INTERDISCIPLINARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ARCHAEOLOGY

The Scioto Hopewell and Their Neighbors
Bioarchaeological Documentation and Cultural Understanding

D. Troy Case and Christopher Carr
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and Their Neighbors
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The Scioto Hopewell
and Their Neighbors

Bioarchaeological Documentation and Cultural Understanding

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Springer
To Hopewell people of the Scioto

for your creative spirits and passions in living
Investing in the future of Hopewell archaeology is the spirit in which this book has been written and is its substance. Our passion to do so derives from our admiration of Hopewell peoples, themselves, and all they achieved. Hopewell peoples of the Scioto valley and their neighbors were remarkable by any measure. Their graceful and powerful artwork, monumental earthen architecture, and knowledge of geometry and astronomy; their social finesse in choreographing ritual performances with many hundreds of persons, local and foreign; the long-lasting intercommunity peace they achieved through the rich and cross-cutting social and ritual ties they wove; and their extraordinary sensitivity to and relations with the animal persons and spirit beings with whom they cohabited—each humble the Western mind. For us, it seems only right and worthwhile that an empirical and conceptual path be cleared whereby future archaeological work might help Hopewell peoples to speak better for themselves of their lives, accomplishments, concerns, and disappointments.

This book shares with you the empirical tools and a broad vision for exploring the ways of Scioto Hopewell and other Ohio Hopewell peoples. In these pages and the accompanying CD, we summarize what is known about Scioto Hopewell culture, life, and history as a beginning point, compile four massive data bases for further investigating the culture, lives, and histories of Scioto and other Hopewell peoples in Ohio, present preanalyses of the data to ready researchers for deeper studies, and offer a detailed agenda of pressing empirical issues and intriguing interpretive questions that remain to be addressed in the attempt to understand Hopewell peoples.

The first half of the book provides a synthesis and expansion of current knowledge about the anthropology of Scioto Hopewell peoples: their natural and symbolically interpreted environments, subsistence, settlement and mobility patterns, community organization at several scales, social-political-ritual organization, and world view, and the history of changes of each of these over time. Coming to an understanding of how Scioto Hopewell social-ceremonial life abruptly began and abruptly ended, neither of which were triggered proximally by subsistence or demographic change, is one of the fruits born from attempting the broad synthesis. The ethnohistory presented here is made tangible with over 195 photographs of artistic renderings that Scioto Hopewell peoples made of themselves, of artifacts that marked their social roles and were used in their ceremonies, and of views of their sacred landscape.

The reconstruction of Scioto Hopewell life presented in this book is an integration, maturing, and substantial widening of the ideas developed in the individual, focal studies reported in its sister book, Gathering Hopewell, edited by us and published in 2005 by Springer. Here, we make a first attempt to write an integrated “thick prehistory” of Scioto Hopewell peoples. By this is meant a text that empirically and richly
describes the lives, lifeways, and motivations of individuals and social groups in their own local context, considering a full spectrum of social, cultural, natural environmental, and historical matters, and personalizing the past with people in active, created, on-the-ground sociocultural roles. In complement, *Gathering Hopewell* focuses on primarily social, political, and ceremonial organization, and spans and compares multiple Hopewell local groups across the northern Eastern Woodlands for this one subject. A number of the social and ceremonial analyses presented in *Gathering Hopewell* for Scioto and other Ohio Hopewell peoples have been reworked for this publication.

