studies, as well as new theories and diverse theoretical perspectives. The Handbook concludes with a section on the archaeology of the Spanish conquest and the Colonial and Republican periods to connect the prehispanic, proto-historic, and historic periods. This volume will be a must-read for students and professional archaeologists, as well as other scholars including historians, art historians, anthropologists, and ethnographers with an interest in Mesoamerican archaeology. Ian Hodder's brief is far wider. His aim is to break down the division between the intellectual and the "dirt" archaeologist to demonstrate that in this discipline more than any other, theory must be related to practice to save effectively our rapidly diminishing heritage.In this concise, friendly textbook, Patricia Urban and Edward Schortman teach the basics of archaeological theory, making explicit the crucial link between theory and the actual conduct of archaeological research. The first half of the text addresses the general nature of theory, as well as how it is used in the social sciences and in archaeology in particular. To demonstrate the usefulness of theory, the authors draw from research at Stonehenge, Mesopotamia, and the Naco Valley of Honduras. They show how theory becomes meaningful when it is used by very real individuals to interpret equally real materials. These extended narratives exemplify the creative interaction between data and theory that shape our understanding of the past. Ideal for introductory courses in archaeological theory.Olmec Archaeology and Early Mesoamerica offers the most thorough and up-to-date book-length treatment of Olmec society and culture available. Many students view archaeological theory as a subject distinct from field research. This division is reinforced by the fact that too often we think of fieldwork as stand-alone courses that do not fit into our overall undergraduate programs. Divorcing the two sets of activities means that archaeologists go about understanding the past. This book bridges the gap between theory and practice by looking in detail at how the authors and their colleagues used theory to interpret what they found while conducting research in northeast Honduras. This is not a linear narrative. Rather, the book highlights the open-ended nature of archaeological investigations in which theories guide research whose findings may challenge these initial interpretations and lead in unexpected directions. Pursuing those novel investigations requires new theories that are themselves subject to refutation by newly gathered data. The central case study is the writers' work in Honduras. The interrelations of fieldwork, data, theory, and interpretation are also illustrated with two long-running archaeological debates, the emergence of inequality in southern Mesopotamia and inferring the ancient meanings of Stonehenge. The book is of special interest to undergraduate Anthropology/Archaeology majors and first- and second-year graduate students, along with anyone interested in how archaeologists convert the static materials we find into dynamic histories of long-lasting peoples. The first comprehensive English-language book on the largest city in the Americas before the 1400s. Teotihuacan is a UNESCO world heritage site, located in highland central Mexico, about twenty-five miles from Mexico City, visited by millions of tourists every year. The book begins with Cuicuilco, a predecessor that arose around 400 BCE, then traces Teotihuacan from its founding in approximately 150 BCE to its collapse around 600 CE. It describes the city's immense pyramids and other elite structures. It also discusses the dwellings and daily lives of commoners, including men, women, and children, and the craft activities of artisans. George L. Cowgill discusses politics, economics, technology, art, religion, and possible reasons for Teotihuacan's rise and fall. Long before the Aztecs and 800 miles from Classic Maya centers, Teotihuacan was part of a broad Mesoamerican tradition but had a distinctive personality that invites comparison with other states and empires of the ancient world. From the early cities in the second millennium BC to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan on the eve of the Spanish conquest, Ancient Mesoamerica created another architectural, political, and economic power structure that (√)of meaning and power. The origins of Teotihuacan are based on the archaeological remnants of Teotihuacan attest to the power and centrality of these urban configurations in Ancient Mesoamerican history. In Landscape and Power in Ancient Mesoamerica, Rex Koontz, Kathryn Reese-Taylor, and Annabeth Headrick explore the cultural logic that structured and generated these centers. Through case studies of specific urban spaces and their meanings, the authors examine the general principles by which the Ancient Mesoamericans created meaningful urban space. In a profoundly interdisciplinary exchange involving both archaeologists and art historians, this volume connects the symbolism of those landscapes, the performances that activated this symbolism, and the cultural poetics of these ensembles.Studies in Archaeology: Archaeological Hammers and Theories provides information pertinent to the archaeological method, with emphasis on the interaction of data and technique with theory and problems. This book describes the nature of archeological data, the range of archeological theories, and the scope of archeological problems. Organized into three parts encompassing 13 chapters, this book begins with an overview of the products of the archeological record. This text