century of upper-class Iberian support before the Inquisitions of the Peninsula declared it a
superstitious affront to the Church. Consolación Baranda investigates the censorship of the
important mystical figure, María Jesús de Agreda, who, though a clear successor of Teresa of
Ávila, had to alter her writings significantly to get them past the Inquisition. Karine Durin
follows the intellectual influence of epicureanism on the Judaizing heresy of the Alumbrados,
which brought seemingly harmless academic study under the suspicion of the Inquisition.

The third section contains four articles that analyze the influence of civil and religious
censorship of the literary and historical treatment of heretical and political events. In the
first, Blanca Vizán assesses the strange connection between Luis de Granada’s Introduc-
ción al Simbolo de la Fe (1583) and Analucía’s converso population who used this orthodox
preaching manual as a source of lost knowledge concerning the Talmud, eventually causing
the work to be extensively expurgated. The same reaction to the ever-present censorship is
discussed in the collection’s last three articles. Donatella Gagliardi focuses on Traiano Boc-
calini’s commentary on Tacitus, which even in manuscript seemed dangerous to both civil
rulers and the pope. Unwilling to change his text, Boccalini went to his grave with it unpub-
lished. When submitted to publishers it was severely bowdlerized by no less a power in the
publishing world than the Republic of Venice. Ramón Valdés studies the many changes Fran-
cisco de Quevedo made to his Manippean satires under the threat of wholesale changes by
the censors while Simona Munari shows how the editors of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-
century collection, ad usum Delphini, engaged in a very similar self-censorship.

This collection does a fine job in discussing in a balanced way the assured zeitgeist of
early modern censoring powers and the practical response to this threat by authors of many
kinds of books that were held under suspicion. As a result, Counter-Reformation censor-
ship and the authors of “dangerous” books both attain a “human face.”

Politics and Ecology in Formative Period Coastal Oaxaca

Arthur A. Joyce.

Reviewed by: David S. Anderson
Radford University

This edited volume represents a long-awaited synthesis of the ongoing archaeologi-
cal research in the lower Río Verde Valley of Oaxaca, Mexico, headed by Arthur A. Joyce.
Joyce’s extensive experience working within the region adds substantial authority to the
volume, making it an indispensable work for those interested in the archaeology of Oaxaca
and the Formative period cultures of Mesoamerica.

This publication presents notable strengths, particularly in its dedication to interdis-
ciplinary research in archaeology. After Joyce’s comprehensive introductory chapter, the
book features two chapters focused on joint ecological and archaeological research aimed
at improving our understanding of the people who once lived in the lower Río Verde valley.
Michelle Gorman et al.’s chapter on the paleoecological evidence for early agricultural
practices in the region offers an excellent overview along with significant additions to our
understanding of the early history of domestication and production of maize. Likewise,
Raymond Mueller et al.’s chapter on anthropogenic landscape change offers interesting
insights into how the activities of people living in the Nochixtlán valley had a substantial
impact on the lives of those people living in the lower Río Verde valley, which lies down-
stream from Nochixtlán valley.
Joyce and his colleagues offer welcome revisions to the now outdated model of Zapotec conquest once used to explain the region's sociopolitical development. In his contribution to the volume, Marc Levine presents a careful analysis of the ceramic evidence used to support the hypothesis, ultimately concluding that even by the original standards of proof the Zapotec conquest model cannot be supported. Joyce further expands on this topic in his introductory chapter. Thanks to the careful research carried out in the region, Joyce is able to demonstrate that the lower Río Verde region witnessed an indigenous development of social and political complexity during the Formative period, thus making clear the limited influence held by the Zapotec state centered at the site of Monte Albán.

The book's additional chapters further flesh out our understanding of the Formative period inhabitants of the lower Río Verde valley, including particular attention on the burial practices and architectural traditions of the region, along with the iconography of local figurine traditions.

This volume is, however, not without its weaknesses. Most notably, the volume presents a rather confusing tableau of differing, if not contradictory theories of interpretation from one chapter to the next. The emphasis on environmental influences on cultural development found in the aforementioned chapters by Gorman et al. and Mueller et al. embody a focus on environment and culture that has so often typified Processual theoretical approaches. The Processual approach is also notably felt in Joyce et al.'s chapter on place-making and power, where the authors take an energetic approach seeking to model the energy input behind the site's monumental architecture.

