

The Codex Mendoza. Edited by FRANCES F. BERDAN and PATRICIA RIEFF ANAWALT. 4 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992. Plates. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Figures. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Indexes. 900 pp. Cloth. \$495.00.

The publication of the *Codex Mendoza* is truly a major accomplishment. The present four-volume edition seeks to make this important document accessible to scholars while also providing the basic research background that might serve as a point of departure for future investigations.

The first volume of this quarto-sized work contains 8 chapters that place the codex in perspective and 11 appendixes that outline specific details contained in the codex. The history, physical description, ethnographic contents, and stylistic analysis of the work form important parts, as do specific studies on the tribute roll, glyphic conventions, and costumes and accoutrements. These essays both summarize what has already been written about the codex and offer new insights and interpretations.

The second volume of this edition provides a page-by-page description of the contents of the codex; it contains extended descriptions of each codex leaf. These small essays provide the reader with a tremendous amount of background material for each page. Volume 2 also contains an extensive bibliography and the index for the work.

The third volume is the facsimile of the original codex, produced from color photographic transparencies made of the original work. Undoubtedly this is the best available facsimile of the codex. The last volume is a replica of the original document, consisting of line drawings taken from the original. All the Spanish glosses have been translated into English and placed in the appropriate location in typeface. The descriptive passages in Spanish are also reproduced in typeface with parallel-column English translations.

With a work as large and complex as this one, it would be difficult even briefly to touch on all the salient features. A few of the strong points and weaknesses can be noted, however. The codex itself consists of three sections. The first tells of the foundation of Mexico-Tenochtitlán and the history of Mexica (Aztec) conquests. The second is a record of tribute levied by the Mexica, and the last is a study of Mexica daily life and customs. Consequently, the essays and analytical studies in these volumes must confront a wide range of material. Among the essays, those that stand out are the studies of costume by Patricia Rieff Anawalt, Elizabeth Boone's work on the Aztec pictorial history, and the ethnographic studies of Edward Calnek. Frances Berdan interestingly treats the tribute roll and glyphs, while H. B. Nicholson offers a detailed history of the manuscript itself. Wayne Ruwet studies the physical aspects of the manuscript, and Kathleen Stewart Hall analyzes the influence of European and indigenous styles.

One of the most problematical aspects of both the manuscript and the book is the interpretation of glyphs, particularly place glyphs. Berdan contributes a long

essay on the glyphic conventions as well as an extensive appendix analyzing the place of each glyph that appears in the codex. The interpretation of these glyphs, however, is fraught with difficulty, in spite of Berdan's efforts to clarify it. In some instances it might hold more options than Berdan offers.

Since the codex was published, Frances Karttunen has engaged in an extensive study of the place glyphs, and has shared her results with me. I will comment on two issues the results raise. First, the suffix *-tzin* or *-tzinco* is not uncommon in Mexican place names. The glyph used to designate this is the human buttocks, *tzintli*. The *-tzin* can have two different implications: honor and smallness. Berdan consistently glosses place names containing the *-tzin* as "In the small . . ." or "On the small. . ." Yet there seems to be an equally clear relationship between towns that have the *-tzin* and those that do not; for example, Tollan and Tollantzinco (Tulancingo), Huexotla and Huexotzinco. One might reliably posit that rather than merely being the small place, these latter communities were outgrowths of the former, and the *-tzin* functioned like "New" in North American place names, such as York versus New York.

Of greater concern are the *-tla* (place of an abundance), *-tlan* (place of, at, by), and *-titlan* (beneath, next to, at the base of, among). Unfortunately, in writing down the place names, town names that end in *-tlan* were often written as *-tla*. Consequently, these might be glossed as "in a place of abundance" while actually meaning "place of, at, by." But under no circumstances should a place name that actually ends in *-tlan* or *-titlan* be glossed as "place of an abundance." Nevertheless, Berdan regularly does this. For example, Berdan glosses Comitlan as "Where There Are Many Pots," from *comitl* (pot) and *-tlan* (vol. 1, p. 181). Yet actually it should be "The Place of Pots."

The work of the second volume, providing background and explanation of each page of the codex, is indeed impressive. The historical section details the events described in the codex and provides maps and ample references to other accounts. In the section dedicated to tribute, the study describes each province in the conquest record and tribute account. Each gets a map, and its cities are identified with modern places. The conquest history is detailed, drawing on other accounts. The province, its inhabitants, and their tribute obligations are described. Each part has ample footnotes and other references. In the final section, dealing with everyday customs, the descriptive images are fully analyzed and the Nahuatl terms are discussed. The bibliography is quite inclusive, and the index is extensive.

In summary, this is a monumental effort. The edition must surely rank as the definitive facsimile edition. The essays, appendixes, and companion volumes all provide the reader with sufficient material for understanding the work, and plenty of groundwork for further investigations.

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