

empfehlenswertes Buch, das den Bestand an noch immer eher dünn gesäter ethnologischer/kultur- und/oder sozial-anthropologischer Methodenliteratur mit Sicherheit bereichert.

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**Hirth, Kenneth G., and Joanne Pillsbury** (eds.): *Merchants, Markets, and Exchange in the Pre-Columbian World*. Dumbarton Oaks: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2013; 469 pp. ISBN 978-0-88402-386-9. Price: \$ 70.00

This most recent Dumbarton Oaks conference volume is an important contribution to studies of Pre-Columbian economies in both Mesoamerica and the Andes. Like all edited volumes, there are good points and weaknesses, but overall it is well worth reading most, indeed all, chapters. Also like most such volumes, the internal dialogue between chapters is minimal. That is unfortunate because there are some fascinating contradictions between the studies presented – which I consider to be a strength of the volume.

The mission of the volume, laid out by Hirth and Pillsbury in the introduction, is to challenge “traditional” models (somewhat hyperbolized) which understated the importance of both markets and nonelite roles in the economy. The volume succeeds in this and also in their intent for this to be a provocative contribution. The editors’ mandate might be a bit too leading, since some chapters seem to strain interpretations to support those conclusions regarding importance of markets and of domestic economy. In general, however, most chapters – after somewhat redundant denunciations of earlier “anti-market” anthropological dogma – go on to provide nuanced interpretations of the many different *kinds* of markets, as well as a wide variety of nonmarket configurations (some surprising).

Perhaps the most significant weakness in the volume is that in the Mesoamerican studies there is very little discussion of actual physical transport systems, routes, and mechanisms, which is a serious omission for a volume covering merchants and exchange. In the introduction Hirth and Pillsbury, and in the later chapter by Hirth, it is asserted that in Mesoamerica travel was only by slow foot trails with few navigable rivers and with “limited” maritime transport. This is incorrect for eastern Mesoamerica where Classic Maya movement, wars, alliances, and, indeed, much center placement, was focused on navigable rivers like the Pasión, San Pedro, and several in Belize and where, during the Post-Classic, Caribbean and Gulf transport by canoe was perhaps the most important route and form of transport for trade up to the contact period. The Andean chapters, particularly, those of Dillehay, Topic, and Nielsen, however, do cover these issues, e.g., multiple modes of economic contact, caravan routes, llama transport, site mobility, etc.

In the space of this review, and reach of my own expertise, it is possible only to comment very briefly on most chapters, but each has something important to offer. The chapter by Blanton on “Moral Economy of the Marketplace” exemplifies the great strength of this volume. Despite the opening stylistic trope denouncing ear-

lier “anti-market mentality,” Blanton’s important article actually goes on to describe and discuss the great *variability* in different forms of markets, market cooperation, and mechanisms, as well as regional and chronological variation. The latter aspect of chronological change is also one of the major contributions of the chapter by McAnany who draws on evidence from almost every subfield to provide a definitive statement on the various modes of royal court-related exchange, particularly tribute. She also presents a convincing diachronic description of the changing role and the rising status of Maya elite merchants and new modes of exchange at the very end of the Classic period. Similarly, Burger – drawing especially on the complexity of Inca economies – is able to convincingly identify multiple exchange systems and probable markets even 2,500 years earlier in the Chavín period.

A healthy, albeit implicit, dialogue on these questions of change versus continuity in markets can be seen in the chapter by Masson and Freidel which argues instead for much more similarity, and far less change, between Classic and even *Late* Post-Classic Maya economies. Other debates and dialectic on the volume issues can be seen in the synthetic chapters by Mayer on the Inca and Goldstein on Tiwanaku who both contradict the trend of the volume by warning against a pro-market tendency and an idealization of market impact. However, both also exemplify the strength of this volume in noting and describing the great variability of institutions and arrangements that fall under the overly-broad rubric of “market” (and also often vague traditional assertions on “redistribution”).

It is important to note that while the chapters all provide interesting and useful synthetic models, experts in the various subfields will need to judge the consistency with the data. For example, the chapter by Masson and Freidel might be the most controversial in the volume. Their argument for close similarity between Late Post-Classic and Classic period markets is based on comparisons of numbers, distributions, and contexts of wealth goods and imports between Post-Classic Mayapan and Classic Tikal. However, both sites are far from typical for their respective periods – Mayapan being the sole Late Post-Classic capital of all of northern Yucatan and Tikal one of the very largest Classic Maya sites with the greatest interregional reach and the greatest wealth in obsidian. Furthermore, the Mayapan data covers only two centuries and a half and is compared to Tikal data that is combined by structure for all six centuries of the Classic period, in an essentially synchronic evaluation of import presence in “small” versus “elite-civic” structures. Yet at Tikal it is well documented that interregional economic patterns changed significantly between the Early and Late Classic and also that many Early Classic east-side elite residences (with good midden contexts) had become nonresidential ancestor shrines (with largely construction fill material) by the eighth century. While this problem with chronology and context weakens their argument for Classic-Post-Classic market continuity, they do succeed in demonstrating the need to question our generally complacent assumptions about Classic versus Post-Classic economies. They show that these issues will need to be

