

**The Scioto Hopewell and Their Neighbors: Bioarchaeological Documentation and Cultural Understanding.** *D. Troy Case and Christopher Carr.* Interdisciplinary Contributions to Archaeology. New York: Springer, 2008, 775 pp., CD-ROM. \$139.00, cloth.

The remarkable mound complexes and associated villages of the Scioto Valley Hopewell people of Ohio have captured the imagination of scholars for two centuries and were a central impetus to the development of archaeology in America. The legacy of this fascination is thousands of studies, excavations, projects, and reports, each a small window intending to shed light on this part of the Native American past. In this book and its companion volume, *Gathering Hopewell* (New York: Springer, 2005), Case and Carr's massive, remarkable, innovative effort is an extended meditation on how archaeologists can move beyond typical regional syntheses by grounding our understanding of the past in the people themselves who were the Scioto Hopewell.

The centering perspective of this book is "thick" prehistory, "the detailed describing of individuals, social groups, events, actions, patterned behaviors and ideas, and their interrelationships within a local social, cultural, natural, and historical context." (p. 3). This "partitive" view of culture is grounded in Stuart Stuever's regional, multisite subsistence-settlement system approach to archaeology. For Case and Carr, assessing regional archaeological data creates the possibility of broadly exploring social, ritual, and religious patterns of life that marked the creation as well as the abrupt disappearance of the Scioto Valley Hopewell.

Case and Carr give equal standing to the book's two aims, providing a richly detailed, ethnographic-like description of the lifeways, culture, and history of the Scioto Valley Hopewell people that is complemented by a systematized, immense, detailed database derived largely from unpublished archaeological reports and skeletal data. Systematizing data for more than 1,000 individual graves, 75 ceremonial deposits, 113 mound and cemetery areas, and 52 ceremonial centers from across Ohio is as breathtaking in its scope as it is fundamental as an accomplishment. The significance of this database cannot be understated. Case and Carr not only draw on this first comprehensive archaeological accounting of the Scioto Hopewell in their interpretation but invite us to explore these data, and the complementary database, in *Gathering Hopewell*.

In the four parts of this book, Case and Carr first present a framework for "thick prehistory" and an overview of the book. Part II presents a comprehensive description of the Scioto Hopewell as an enduring symbolic cultural group living in dispersed residential settlements. These local communities were linked through ceremonial centers, led by shaman-like figures in villages organized around clan and sodality affiliations. The material identity of the Scioto Hopewell people appears archaeologically to form quickly and then equally abruptly vanish. Case and Carr note that both the formation and rapid disappearance of this culture are not due to the dynamics of environmental changes, resource utilization, or changing population density. Rather, they conclude that a symbolic community crystallized suddenly around a new, shared worldview and equally rapidly crumbled when the demands of these social and symbolic alliances could no longer be maintained.

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Part III presents a detailed accounting of the bioarchaeological database. A description of the sites, their locations and architecture, discussions of the grave associations and the skeletal remains as well as a contextualizing and preanalysis of the mortuary data are presented. Ethnographic information as expressed in symbolic representations is also incorporated into this database. Case, Carr, and colleagues provide thoughtful discussions of the logic of, approach to, and practical limitations of wresting archaeological information collected over nearly two centuries into a coherent, useable format.

In Part IV, Case and Carr take stock of our current understanding of the Scioto Hopewell. As reflected throughout this volume, for Case and Carr it is about understanding the Scioto Hopewell as people in their own terms, as reflections of their lifeways and views of the world. By raising both key subjects and key analyses, Case and Carr present a close reading of what we think we know about these past people, and what we don't. They challenge the reader to contemplate gaps in our understanding, differing perspectives, and future prospects for analysis.

Case and Carr reveal to us the work of archaeologists at its finest. They have brought Struever's partitive perspective of Hopewell to full fruition through "thick" prehistory, have provided us with the means to explore the data directly for ourselves, and offer a thoughtful, reasoned contemporary perspective on what more we can learn. This volume and its companion book, *Gathering Hopewell*, represent years of dedicated, thoughtful, insightful hard work. Case and Carr have written what will be an enduring classic in archaeology about how one comes to know another.

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**Ethnographies and Archaeologies: Iterations of the Present.** *Lena Mortensen and Julie Hollowell*, eds. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009, 288 pp. \$69.95, cloth.

This is an edited volume that I hope will make a significant mark on both the field of archaeology and those cultural anthropologists who are watching and analyzing what archaeologists do methodologically, epistemologically, and theoretically. The contributing authors (sixteen, including the editors) of this provocative, multifaceted, and overall excellent collection straddle the divide between the two anthropological subfields, but clearly those of the contributors who identify as archaeologists are not camera-shy, so to speak, when it comes to innovative theoretical advances in cultural anthropology. This sets them apart from some of their colleagues, as Hugo Benavides, a cultural anthropologist, states in his chapter:

The ethnographic perspective allows archaeologists a much-needed outside perspective . . . of what it is that they do and of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings involved in the production of the past. Many mainstream archaeological circles have been resistant to this ethnographic wave and have mistakenly presented the conflict in terms of an elusive dichotomy between science and humanities (p. 153).

*Journal of Anthropological Research*, vol. 66, 2010