

arguments based on social mechanisms for the maintenance of flexibility. This is a shame because a more-comprehensive examination of these mechanisms would have enhanced the thesis.

Sabo's work illustrates many of the problems associated with Arctic research. The data set is extremely limited, consisting of nine houses excavated from three sites. All of these houses are winter occupation sites, making it difficult to discuss the entire seasonal cycle. However, anyone working in the north knows that the excavation of these structures is an accomplishment in the land of permafrost, short digging seasons, and voracious mosquitos. The dating of the sites is problematic as it is restricted to relative dates based on comparisons with sites that have mostly relative dates. In the end, much of the dating is based on a schema built on changes in dwelling structures due to climatic shifts, thus adding a degree of circularity to Sabo's arguments. Despite mention of the ethnographic literature little use is made of this resource to back up the assertions made. Nonetheless, Sabo has put forward a coherent argument that the flexibility in Inuit society noted ethnographically extends back into the archaeological past.

Ancient Trade and Tribute: Economies of the Soconusco Region of Mesoamerica. BARBARA VOORHIES, editor. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 1989. xiv + 346 pp., figures, tables, references, index. \$30.00 (cloth).

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This useful collection focuses on economic organization in the Soconusco region of southern Mexico during the Classic, Late Postclassic, and Early Colonial periods. Fourteen chapters by a variety of authors describe the results of archaeological and ethnohistorical research undertaken by the "Proyecto Soconusco" under the general direction of the editor. More detailed descriptions of the fieldwork and artifacts will appear in a planned final report of the project.

Chapter 1 by Voorhies introduces the environment and archaeology of Soconusco. The following section, "Political Economy During the Protohistoric Period," contains three chapters. Voorhies reevaluates Polanyi's port-of-trade model that Chapman and others have applied to Soconusco and finds it lacking in empirical support. Gasco and Voorhies then examine the economic role of Soconusco as an Aztec tributary province in an impressive piece of detailed scholarship. This article is very useful for understanding the nature of the Aztec tribute system in a distant province. Voorhies then discusses four possible models for pre-Aztec political organization in the area (bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and large unitary states), and concludes that the data best fit the chiefdom category.

The section, "Subsistence Economy," contains a single article by Hudson, Walker, and Voorhies, describing a rough, class-level analysis of faunal remains from a number of sites. A section on "Craft Production" follows with four chapters. Pfeiffer describes evidence

for pottery production at the Classic site of Río Arriba. While the qualitative evidence is strong, the analysis has several methodological flaws, including improper quantification procedures. Neff's chapter deals briefly with the distinctive Plumbate pottery that was produced in this area in Late Classic and Early Postclassic times. Voorhies then discusses Postclassic cotton-textile production on the basis of spindle whorls and cloth imprints on ceramic sherds. Finally, Clark expands the temporal perspective by outlining patterns of obsidian production from Archaic through Late Postclassic times from a technological perspective; this is a concise and useful review.

A section on "Craft Distribution" contains three chapters. First, Pfeiffer discusses ceramic imports and exports at Río Arriba. Neff's chapter is an excellent example of the productive use of ethnographic analogy, showing how the nature of foreign demand generated the expansion of the Plumbate export trade. Then, Clark, Lee, and Salcedo examine obsidian trade over the whole spectrum of Soconusco prehistory based upon the visual sourcing of 60,000 artifacts from a number of sites. Although not all archaeologists would agree with their assessment of 90–95 percent accuracy for visual sourcing, this is an impressive analysis with many useful observations.

In the final section of the book, Gasco contributes two solid chapters. One reviews archival evidence on the colonial economy, showing the importance of the cacao industry in both trade and tribute. The second chapter focuses on the site of Ocelocalco, using the data of excavations and documents to provide a more detailed account of the fate of one particular town in the colonial economy.

Most of the chapters in *Ancient Trade and Tribute* are interesting and well written, but there is a disappointing lack of theoretical or thematic integration beyond the regional orientation. The common focus on Soconusco certainly provides sufficient justification for the book, but an overarching theoretical approach would make the chapters more interesting and useful beyond Soconusco. For example, the different periods could be compared in terms of the changing (or constant) role of Soconusco as an economic periphery to states centered elsewhere, perhaps using world systems theory or models of imperialism. Did the distinctive resources of the area, particularly cacao, lead to common patterns of exploitation in Classic, Postclassic, and colonial times, or did the very different macroregional political economies of those periods lead to distinctive economic patterns in Soconusco? There may or may not be enough data to answer such questions adequately, but unless they are asked the usefulness of these chapters will remain more locally circumscribed. Nevertheless, this relatively minor problem does not detract from the quality of the individual studies. *Ancient Trade and Tribute* is a useful and timely book, and Voorhies and the other authors are to be congratulated for bringing these formerly obscure yet interesting local economies into the mainstream of the mesoamerican past.

Les chasseurs d'aurochs de La Borde: Un site du Paléolithique moyen (Livernon, Lot). JACQUES