

tion to critiquing artists' reconstructions and deconstructing accompanying texts, Conkey proposes useful alternative ways of presenting and representing the past in both research and teaching.

This important volume explores formerly neglected topics related to the female of the species and places them at the center of contemporary research on human origins and evolution. I highly recommend this book to anyone who has become bored with conventional debates in paleoanthropology.

Settlement Ecology: The Social and Spatial Organization of Kofyar Agriculture. GLENN DAVIS STONE. 1996. Arizona Studies in Human Ecology, University of Arizona Press, Tucson. xv + 257 pp., 39 illustrations, 9 tables, 1 appendix, references, index. \$47.50 (cloth).

Reviewed by Philip C. Burnham, University College London.

This study, written in an ethnoarchaeological mode, sets out to evaluate current theories pertaining to agrarian settlement location, using case study data drawn from the Kofyar people of the Nigerian Middle Belt. The Kofyar were first made famous in the West African ethnographic literature through the detailed work of the late Robert Netting in the 1960s. His original analysis compared the intensive system of agriculture practiced by Kofyar households in their densely populated hilly homeland with the more extensive swiddening system used by recent Kofyar migrants to the thinly populated plains, giving special attention to the variations in household organization and labor mobilization strategies in these different agro-ecological settings. Netting's earlier work provided a baseline for the present book, most of the data for which were collected by Glenn Stone, working in conjunction with Priscilla Stone and Netting, in a joint restudy of the Kofyar in the early 1980s.

Stone opens the book with an interesting discussion of the literature on settlement location, starting from Christaller's distinction, developed in his *Central Places in Southern Germany* (1966, first published 1933), between *dorf* (village, or agrarian settlement in Stone's terminology) and *stadt* (town). By agrarian settlements, Stone is referring to communities (p. 5) "inhabited by a few to a few hundred persons (mostly or exclusively farmers); the settlements as defined include discrete residential compounds, however small, and exclude communities with a significant proportion of non-food producers." Stone argues that, on the whole, geographers and archaeologists have devoted themselves more to locational studies of towns, on the one hand, or to the analysis of hunter-gatherer settlement patterns on the

other, than to the topic of agrarian settlement. And this despite the fact that a large proportion of the sites excavated by archaeologists fall into the agrarian settlement category. Stone also sees the "social physics" models developed by geographers and archaeologists analyzing agrarian settlements in the 1960s and 1970s as hollow, since they generally failed to consider the agricultural options available to farmers and the social content of the relations between settlement sites.

Stone has developed his own approach to the analysis of agrarian settlement from Boserup's intensification theory, which he has modified by making it more ecological through a more detailed consideration of the economics and social relations of agricultural production. As Stone says (p. 28), "My experience with the Kofyar convinced me that any rules on where to settle are inextricable from rules on how to farm." And for the Kofyar, as Stone demonstrates, a particularly key aspect of "how to farm" centers on the issue of labor mobilization. Thus, for Stone, agriculture must be seen not only as an ecological act but as a social process—settlement pattern is closely tied to the social organization of production, which is embedded in patterns of group affiliation.

In the core empirical chapters of the book, Stone's extremely detailed field data permit him to examine the effects on Kofyar settlement of a large number of variables, including both social factors such as marriage choice and political, ethnic, and religious affiliations, as well as more ecological variables such as population density, soil types, access to water, farm shape and dispersal, and frequencies of trips to farms. To do so, Stone combines qualitative ethnographic data with a well-chosen array of statistical analyses and simulations, backed up by effective diagrams and illustrations. While the Kofyar are only one case, and a rather particular one at that, given the Kofyars' extensive knowledge of the methods of agricultural intensification, the methods developed by Stone for the analysis of this case should do much to show the way to future workers in the agrarian settlement field.

There are many interesting aspects of this book, but for this reviewer, Stone's discussion of the contrast between intensifying cultures and extensifying cultures is particularly noteworthy. Studies of the frontier have often treated settlement evolution as a step-wise process, in which the first stage of colonization is characterized by extensive farming and rapid abandonment, followed by a second stage of agricultural intensification and stable settlements. However, as Stone notes, real life is not that simple. In the Nigerian Middle Belt where he worked, Kofyar intensifiers co-existed with Tiv extensifiers on the agricultural frontier, just as in the eastern woodland frontier of colonial American studied by Jordan and Kaups (1989), Finnish extensifiers lived

alongside German intensifiers. As Stone aptly remarks (p. 193), "both the intensifying and the extensifying systems make ecological sense, but only if we see the agrarian settlement system as embedded in social organization and labor mobilization." This finding certainly poses a challenge to archaeological methods, which will need to be sufficiently fine-grained and sensitive to pick up such cultural variation in the archaeological record.

