

bus 500 years ago, came to the Americas. It is a good introduction for the lay reader and a useful quick review for scholars of this subject up to and through the 1970s—a review we need because *Man Across the Sea: Problems of Pre-Columbian Contacts* (Carroll L. Riley et al., eds.) is 15 years old.

General readers will be fascinated and professionals impatient with Davies's lengthy decimation of Immanuel Velikovsky and Erich von Däniken and the like, who find it easier to envision visits of aliens or Phoenician and Chinese shuttle service across the Atlantic and Pacific than to believe in the possibility of Amerindian originality. The best parts of the book, for amateurs and professionals alike, are the chapters on the first crossings of Beringia by homo sapiens and on the later, but pre-Columbian, voyages of the Vikings and Polynesians. The latter chapter is an eyeopener for Americanists who insist that trans-Pacific contacts before Magellan were absolutely nonexistent.

This book has the usual advantages and disadvantages of a publication aimed at the general public. It reads easily, but some parts are more cute than helpful, and there are a lot of little mistakes. Does calling the founders of the Olmec and Chavin civilizations "America's First Capitalists" help or hinder understanding? Hinder, I think. And there are no native antelopes in the New World. If Davies means the pronghorns, they live in North, not South, America. Carl Ortwin Sauer was primarily a geographer, not a botanist. Columbus could not have seen black Americans "long before" the Spaniards brought black Africans to America because he almost certainly brought some himself, and their arrival in Española in 1502 is a known fact. The Beothuk Indians are long gone, every last one of them. The Gokstad ship did not have a rudder. Writing in Ogham script most certainly did not die out by 300 B.C.; it probably did not exist yet.

Having said that, let me reemphasize the usefulness of this book as a prophylactic against new outbreaks of Danikenian silliness. I also want to thank Davies for telling me that there was once an Americanist who believed that humans first got to the New World by walking from Australia across Antarctica to South America. In addition, I am grateful for a devastating example of the pitfalls of interpreting artistic evidence: the Old World elephants portrayed in ancient Mexican friezes are probably New World macaws. Big noses are a lot like big beaks, and it is easy to understand the confusion.

University of Texas, Austin

ALFRED W. CROSBY

Late Lowland Maya Civilization: Classic to Postclassic. Edited by JEREMY A. SABLOFF and E. WYLLYS ANDREWS, V. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986. Figures. Tables. Notes. References. Index. Pp. xiv, 526. Cloth. \$37.50.

This is another volume of edited papers from another advanced seminar of the School of American Research. At least two of the previous volumes on the Maya

(one on the collapse and the other on settlement patterns) are distinguished by their scholarship, imagination, and breadth. The volume under review has little of these qualities. The conference and the book are an attack on the putative neglect of the Postclassic of the Maya Lowlands. The attempt is made to bring the period into a new perspective.

The major contributions of the volume can be summarized quickly. One recurrent and endlessly bruited theme is that the Toltec architecture and period at Chichén Itzá are contemporary with the late Maya Classic florescence of the Puuc cities (Uxmal et al.). This is not a new conclusion, and was suggested by Harry Pollock as far back as 1962. A number of other scholars (not at the conference) have discussed the implications with far more profundity and credibility than appear here in Lincoln's paper or elsewhere. Another theme is that of continuity between the Terminal Classic and Early Postclassic; again nothing very new. More original, but probably wrong, is the leitmotif of the Postclassic as being nondisjunctive with the Classic. The Chases push this idea here but without much evidence for it and much against. Arlen Chase's espousal of an 11.3.0.0.0 correlation goes against an immense weight of evidence. Miller's idea of the Chontal Maya being present at Chichén in 770 A.D. is eccentric, to put it kindly. The fabulous "Putun" from the Tabasco coast are invoked in this case. As I argued against J. E. S. Thompson in his original promotion of this idea, the likelihood of ethnic continuity between a named group of the sixteenth century and an archeological complex of the eighth century is extremely tenuous without hard evidence.

The paper by David Pendergast is in refreshing contrast to most of the others. It is a solid description and interpretation of the massive amount of data from Lamanai, Belize, where there indeed does seem to be continuity between Classic and Postclassic. The Rices do their duty and present data in such a manner as to disallow the interpretation that they make of them. It seems much more likely that the Petén was a backwater during the Postclassic and not the innovation center that it had been earlier. Ball's presentation of alternate schemes of interpretation is a real clarification of the ambiguous data available at present on the North Lowlands sequence. Friedel's interpretative synthesis is stimulating and imaginative, but verges on the mystical at times. The introductory essay by Willey is below his usual standard and has some surprising distortions in it, perhaps due to his dependence on graduate student papers. The summary by Sabloff and Andrews mainly outlines the disagreements and discusses the unresolved problems left by the conference.

In short, the book is a series more of scholarly misadventures than of solid accomplishments. Too many miscitations, misattributions, and plain mistakes of fact occur to make it an important addition to the literature on the ancient Maya.

University of Texas, San Antonio

RICHARD E. W. ADAMS