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## REVIEWS



**Breath and Smoke: Tobacco Use among the Maya.** Edited by Jennifer A. Loughmiller-Cardinal and Keith Eppich. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2019. 262 pages. \$75.00 cloth and electronic.

In sharp contrast to tobacco's vilification in the United States and other societies for causing cancer and other health problems, most recently by vaping, the ancient Mayas revered it. Today, tobacco is deployed to heal and protect clients by Mexican and Guatemalan *curanderos* (healers) and *ajq'ija'* (day keepers). The editors of *Breath and Smoke: Tobacco Use among the Maya*, Jennifer A. Loughmiller-Cardinal and Keith Eppich, have gathered scholars of archaeology, anthropology, linguistics, chemistry, pharmacology, and ethnohistory. A myriad of Mesoamerican uses of tobacco emerges from this collection: medicinal, spiritual, religious, prophylactic, hallucinogenic, intoxicant. From artifacts, hieroglyphs, and iconography, to folk tales and oral histories, the study of tobacco facilitates a nuanced and sophisticated portrayal of ancient and contemporary Maya.

One of the central threads woven throughout the essays is tobacco's medicinal and therapeutic qualities. While some myths (including one among Salvadoran Pipiles) associate tobacco with foodstuffs (30), Belizean tales of the Moon Goddess from Mopan and K'ekchi' [*sic*] portray tobacco as the first medicine and intoxicant (33). Whether ingested or rubbed, blown, spit or sprayed onto the body, according to Maya sources tobacco relieved gastrointestinal ailments (including constipation, worms, and urinary stoppage), reduced swelling, alleviated bone breaks, sprains, and bruises as well as bites and stings (64–68), relieved cold symptoms and catarrhal infections, and served as a prophylactic against afflictions (131, 71). When illnesses are terminal, *curanderos* use tobacco to calm and relax patients (217). As Kevin Groark concludes in his essay on Tzeltal and Tzotzil Chiapanecos, "tobacco remains a paramount primordial medicine in the pharmacopoeia of the contemporary highland Maya" (84).

Reflecting Maya holistic approaches to healing that take into account an individual's psychological, emotional, and corporeal wellbeing, the authors explore tobacco's ambiguity in addressing ailments that are at once physical, spiritual, and supernatural. The ancient Maya considered *nicotiana* a sacred plant (54). Contemporary Maya assert tobacco can ward off evil spirits and even summon aid when its possessor is in distress. Mixed with alcohol, tobacco leaves allegedly are an aphrodisiac for Ch'orti' women (130). As Loughmiller-Cardinal and Eppich observe in their introduction, "Maya tobacco practices straddle a recreational-ritual-medicinal nexus" (7). Particularly for people whose working lives are characterized by outdoor manual labor, tobacco's ability to reduce fatigue and pain, ease hunger, stimulate the nervous system, elevate moods, and enhance focus make it invaluable.

The ways Maya consume tobacco has changed over time. Contemporary Ch'orti' pipes notwithstanding, few Maya smoke tobacco beyond ritual contexts. Whereas Kaqchikel *ajq'ija'* offered tobacco to ceremonial fires rather than smoke it themselves in the 1980s, in the 1990s they began pre-ceremony divinatory smoking. I have been told that today, many smoke throughout the ceremony to convey the many meanings and interpretations provided by the path of the fire through the cigar (Judith Maxwell, personal communication). In turn, studies of snuff flasks offer rich flora for archeological musings. Maya reverence for tobacco has persisted across time. Ch'orti' Mayas continue to approach tobacco as a symbol of peace, confidence, and respect (129). Even if the first did not always hold in the ancient world, the last two are evoked in the snuff bottle that belonged to Lady K'abel, the overlord who ruled a major Maya city-state in Petén during the Classic era (204).

