

Worley, Paul M. and Palacios, Rita M. (2019) *Unwriting Maya Literature: Ts'üib as Recorded Knowledge*, The University of Arizona Press (Tucson, AZ), x + 237 pp. \$65.00 hbk.

In *Unwriting Maya Literature* Paul M. Worley and Rita M. Palacios challenge the dominant methods in the study of literature of the pan-Maya world and advance a decolonial model for understanding Maya cultural production. Specifically, the authors use the Maya term *ts'üib* to demonstrate that the idea of 'writing' in pan-Maya artistic practices must extend beyond what can be expressed in alphabetic form. The book is noteworthy in its seamless co-authorship and provides a model for future studies in the field of pan-Maya cultural production.

The introduction is a clear and succinct exploration of the goals of the text and the concept *ts'üib*. Chapter one begins a detailed exploration of *ts'üib* within contemporary and historical contexts. The authors use three additional pan-Maya concepts to support their discussion of *ts'üib*: *k'anel*, *cholel*, and *cha'anil*. This chapter effectively argues that it is necessary for the field of Maya literary studies to advance beyond its colonial views and begin to see Maya cultural and artistic production in the expansive way that Maya people themselves do.

Chapter 2 is a case study of three textiles produced by two cooperatives in the Highlands of Chiapas: Jalabil and Tsobol Antestik. The chapter is effective in its application of methods within literary and performance studies to a reading of huipils and the process of production. In chapter 3 Worley and Palacios add to the scholarship on the role of weaving in Maya literature. This chapter represents the clearest application of their thesis: *ts'üib* is multimodal and the deployment of weaving techniques in a written work is an extension of the web of citationality and relationality in Maya cultural production. The chapter features close readings of the work of poets Calixta Gabriel Xiquín (Kaqchikel) and Ruperta Bautista Vázquez (Tsotsil). In featuring the work of these two women, the chapter provides an especially powerful shift in attention to how indigenous women contribute to knowledge production through their poetry.

Chapter 4 explores the poetry and performance of Humberto Ak'abal and Rosa Chávez. Tying together the use of poetic language about weaving in the work of Ak'abal as well as Chávez's use of *traje* in her poetry and performance, Worley and Palacios argue that Ak'abal and Chávez destabilise gendered stereotypes within and beyond Maya communities through their work. Worley and Palacios rely mostly upon the concepts of *cholel* and *cha'anil* within the chapter and while the close readings are compelling, the connection to *ts'üib* in this particular chapter is less apparent than in the previous. In chapter 5, Worley and Palacios explore the work of three Maya authors: Victor Montejo (Jakaltek), Armando Dzul Ek (Yucatec Maya) and Josías López Gómez (Tzeltal). These texts are examined through their reference to the books of the Chilam Balam, which Worley and Palacios locate within the performative tradition of Maya *ts'üib*. The chapter contributes to an understanding of how pan-Maya aesthetics and cultural practices are used by Maya writers to imagine a community of shared cultural heritage while not ignoring ethno-linguistic difference.

In chapter 6, Worley and Palacios analyse the bilingual poetry of Waldemar Noh Tzec (Yucatec Maya) to explore how his texts achieve different ends in their Spanish and Maya versions. In this way, the chapter contributes to an understanding of the layers in Noh Tzec's Maya texts that would be missed entirely if one only read the Spanish version. In chapter 7, the authors analyse the works of Manuel Tzoc Bucup (K'iche') and

Benvenuto Chavajay (Tz'utujil), both visual/textual artists in Guatemala. Tzoc Bucup and Chavajay work in a variety of mediums, making the application of *ts'uib* particularly appropriate for the analysis. This chapter captures much of what the book as a whole argues and is an effective way to bring their work to a close. The conclusion reiterates the necessity of studying Maya cultural production through the category of *ts'uib*: if we separate writing from visual arts, performance from weaving, we miss out on the ways in which Maya artistic practices are multivalent and polyvocal.

*Unwriting Maya Literature* would make an excellent selection for a graduate seminar in a comparative literature, anthropology or folklore course and would be of use to the scholar in those fields. The text is at times difficult due to the complexity of its argument, making it perhaps less accessible to a general readership. Worley and Palacios's text will be a landmark, however, in the study of Maya cultural production and is especially notable for its co-authorship, use of indigenous epistemologies and concepts, focus on gendered relations within cultural production, and intervention in the western-derived methods within the discipline of Maya art and literary studies.

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Burdette, Hannah (2019) *Revealing Rebellion in Abiyala: The Insurgent Poetics of Contemporary Indigenous Literature*, University of Arizona Press (Tucson, AZ), xi + 301 pp. \$55.00 hbk.

Hannah Burdette's *Revealing Rebellion in Abiyala: The Insurgent Poetics of Contemporary Indigenous Literature* (2019) begins with the First Conference on Indigenous Literature of América in 1988. Gaspar Pedro González, Q'anjob'al Maya poet and novelist, inaugurated the conference by celebrating the scholars and poets who were 're-wetting' the inkwell after 400 years of colonisation. The conference, as Burdette notes, was unique in its hemispheric approach and remarked upon a rise in indigenous literature and political movements throughout the Americas (or Abiyala), leading her to ask: 'What do indigenous literature and social movements have to do with one another, and why do the two phenomena arise almost simultaneously in such disparate contexts?' (p. 5). To answer these questions, she analyses the implications of increased visibility of indigenous literatures in much of Abiyala, drawing our attention to the poetic and political proposals embedded within this literature.

She organises her impressive corpus into two sections based on the motif of sight (and their link to sound): 'Visibilizar' and 'Visualizar'. The first refers to the modes in which subjugated knowledge is made visible by both a colonising 'regime of visibility' and indigenous literatures that reveal and also guard against full unveiling. In her analysis of the Zapatistas she illustrates how the ski mask works as an invitation for solidarity with the movement while also emphasising the misrepresentation of indigeneity. Burdette finds a similar interplay between visibility and invisibility, inside and outside indigenous communities, in the novel *Wila che be ze lhaol/Cantares de los vientos primerizos* by Zapotec author Javier Castellanos Martínez. The novel's plot calls for relearning forgotten Zapotec culture and the format requires readers to use the Zapotec language (the chapters alternate between Zapotec and Spanish). She concludes: 'the novel presents a complex reflection on the possibilities of being heard, not only by dominant society but also by the Zapotec community itself' (p. 58). In other areas of Abiyala, she shows how translations likewise have the potential to reach out to indigenous communities