

The 12 chapters following the introduction are organized as a saga moving those gods northward, resonating with the historical adventure of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and his companions, which was an astonishing affirmation of the ability of strangers, especially magicians and healers, to survive long treks through the continent. That Indigenous Americans interacted with each other over great distances on metaphysical matters, as well as technical ones, should by now be obvious to archaeologists, and it is to some. Indigenous archaeologist Robert Hall always knew this, as Pauketat reports. That Indigenous people should respond to environmental change over distance intellectually as well as practically should also be obvious.

Pauketat strives to reveal the materiality of his arguments, tying the cults of wind/rain gods to round structures, feathered serpents, conch trumpets, and flower-shaped points, among other artifacts. Such empirical data are not perfectly aligned with the grand sweep of cultic movement over space and time, as he admits, and this point invites debate and discussion among specialists. Fugue-like, Pauketat keeps the focus of his interest on the larger proposition as he moves through space toward eastern North America. Each chapter is anchored into engaging physical description of the sites and artifacts, the ambient landscape, and the people.

The thesis will continue to be subject to debate. Yes, there were water shrines at Cahokia, not only the well-documented ones but recently advanced ones like the group north of Monk's Mound. Yes, the raptor deities, avatars of the feathered serpent storm gods, were also present at Cahokia. Yes, there are sacred monumental poles at Cahokia, like the great poles that allowed bird men to descend in Mesoamerica—not only in the late medieval period but also from much earlier. Indeed, a “sprawled” sacrificial victim at Mound 72 at Cahokia is probably a pole flyer descending with the bundled woman/man next to him.

The great methodological advance of diffusionism in the mid-twentieth-century archaeology of North America was not conceptually wrong but rather was a foundation for a new understanding, in which the movement of technologies was always accompanied by dialogue and coherent discussion of an animate, ambient world in which humans are agents of balance, not chaos. The material forms were bundles, as Robert Hall declared, as much as points or seeds. Pauketat discerns this truth moving toward a more perfect understanding.

A product of his years in conferences at the Santa Fe Institute, a major scientific think tank in the United States, this book affirms that archaeological science takes many forms, and the approach taken in *Gods of Thunder* is one of them.

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***Archaeologies of Cosmescapes in the Americas.* J. Grant Stauffer, Bretton T. Giles, and Shawn P. Lambert, editors. 2022. Oxbow Books, Havertown, Pennsylvania. ix + 265 pp. \$39.95 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-78925-844-8.**

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This book argues for the use of cosmescapes as a theoretical tool for improving archaeological interpretations of non-Western cultures. With case examples from throughout the Americas, it illustrates how archaeologists might better understand the richness and relatedness of materials, motifs, and monuments when considered as they exist within a culture's cosmescap. The benefit of a cosmescap approach derives, in part, from the expansiveness of the concept. It provides a template for the cosmos

that includes its shape, scope, and the relationships with which it is entangled; this template's scalability makes it appropriate to examine the microcosm, macrocosm, and everything nested in between. Such an approach allows the researcher to consider material and contextual aspects of native ontologies alongside one another and with consideration for their attendant histories. By conceptualizing cosmoscapes, the contributors to this book explore how late precontact-era communities created and modeled the various realities they experienced.

Much of this work is inspired by F. Kent Reilly's analyses of iconography and symbolism in Mesoamerica and the US Southeast. The editors, J. Grant Stauffer, Bretton T. Giles, and Shawn P. Lambert, credit not only Reilly's contribution to the literature of cosmoscapes via his application of art historical and iconographic approaches but also his role in the growth of its application as a theoretical model. They go on to define the main advantage of the cosmocape concept over traditional Western interpretive tools as its holistic nature, which does not limit the considerations one might make when seeking to understand non-Western pasts. A cosmocape perspective details the complexity and fluidity of objects, landscapes, and worldviews, in contrast to traditional methods that tend to flatten them.

The first section of this book is dedicated to objects specifically, with authors using a thing-centered approach versus a human-centered one. Herein objects can be agents and can affect those with whom they interact, particularly through the iconography they carry. Madelaine C. Azar and Vincas P. Steponaitis provide one of the best examples of this approach in their analysis in Chapter 2 of a body of Central Mississippi River Valley effigy bowls as "readable objects." Their approach offers a richer interpretation not just of a regional or type-specific body of ceramics but also of Mississippian cosmology and ritual in a broad manner, contributing to the field well beyond the interests of ceramic analysts alone. In Chapter 5, David S. Dye and Toney Aid also provide an exemplary application of the concept in arguing for panregional ritual goods as microcosms that referenced shared iconography as a means of mediating relationships among groups with different ontologies. Both examples illustrate how extant data can provide entirely new insights through the cosmocape lens.

The book's second section is dedicated to how the natural and built environments are manipulated to create and reflect cosmoscapes. The main thrust of this perspective is borrowed from landscape approaches, particularly those that emphasize the landscape's roles in social memory and time. The contributors add value to these older concepts by expanding them to "encapsulate the whole universe," as Annabeth Headrick notes of Mayan calendar stones in Chapter 7. Joy Mersmann and J. Grant Stauffer in Chapter 8 similarly consider the mounds, plazas, and structures that comprise Mississippian period Cahokia as a microcosm of the universe, noting how the use of monumental poles associated with native beliefs of "first man" transcended deep time to add legitimacy to the transformation of physical space into a cosmocape.

The critiques to be made of this book are few. Although all contributions provide worthwhile data and interpretation, several authors note but do not apply cosmoscapes as a theoretical tool, whereas others curiously fail to even mention cosmoscapes, despite their data being appropriate for its application. The difficulties that the malleability of meanings pose to interpretation of the past is broached (see Lambert's Chapter 4), but further discussion on that topic would have been welcome. Finally, the use of jargon is excessive in some chapters, as is woefully the norm in academic prose. Melinda A. Martin's Chapter 10 was a nice exception that illustrates how straightforward language does not at all detract from conveying the complexity and utility of cosmoscapes. Of the physical book itself, the generous section of full-color photographs was excellent, although the glue binding the cover to the pages was not—failing completely only two chapters in.

In all, this book makes compelling arguments for a theoretical shift away from the "persistent dualisms" imposed by Western thought in favor of an approach that views mental and material dimensions of symbolism as inextricable. Those wishing to follow suit will find it an inspiring example. Although the geographic scope of case studies is broad, most chapters focus on examples from Mississippian sites in eastern North America, so this book will have particular appeal to the audience of specialists in this area.