

MARCH 2005  
Journal of the Royal Anthropological  
Institute 11.1 145-146

British settlers. The autochthonous rise of other powerful leaders in the Chesapeake, although not as well known as Powhatan, followed the same strategy and with much the same outcome. Thus, while Powhatan was certainly a unique individual, and his polity a unique and remarkable accomplishment, he was not alone in successfully manipulating new sources of power.

Here we have the central problem of Gallivan's book, one encountered by all who work in the proto-historic period. In prehistory, we have nameless actors whose shadows we see in the material remains of archaeological sites. In history, we have Powhatan, Pocahontas, John Smith, and so on – actors with strategies and motivations whose effects we can measure. Bringing the shadows of prehistory together with the faces of history is a difficult task. Gallivan approaches this task well, and provides us with valuable new insights into the dynamic world of the proto-historic Chesapeake.

PETER N. PEREGRINE

*Lawrence University*

HENDON JULIA A. & ROSEMARY A. JOYCE (eds).  
*Mesoamerican archaeology*. xvi, 352 pp.,  
maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford,  
Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing,  
2003. £60.00 (cloth), £19.99 (paper)

This volume is the first in a series of textbooks designed to introduce undergraduate students to advanced theoretical concepts applied by active field researchers to the archaeology of a major world region. Juxtaposing chapters written by multiple authors with varying approaches (although most embrace practice theories), each explaining a different archaeological problem in the interpretation of Mesoamerican data, is an admitted pedagogical gamble. To make the various studies more comprehensible to non-specialists, Joyce has written an introductory chapter that covers major topics of Mesoamerican prehistory and basic archaeological techniques. The editors warn that this book is not a comprehensive overview of Mesoamerican prehistory but is meant to complement other textbooks. Its contents – both substantive information and often complicated theoretical and analytical arguments – must be properly contextualized by the instructor. Students and teachers will need to look elsewhere for information on the Olmecs, the Teotihuacán diaspora, the Aztec empire, the Maya 'collapse', the role of Chichen Itza, and other favourite topics, and the usual explanatory models privileging trade, warfare, or ecology are absent in preference to theories that focus on individual agency. Readers will also need access to maps and photos of sites and artefacts as this volume is far less illus-

trated than most. A glossary defines technical terms; a pronunciation guide would have been useful.

Given the focus on variability in problem orientation and scale (micro and macro), two chapters were written for each of five areas/time periods: Formative, Teotihuacán, Classic Maya, Oaxaca, and Basin of Mexico Aztec. Clark considers the role of early public architecture and plazas in the emergence of complex society on the Pacific coast and San José Mogote, Oaxaca, arguing that 'community' appears first in the former area rather than in the better known Oaxacan site. Lesure reviews the debate over the Formative art style long called 'Olmec', divorcing it from Gulf coast Olmec culture itself. Rather than dwell on the origins and spread of this style, he emphasizes agency and structure in the use of its motifs by various peoples. Two chapters on Classic Teotihuacán follow: one by Sugiyama describes recent excavations at the Moon and Feathered Serpent Pyramids, and another very useful one by Manzanilla discusses aspects of daily life as determined from archaeological evidence. Two chapters on the Classic Maya form a similar pairing. Robin examines daily life from the point of view of diversity at three sites, contrasting the life of the rulers, determined from imagery and excavations of palaces, with that of sub-royal aristocrats and humble farmers. Ashmore takes a broad view of people-land relationships, examining Classic Maya settlements as conceived landscapes that blur the division we often make between natural and built environments.

Returning to central Mexico, Joyce suggests that architectural modification of the great Zapotec capital, Monte Albán, from the Late Formative through the Classic periods evidenced the development and change in political authority, as public ritual that sanctified legitimacy gave way to private rites focused on aristocratic lineage. Pohl provides insights into how he located Post-Classic Mixtec towns with archaeological remains in western Oaxaca so that these dynastic historical traditions can be localized and Mixtec history and archaeology co-ordinated. An Aztec chapter by Brumfiel imaginatively considers how designs on pottery purchased by consumers in the market for household feasts might provide insights into the 'figured worlds' of Aztec commoners and the degree to which they accepted the dominant political ideologies. Nichols looks more broadly at Aztec period settlement in the Basin of Mexico, contrasting the better known city-centred perspective with newer information on rural sites, and provides a history of Basin of Mexico settlement archaeology.

