

AMERIND STUDIES IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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ACROSS A GREAT DIVIDE

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN NATIVE
NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETIES,
1400–1900

EDITED BY **LAURA L. SCHEIBER**
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Crossing, Bridging, and Transgressing Divides in the Study of Native North America

Stephen W. Silliman

The question of history looms large in this volume. How do we write indigenous histories alongside or entangled with colonist histories? At what scale do we write those histories? With what terms do we narrate such histories, and who gets to narrate them? How can these histories cross disciplinary and temporal boundaries? What role does and should archaeology play in this process? How do we recognize and interpret the dialectic of change and continuity in indigenous histories, especially into and across pivotal moments such as the European colonization of North America? No easy answers await, but the contributors to this book offer interesting possible answers. They put forward innovative, cross-cutting, and multi-regional ways to rethink how to study long-term histories in native North America. To conclude this volume, I offer a humble attempt to chart the ways in which the contributors start to cross or bridge some of the great divides and I suggest additional lines of inquiry or thinking that might continue useful transgressions. The “great divides” covered here are disciplinary, interpretive, cultural, scalar, and political.

Disciplinary Great Divides

A central theme of this volume is the notion of further crossing the great artificial divide between history and prehistory. The chasm has undergone serious bridging over the last fifteen years, due in no small part to Lightfoot's (1995) seminal article in which he argues for the inherent and necessary similarity between prehistorians' research questions, methods, and theories and those of historical archaeologists. Coupled with the flurry of research sparked by the Columbian Quincentennial

in 1992, this push has prompted reverse flows across the disciplinary divide. On one hand, the historical archaeology of Native Americans (Rubertone 2000), or what many have termed “contact-period research,” has assumed a powerful role in contemporary historical archaeology, as usually defined. A quick perusal of the journals *Historical Archaeology* and the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, plus some of the chapters in Hall and Silliman's (2006) *Historical Archaeology*, reveal this trend. One of the interesting aspects of this current volume is that every chapter offers a version of historical archaeology, but hardly anyone refers to that subfield designation. I consider this a healthy and appropriate decision, implicit though it probably is for some of the authors despite the call by the volume editors for careful use of terminology. Calling historical archeology such might detract from the long-term indigenous histories that the contributors seek to examine, linking the inquiry as it would to notions of written “history” and to colonial impact. Regardless of label, these archaeologists continue to shine alongside historians for their abilities and willingness to access aspects of native life far removed from written documents and for resituating historiography in the materiality of lived experiences. As Wilshusen and Hantman both demonstrate in their chapters, much remains at the edges of written history and beyond the immediate purview of traditional colonial studies.

On the other hand, archaeologists trained primarily as so-called prehistorians due to their longstanding interests in “precontact” Native Americans have begun to see the value of extending the endpoint of their studies well into the proverbial post-Columbian periods. Several contributors to this volume doubtlessly come from just such a place. Where once this traditional cadre of “prehistoric” archaeologists might have found the “historical” artifacts near the top of their excavation units mere overburden to discard, or found the cultures that these represented not pristine, distant, unfamiliar, or intact enough for the grand questions of anthropological archaeology, they now incorporate these aspects into their research. A particularly innovative move in this direction came from Pauketat and Loren's (2005) volume *North American Archaeology*, which broke with the tradition of studying the continent's archaeological record as that of Native Americans up to but not beyond the “contact period”

by adding chapters on the archaeology of Native Americans in colonial periods (Silliman 2005b), creolization between different cultural groups (Loren 2005), and other topics.

An important benefit of this continued bridging of (mis)labeled prehistory and history relates to theoretical development. The last ten years have witnessed a proliferation of historical archaeology studies of native North America that employ theoretical perspectives on agency, practice, and gender, far more than have yet to occupy the literature on “prehistoric” North America. This discrepancy both reveals and divides. It reveals that scholars on opposite sides of the divide approach their study subjects with different perspectives, sometimes encouraged by perceptions of limited datasets in the absence of written documents, but sometimes grounded in different ontologies of human experience. Many North American prehistorians still tend to see the past worlds of Native Americans framed by adaptation and evolution, whereas historical archaeologists recognize other dimensions and factors of cultural life, as contributors to this volume such as Frink and Scarry further emphasize (see another excellent example in Loren 2008). This situation will continue to divide quite unnaturally the interpretations of native cultural change and continuity before and after European colonization. Without more attention to agency, practice, and gender in the “before” scenarios, we will have a harder time tracing out the long-term patterns of social and cultural relations and will run the risk of making it appear as though native people did not have (or find?) agency until they confronted European peoples, institutions, and impacts. This is untenable.

