Ballads of the Lords of New Spain

Bierhorst, John

Published by University of Texas Press

Bierhorst, John.
Ballads of the Lords of New Spain: The Codex Romances de los Señores de la Nueva España.
University of Texas Press, 2009.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/17286.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/17286

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=569775
Romances de los Señores de la Nueva España

1 xopácuicatl de Neca valcoyotzin

15 ¶ xiyahuelipehua xiyahueli[1]

[folio 40]

40 ¶


[folio 40v]


[folio 41]

41 ¶
[XXXIII] [Part 4, Song 1]¹

15 Begin in beauty, sing with beauty in this flower house,² O Chichimec Lord, O Acolhuatzin.

4 Be pleased, be glad, be entertained. Don’t be sad. Do we come to earth again? Only briefly are they borrowed here: these flowers of His, these songs of His: and He is God!

9 In this flower house He starts to sing: flower garlands are whirled, these hearts of yours, O singer!

F40v 13 Singer, come!³ You’re giving songs,⁴ jewels to the Acolhuans. These flowers, will they truly be eternal? These songs, eternal?

1 Our hearts are glad with flowers. Just briefly here on earth. Our good flowers walk abroad!⁵

6 Be pleased here, singer, in this house of green places. Our good flowers walk abroad!

10 Alas, these flowers are our hand flowers, our flower crowns here on earth, right here.

14 We’re to leave this nation,⁶ you Chichimec princes. I’m not to carry off the flowers, not to carry off the good songs. Here on earth, right here.

2. ‘Begin with pleasure, sing with pleasure […]’ would be the translation if the text were interpreted as xiahuilpehua xiahuihuica […], as in CM 16v:7.
4. Read tiquincuicatia.
5. MOLS passearse por las calles, plaças o huertas ‘ni,nenenemi. ni,quiquiztinemi. ni,quiç’a’. Cf. FC 4:70:11, 12:97:5, and 12:104:22, where the verb nenemi means ‘to move or march [in battle]’. Although in the present context it may be tempting to translate nenem as ‘live’ or ‘keep living’, such an interpretation is not provided for in early lexicography; and in the netotiliztl, nenemi and its reduplicative form nenem always seem to mean ‘move’, or, better, ‘march [in the military sense]’ (see RSNE 5v:11–12, 9v:16; for CM usages see DICT nehnehnemi, nehnemi).
6. DICT tlalli/tepetl.
Romances de los Señores de la Nueva España


2 ¶ ach iuhqui xochitl · ync cuicâtl / ync [13] tonequimilol i antocniuá / yca [14] ye tonemico · ync tÞc · ca ohuaya o


[folio 41v]


[folio 42]

42 ¶

I’ve come to set up the flower tree. Within it my good songs are bursting open.

I scatter these songs of ours. They’re parceled out where you are grieving. Be entertained. Don’t let your heart be worried anymore. Be adorned with these songs.

[XXXIV] [Part 4, Song 2]

Like flowers, songs are our adornment, friends. It’s for this that we’ve come to live on earth.

Truly our songs, truly our flowers are good songs. Let’s have these jades, these gold ones, these broad plumes. Let me have them here beside the drum. Can it be true that death for us would be vanquished here on earth? Singer that I am, oh would that it might be so.

We are song-glad, adorned with flowers here. Yes, our hearts enjoy them. Alas, we go away and leave them, and so I weep, I grieve.

If only it were not true: no one when he’s gone will enjoy your riches, your flowers, God Self Maker. We go away and leave them, and so I weep, I grieve.

As flowers here the nobles, the comrades come spinning? Be pleased. Right here on earth.

7. The stanza opens with the vocables yllihuacanoo yeellihuacâna (cf. CM 17v:28 ylihuâcano), taking geellihuacana as a copyist’s error. But if the g is a deliberate orthographic variant of x (as at 17:16 and 41:5), the vocable is xeelihuacana, reminiscent of the verb xelihui ‘to be scattered or parceled out’.

8. Omitting the vocables, read: xelihui oncan tinemi titlaocoya. For nemi ‘to be [doing something]’ see DICT nemi 5.

9. Literally, ‘we gladden ourselves with song’ (titocihapacti). On the omission of the subject prefix see the note to 2:14.

10. Alternate translation: ‘By means of flowers here the nobles [read tecpillótli], the comrades become spun [or twisted].’ On purposive verbs see GN 2.5.

Romances de los Señores de la Nueva España


3


17 ¶ maha tlaocoxti hamo[...][1]

[folio 42v]


4


fin de los cantos -

144 fojas por todo
3 The Place Unknown, that [other] place, is not the same as earth. Flowers, songs lie here.\textsuperscript{12}
7 Forever here! Let all be adorned. Who is known in that place?\textsuperscript{13} It is not true that there is life.
10 He does not grieve,\textsuperscript{14} He recalls no one.\textsuperscript{15} It is not true that we live in Our Home.

\[\text{[XXXV]}\] [Part 4, Song 3]

14 “Never with shields do princes get through the day.”\textsuperscript{16}
17 Would that he might not pass away grieving,\textsuperscript{17} “War is not your joy, not your wealth.” Cuatlecoatzin, gone away, knows God.

\[\text{[XXXVI]}\] [Part 4, Song 4]

6 Jade, turquoise: your chalk, [your] plumes,\textsuperscript{20} O Life Giver.
11 All princes are rich with the flower of knife death, war death.\textsuperscript{21}

end of the songs

144 folios in all\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{12} For manē read mani. If manē is allowed to stand, the translation is: ‘Flowers, songs—don’t let them be here!’
\textsuperscript{13} Read acon macho yeyu can ‘Who is known in that place?’ (as suggested in Garibay 1964:99). Cf. CM 8:19 quimatiaypalnemohuani ‘he knows Life Giver’; CM 9v:21 anqui nelin ye quimatinypalnemoa ‘it would seem indeed that he knows Life Giver’.
\textsuperscript{14} Aya tlaocoya ‘not at all does he grieve’. DICT aya 3.
\textsuperscript{15} Ayac quílnamiqui.
\textsuperscript{16} “Get through the day” is an understatement meaning “to survive for a while,” i.e., to stay alive. DICT cemihuitia, cemihuitillani:te, cemihuitillitia:te.
\textsuperscript{17} Read maca tlaocoxtia h.
\textsuperscript{18} Where the corner of the manuscript has been torn away, leaving hamo[…]yl, the likely reading is hamonetlamachtyl for ahmonetlamachtli, ‘not your joy’. DICT netlamachtilli.
\textsuperscript{19} Alternate translation: ‘Cuatlecoatzin, a warrior, knows God’. DICT yahqui.
\textsuperscript{20} A hole in the manuscript leaves the truncated [… ]huiyon, which may be reconstructed as mihuiyon for mihhu iyo ‘your plumes [plus the intrusive nasal n]’. DICT tizatl/ihhuitl, ihhu iytl.
\textsuperscript{21} Cf. 36:16–17.
\textsuperscript{22} Counting the missing folio 33, the Romances manuscript has 42 folios (i.e., 84 sides, or pages), preceded by the 102 folios of Pomar’s Relación.