

TOMPKINS, JOHN BARR. "Codex Fernández Leal," in *The Pacific Art Review*. (San Francisco, California, Summer, 1942, pp. 39-59).

The rediscovery of the Fernández Leal is a matter for rejoicing. Its republication in the handsome *Review* of the De Young Museum is welcome. Now, as its rediscoverer and republisher observes, a definitive edition is in order.

After Peñafiel's original publication, in 1895, the original disappeared. It has now been dredged up and steered to a safe haven in the Bancroft Library at Berkeley, California, from which it was loaned to the De Young Museum. The latter institution presents it in a convenient and pleasing form, in twelve black and white plates with text. All that is missing is one sheet of the original, which was lost many years ago, and must still be consulted in Peñafiel.

Mr. Tompkins' commentary is admittedly tentative. He points out that the codex is Cuicatec, and that it is closely linked to another Cuicatec manuscript: the Porfirio Díaz. Aside from that, his remarks are not very startling. Neither, for that matter, were the remarks of previous students of the same two documents. As Mr. Tompkins points out, Peñafiel mistook the middle of the torn Fernández Leal—it is mounted on both sides of a long strip—for the beginning, and Chavero "had little difficulty in ascertaining that the migration route was one . . ." exactly the opposite of the one picked out by Peñafiel.

We hope with Mr. Tompkins that "the two codices may be published together and collated against the broader background" now.<sup>1</sup> We hope also that this broader background may include some references to the pre-Calli-Tochtli-Acatl-Tecpatl calendar employed in the Fernández Leal, which he curiously ignores; some more careful etymologies, and some examination of maps and archives and Cuicatec synonymy in the reading of place-names. For Mr. Tompkins is not without sin: he renders in dubious Náhuatl hieroglyphs which he admits may not represent Nahuatl names in the first place—*tehua* is not "fearsome creature," though *tecuaní* is "carnivore"; the armadillo is not *ayotocho*, but *ayotochtli*. He places the Fernández Leal and Porfirio Díaz in the "Mixtecan-Zapotecan linguistic stock" [*sic*]—though it is not clear how *any* pictorial codex can belong to *any* linguistic stock, and anyhow neither the Mixtec (Nuttall-Vindobonensis) group of codices<sup>2</sup> nor the Zapotec frescoes of the Monte Alban tombs 103 and 104 resemble the above-mentioned codices stylistically. He tries, like so many, to devise a geography without maps, hazarding place-names from the hiero-

<sup>1</sup> The colonial Codex of Quiotepec y Ayauhtla, of which there is a photograph in the Museo Nacional, might be useful for comparison.

<sup>2</sup> Recently shown by Caso to originate in such towns as Tlilantonco and Teotzacualco.

glyphs as if the migration led to Cloud-Cuckoo-Land with a stop-over in East Shangri-La—though native toponymics have not been lost and changed so often as he thinks, at least three quarters of the towns in the prehispanic *Matricula de Tributos* being findable on modern maps. The migration, in short, he portrays as leading from probably Ameyalco to possibly Atzacan. What Ameyalco? Which Atzacan? If a series of glyphs be read, and a corresponding series of towns be unfindable in three-dimensional Mexico, then something is wrong with the reading.

A woozy feeling results from this kind of approximation (here we scold an age, and not just Mr. Tompkins): a notion that, like the Japanese who conquered Singapore, the Mexican aborigines were just so many quaint unreal little people, in this case doodling for the amusement of us later eccentrics. The picture codices are things of greater dignity: they are the record of how one branch of the human race warred and measured the stars; ate and prayed to stone gods.—R. H. B.