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Ten Thousand Years of Inequality: The Archaeology of Wealth Differences.

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the allure of the item and how and why it came to be desired; and how and in what context the item was ingested.

These practices are influenced by both the properties of and the nature of the allure of the item, as well as other factors. Economic considerations played key roles in production and distribution, influencing consumption patterns. Other dynamics that affected products such as sugar and rum include the slave trade and the Atlantic commercial networks. Tobacco and cacao, both indigenous plants, also became important products in international trade. Issues related to gender are also critical to the analysis of several substances; for example, we learn that women often prepared the ingested product. Similarly, ethnicity played a complex role in the production of certain cultigens, as production processes and uses changed to incorporate new ways of preparing and consuming indigenous substances (e.g., pulque, chocolate). The involvement of indigenous populations in the production of what had become commodities in the colonial economy (e.g., tobacco and sugar) also led to intriguing and unexpected behaviors. Finally, the symbolic meaning of some substances is addressed to explain how new items were introduced and the extent to which existing symbolic meanings were adopted or new meanings were developed.

The six chapters that follow are grouped thematically into two sections. The first focuses on issues of seduction and how consumers were seduced by new substances. Martin Nesvig in the first chapter examines the use of mushrooms of the genus *Psilocybe* and peyote, hallucinogens native to Mesoamerica with a long history in the region. Hallucinogenic mushrooms were called *teonanacatl*, which means food or flesh of the gods in the Nahuatl language, and were used in divination and shamanism (p. 27). In addition to considering the notion of cultural memory, Nesvig explores the process by which non-indigenous peoples in colonial Mesoamerica were seduced by these substances. In Chapter 2 Schwartzkopf focuses on the seductive properties of distilled sugar cane alcohol (*aguardiente*) for the Maya population of highland Guatemala and on the concept of commodity succession, in which a precolumbian fermented honey drink was replaced by *aguardiente*, as well as by rum and wine. A third seductive substance, cacao (used to make chocolate), is explored by Sampeck and Jonathan Thayne in the next chapter. In the colonial period Spaniards and others developed a taste for very transformed recipes for beverages made from this native substance. Using a large corpus of chocolate recipes, Sampeck and Thayne construct a dendrogram to chart the similarities and dissimilarities

of these recipes across South and Central America, Mexico, and Europe, which is a useful way to visualize how taste preferences—the core of chocolate’s seduction—varied across space.

The second part of the volume addresses what the editors call “substantial matters,” by which they mean the social, political, economic, and moral effects of the substances. It begins with a chapter by Joel Palka, who examines the development of the Lacandon Maya tobacco trade in the nineteenth century. While the Lacandon had long used tobacco for social and ritual purposes, the growing demand for tobacco led to changes in agricultural strategies and an increased involvement in trade. Shifting attitudes and practices associated with pulque, fermented maguey juice, are the focus of Joan Bristol’s Chapter 5, which explores ambivalent views about pulque’s health benefits and notions about purity and ethnicity in colonial Mexico City. The final chapter, by Guido Pezzarossi, takes a biopolitical approach to the production and consumption of sugar and alcohol in colonial Guatemala, identifying the inherent contradictions between Spanish concerns about the negative effects of sugar and particularly of alcohol on the health of the indigenous population and the economic realities that encouraged indigenous communities to produce sugar, which often was used to make alcohol. Archaeological data from Aguacatepeque, Guatemala, provide additional information not readily available in the documentary record. An afterword by Carla Martin effectively summarizes the common themes and strengths of the volume.

These two volumes that cover some of the same plants have very different goals and perspectives, and they use very different methods. Yet readers interested in human use of these substances will find their approaches to be complementary and may be inspired to expand the scope of their own research.

Ten Thousand Years of Inequality: The Archaeology of Wealth Differences. TIMOTHY A. KOHLER and MICHAEL E. SMITH, editors. 2018. Amerind Studies in Anthropology. University of Arizona Press, Tucson. ix + 337 pp. \$70.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8165-3774-7.

