



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mexican Painting. Codex Vaticanus 3738 page 137 Aglio Vol 2. Specimen of Mexican Picture Writing.

Stock#: 102315
Map Maker: Shippard
Date: 1840 circa
Place: n.p.
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: Good
Size: 13 x 13 inches
Price: \$ 9,500.00



Description:

Visually Stunning Watercolor after Codex Vaticanus

An original watercolor by Captain William H. Shippard. The image clearly depicts Spanish soldiers as well as Aztec or Mexica people.

Transcription of note by Shippard, written on the sheet in his distinctive hand:

Mexican Painting. Codex Vaticanus. 37338. Page 137. Aglio Vol. 2.

Specimen of Mexican Picture Writing.

Facsimile from Page 137 of an Original Mexican MS. of 149 Pages, preserved in the Pope's Library of the Vatican Numbered 3738. called the larger Vatican Codex. Lord Kingsborough says Acosta mentions this Mexican Painting, but Zoega [?] and A. Humboldt imagine that Acosta and Kircher refer to the other MS. No. 3776.

This Painting represents the Arrival of the Spaniards in America. All Historians and all



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travellers of credit agree that it was by this means the Mexicans transmitted to their King the news of the arrival of the Spaniards.

Their supposed numbers being signified thus [several pictorial symbols] meaning 500 men each little mark thus [symbol] being 20 and thus [another symbol] put for 400. The year in which this happened being portrayed by their Astronomical signs as shown in the little square tablets marked above. This Painting is particularly curious as proving the Invention of Drawing to have preceded Writing, and also furnishing tangible proofs of what must be considered the most primitive style if not the earliest state of writing whence we may fairly and naturally [a few lost words] demonstrate? (... from analogy) that all Nations in the Infancy of civilization, have pictured rude representations [loss of word] prior to the Inventions of Letters, Hieroglyphs or Symbols of any sort, which we likewise know [loss of words] been the case amongst the Chinese. W. H. Shippard

Codex Rios or Codex Vaticanus A (3738)

Codex Vaticanus A (3738), also known as the Codex Rios, is a Mexican codex that was created between 1570 and 1589. Held in the Vatican Library, its 100+ pages comprise various sections, covering cosmological, mythological, and ethnographical topics. It is also known as Codex Rios and is understood to be an augmentation of a Spanish colonial-era manuscript, Codex Telleriano-Remensis, that is partially attributed to Pedro de los Ríos, a Dominican friar who worked in central Mexico between 1547 and 1562. The codex itself was likely written and drawn in Italy after 1566.

The Codex Rios as a whole is focused on the Tolteca-Chichimeca culture of the Tehuacan Valley in modern-day Puebla and Oaxaca, but also relates events after the arrival of the Spaniards.

It can be divided into seven sections:

1. Cosmological and mythological traditions with emphasis on the four epochs.
2. An almanac, or tonalamatl, for the 260-day divinatory year common in Mesoamerica.
3. Calendar tables for the years 1558 through 1619, without drawings.
4. An 18-month festival calendar, with drawings of the gods of each period.
5. Ritual customs, with portraits of Indians.
6. Pictorial chronicles for the years 1195-1549 beginning with the migration from Chicomaztoc and covering later events in the Valley of Mexico.
7. Glyphs for the years 1556 through 1562, without text or additional drawings.

The present watercolor is clearly from the 6th section of pictorial chronicles.



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Detailed Condition:

Ink and watercolor on wove paper. Loss to the lower left corner resulting in the lost of a few words.
Vertical fold at left. Some toning.