The second half of the book presents four massive computer data bases of primary archaeological and ethnographic data that made possible the integrated reconstruction of Scioto Hopewell life summarized here, and that open the way for future archaeological studies and insightful advances. Central is a bioarchaeological data base that documents the mortuary records of over 1000 Ohio Hopewell people and over 75 ceremonial deposits of artifacts buried in 113 mounds and cemetery areas within 52 ceremonial centers across the state—all reported, excavated and provenienced Ohio Hopewell individuals of whom we are aware. The ceremonial centers include well known ones, such as the Hopewell and Mound City sites, and ones that have long been forgotten in the archives of libraries and museum collections. The people are described in detail for their sex and age at death, tombs, body treatment, grave goods, and the spatial organization of their graves by over 500 variables, making fine-grained social and anthropological analysis possible. To support these studies, the bioarchaeological data base is supplemented with three others. One places the individuals and ceremonial deposits of artifacts in spatial context by assembling 84 maps of the layouts of the burials and deposits on mound floors and the spatial arrangement of mounds, embankments, and other earthen constructions within ceremonial centers. A second data base places the 52 ceremonial centers in a regional context.

It reproduces 53 detailed-scale Ohio county maps and one state-wide overview map of the locations of Adena and Hopewell mounds and earthen enclosures as recorded in W. C. Mills’ (1914) comprehensive *Archaeological Atlas of Ohio*. The third data base collects and systematizes more than 1000 dispersed ethno-historic accounts of the ceremonial functions, religious and symbolic meanings, and social role associations of 51 kinds of ceremonial paraphernalia and raw materials used by historic Woodland and Plains Native Americans and analogous to ones used by Ohio Hopewell peoples. The accounts are crucial to interpreting the mortuary records in the bioarchaeological data base in terms of the social roles and actions of once living Hopewell people. Together, these four data bases provide researchers with the information necessary to make extraordinarily detailed, personalized, ethnographic-like reconstructions of the social, political, and ceremonial lives and ways of each of several Ohio Hopewell peoples. At the same time, they permit broad-scale cultural comparisons among Ohio Hopewell peoples and contextualizing demographic and ecological inquiries.

The data bases compiled here make possible the study of Ohio Hopewell lifeways, with nearly instantaneous feedback between idea and testing of idea, great detail, and broad comparative coverage in a way that it simply was not previously. Lack of publication of much primary data, geographic dispersion of collections, documentation of individual sites and mounds in a multitude of partial sources by different archaeologists, and inconsistencies among records put stringent practical limits on the kinds of studies that could be made of Ohio Hopewell archaeological records. Assembling the bioarchaeological data base, alone, took 27 months of full-time archival research in seven institutions, and 8 years of continuous computer coding and verification by one to two persons working ten to twenty hours per week. The ethnographic data base took an additional person-year to assemble and tabularize, and the two spatial data bases a half-person year. These
overhead costs to fine-grained yet broad-scale investigations are largely eliminated with the publication of the data in this book. We gladly share them with you, with the hope that you and other researchers will use them to help further advance anthropological understanding of Ohio Hopewell peoples and the extraordinary and thought-provoking lives they lived.

Christopher Carr
D. Troy Case
September 22, 2007
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When colleague and friend become interchangeable terms, life is good. The patience, care, guidance, good cheer, and open generosity of all those who supported us in the massive tasks of assembling, checking, and presenting the primary data in this book are deeply appreciated, professionally and personally. Immeasurable, faithful assistance over many years was provided by museum collections curators and staff during extended research stays and long-distance communication cycles to collect and clarify basic data. Central in this effort were the archaeology curators and staff of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, where the bulk of the artifacts, human remains, and written documentation reported here are housed. We extend our hearty thanks to Martha Otto, Melinda Knapp, Brad Lepper, Cheryl Johnston, Melanie Pratt, Linda Pansing, William Pickard, and Don Bier at the Society. Equally essential helping hands were offered by Jennifer Pederson, Jarrod Burks (Hopewell Culture National Historical Park); Robert Genheimer (Cincinnati Museum Center); Jonathan Haas, Janice Klein, Wil Grewe-Mullins, Elisa Aguilar-Kutza, Jon Eric Rogers, Jamie Kelly, Scott Demel (Field Museum of Natural History); Gloria Greiss, Scott Fulton, Penelope Drooker, Susan Haskell (Harvard Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology); Lynn Simonelli (Dayton Society of Natural History, Boonshoft Museum of Discovery); Kasey Eichensehr (Clark County Historical Society, Springfield, OH); Brent Eberhard, Franco Ruffini (Ohio State Historical Preservation Office, Columbus); N’omi Greber (Cleveland Museum of Natural History); James Krakker (National Museum of Natural History); Pattie Malenki (Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum, Coshocton, OH); and Rosemary McCarthy (Museum of the American Philosophical Society).