Mississippian Political Economy. JON MULLER. 1997. Plenum Publishing, New York. xiii + 455 pp., 81 figures, 37 tables, references, index. \$79.50 (cloth), \$39.50 (paper).

Reviewed by David G. Anderson, Southeast Archeological Center, National Park Service.

This is an important, impressive, and indeed massively erudite work that deserves to be read by every serious scholar of southeastern archaeology. It presents a detailed argument about what is meant by "Mississippian" that must be considered and evaluated by all who would explore these societies.

The volume consists of nine densely packed chapters that explore (among a great many other things) political economy in general, in chiefdoms, and in Mississippian societies; southeastern ethnohistoric accounts of these societies; the origins and material/economic basis of Mississippian society; population and skeletal biology; kinship and settlement; labor relationships; prestige (display) goods and craft specialization; exchange networks; and directions for future research. A broad-ranging overview, it provides a detailed perspective, from one of the senior practitioners in the field, on how archaeology has explored the question of political economy in the late prehistoric Southeast, what we have learned to date, and how we should proceed in the future.

As an introduction to Mississippian research in general it has appreciable value; the discussion of the Late Woodland/Mississippian transition is just one of a number of excellent synthetic treatments. This volume is not a comprehensive overview, however, but rather an extended argument in support of a particular series of positions about one important aspect of Mississippian society. While scholarly in tone and content, the author's opinions come through on almost every page, in ways that are at times funny, trenchant, provocative, irritating, or inspirational. The volume thus additionally serves a useful role illustrating how one can approach science and research, and present the results of this effort.

Muller offers a much simpler view of southeastern Mississippian chiefdoms than has been traditionally suggested by research over the region, particularly by those

working at major centers like Etowah, Moundville, or Cahokia. He focuses more on the run-of-the-mill folks than on the elites, and the Mississippian world he paints is more egalitarian and uncomplicated than has perhaps been accepted by most archaeologists, characterized by societies more closely resembling Tikopia than Hawaii, or the Plateau Tonga than the Zulu. Such a position is likely shaped by Muller's long history of research in the lower Ohio River valley, at Kincaid and in the Black Bottom, research that is summarized in detail in this book and provides many of the examples and data offered in support of his positions.

Muller directly and forcefully challenges arguments that have been raised in recent years about the existence of high levels of power, population, political organization, prestige-goods exchange, and craft specialization in Mississippian society. Elite "power" is minimized to the extent that the word is often used, as here, in quotes. The importance of prestige-goods in the creation and maintenance of elite status in Mississippian society is questioned, based on evidence indicating such goods occur in a wide array of site types, suggesting access was not restricted to particular subgroups. Elites are inferred to have been only minimally divorced from the mundane aspects of daily life, such as hunting, food production, construction, and so on, and where exceptions occurred this was likely only at the largest of centers and only for the position of the chief.

As such, Muller's view of Mississippian falls into what he acknowledges is called the "minimalist" school of thought (although he explicitly objects to such a characterization of his work). This position is contrasted with what he calls the "power" (postmodernist) and "exaggerationalist" positions, which emphasize the political and ideological arenas shaping the organization and operation of these societies, and posit the existence of highly complex organizational forms, respectively. Economic as opposed to political matters are what Muller emphasizes, clearly differentiating his views about the nature of Mississippian from those put forth by Emerson, Knight, or Pauketat, among others, who place greater emphasis on religion, ideology, and power relationships.

Muller's approach is explicitly "bottom-up" as opposed to "top-down," with greater emphasis on household economy and total populations than on elites and centers. The volume offers a great deal of comparative analysis in support of its points, making good on Muller's deeply rooted and explicitly stated belief that to do archaeology effectively one must argue from evidence, not assertions. His analyses lead him to a number of intriguing conclusions, such as that regional population levels declined appreciably after A.D. 1300 or so, possibly due to the negative health effects of closely packing people into communities; that postcontact social