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Tlaloc, His Song, from the Florentine Codex

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THE FLAYED GOD

THE MYTHOLOGY OF MESOAMERICA
SACRED TEXTS & IMAGES FROM PRE-COLUMBIAN MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA



ROBERTA H. MARKMAN & PETER T. MARKMAN

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Tlaloc, His Song, from the *Florentine Codex*

"Tlaloc, His Song" is still another in the series of sacred hymns recorded by Sahagún in both the *Codex Matritensis* and the *Florentine Codex*, a series that includes the "Song of Xipe Totec Iouauallan," "Teteo Innan, Her Song," and "Cihuacoatl, Her Song," all of which are presented above.

This hymn to Tlaloc is third among those hymns. As one can see from the analysis of this sacred hymn in our discussion of fertility, this text, like the other sacred hymns we have presented, is extremely confusing and difficult to explicate completely. Willard Gingerich, whose sensitive translation follows, tells us that this hymn "was sung in the festivals of Tlaloc and the present version is specifically from Tenochtitlan since 'Mexico' is mentioned as its locale. The worship of Tlaloc as a god of agriculture was universal throughout Mesoamerica from ancient times. Every successive empire rested directly on an agriculture base and none ever forgot it; cults came and went, but Tlaloc never waned."⁸³



TLALOC, HIS SONG

Translated from the Nahuatl by Willard Gingerich. Originally published in "Tlaloc, His Song," by Willard Gingerich, in *Latin American Literatures* 1 (1977): 79–88. Reprinted by permission of the translator.

*Ahuia! Mexico seeks a loan of the god;
paper-flag places in the four directions;
men stand forth;
finally the time of its weeping.*

*Ahuia! I am creation of my god.
With festive handfuls of bloodied thorns
I fill the sacred patio.*

*Ahuia! My over-lord, Magic Prince:
though in truth
our flesh is yours and you make us,
though you are foremost,
they only shame you.*

*Ahuia! "If some cause me shame
they know me not well;
but you are my fathers,
my priesthood, Jaguar-Serpent."*

*Ahuia! In Tlalocan of the turquoise boat
he who appeared there is no longer seen—
Acatonal.*

*Ahuia! Look to all points;
Ahuia! Go forth in Poyauhtlan.
With the timbrelled mist staff
is it carried to Tlalocan.*

*Ahuia! O my elder Tozcuecuexi:
I send him forever
to his place of weeping.
Ahuia! "Send me to Quenamican,
where somehow we continue to exist."
His word has been given,
and I have already said
to the Prince of Horrific Omens,
"I send him forever
to his place of weeping."*

*Ahuia! In the fourth year
comes over us the wind—
unknown to any, innumerable;
to the Place of the Fleshless, Quetzal House,
We are carried across:
It is a benefice of man's reviver.*

*Ahuia! Look to all points;
Ahuia! Go forth in Poyauhtlan.
With the timbrelled mist staff
is it carried to Tlalocan.*