Ball lightning (Kugelblitz) is a large amount of electrical energy concentrated in a small volume. This rare phenomena generally appears at the end of a thunderstorm as a brightly luminous and slow moving ball. The ball may be rotating, emitting sparks or “shotgun blast” like reports (Ley 1967, Brand 1923, Mohr 1966). The earliest known description of this phenomenon, in the New World, comes from the Florentine Codex.

On the night of August 12th 1521 (dated by the capture of Guauhtémoc after daybreak) “...there appeared to the Mexicans what showed itself to be [a ball of] jasper which seemed to issue from the heavens and carne to view like a large coal of fire” (Sahagún 1955:115).

And when night had fallen, then it rained and sprinkled at intervals. Late, at night the Flame became visible; just so was it seen, just so it emerged as if it came from the heavens. Like a whirlwind it went spinning around and revolving; it was as if embers burst out of it—some very large, some very small, some like sparks. Like a coppery wind it arose, crackling, snapping, and exploding loudly. Then it circled the dike and traveled toward Coyonacacazco; then it went into the middle of the lake there to be lost.

None shouted; none spoke aloud.¹

REFERENCES CITED

Brand, Walther

Ley, Willey

¹ Italics mine. The source of this quotation is chapter thirty-nine, Book 12, The Conquest of Mexico, of the General History of the Things of New Spain.


La presente bibliografía de los años 1966 a 1969 puede ser útil pero también deberá ser complementada con las bibliografías anteriores. Fueron referencias a una o más condiciones de utilidad dar a la:

5 “Teotihuacán y la medicina”, *México*.
7 “La historia de la medicina”, *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl*.