The issue of incorporating studies of more recent Native American pasts into historical archaeology implicates more than the policing of disciplinary boundaries; it has profound political implications as well. Contemporary Native American communities frequently face public opinions and government claims about disappearance, inauthenticity, or cultural impurity due in part to widely held perceptions about a disconnect between so-called history and prehistory. Although such issues extend far beyond the immediate power of archaeology, we should understand by now the contributions that archaeology frequently makes to this arena.

By not consistently including the most recent periods in studies of native North America, archaeologists have contributed to the idea that

Native American lives and issues in the era of post-1492 North America do not warrant attention on par with the seemingly more exotic or unique aspects of ancient North America or, worse, that contemporary and historical Native Americans are irreparably severed from their prehistoric ancestors. Recent literature has tried to redirect that path to these intervening or later periods (Lightfoot 2006; Silliman 2009). The work of Dobyns (1991) and Dunnell (1991) contributed much force to the idea of significant breaks between “precontact” and “postcontact” native groups due to disease-induced demographic collapse, the latter scholar arguing that ethnographic and contemporary sources on native cultural practices have no utility for understanding their ancestral ways. Fortunately, archaeologists have trended in the direction opposite of the one encouraged by such talk of severance (Lightfoot 1995). For instance, in this volume, Kulisheck recasts the demographic argument from the perspective of Pueblo mobility and social structure, revealing that initial disease loads from Spanish presence did not lead to inevitable population collapse. What fostered continued population decline in the Southwest were the militarization of non-Pueblo people and the increasingly heavier colonial hand of the Spanish, which forces the recognition of cultural and political forces rather than just a kind of ecological imperialism.

In addition, the growing number of collaborative projects between archaeologists and native communities to study indigenous histories signals, among many other things, a recognition of the value of contemporary native insights into their own pasts (e.g., Kerber 2006; Silliman 2008). Given how many of these collaborative projects now concern what we think of as historical archaeology, they also demonstrate a commitment to recovering more information about the periods that link contemporary groups to their more distant pasts. Further, they suggest a greater salience for contemporary indigenous people of perspectives that focus on issues other than adaptation and evolution, such as agency, history, and cultural meanings.

Interpretive Great Divides

While the divide between “prehistoric” and “historical” archaeology continues to be bridged, archaeologists have to confront how to study long-term native histories before, in, and across the periods characterized

by European colonialism. The problem is not really how archaeologists might study centuries, if not millennia, of cultural change and continuity, for this skill set already exists in the discipline's repertoire, but rather how to deal with the appearance of European colonizers and colonialism as a key factor. A paramount question tackled by the contributors to this volume is: How do we respect the transformative periods of colonialism but not render them decisive, completely destructive, or detached from indigenous histories and intergroup interactions? Similarly, how do we show native participants as active—sometimes with equal or greater political, economic, or military power when compared to colonists, but other times with little control over aspects of the large, overarching process? As Mitchell and Scheiber outline, this is a process of narration with deeply entrenched tropes drawn from cultures of colonialism.

One approach involves cutting to the core of the interpretive language used to represent or study these issues. How exactly do we refer to these periods and processes? Do we study them as contact periods and processes of culture contact, or do we study them as colonialism (Silliman 2003a) and cultural entanglement (Jordan 2009; Jordan, this volume)? The seminar reached no full consensus on this, other than to conclude that we lack a proper term altogether, despite a growing dissatisfaction with notions of culture contact. I have preferred to consider these various entanglements within the realm of colonialism—not the colonialism that equals colonization, total domination, finality, and the proverbial fatal impact, but the colonialism understood by postcolonial theorists as a series of colonial projects with multiple agents (see Thomas 1994)—but others, such as Jordan in this volume, find that such a term may be too top-heavy and not grant space for those cases across North America when European colonizers had a more tenuous hold *vis-à-vis* native resistance and tolerance. We may have to consider the possibility that no term captures all of these experiences, but we need to remember, as Mitchell and Scheiber state in the introduction, that we are already embedded in colonial discourse and that great variability exists in colonial cultures and native agencies. If we retreat from such meta-terms, we must be vigilant not to let our archaeological studies drift from the work of colleagues in cultural anthropology, ethnic studies, literature, history, and other realms who study the multiple faces of colonialism. We need multidisciplinary dialogue, not insularity. Whatever we do,

