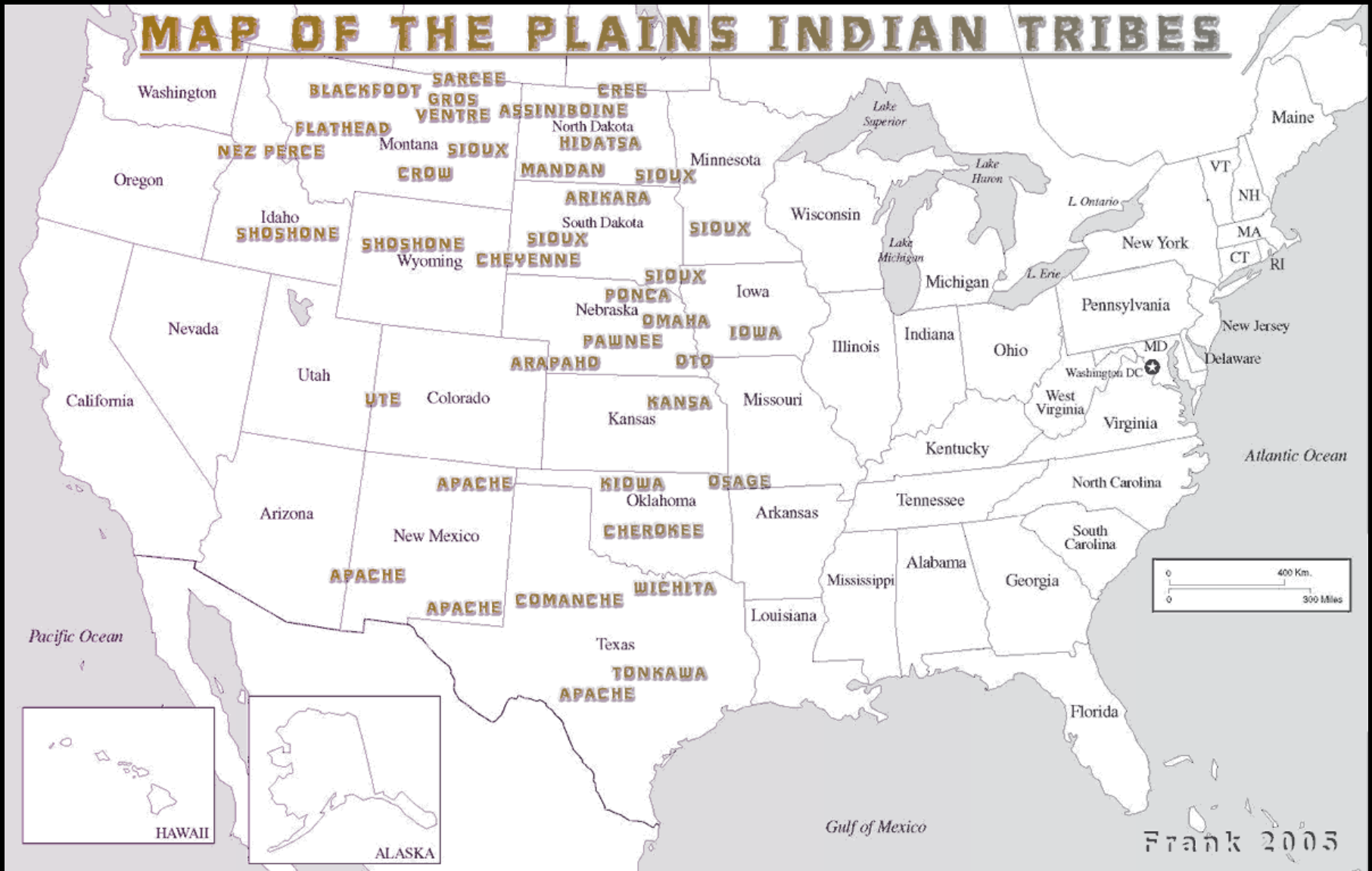


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Great Plains



Battle Scene, Hide Painting. North Dakota. Mandan. 1797 – 1800. Tanned buffalo hide, dyed porcupine quills, and black, red, green, yellow, and brown pigments. 7'10" x 8'6" (2.44 x 2.65 m)



Sioux vs. Mandan battle in 1797. It was worn, most likely by the hero of the battle. Material is one of the food sources (buffalo), and suggests the nomadic lifestyle.



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NAMPEYO



Nampeyo (Hopi-Tewa), Polychrome jar, c. 1930s, clay and pigment, 13 x 21 cm
(National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution)

NAMPEYO



Smarthistory [Video](#)

NAMPEYO



Consider how this work is a continuation of Native American traditions and also how it is also modern and speaks to a wider fascination in Native American art at the time.

