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Book Reviews

Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology. Jane Lydon and Uzma Z. Rizvi, eds.

Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010. 503 pp.

Decolonizing Indigenous Histories: Exploring Prehistoric/Colonial Transitions in Archaeology. Maxine Oland, Siobhan M. Hart, and Liam Frink, eds.

Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2012. 300 pp.

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During the emergence of archaeology as a scientific discipline, research on Indigenous peoples and sites typically followed a colonial model focused on discovery and recovery. Sites, artifacts, and human remains were located, removed, contextualized, and displayed by explorers and outsiders; these processes often took place without the participation or consent of traditional leaders and knowledge-bearers from the population under study. These archaeological excavations enabled colonial states and scientific authorities to dominate and appropriate the intellectual and cultural property of colonial subjects. Practitioners of scientific colonialism routinely marginalized Indigenous perspectives and distorted representations of ancestral peoples, objects, and territories. They also introduced temporal, social, and typological divisions between present and past, and between theoretically "primitive" and "civilized," "historic" and "prehistoric" eras.

Postcolonial approaches to archaeology, as theory and practice, constitute more than just forms of resistance to earlier colonial models of archaeology. Postcolonial methods are, ideally, investigative, restorative, and collaborative. Practitioners examine the impacts of colonial processes, while soliciting data and insights that can expand our understanding of the archaeological record. Proponents of decolonization also seek to restore local and Indigenous perspectives and to shift the social relations around archaeology by increasing engagement with contemporary descendant communities. Two new publications examine both the history of colonial archaeologies and trends in postcolonial archaeologies; each is likely to prove influential in shaping the future of collaborative archaeologies.

Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology: Reframing Colonialism

Jane Lydon and Uzma Z. Rizvi, editors of the *Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology*, offer a collection of narratives that recount place-specific histories of colonizing archaeologies and decolonizing projects. This volume is organized into five parts, framed by introductions and

commentaries. Themes are critiques of colonialism; archaeological narratives of colonialism; issues of restitution, repatriation, and ethics; postcolonial identities; and strategies for implementing postcolonialism. Forty-five contributors from six continents represent various scientific, Indigenous, and ethnic perspectives. Each author examines colonial power relations, articulates attempts to decolonize, and proposes future projects, while weaving together regionally specific negotiations of power, identity, and history. The authors seek to disentangle archaeological theory, practice, and ethics from the limitations of colonialist thought and to recover more culturally accurate representations of local Indigenous peoples and ethnic histories.

Part I, "The Archaeological Critique of Colonization: Global Trajectories," is particularly valuable for its thoughtful discussions of the histories of archaeological practice in the Middle East, Near East, South Asia, and East Asia. Alfredo Gonzalez-Ruibal (chapter 2) examines Western searches for the origins of classical civilizations in the Middle East, linking this work to the invention of the "primitive," the consolidation of nation-state identities, and the persistence of Western intellectual dominance (45). Benjamin W. Porter (chapter 3) critiques archaeological (re)constructions of history in Palestine and Israel that bolster national narratives to legitimate contemporary social injustices. Identifying the term "Near East" as a "discursive myth," he suggests recovering local Indigenous terms (e.g., the Arabic *mashriq*) that are more historically grounded (52). Museological models are examined in the chapter by Sonya Atalay (chapter 4). She uses Anishinabe petroglyphs and prophecy representing spiral reckonings of time to acknowledge colonial ruptures while also laying foundations for postcolonial futures. Dilip K. Chakrabarti (chapter 5) argues that in South Asia, archaeologists marginalized India's Indigenous history by focusing on successive migrations rather than local communities. He also complains of the continuing intellectual marginalization of Third World scholars by First World scientists. Koji Mizoguchi (chapter 6) describes trends in East Asia (e.g., antiquarianism, Marxism, and myths of imperial genealogy) that reshaped identities and inspired new national traditions (83), and Hyung Il Pai (chapter 7) discusses how Japan mapped and manipulated Korea's ancient remains (*koseki*), relics (*ibutsu*), and scenic places (*meisho*) to service "imperial nostalgia" (99, 101). Parvel Dolukhanov (chapter 8) reveals links between political ideology and scientific research in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, focusing on several outmoded models: the rejection of cultural or ethnic categories; the embrace of Marxism; a flirtation with Aryan supremacy; and the concept of Eurasia centered on Russia (117). The commentaries to part I appear slightly tangential. Ania Loomba (chapter 9) draws distinctions between decolonizing trends in literary and archaeological research, and Thomas Patterson (chapter 10) observes the fading of the middle-class positionality that has dominated archaeology since the fifteenth century (133).