then examines survey sampling, site formation studies, and lithic and ceramic analysis. Other chapters consider the behavioral concepts that are implicit in the notions of special behavior, optimization, decision making, and population dynamics. This book discusses as well the analysis of pottery, which plays a leading part in the gap between Archeology and the history of the Preclassic, Colonial, and Republican areas of the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. A cultural unit of that length is daunting for the simple fact that a large number of important finds are archaeological records kept by societies long vanished. First comprehensive English-language book on the largest city in the Americas before the 1400s. Teotihuacan is a UNESCO world heritage site, located in highland central Mexico, about twenty-five miles from Mexico City, visited by millions of tourists every year. The book begins with Cuicuilco, a predecessor that arose around 400 BCE, then traces Teotihuacan from its founding in approximately 150 BCE to its collapse around 600 CE. 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in the relations people develop with one another and with the world around them through what they do, where and how they do it, and with whom or what, memory leaves material traces. Hendon conducted research on three contemporaneous Native American civilizations that flourished from the seventh century through the eleventh CE: the Maya kingdom of Copan, the hilltop center of Tcontemporary and the dispersed settlement of the Cuicatec of western Oaxaca, all as well as the non-private rules that include the ballgame. Combining her findings with a rich body of theory from anthropology, history, and geography, she explores how objects—the things people build, make, use, exchange, and discard—help people remember. In so doing, she demonstrates how everyday life becomes part of the social processes of remembering and forgetting, and how “memory communities” assert connections between the past and the present. Soke, Flames, and the Human Body in Mesoamerican Ritual Practice address the traditions, circumstances, and practices that involved the burning of bodies and bone, to better understand the ideologies behind these acts. It brings together scholars working across Mesoamerica with different methodologies and interdisciplinary lenses.Oysters in the Land of Cacao delivers a long-overdue presentation of the archaeology, material culture, and regional synthesis on the Formative to Late Classic period societies of the western Chontalpa region (Tabasco, Mexico) through contemporary theory. It offers a significant new understanding of the Mesoamerican Gulf Coast. This volume debuts the new scope of Remote Sensing, which was first defined as the analysis of digital data collected by sensors that were not in physical contact with the objects under investigation (using cameras, scanners, and radar systems operating from spaceborne or airborne platforms). A wider characterization is now possible: Remote Sensing can be any non-destructive approach to viewing the buried and nominally invisible evidence of past activity. Spacesborne and airborne data are now supplemented by non-invasive techniques and surface collection or field-walking survey. Now, any method that enables observation of evidence on or beneath the surface of the earth, without impact on the surviving stratigraphy, is legitimately within the realm of Remote Sensing. The new interfaces and sensory techniques used in Remote Sensing offer a philosophical level, in that the landscapes and built environments that reveal history through place and time. It is about new perspectives—the views of history possible with Remote Sensing and fostered in part by immersive, interactive 3D and 4D environments discussed in this volume. These perspectives are both the result and the implement of technological, social, and epistemological advances in record keeping, interpretation, and conceptualization. Methodology presented here builds on the current ease and speed in collecting data sets on the scale of the object, site, locality, and landscape. As this volume shows, many disciplines surrounding archaeology and related cultural studies are currently involved in Remote Sensing, and its relevance will only increase as the methodology expands. This book, the first of a proposed three projects, reports on excavations at Formative-period sites in the state of Tlaxcala, Mexico. The transition to the Formative in the relatively high-altitude study region is later than in choice regions for early agriculture elsewhere in Mesoamerica. From 900 BC, however, population growth and sociopolitical development were rapid. A central claim in the research presented here is that a macroregional perspective is essential for understanding the local Formative sequence. In this volume, excavations at three village sites (Amonoloe, Tetel, and Las Mesitas) and one modestly regional center (La Laguna) are reported. Ceramics are described in detail. An innovative approach to the classification of figurines is presented, and a Formative chronology for the region is proposed based on seriation of refuse contexts and radiocarbon dates. The work concludes with a macroregional framework to be used in the analysis of subsistence, social relations, and political economy in forthcoming volumes 2 and 3. An archaeological examination of the Feathered Serpent Pyramid as a symbol of power in Teotihuacan. In the seventeen years since the first edition of Mesoamerican Archaeology: Method and Theory was published, a number of important discoveries, written by the