

The Neighborhood as a Spatial and Social Unit in Mesoamerican Cities, *ARNAULD et al.* 2012, U. of Arizona Press

Recent realizations that Prehispanic cities in Mesoamerica were fundamentally different from Western cities of the same period have led to increasing examination of the neighborhood as an intermediate unit at the heart of prehispanic urbanization. This book addresses the subject of neighborhoods in archaeology as analytical units between households and whole settlements.

The contributions gathered here provide fieldwork data to document the existence of sociopolitically distinct neighborhoods within ancient Mesoamerican settlements, building upon recent advances in multi-scale archaeological studies of these communities. Chapters illustrate the cultural variation across Mesoamerica, including data and interpretations on several different cities with a thematic focus on regional contrasts.

This topic is relatively new and complex, and this book is a strong contribution for three interwoven reasons. First, the long history of research on the "Teotihuacan barrios" is scrutinized and withstands the test of new evidence and comparisons with other Mesoamerican cities. Second, Maya studies of dense settlement patterns are now mature enough to provide substantial case studies. Third, theoretical investigation of ancient urbanization all over the world is now more complex and open than it was before, giving relevance to Mesoamerican perspectives on ancient and modern societies in time and space.

This volume will be of interest to scholars and students specialists of the Mesoamerican past, but also to social scientists and urbanists looking to contrast ancient cultures worldwide.