Although part II is titled "Archaeological Narratives of Colonialism," these contributions are more accurately characterized as narratives of decolonialism. Steven Silliman (chapter 11) describes the flourishing of postcolonial approaches to Native American histories of colonization, particularly in the wake of the 1992 Columbus Quincentennial. Theresa A. Singleton (chapter 13) describes a similar surge of interest in African-American colonial communities in the aftermath of the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s. Alistair Paterson (chapter 12) describes the emergence of postcolonial critiques in Australia and the increasing attention paid to social justice concerns, particularly "frontier violence and land rights" (176). The colonial history of Ireland is disentangled from that of Europe for close examination by Charles E. Orser Jr. (chapter 14), who notes that "the archaeology of Ireland has always been political, even if its political roots have been ignored, misidentified, or even denied" (210). In Africa Peter R. Schmidt and Karega-Munene (chapter 15) challenge the routine silencing and disenchantment of subaltern communities, insisting that archaeologists not ignore urgent contemporary human rights concerns. Two commentaries query the persistence of colonial ideologies in neocolonial institutions. Ashish Chadha (chapter 16) reports on the Archaeological Survey of India, and O. Hugo Benavides (chapter 17) discusses the challenges of negotiating Indigenous archaeologies in Latin America.

Part III, "Addressing/Redressing the Past: Restitution, Repatriation, and Ethics," is helpful for those seeking guidance on how decolonizing ethics and legal protocols apply to questions concerning cultural heritage and property. Two chapters provide succinct histories of repatriation practice and legislation: Jon Daehnke and Amy Lonetree's analysis of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (chapter 18), and Michael Green and Phil Gordon's review of Australian perspectives and practices (chapter 19). Green and Gordon note that despite persisting challenges, repatriation has increased the circulation (and accuracy) of Indigenous data and inspired increasing collaboration with Australian Aboriginal communities. Peter Veth (chapter 20) suggests that archaeologists intervene to help resolve discords between Western law and Indigenous knowledge concerning tribal title. Alexander Bauer (chapter 21) provides a review of recent disputes over Indigenous property. The chapter by Lina Tahan (chapter 22) illustrates how such disputes were shaped (and are perpetuated) by museum practices in France and Lebanon. Commentaries by Magnus Fiskejo (chapter 23) and Joost Fontein (chapter 24) reflect upon the degree to which theoretically "universal" categories tend to mask and silence Indigenous voices, and they examine strategies of memorializing captured pasts. Fiskejo's discussion of the 2002 Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums offers a particularly provocative outline of the rationale that underlies elite museums' ideologies of possession and the poignancy of their "loss of the power to define history" (307).

Part IV, "Colonial and Postcolonial Identities," investigates a range of concerns surrounding identity politics and Indigenous continuity. The contributors grapple with various methods of identity formation that link colonized peoples to the past, enable assertions of contemporary identity, and provoke scientific conflicts. Lousie Strobeck (chapter 25) suggests that feminist theory and gendered perspectives could expand our understandings of Indigenous experience and inspire more multivocal fieldwork. Sarah Croucher (chapter 26) argues that the cultural-historical model of cultural identity served colonial political goals by presuming that acculturation, rather than accommodation or creolization, would result from cultural contact. She calls upon archaeologists to address the antiquated "taxonomy of library catalogs, past reports, and museum interpretations" that contradict contemporary Indigenous identities (360). The inequalities and ambiguities of class and race, amid archaeologies of capitalism, are examined by Gavin Lucas (chapter 27). Paul Mullins (chapter 28) expands upon this topic, and challenges recent archaeological dismissals of race (as a social construction) by tracing inequalities that persist in the present. In her commentary, Whitney Battle-Baptiste (chapter 29) provides a personal African-American female perspective that emphasizes the "different voice from which racialized minorities and other oppressed communities speak" (390). John Norder (chapter 30) critiques the use of the Indigenous body "as a tool to empower the master narrative of anthropology" (394) and cautions against the use of DNA analysis. Scientific tools may scientifically adjudicate some aspects of Indigenous relationships, but they can also violate the sanctity of the iconic "ancestral body" (397).

