

Die beiden abschließenden Kapitel “Critically Examining Pre-Columbian Seas” und “Dubitanda” bieten eine Zusammenfassung des Referierten und ihres Ansatzes, in dem sie unterschiedliche Stufen der Wahrscheinlichkeit bzw. Plausibilität unterscheidet (161–171, 173–182). Sie kommt zu dem Schluss, dass transozeanische Reisen vor Columbus möglich waren und einige sogar plausibel seien (182). Blickt man auf die Fahrten der Wikinger, so sind diese nicht nur plausibel, sondern archäologisch belegt. Umgekehrt stellt sich die Frage, warum eine Autorin, die sich einer solch vehementen Kritik an der anglo-amerikanischen Tradition verpflichtet weiß, im Blick auf offensichtliche Fälschungen bzw. Fehldeutungen zwecks Erstellung einer erfundenen skandinavischen Traditionslinie, wie im Fall des Kensington Stone und des Newport Tower, so unkritisch vorgeht.

Das Buch bietet einen Überblick über diverse Beispiele für in den letzten sieben Jahren diskutierte mögliche Hinweise auf transozeanische Kontakte und richtet sich klar an eine fachfremde Leserschaft, da die Literatur nicht umfassend aufgearbeitet ist und die Diskussion der Befunde oftmals oberflächlich bleibt. Warum mit der Left Coast Press ein Verlag zur Veröffentlichung gewählt wurde, der sich in der Regel an ein Fachpublikum wendet, erscheint daher verwunderlich. Wer sich ernsthaft mit dem Thema befasst, dem bietet das Buch letztlich nichts Neues und die “Revisionen”, die bereits anderen Orts vorgebracht wurden, können ebenfalls nicht überzeugen. Auch ist das Buch bedauerlicherweise nicht sorgfältig redigiert, wie nicht nur die unpassende Kartenunterschrift zeigt, auf die bereits hingewiesen wurde. Das Register, weist nicht alle Namen aus, so findet sich Thor Heyerdahl auf Seite 36 und auf Seite 46 in der Tabelle erwähnt, wird aber nicht im Register aufgeführt. Kehoes Beitrag von 2005, der auf Seite 142 ausgewiesen ist, findet sich nicht im Literaturverzeichnis (199) und unscharfe Abbildungen wie Karte 3.1. fügen sich ebenso in dieses Bild ein (34). Letztlich wird das Buch in Erinnerung bleiben als ein weiterer Beitrag Kehoes zur Kritik des angloamerikanischen Ethnozentrismus, der sich zwar anthropologischer Fragestellungen bedient, aber diese letztlich nicht weiterführend bearbeitet.

Harald Grauer

Lamb, Weldon: *The Maya Calendar. A Book of Months, 400–2000 CE.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017. 339 pp. ISBN 978-0-8061-5569-2. Price: \$ 45.00

Weldon Lamb attempts to compile the different traditions and forms of the Maya year count or solar calendar of 19 month or 365 days over a period of more than 1,600 years. He presents distinct sets beginning with the earliest record of month names among the Maya during the Classic period, which he settles around 400 C.E. as suggested by the year in the title, while in the introduction and chap. 1 he prefers 200 C.E. (xv). He does not give any explanation why he leaves out earlier records from the pre-Classic and starting as early as 600/400 C.E.

The author sees his work as a continuation of that of his mentor Munro Edmonson, who in 1988 published

“The Book of the Year” which compiles and discusses along with the solar calendar also the so-called Maya sacred year count of 260 days. Thus, while Edmonson focuses more broadly on two of the most important Maya calendars, Lamb concentrates on the 365-day year count. More generally, he splits the solar calendar up into fifteen sets based on different forms and records and Maya language affiliation. He also subdivides his analysis of month names according to the period either as “glyphic calendars” for the period of the Classic and the Postclassic (ca. 1000–1500 C.E.) or as “ethnographic calendars” since the colonial period (after 1500 C.E.).

