to technological developments in Almohad Seville, Nasrid Granada, and Ayyubid Egypt and Syria. By tracing both textual awareness of these developments and the evidence of existing objects, Hernández Pérez nuances scholarly understanding of the flow of knowledge between the Eastern and Western Mediterranean.

The volume also considers the ways in which the cultural dialogue of the Mediterranean traversed the religious and political boundaries of the region. For example, "Siculo-Arabic, Andalusi and Fatimid ivory Works: Iconographic Transfers and Visual Propaganda" by Noelia Silva Santa-Cruz argues that the Norman court adopted the visual strategies of the Fatimid caliphate in order to communicate its power and legitimacy.

When considered in total, *Artistic and Cultural Dialogues in the Late Medieval Mediterranean* fulfills many of its articulated aims. The collected essays clearly demonstrate the complex webs of awareness, influence, and interaction between the Western Islamic societies and the surrounding region. The authors move beyond consideration of stylistic mimicry or hybridity to consider how the use of specific models functioned as a conveyor of meaning. The historiographical significance of this methodological framing is highlighted by the forward and preface, both of which describe the project as an important deviation from the narratives of opposition between Islam and Christendom. Ideally this perspective would have included the avoidance of outdated language, such as the use of "the Moors"/"Moorish" (107) and "the oriental lands" (258). However, this does not take away from the persuasiveness of the text nor its importance to the discourse on the artistic and visual culture of the late medieval Mediterranean.

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Códice Maya de México: Understanding the Oldest Surviving Book of the Americas. Andrew D. Turner, ed.
Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2022. x + 86 pp. $24.95.

Every so often, perhaps once or twice a decade, a book will be published that elicits from a field's scholarly community a collective "thank goodness." Andrew D. Turner's edited volume, *Códice Maya de México: Understanding the Oldest Surviving Book of the Americas*, is such a publication. This short but impressive text succeeds in numerous ways, but most importantly, it manages to be an insightful, smart text that fills a scholarly lacuna in the field, while also modeling the ethical collaboration requisite for twenty-first-century scholarship. The

book puts to rest, once and for all, the controversies that have haunted *Códice Maya de México* since academics first became aware in the 1960s of its miraculous survival. Turner has created an accessible text that informs readers of the codex's place within the larger expanse of Maya history, its fraught positionality in the messy realities of modern looting, illicit trade, and repatriation, and, perhaps most importantly, the role it serves in contemporary Maya communities today.

To summarize *Códice Maya de México*'s modern biography is to relay something of a contemporary whodunnit tale. The ten-page, accordion-folded pictorial manuscript suddenly appeared in the hands of an antiquities dealer in 1964, acquired from individuals who had violently looted it from a dry cave located somewhere along the border of the Mexican states of Chiapas and Tabasco. Its so-called discovery served as a catalyst to ignite longstanding academic feuds within the Mayanist community, with one camp arguing for authenticity and the other that it was a fake, a modern painting made upon ancient bark paper. The fact that only three other precontact Maya codices survived the colonial period makes the existence of *Códice Maya de México* all the more remarkable, and partially explains some scholars' incredulous responses.

Turner's introduction informs readers of the text's cultural and art historical contexts, arguing that it was produced in a transitory moment of Maya history. The codex's materiality (more fully interrogated in chapter 2), its bark paper substructure and gesso ground, coupled with its stylized iconography, solidly center it in larger networks of Mesoamerican artistic production. Now known to be produced in the early postclassic period (900–1200), *Códice Maya de México* was an object created in "precarious and uncertain times as balances of power began to shift" (4), more specifically as political and religious authority moved from Petén in Guatemala northward to the Yucatán Peninsula and central Mexico. Turner cogently explicates the complex intellectual world of the manuscript, defined by sophisticated calendrical systems and astronomical knowledge, detailing how *Códice Maya de México* functioned as a 104-year almanac that recorded five cycles of Venus's four distinct phases.

The second chapter, authored by Gerardo Gutiérrez and Baltazar Brito Guadarrama, definitively proves *Códice Maya de México*'s authenticity, finally laying to rest the accusations that have plagued its proper evaluation for nearly six decades. The authors conducted a battery of destructive and nondestructive tests (not all of which can be described here), which ultimately verified the text's production in the early postclassic period between 1021 and 1152 CE, according to AMS ^{14}C tests. Moreover, they were able to disprove previous assertions that claimed the presence of modern and synthetic pigments using X-ray florescence, and to verify the use of Maya Blue pigment, whose

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techniques of production were not known to the scientific community until after the reappearance of the *Códice Maya de México*. Additional historically verified materials were present, cochineal dye and calcium sulfate, solidly placing the manuscript within the broader artistic traditions of early postclassic Mesoamerica.

Jesús Guillermo Kantún Rivera finishes the book, articulating the profound importance of the *Códice Maya de México* and the other three surviving codices for contemporary Maya communities living in Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize. As a resident of Mérida, Yucatán, he describes his own self-discovery of his Indigenous ancestry, initially as a teenager reading American academic texts in translation. Kantún Rivera became a professional archaeologist and epigrapher, and today is a faculty member in the Department of Anthropological Sciences of the Autonomous University of Yucatán (UADY). He is part of a growing network of Indigenous scholars who together are working to "[recover] the historical and cultural heritage bequeathed to us by our ancestors" (66).

This edited volume will be cherished by Mayanists in all their subsidiary disciplines for its concise argumentation, beautiful facsimile foldout, and supplemental descriptive annotations. Its readability makes it perfect for undergraduate and graduate-level education alike.

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Fra Angelico: Painter, Friar, Mystic. Timothy Verdon.
Arts and the Sacred 3. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021. 384 pp. €150.

Timothy Verdon's passion for Italian Renaissance sacred art, and the faith that inspired it, is on full display in this splendidly illustrated monograph. A Dominican friar and priest declared a saint by Pope John Paul II, Angelico was a key figure of the Florentine Quattrocentro. Author Timothy Verdon, himself a Catholic priest, art historian, and director of the Museo del Duomo in Florence, examines Fra Angelico's oeuvre through the lens of art history fused with theology and faith. Akin to the author's other publications, this book is part of Brepols's series Arts and the Sacred.

Aptly titled "With Christ Always," chapter 1 outlines the religious context of Angelico's art, which, as Verdon demonstrates throughout this study, constitutes a pictorial form of exegesis anchored in scripture and church writings. As a Dominican friar and priest, Angelico also draws upon liturgical practice and sacred theater for a theological program linked to his order's role in the Observant Reform movement following the Western Schism. Angelico's