At the same time, other chapters in the book embrace themes more commonly associated with Interpretive, or Post-Processual archaeologies. Hepp and Joyce's chapter on iconography and figurines embraces agentic power, gender roles, and the influence of mimetic faculties. Barber's chapter on community and status likewise approaches the topics at hand through a focus on the role of individual actors in hosting feasts. Joyce et al. also further explores these topics when addressing the concepts of place-making and architecture, a chapter that, as noted above, also embraces a Processual approach.

While these approaches are not mutually exclusive, and can in fact be used together to great mutual benefit, the authors of the volume do little to reconcile the conflict-ridden history found behind them. In a very real sense, the diversity, if not confusion, of theoretical approaches found among these chapters is representative of the state of modern archaeological theory. Most archaeologists have moved away from supporting hard-line and exclusionary schools of thought. That is to say, most archaeologists now recognize that both Processual and Interpretive archaeologies have made important contributions to our field. And yet, integrating these approaches has proved difficult. What is most problematic about the theoretical diversity found in the present volume is Joyce's own refutation of earlier theoretical perspectives in his introductory chapter. Joyce takes a relatively hard line suggesting that the volume is purely influenced by more recent Interpretive approaches. A close reading of the full volume, however, clearly demonstrates that older theoretical approaches strongly influenced the archaeological research carried out in the Lower Río Verde valley.

In conclusion, this volume represents a substantive contribution to our understanding of the Formative period, not only in the lower Río Verde valley, but in Mesoamerica writ large. This fact is nicely emphasized by Christopher Pool's remarks in the book's closing chapter. As new Formative period research continues throughout Mesoamerica we are consistently finding that there was great diversity throughout the region, in contrast to earlier interpretations where a relatively small number of cultures, if not one culture, was
favored as dominating the entirety of Formative period Mesoamerica. While as a reviewer I may have quibbles regarding the use of archaeological theory in this volume, that should not detract from the substantial contribution to the archaeology of Oaxaca and Formative Mesoamerica made by this volume. This book will clearly become an essential resource for anyone working with these topics.

Maya Creation Myths: Words and Worlds of the Chilam Balam.
Timothy W. Knowlton.

Reviewed by: Julia Smith
Eastern Washington University

The Chilam Balam is second only to the Popol Vuh as an expression of Maya worldview in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Strictly speaking, the Chilam Balam is not a single book, but several, each identified by the name of the town in which it was located. This group of related texts raises complicated issues of textual history and interpretation. Timothy Knowlton, in Maya Creation Myths: Words and Worlds of the Chilam Balam, explores a group of accounts in the Chilam Balam of Chumayel in insightful new ways that are accessible to the nonspecialist. Knowlton combines new understandings of earlier hieroglyphic texts, recent research on Maya languages, and a knowledge of both pre-Columbian and colonial religious thinking to reinterpret these texts.

His approach follows that of Mikhail Bakhtin, whose work has influenced readers of classical literature as well as more recent work. Knowlton approaches these texts as dialogues—here between prehispanic Maya thinking and Christian ideas, but also between tradition and authorial innovation. He argues that these accounts explicitly engage with Christian teachings to reframe them in Maya terms. The process of dealing with the product of a complex textual tradition with a somewhat unclear history should be of interest to scholars dealing with similar sorts of works in the European tradition.

Knowlton explores three pieces of the creation story: an account of the destruction and recreation of the world, the fall of Lucifer, and the creation of humankind. In each piece, he situates the account within accounts from sixteenth-century Christian texts available in Yucatán as well as accounts within pre-Columbian and colonial native texts. In the process, he demonstrates considerable continuity of Maya thought across a thousand years, as he is able to demonstrate that ideas from Classical period (before 900) hieroglyphic texts are found in these sixteenth-century documents. At the same time, he ably makes the argument that European thinking is key to understanding these texts, as concepts such as Aristotelian ideas about the soul are reflected in these “native” documents. In the process, he raises interesting questions about the continued development of Maya scholarly tradition under colonial rule as it creates a syncretic intellectual tradition combining pre-Columbian and European understandings of the world.

This book is useful for scholars interested in the Spanish colonial period in Mexico, those interested in the interaction between Christianity and indigenous religious traditions—in the New World or in places such as northern Europe—and for those interested in innovative approaches to texts with complex histories.