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The enormous tasks of coding, verifying, and evaluating the accuracy of information in the HOPEBIOARCH data base on the CD accompanying this book were supported by Beau J. Goldstein, over the course of three years, Ashley E. Evans, over more than a year, and Ed Ritchie during one semester. The conceptual design of the data base was significantly improved by Ashley Evans. She also typed, from their handwritten form, over 700 of the provenience sheets presented in Appendix 6.2. The huge and tedious work of drafting and cleaning up maps of sites, cleaning up and enhancing photographs of artifacts, and creating page layouts of figures was steadfastly accomplished by Rebekah A. Zinser over 2 years. We give a very big thanks to these persons for their major contributions to the book.

The survey and compilation of ethnohistoric literature on the ceremonial uses, social role associations, and social and spiritual meanings of artifacts analogous to those used by Ohio Hopewell peoples, as presented in the appendices to Chapter 11, could not have been accomplished without the tenacious efforts of Rex Weeks and Mark Bahti over a year and a half. Both added substantially to the design of the survey as it proceeded. We are grateful for their enormous, careful, and thoughtful efforts.

The challenge of writing an ethnographic-like and historical description of the lifeways of Scioto Hopewell peoples, as presented in Chapters 2 through 5 and augmented in Chapter 15, was made easier for Chris Carr by a stream of conversations he had with his close colleagues in Ohio and Kentucky. Mark Seeman, Bret Ruby, Paul Pacheco, DeeAnne Wymer, Bruce Aument, Stan Baker, Paul Sciulli, Bob Riordan, Brad Lepper, Berle Clay, and Chuck Niquette each lent open ears and provided insights and data as the substance of these chapters was being mulled over and written. The sage advice of these colleagues is very much appreciated.

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Part I

Rationale and Framework
Chapter 1

Documenting the Lives of Ohio Hopewell People: A Philosophical and Empirical Foundation

CHRISTOPHER CARR AND D. TROY CASE

How does one come to know another? Ethnographers, social psychologists, historians, biographers, and economists and political scientists of micro decision-making each face this most fundamental issue in exploring and studying the social and individual lives of people. It is no less true of anthropological archaeologists who wish to come to know a past people. In actuality, all human beings share this concern, to the extent that they depend on others and must understand them and adapt to them at some level in the course of social relations.

Rapport with and understanding of another person comes in part from taking the time to experience life together with them, cultivating within oneself an awareness of their actions, responses, and sensitivities in varying contexts, and situating oneself, to the extent possible, in their social and personal worlds. Without taking enough time to experience in detail another and their ways of living life, one’s constructed image of them becomes dominated by the contents of projections of one’s own unconscious, personality, world view assumptions, and paradigms – an imprisonment in one’s own existence and understanding of life without substantial companionship and enrichment from others, and a condition of which psychologists and philosophers of science repeatedly warn. For an archaeologist, openly experiencing and understanding a past people – or a particular individual of the past (e.g., DeBoer 2004; Gillespie 2001; Hodder 2000; McGregor 1941; White et al. 2004) – necessarily implies reconstructing their lives, and the social, cultural, natural, and historical contexts in which they lived, in rich detail. Immersing oneself in such details constrains the range of reconstructions that can logically be made, and gives at least the hope that the material voices of a past people will speak louder than one’s own presuppositions, and will help to jar one into awareness of them.1

