



The Cost of Courage in Aztec Society

Inga Clendinnen

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How can men be brought to look steadily on the face of battle? Tenochtitlán, the great city of the Aztecs, was the creation of war, and war was its dynamic. In the title work of this compelling collection of essays, Inga Clendinnen reconstructs the sequence of experiences through which young Aztec warriors were brought to embrace their duty to their people, to their city, and to the forces that moved the world and the heavens. Subsequent essays explore the survival of Yucatec Maya culture in the face of Spanish conquest and colonisation, the insidious corruption of an austere ideology translated into dangerously novel circumstances, and the multiple paths to the sacred constructed by 'defeated' populations in sixteenth-century Mexico. The collection ends with Clendinnen's transition to the colonial history of her own country: a close and loving reading of the 1841 expedition journal of George Augustus Robinson, appointed 'Protector of Aborigines' in the Port Philip District of Australia.

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