

*Forest, Field, and Fallow: Selections by William M. Denevan*. ANTOINETTE M. G. A. WINKLER-PRINS and KENT MATHEWSON, editors. 2021. Springer Nature, Cham, Switzerland. 451 pp. \$169.99 (hardback), ISBN 978-3-030-42479-4.

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William Denevan is a key figure in American geography because of his substantial research, the many colleagues and students he has influenced positively, and the broader public that came to know his work through Charles C. Mann's excellent book *1491*. Denevan's research is far-reaching in geography, especially in cultural ecology, archaeology, historical ecology, political ecology, environmental history, human ecology, and historical demography. The book *Forest, Field, and Fallow: Selections by William M. Denevan* is an excellent and fitting homage by his students and colleagues, including the book's editors Antoinette M. G. A. WinklerPrins and Kent Mathewson. Like so many books, this Springer volume is expensive at \$169.99 for print versions and \$129 for the e-book, but some university libraries have online versions. I hope the costs do not limit its use by students in both the United States and Latin America, and beyond, because they would benefit greatly from knowing more about Denevan.

The book reprints key Denevan classics with introductions by senior scholars from geography, ethnobotany, and archaeology. It strikes a fine balance between revealing personal Denevan anecdotes and appraisal and synthesis of his research. We learn that he is a theorist despite his protestations, that he worked as a journalist in South America before becoming an academic, that he had ups and downs in graduate school at UC Berkeley, and other tidbits of his personal life.

All 11 chapters in this book are valuable, and I urge readers to read the entire book. The chapters—W. George Lovell on historical demography, Clark L. Erickson on agricultural landforms, Karl S. Zimmerer on cultural plant geography, Susanna B. Hecht on

human environmental impacts, Charles R. Clement on indigenous agroecology, Christine Padoch on tropical agriculture, Richard Hunter and William E. Doolittle on livestock ranching, and Billie Lee Turner II on synthetic contributions—are supplemented by reflections on Denevan and his contributions: Gregory W. Knapp writes about being a student of Denevan, Kent Mathewson presents a biographical sketch, and Daniel W. Gade and Mathewson offer an appreciation of Denevan. Each chapter illuminates the continuity and endurance of Denevan's research and how much of the work has diffused beyond geography. For example, Denevan with other scholars of his time like Karl Butzer set the stage for today's widely debated concepts: the Anthropocene and the early Anthropocene, sustainability, and resiliency.

The foreword by Charles C. Mann expertly captures the broad reach of Denevan. It highlights Denevan's importance to research on Amazonia and his continuation of the Berkeley–Sauerian tradition in the general milieu of human–environmental interactions. Mann considers Denevan's foremost contribution to be his work on the “pristine myth,” a phrase he coined that describes the misconception that Amazonia was bereft of human impacts, despite the ever-growing evidence to the contrary.

Hecht provides a thorough reckoning of the contexts and currency of two Denevan classics: *Development and Imminent Demise of the Amazon Rain Forest* (1973) and *Pre-European Human Impacts on Neotropical Lowland Environments* (2007). The former provides a prescient warning of deforestation, and the latter synthesizes the long, intensive, and extensive prehispanic impacts that have been uncovered recently through lidar imagery. Hecht discusses the “Meggersians versus the Denevians” and those who study “labsapes” versus landscapes in a spirited review of the range of opinions about the intensity of neotropical human impacts. Unlike the Maya tropical forest, too few lidar findings are available for the Amazon to silence this debate.

Erickson provides a comprehensive and discerning chapter on agricultural landforms in two Denevan classics: *Aboriginal Drained-Field Cultivation in the Americas in Science* (1970) and “Terrace and Irrigation Origins and Abandonment in the Colca Valley, Peru,”

a chapter in Denevan's magnum opus *Cultivated Landscapes of Native Amazonia and the Andes* (2001). The phrase "agricultural landform" is a useful one because it connotes the widespread nature of cultural geomorphology embedded in landscapes: humans are the Earth's largest geomorphic agent, responsible for human-induced erosion and the vast relict infrastructure of the past and present.