Reviewed by Arlen F. Chase, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Archaeologists often have difficulty demonstrating the relevance of their research to present-day problems and concerns. This volume, edited by Timothy Kohler and Michael Smith, is a welcome addition to the

archaeological literature because it demonstrates how archaeological data can be used to frame questions that are germane to the present. It focuses on the origin of inequality, using Gini indexes—statistical measures used by economic studies to assess inequality—as the method of choice. Social and economic forms of inequality, driven by wealth disparities, are major problems facing our society. We are all familiar with the controversy over the 1% who control as much wealth as the other 99% of the combined world's population. But how did this disparity happen, and what are its impacts? While history can provide limited answers to these questions, archaeology yields a far longer record in the historic and prehistoric past.

This edited volume is organized into 13 chapters. The introduction by Smith, Kohler, and Gary Feinman presents background information to frame inequality and to explain how Gini indexes can be used to measure house sizes as indicators of wealth. The two methodological chapters that follow, the first by Christian Peterson and Robert Drennan, and the second by Rahul Oka and his colleagues, are the strongest chapters in the book, doing much to lay out the issues involved in using Gini indexes: they note the need for multiple Ginis and large sample sizes and that two equivalent Ginis can indicate very different things if supplementary data are not used.

These three introductory chapters are followed by detailed archaeological analyses on different-level societies in diverse parts of the world. Anna Marie Prentiss and her colleagues examine a complex “fisher-forgery” society in British Columbia, concluding that “Gini coefficients are subject to many biases,” but are “useful for defining variation in the nature of inequality” (p. 123). Their study shows that inequality can be manifested in differential access to food and goods, with house size being a less important indicator. The next two chapters examine prehistoric cultures from the American Southwest. Kohler and Laura Ellyson study sites in the central Mesa Verde and Chaco areas. They show that elite Great Houses are associated with greater inequity, but also demonstrate that social inequality in the Chaco area is in line with that found in other agricultural societies, that wealth inequalities tended to increase at the onset of “periods of exploitation” (p. 148), and that there was a reduction in the range of inequality during exploitation periods. In contrast, Matthew Pailes, looking at the Hohokam archaeological data in the American Southwest, concludes that there was “mostly negligible change through time in the degree of inequality experienced by Hohokam families” (p. 171), even as population increased; he suggests that while there was “increasing social complexity in the Hohokam region, there is only scant evidence of any

wealth inequality” (p. 173). Alleen Betzenhauser next investigates archaeological inequality during the Mississippian Period in the American Southeast using the floor areas from more than one thousand excavated buildings. She demonstrates that sample selection and inclusion significantly alter the result of a Gini coefficient and its interpretation (p. 192), arguing that in some cases the Gini indexes are measuring “architectural standardization rather than household inequality” (p. 195) and that the least amount of inequality occurs during the late Mississippian Periods.

Chapter 8 is a comparative chapter analyzing the archaeological data from northern Mesopotamia and southwestern Germany in terms of farming, inequality, and urbanization. Amy Bogaard and her colleagues show that mean house area and Gini coefficients are often related, even if site size and Gini coefficients are not; they also examine the impact of both living and storage space on wealth inequality and highlight the differences between these two Old World areas in their trajectories toward urbanism and social inequality. Elizabeth Stone next examines the use of Gini indexes in southern Mesopotamia, making use of both the archaeological record and Quickbird satellite imagery. She finds a strong relationship between house size and courtyard size. Based on the striking differences in Gini indexes based on burial data versus housing data (p. 255), she argues that the distribution of house sizes reflects income, while that of burial goods reflects prestige and ideology. Feinman, Ronald Faulseit, and Linda Nicholas examine wealth inequality in the Valley of Oaxaca: they measure terrace area, house size, and patio area for their settlements, contrasting these Gini coefficients with the associated domestic assemblages for 13 excavated houses (p. 275). They conclude by noting that “one Gini value for any time or place may not be sufficient to understand the complexity of inequality” (p. 280) and that we should “expect to see chronological variance in the degree of inequality” (p. 282). The final chapter is a summation of “deep inequality” explored by all of the major authors in the book that comparatively examines inequality for 62 archaeological cases in the New and Old Worlds. It appropriately ends by arguing that archaeologists are no longer reliant on other disciplines and that “we can begin to forge our own narratives” (p. 314) about issues that affect modern society.