The book starts with “The Ancient Maya Hieroglyphic Calendars” (chap. 1), which include four sets of month names as supposedly documented by hieroglyphic writing in the Classic, in the Postclassic based on the records from the Codex Dresden, in the 16th century by the friar Diego de Landa, and in the 18th-century by the “Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel.” “The Ethnographic Calendars” (chap. 2) follow next and include 13 different language-based year counts and month names (from Ch’ol to Yucatec) based on different ethnohistorical and ethnographic sources, but confusingly again the “Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel” among other similar books from Yucatan. Thereafter, the author analyzes the forms and meanings of the month names as recorded in dictionaries and secondary sources (chap. 3). The last two chapters are concerned with the dynamics of the calendar. The one entitled “The Maya Month Initial Dates” refers to the first month name – of 18 months spanning 20 days within the different sets or traditions – and the last month representing the remaining period of five days alongside with the question of how the Maya year count was correlated with the European calendar through seasonal stations (chap. 4). The other one, labeled “Continuity in Sound and Sense” (chap. 5), focuses on themes correlated with the months (e.g., agriculture, animals, religion) and on the language-based changes of the month names throughout time. The book includes several appendixes, from hints to phonemes in Maya hieroglyphic writing (Appendix A), archaeological sites and language affiliation (Appendix B), innovative month names recorded in the hieroglyphic texts (Appendix C), stemmas to record changes in meaning and language (Appendix D), index to stemmas (Appendix E), month names grouped according to themes (Appendix F), up to a compilation of zenith passage dates (Appendix G).

There are some limitations and confusions in chap. 1, where the author describes and analyzes the month names as written by hieroglyphs for all of his four sets (inscriptions from the Classic period, Codex Dresden, Landa, and Chilam Balam of Chumayel). Moreover, he only documents three of them visually and omits the examples from the Chumayel (Table 1.1, pages 5–8). More confusing, however, is his particular schema of sets. Why should the Classic period hieroglyphic set represent “standard forms” (4–12), when there are different writing and language traditions within this set as he himself admits? Furthermore, within his explanation for each month name there is no consistency and even some errors in reading

the inscriptions. For the month name Yax, as documented from the Classic period in his Table 1.3 on page 13 and on page 21, he offers different readings (*ha'al*, *kúum*, *ku'um*, *tuun*) and meanings (rain, thunder, stone, net-bag stone, 20 days/person, seat). With regard to his reading as HA'AL (his typographic convention), "rain," he refers to figure 52 on page 266, where one finds instead an image of a Maya vase (K0955) with the month written in the widely consistent form of YAX-hi-la/ma or YAX-SIHOOM-la/ma. Concerning the last reading, he unfortunately even omits to mention that Maya scholars, more generally since some time, reconstruct from language evidences the signs in question as SIHOOM – although syllabically the particular signs render usually *hi-ma*. Instead, the author mentions the SIHOOM reading only when dealing with the Landa-set from the 16th century on page 30. There he lets the reader know that in 794 C.E., based on inscriptions from Ek' B'alam, the particular record of the month as YAX-WINIK had replaced the earlier writing form YAX-SIHOOM. And it is only in chap. 5 that he discusses the "diffusion of glyphs" and the *sihom* (his typography) innovation in Yucatan that impacts, according to the author, on the southern Lowlands and the Highlands (217, 222–224). Concerning the hieroglyphic evidence of month names, although it is not possible to document all evidences from the Classic period, nonetheless, one would have expected to include those few from the Postclassic beyond the Codex Dresden too, that is, the samples for the month Pop from the Codex Madrid (G. Vail and V. R. Bricker: *Haab Dates in the Madrid Codex*. In: G. Vail and A. Aveni [eds.], *The Madrid Codex. New Approaches to Understanding an Ancient Maya Manuscript*. Boulder 2004: 173–175, 199).