researchers themselves, have proved successful. When approached by Wiley-Blackwell to edit a second edition, the original coeditors, Julia Hendon and Rosemary Joyce, agreed that the chance to incorporate new research by an international array of scholars was not to be missed. The first move was to add Lisa Overholtzer as editor. The three of us approached some authors from the first edition who agreed to update or rewrite their chapters. We then invited new contributors whose work reflects current research trends in Mesoamerican archaeology. For this edition we purposefully included a chapter on bioarchaeology and three chapters that include the Colonial period in their discussions. As with the first edition, this book is intended to be useful for anyone teaching Mesoamerican archaeology, whether as the sole subject of a course, or as one case study among others in courses dealing with archaeology of the Americas, complex societies, or other topics. We also expect that it will be of interest to any reader who wants a sample of contemporary research on the major time periods and societies that are the focus of Mesoamerican archaeology. Because this book is a departure from other models for introductory texts, it is appropriate for us to briefly explain what it is, and is not, and to suggest how we hope it might be incorporated into the classroom. All three of us teach material from the field of Mesoamerican archaeology in basic introductory courses and more advanced offerings. As active researchers who each have developed and collaborative atmospheres, we find ourselves struggling to see that it is important to keep a foot in the archaeological understanding (or differences in opinion, as illustrated by some of the essays included here) are constructive part of the research process. They reflect the mechanisms through which our discipline debates explanations, puts them to the test against existing and new data, and gradually revises them. Too often, we find that students (and people outside the academy interested in archaeology) have the impression, especially from media coverage, that changes in interpretation result from violent rejection of earlier ideas, represented as poorly conceived, foolish, or examples of bad work. We do not think that representing archaeology as a kind of winner-takes-all contest is very true to the reality of the constant hard work, only occasionally accompanied by remarkable advances. We consider it helpful to explain that new research often modifies, extends, or disagrees with those ideas—Urbanization is a phenomenon that brings into focus a range of topics of broad interest to scholars. It is one of the central, enduring interests of anthropological archaeology. Because urbanization is a transformational process, it changes the relationships between social and cultural variables such as demography, economy, politics, and ideology. As one of a handful of cases in the ancient world where cities developed independently, Mesoamerica should play a major role in global, comparative analysis of first-generation cities and urbanization in general. Yet most research focuses on later manifestations of urbanism in Mesoamerica, thereby perpetuating the fallacy that Mesoamerican cities developed relatively late in comparison to urban centers in the rest of the world. This volume presents new data, case studies, and models for approaching the subject of early Mesoamerican cities. It demonstrates how the study of urbanism in Mesoamerica, and all ancient civilizations, is entering a new and dynamic phase of scholarship Anthropomorphizing the Cosmos explores the sociocultural significance of more than three hundred Middle Preclassic Maya figurines uncovered at the site of Nixtun-Ch’ich’ on Lake Petén Itzá in northern Guatemala. In this careful, holistic, and detailed analysis of the Petén lakes figurines—hand-modeled, terracotta anthropomorphic fragments, animal figures, and musical instruments such as whistles and ocarinas—Prudence M. Rice engages with a broad swath of theory and comparative data on Maya ritual practice. Presenting original data, Anthropomorphizing the Cosmos offers insight into the synchronous appearance of fired-clay figurines with the emergence of societal complexity in and beyond Mesoamerica. Rice situates these Preclassic Maya figurines in the broader context of Mesoamerican human figural representation, identifies possible connections between anthropomorphic figurine heads and the origins of calendrics and other writing in Mesoamerica, and examines the role of anthropomorphic figurines and zoomorphic musical instruments in Preclassic Maya ritual. The volume shows how community rituals involving the figurines helped to mitigate the uncertainties of societal transitions, including the beginnings of settled agricultural life, changing balance of social differentiation and inequalities, and the centralization of political power and decision-making in the Petén lowlands. Literature on Maya ritual, cosmology, and specialized artifacts has traditionally focused on the Classic period, with little research centering on
