

finally, into a rain-bringing deified ancestor.

Will traditional authority rise again among the Coras of Santa Teresa? Coyle does not seem very optimistic about that. Rather, similar crises of legitimization seem to affect more and more of the indigenous communities of the Gran Nayar region. However, it should be remembered that already a century ago, anthropologists like Lumholtz and Preuss predicted that the local indigenous cultures would soon vanish. They did not count on major historical events (like the Mexican Revolution), which actually changed the course of history, providing possibilities for many Indian communities to conserve and reproduce their traditional cultures.

Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power. MICHAEL DIETLER and BRIAN HAYDEN, editors. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 2001. xii + 432 pp., figures, tables, bibliographies, index. \$29.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Michael E. Smith, State University of New York at Albany (SUNY).

Feasts play crucial social roles in most societies, and archaeologists have begun to identify and analyze ancient feasting with some success. Around 1990 the editors began publishing (independently) on ancient feasting, using very different theoretical perspectives. Their joint introductory chapter establishes the importance of the topic and highlights similarities and differences in their approaches. In the following two chapters, each editor expands upon his theoretical and empirical perspective; in brief, Hayden takes an ecological approach whereas Dietler's perspective focuses more on agency and political economy. Five ethnographic/ethnohistorical case studies are then presented: Polly Weissner on Enga feasts (Papua New Guinea); Michael J. Clarke on Akha feasts (Thailand); Patrick V. Kirch on feasts in three Polynesian societies; James R. Perodie on the Northwest Coast; and Warren R. DeBoer on the Shipibo (Upper Amazon). These chapters are followed by a brilliant contribution by Dietler and Ingrid Herbich titled "Feasts and Labor Mobilization." This paper analyzes "collective work events," showing how feasting relates to work exchange, *corvée*, and other forms of labor mobilization in a variety of societies.

Six archaeological cases are included: Laura Lee Junker summarizes her important research on Philippine feasting; Vernon James Knight uses posthole data at Mississippian sites to identify "scaffolding behavior" that may relate to the display of meat for feasts; Lucrecia S. Kelly analyzes an impressive feast-

ing deposit of faunal remains from Mound 51 at Cahokia; Linda S. Brown identifies "ritual feasting and village festivals" in the volcanically preserved remains at the Cerén site in El Salvador; Denise Schmandt-Besserat summarizes pictorial and textual data for feasting in Mesopotamia; and Douglas C. Wilson and William L. Rathje bring the archaeological cases up to the present with "Garbage and the Modern American Feast."

This collection is weak on complex state societies, but current work by numerous scholars will soon make up for this. The editors explicitly and deliberately fail to standardize terminology and concepts among chapters; in my view, this kind of definitional anarchy—fashionable in postmodern circles—inhibits the advancement of knowledge. Nevertheless, *Feasts* marks the coming-of-age of the archaeology of feasting and establishes a firm foundation for continuing research. This important volume shows that ancient feasting is not just another fad, but rather a topic that few of us can afford to ignore.

Mesoamerica's Ancient Cities: Aerial Views of Pre-Columbian Ruins in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras. WILLIAM M. FERGUSON and RICHARD E. W. ADAMS, Rev. ed. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2001. xiv + 260 pp., maps, color photographs, glossary, bibliography, index. \$34.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Osvaldo Sterpone, Centro INAH Hidalgo.

El entusiasmo de dos aficionados por capturar las imágenes de la diversidad arquitectónica y el paisaje en los que se encuentran inmersos un conjunto de vestigios arqueológicos mesoamericanos, ha sido plasmado en este volumen mediante un relato donde se explica la trama del desarrollo histórico seguido por unas cincuenta ciudades prehispánicas en tres áreas culturales, el altiplano central mexicano, Oaxaca y las tierras Mayas. La búsqueda de respuestas sobre los sistemas políticos que le dieron forma a los asentamientos guía el desarrollo de la obra, atendiendo a la dinámica de crecimiento de ciertas ciudades y al control que ejercieron sobre los asentamientos en el ámbito regional y suprarregional con un marcado énfasis en el periodo clásico de las tierras Mayas, comprendido entre los años 200 a.C. y 900 d.C.

Un libro diseñado para la difusión de la ciencia que trata de captar la atención del público general y despertar el interés por los problemas a los que se enfrentan arqueólogos e historiadores al estudiar los vestigios culturales, es además un buen material de consulta para quienes se adiestran en estas artes, por la forma didáctica en la que se despliegan las explicaciones. Los tex-