Chapters 2 and 3 compile the diverse records of month names by language and ethnic affiliation from ethnohistory and ethnography. Both chapters can be considered as the backbone of the book. While chap. 2 discusses more generally a total of 14 year calendars or traditions of month names as reported by colonial sources or cited by secondary sources, chap. 3 explicitly compiles the meaning of the month name within each language or tradition. At the end of each section of a calendar or tradition in both chapters there is a summary that describes what is shared with or what is strikingly different from other Maya traditions. It is also explained how the fixed solar year consisting of 365 days is handled in particular and against the Gregorian calendar. Chap. 4 summarizes for each tradition the ethnohistorical and ethnological evidences for the first month of 19 within a fixed year that is most often frozen against the Christian calendar. For the reader it is not easy to understand what the author is doing here, as he does not explain more generally the problem how a vague year may have kept time with the sun, even more as it is still unclear if and how the Maya handled this in relation to the Gregorian calendar.

In chap. 5, the categories associated with each month name and linguistic set or ethnic tradition are discussed and a total of 522 meanings or themes of traditions are reported (Table 5.1, Appendix F). Agriculture and animals are among the most common ones, followed by re-

ligion and ritual. While the mentioning of agriculture is not surprising and something well-known, with regard to religion and ritual the author argues, that these categories "preserve features of the court culture attested in Late Classic and Postclassic iconography" and mentions "accession, bloodletting, heart excision, arrow sacrifice, and dance" (215). However, he does not explain why the Maya should have included such features in the month name, and how the different categories can be explained. Instead of this, based on his "stemmas" in Appendixes D and E, the author expands on the already mentioned diffusion of the glyphs during the Classic and Postclassic and suggests some developments concerning the preservation of month names or the appearance of new elements within each set or tradition (217–238). In part his analysis seems to be speculative or associative. An example is his reference to the innovation of attaching the sign (syllable) *wo* to the glyphs *ek'lik'-ta/TAN* for the month Wo, a name reported by Diego de Landa in the 16th century in Yucatan. Lamb argues that in Yucatan Wo was the result of a transformation from *IK'TAN (his typography) to proto-Yukatec *Éek' Ta'an (Black Ashes), where an optional -ki sign "indicate[d] the transformation into *Éek' Säb'äk 'Soot, Black Ink'" and this one "led to *tz'fib' 'write; writing'" (222). The last one finally made possible the appearance of Wo as WOJ (glyphs) (222). The author concludes that in pre-Hispanic times the month names underwent 92 modifications from which 67.4 percent happened during the Classic period (244). However, he does not say, why these changes had happened nor how these changes are reflected in the "ethnographic calendars." Rather, he gives the impression that most of the latter calendars emerged only suddenly, as they were documented only during the colonial period or in even more recent times, something that he underpins also by revealing that one third of the month names in Ch'olan and Tzotzil "qualify as sui generis" (247). Nonetheless, he ranks the 15 documented sets or traditions into five groups, with "Ch'olan, Yukatek, Poqom, and Q'eychi" as the first group of "glyphic calendars," and the Ixil "ethnographic calendars" as the last one.

Although some limitations exist in the glyphic analysis and linguistic reconstructions, and there is missing some specialized literature (e.g., S. Wichmann and A. Lacadena, *The Dynamics of Language in the Western Lowland Maya Region*. In: A. Waters-Rist et al. [eds.], *Art for Archaeology's Sake. Material Culture and Style across the Disciplines*. Calgary 2005: 32–48.; C. M. Prager, *The Month Name Wayeb'*. A Substitution Pattern. *Wayeb' Notes* 4.2003: 1–2; G. Vail and V. R. Bricker 2004; J. M. Weeks et al., *Maya Daykeeping – Three Calendars from Highland Guatemala*. Boulder 2009), the book is important as it covers for the first time the topic of month names among the Maya in its different sets or traditions. For scholars, who wish to become more familiar with the Maya month names, it is a must.

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