Mockeries and Metamorphoses of an Aztec God: Tezcatlipoca, "Lord of the Smoking Mirror" (review)

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Latin American history. There are a number of arenas where this monograph proves such a trailblazer. Diaz breaks new ground, for example, in her comparative discussion of how women viewed marriage as slavery, or as a contract with mutual obligations, or rejected it; or how men expressed rights and obligations as husbands and family heads; or how both expressed different and changing visions of citizenship. This work is a rare contribution where gender dominates throughout as the foremost category of analysis, and where the voices of women and of men emerge in an analytically distinctive yet contrapuntal dynamic. It is challenging where it fails and also where it succeeds. In sum, it will provide grist for serious discussion about the methodology of comparison as well as provoke additional questions about gender roles, the law, and the state from the colonial to the modern era.

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Mockeries and Metamorphoses of an Aztec God: Tezcatlipoca, "Lord of the Smoking Mirror." By Guilhem Olivier. Translated by Michel Besson. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003. Pp. xiii, 403. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $75.00 cloth.

While Quetzalcoatl has received more than his fair share of attention, Guilhem Olivier's work promises to bring Tezcatlipoca to center stage thanks to this complex and thorough study. Tezcatlipoca took on many different guises and was known as Yohualli Ehecatl ("Night Wind"), Telpochtli ("Young Man"), Yaotl ("Enemy"), Iztli ("Obsidian"), Ce Miquiztli ("One Death"), and Ome Acatl ("Two Reed"). Several of these characteristics he shared with other deities. For example, Quetzalcoatl was also known as Ehecatl. Olivier introduces these personalities in the opening chapter, with a fuller development of all their nuances appearing in the last chapter.

In the second chapter Olivier analyzes Tezcatlipoca's various pictorial representations by listing all of the visible attributes and then developing tables to indicate which appear in which representation. He then compares those descriptions with ones given by eyewitnesses to the conquest. One important facet is Olivier's analysis of the *tlaquimilolli* or sacred bundle of Tezcatlipoca, which contained the essential elements of his identity. Using only iconographic sources, in Chapter 3 Olivier begins his search for the origins of Tezcatlipoca, presumably in Teotihuacan. He concludes that nothing in the archeological record indicates his presence before the Post-classic period, although two of his symbols, the jaguar and obsidian, are ancient in Mesoamerica. In various myths Olivier discovers aspects of transgression, sexual and otherwise, linked to Tezcatlipoca's character. Chapter 4 analyzes some of these myths in greater detail, especially legends of the fall of Tollan, in which Tezcatlipoca is placed in an adversarial position to Quetzalcoatl. Olivier analyzes the Toltec myth in light of myths common in Mesoamerica to demonstrate that the fall of Tollan reflects a similarity to other cyclical destruction myths (such as the end of the four creations in later Nahua myth). Chapter 5 discusses the priests and temples dedicated to Tezcatlipoca. Here Olivier finds that while some temples were

dedicated to Tezcatlipoca, others were founded to honor one of his avatars. Analyzing the function of the *momoztli*, an altar or temple dedicated to a god, he notes that while these were common (if not clearly defined) features in the pre-Columbian landscape, they were closely associated with Tezcatlipoca. Olivier also finds a close relationship between the Tezcatlipoca priesthood and the highest offices of the land.

In Chapter 6 he looks closely at the celebrations to Tezcatlipoca in the Nahua month of Toxcatl, dedicated to Tezcatlipoca and filled with ceremonies to revere him. Music, and especially the flute, was an important component in his celebration as was the slow ascent of the pyramid, and Olivier focuses on the *ixiptla* or ritual impersonator of Tezcatlipoca in order to gain greater insights into the deity's character. Depictions of Tezcatlipoca frequently show him with a torn or amputated left foot and in Chapter 7 Olivier demonstrates that this feature is by no means universal. The lost extremity seems to be related to the production of fire. On the other hand, the smoking mirror was one of the nearly universal features of Tezcatlipoca. The mirror was a tool of sorcerers and diviners and through it Tezcatlipoca could reveal people's transgressions. In the end Olivier concludes that Tezcatlipoca, as a result of these two key features, represented sexuality. In his conclusions, Olivier compares and contrasts what he has elucidated about Tezcatlipoca with what is known about Quetzalcoatl, and sees in these two deities the poles of Mesoamerican religion, or as he calls them "the alpha and omega of ancient Mexican mythology" (p. 277).

This is an excellent book, well researched and extremely detailed. This said, it suffers from some unnerving flaws. The translation from time to time mystifies. One of the attributes of Tezcatlipoca is small bells, what most people would call jingle bells. The text calls these "tinker bells" (e.g. p. 55) or "tinkle bells," (e.g. p. 211). At several points the work talks of "monks" (e.g. p. 82) referring to the early Franciscan missionaries; Franciscans are friars, not monks. The book would have also been greatly improved if the illustrations could have been placed in proximity to the text where they were described, rather than at the end. Lastly, a glossary would aid readers unfamiliar with Nahuatl terms such as *ixiptla*, *momoztli*, and *tlaquimilolli*, or with specialized Spanish terms such as *trecena*, to mention but a few.

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The Origins of Mexican Catholicism: Nahua Rituals and Christian Sacraments in Sixteenth-Century Mexico. By Osvaldo F. Pardo. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004. Pp. xii, 250. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $70.00 cloth.

Osvaldo Pardo examines how mendicant friars introduced Christian sacraments—baptism, confirmation, confession, and communion—to the sixteenth-century Nahuas. Though working exclusively with published materials, Pardo shows a broad command of the literature from and about Mexico (both sixteenth-century