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**Author**

Payne, Claudine

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considered “work” and that reform policies carry race, class, and gender biases that do not reflect the “community as worksite” conceptual model of Native American reservation life. She also discusses how welfare reform undercuts tribal sovereignty, in part by routing welfare block grants to tribes through states (thus sidestepping federal trust responsibilities). She also raises the question of the potential impact on reservation economies of urban-dwelling tribal members who return home after their welfare benefits run out after the new two-year limit. These issues are all worthy of deeper consideration by scholars of contemporary native communities.

As an experiment in ethnographic writing, *Circle of Goods* has a number of strengths. One is that the text itself, by weaving in short direct testimonies from interviewees, reflects what Berman refers to as the “complex set of dialogues” (p. xiii) that make up the compositional process behind ethnography. The several case studies, or vignettes, that focus on specific communities and/or events such as the Shell Creek community descended from a rebel Hidatsa band, or the Thunder Bay land claims case where women took action to retain familial land rights, offer crisp illustrations of more abstract theoretical points. Yet, although the brevity and economy of the text is welcome, the book could benefit from the presentation of more sustained narrative strands—for example, following one or two women through the entire text, returning repeatedly to specific characters so that the reader leaves with a more complete sense of the humanity of Berman’s interviewees. The text—probably intentionally—is rather staccato, resulting in a less-than-complete image of any given Fort Berthold woman. Some explicit dialogue between author and subjects does occur within the text, but I found myself wanting more, particularly because Berman does do a good job of crediting analytical insights to her interviewees several times.

*Circle of Goods* makes an important contribution to the study of reservation political economy, gender relations, the material dimensions of ceremonial life, and art production. Scholars concerned with these arenas would do well to build upon Berman’s work.

*Rebecca Dobkins*

Willamette University

**Etowah: The Political History of a Chiefdom Capital.** By Adam King. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 2003. 216 pages. \$55.00 cloth; \$29.95 paper.

For 600 years, the people archaeologists call Mississippians dominated the Southeast and Midwest. Farmers and traders, artists and builders, politicians and town dwellers, Mississippian people left a distinctive mark on the landscape. Perhaps most prominent were their walled towns and the truncated earthen pyramids they built to serve as platforms for chiefs’ residences, religious structures, and other public buildings. Although archaeologists know more than 500 towns—capitals of simple and complex chiefdoms—

platform mounds are nearly all that remain aboveground at most sites. Because we see only the end product of their construction history, it is easy to view Mississippian capitals in a monolithic fashion. Changes, however, are inevitable over the course of several hundred years. Adam King goes far beyond a monolithic view in his examination of the Etowah site in northwestern Georgia, providing a much needed diachronic analysis of this major Mississippian capital.

Etowah, although one of the largest Mississippian sites, is relatively little known compared to Mississippian capitals such as Cahokia and Moundville, both of which have seen extensive, systematic, and collaborative investigations over the years. About Etowah, we had bits and pieces. A long excavation history had resulted in few radiocarbon dates, few analyses of collections, and even fewer publications. What was known about Etowah, though, was spectacular. Excavations by John Rogan, Warren K. Moorehead, and Lewis Larson, in particular, revealed elaborate, high-status graves, artwork, and iconography characteristic of the widespread Southeastern ceremonial complex, and invaluable data about the nature of large platform mounds. But this information had limited context, both temporal and geographic, due to unanalyzed excavation data and the paucity of radiocarbon dates. King has provided an important service by drawing on his own and previous archaeological work in the Etowah Valley to craft an authoritative synthesis of the Etowah site and to explore political changes in the region throughout the Mississippian era.

As King discovered, the history of Etowah was not a smooth upward progress of increasing complexity. Etowah's history is replete with town abandonments and shifting political strategies. King begins the story by recounting the site's modest beginnings in the eleventh century as a small community, with mere hints of social ranking and political complexity. Growing slowly over the next 200 years, its inhabitants constructed the early stages of what were to become massive earthen mounds. Other mound centers appeared in the Etowah Valley, suggesting concurrent development of simple chiefdoms, but no one mound center seems to have dominated the others. Early in the thirteenth century, the entire Etowah Valley, including the Etowah site, was inexplicably abandoned, although this time period saw the rise of chiefdoms in other parts of Georgia and the Southeast.

The abandonment was short-lived. In the mid-thirteenth century, Etowah began, in King's words, "a quick rise to greatness." In slightly more than a century, the residents of Etowah experienced a building boom during which the town sprawled outward, massive fortifications were built, and the platform mounds grew ever higher. Mound A reached a height of twenty-one meters, making it one of the tallest platform mounds in the Southeast. Perhaps because of its inordinate height, its builders constructed a seven-meter wide staircase of packed clay and logs up a ramp on its east side. At the same time, the rulers of Etowah also experienced a rise to greatness. Fostering connections to other chiefs throughout the Southeast, they were able to acquire chert and copper from Tennessee and marine shell from the Gulf Coast. During this time the Southeast saw the ascent of the Southeastern ceremonial complex, or SECC (the term is a shorthand for a widespread religious iconography and

international art style displayed on such media as hammered copper and large marine shells). The SECC artwork and religious items gave chiefs at Etowah (and throughout the Southeast) an opportunity to display their power and authority on a lavish scale. Breathtaking examples of SECC artwork, such as large embossed copper plates with depictions of mythical figures, can be found in elite burials of this time. Then, mysteriously, everything once more came to an end during the late fourteenth century. King hints at the possibility of invasion; the palisade was burned around this time, and the temple on Mound C might have been sacked. Whatever happened, the town and the valley were abandoned, yet again, this time for a century.

