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## Review of *Archaeology on the Great Plains* Edited by W. Raymond Wood

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**Archaeology on the Great Plains.** Edited by W. Raymond Wood. Maps by E. Stanley Wood. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998. 522 pp. Maps, figures, references, index. \$29.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7006-0883-4).

Plains archaeologists have long awaited a worthy successor to Waldo Wedel's magisterial *Prehistoric Man on the Great Plains* (1961). W. Raymond Wood's edited volume pretty much fills the master's very large shoes. As befits the increase in the size of the database and our understanding of the complexity of cultural dynamics on the Plains since Wedel's publication, the fourteen topics into which the book is divided are each examined by different collaborators: "Introduction" (W. Raymond Wood); "The Great Plains Setting" (Marvin Kay); "A History of Great Plains Prehistory" (Richard A. Krause); "The Paleo-Indian Cultures of the Great Plains" (Jack L. Hofman and Russell W. Graham); "The Northwestern and Northern Plains Archaic" (George C. Frison); "The Central and Southern Plains Archaic" (Marvin Kay); "The Plains Woodland" (Ann Mary Johnson and Alfred E. Johnson); "The Central Plains Tradition" (Terry L. Steinacher and Gayle F. Carlson); "The Middle Missouri Tradition" (R. Peter Winham and F. A. Calabrese); "The Coalescent Tradition" (Craig M. Johnson); "The Oneota Tradition" (Dale R. Henning); "The Southern Plains Villagers" (Richard R. Drass); "The Late High Plains Hunters" (Jeffrey R. Hanson); and "Euro-American Archaeology" (Douglas D. Scott). The last is a particularly welcome contribution, an indication of the increasing importance this branch of the discipline is assuming in a post-NAGPRA world.

Wood's edition is a perfect mirror of contemporary Plains archaeology, illuminating both its points of emphasis and its deficiencies. Regarding the former, his introduction makes clear that this is a book about culture history. The overall coverage of the Plains culture area is impressive, and most researchers will find their own areas at least mentioned. In most instances the minutiae of areas' culture histories are explored in great detail, in some chapters so thoroughly that probably only regional specialists will truly appreciate their comprehensiveness. (One criticism I have is the volume's concentration on the US, Canada yet again seeming a rather redundant appendage to its southern neighbor). Another point of emphasis is the contributors' reliance on *ecological functionalism* for explaining the course of cultural dynamics. (In this regard I would like to have seen more coverage of Frison's seminal work in bison ecology and hunting practices).

Any weaknesses the book may have are a reflection of deficiencies in Plains archaeology as a whole, such as an unwillingness to place archaeo-

logical knowledge into the political and social contexts of its production. One searches in vain, for example, for much reference to how increasing numbers of Plains scholars are beginning to incorporate feminist and indigenous sensibilities into their interpretations.

Such criticisms might seem churlish, however, reflecting as they do the state-of-the art of Plains archaeology in general, rather than of this book in particular. Above all, *Archaeology on the Great Plains* provides Plains researchers and teachers with what we have been waiting for these many years. Its scholarship is first-rate and its writing genuinely literate, a rare combination these days. I am glad to have this successor to Wedel in my library. **Philip Duke**, *Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College*.