Experiencing others of the past in their own terms entails the discipline that we previously have called thick prehistory (Carr and Case 2005a:19–21). By this we mean the detailed describing of individuals, social groups, events, actions, patterned behaviors and ideas, and their interrelationships within a local social, cultural, natural, and historical context. The thick prehistory approach has four key elements,
which are followed in this book. First is carefully exploring and keeping close to the data while empirically and richly describing people and their culture and lives. Second is personalizing the past with people in their active, created, on-the-ground, sociocultural roles. Archaeologically identifying and defining the roles of past people provide social substance and dynamism to their archaeological records, and discourage the projection of one’s own self, culture, and implicit patterns of thought and behavior onto them. The rights, duties, functions, and latitude of a social role define the domains and forms of action of those people who take on the role, potentially lead to their action in a normative or negotiated manner, and point toward possible motivations. Third, thick prehistory attempts to contextualize the ideas and practices of past people within their own local social, cultural, natural, and historical milieux. It is within the context of local conditions and demands, and individuals’ needs that may be particular to a place and time, that insights are fostered into the motivations behind the specific actions, patterns of behavior, and selected ideas of the people there. Locally contextualizing the ideas and ways of a past people is an essential vehicle for experiencing and understanding them in a manner that is faithful to them rather than as largely an extension of oneself and one’s own cultural, natural, and historical milieux. Finally, thick prehistory involves tracking the local history of people and contextualizing them within it. Detailed sequences of events and historical contingencies can give strong insights into the motivations of past peoples.

Finding the faces, actions, and motivations of past people, as individuals, as social persons within varying roles, and as larger social formations, and within their local social, cultural, natural, and historical milieux, is essential to a fully realized, anthropological archaeology. As an aspect of basic archaeological observation and identification, it is a precondition to faithfulness in sociocultural reconstruction – of coming to experience and know a people prior to trying to interpret or explain their ways with the additional vantages of high theory or cross-society comparison in heavy application. Thick description of past people in context is also necessary to the potent wedding of scientific, humanistic, and historical approaches of understanding – a union to which contemporary and earlier archaeologists have aspired (Carr and Neitzel 1995:10, 15; Flannery 1972:409; Hall 1977, 1997; Hawkes 1968:255, 260–262; Hodder 1987; Hogarth 1972:304; Wheeler 1950:128–129). Focusing on dynamic social roles in the context of local conditions, demands, and needs encourages the study of persons and their motivations, as do the humanities, but also opens exploration of the structural and processual regularities that those conditions, demands, and needs may produce, as studied in the social sciences by scientific method. Thick, contextualized descriptions of people, their motives, and their milieu over time also provide the foundations for developing understandings of the kinds that the discipline of history seeks: seeing how cultural and behavioral changes are generated by personal actions and motives that are constrained or encouraged by and interact with local, temporarily contiguous events and factors. It is in the wholeness of humanistic, scientific, and historical points of view combined that an individual or a people can be made understandable and that this fundamental aim of anthropological archaeology can be achieved.

This book has two aims. The first is to describe in rich, ethnographic-like detail and genre, to the extent possible, the culture, lifeways, environment, and history of a remarkable set of peoples: the Hopewell who lived in the Scioto valley and its tributaries in Ohio in the first centuries A.D. (Figure 1.1). These were the most socially complex and materially vocal of Native Americans who resided in Eastern North America at the time, and for centuries before and afterward. The Scioto Hopewell built monumental, 80 acre earthworks aligned precisely to events in the day and night skies, masterfully worked glistening metals and semiprecious stones into intricate and elegant symbolic designs, and honored their dead with these vocal artifacts in community burial houses two-thirds the size of a football
The world view and rituals of the Scioto Hopewell inspired their artistic exploration of the principles of three-dimensional perspective a thousand years before Renaissance artists discovered them in the Old World and unlike the artistic norms of any other Native American people. The Scioto Hopewell’s intricate social order of complementary and crosscutting groups and their religious-based concepts of alliance afforded them three centuries of peace among both individuals and communities, as revealed by the lack of evidence for interpersonal violence in their skeletal record and many other lines of evidence. All of these civilized qualities of Scioto Hopewell life perhaps seem out of place among a people who were hunter-gatherer-horticulturalists and lacked any centralized leaders, making Hopewell peoples and their accomplishments all the more curious, as well as challenging to anthropological theory.

