

semble-t-il, la posture fondamentale des auteurs devant Geminoid, c'est-à-dire une posture qui évacue presque complètement le sens critique. Les auteurs veulent croire dans la possibilité d'établir une communication avec Geminoid, et cette croyance est au fondement de la surinterprétation. Ils parlent bien de "résistance au simulacre" (158), mais ils y résistent très peu, ou seulement sporadiquement. Comme ils le disent, ils se laissent prendre au jeu (40).

Les conclusions des auteurs au sujet de la communication sont somme toute assez triviales. Il est en effet difficile de communiquer avec une machine, même quand on a la croyance. "Deux modes d'existence entrent ici en friction, l'organique et le machinique. Ils s'affrontent sans possibilité de s'unir, de se combiner, dans une nouvelle sorte d'être qui relèverait à la fois de l'un et de l'autre" (131). Malgré tout, l'auteur qui procède aux expériences cherche sans cesse cette possibilité de communication, qu'il semble trouver dans les manques de la machine, dans les *bugs* (sic), qui donneraient au robot une certaine autonomie par rapport à la personne qui l'active. Selon cet auteur, l'expérimentateur, "le Geminoid pose les conditions d'une autre communication reposant sur le dédoublement d'un des protagonistes, tantôt émetteur, tantôt récepteur" (157). Ne s'agit-il pas là d'un des invariants de la communication entre humains ?

Ce livre contient des observations quelque fois intéressantes, mais il pêche par surinterprétation. Les données telles que présentées sont en décalage par rapport aux conclusions. L'allusion au théâtre, au drame, dans la relation au robot me semble artificielle. Il faut vraiment vouloir parler au robot pour penser qu'il s'agit là d'une forme de communication avec la machine, qui est activée par un technicien. On peut avoir l'illusion de la communication, mais, pour employer un mot anglais, il s'agit plutôt de *self-delusion*, de fantasmes venant de la volonté du chercheur de trouver absolument quelque chose, fantasmes qui se fondent sur l'auto-persuasion. Les auteurs voient dans ce robot l'avenir, un avenir où les robots pourront penser et converser, où, peut-être, ils pourront manger des pommes eux aussi. Mais la démonstration de cette possibilité est loin d'être faite dans ce livre.

Bernard Bernier

Grube, Nikolai: Der Dresdner Maya-Kalender. Der vollständige Codex. Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 2012. 223 pp. ISBN 978-3-451-33332-3. Preis: € 19,99

The book under review is an excellent example of the long-standing German tradition of popular science volumes. Its target audience is not necessarily full-time specialists who study the ancient Maya or other Mexican antiquities, but anyone who would like to know a little more about Maya than an average newspaper article can offer to have a firsthand experience of exploring the remains of an ancient civilization. The book is luxuriously illustrated. In fact, it represents a life-sized photographic reproduction of the Dresden Codex, every page provided with detailed commentary by Nikolai Grube (one page of commentary in German corresponds to one page of the original man-

uscript). The book also features a brief introduction by Nikolai Grube on the basics of Maya hieroglyphic writing, mathematics, calendar, and religion, as well as the structure and content of the codex. Another short article by Thomas Bürger outlines the history of the manuscript. Photographs are of high quality and constitute the first accurate reproduction of the Codex, which was meticulously restored after it had suffered serious damage during the firebombing of Dresden in World War II. As the quality of photographic reproductions and facsimiles before World War II cannot be compared with modern reproductions, it is not just a nicely illustrated edition for people who want to learn about the Maya, but also an invaluable source for Mayanists. The whole codex is also now online in high resolution.

The Dresden Codex itself deserves a short introduction. Exhibited at the Museum of the Saxon State Library in Dresden, Germany, it is one of only three authentic Maya manuscripts which survived to our days. The other two are the Madrid Codex, held by the Museum of America in Spain, and the Paris Codex, hosted at the Bibliothèque Nationale in France. The last one is heavily damaged in comparison to the Dresden Codex even after all the damage that this Codex has suffered during the war. The Madrid Codex dates at least partially from the 17th century, long after the arrival of the Spaniards. The Madrid Codex contains a number of calligraphic and orthographic anomalies, for example, idiosyncratic underspellings, including underspellings of grammatical morphemes. This fact suggests that at least some scribes of the Madrid Codex did not have a full command of Maya glyphs. By the way, I suspect many unsustainable interpretations of the late Knorozov to be due to his adherence to "anomalous" examples of the Madrid Codex we still cannot explain today. The Dresden Codex, therefore, is the only one well-preserved and extensive pre-Columbian Maya manuscript. With 79 pages in total, it also constitutes the only well-preserved and extensive manuscript in the New World that was undisputedly written before the arrival of the Spaniards despite the ongoing discovery of many inscribed monuments dated long before the conquest in various parts of Mesoamerica. However, texts and tags on pre-Columbian monuments and portable objects mostly deal with courtly life and dynastic history, which makes the Dresden Codex a unique source on religion and worldview of the ancient Maya and other pre-Columbian cultures in the Americas.

