

## BOOK REVIEW

**The Mixe of Oaxaca. Religion, Ritual, and Healing.** Frank J. Lippo. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1991. Pp. xx, 253. \$35.00 (clothbound). ISBN 0-292-76517-7.

The product of extensive field work spanning five trips (one of which lasted 16 months) and thorough bibliographic research, this book is indeed a welcome contribution to ethnobotany and anthropology of Oaxaca and particularly of one of the most poorly known native cultures of Mexico. It is not frequent that an Indian group of 76,000 individuals living in some 50 villages in a country where so much anthropological work has been carried on for so long has escaped such dedicated study as that apparent in this volume. As Dr. Munro Edmonson, anthropologist at Tulane University, states: "Mixe culture and Lippo's description of it stands alone in the Middle American ethnography ... . This work fills a gap in the literature for which there is no alternative and no competition."

A long introduction acquaints the reader to the methodology used in the field studies. Then follows nine chapters: Social Organization and Kinship; Subsistence Agriculture; Religious Belief System; Calendrical System; Ritual Behaviour; Rites of Passage; Village Festivals; Medical Concepts and Behaviour; Postscript. There are three appendices: Mixe Region; Mixe Phonemes; Mixe Texts. Fifteen pages are devoted to two lists of names: one of Mixe terms, the other Spanish and Nahuatl words. The bibliography of literature cited enumerates 306 items. There is a detailed index.

This masterly book is beautifully published and conservatively priced.

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