The second goal of this book is to systematize and present for use by other researchers the massive, largely unpublished mortuary-archaeological and physical anthropological information and other supporting data that exist on the Scioto Hopewell and their Hopewellian neighbors across Ohio (Figure 1.2). These data have made possible the fullness of the cultural reconstructions of Scioto Hopewell life that we present here, and of the lives of Scioto and other Ohio Hopewellian peoples that we and our colleagues have previously offered in the book, Gathering Hopewell: Society Ritual, and Ritual Interaction (Carr and Case 2005c). Through our presentation of this information, we remove the extraordinarily heavy burdens of data acquisition and organization that previously have constrained archaeologists from making in-depth, empirical inquiries into the social and political lives, rituals, and religious concepts of Ohio Hopewellian peoples generally. In so doing, we allow evaluation of our findings, and encourage further detailed studies and deeper, faithful understandings of these culturally rich peoples.

The title of our book expresses both of its aims: to develop an understanding of Scioto and other Ohio Hopewell peoples through thickly describing them, and to empirically document their bioarchaeological record. Yet, the title also bears a deeper meaning and goal of this book: to foster an attitude of respect for Ohio Hopewell peoples and to accept them for who they were – regardless of whether their evidenced ways fit neatly with general anthropological theoretical expectations, ethno-historical Woodland Native American analogs, or popular interpretations. By “Cultural Understanding” in the title we mean both “an understanding” of Ohio Hopewell peoples and to “be understanding of” Ohio Hopewell peoples – both noun and verb.

To develop an understanding of a past people that is faithful to them requires the researcher to be understanding – to respect their material voices and to leave behind his or her own Western and personal preconceptions, regardless of how comfortable those ideas feel. In turn, both forming an understanding and being understanding of a past people are encouraged by, and indeed cannot occur without, the researcher delving deeply into the details of their material remains and the details of the lives that those remains imply – that is, listening carefully and sincerely to others of the past – the discipline of thick prehistory.
Figure 1.2. Most excavations of Ohio Hopewell ceremonial sites occurred from the 1840s through the 1920s. Unsystematized and/or unpublished information on site layouts, features, artifacts, and skeletal series from these investigations and some later ones has discouraged the analysis and cultural interpretation of the material legacy of Ohio Hopewell peoples. Here, Warren King Moorehead (front row, second from right, in suit) and his field crew stand before a deposit of 69 copper and iron celts and 92+ copper and iron breastplates that covered Skeletons 260 and 261 in Cut 3 of Mound 25 at the Hopewell earthwork. See credits.

REQUISITES FOR REVEALING THICK PREHISTORIES

Doing thick prehistory as a means for coming to know, understand, and respect a past people entails more than the attitude and strategies described above for approaching the archaeological record. It has very practical implications: the nature of the archaeological records to which it is amenable, the large amounts of data it requires, and the archaeologist’s budget, tenacity, and talent for team research. Here we consider each of these three practical matters.

Revealing the social and cultural lives of a people in detail requires that their material record be socially and culturally vocal, intentionally or not. When some certain aspect of a past people’s lives is unexpressed materially, the researcher is left to surmising its nature from direct culture-historical analogies, crosscultural generalizations and correlations, and/or theoretical models that contextually seem appropriate. These strategies, of course, do not acknowledge the cultural inventiveness of individual peoples. They also open the way to laying interpretations upon a people that coincide with the researcher’s own views on cultural life and that may not be true to the people.

Ohio Hopewell societies, fortunately, were very expressive materially about their social, political, and spiritual lifeways and beliefs.