

REVIEWS

***Archaeology of Households, Kinship, and Social Change.* Lacey B. Carpenter and Anna Marie Prentiss, editors. 2022. Routledge, London. xx + 358 pp. \$160.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-0-36762-419-4. \$48.95 (e-book), ISBN 978-1-00310-936-5.**

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I am gratified to see the ongoing utility and evolution of household archaeology as exemplified by the edited volume produced by Lacey B. Carpenter and Anna Marie Prentiss. The editors bring together an enormous amount of data on ancient households in a refreshing worldwide mix of 10 case studies within this well-organized and integrated volume. The short method and theory chapters that introduce the three main sections of the book provide the reader with an orientation to each part and a synopsis of relevant contributions. These bridging chapters on the subjects of assemblages (Julián Salazar, Thomas J. Pluckhahn, and Jennifer G. Kahn), households within broader networks (Colin P. Quinn, Donna M. Glowacki, Carl J. Wendt, and Nathan Goodale), and households as centers of transformative changes (Carpenter, Charles S. Spencer, Elsa M. Redmond, and Casey R. Barrier) display the effectiveness of developing linkages among SAA meeting symposium articles when participants have the opportunity to refine their presentations in a workshop, in this case supported by the Winslow Series in Archaeology at Hamilton College, New York.

Although many of these topics are not new to household archaeologists, fresh viewpoints are complemented with illustrative case studies, thereby providing insights for all archaeologists. The numerous authors show how to do household archaeology by implementing different theoretical perspectives, such as assemblage theory (see Salazar's excellent Chapter 4), that expand the application of traditional approaches. The useful introduction by Carpenter and Prentiss and the concluding chapter (Prentiss and Carpenter) situate this volume among the vast amount of research on household archaeology and distinguish its approaches. The theme of cooperation echoes throughout the chapters; for instance, Pluckhahn and Neill J. Wallis provide a prime example of how to study cooperation through pottery (Chapter 3). The inclusion of Mesoamerican cultures (Wendt on the Olmec in Chapter 8; Spencer and Redmond on the Zapotecs in Chapter 14; Prentiss and Carpenter on early Zapotec sites in Chapter 15) highlights the long productivity of household archaeology in this region. Likewise, two chapters on the US Southwest (Chapter 7 by Glowacki and Kay E. Barnett on the Puebloan Mesa Verde area, and Chapter 13 by Barbara J. Roth on the Mimbres) attest to ongoing in-depth household studies there. Other areas of North America are represented by Pluckhahn and Wallis on the US Southeast (Chapter 3); by Barrier on Cahokia in the American Bottom region of Illinois (Chapter 11); and by Goodale, Quinn, and Alissa Nauman (Chapter 9) and by Prentiss and Carpenter (Chapter 15) on the Pacific Northwest. Salazar discusses household archaeology in north-west Argentina, Kahn (Chapter 5) considers households and chiefdoms in the Society Islands, and Ian Kuijt covers central Anatolia during the Neolithic (Chapter 12).

The authors aptly demonstrate the benefits of extending analyses beyond the physical structure of the house to better assess the household, its members, relationships, interactions, and cultural patterns. House-centrism is contested especially well by Kuijt, who focuses on the passageways and conceptual kin pathways in central Anatolian Neolithic households during the critical period of changing from foraging to farming. Many authors deftly deal with chronology, the ever-present consideration of accurate archaeological analysis. The issue of contemporaneity looms large for those wanting to reconstruct social interactions. It is debatable whether one can reconstruct kinship patterns—such as descent,

family type, and residence patterns—from archaeological remains alone, and this issue will not be resolved with this volume. But the authors provide examples of how they have attempted resolution. Kahn's chapter on Polynesian societies is one of my favorites because it made me rethink the structures of the Classic Maya and opened up an avenue of inquiry that may lead to further insights about complex society. Likewise, Goodale and colleagues make critical insights about how some house remains are signatures of networks beyond the family dwelling.

A shortcoming of the book is that the quality of the figures is variable; some could have been better executed or reproduced so that vital information would not be lost, whereas others add greatly to the chapters.

Of note are the environmental impacts that affect households, as emphasized in the chapter by Glowacki and Barnett on the Mesa Verde region in southwestern Colorado. This lesson should be well heeded for contemporary times. If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is that the household remains a viable, practical unit of analysis that reflects larger societal trends and, in turn, has feedback into those trends. This volume contributes to the ever-evolving scholarship on household archaeology by raising and answering provocative questions and by contributing to archaeological and ethnographical household studies across the globe.

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***Social Inequality before Farming? Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Study of Social Organization in Prehistoric and Ethnographic Hunter-Gatherer-Fisher Societies.* Luc Moreau, editor. 2020. McDonald Institute Conversations, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge, Cambridge. xii + 334 pp. \$0.00 (PDF), ISBN 978-1-913344-00-9, <https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/313521>.**

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This volume, part of McDonald Institute Conversations, is based on a conference held in Cambridge in January 2018. The 18 chapters, which broadly address the circumstances, measures, and implications of inequality among hunter-gatherer-fisher (HGF) societies, are presented in three parts, along with an introduction and a preface by Robert L. Kelly. It is well produced and lavishly illustrated. I agree with Kelly's assessment of the importance of some of the articles, but others, unfortunately, lack critical evaluation of proposed interpretations, especially against possible alternatives, and they are often unable to suggest any means for resolving remaining ambiguities.

Luc Moreau introduces the volume by outlining the conceptual ambiguity and interpretive problems that complicate the archaeological study of inequality among HGFs, particularly in the Pleistocene. Unfortunately, his claim that inequality in the Upper Paleolithic (UP) is still considered a radical proposition gives too much weight to mere suggestion of the possibility.

Part I, which looks at inequality and egalitarianism among extant HGF societies, includes seven chapters ranging from singular case studies to cross-cultural analyses and broad theoretical syntheses. These include studies that highlight the observed and potential roles of mobility and resource distribution (Paul Roscoe), storage (Christophe Darmangeat), age and organizational skill (Alberto Buela), and even competition among children (Rachel Reckin et al.) in supporting emergent inequality, and