At the end of the fifteenth century, people returned to the Etowah site, to live among the gigantic and now presumably unused mounds. But there was nowhere near the intense occupation of the thirteenth-century florescence, and mound building never resumed the frantic pace of the earlier years. Early in the sixteenth century, this Etowah was visited by the army of Hernando de Soto who called it "Itaba" and left behind signs of their short stay at the site in the form of chain-mail links and scraps of iron. Not long afterward, Etowah was abandoned for a third and final time.

The picture King paints of Etowah has an air of reality. His Etowah is not a one-dimensional chiefdom growing smoothly from simple to complex, but a real polity facing periodic setbacks, as well as steady development and bursts of fantastic growth. Its leaders seem to have drawn on community resources at times; at other times, at least it seems to this reader, they might have over-extended themselves, perhaps fatally.

King's goal in this volume was not only to describe the history of the Etowah site, but also to explain the political changes occurring there over time. To do this, he takes an approach pioneered in Mesoamerica and, to date, infrequently applied in the Southeast. This approach, dual processual theory, examines the strategies that leaders take to acquire power, with network strategies relying on the creation of external networks and corporate strategies emphasizing the ties that hold the community together. As these strategies are manifested differently in the archaeological record, material culture can offer clues to the nature of political choices. Examining the growth of Etowah from a dual processual point of view allows King to recognize differences in the nature of the chiefdom through time. From its beginnings as a small corporately organized chiefdom, Etowah became, after a short lapse in occupation, a wildly extravagant network-based leviathan with connections throughout the Mississippian world. After its fifteenth century abandonment, Etowah's leaders take up a network strategy again, but are never able to recreate the glory days of the thirteenth century. King's application of dual processual theory provides a useful insight into the nature of the Etowah chiefdom that goes beyond issues of size or complexity.

In recent years, research at other major Mississippian capitals, particularly Moundville and Cahokia, has resulted in books which integrate and synthesize data about the history of the sites and offer explanations of political organization. As a result, studies of Moundville and Cahokia have dominated our understanding of Mississippian political structure. No longer. Adam

King's book offers a new perspective, both geographic and theoretical, on the rise of the great Mississippian chiefdoms.

*Claudine Payne*

Arkansas Archeological Survey

**Iroquoia: The Development of a Native World.** By William Engelbrecht. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003. 231 pages. Illustrated. \$65.00 cloth.

Operating at the intersection of archaeology and history, William Engelbrecht offers the reader a "state of the field" report on Iroquoia. He begins his study by rejecting the argument that intergroup conflict emerged over resources, and the notion that life in the distant past was generally peaceful. He argues "spirituality and warfare are deeply rooted in the cultures of northeastern North America and are key to understanding Iroquois cultural development" (p. 4). Engelbrecht then uses these two notions to interpret Iroquoian development from the Owasco period (c. A.D. 950–1350) until the early nineteenth century.

Increasingly, archaeologists are using material culture to reconstruct the social fabric of the society under study. Engelbrecht's work continues the trend. Although this approach is fraught with difficulties, the author does an excellent job of showing how archaeology can help reconstruct Iroquoian society. He does so by combining the archaeological data with the works of historians, anthropologists, linguists, and Iroquoian tradition. These sources allow him to recreate the human evolution of Iroquoia. This does not mean that the narrative omits traditional archaeology. Readers learn how longhouses were made (and of what), when horticulture arrived (and the types), how fishing nets operated in shallow water, and the size of Iroquois villages. Nevertheless, Engelbrecht maintains, "a strict 'stones and bones'" approach to archaeology "leads to an impoverished perspective" (p. 4).

To detail how the Indians of what is now New York became Iroquois, Engelbrecht begins by examining the Owasco period in the light of indigenous spirituality, specifically the concept of *orenda*. The author connects such everyday Iroquoian (or pre-Iroquoian) objects as fishing nets, masks, and weapons with their possible connections to indigenous spirituality. He then shows how the archaeological record parallels the religious observations of early European visitors to Iroquoia. Focusing on the notion of "balance," Engelbrecht sees warfare as one way that the indigenous peoples of Iroquoia maintained their harmony with the world around them. This was particularly significant when horticulture became more important in the northeastern woodlands.

By the end of the Owasco period, the people of Iroquoia cultivated squash, maize, and beans (listed in the order that they took root). The transformation from a hunting and gathering to horticulture culture produced significant changes. Engelbrecht ties this shift to increased conflict within Iroquoia, contending that this growing strife resulted from cultural requirements rather than economics. Acknowledging that the connections are