the status of a theory but instead merely succeeds in displaying the irredentist tendencies of a true believer.

Feinman acknowledges the limitations of the systems paradigm and hopes to overcome them by incorporating the ebb and flow of complex formations into a dynamic model of "nested, multiscalar" regional systems. He insightfully considers the problems of organizational scale and state size. Early states, he observes, were often small and decentralized, and difficult to distinguish from chiefdoms. Scale and complexity are not easily correlated and there is no rule, as Carneiro has argued, that increasing size must be accompanied by elaboration in scale and complexity. Complexity has a fluid and situational nature, while scale should be considered both horizontally and vertically. Like Marcus, Feinman maintains that "secondary states" are usually the consequence of the disintegration of pristine states. This leads him to his case study of the Maya, in which he explores how pristine states "decompose," and he concludes that they do not follow the same trajectory in disintegration that they did in integration.

A different tack is taken by J. Baines and N. Yoffee. They compare Egypt and Mesopotamia in order to isolate their different principles of organization and change. Their study contrasts Mesopotamian political and economic centralization in urban centers and the decentralized political economy of Egypt, where power is dispersed among estates in the hands of elites. Kingship prevails in both, but in the former it is constrained by the city-state form and its local religious and economic institutions, while kingship in the latter, without a central political urban form, is overarching and unified according to an all-encompassing cosmology. Baines and Yoffee choose order, legitimacy, and wealth as terms of analysis because these are concepts shared by both modern analysts and ancient actors; they also help bridge the difference of our sources: the wealth of literary testimonia from Mesopotamia and the predominance of monumental representations, often funerary, in Egypt. Because power was held by private individuals, institutions, and the state in a complex arrangement, there was a tension in Mesopotamia between rulers and ruled. In Egypt, because of the profound inequality between rulers and ruled, the elite assumed a protective role that made an extensive documentation of their relationship unnecessary. Baines and Yoffee contend that we must study Egypt and Mesopotamia not only as archaic states but also as civilizations. In Egypt the forms of civilization emerged very early in an art that the privileged inner circles used in intragroup competition. For Mesopotamia Yoffee emphasizes the preeminence of writing, though in many studies I. Winter has shown that art is equally sophisticated and important as a communicative device among the inner elite. As Baines and Yoffee emphasize, it is the inner elite who create and maintain civilizations and whose influence continues long after the collapse of their states.

Two chapters in this book present case studies of cultures and areas that seem ill-suited to the systems theory model, either because the model inadequately accounts for the information available or because the evidence of social and cognitive behavior has not been recognized or properly interpreted in previous studies. G. Possehl reviews the state of research for the Indus Valley, where the lack of evidence for an elite leadership, bureaucracy, state religion, and centralized economy in an otherwise highly developed culture leads him to identify the Harappan centers as differentiated "non-states," a woefully inadequate term. Alternative models, such as Blanton's corporate political economy, might offer a more fruitful picture of the evidence, but these clearly would have to be coordinated with systematic and intensive regional studies. C. Morris's study of the Inka illustrates how prevailing interpretations employ the systems theory model to demonstrate centralization and domination but ignore the problems inherent in the necessary integration of regions. He advocates an approach that focuses less on coercive power and more on communicative and economic strategies adapted to local circumstances. He shows that the archaeological evidence supports an interpretation of the importance of ceremony and public feasting as strategies of incorporation, especially when held in architectural settings that reflected the organizational and hierarchical principles of Inka ideology. Additionally, Morris argues that the traditional notion of military coercion is undermined by the widespread absence of weapons, although its importance in maintaining the cohesion of the far-flung Inka state is unquestioned.

The issue of coercion is an old chestnut that D. Webster takes up in the final contribution, which compares Mayan and Polynesian warfare. Although he rightly laments the absence of comparative studies of early warfare, his own is narrowly confined. Of interest is his discussion of the difficulty of establishing the archaeological correlates of warfare and his important distinction between internal and external warfare. His comparison between the two societies is instructive for its consideration of the many dimensions of armed conflict and its role in pristine settings.