Part V, "Strategies of Practice: Implementing the Postcolonial Critique," promises a broad survey of new approaches to decolonizing practices, including new forms of engagement with communities and public stakeholders. Three chapters propose new theoretical interpretations; other chapters discuss practical modes of implementing decolonized relations on the ground. The section opens with a strong contribution from Fernando Armstrong-Fumero and Julio Hoil Gutierrez (chapter 31), who focus on community partnership and local perceptions of land, memory, and heritage among the Yucatec Maya in Mexico. They call particular attention to issues of class by noticing the lack of substantive engagement with the "Maya-speaking laborers who work as groundskeepers, excavators, and masons in research and restoration projects" (407). Living relations with ancestral spirits come to the fore in Liam Brady and Joe Crouch's (chapter 32) discussion of community archaeology efforts among Torres Strait Islanders. They articulate a partnership of extended kin that explicitly includes "living Islanders, dead Islanders, and archaeologists," mediated by their differing relations to the same material culture (422). In the first of three theoretical chapters, Martin Nakata and Bruno David (chapter 33) pose multiple questions about the power dynamics that complicate collaborative efforts. They propose the use of "Indigenous standpoint theory" to prioritize "the locale,

agency, and tensions that sit in this cultural interface" of contested knowledge (437). Lynn Meskell (chapter 34) describes her philosophy of long-term immersion as the most appropriate means of conducting ethnographic research in South Africa, but does not extrapolate that as a given elsewhere. Sandra Sham (chapter 35) distinguishes public interest archaeology from community archaeology, by identifying it as shallow "hypertext," complete with subtext and drama, with (theoretically) little scientific purpose (463). Her suggestion that public interest archaeology trivializes and commercializes the past appears ill-informed, in light of the successes of tribal museums (e.g., the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, and the Anishinaabe exhibition described by Atalay in chapter 4 of this volume) that challenge visitors' stereotypes by linking present and past. In the commentaries Peggy Reeves Sanday (chapter 36) champions public interest anthropology from a different philosophical standpoint; she promotes ethnographic research as a viable method of raising awareness for social change. The volume ends with contrasting statements by Carol McDavid and Fred McGhee (chapter 37), who seek strategies for "creative, moral, and practical" ways to link archaeologists and descendant communities as stakeholders in cultural resource management (481), but who have not reached agreement about the best applicable approach.

For additional in-depth discussions of how decolonial, postcolonial, and collaborative theories and methodologies can be implemented, readers are encouraged to turn to two other recent volumes: Sonya Atalay's *Community-Based Archaeology: Research with, by, and for Indigenous and Local Communities* (University of California Press, 2012) and Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh and T. J. Ferguson's *Collaboration in Archaeological Practice: Engaging Descendant Communities* (AltaMira Press, 2008).

Decolonizing Indigenous Histories: A Focus on Transitions

The volume *Decolonizing Indigenous Histories: Exploring Prehistoric/Colonial Transitions in Archaeology*, edited by Maxine Oland, Siobhan M. Hart, and Liam Frink, features a selection of case studies from Africa, Australia, Mesoamerica, North America, and South America that examine distinct Indigenous locales at multiple scales. As in *The Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology*, these editors critique colonial influences, but *Decolonizing Indigenous Histories* has a thematic rather than a broadly global focus. The editors deliver a carefully targeted critique of the routine temporal and cultural division between "precolonial" (prehistoric) and "colonial" (historic) categories. Identifying this divide as an artifice of colonialist thought, they call attention to the broad timespan and cultural depth of Indigenous histories.

The case studies in *Decolonizing Indigenous Histories* are, in general, more detailed than those in *The Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology*. Thirteen contributors address three linked themes—critiques of colonial thought, transitions at multiple scales, and historical trajectories of

decolonizing—in a framework that highlights evidence of Indigenous persistence and negotiations in the midst of colonial encounters. Colonialism is situated as a series of events and interactions that intersected with Indigenous societies, rather than as a hegemonic organizing framework that constricted Indigenous agency. By positioning Indigenous perspectives and practices at the center of their archaeological research, the authors illustrate how colonialism constituted not a rupture in Indigenous continuity but a distinct and measurable event in the long ongoing span of Indigenous history.

Oland, Hart, and Frink propose that "archaeologies of transitions" can serve as a means to shift power differentials between colonizers and Indigenous peoples and recover histories otherwise "lost in translation" (2). They promote collaboration with Indigenous communities and urge archaeologists to engage with Indigenous histories, foreground Indigenous perspectives, and sensitively consider social, political, legal, and other relevant contexts (4). Further, they encourage a comparative approach, insisting that local efforts to decolonize "also need to be connected to global processes and practice" (6). All the authors in this volume offer in-depth analyses of empirical evidence from specific sites and demonstrate multiple ways to recover evidence of Indigenous cultures and histories. They encourage forms of cross-disciplinary research that can complement archaeological excavations: ethnohistorical interviews, archival documentation, oral traditions, phenomenological experiences, consultation with descendant communities, and collaboration with Indigenous knowledge-bearers.

