

## *A Guide to the Page Descriptions*

This section of volume 2 provides a page-by-page presentation of the pictorial folios of *Codex Mendoza*. In contrast to the eight interpretive essays, these descriptions more directly discuss and explain the pictorial's content. To this end, the information conveyed by *Codex Mendoza*'s folios is compared with data from other pre-Hispanic and Colonial sources and with the works of modern scholars; readers are encouraged to use the references listed for further research.

The conquest history page descriptions of *Mendoza*'s part 1 are organized around the successive emperors. The personality and life of each ruler, the outstanding events of his reign, and his particular role in extending/conserving the boundaries of the Aztec empire are addressed in brief sketches. To illustrate the progression of the empire's expansion, a map is provided showing each monarch's victories as recorded on these history folios.

All the place-names are spelled as they appear in *Codex Mendoza*. The rulers' names have been conventionalized, but they are easily recognizable despite their sometimes variant *Mendoza* spellings. Also, while the pictorial's dating of these reigns is sometimes confusing, these idiosyncracies are acknowledged and explained. For more information on orthographic conventions see "Paleographic and Translation Conventions" in volume 4.

The descriptions of the tribute pages in the second section of

*Codex Mendoza* list each province's geographic peculiarities, political history, and cultural characteristics, as well as the empire's tribute demands. Two maps accompany each province's description, one showing its position within the empire, the other pinpointing the towns—those that still can be located—within the province itself. In both cases, Barlow's 1949 map serves as a base, though his reconstruction of the Aztec provinces is far more extensive than that actually indicated by *Codex Mendoza*.

The final section of the pictorial, the ethnographic account, presents vignettes of Aztec life from birth to death. Because of the unique nature of these folios, other contemporary sources have been liberally used to shed light on the events that make up this cycle. The encyclopedic compendium of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún—whose work is drawn from direct interviews with native informants—is the principal source for explaining these pages, along with the accounts of other sixteenth-century authors such as Fray Diego Durán and Fray Toribio de Benavente (Motolinía). The content of each folio is first described and amplified with relevant indigenous/Colonial material, followed by a detailed examination of all depictions on each page. These "Image Description" sections draw on analogous data found in other central Mexican pictorial codices.