Individually these studies are of interest, but taken as a whole they illustrate the need for more open and inclusive conversation among those interested in archaic states. It is in recognition of what is lacking that the reader will realize the acute need for fresh ideas from other regions and from different scholars in order truly to advance our understanding of archaic states.

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World systems theory (WST) sprang almost unaided from the brain of Immanuel Wallerstein during the 1970s and has been a potent influence among those historians and archaeologists who (in spite of attempts at decon-
structive fragmentation by Postmodernists in those professions) retain an interest in large-scale processes in the past. In essence, Wallerstein argued for two important forms of heightened intersocietal linkage, or "world system." The first, which he believed was the norm for precapitalist societies before the 16th century A.D., was the "world empire"—and here social and political spheres of control and dominance tended to expand beyond economic integration, such that empires were amalgams of diverse economies. The second, "world economy," represented a state of affairs in which a dominant economy expanded its sphere across formally autonomous sociopolitical units; for Wallerstein this has happened just once, with the rise and expansion of the modern global commercial and capitalist economy in post-Medieval times. Thus, Wallerstein separated precapitalist pre-Modern from capitalist Modern, a view that is close to the Substantivist position: modern economics have little or no relevance to precapitalist societies. Almost all scholars who have sought to apply WST to precapitalist societies have ignored Wallerstein's separation, however, thus aligning themselves with the Formalist school of economic historians, who believe that processes akin to modern economics were significantly at work in the remoter past.

This collection of papers offers a very welcome overview of the WST approach as a means of revealing major insights into world history and prehistory. It provides both a theoretical debate on how we understand long-distance interactions between diverse human communities and a series of case studies that test the theory with varying degrees of success and failure. I congratulate the editor, Nick Kardulias, for not persuading dissidents who find WST unsatisfactory or useless to take their papers elsewhere; the chapters as a whole give readers the opportunity to review the strengths and weaknesses of the application of such a bold set of ideas to past societies. In fact, so fair is the spread of opinions in this volume on the merits of using WST that thorough skeptics may well find no reason to change their minds after reading it. To this reviewer, basic difficulties in the theoretical underpinnings of WST as applied to precapitalist societies, and unresolved problems with the case-study interpretations offered in the volume, suggest that WST is probably inadequate for use as a key "super model" (which is sad, since WST is perhaps the closest archaeologists will get to one!).

A number of central points emerge from studying this rich and excellently referenced volume. First, to make WST work, it seems most advocates need to start dismantling Wallerstein's systems into less rigid, more flexible shapes. The economic integration of the world economy can fade into trade, tribute, or even ideological waves. The dominance of the "core" can be allowed to weaken into strong mutual relations between a developed and less-developed form of political or economic community. In some authors' deployment, WST then becomes indistinguishable from core-periphery system, or peer-polity interaction, or even just empire, with the usual connotations of rulers demanding products from provinces. The very attraction of WST, as an overriding form of structure that entraps human action into large-scale flows of goods and ideologies, progressively loses its value with each step along the road to multiple players within the system and unpredictable dynamics favoring now one partner over another.

Yet I would still recommend the book because it leaves one with the firm conviction that we always need to evaluate the types and varying strengths of intercommunity interactions, especially when focusing, as most of us do, on our favored regional community and its historical trajectory. The finest chapters in the book are the case studies, and chiefly those in which rich empirical detail is assembled to show how reconstructions of both the "inside" and "outside" of a society are needed to help us explain the ways it developed over time (e.g., Morris, Wells, Alexander, Kardulias, Jeske, and Kuznar). Consistently we find that WST in these applications is too generalized and monocausal a theory to account for the rich complexity of the case studies, although it clearly deserves a role as a heuristic model to be introduced alongside several others in a multifactorial form of approach (see my "Regional Survey, Demography, and the Rise of Complex Societies in the Ancient Aegean," JFA 24 [1997] 1–38). Curiously, contributors tend to divide into those who go wholeheartedly for the full application of a strong theory of world systems, and those who find the approach somewhat of a failure. I suspect that WST in the future will be one of many structured forms or historical processes affecting the creation of community dynamics, rarely operating in isolated dominance from other recurrent processes.