Part I, "Beyond Dichotomies and Colonial Categories," revisits Indigenous experiences of colonial encounters and materialities at sites in the Americas and Australia. The first two articles point to the under-analyzed complexity of Indigenous agency and strategy in the Americas during the cross-cultural encounters that characterized the "historic" period. Matthew Liebmann (chapter 2) calls attention to variability and innovation during the historic period at Jemez Pueblo, and Enrique Rodríguez-Alegría (chapter 3) analyzes the ceramic distribution of Spanish majolica pottery at Xaltocan, Mexico. Alistair Paterson (chapter 4) similarly assesses Aboriginal Australian uses of rock art as artifact, text, and social medium, while identifying Indigenous people as keen observers (and critics) of colonial activities. Siobhan M. Hart's (chapter 5) carefully negotiated engagement with regional stakeholders at an Indigenous heritage site in North America reveals persisting patterns of misdirection that have obscured Indigenous histories.

The case histories in part II, "Scales of Transitions," examine varying scales of temporal and spatial analysis, while considering regional relations that pre- and postdated colonial encounters. Each illustrates the impact of colonial encounters amid other experiences that shaped and reshaped regional identities. Steven Silliman's (chapter 6) account of collaboration with the Eastern Pequot

Tribal Nation emphasizes the relevance of local family and household histories. François Richard's (chapter 7) work with West African Siin people takes a similar tack, by mining oral traditions and historical archives to counter the dominance of Eurocentric narratives. In Ghana, Ann Stahl (chapter 8) attends to genealogical perspectives that effectively record "how both 'tradition' and innovation were produced (through material practice)" (163). In Belize, Maxine Oland (chapter 9) uses archival and archaeological evidence to illustrate how Spanish colonization intersected with three centuries of community restructuring. Steven A. Wernke (chapter 10) analyzes households in Peru that show the persistence of Indigenous Inkaic social structures, in the midst of Spanish domination. Stacie M. King (chapter 11) examines the multiethnic region of Nejapa in Oaxaca, Mexico, to discern similar social complexities in multi-generational Zapotec, Aztec, and Spanish influences.

Part III, "Reflections: Found in Transitions," offers brief but significant commentaries from two prominent scholars of North American colonialism. Patricia E. Rubertone, in "Archaeologies of Colonialism in Unexpected Times and Unexpected Places" (chapter 12), suggests that "effective use of the diachronic perspective afforded by the archaeological record" to interpret Indigenous histories is not as simple as it might seem. The act of recovering visions of the lived past "mandates the creative synergy of integrative methodologies and fertile imaginations" (270). She particularly calls for critically informed studies of postcolonial locales that are not typically examined closely by archaeologists in search of Indigenous histories (e.g., cities, lumber camps, local heritage sites; 278). In "Lost in Translation: A Retrospective," Kent Lightfoot (chapter 13) praises the dramatic advances in comparative studies of colonial entanglements and collaborative research partnerships, and the increasing sophistication of colonial research beyond classical temporal divides. He notes the inherently political implications of colonial studies amid increasing scrutiny (and litigation) of Indigenous identity, and he marks the reversal of the "fatal impact" model that attempted to erase Indigenous continuity in the Americas (288–89). These integrative essays emphasize the usefulness of global perspectives in understanding complex processes of cultural interaction and transformation over time, while also suggesting that archaeology can (and should) contribute to contemporary efforts toward social justice.

Applied Collaboration in Postcolonial Archaeology

Taken together, these edited collections effectively summarize the important shifts in archaeological theory and practice that have shaped decolonizing efforts and colonial studies over the past few decades. They highlight new research that reflects postcolonial innovations and increased collaboration with Indigenous informants in far-flung locales. As part of a curriculum in archaeological decolonizing, these books effectively complement each other without repetition. It must be noted, however, that neither functions as a "handbook," per se. There are no guidelines,

no glossaries, no lists of contacts, and a mere handful of charts and maps. Instead, each book employs a discursive and analytical approach to examine past and present archaeological practices in diverse regions around the world through a decolonizing lens. Although the particular examples in each volume might appear, at first glance, to be too diverse and distinct to serve as general models, each reveals a different facet of colonial power and a useful set of tactics for decolonizing.