addressed, but perhaps with better chronological control. More serious data issues arise in the case study portion of the Kovacevich chapter on jade production at the Classic Maya site of Cancuen. The jade preform production area there is now very securely dated to only the very end of the occupation, A.D. 790–800, and thus, it is not contemporary with many of the features to which it is, again synchronically, compared in the study. Also the very important imported fine paste ware distribution is not most common at that jade preform workshop area, but fifth in frequency of 11 such concentrations in the site, and there is no hypothesized correlation between those Gulf coast ceramic imports and proposed production areas. Thus, the actual distributions contradict the specific case study conclusions regarding Cancuen craftsperson agency and identity. The chapter does, however, offer a very interesting general synthesis, drawing heavily on ethnohistorical data, on the economic parameters of jade in Mesoamerica, as well as the significant variability in value and nature of what we usually too broadly call “jade.”

Again, in fairness, it is impossible for this reviewer (a Mayanist) to properly assess data and details of methodology of most of the other chapters in this volume (particularly the Andean contributions). However, experts in each subfield and region will need to carefully evaluate those interpretations in each chapter regarding specifics of context and chronology – which is especially necessary given the current popularity of essentially synchronic sociological models which often are forced (usually implicitly) onto diachronic data. Nonetheless, even the above comments do again show that the volume succeeds in its editors’ mission of provoking debate and reassessment of existing positions on production, exchange, and markets.

For lack of space, I can only note that the principle contribution of most articles is to present a rich detail of information on the many differing economic institutions and mechanisms from, and within, different regions. This is seen in the specifics of the chapter by Hirth and Carballo on itinerant obsidian craftspersons, and in the synthesis by Nichols of almost all elements of economy in the Otumba Aztec systems. Similarly, Tokovinine and Beliaev synthesize nearly all linguistic, epigraphic, and iconography information on aspects of Maya economies and particularly the actors in those economies. More on market variability is seen in the chapter by Stanish and Coben who identify the core issue: *what exactly is a market?* They demonstrate that the conceptual distinction between barter and markets is a false one and describe the range of configurations between them. The issue of mechanisms of movement, and their relation to modes of exchange (neglected for Mesoamerica) is explored in both geographical and chronological context by Nielsen. Interregional variability in economic institutions is demonstrated by Topic, reminding us again that overly broad assertions about “Andean” or “Mesoamerican” economies only obscure the dynamic and highly variable nature of such systems.

My final recommendation to readers of this book is to read *all* of the chapters, rather than our usual academic approach of skipping or skimming those not in our sub-

field, discipline, or regions. Insights can be drawn from unexpected areas. For example, Dillehay’s *tour de force* synthesis on Andean mobility and exchange describes economic mechanisms often underestimated in importance or even unidentified – for example, resource sharing and especially the role of not only site location and routes, but even of cyclical residence of sites in order to facilitate exchange. Thus, he reminds us that the studies of economy and of settlement patterns are conceptually and methodologically inseparable. Similarly, the Gutiérrez chapter, seemingly a narrow study of one Aztec period tribute list (a chapter that I usually might have skipped!) has some truly unexpected, but thoroughly documented, elements of great significance to all Pre-Columbian scholars. These include the fact that just one level of bureaucratic intermediaries were raking off over 12% of Aztec tribute and the absolutely astonishing, but well demonstrated, figure that Aztec tribute owed by the Tlapa province of this study increased in 36 years by 947%! Such numbers not only help to explain the instability and constant rebellions in the Mexica hegemonic empire, but indicate, in general, how rapidly and easily tribute, once established, can be raised to unsustainable levels – invoking warfare in any region, probably also including the Classic Maya, Tiwanaku, and elsewhere.

In his extraordinary concluding chapter, Isaac expands on the theme of variability and complexity of economic institutions, again especially the overly-broad concept of “market.” Here such institutions are thoroughly explored by Isaac drawing on both Aztec and other Pre-Columbian data in the context of general economic theory. Isaac is able to describe and distinguish the tremendous variability in what we think of as “markets,” “taxes,” “tribute,” and “redistribution” and the many different roles of the state and other actors in such systems. He shows that differing mechanisms, great limitations on markets, and embeddedness of exchange systems are observable even in the contact period Aztec system – often seen as the paramount most “free market” Mesoamerican economy – and with the Inca, long considered the theoretical bastion of state “redistributive” economies.

Given the above critique, it should be clear that this is a lively, insightful, and very important work. The editors and authors are to be congratulated and this *Dumbarton Oaks* volume should be in the library of any scholar of Pre-Columbian studies. Arthur A. Demarest

**Hodder, Ian** (ed.): *Archaeological Theory Today*. 2nd ed. Malden: Polity Press, 2012. 347 pp. ISBN 978-0-7456-5307-5. Price: £ 18.99

The second edition of Hodder’s reader is a welcome addition to the archaeological literature. This new edition has 14 chapters instead of the previous 12, and their composition has been changed. Earlier chapters on cognitive evolution (Mithen), American material culture (Yentsch and Beaudry), and dispersion of the discipline (Shanks) have been replaced and supplemented by chapters on human behavioral ecology (Bird and O’Connell), complex systems in archaeology (Kohler), materiality (Knappett),