It is no wonder that the Dresden Codex was instrumental in the decipherment of Mayan hieroglyphs. Astonishingly, the document played a key role in four major discoveries. At the end of the 19th century, Dresden librarian Ernst Wilhelm Förstemann (*Die Mayahandschrift der Königlich öffentlichen Bibliothek zu Dresden*. Leipzig 1880) succeeded in deciphering Maya mathematics and calendar, having compared numerical and calendrical signs in the codex with the corresponding chapters from Diego de Landa's "*Relación de las cosas de Yucatán*" (dated to the 16th century). Soon after Paul Schellhas (*Die Göttergestalten der Maya-Handschriften*. Dresden 1897) assigned specific Latin letters as designations for certain deities re-

peatedly depicted in the codex and noticed that each deity was associated with a particular glyphic compound in the accompanying text. Paul Schellhas interpreted the glyphic compounds under discussion as names of corresponding deities. Last but not least Yuri Knorozov (1952) succeeded in a phonetic decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic writing which was based on “Diego de Landa’s Alphabet” and the extant codices, mostly, the Dresden Codex. Yuri Knorozov was able to show that the Maya writing was logographic and determined correct phonetic readings for several dozens of syllabic and logographic signs. Surprisingly, after Yuri Knorozov’s attempt to make a complete translation of the Maya codices (1975, see also the English edition: *Maya Hieroglyphic Codices*. Albany 1982), little was published on the manuscript (cf. H. Bricker and V. Bricker, *Astronomy in the Maya Codices*. Philadelphia 2011). Mayanists of the last 30 years were mostly concerned with hieroglyphic inscriptions of the Classic Period from the Maya Lowlands. The Dresden Codex as a source for new understanding of the ancient Maya was exhausted in those times; again religious matters of a lost civilization are not easy subject to deal with. Ironically, today our understanding of Classic Maya inscriptions manufactured several hundred years earlier is superior to our understanding of the Dresden Codex. The book under review seems to herald a new chapter in the study of this invaluable document.

An important contribution of the book under review is the first syllabary of the Dresden Codex ever published (58). It allows to a reader unfamiliar with Maya writing to start to read glyphs in Dresden Codex by himself. Unfortunately, the provided list of logographic signs (59) is extremely short. I also have some reservations concerning the syllabary. Why is the logographic sign TE? (tree) given as a syllabic value “te”? Did Nikolai Grube find a context where the sign undoubtedly has a syllabic value? Many syllabic signs found in the codex are missing, for example, “ʔa₁,” “b’a₃,” “b’o,” “ke,” “k’o,” “na₃,” “so,” “ʔu₃,” “ʔu₄” (here I use subscript numbers to distinguish different signs with the same phonetic value). I also believe the readings for “ne” and “je” in the Dresden Codex problematic; I can neither prove nor disprove their phonetic values in the contexts attested.

Reading, translation, and interpretation of a Maya manuscript is a risky business. Our understanding of Maya writing is still incomplete, many concepts and ideas of the Maya are still obscure for us, many signs and glyphic combinations attested are *hapax legomena*, some relatively frequent signs still elude their reading. It is obvious that any book dedicated to thorough analysis of a pre-Columbian manuscript would contain some misinterpretations, inaccurate readings, and debatable suggestions. After reading the book I have found myself anxious to get answers to many questions. For example, I find it hard to agree with the reading K’AL for the sign “TWENTY” (59). The phonetic complements in the spelling TWENTY-na-ki (Dr. 61) seem to offer an unquestionable proof that the sign in question is to be read WINAAK. Did Nikolai Grube find evidence for the K’AL reading I overlooked? Who was the first to suggest reading TZ’UL “for-

eigner” (126) and on which evidence? Why “his spouse” is *y-atan* if the glyphic compound spells “ya-ta-li,” cf. colonial Yukatek <*atal*> “purchased, reward”? How tamales (maize dough steamed in leaf wrappers) can be *mak*’-ed (eaten), if in Cholan and Yukatekan languages the word *mak*’- means “to eat soft and sweet things only (for example, overripe bananas and honey)”? The word for eating tamales is *weʔ*-. Is not the interpretation ʔu-k’am-waaj “he takes tamales” a better solution taking into account the fact that the “ma” sign frequently shows a deviant reading order due to the peculiar complete version of the sign in question? I have a number of similar questions and there is not enough room in this review to handle them. These are questions, which a specialist in the field gets after reading the book, because detailed reading, grammatical analysis, translation, discussion, and references are omitted. However, we should admit that, first, popular science literature is like this, second, it would be impossible to publish the Dresden Codex in such a format, and, third, many readers who are not specialists would not enjoy an extended academic edition. At the same time, consistent commentaries with particular attention to iconography, text structure, and general content allowed Nikolai Grube to show his readers an extraordinary perspective on the document and have a glimpse of its bewitching intrinsic logic.

In summary, I would recommend every Mayanist to get acquainted with the book under review. I hope that a revised and extended version of the book will appear in English. I am also eager to see an expanded academic edition of the Dresden Codex as well as a special volume dedicated to its study in the nearest future. And I suspect that many readers will get deeply interested in Maya culture after reading this book.

Albert Davletshin

Halmos, Istvan: *Music among Piaroa Indians. Melodies and Life of an Indigenous Community in Venezuela*. Budapest: L’Harmattan Könyvkiadó-Libri Kiadó, 2012. 502 pp., CD-ROM. ISBN 978-963-310-179-7.

After 55 years, the Hungarian ethnomusicologist Istvan Halmos has published parts of his recordings made during a field trip together with the anthropologist Lajos Boglár between September 1967 and June 1968 in Piaroa territory by the Orinoko River, on the border between Venezuela and Colombia. Their main field site was between the Samaripo and Cuao River, home to the two communities Caño Pauji and Caño Raya. Here Halmos had the opportunity to record a *Warime* ritual, which is unfortunately not published nor analysed but described in his diary notes attached in the appendix with the explanation, that the recording is archived with the others in the Musicological Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Science.

The main focus is on the analysis of 42 recordings which are attached in the supplied Audio CD. These recordings should be heard before reading the book in order to be able to follow the very detailed transcriptions and in-depth sound analyses. In his first chapter, named