Critics of postcolonialism argue that correctives to colonial theory and practice are unnecessary, positing the claim that archaeology is an impartial scientific endeavor, and that decolonizing advocates are merely arguing for Indigenous exceptionalism (e.g., McGhee 2008). Yet the history of archaeology is inextricably entangled with European imperialist exceptionalism, and the routine categorization of all non-white non-Europeans as "Others." As George Nicholas and Julie Hollowel note, "Archaeology has never been a politically neutral enterprise. . . . Its practitioners (both amateur and professional) have appropriated, possessed, and controlled someone else's cultural heritage." They suggest that colonial frameworks embedded in the discipline must change to ensure "that archaeology will sustain itself as relevant and ethical social theory and practice" in the future (Nicholas and Hollowel 2010, 13–14).

The Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology answers potential skeptics by demonstrating how decolonizing archaeologies can intersect with, differ from, and improve upon traditional (colonial) archaeological practices. It highlights natural linkages among collaborative, decolonizing, and Indigenous approaches to archaeology, using cases that inspire new research questions and new categories of analysis. This text constitutes a wide-ranging history of colonialism in archaeology that can provoke useful thought about what future changes in the discipline could look like. *Decolonizing Indigenous Histories* makes a particularly crucial contribution to the field of decolonizing by critiquing notions of time and transitions. Archaeologists have routinely employed temporal categories as a means of grafting their assumptions about social development onto the past, thereby situating (if not constructing) materials and societies. More nuanced conceptions of fluidity and continuity are long overdue.

The postcolonial models described in both volumes encourage collaboration and communication at virtually every stage of research: identifying sites; developing research questions; employing cross-cultural teams of research partners; mitigating threats to sensitive sites and data; categorizing and curating materials; and sharing research results with communities, among others. Innovative epistemologies and methodologies are called for, as are careful analyses, at multiple scales and from multiple perspectives, of the material remains and traces of past peoples, events, artifacts, ecosystems, political relations, and land formations. The project of decolonizing calls for particularly significant shifts in perception and practice. Instead of pursuing research "on" and

"about" a group (implying the objectifying and distancing of research subjects), archaeologists can aim to work "with" and "for" (a language that emphasizes inclusive and reciprocal relationships; Nicholas et al. 2008, 294). This inclusiveness is essential if one seeks to recover data from Indigenous or minority communities who have been misrepresented or marginalized in the past. For example, comparative data derived from oral traditions and Indigenous knowledges can shed new light on old archaeological findings (e.g., Atalay 2012; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008).

The case studies in both volumes align with the principles outlined in the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) Code of Ethics (1990) vis-à-vis collaborative and Indigenous archaeology. Those principles aim to acknowledge and recognize Indigenous ownership and relationships with cultural heritage, while also recognizing "Indigenous methodologies for interpreting, curating, managing and protecting indigenous cultural heritage." Archaeologists are urged to establish "equitable partnerships and relationships between Members and indigenous peoples whose cultural heritage is being investigated" (WAC 1990). The implementation of these principles requires consideration of both epistemological and logistical concerns: What kinds of knowledges will guide future archaeological practices? How will the products of archaeology be used, controlled, and curated? How will understandings of heritage be publicly represented and communicated in ways that support social justice? Can the successes gained from a unique case in one locale be effectively replicated elsewhere?

The commentaries that close each section, in both books, suggest that archaeologists might answer some of these questions by encouraging more collaboration across anthropological subfields and by reaching out to Indigenous communities. Archaeologists should also seek to collaborate with academic colleagues in other disciplines (e.g., history, folklore, literature, art), and with scholars in Native American and Indigenous Studies, as a means to transgress the artificial divisions imposed by classical academe and gain greater insights into the materiality and ephemerality of human expressions over time. Most important, these volumes exemplify the utility of the global comparative approach promoted by the World Archaeological Congress. Readers will not come away with a single set of one-size-fits-all guidelines; instead, they will gain an understanding of the complexity of decolonizing challenges, the depth of the postcolonial critique, the diversity of worldwide concerns, the potential for collaborative research, and the range of questions that demand site-specific answers. Collaborative research implies cooperative relationships, and these will demand considerable effort as archaeologists strive to initiate and maintain ongoing dialogue and negotiation among scientists, subjects, and stakeholders. However, new understandings of material and intellectual data and more nuanced interpretations of the past are guaranteed to emerge as a result.

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