

Dear Stuart,

I enjoyed reading your Xiuhtlalpilli paper. You are an excellent writer and have a fluid style for dealing with some otherwise very difficult material. You've really got a good handle on the Aztec and I look forward to reading your Tenochtitlan book. Your discussion of the Red Temple on page 13 is as good as anything I've read.

COMMENTS:

I don't have any problem with your overall discussion but I do find the themes somewhat tenuously linked which honestly doesn't bother me here as simply your "observations", but for future publication, if you are interested in making some stronger iconographic arguments about the garment, I would pull out your best points and write them up seperately. One of the things I have encountered is that when I try to write up every piece of information that supports a point, my colleagues get suspicious because it sounds like I'm trying to prove something that I am not too sure of myself... the argument gets overworked...like some one who is asked for an alibi and ends up producing a minute by minute diary account of their actions only for the night of the murder. It often works better to give them the most direct material and footnote the more peripheral arguments that support it.

That said however, I found your entire paper to be a fascinating tour of the Templo Mayor! I would strongly suggest that you use a similar approach in your book. Instead of just going from temple to temple, and discussing each theme seperately, use the religious stories and the linkages between the gods and their symbols that you have identified here to drive your narrative. I noted a number of different sections in your discussion that were inspired by a reference to the Tenochtitlan model or to the temples themselves. By focusing on the temples but then discussing the iconographic themes of the gods as you have joined them here I think you are well on your way to a great manuscript. Page 8 is an excellent example: Using a discussion of the Xiuhcoatl as a base, you have moved from the fire ceremony into a discussion of the Camxatli-Mixcoatl saga and back into the fire ceremony as a nice bridge for looking at the locations of several rituals, different temples, and other sacred sites.

On page 29, please drop the explanation of yourself as an amateur. Nobody expects you to produce scholastic credentials and it throws off

your colleagues because they can't figure out why (if you're just an amateur) you are investing all this work into visualizing Tenochtitlan. The only difference between what you have written and what Anawalt has written is that Anawalt has more training in tracking down the original sources and citing them as such, therefore her arguments carry a lot more weight for a discussion of sumptuary laws in ancient Aztec society. I would simply say that as an artist you are taking a visual approach to explore how the narrative themes embedded in Aztec religious stories might operate as larger units in a massive architectural program. You and Scott are doing a study in art that ranks up with the Classic 19th century studies of narrative at Pompeii or the Acropolis for example. Anawalt is taking a more direct anthropological approach because that is her training.

Your paper has a more art historical approach. I found many interesting things in it that I hadn't thought about or read for some time. If you intend to publish this you might want to put in a few more references even as footnotes. For example, on page 2 when you say that the calendar date *ce xochitl* was one of the most important dates honoring Xiuhtecuhtli in his feminine aspect of Chantico, is that your original idea or did Seler propose it? I haven't seen anyone discuss Xiuhtecuhtli and Chantico as aspects of the same spirit in the 16th century sources. Could it be that they are simply two different fire gods that became fused into the Aztec pantheon by their assimilating some one else's patron deities? I don't know myself, but this is one among several significant points that you make, that if you were to publish this as a scholastic article for *American Antiquity*, you would get called upon for references. In another example on page 4, I really liked the discussion of the original robe being preserved. Are there any references that would support your idea. A footnote for example on the importance of reliquary objects that might suggest that it was not beyond the realm of possibility that such garments were preserved?

Two final comments are that I thought *Codex Borbonix* was spelled *Codex Borbonicus*. You also have *devine* for *divine*.

Thanks again for the paper and talk to you soon.

John