Pueblos within Pueblos: Tlaxilacalli Communities in Acolhuacan, Mexico, ca. 1272–1692. By BENJAMIN D. JOHNSON. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2017. Maps. Figures. Tables. xv, 252 pp. Cloth, $63.00.

Amid a self-similar stream of New Philology text presentations, additional perspectives on struggles initially following first contact, and book-length humanistic essays dealing with currently popular Western preoccupations and purporting, with limited success, to elucidate indigenous categories and cultures, Benjamin Johnson's analysis of the role of *tlaxilacalli* across four centuries in the eastern Basin of Mexico stands out as original, creative, and inviting of multidisciplinary engagement and collaboration. It serves as an exemplar of the productive use that can be made of certain aspects of the New Philology's output.

The Acolhuacan region, heartland of the small precontact empire of modern-day Texcoco, the Aztec second city, offers unmatched density of documentation, as well as archaeological and ethnographic information, for approximately the last millennium. Johnson joins those who have succeeded in assimilating this complexity while identifying important underlying principles within it. The purpose of this attractively produced and heavily footnoted book is threefold. It posits an analytical equivalence between precontact and postcontact imperial structures to illustrate the role of tlaxilacalli in strengthening and vitiating the ruling processes of both regimes. It takes advantage of the detail in Texcocan documentation to tie individuals and households to known landscapes and local-level political processes. And it thereby highlights the role commoners played in the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of imperial structures.

Johnson first must disambiguate the indigenous concept *tlaxilacalli* from the confused colonial semantic cloud of *barrio*, *pueblo*, *altepemaitl*, *calpolli*, *altepetl*, and so on—another revealing instance of the continued failure of the intrusive Spanish and their descendants to understand the cultures they confronted. Tlaxilacalli were face-to-face networks administered by commoners that incorporated compulsion and inequality while also offering security and community through rights and obligations involving landholding, kinship, and other affective attachments to specific landscapes. Tlaxilacalli offered submission to immature, developing imperial structures in exchange for a measure of autonomy, leading to policies of indirect rule on a microscale that made both precontact and postcontact imperial structures fractious and fragile.

Chapter 1 posits a thirteenth-century origin of tlaxilacalli regimes in the northeastern Basin of Mexico, beginning their characterization by Johnson in terms of landholding, economic, and cultural forces within the larger context of precontact warring states. Chapter 2 studies precontact and first-contact imperial processes through the rapid rise of the Triple Alliance, facilitated by tlaxilacalli recruitment and support, and then the equally rapid redeployment of Texcocan tlaxilacalli in support of Hernando Cortés and invading indigenous groups to facilitate the entry of a new and, at the time, unknowable order. Cuauhtepoztlan, a tlaxilacalli within Tepetlaoztoc, comes under the microscope in the third chapter, in which Johnson, working from the outside in, applies a novel variety of techniques to describe this tlaxilacalli's hierarchical structures and

processes, not only in terms of power but also in terms of attachment to community and landscape. The final three chapters further explore these themes across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when tlaxilacalli became the sole refuge for the great majority of commoners—and their means of projecting political power. As the former indigenous elite, never that closely integrated into tlaxilacalli, became detached from their economic support, tlaxilacalli adopted and used new Catholic cultural content to confect new idioms of attachment to landscape and community that also enhanced success in the variably corrupt colonial legal process.

Johnson's work thus identifies a durable, adaptive, indigenous concept and its expression in a range of entities of central importance across four centuries. He handles the existing evidence well while also adducing extensive new evidence, implicitly inviting other disciplines to understand tlaxilacalli more thoroughly. Archaeologists may wish to study its applicability to their evidence before and after the twelfth century as well as inside and outside the Basin of Mexico. They may finally be drawn into renewed fieldwork in Tepetlaoztoc by devising methods to work around deep soil disturbance by modern agriculture. Ethnohistorians may take up the challenge of further characterizing the tlaxilacalli's internal economic, political, and affective processes, as well as its exact articulation within imperial regimes. Ethnographers may seek commonalities between what they see on the ground today and prior patterns persisting through many centuries. The latter two groups will advocate for greater understanding of kinship, *compadrazgo*, succession, inheritance, and landholding within tlaxilacalli.

None of these comments are a criticism of this work but rather an assurance of its importance and centrality for future research in indigenous political organization and process across the contact boundary to today. While publications of minute textual examination continue to abound alongside wide-ranging studies of iconography, religion, gender, and other cultural content, this book is a beacon reminding researchers to understand and appreciate, through indigenous categories, the everyday realities, practicalities, choices, and struggles of the people who produced the works they study. The responsibility to understand this basic context remains key to optimizing future scholarly output and rendering it meaningful in worldwide comparative conversations.

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Black Market Capital: Urban Politics and the Shadow Economy in Mexico City.
By ANDREW KONOVE. Oakland: University of California Press, 2018.
Photographs. Maps. Figures. Tables. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xiii, 283 pp. Paper, $29.95.

Tepito, a *barrio bravo* in the heart of Mexico City, has been characterized as one of the most dangerous marketplaces in the world. It spreads over dozens of square blocks a short distance from the Zócalo. Tepito has a long and complex past, and Andrew Konove's *Black Market Capital* tells a complicated history of the street market that