we must find ways to talk about the intersections of cultural histories without necessarily foretelling the conclusion of full-scale colonialism, a point worried over by some contributors (Jordan, Kulisheck) to this book. Just because a rearview mirror reveals the broader scope of colonial developments does not mean that past actors, whether intended colonizers or colonized, had the same objectives or anticipations in mind.

Similarly, do archaeological studies have any use for labels such as prehistory, protohistory, and history when talking about these issues, given that these so-called periods start at different times for different groups and come laden with considerable baggage? As Mitchell and Scheiber capture in the introduction, the seminar participants generally agreed that perhaps these should fade from our lexicon, since they have too much problematic salience in the public imagination (i.e., dinosaurs are prehistoric) and not enough nuance to do anything but pigeonhole periods based on the presence and impact of Europeans and their attendant writing systems. We should be wary of assigning chronologies based on the presence of certain artifacts for the way it privileges forces external to native cultural trajectories and allows temporal signifiers to undermine the very conceptualizations of long-term indigenous histories.

The core problem is the way in which period names become proxies for cultural processes. Does labeling a “contact period” lead us into envisioning all interactions therein with a “culture contact” framework, even when they are clearly colonial? Do we stop referring to a period as colonial (such as after the American Revolution for the eastern United States or after the Mexican Revolution for the Southwest and California) simply because the overseas colonies of emerging nations like England and Spain became independent, even while settler policies regarding the indigenous people on whose land they still occupied remained fundamentally colonial? Are native technologies first considered prehistoric, even when found to continue into so-called “contact” or “historic” periods? Can they change across just a handful of years in the hands of the same individual who lived across the presumed divide that archaeologists have created as part of their disciplinary taxonomies? This seems unlikely, so we need conceptual and terminological schemes to handle the situations.

I argue that the solution requires devising ways to talk about artifacts that tell history rather than those that just tell time. Conflating period

and artifact labels seems to confuse matters. Perhaps this indicates a need to have separate temporal terms and processual terms, or perhaps it means talking about time by calendars, events, or even indigenous memories of time rather than by ongoing cultural processes that would have to be abbreviated or singled out to name a period. Under the encouragement of the astute editors in chapter 1, some authors in this volume have chosen to move more toward calendrical time rather than periodized time to see if this might help to unlink interpretive directions from temporal labels. I think it offers one of the more innovative contributions of this book.

Cultural Great Divides

Another type of great divide in the long-term study of native histories in North America is the one, both real and imagined, between colonizer and colonized, between European and Indian. I take no space here to discuss the very real differences between Europeans and Native Americans in the last five hundred years on the continent; besides, several of the chapters herein provide contours of those differences. What deserves some attention, though, is the homogenizing way that archaeologists (plus anthropologists, historians, and others) characterize the historical actors in the grand drama and imagine their fundamental differences as colonizer and colonized. Understanding difference is not the same thing as assuming it ahead of time, especially when the categories of difference used by historical scholars frequently mirror those lodged in the broader cultural imagination as a result of colonialism. The problem of how to research a phenomenon with legacies in the very frameworks of interpretation is one that postcolonial scholars, such as Thomas (1991, 1994) and Stoler (1992), have been studying in anthropology. Most contributors other than Hantman and Mitchell and Scheiber in this book do not engage specifically with postcolonial ideas, but the influences of this way of thinking can be felt throughout. More attention to the specific languages of postcoloniality in North American archaeology may help to refine these positions and sharpen their impacts (Preucel and Cipolla 2008; Silliman 2010b).

