

change and the Phillips and Griffin dispute with Ford that Lyman and his co-authors present in detail.

Finally, Lyman, O'Brien, and Dunnell evaluate the success of the culture history school in building viable classificatory schemes that would serve to organize artifacts into meaningful units to enable comparisons over time and space. It was out of this impulse that the Midwestern Taxonomic Method emerged, very much as a consensus of contemporary Eastern Woodland researchers. A similar approach emerged almost simultaneously in the Southwest. From these foundations, Willey and Phillip's generated a taxonomic system that pervades most of the Eastern Woodlands today, with its components, phases, traditions, and horizons linked to an anthropological theory of human societies. Lyman et al. argue that this linkage of artifacts to people finally doomed culture history by making it unable to study the issue that first established it as a viable paradigm—culture change. The authors believe that the solution to this paradox today lies in the acceptance of an evolutionary paradigm by archaeology.

The *Americanist Culture History* and the *Rise and Fall of Culture History* volumes are companion pieces which together give the reader a critical evaluation and thorough understanding of culture history. I appreciated the clarity and insight in the authors' presentations. Even more, I appreciated their forthrightness in disclosing their theoretical perspectives. While one may or may not agree with their evolutionary agenda, it creates a useful framework for examining the development of culture history. These volumes are more than a contribution to the history of Americanist archaeology—they represent essential elements in the education of both current and future archaeologists. Whether one espouses an evolutionary, processual, postprocessual, or even "closet" culture historical leaning, the basic units of today's North American archaeology are those created and made viable by culture historians. It is imperative that we understand the forces that created them and their implications. Lyman, O'Brien, Dunnell, and Plenum Press have done us an important service in bringing this original material and their analysis together in an accessible format. My only caveat lies in the poor production quality in the review copy of their reprints, some of which verge on being unreadable. This is not acceptable in a \$45.00 book and, hopefully, is an exception.

The Cahokia Atlas: A Historical Atlas of Cahokia Archaeology, Revised Edition, MELVIN L. FOWLER. Studies in Archaeology Number 2. Illinois Transportation Archaeological Research Program, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. 1997. xx + 267 pp., 128 figures, 3 tables, index. Paper (\$27.50 plus shipping and handling). Distributed by the Center for American Archeology, Kampsville.

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This is a wonderfully detailed compendium of primary descriptive data on the cultural features that combine to form one the world's truly great archaeological sites. Mound by mound, borrow pit by borrow pit, Melvin L. Fowler takes the reader on a tour across this remarkable site, detailing the location, size, and research that has occurred at each major architectural feature. In this aspect alone the volume superbly conveys the immensity of Cahokia, and helps make clear why generations of archaeologists have worked at the site and

wrestled with its interpretation. This volume is much more than a mere catalog of architectural features, however. It provides an excellent history of the research and exploration that has occurred at Cahokia down through the years, it offers an up-to-date bibliography, and its appendices include listings of radiocarbon dates and summaries of major site features, specifically mounds and borrow pits. It is attractively formatted and produced, extensively illustrated, remarkably devoid of typos, and perhaps most importantly, offered at a reasonable cost. It is an enjoyable read and a great source of information.

This volume's most important contribution, however, is that it explains in clear and straightforward language why Cahokia is so vitally important, and why its preservation, and continuing research on it, is worthy of support. The size and complexity of Cahokia is highlighted in both the introductory and concluding chapters, and is reinforced with dramatic understatement throughout the remainder of the text by the sheer magnitude of the features being described. Every reader will come away from this volume with an appreciation of how important Cahokia is to understanding cultural developments in Eastern North America, as well as a sense of how work at a site like this can hold clues to the evolution of civilization itself.

The contents of the volume include a preface by the author outlining the goals of the volume and how they were accomplished, and the forwards to the original and revised editions by Thomas E. Emerson, emphasizing the popular appeal of the volume and, given the furious pace of research, the reason why it has been revised so soon after its initial 1989 release. Importantly, Emerson argues that since so much of Cahokia remains unprotected and is being rapidly destroyed by development, we must redouble our efforts to document or preserve its threatened areas. As an aside, I am in complete agreement with his statement that it is "a flagrant neglect of our ethical responsibilities 'to preserve the past for the future' if we destroy, through excavation, the publicly owned and protected parts of Cahokia while those outside the park are destroyed without benefit of being recorded." Given the rate archaeological site destruction is proceeding nationwide and globally, I hope this philosophy becomes more widespread.