There, however, are weaknesses in this volume. Like any study in archaeological quantification, it has inconsistencies in how key metrics are established; and as with radiocarbon dates, while a Gini coefficient may be precise, the interpretation of the index may not necessarily be accurate (e.g., Chapter 3). There are other potential issues with some of the numbers used or assigned and in some classifications of

archaeological sites, specifically in Chapter 11 in relation to Mesoamerican sites. For instance, the total population for Teotihuacan is listed as 14,485 in Table 11.1, which is the same number given for its households; a similar error in the number of households and total population is also found for Mayapan, Capilco, and Tenochtitlan. The total site populations for Tikal and Caracol do not match published figures, and no supporting data or references are provided to indicate why these numbers were used. References in Chapters 1 and 11 are made to supplementary materials associated with an earlier 2017 publication, but similarly problematic population estimates without easily accessible supporting data, methodology, and references are found here as well. I hope that some of these issues can be corrected and resolved before the volume appears in paperback, so that researchers are able to see from whom and how these data were derived.

Despite these referencing and numerical issues, this is an important volume that serves as a concrete example of how and why archaeology is relevant in the modern world. Any serious researcher on past social complexity should add it to his or her methodological repertoire.

Smoke, Flames, and the Human Body in Mesoamerican Ritual Practice. VERA TIESLER and ANDREW K. SCHERER, editors. 2018. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, DC. viii + 471 pp. \$ 75.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-88402-426-2.

Reviewed by Davide Domenici, Department of History and Cultures, University of Bologna, Italy

The transformative power of fire is the common thread linking the essays collected in the latest volume of the Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Symposia and Colloquia series. As the editors Vera Tiesler and Andrew K. Scherer stress in their introduction, the study of the role of fire in ritual practices is a burgeoning scholarly field, but no study of this kind has yet been devoted to Mesoamerica. *Smoke, Flames, and the Human Body in Mesoamerican Ritual Practice* is thus a welcome contribution that fills this void.

The volume focuses on the relationships between fire and the human body, both in funerary and nonfunerary rituals. Nevertheless, the chapters also discuss archaeological, bioarchaeological, ethnohistorical, and ethnographic data and address the role of fire in a wider set

of ritual practices, such as calendric rituals and accessions to political offices.

Despite the variety of disciplinary approaches and regional focuses, some themes crosscut the various chapters, favoring cross-cultural comparison and synthesis. The key notion undergoing most, if not all, of the essays is the ability of fire to induce ontological changes in human and extrahuman bodies. The transformative qualities of fire—and of its most powerful instantiation, the Sun—make it the key agent in liminal moments of human and cosmic life cycles, such as creation events or calendric, funerary, sacrificial, and political rituals. Several contributors stress how the Nahua and Maya mythological narratives of the birth of the Sun and the Moon from a sacrificial bonfire became the charter for various ritual reenactments that marked the beginning of new cycles. This is the case of an Early Classic Maya double burial from Tikal, discussed by Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos, who also brings to light ethnographic and ethnohistorical evidence on a lesser known myth regarding the fiery death of an old goddess. It is also the case of the well-known Aztec New Fire ceremonies whose origins, according to Christophe Helmke and Jesper Nielsen, go back to the Classic Teotihuacan period. These ceremonies were conceptually linked to the cremation of bundled bodies of dead warriors, as well as to shifts in power relations and enthronization rituals that also involved lords from faraway regions such as the Maya area.

The Maya in the Classic period also shared a similar conceptual link between fire kindling, dynastic transitions, and sacrifice, especially of children. This linkage is shown in Scherer's and Stephen Houston's chapter, in which they contrast epigraphic and iconographic data with archaeological information from a royal tomb at El Zotz (Guatemala). During the Postclassic period, the Maya also drilled new fires in ceremonies held to celebrate the termination or beginning of various temporal cycles, as shown by Gabrielle Vail and William N. Duncan. The role of fire in the termination of time periods depended on its destructive, chaos-inducing potential. The destructive dimension of fire is explored in the volume by both Pedro Pitarch, in reference to contemporary Tzeltal rituals, and by John F. Chuchiak IV in a chapter on the role of fire in Postclassic Maya war and diplomacy.

The conceptual link between the kindling of a new fire, penitence, and accession to political and religious offices persists in contemporary Tlapanec rituals, which Danièle Dehouve compares to what she calls the "Fire-Penance Complex" in Postclassic Nahua society. Dehouve's analysis is nicely complemented by Markus Eberl's chapter. Drawing interpretive categories from the work of Jacques Derrida, Eberl