
One of the most valuable historical codices of the Valley of Mexico, although completed a few years after 1553, remained unknown until 1796 when Boturini secured it along with numerous other Ms. Because this Codex of Texcoco is laid out in the form of a cross (13 years on each arm, making 52-year period for each leaf), it was early designated as *Códice en Cruz*. Short descriptions of it have been made by Boturini, León y Gama, Aubin, and Bobán. The original now rests (uneasily?) in the National Library in Paris, but reproductions have been made, a tracing of one of which is excellently reproduced in volume II of Dibble’s work.

The Codex begins with 1 Tochtli (1402), which depicts the birth of Nezahualcóyotl, and ends with 1 Tecpatl (1557). However, among these 156 years of history, some 58 are left blank, due perhaps to the lack of any historical event of importance occurring during these years. After 1557 (the last actual event recorded falls in 1553) some later writer who possessed the Codex began adding events in Latin letters, starting with 1 Tochtli of the third leaf as 1558 and continuing on around the 52-year cycle to 1609.

The critical study in volume I continues very lucidly from year to year, and Dibble has thoroughly analyzed each hieroglyph, bringing together references from every type of source material which may shed light on the interpretation of each historical event.

The book is divided into three parts according to 52-year periods. Each part has a chronological table comparing dates of events with dates given in other sources. Also are included numerous places of hieroglyphs from various codices with explanations for comparison with those of the *Códice en Cruz*.

Dibble has greatly increased usability of his study by adding an excellent index and an ample bibliography.

In conclusion the author substantiates two points: (1) That the Codex must have been written by a Tlaxcallan in Chiauhua, an important cabecera in the province of Texcoco, and (2) that the writing took place a few years after 1553 and perhaps during the so-called golden age of Texcoco when Don Hernando Pimentel was the thirteenth Texcoco king.

Dibble’s work sets a pattern for future analysts of Mexican historical codices. Although such work as this represents a tremendous amount of labor (the *Códice en Cruz* is the culmination of 4 years of study in Mexico), it is of vital importance as basic material for a clearer reconstruction of the still hazy aboriginal history of Mexico.—[G. T. S.]

Hernández, Francisco. *Historia de las Plantas de Nueva España*. (Publicada por el Instituto de Biología de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, y bajo la Dirección del Dr. Isaac Ochoa-Cerón, Director del mismo Instituto.) Tomo I (Libro 1 y 2). México: Imprenta Universitaria, 1942. xxi+318 pp. Illustrated.

Students of natural science will find the works of Hernández of primary importance, but those interested in the native cultures of the New World will also find valuable information scattered through the pages of Hernández. This is evident from the first volume of the new edition which lies before us—an edition which will comprise five volumes (or six, according to the Preface).

Francisco Hernández, Philip II’s physician, was sent to New Spain by his sovereign with orders to examine, describe, and depict the various plants, animals, and minerals. He spent seven years of arduous labor completing his task. After his death his Ms. came into the hands of Nardo Antonio Recchio, an Italian physician, who prepared it for publication. Recchio, who seemed to be interested only in plants with medicinal properties, cut out large sections of the Ms. and published a mutilated edition in 1651 entitled *Tesoro de las Cosas Medicinales de Nueva España*.

Another complete Ms., resting in the Biblioteca del Escorial, Madrid, was destroyed by fire in 1671. Students despaired of ever obtaining a complete edition of Hernández, until one day Juan Bautista Muñoz discovered five Ms. volumes in folio, emended in Hernández’s own hand, in the Biblioteca del Colegio Imperial de Madrid. Both Charles III and Charles IV ordered the Latin work to be published, but it seems that sections remained unpublished until now.

The National University of Mexico plans to publish in the Spanish version of José Rojo five volumes whose contents will be arranged as follows: vols. I, II, III, histories of the plants with complete indexes in vol. III; vol. IV, commentary on life and writings of Hernández with histories of quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, insects, fish, and minerals; vol. V, descriptions of the great temple of Mexico City and miscellaneous material, such as the *cocoliztli* (smallpox) plague and information on certain species of fish.

The first volume of the series is divided into chapters, each of which describes an individual plant, following a certain plan: (1) Nahuatl name and definition; (2) description of plant; (3) Nahuatl name analyzed etymologically by José Dávila Garibi (Tarascan and other non-Nahuatl names are ignored); (4) Latin botanical name; (5) geographical locale of plant; (6) common names assigned to plant in different localities; (7) further medicinal information and bibliographical notes.

Dávila Garibi’s etymologies are sometimes at variance with those
commonly accepted. He defines, for example, the name *ahuehuetl* (ahuehuete tree) as meaning “the tree that never grows old,” assuming that the prefix *a*- is from *aie*, “never,” instead of from *alt*, “water,” which would make it mean “the old water tree,” or “the water drum” (*huehue*, “old”; *huehuetl*, “drum”).—[G. T. S.]

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1 Another Sixteenth-Century Ms. dealing with the botany of New Spain and only recently published is the herbal called the *Badianus Manuscript*, of which there are two editions, affording supplementary material to the Hernández work. Cf. Emmart, E. W., *The Badianus Manuscript*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1940; and Gates, Wm., *The de la Cruz-Badiano Aztec Herbal of 1552*, Baltimore, The Maya Society, 1939. The former is the more accurate edition.