The main body of *The Cahokia Atlas* consists of eleven chapters documenting, respectively, the importance of the site; the history of investigations undertaken there; historic and recent maps of the site; five chapters of descriptions, maps, and (in many cases) pictures of each of the 104 mounds and 20 borrow pits comprising the site complex; and three wonderfully synthetic concluding chapters discussing what Cahokia must have been like as it grew and declined; the organization of the site, specifically the arrangement of its architectural features into a central precinct surrounded by rings of satellite communities; and a somewhat philosophical retrospective on what has been done and remains to be done to better understand Cahokia archaeologically. These eleven chapters should be required reading in any serious graduate course on Eastern North American prehistoric archaeology. That they are so clearly written and offer a fascinating overview means they will be appreciated by students and interested members of the public alike.

The volume concludes with a series of appendices, the first four of which present information on radiocarbon dates from the site, the 1966 University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee detailed site mapping program the *Atlas* employs heavily, and specific information on the mounds and the borrow pits. Because the main text of *The Cahokia Atlas* was actually completed in the early 1980s, two final appendices are a particularly important addition to the volume. They consist of detailed summaries by knowledgeable scholars of the archaeologi-

cal research undertaken at Cahokia during the periods 1984 to 1989 (by William I. Woods and George R. Holley) and 1990 to 1995 (by George R. Holley, William I. Woods, Rinita A. Dalan, and Harold W. Watters, Jr.). These are important papers in their own right and deserve to be carefully examined, since a number of new discoveries about the site are highlighted. Not the least of these is Dalan's finding that a tremendous amount of landscape modification, specifically cutting and filling, occurred during the construction of the Grand Plaza in the central precinct. As these papers show, research at Cahokia has not slowed down at all in recent years. The volume concludes with an extensive bibliography of Cahokia archaeology, one that is strong on the primary sources recounting fieldwork and discoveries, but somewhat less than complete on synthetic and interpretive accounts, particularly those appearing in the past 15 years or so. The index is absolutely superb and, knowing firsthand the time and effort needed to make these useful to readers, is yet another testament to the care put into all aspects of this publication.

For all that this volume shows us about what has been done and discovered at Cahokia, it also leaves us with a strong sense of how little we actually know, and how much there is left to learn. The immensity of the site contrasts sharply with the comparatively limited amount of examination and reporting meeting modern standards, and this is in spite of a great deal of solid work by some of the very best of American archaeologists. Given how much of this site is unexplored, in fact, one can only marvel at how much we have been able to learn to date about its history.

Fortunately, Fowler fully recognizes the kind of work that needs to be done if we are to get a progressively clearer grasp of the site's history, and in his conclusions offers a number of suggestions for future research.

These include a discussion of the kinds of fieldwork required to determine the periods of occupation and use of the major site features. These are important questions at any Mississippian center: what do we need to do to determine when individual mounds were built, occupied, and abandoned, what their functions were, and whether these changed over time? Careful work, and a great deal of it, will be needed to answer such questions, and Fowler offers specifics on how this could proceed. Probably the most important piece of advice he offers future generations is that no fieldwork should be undertaken in protected areas of the site unless the resources are available to collect, conserve, and report the findings adequately.

As a personal aside, Fowler's book has helped me come to grips with my own hopes for understanding the grandeur of Cahokia. When younger and more impatient, I was eager to know the full construction history and contents of Monks Mound (and many other intriguing mounds on the site, such as Mound 49 near the center of the Grand Plaza), the way we do lesser and more manageable sized platform mounds, such as Irene, or Cemochechobee, or Beaverdam Creek, that have been completely examined stage by stage and building by building. I now more fully appreciate that arriving at archaeological knowledge is itself a slow process, and that a site as magnificent as Cahokia deserves to have a few mysteries, whose secrets should be revealed slowly and carefully. It is only appropriate that it will take many future generations to solve this site's puzzles. At Cahokia, as Fowler has admirably documented, we can see how our understanding of the site has changed over time. As such, this volume serves as an object lesson about how the archaeological research endeavor itself proceeds.