A way to bridge this divide involves balancing broader ideas about comparative colonialism with textured, local cases (see Mitchell and

Scheiber, this volume). Not only does this ground colonial and indigenous histories in real contexts with significant variation, but it also counters the broader national and cultural narratives about colonialism in North America. We move beyond thinking of past interactions as having taken place between Europeans and Indians, broadly speaking. Instead, in this volume, we have Yup'ik men and women interacting as “identity collectives” with Jesuit missionaries in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Alaska (Frink), and Apalachee elite men and women with Spanish padres in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Florida (Scarry); we have Wichita men and women on the Plains engaging with the hide trade on their own terms and with their own technological choices (Vehik et al.), and Powhatan and Monacan engaging in relationships with each other as well as with English colonists at Jamestown (Hantman). We see Creek factions of “accommodationists” and “traditionalists” coming into conflict in the early nineteenth century as a result of both capitalist intrusion *and* long-standing native moral economies and social inequality (Wesson 2002, this volume). Similarly, Wagner’s chapter herein shows that a variety of Algonquian groups, following removal in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Illinois, split into factions between those termed “accommodationists” for their acceptance of European material trappings and “nativists” who explicitly rejected most, although not all, material aspects of their American neighbors and oppressors through their following of a revivalist movement headed by the Shawnee Prophet. The varieties of indigenous groups and their own internal diversities along the lines of gender, status, age, class, ethnicity, and other dimensions should not be considered simply “Native Americans” who collided with equally generic “Europeans” who might have been French, English, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, or other burgeoning nationalities with similar internal cleavages. Understanding long-term indigenous histories remains crucial for recognizing these, particularly since they have been more readily recognized by historians in the colonizer/settler populations (Simmons 1988).

Once recontextualized in their diversities and nuances, the categories of “European” and “Native American” start to lose their efficacy as categories of *artifact* analysis as well. How can we recognize the diversity of cultural encounters and entanglements and then fall back on preconceived and almost stereotyped ideas about material culture or

about food items? Why do we talk about artifacts and food remains as always already European or Native American, as though these objects cannot be recontextualized, and as though their origins offer the only salient source for meaning? Contributors to this book like Scheiber and Finley have begun to explore these issues, as have I in other venues (Silliman 2009, 2010a). Archaeologists of native histories during colonial times in North America have demonstrated time and time again how material culture drawn from European sources—both cultural and manufacturing—can be made meaningful in indigenous cultural contexts, but we have not quite found a way to talk differently about the objects themselves that does not already assume that we all know what an Indian artifact or European artifact looks like before we ever even retrieve one from the ground.

For example, is creamware always going to be a European artifact when it appears in a sifter screen or in a report (Silliman 2010a)? No one questions its origins of production in European factories—even though we could ask if it might be better termed British or might be better framed in terms of industry and class rather than of culture *per se*—or its likely origins in a colonist or settler-merchant context. However, why should it be called a European or even a British artifact if it is recovered from an archaeological site that had been occupied by three generations of Native Americans who had been using those ceramics as part of household practice? The material culture aspect offers one such instance, where creamware as a specific artifact may be at once—using for a moment those broad terms—British, Euroamerican, Native American, African, or any number of other options when found in a North American context. The social biographies of objects take on particular power in these contexts (e.g., Appadurai 1986; Turgeon 1997). We need to consider the ways in which different cultural contexts imbued these objects with meanings and, simultaneously, how these objects made possible very different cultural experiences. The same goes for food remains and their associated material culture, as Graesch, Bernard, and Noah demonstrate nicely in this book.

Returning diversity to colonial and indigenous histories requires that we account for these unique histories becoming entangled and shared. Entangled histories refer to the material culture, but also to the colonial process itself and the agencies enacted therein. This sharing