What do we think about when we
hear “the Aztecs”

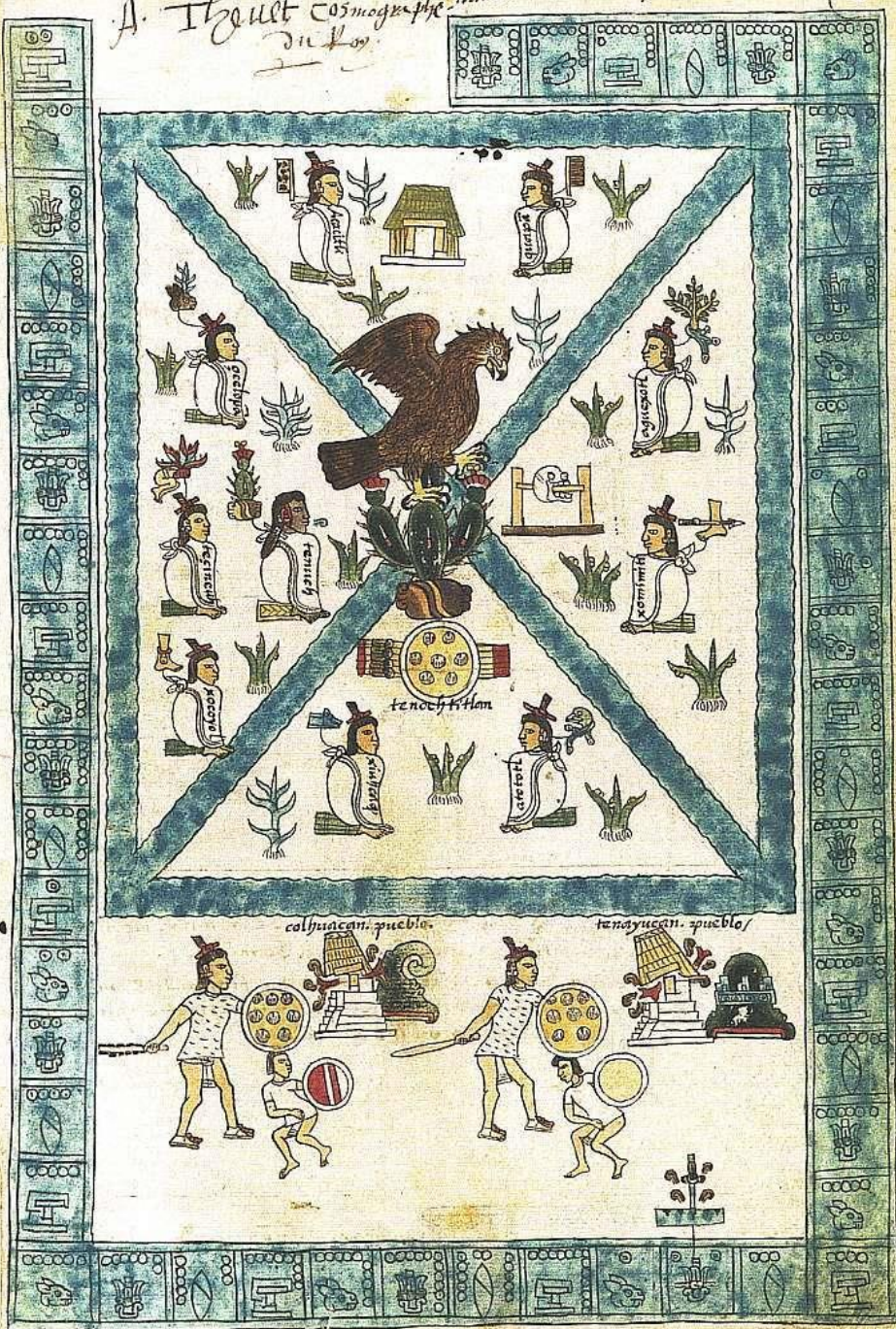
The Aztecs

- Over 400 years in power by the time Hernan Cortes arrived in Tenochtitlan in 1519.
- Brutal and practiced the sacrifice of humans (belief that world would end if sacrifices ended)
- Technologically advanced





A. Thevet cosmographie numero de omnes. L. 1.



Why was it made?