beginnings of Maya sociopolitical organization and ideological beliefs in the Middle Preclassic. Anthropomorphizing the Cosmos is a welcome contribution to the understanding of the earliest Maya and will be significant to Mayanists and Mesoamericanists as well as nonspecialists with interest in these early figurines. In the quarter century since Wallerstein first developed world systems theory and its application in the analysis of a variety of disciplines, many scholars have adopted this theoretical approach to light on the social, economic, and symbolic value in pyramids and other prominent buildings, viewing plazas as by-products of these buildings. Even when researchers have recognized the potential significance of plazas, they have thought that plazas as vacant spaces could offer few clues about their cultural and political roles. Mesoamerican Plazas challenges both of these assumptions. The primary question that has motivated the contributors is how Mesoamerican plazas became arenas for the creation and negotiation of social relations and values in a community. The thirteen contributions stress the significance of plazas as spaces of social processes, not simply as places of power relations and embattled theory and practice. The book concludes with a commentary by one of the major voices in archaeological theory, Norman Yoffee. This is an important and timely examination of the long-standing question of how and why societies have grown in scale and complexity, how they have maintained and discarded aspects of their own cultural heritage, and how they have collapsed. In addressing these long-standing questions of broad interest and importance, the authors develop counter-narratives - new ways of understanding what used to be termed ‘cultural evolution’. Encapsulating the Middle East and Egypt, India, Southeast Asia, Australia, the American Southwest and Mesoamerica, the fourteen essays offer perspectives on long-term cultural trajectories; on cities, states and empires; on collapse; and on the relationship between archaeology and history. The book concludes with a commentary by one of the major voices in archaeological theory, Norman Yoffee. This is the first application of the comparative approach of world-systems analysis in Mesoamerican archaeology. Focusing on marriage figurines—double human figurines that represent relations formed through social alliances—Hendon, Joyce, and Lopiparo examine the material relations established between AD 500 and 1000, a period of time when a network of social houses linked settlements of a variety of sizes in the region. The authors analyze these small, seemingly insignificant artifacts using the theory of materiality to understand broader social processes. They examine
the production, use, and disposal of marriage figurines from six sites—Campo Dos, Cerro Palenque, Copán, Currusté, Tenampua, and Travesia—and explore their role in rituals and ceremonies, as well as in the forming of social bonds and the celebration of relationships among communities. They find evidence of historical traditions reproduced over generations through material media in social relations among individuals, families, and communities, as well as social differences within this network of connected yet independent settlements. Material Relations provides a new and dynamic understanding of how social houses functioning via networks of production and reciprocal exchange of material objects and will be of interest to Mesoamerican archaeologists, anthropologists, and art historians. In this concise, friendly textbook, Patricia Urban and Edward Schortman teach the basics of archaeological theory, making explicit the crucial link between theory and the actual conduct of archaeological research. The first half of the text addresses the general nature of theory, as well as how it is used in the social sciences and in archaeology in particular. To demonstrate the usefulness of theory, the authors draw from research at Stonehenge, Mesopotamia, and their own long-term research project in the Naco Valley of Honduras. They show how theory becomes meaningful when it is used by very real individuals to interpret equally real materials. These extended narratives exemplify the creative interaction between data and theory that shape our understanding of the past. Ideal for introductory courses in archaeological theory.

In Houses in a Landscape, Julia A. Hendon examines the connections between social identity and social memory using archaeological research on indigenous societies that existed more than one thousand years ago in what is now Honduras. While these societies left behind monumental buildings, the remains of their dead, remnants of their daily life, intricate works of art, and fine examples of craftsmanship such as pottery and stone tools, they left only a small body of written records. Despite this paucity of written information, Hendon contends that an archaeological study of memory in such societies is possible and worthwhile. It is possible because memory is not just a faculty of the individual mind operating in isolation, but a social process embedded in the materiality of human existence. Intimately bound up in the relations people develop with one another and with the world around them through what they do, where and how they do it, and with whom or what, memory leaves material traces. Hendon conducted research on three contemporaneous Native American civilizations that flourished from the seventh century through the eleventh CE: the Maya kingdom of Copan, the hilltop center of Cerro Palenque, and the dispersed settlement of the Cuyumapa valley. She analyzes domestic life in these societies, from cooking to crafting, as well as public and private ritual events including the ballgame. Combining her findings with a rich body of theory from anthropology, history, and geography, she explores how objects—the things people build, make, use, exchange, and discard—help people remember. In so doing, she demonstrates how everyday life becomes part of the social processes of remembering and forgetting, and how “memory communities” assert connections between the past and the present.