Zimmerer provides fascinating insights on Denevan's contributions to cultural plant geography in two papers that are 40 years apart: "The Upland Pine Forests of Nicaragua" (1961) and "Fields of the Mojo, Campa, Shipibo, and Karinya" (2001). This chapter includes a valuable timeline of this field, weaving the past with the present and connecting Carl Sauer's *Morphology of Landscape* in 1925 through Denevan to historical ecology, social forests, and Zimmerer's ongoing work on agrobiodiversity.

One of Denevan's first students, Turner explores three of Denevan's major articles in the geographic literature: "The Pristine Myth" (1992) and "A Bluff Model" (1996) in the *Annals of the AAG*, and "Adaptation" (1983) in the *Professional Geographer*. "The Pristine Myth" discusses the long and deep humanization of the prehispanic Americas, dispelling the pristine wilderness romanticism. This article was cited more than "A Bluff Model," which focuses on the levee geography of Amazon settlement. The "Adaptation" article was the most surprising to Turner (and painful for Denevan to write, according to Knapp in his later chapter) because it had a more theoretical bent: it attempted to fuse the Berkeley School with the Chicago School by adding natural hazards and societal and individual decision-making to cultural landscapes. Turner and other chapter authors note how these articles and others in the Denevan oeuvre planted the seeds of the IPCC's and sustainability science's current efforts to study societal adaptability and resilience to climate and its attendant changes.

My colleague Greg Knapp introduced me to Denevan's work in 1984, when he was a visiting scholar at Minnesota where I was a graduate student. Knapp's chapter, "Being a Student of Denevan," is a deeply personal remembrance of a great teacher and mentor; it addresses the topics, people, concepts, and theoretical frameworks Denevan discussed.

The editors and writers of this book have contributed to Denevan's legacy, a service that few scholars receive or deserve. This is an excellent model for a serious interrogation of the critical contributions of important scholars and their continued relevancy. Denevan's six decades of work show that long-term human-environmental interactions in the Indigenous Americas are vibrant and that any linear explanation with a twinge of environmental determinism is highly

suspect. In the foreword, Mann recounts that Denevan remarked, "Well, I haven't heard that for a while," in response to a popular environmental determinist. As for Denevan's own work, I can say that I have heard many of his ideas widely and recently both in academic and broader circles.

*The Archaeology of the Upper Amazon: Complexity and Interaction in the Andean Tropical Forest*, RYAN CLASBY and JASON NESBITT, editors. 2021. University Press of Florida, Gainesville. xiv + 311 pp. \$90.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8130-6690-5.

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This timely book springs from *The Upper Amazon*, the landmark 1970 book by Donald Lathrap that advocated for Amazonian archaeology and championed the importance of precolumbian Amazonians to any cultural history of South America and the Western Hemisphere. Almost every author in this edited volume acknowledges their debt to Lathrap's research along the boundary between the Andes and the Amazon. With a list of contributors whose work spans three generations, the book grows from these deep roots, placing these new studies within a network of conversations and arguments from the past five decades.

An issue for the study of this area is its definition. Geographic terms (like the hydrological limits of the Amazon) appear straightforward, but regions near the edges are often shunted between one designation (the Andes) and the other (the Amazon), so even though they are often solemnly acknowledged as being important, they are only rarely considered seriously. Here the editors and authors work explicitly to push past the idea that the Upper Amazon must be confined to a stereotype; for example, the pattern of a barrier (à la Steward in his explanation of linguistic diversity at the base of the Andes mountains as a wall). Scholarship has come of age in the sense that none of these larger narratives seems to account for the variety of interpretations and new evidence presented here. Thankfully, the book is not limited by a single motif of frontier, boundary, barrier, or anything else.

In the 50 years since Lathrap wrote, the role of such a book on regional archaeology has changed. Although in 1970 it might have been possible to gain a working knowledge of the archaeological literature across much of the world from reading such secondary sources, in 2022 the problem of information retrieval, evaluation, and synthesis has expanded