- Representation of the city at the time of its founding.
- Commemoration of Spanish victory of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan.
- To be presented to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (also King of Spain), so he can learn about his



Tenochtitlan





Calendar Stone. Mexico. Aztec. Circa 1500. Diameter 11'6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (3.6 meters), 4 feet thick



Sun God Tonatiuh with stone flint tongue



Four Previous Eras: Jaguar, Water, Rain, Wind



Aztecs lived in the 5th era (4 Motion)



Hands of the sun god clasping human hearts



Twenty-day months, Five-day weeks



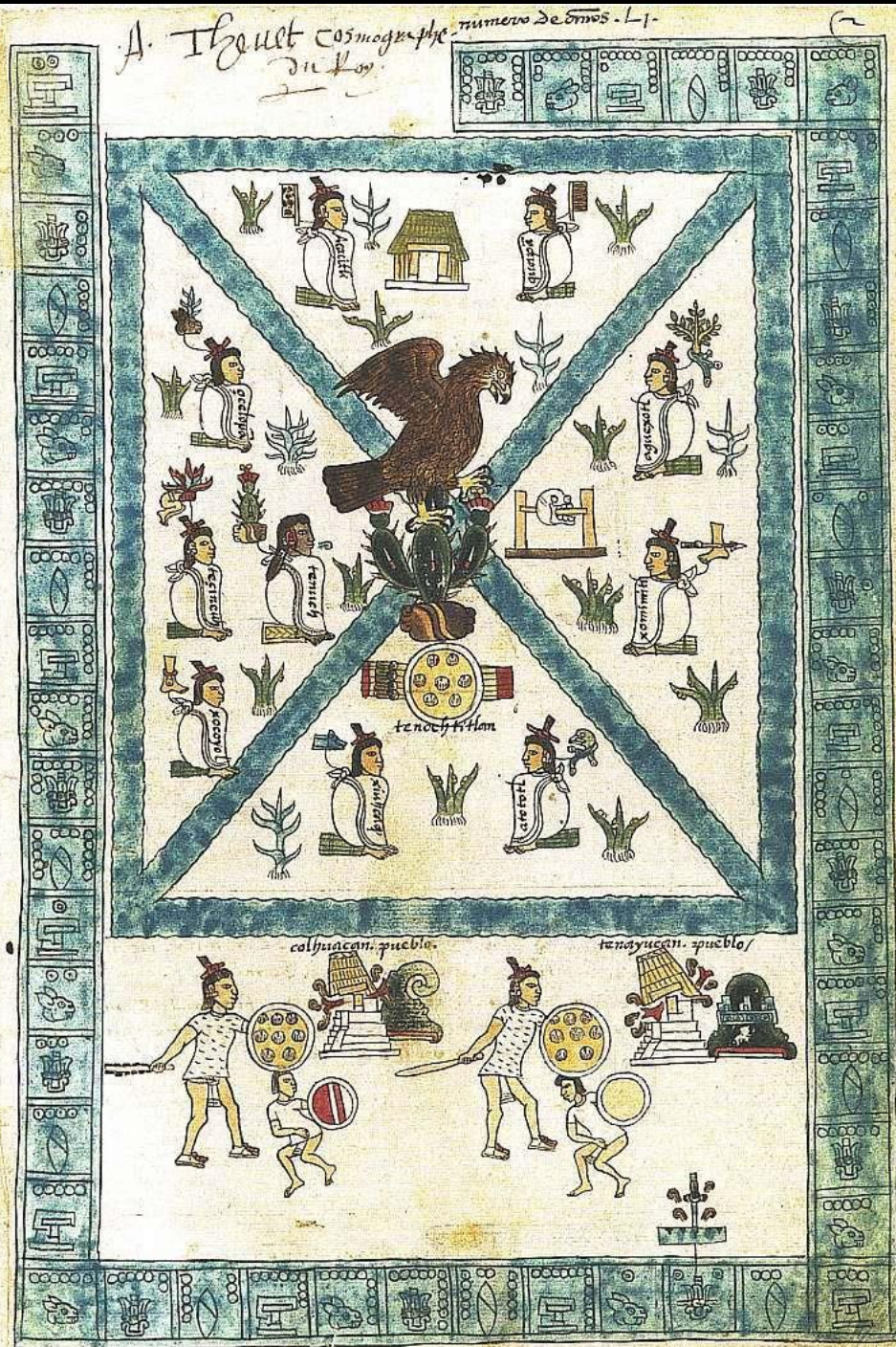
Rays of the sun



1476: year the stone was completed?



Cycles of 52 years



Feather Headdress of Moctezuma. Before 1519. Quetzal, blue cotinga, and other feathers and gold. 45 5/8" x 68 7/8" (116 x 175 cm)



Male Quetzal bird



Is this art?



Inca Empire

Land of the Four Quarters



- No written language!
- Cuzco: capital city
- Had religion which held the empire together
- 23,000 miles of road
- Most famous monument: Machu Picchu

Machu Picchu. Peru. Inca. 1450-1530



Video: Machu Picchu Decoded (National Geographics)

- What kind of civilization did the Incans have?
- What was the purpose of Machu Picchu?
- How did the scholars arrive at their conclusion?
- How was Machu Picchu built? What were some of the challenges faced by the architects?
- How is Machu Picchu a demonstration of Incan artistry and engineering?
- Parts [One](#), [Two](#), [Three](#), [Four](#)