

are shown to interact to determine the recognizably distinctive features of village and house styles in the different groups. Thus one learns, for example, that the absence of chimneys, leading to smoke-filled houses, has the advantage of reducing the threat of wood-boring insects by coating timbers with tar, and of keeping out malarial mosquitos. The lowland dwelling Tharus, hence, put up with the smoke; while the Marphalis, in their high and dry climate, have responded eagerly to the innovation of chimneys made out of flattened transport tins.

The idea of looking at cultures through their architecture, and at architecture as a cultural product, is a good one. Because of this, one wishes the author had pursued it in a somewhat more ambitious and systematic way. The anthropologist would have benefitted from more data on household composition, land ownership, and numerous other matters while the architectural reader, I would guess, will find technical information lacking. Likewise, the photos at present constitute a nice travel essay, but do not really constitute a disciplined approach to the subject.

The book's ambitions are, however, relatively modest. The author makes no effort to claim that these four villages represent anything other than themselves; and there is no unifying framework of theory or comparison. Within the limits of what it attempts, then, this book is a slight but attractive presentation of an interesting aspect of Nepali ethnography.

The Lowland Maya Postclassic

Edited by Arlen F. Chase and Prudence M. Rice

Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1985. viii + 352 pp. Photos, maps, charts, bibliography. n.p. (cloth).

Reviewer: Richard E.W. Adams

University of Texas at San Antonio

This is a valiant attempt to put together a coherent volume on the Maya Lowland Postclassic period (ca. 900-1540 AD). Unfortunately, it does not meet the tests of utility, comprehensiveness, or currency. Ten essays were taken from a 1979 symposium organized for the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, others added, an introduction written, bridging passages inserted by the editors, and a final synthesis written by David Freidel.

The volume editors say that they aim at a state of the art assessment, interpretation, and explanation of the Postclassic. Most of the articles and papers are by researchers who have recently been or currently are engaged in work which bears on the questions of the Postclassic. However, the author list is selective and thereby omits important people, data, and ideas. Several themes of the Postclassic are identified by the editors and include those of long distance trade, locations of communities in coastal and riverine situations, and the emphasis on militarism. A space of 250,000 square kilometres, and a time span of 600 years are the framework. Five regions which comprehend some 50% of the total area are defined. The remainder of the lowlands are either unknown during the period or refuge zones.

The book largely consists of the specific and sometimes excessively detailed reports on recent project results. The lack of comprehensiveness is created by the fact that no effort is made to systematically review and integrate information on the

major sites of the Postclassic: Chichen Itza, Mayapan, Tulum, Acanceh, and others. Thus a curious situation is created of major holes around which the authors and editors talk. Nonetheless, some quite good data is placed on record, and some very stimulating interpretations are suggested. The Lamanai site in Belize is discussed by David Pendergast who points out the continuities and lack of disjunctions between the Classic and Postclassic at the site, which seems to have been continuously occupied from ca. 250 BC until ca. 1700 AD. Important work on the Yucatec intrusions into the south at the time of the Classic collapse are documented and discussed by the Chases, the Rices, and others. Here one wonders why Hammond's crucial data on the question were not used; the bibliography has citations up to 1983 when that information was available. It becomes clear, on reading closely, that not all papers were updated after 1979. Mis-citations and some other bibliographic problems compound this atavism. Some papers contain misstatements of fact and misreadings of the writings of others.

Among the most stimulating of the papers is the work of Joseph Ball who suggests that in the Postclassic record of Central Campeche we have a set of refugee populations. Wonderly, in his discussion of the Sula area of Honduras, makes excellent use of archaeological and ethnohistoric data. Other candles also shine in the general darkness.

Freidel attempts to draw together the disparate threads of discussion and information. He notes three themes that emerge: continuity and disjunction, the role of external groups in the lowland Maya postclassic, and the heterogeneity of postclassic cultural groups. In spite of this readable and interesting essay, the volume does not constitute what is needed. That is, we still lack a comprehensive, carefully systematic, and balanced assessment of all of the data and theory on the Lowland Maya Postclassic; a volume which will complement those on the Collapse, the Origins, and the Settlement Patterns.

The book can be used with care by professionals who already know the literature, and can avoid the pitfalls of error in interpretation, citation, and fact.

Yawar Fiesta

Jose Maria Arguedas

Translated by Frances Horing Barraclough. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1985. lxxi + 200 pp. \$19.95 (cloth), \$8.95 (paper).

Reviewer: Susan Niles

Lafayette College

Set in the highland town of Puquio in the 1930s, Arguedas' novel describes residents' plans for a bullfight to celebrate Peru's national holiday. Traditionally a way for men of two *ayllus* to compete for honor in the bloody festival that gives the work its title, the "Indian bullfight" is banned by officials who force the town to hire a Spanish bullfighter to instill proper moral values in the peasants. The novel focuses on the interaction of members of the *ayllus*, local mestizos, representatives of the government, and university students returning from Lima as they react to, and eventually reject, the government edict. Arguedas compares the history of Puquio's construction of a road with the story of the domination of the bull to demonstrate the