does not mean mutual responsibility, similar meanings, or lack of unique experiences, but rather implies mutually constituting elements that ran alongside uniquely differentiating ones (see Byrne 2003; Harrison 2004 for an Australian case). Hantman makes this point well in his chapter regarding the intertwined nature of Powhatan, Monacan, and English lives in the early seventeenth-century settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. All colonialism in North America did not proceed solely by the plan and execution of a grand design by all European colonists and their settler descendants, a point made more broadly by Thomas (1994). It sometimes happened that way, but other times, the settlers themselves were unsure of their own identities and of the outcomes of their decisions. Similarly, numerous cases exist in which Native Americans themselves served as willing or unwilling agents in the colonial process. They invited missionaries to their territories as part of chiefly power plays, as among the Apalachee (Scarry, this volume, 2001; Scarry and McEwan 1995; Scarry and Maxham 2002). Some indigenous groups allied with colonial militias or cavalry regiments to further their own agendas against neighboring communities, some of which may have been longstanding enemies. In more subtle and unintended ways, Native American consumers contributed to the market economy and credit/debt system when faced with little choice. The weight of the colonial, capitalist system in the eighteenth century and beyond was such that a Native American could have chosen to resist the market and refused to buy any goods from a local merchant, but he or she may have then found his or her children starving with no house for shelter.

I offer stark examples here, but they should not be read as casting blame on native people for the colonial circumstances that enveloped them. They did not seek many of the outcomes that befell them, nor could they have predicted the course of unintended consequences that followed. Instead, the cases serve as reminders that the choices, actions, and practices enacted by indigenous people on the North American continent while it underwent colonization and colonialism were complex and functioned in many registers. Archaeologists should study the short- and long-term effects of their past choices, respect their agencies and the context in which they enacted them, and avoid attributing implied post facto blame.

Scalar Great Divides

Another point to consider is the scale of history and the divides that such scales may bridge closer or open wider, depending on the context. The goal of telling indigenous histories is a commendable one for the volume, and we must be attuned to what it means to craft such histories. The volume editors propose that archaeology is well suited for the task of studying indigenous histories because it offers a long-term perspective. I could not agree more, but we must wield this interpretive power appropriately. At one level, we must be wary not to overemphasize the long-term vision of archaeology at the expense of the short term. Archaeology can also delve deeply into the short-term, lived experiences of real people rather than tackle only longer sweeps of time. Because archaeology offers one of the primary access points, along with oral history, for aspects of indigenous histories in North America that precede European colonization, it can reveal the Native American responses to European diseases, foods, peoples, and lifeways. These often happened rapidly and at microscale contexts like households, as Graesch and his colleagues highlight in their chapter.

However, these responses developed out of larger and longer contexts of cultural practices and logics, and archaeology's access to the longer term helps to frame those contexts. As a result, archaeologists rarely begin their studies of native people during the last few centuries without a full acknowledgment of precontact lifeways, as they are frequently called. Simultaneously, as book contributors such as Hantman, Jordan, Kulisheck, Wesson, and Wilshusen demonstrate nicely, archaeology can also track historical changes and continuities into and beyond these more recent periods that have more to do with indigenous issues and agencies than with just their responses to colonization. This marks a significant departure from earlier studies based on acculturation or on the primacy of colonialism because it returns independent and separate historical process to Native Americans without denying the transformative moment of colonialism and the entanglement it produced.

The question of temporal scale takes on paramount importance in this context. How far back in time do archaeologists try to narrate these indigenous histories, and how do they bear on native cultural practices and outlooks during colonial and postcolonial periods? Just because

archaeologists can access material and cultural histories that span millennia does not authorize them to deploy that extensive dataset and historical connection without good reason. Three such good reasons immediately spring to mind, though: (1) oral traditions and oral histories that link native communities to deep pasts; (2) long-term uses of particular landscapes for subsistence, social, and spiritual reasons; and (3) contemporary communities' interests in seeking material evidence that links them to particular places and things over long spans of cultural (and calendrical) time. However, privileging the long-term has drawbacks in cases in which Native American groups undergo fairly noticeable material changes in the aftermath of European colonization. Archaeologists must be careful not to miss the development of new traditions and the adjustment and hybridization of cultural forms—all elements recognized by postcolonial scholars—that operate on smaller scales of history and social memory.