The rich descriptions of Classic, Postclassic, and twentieth-century Maya tobacco use make the volume's omission of the colonial period and nineteenth century glaring (though Kerry Hull provides a concise history of tobacco use among Ch'orti' (126–127). Since the introduction does not provide a chronological framework for the evolution of tobacco use, the jump from chapters about the ancient world to ones about contemporary southern Mexico and Guatemala (and then back to the ancient world in the final essays) is jarring. During the colonial period, Spaniards (in Mesoamerica and Spain) used tobacco as a purgative, expectorate, and pain reliever. Examining how and under what circumstances Mayas shared that knowledge and practices could demonstrate how Mayas influenced tobacco use beyond Mesoamerica. If as Groark asserts, Mayas so guarded their medicinal and prophylactic knowledge of tobacco that its “virtues are virtually unknown in the surrounding Mexican community” (66), the exchange of such information during the colonial era must have a complex history. More importantly, description and analysis of Maya tobacco use during the colonial period and nineteenth century would have helped readers trace historical continuities from the ancient world to the twenty-first century and buttress such assertions as Groark's suggestion that the “tradition of personal tobacco containers appears to derive from the ancient Maya” (63). Although it is tempting to assume source material is lacking for the colonial and early national period, Loughmiller-Cardinal suggests otherwise noting, “the extraordinary wealth of . . . ethnohistorical descriptions that feature rites, rituals, and behaviors involving tobacco” (186). A concluding chapter could have strengthened the coherence of this episodic volume. Such a conclusion would have allowed the editors (or another scholar) to weave some of *Breath and Smoke's* descriptive threads together into an interpretive tapestry. The examination of female goddesses, rulers, and curers in various essays beg for analysis of gender relations.

While many of the essays offer rich description of tobacco use among Maya, only a few provide analysis (an essay on miniature flasks by Jeb J. Card and Ana Claudia María Alfaro Moisa particularly stands out, even as it begs for further exploration of El Salvador's attempts to arrest trafficking in patrimonial antiquities). The broader significance of the collection's findings is not always apparent as a result. A few essays only tangentially address tobacco. McBride's essay on psychopharmacy reads like an exploration of shamanism shoehorned into a volume on tobacco. Similarly—in

contrast to his essay on the origins of tobacco through the lens of Indigenous myths, which provides invaluable insights into Maya perspectives of the plant—Erik Boot's study of hieroglyphic signs related to the Classic Maya word for tobacco (*mahy*) offers such a plethora of insight into the word's derivatives and associations that readers learn more about animal extremities, deer, and homes than tobacco.

Notwithstanding such minor (and perhaps overly historical) critiques, *Breath and Smoke* provides an original lens through which to understand ancient and modern Mayas—no small feat in such a prolific field. As is the wont of University of New Mexico Press, the images are plentiful and striking; the contributors adeptly integrate discussion of them into the essays. Aimed at specialists in Maya studies, particularly archeologists and anthropologists, this collection rewards a close read.

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**Dakota in Exile: The Untold Stories of Captives in the Aftermath of the U.S.–Dakota War.** By Linda A. Clemmons. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2019. 260 pages. \$27.50 paper.

Among the conflicts of early North American colonization, several stand out because of their severity, violence, and the reprisals carried out on combatants and noncombatants at war's end. For the rage of the fighting, as well as colonial aggression and violence inflicted on tribal survivors, the Pequot War of 1637 and King Philip's War of 1675 come directly to mind. Unfortunately, that kind of ferocity resurfaced with the 1862 Dakota war in Minnesota. The Dakota attack at New Ulm, Minnesota on August 18, 1862 was initiated by the long-standing corruption and bad faith of the United States, loss of tribal land, and destruction of Dakota living standards. The fighting endured nearly two months, and postwar, national and local non-Indian leaders and community members turned their attention to demanding punishment and humiliation for the combatant and noncombatant Dakota survivors and captives. A time of great hardship ensued. This war's aftermath, seen through the eyes of the Hopkins family, is the theme of *Dakota in Exile*. Clemmons crafts her postwar captivity narrative on the Robert Hopkins family's story, as far as sources allowed, permitting the author to create a personal story of oppression, humiliation, and suffering that captives endured, as well as their resistance, resilience, relocation, and survival.

Historical, legal, and even literary works on the United States–Dakota War are extensive, since the conflict influenced national, state, and regional leaders to seek revenge. As federal soldiers and state volunteers brought the war toward an end at the battle of Wood Lake, tribal fighters and noncombatants understood the victors would squeeze and extract maximum punishments against them. Realizing the terrible fate awaiting them, some Dakota left Minnesota, seeking safety at Fort Garry, Manitoba, an act reminiscent of Sitting Bull's later flight to Canada. A terrible war displaced