The last section or “footprint” of the volume places attention on “revealing our prehistoric past.” Here, Schiffer begins to summarize and integrate information presented earlier in the volume. The three chapters in this section look at (1) the discovery and study of the earliest humans, (2) the move from foraging to farming and the significant cultural and other changes this shift incorporates, and (3) the move from towns and villages to cities and empires. In these chapters, Schiffer shows how archaeologists use previously collected data, various methodologies, multiple lines of evidence, and information from other disciplines to address complex problems. These final chapters show the reader how archaeological research progresses, and how we address some of the big research questions in archaeology and in the development of the world.

The end of the book brings me to my only other criticism. In my opinion, Schiffer’s volume would benefit from a closing chapter. If readers get all the way through the book, they might want to know possible new directions of archaeological research, how the general public can better support archaeology and learn from it, and what being good stewards of the past might mean. The introductory chapter of Footprints is good and broad in its coverage, but Schiffer does not similarly bring the story to a close, or suggest the future. He is missing an opportunity to move the reader forward to action.

I enthusiastically recommend this book for general readers and for use in archaeology classes. There are even many great chapters that I would be happy to assign in more advanced classes, and, in addition to the points outlined above, some of Schiffer’s discussions and explanations of archaeological methods are clear and useful for students.

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Thirty-five years ago, Eric Wolf noted in his magisterial *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) that the social sciences constitute “one long dialogue with the ghost of Marx.” That same sentiment informs this book. It considers the utility of mode of production theory in archaeology. There is an enormous literature about the mode of production concept, and several of the better-known conceptions appear in this volume (e.g., Asiatic mode, Germanic mode). The volume includes chapters about societies at every range of societal scale, covering hunter-gatherers, pre-state agriculturalists, ancient states, and modern states. The geographical focus is primarily the Americas: North, Central, South, and Caribbean.
An introductory chapter by the editors offers a useful review of key literature, including several modes of production that are well known to archaeologists: Karl Wittfogel’s Asiatic mode, Marshall Sahlins’s domestic mode, and Eric Wolf’s “elegantly simple trinity” of kin-ordered, tributary, and capitalist modes of production. The editors are not interested in evaluating the fidelity of these formulations to some original Marxian conception, nor the pros and cons of alternative formulations. Instead, they are interested in the useful insights about social process and change that one or another conception can produce in particular archaeological contexts.

The section on hunter-gatherers contains five chapters, the most in the volume. The studies take us from the Northwest Coast to the tip of South America. Thomas Patterson examines the articulation of non-capitalist and capitalist modes of production in eighteenth-century California. Barter, plunder, colonial extraction, and wage labor relationships enmeshed hunter-gatherers in unstable, dynamic relationships. Bill Angelbeck critiques the formulations of Sahlins and Wolf and sees, on the Northwest Coast, an array of production modes classifiable by subsistence (hunting, gathering, fishing) and organized by variable relations of production differentially focused on individuals, families, households, and cooperative to hierarchical teams. Notable in this section are a couple of empirically rich chapters from scholars doing social archaeology in the Global South. Guillermo Acosta Ochoa employs macrobotanical data to examine modes of production at the transition to agriculture in the Basin of Mexico. Myrian Álvarez and Ivan Briz Godino employ lithic analysis to examine “modes of consumption” in Tierra del Fuego. Bradley Ensor closes the section with a consideration of the contradictions and crises generated within Wolf’s kin-ordered mode of production in the Archaic of the Lower Mississippi Valley.

Among pre-state agriculturalists, Robert Rosenswig uses Human Relations Area Files data to evaluate the proposition that Wolf’s tributary mode of production calls forth ideologies justifying the political extraction of surplus by projecting that coercive power relationship into the cosmic realm. Jerimy Cunningham interprets the emergence of social complexity at Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, through a model of the kin-ordered mode giving way to a more labor-intensive “ritual mode of production” that created new potentials for kin leaders to exploit labor. Johan Ling, Per Cornell, and Kristian Kristiansen examine Bronze Age Europe to understand how control over different kinds of trade goods bestowed a “comparative advantage” in the wealth competition among societies characterized by the relatively decentralized Germanic mode of production.

The ancient states section has Bradley Ensor using his second chapter to examine elite and commoner class agency in the kin-ordered and tributary modes of the Gulf Coast, Tabasco. Gary Feinman and Linda Nicholas use the mode of production approach to re-envision Mesoamerican economies in a way that clarifies spatial and temporal diversity in governance relationships (collective to autocratic) in the Classic and Post-Classic Valley of Oaxaca.

The final section on modern states considers the capitalist world. Charles Orser examines the articulation of three different agricultural modes of production involving free planters, indentured servants, and enslaved Africans and Indians in the early-seventeenth-
century colony on Providence Island, a small island in the western Caribbean. James Delle considers a “plantation mode of production,” pitched as a variant of the capitalist mode, in nineteenth-century Jamaica. He examines how a material landscape of buildings, machines, fields, and villages was experienced differently by actors within the plantation mode while allowing planters a “spatiality of control” based on panoptic surveillance.

The common theme uniting all of these contributions is the variability, complexity, and instability of production relationships, as well as their governing politics and ideologies, among the various societies that are the subject of archaeological inquiry. The volume’s contributors are aware of the empirical ambiguities and paradoxes that typically bedevil archaeological interpretation. They show how a mode of production approach can successfully make sense of contradictory archaeological patterns and illuminate the tensioned social relationships that produce them. Even if a reader is not open, for whatever reason, to theorizing with Marxian analytical categories, there are many other interesting ideas and data summaries to be found here that make the volume a very worthwhile read.

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Resistance and resilience serve as the guiding themes of this anthology, whether referring to present-day indigenous cultures in Yucatán, the Hopi mesas, Oaxaca, Peru, or Amazonia; among Japanese Americans interned during World War Two; or colonial and Caste War populations in the Maya area and central Mexico. Throughout the Americas today, ancestral homelands may still be occupied by descendant peoples, but often indigenous populations have been pushed aside to make way for Euro-American interests. Homelands may have been abandoned for a variety of reasons, and processes of reclamation may even now be under way (although not always by the original inhabitants).

Contrasts are drawn between Euro-American uses of land (involving high-intensity, short-term approaches) and those of indigenous inhabitants, who forged a balanced relationship with the land over long time periods, incorporating places of importance on the landscape into oral traditions. The chapters by Fernando Armstrong-Fumero and Julio Hoil Gutierrez on modern Yucatán; Maren P. Hopkins et al. on contemporary and ancestral Hopi peoples; Christine Kray, Minette Church, and Jason Yaeger on colonial