More attention must be paid to the scale of social memory in these periods, for native people may draw on a mix of pasts, near and far, to craft continuities and changes in the later centuries of colonialism (Silliman 2009). As Wagner notes in this volume, the "nativists" who wanted to protect their "Indian" way of life in the Midwest in the late 1700s and early 1800s were not protecting a timeless, millennia-old suite of unchanged practices, but rather a coherent amalgamation of cultural practices that developed in preceding centuries as a result of interactions with neighboring Native Americans and Europeans. Wilshusen demonstrates in his chapter that the development of Diné cultural identity and distinctiveness in the Southwest began at least a century or more before the Spanish entrada into the region, although the colonial presence affected some of its development trajectories and it did not emerge as uniquely Navajo until the first half of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, the Pueblo situation studied by Kulisheck in his chapter contribution reveals that a longer time span, from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth century, better illuminates the demographic and cultural issues at play in spite of and because of the Spanish. Therefore, archaeologists should make sure that they conduct diachronic studies (e.g., Lightfoot 1995), but not just seek connections as far back as they can make them. In other words, every study of Native Americans just before or after colonial intrusion should not recount the archaeological history of the region from Paleoindians

onward. What matters is how people in the past lived their own pasts rather than how we think they should have or how we think they might have, since we can see the repertoire of their own material and practical histories that might have been at their disposal.

These will vary by context, by cultural group, and by involvement in colonial institutions and pressure from colonial governments and settlers. Most archaeological research on culture contact and colonialism in native North America still focuses on situations with indigenous communities that may be autonomous and outside of direct colonial/settler oversight, that may interact on a somewhat level economic and political playing field with European colonists, and that may be quite early in date with respect to the development or impact of full-blown colonialism across North America. Such contexts may necessitate particular analytical and temporal frameworks, since the connections of those indigenous groups to their so-called "precontact" cultural practices remain immediate and proximate. They certainly give us ample opportunity to discuss the origins of native "success stories" in the face of colonialism. Being able to rebound or resist does not efface colonialism, but rather emphasizes the persistence of long-standing cultural practices and values as the result of agency and struggle, as Jordan demonstrates in this book. Similarly, cultural change and continuity, if not ethnogenesis, frequently happened rather independently of colonialism, a point well articulated by Wilshusen's chapter for the Athapaskan-speakers of the Southwest when compared to the Pueblo communities impacted by the Spanish.

Slightly different challenges await the study of indigenous people after several generations, if not centuries, of colonial entanglement that might have involved missionization, reservation systems, labor requirements, forced relocation, heavy warfare, and other such contexts. Shifts may have taken place in the depth of social memory, the development of new traditions or the modifications of old ones, the need to enter the market and workplace to survive, and the inability of communities to remain completely autonomous. As Scarry and Hantman both note in their respective chapters, greater time of exposure between Native Americans and European settlers led to more potential for indigenous people to build knowledge about their intruders and neighbors, which may have affected later decisions and agencies from those put in place

at first contact. This invokes the contingency and positionality noted by Hantman. The development and refinement of new knowledges—perhaps distinctively *indigenous* knowledges that situated newcomers and novel experiences in the context of long-term cultural logics and worldviews (e.g., Sahlins 1981, 1985)—remains understudied but important for setting long-term contexts through and beyond colonial periods. These contexts of indigenous survival link the earlier "success stories" with the later contemporary native groups. Without studying them, archaeologists contribute little to stemming the public trend of seeing some contemporary Native Americans as inauthentic fabrications because the only comparisons available are those earlier periods and not those middle periods that followed.

In general, most contributors to this volume focus on the earlier, less entangled periods, but intriguing exceptions and extensions exist. Frink discusses the Jesuit church experience as a scene for gender and cultural renegotiation for Yup'ik women, a context that worked in this way due to the intersection of long-term indigenous cultural patterns and mercantilism and the Russian Orthodox Church from prior colonial periods. Wagner identifies in his chapter different communities in the Midwest that chose explicitly to conform to or to resist settler material ways through the venue of lenses of removal and revitalization. Scheiber and Finley talk about the relatively autonomous Mountain Shoshone, but in the context of Manifest Destiny and the development of Yellowstone National Park in the late nineteenth century. Jordan's chapter discusses Iroquoian/Haudenosaunee histories somewhat independently of colonial intrusion but does note the colonial contexts, such as the scorched-earth campaigns of Sullivan in the eighteenth century, that framed some of their later reactions. Finally, Hantman and Scarry both focus on relatively early periods in their respective chapters, but they take an often omitted next step that traces out the implications for descendants and contemporary politics that deepens the understanding of colonialism and indigenous histories.