Cahokia has long been a focus for passionate and sometimes contentious debate in American archaeology, and the present is no exception. Major differences of opinion exist on the complexity of the society that formed the site, as well as how its archaeological record should be studied and interpreted. Some researchers have argued that it was a state-level society, while others see it as a complex or paramount chiefdom, organizationally no different, save in scale, from other Mississippian societies. Likewise, many of the theoretical directions American archaeology is exploring can be seen in microcosm in recent studies of Cahokia. The site's growth and decline attracts perhaps the greatest fascination, as its history has come to be better understood. Some scholars have focused on environmental explanations such as declining firewood supplies, others prefer to explore how specific actors could effect such changes, others have invoked the instabilities generated by factional competition inherent in chiefdom societies, while still others have explored multicausal explanations. All of these approaches, of course, have something to offer, and are helping us to better understand what happened in the northern American Bottom a millennia ago.

Unfortunately, much of the primary interpretive literature about Cahokia is so highly technical and so polemical (sometimes to the point of unintelligibility to those untrained in contemporary archaeological theory or the positions under debate), or is published in such obscure journals or presses, that it has become all but inaccessible to large audiences, particularly the educated lay public whose support is so often crucial (as it was in the preservation of Cahokia itself). *The Cahokia Atlas*, fortunately, is both clearly written and refreshingly free of jargon, and this and its slick appearance and lavish use of illustrations makes it accessible to a wide range of readers. It is an excellent overview of the site, that (in the first edition) has had widespread public as well as professional appeal. The revised edition is even better.

The basic information about Cahokia presented in this volume is quite overwhelming in and of itself, obviating the need for a lengthy history of the various schools of thought about how the site may have developed. The entire extent of most other southeastern Mississippian mound centers would fit comfortably under Monks Mound! By reading this book, however, it will be easy to see why Cahokia has generated such interest and debate down through the years.

Turning to specific details within the volume, of the many people whose work is reported I will speak of only one. Warren K. Moorehead, who dug widely across the site in the 1920s, comes across as both the hero and villain of this book, as he has at so many of the sites he explored. That his fieldwork brought great attention to Cahokia, and aided in its ultimate preservation, is undeniable, and to his eternal credit. That it was of abominable quality, even for its day, however, is also undeniable. No modern archaeologist would want to be remembered by the descriptions of his work that appear throughout this volume. As such, *The Cahokia Atlas* provides the careful reader with an ongoing lesson in how archaeology should and shouldn't be done. It is a sobering reminder to all archaeologists that our work can be of great value to future generations, but only if we meet our basic professional obligation to document it as carefully as possible.

This is a wonderful book, but I would be remiss if I did not note a few ways it might be made still better, particularly since it will likely be revised and widely reprinted in the years to come. In subsequent revisions, of which I hope there are many, I would suggest a few minor changes. Most importantly, when new research occurs at one of the architectural features (i.e., mounds, borrow pits, plazas, etc.) documented in the main body of the text, or

when new such features are found, this should be indicated there, and not in separate appendices covering recent work, as at present. This will avoid confusion, as for example when the reader is informed on page 116 that "no known excavations have been conducted" at Mound 49. Yet on page 233, in an appendix covering recent work, we learn that excavations were indeed conducted at this mound in 1994. Minimally, comments about new work and appropriate references should be added throughout the main text wherever these are appropriate, through either the use of editorial footnotes or direct insertion. As a help to researchers, I would also suggest that the list of radiocarbon dates from the site should be updated and references provided. Finally, the key on the maps showing the location of maps within the overall site complex could be made more user friendly by adding in a few key features, such as Monks Mound, Cahokia Creek, and perhaps a few other mounds, as is provided in one key, for Mounds 72 and 96 (Figure 6.29 in the volume). These are minor concerns, however, and in no way detract from what is an excellent compendium of information.

One thing I did miss was much specific detail on the numbers and kinds of artifacts that have been found in each area or architectural feature examined. Such information, however, goes far beyond the scope and objectives of the present volume, and would no doubt occupy a great many volumes, and probably the life's work of one or more people to compile. I have no doubt, however, that as research progresses, and electronic databases accumulate, that such an atlas or catalog of Cahokia's artifactual assemblages will itself one day emerge, probably as part of or leading to new interpretative syntheses of this site of sites.

In conclusion, I view *The Cahokia Atlas* as an essential guide to anyone seeking to understand the Cahokia site and its importance in American archaeology. The publication of this book in revised and updated form, and the fact that provisions for future revisions are in place, is a very real service to American archaeology and particularly to the American public. In this volume we all have, under one cover, as good an argument as I have ever seen as to why the Cahokia site is so important. The primary author, the contributors to the various appendices, the series editor, and the agencies supporting this publication all deserve our thanks. This is a book that I did not want to see end (unlike many archaeological works I must force myself through), and I look forward to future editions with great enthusiasm.