

the twentieth century with previous periods and cultural or political history with other approaches and by breaking down language barriers. Contemporary political and cultural history may both sell books but can fall out of alignment within a single volume. On the one hand, we may be asked to celebrate the pioneering men of the twentieth century who help mark our present progress over a diseased or ignorant past (including Oswaldo Cruz, João Carlos Teixeira Brandão, and Adolfo Lutz). On the other hand, old cultural beliefs (phlebotomy, miasmas, and witchcraft) make for good stories of a fantastic world of strange ancestors. Environment, economics, or demographics are mostly missing from the collection, and with them enormous ranges of historical methods, leaving us uncertain about a complex physical world of health determinants and outcomes. For example, until smallpox was eliminated by a vaccine (and a belief in that vaccine enforced by the state), it killed hundreds of thousands in Brazil regardless of whether the victim recognized it as a virus sent airborne by a cough, Christian sin, or the Yoruba spirit of disease, Babalú Ayé. Finally, while Brazil's South American neighbors, and especially Argentina, shared so many developments in their colonial and national histories of health, most of the chapters of this book include no Spanish sources. In these ways, we may better find the "intricate relationships among disease, health, and society" (p. 19).

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## Precontact

*La Consentida: Settlement, Subsistence, and Social Organization in an Early Formative Mesoamerican Community.* By GUY DAVID HEPP. Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2019. Photographs. Illustrations. Maps. Figures. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xii, 344 pp. Cloth, \$81.00.

In this book, Guy David Hepp presents detailed information from excavations he directed at La Consentida on the Pacific coast of Oaxaca, Mexico. Importantly, he shows that this site is one of the first settlements (ca. 1900–1600 BCE) in Mexico and Central America found thus far. Archaeologists have debated the causes and nature of early sedentism and the rise of social hierarchy in Mesoamerica for decades. This book joins that debate. What is interesting is that the author argues that we should consider changes in social life along with shifting economics and ecology in the rise of permanent villages, agriculture, and social differentiation. The value of the book rests in its cogent presentation of current theories regarding the establishment of sedentary societies in the Americas and the supporting archaeological evidence. The author effectively presents data for environmental adaptation, interregional interaction, permanent settlement, and social differentiation at La Consentida. The author does not discuss religion or politics in the rise of village societies in great detail despite his consideration of socioeconomic status and ceremony in some chapters.

This book contains a great variety of information on people's lives at this early village. The site has a small number of earthen mounds, but their existence points to an organized community and control over local labor. The findings suggest communal collective action for larger mound construction, of which there is a growing body of literature that the author does not engage much. It is possible that smaller domestic platforms existed here. However, they are harder to find in the deep soils accumulated at the site over the last 4,000 years. More excavations away from visible architecture would be needed to learn more about the smaller domestic, or perhaps even ritual, constructions.

The completeness of the study is remarkable; the author analyzed most of the artifacts, animal bone, human burials, and architecture. One interesting find is the identification of one of the earliest pottery types in Mesoamerica. Furthermore, the pottery has strong affinities with the highlands and west Mexico rather than coastal sites. Some pottery may support the occurrence of feasting, as do the specific locations of select food remains. However, other pots were generally used for cooking and serving food. The author's analysis of the pottery appears in a helpful appendix containing photos, tables, and drawings.

Many insights on the ancient diet at La Consentida were gleaned from examining ground stone tools, stonecutting tools, human bone, and animal remains. Analyses of plant remains are not provided. The data point to the exploitation of a nearby bay and rivers, making the subsistence adaptation at La Consentida different from the known estuary sites in the region. The acquisition of crocodiles and catfish rather than shellfish and saltwater species for food was an interesting discovery. However, chemical assays of human bone and the later importance of ground stone point to the increasing importance of maize in later times. Thus, the author shows that maize agriculture actually did not coincide with population growth and social differentiation at La Consentida, as others would believe. Obsidian cutting tools from different sources in Mesoamerica also signal far-ranging social and economic ties, as does the pottery. The interpretations of ceramic figurine iconography bolstered the author's reconstructions of social organization and social differentiation. Yet the prevalence of nude female figurines begs a treatment of gender and women's input in community structure, artifact manufacture, and religious ideology.

In the end, this is an excellent book, and it is one of the best I have read recently in Mesoamerican archaeology. It is well written and tightly organized, and it presents extensive data to back the author's theoretical positions on the establishment of village societies. His scholarship and knowledge of the archaeology of the first Mesoamerican communities are impressive. A big advantage of the study rests with the extensive laboratory work on different artifact types, and not just pottery or stone tools, for instance. Instead, the author examines a great deal of evidence in an admirable manner. Other archaeologists may dispute the author's conclusions, but his contributions are clear: we need to consider regional differences in the rise of communal living in Mesoamerica and never lose sight of the social conditions involved in culture change. Sedentary populations, agriculture, interregional

interaction, and the evolution of elites came about at the same time, and one of these, such as agriculture, did not singlehandedly drive changes in the others.

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### Fifteenth–Seventeenth Centuries

*The Spanish Caribbean and the Atlantic World in the Long Sixteenth Century.*

Edited and with an introduction by IDA ALTMAN and DAVID WHEAT. Lincoln:

University of Nebraska Press, 2019. Maps. Tables. Notes. Glossary.

Bibliographies. Index. xxv, 301 pp. Paper, \$40.00.

Twenty-first-century edited collections addressing the Spanish presence in the early colonial Caribbean have approached the topic from a variety of perspectives. *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500–1820* (2002), edited by Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy, conceptualized the role of Spain in the region via a borderlands focus characterized by interactions between peripheral outposts and Iberian ports. *The Early Modern Hispanic World: Transnational and Interdisciplinary Approaches* (2017), edited by Kimberly Lynn and Erin Rowe, explored the subject thematically, juxtaposing social and cultural developments in Iberia and Iberian colonies in the Western Hemisphere and elsewhere. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra's edited work *Entangled Empires: The Anglo-Iberian Atlantic, 1500–1830* (2018) explored the interconnected endeavors of two major colonizing powers and, in part, how Caribbean peoples and lands experienced their competition. The book under review differs from the above in multiple ways, but two points stand out: *The Spanish Caribbean and the Atlantic World in the Long Sixteenth Century* concentrates primarily on the 1500s, and the region covered is highlighted as a distinct influencer of colonial dynamics in the Americas and beyond.

Editors Ida Altman and David Wheat claim that the sixteenth-century Caribbean deserves attention from scholars for a variety of reasons: “Not only was the region in many senses a microcosm of the larger Atlantic world; arguably it was also the first full-fledged incarnation of that world, rapidly becoming the setting for imperial and national rivalries and geopolitics, interethnic conflict and accommodation, the mixing, movement, and displacement of peoples, new economic ambitions and opportunities, social experimentation, the testing and pursuit of new ideological and religious aspirations, and social and cultural interaction and hybridity” (pp. xiii–xiv). To make this point, they recruited ten scholars to contribute studies illustrating the above from a variety of vantage points. The volume contains 12 chapters sorted into sections labeled “Indians in the Early Spanish Caribbean,” “Europeans in the Islands,” “Africans and the Spanish Caribbean,” “Environment and Health,” and “International Commercial Networks.” All authors, to varying degrees, highlight the central role of the sixteenth-century Caribbean in their areas of study.