Yet ending a discussion of scalar great divides would be premature without considering the spatial scale as well. Events, process, and cultural meanings take place across space as much as time. Lightfoot (1995) has argued cogently for archaeologists to consider colonial and indigenous histories from a multiscale perspective, one that invokes both time and

space. Authors in this volume expand that spatial aspect in interesting ways. Jordan provides a good case for why studies that privilege “One Site Against the World” do not permit an understanding of the broader spatial scales of cultural actions and tend to ensure the inevitability of domination when these single sites seem too miniscule against the broader world systems of capitalism and colonialism. His summary of survey and excavation data from a large Iroquois region around the Great Lakes takes us a step closer to seeing real indigenous innovation, survival, changing community interconnections, and perhaps equal economic and military power *vis-à-vis* the Europeans in the initial periods of cultural entanglement.

A key to understanding native spatial scales for contributors in this volume is mobility, a much-neglected topic of social consequence in an archaeological literature rife with ecological interpretations of mobility patterns. The volume offers refreshing alternatives, revealing as it does the fluidity of spatial scales for cultural action. Kulisheck’s chapter reveals how a broader spatial scale of Pueblo life also negates the idea of inevitable demographic collapse and turns attention to distinctly Pueblo mobility and cultural practices that play out across a wider landscape. Wilshusen reveals how Athapaskan speakers maintained separate and perhaps more demographically sustainable mobility patterns up to and throughout Spanish presence in the Southwest. Scheiber and Finley discuss the ways in which Mountain Shoshone people extracted themselves from rather harsh settler contexts in the northern Plains and Rocky Mountains by moving to high-altitude contexts, a move that fostered some initial immunity and autonomy. Frink talks about the ways in which Yup’ik people used mobility for social strategy and had missionaries perceiving these spaces outside the primary settlement as dangerous.

Political Great Divides

A final type of divide that this volume helps to mend concerns the connections between politics and archaeology. The days when archaeologists could study indigenous histories without acknowledging people who come from those pasts, without trying to work with descendent communities, without considering the legacies of colonialism that impact the current world (including the academic and public practice of archaeol-

ogy), and without thinking about the implications of even conducting archaeological research on Native American history have long passed (e.g., Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2007; Silliman 2008). This does not mean that all archaeologists have bid those days farewell (and it certainly does not mean that non-archaeologists have done anything close enough to that either), but this volume demonstrates that more and more archaeologists have moved in a direction that respects these politics while not being determined by them. Hantman’s engagement with the politics of commemoration at Jamestown in this book illustrates these issues quite well, as it serves to fracture long-standing public narratives about colonial history in North America with solid archaeological and historical analysis (see also Gallivan 2007; Hantman 1990).

Revisiting standard colonial histories offers one step in the direction of reorienting archaeology’s various publics to richer, more nuanced pasts, but archaeologists also intersect the fundamental issues of cultural identity, authenticity, and materiality that have profound implications in the present. Federal agencies, tribal authorities, courts, historical societies, developers, and others call upon archaeologists to establish or evaluate Native American claims to their lands, their histories, and their ancestral materials, whether as artifacts or human remains. The Kennewick Man/Ancient One debate captures this in its extreme (Burke et al. 2008). Yet striving for more postcolonial interpretive models, as highlighted above, runs the risk of dissolving the essentialized identities that many presume to be required under laws like the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) because such postcolonial perspectives reveal fluidity and hybridity in cultural negotiations (Gosden 2001). However, Liebmann (2008) and Silliman (2009), in their independent ways, have demonstrated how studies of what Liebmann astutely calls “routes, not roots” of native cultural and historical genealogies can provide appropriate contextual models that show the dynamics of cultural change and continuity within an understanding of community persistence. These have powerful implications for questions of heritage, identity, and repatriation.

Even when not doing this explicitly, the language we use to talk about history — contact/colonialism, prehistoric/protohistoric/historic, Native American/European artifacts — conveys metaphors far deeper than simple categories of analysis or even a kind of short-hand nomenclature. Show

any visitor to Jamestown, Virginia; St. Augustine, Florida; or Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, a series of objects such as guns, lithic tools, glass beads, ceramics produced in England, and a glass bottle, and I predict that the vast majority will invariably seemingly *know* how to categorize them with a cultural, if not temporal, identity. That is, they will be able to state which ones are “Indian” and which ones are “European,” and they would not hesitate to attribute them to “prehistoric” or “historic” periods, even though the lithic artifacts could be from either. This common-sense knowledge stems from embedded cultural assumptions that archaeologists have drawn upon themselves and in return encouraged, rather than any real engagement with a specific cultural context. Many of these categories are direct legacies of colonial encounters and entangled histories. Authors in this book have positioned themselves to make a difference in this realm by further closing the interpretive great divide discussed earlier.

