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Edited by Thomas E. Emerson, Dale L. McElrath, and Andrew C. Fortier.

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to our children. In this sense, Tinker's book shares a common agenda with Richard Twiss's (Lakota) *One Church, Many Tribes* (2000) and Andrea Smith's (Cherokee) *Native Americans and the Christian Right* (2008), both authors who have sought common ground between disparate communities based on their shared concern about the spiritual demise of ordinary people. However, in light of the deeply philosophical nature of Tinker's discourse, it is fair to say that his work complements the intellectual scheme outlined in Deloria's later writings, specifically *Red Earth, White Lies* (1997), *Evolution, Creationism, and Other Modern Myths* (2004), and the posthumously published *The World We Used to Live In* (2006).

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Archaic Societies: Diversity and Complexity across the Midcontinent. Edited by Thomas E. Emerson, Dale L. McElrath, and Andrew C. Fortier. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009. 891 pages. \$74.00 cloth.

Tome is perhaps a better word than *book* to describe *Archaic Societies*. At almost 900 pages, with 397 figures and 58 tables in 23 chapters by 40 authors, this work represents the cumulative knowledge of researchers working across the midcontinent. This piece of scholarship is truly monumental. However, after all, as pointed out by many of the authors, the Archaic period in the Eastern Woodlands spans some 8,600 years (9200 to 600 cal BC)—quite a bit of time. This time frame includes the late Pleistocene Dalton assemblages, although there is some debate as to whether this early period should be included (see Brad Koldehoff and John Walthall, ch. 6). Regardless, the long time span of the Archaic warrants the size of this volume. Mounting evidence from recent scholarship suggests that this was one of the most dynamic periods in Native American history. Many, if not most, of the traditions that were once associated by archaeologists with later time frames in the Eastern Woodlands (that is, post 600 cal BC), now are found to have their roots in the Archaic period. As Tristram Kidder and Kenneth Sassaman state, “it is an exciting time to be studying Archaic societies in eastern North America” (667).

This book, based on a 2004 conference in Urbana, Illinois, hosted and organized by the editors, is the latest edited work that has emerged from similar conferences held in Urbana. Earlier books were comparable in format but examined other time periods in the Eastern Woodlands (for example, Early Woodland and Late Woodland). Volumes such as *Archaic Societies* offer a tremendous resource to archaeologists. Rarely do we find in edited volumes such detailed data coupled with actual insight into cultural traditions, as exemplified by the clear questions set out by the editors for the conference. Foremost among these revolved around ideas related to typology, identity, and climate (particularly the Hypsithermal); sedentism; and the social, religious, and political implications of mortuary practices (xx–xxi). The authors engage these issues in varying degrees of detail for the Mississippi River region, Ohio

River region and the Southeast, and the Great Lakes. Of especial interest to me was the inclusion of the Great Lakes; the chapter by William Lovis was particularly informative.

Archaic Societies begins with an overview of the Archaic period with the following chapters of the first and second sections focusing on some of the general themes that are omnipresent in archaeological studies of Holocene hunter-gatherers in North America. These include overviews of subsistence, chronological issues, the Pleistocene transition, and the emergence of burial practices. Although all of these are informative, the chapter by George Milner, Jane Buikstra, and Michael Wiant is particularly useful and helps put much of the information about mortuary complexes that is presented in the other chapters in perspective. In chapter 2, Thomas Emerson and Dale McElrath provide a broad critique of the history and role of theory in Archaic research. They rightly conclude that such research is heavily dependent on theory (27); however, this chapter seems overly critical of adaptationist approaches and their role in the development of knowledge of the period. Such critique stems from the authors' perspective, which is heavily influenced by agency theory. Although such new perspectives are important, provide insight, and open up the Archaic period to lines of inquiry that were previously ignored, we should be careful not to abandon the well-developed methodological and theoretical contributions of the many important studies in the 1980s that typify this older but still very current perspective.

Taken as a whole, *Archaic Societies* is more than the sum total of its chapters. While most archaeologists know that there is a large degree of diversity in traditions, complexity, settlement, subsistence, and overall histories of Native American Archaic groups in time and space, these chapters bring this particular point to the forefront. The questions then are how do we model this diversity and what does it mean not only for Native American history but also for humanity.

Many, if not most, of the chapters in the volume recognize the problems inherent in the archaeological data of the Archaic, particularly with regard to missing portions of the record and our coarse-grained chronologies. (Our chronologies are not very refined and encompass large time frames that only allow for very broad-scale observations.) Despite this, the data and summaries in the volume provide all the necessary baseline information to begin to view or model the midcontinent as a macroregion, where diverse groups and histories intersected for millennia. I acknowledge that such an endeavor is a difficult task. However, I would argue, and I think the editors and contributors of the volume would agree, that the Archaic period in the Eastern Woodlands represents one of the world's foremost archaeological records pertaining to the archaeology of hunter-gatherers. One needs only to peruse this book to get a sense of the density of data.

Given the above points, it is interesting that in the concluding chapter McElrath and Emerson note that some other scholars have characterized Archaic period research as "much ado about nothing" (850). Brian Butler nicely offers a counterpoint to such notions by noting that although clear evidence of social hierarchy may be absent, we must concede as researchers

the possibility that Archaic societies had “more complex social, political, or ritual arrangements than once thought” (627). For examples of such complexity, one need only consult the chapters in the volume that highlight long-distance interaction (for example, Richard Jefferies, ch. 15), mound building (for example, Kidder and Sassaman, ch. 16), community patterning (for example, David Benn and Joe Thompson, ch. 14), as well as many of the other well-written chapters that touch on or deal directly with such issues.

In conclusion, this is a wonderful, albeit heavy, book regarding Archaic societies. As someone who is interested in this time period and hunter-gatherers, I heartily recommend professional archaeologists purchase a copy. It is a volume that will be referenced and consulted for years to come. The density of data and description in the volume requires quite a bit of concentration. However, even if you are not an archaeologist, reading this work will give you a good sense of the tremendous amount of diversity and innovation during this period. Further, this volume chronicles an important time in the annals of Native America and showcases the resilience and development of the groups that once inhabited the midcontinent. This history deserves to be known by all.

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Caciques and Cemí Idols: The Web Spun by Taíno Rulers between Hispaniola and Puerto Rico. By José R. Oliver. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2009. 432 pages. \$59.00 cloth; \$34.95 paper.

Brilliance looking in a mirror can blind. I felt this nearly happen to José R. Oliver in his new book *Caciques and Cemí Idols*. Nearly. Although an inordinate number of conjectural “maybes” and “perhapses” liberally sprinkle this imaginative manuscript, this *profundo* archaeologist expounds brilliantly on the subject and captures new ground with his multidisciplinary analysis about the first civilization nearly erased from history by the Spanish conquest and subsequent historicity.

Scholarship on Taíno—particularly with anthropological ambition—is notably limited. Compared to other regions and cultures, Caribbean Taíno sources are sparse. Few Taíno perceptions are recorded, and Spanish chroniclers and travelers tend to overlap materials, copy from, and embellish each other. Academic pursuit of the question of indigenous Caribbean identity and culture has mostly focused on the deciphering of stone art and iconography.

Oliver mines and reexamines what scholarship there is with clear depth of research and consistent insight. He teases out of the existing literature and archaeology a pathway for understanding more of the functioning of the Taíno caciquedoms or chiefdoms, the framework of Taíno (Caribbean indigenous) thinking around their cohoba (*Piptadenia peregrina*) ceremony, and their caciques’ (chiefs) connectivity with sacred deities represented in cemís. An established culture in the Greater Antilles, the Taíno (Oliver