Mesoamerican specialists should not overlook this volume because it is a textbook, but should consider how its objectives help to

move the field forward. They may note a few errors, a tendency to oversimplify complex theories, and a little axe-grinding by some authors. Nevertheless, this is not the same old culture history but a respectable compilation of recent fieldwork and analysis within a framework of innovative problem-orientated research. Joyce's introductory chapter is a synthetic *tour de force*. Given that 'Mesoamerica' is notoriously ambiguous, she observes that '[t]o understand Mesoamerica, we must ... attempt to understand the development of networks of interaction between its distinct peoples over long periods of time' (p. 3). Ironically, a thematic focus on inter-societal interaction over time is precisely what is missing from this book, and I suggest commissioning a companion volume that fulfils Joyce's premise.

SUSAN GILLESPIE

University of Florida

LEWIN, ROGER & ROBERT A. FOLEY. *Principles of human evolution*. (Second edition). x, 555 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. £29.99 (paper)

The second edition of *Principles of human evolution* is more than just another textbook about palaeo-anthropology and the fossil record. It is therefore perhaps easier to begin by saying something about what this book is not. The authors steer clear of the typical exhaustive 'laundry list' chronological account of the fossil record which is the backbone of most human evolution textbooks. The book contains many clear and informative diagrams and tables that are used as powerful illustrative tools rather than as decorative background. The whole emphasis is on chapters that expose and discuss various issues and principles and can be read either as a narrative or else as a set of topical units.

The underlying theme taken by Lewin and Foley is that 'human evolution must be studied in the context of evolutionary theory more generally, and so we can usefully ask how the pattern of early hominin evolution relates to the evolutionary process' (p. 323). Throughout the book emphasis is placed on showing how the facts (fossils, dates, sites, etc.) are, on the one hand, part of a set of unique past historic events, and, on the other hand, linked to the broader context of evolutionary principles and issues.

The book covers a vast scope without becoming either exhaustive or superficial. The language is concise and comprehensible and the technical jargon is selectively adopted when necessary. At the end of each chapter there is a 'beyond the facts' box in which ideas behind key scientific debates are addressed. In addition, margin questions are provided next

to the text to highlight relevant key points and issues. The various hypotheses and some of the rather controversial, and as yet unresolved, issues in human evolution are exposed and explained in a clear and coherent manner.

The result is an innovative, theoretically orientated approach to the study of human evolution. Students who usually seek quick facts and details in order to pass their term exam may be disappointed to discover that they are required to undertake a thorough reading of a book which continuously eggs them on to digest the information and form their own opinions on the various issues at hand.

The book comprises three parts. The first part is a compendious account of the wider fields of evolution. The authors begin with a brief account of modern evolutionary theory before introducing the reader to the more complex elements of evolutionary biology and to the main controversies that surround it. The various facets of evolution are exposed to reveal its specific historical aspects such as mass dispersal and extinction events, and complex mechanisms such as speciation, adaptive radiation, geographic isolation, and drift. In addition, the authors provide a chapter about the geological context of human evolution. This chapter addresses the various dating methods used in archaeology and palaeo-anthropology and bone and fossil burial processes. This contribution will be welcomed by all teachers who often discover that their students have gained little knowledge with regard to these central aspects, and therefore struggle to understand and contextualize the fossil finds and the evolutionary processes behind them in the grand scheme of the time-scales involved.

The second and third sections address early and late hominin evolution, respectively. The structural approach is broadly chronological and the division between the sections is placed at the time of transition from archaic to modern humans. By doing so, the authors highlight the evolution and dispersals of modern humans as key historical events in human evolution. The importance of this division is in breaking the perspective that human evolution is simply a progression from more primitive ape-like hominins towards modern humans. Instead, the second part of the book examines a set of central issues such as the relationship between the first hominins and the Australopithecines, the origins of *Homo*, the evolution of the earliest stone tool technologies, and the dispersal of *Homo ergaster/Homo erectus* in both Africa and Eurasia.

The third and final part of the book addresses the origins and spread of modern humans. The chapters in this section cover the genetic evidence, the archaeological evidence of changes in behaviour, the evolution of the