

Part IV

Future Directions

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A primary reason why we have written this book is to share with other researchers information that will allow them to carry on the detailed, empirical and interpretive work we have begun – to reach out to Ohio Hopewell peoples and try to understand them and their lives in terms authentic to them. Both the summary of Scioto Hopewell life as currently understood, in Part II, and the detailed data upon which that view is based, in Part III, are offered with this aim. Beyond these foundations for future work is a third domain of useful information that we accumulated over the 13 years of working on this project and that we also wish to share. It is a subtler domain, made up of hunches based on observed data patterns remaining to be explored, questions that we found theoretically or contextually interesting but could not answer for lack of current data, and insights into the kinds of data that are necessary to collect to address these hunches and questions.

Often, scientists shy away from writing down and publishing such uncompleted thoughts and potential lines of research, perhaps because these are more subject to criticism than are polished ones, or might reveal erroneous thinking when more data are collected, or might give away one's next strategic and exciting research project. However, to expedite the profession-wide, team process of exploring a subject as complex as the lives of past Ohio Hopewell peoples, it seems critical to us that we

present our current hunches and questions on Hopewell life, and thoughts on how to resolve them. These insights, as much as the interpretive summary and the data we offer in Parts II and III, can provide others with a rich, guiding context for planning future research about Ohio Hopewell life and its transformations over time.

Thus, the final chapter of this book, Chapter 15, lays out a large number of topics that appear to have strong research potential, and some pathways for exploring them. The topics span seven broad domains of inquiry: chronology, subsistence and mobility, community organization, ritual organization and alliances, other aspects of social organization, economic organization and its implications for sociopolitical relations, and comparison of these matters among Hopewell peoples in different regions of Ohio. For each topic, current thought and extant data are reviewed, and new methods and data that would shed important light on it are discussed.

Of the many topics raised in Chapter 15, I point out three here that seem especially important to understanding Ohio Hopewell peoples in particular and human diversity in social life in general. One is the relative degrees of competition and cooperation that existed among individuals and among social groups in the Scioto-Point Creek area and other regions of Ohio. This subject bears on the variety of ways around the world in which

the concept of the self is culturally constructed and channeled, and the conditions that produce such self-images. It relates directly to the problem of Western anthropologists unknowingly projecting various fundamental aspects of their own Western cultural and psychological realities onto nonwestern peoples. It also strikes to the heart of archaeological conceptions of the nature of "Hopewell", which historically has been conceived in terms of social-ceremonial interaction among individuals and groups.

A second key topic presented in Chapter 15 is the modes of production of ceremonial paraphernalia, the modes of acquisition of the fancy raw materials from which they were made, and how these actions might or might not relate to sodalities, leaders, others, and their social prestige and power. Who possessed the spiritual knowledge, rights, and skills to safely remove material-spiritual powers from their earthly sources, design the spiritually powerful artifact forms into which those materials would be modified, work the materials into those forms, and use the paraphernalia in ceremonies? Were the acquisition of raw fancy materials and the production of ceremonial items the independent ventures of individuals or ad hoc small groups seeking spiritual power and social prestige, the rites of sodalities, the requirements of young age-sets for their initiation to adulthood, the strategic demonstration of power by aspiring leaders, or the responsibilities of established leaders to their communities? Were acquisition and production open to

all or restricted to certain individuals or social segments, and if so, on what basis? Answering each of these questions is prerequisite to considering how ceremony and "economic" relations might (or might not) have been used to sociopolitical advantage.

A third important topic to be researched is the nature of the social and ceremonial relations of peoples in the impressive Newark earthwork area with peoples in the Scioto-Paint Creek area. Newark is the largest Hopewellian earthwork in the Eastern Woodlands and less than a day's canoe trip from the Scioto-Paint Creek concentration of earthworks. Similarities between the two areas in their earthwork geometries and astronomical orientations, likenesses in the spatial layouts of their burial mounds, and the pointing of Newark's long causeway directly toward the Scioto-Paint Creek confluence all suggest very strong ties between peoples of the two areas. Nevertheless, the specific nature of the ties and the impact of the local histories of the two areas on each other remain unknown.

Many of the topics for future research presented in Chapter 15 are ideal in their scope and their significance to Eastern Woodlands prehistory and general anthropology for doctoral dissertations or masters' theses. We hope that students and others will be intrigued by the questions we raise and, along with the summaries of Hopewell life and the data presented in this book, will run with them full tilt.