Archaeologists do not just confront the politics of the “general public”; they also face the complexities of politics within and between indigenous communities. The competition over history and land does not just play out between natives and nonnatives, and archaeologists and archaeological data can be pulled into the center of controversy. For instance, Wesson’s chapter identifies divisions among the contemporary Creek (the Poarch Band in Alabama and the Muskogee Creek Nation in Oklahoma) that may well have stemmed from the factions that developed in the early nineteenth century and certainly remained or revived thanks to the encouragement of a capitalist milieu. In addition, Wilshusen’s contribution tackles a subject—Navajo and Apache origins—that has a number of individuals invested in the answers to that question who may or may not be convinced of the multiple lines of evidence he uses to craft his argument for centuries of Diné life in the Navajo homeland from the fifteenth century onward.

Finally, different native communities may seek different narratives of their cultural lives over the last five hundred years. Perhaps some want to foreground the hardships of colonialism to accentuate their struggles, document their persistence despite great toil, and insist on the reality of those legacies today. Perhaps others want to talk about their past in ways that do not foreground colonialism, especially if not doing so might reveal their powers to resist, to exist autonomously, and to react to but

not be determined by European peoples, material goods, plants, animals, genes, and diseases (Jordan, this volume). The most appropriate type of narrative will be hard to know or predict without careful community collaboration and some attentiveness to the political arenas of knowledge production and dissemination in archaeology. I hope that some of the book contributors will attend more to these matters. The key will be to remember the interrelated power of conceptual tools, empirical data, and present politics as we shape those histories about a complex North American past.

Conclusion

The presence of a volume such as this and the careful attention its contributors pay to terms, concepts, and nuanced case studies reveal how far the study of long-term indigenous histories has come in North American archaeology. Thanks to the innovative and complex work of archaeologists in the 1980s and 1990s, the last two decades of North American archaeology have seen a florescence of studies of Native American history that crosscut the traditional history/prehistory divide. These have become more attuned to postcolonial theory than just remaining mired in concepts inherited from colonial perspectives, more concerned with materiality than simply material things, more attentive to historical processes than continuing to make assumptions about culture and people, and more integrated into contemporary communities and political realities. This is very much a process of decolonization of theory, method, terminology, and practice, as the introductory chapter has nicely illuminated. These refinements promise to further render the divides discussed in this chapter—disciplinary, interpretive, cultural, scalar, and political—things of the discipline’s past.

If we make these divides obsolete, then instead of crossing, bridging, or transgressing borders, perhaps we will have filled these chasms so that we can move freely across those disciplinary spaces. Doing so will permit us to speak to more than just our archaeology colleagues. The studies represented herein—and there are others taking place in North America, from the Canadian Arctic to northern Mexico—participate in discourses about culture, history, power, identity, materiality, and heritage with resonance far and wide. North American archaeologists

frequently lament the fact that despite our inclusion of the writings of historians, sociocultural anthropologists, native scholars, and others in our archaeological studies, these researchers and writers rarely pay attention to what we do as archaeologists. We lament this, and rightly so, in part because of academic discrimination, but we also do not recognize that we often speak and research in isolation with our concepts, terms, and audiences. This book makes strides toward increasing the potentials of that multidisciplinary discussion.

The studies and ideas contained herein speak to more than just academic colleagues in different disciplines. They also intervene in a variety of discourses well outside of academia. By tackling the issues of culture, history, power, identity, materiality, and heritage, the chapters reveal even further the necessity of situating our work within descendent indigenous communities in North America and their unique histories and perspectives; of positioning our voices in the public arena, where these issues are constantly in use but often uncritically so; and of insuring that we teach our students in ways that reflect these more nuanced approaches to the long-term histories of North America's original peoples.

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