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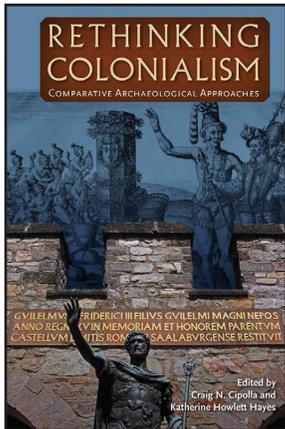
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Rethinking Colonialism: Comparative Archaeological Approaches

Craig N. Cipolla and Katherine Howlett Hayes, editors. 2015. University Press of Florida. 252 pp., 15 figures, 10 maps. \$79.95 (hardcover).

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Colonialism involves the acquisition of full or partial control over another country, occupying it with settlers and exploiting it financially. The edited volume *Rethinking Colonialism: Comparative Archaeological Approaches* provides a series of essays that bring together spatially and temporally disparate narratives to examine colonialism and its impacts on communities in the past and present. The editors repeatedly emphasize two key components of colonialism: it is both highly variable and also an ongoing phenomenon. The latter of these points is at odds with the opinion of many, who view colonialism as a historical concept that plays no role in modern life. This narrow perspective fails to recognize that many of the colonized and their descendants still live with the effects of colonialism. Craig N. Cipolla and Katherine Howlett Hayes have brought together an edited volume that uses the lens of comparative colonialism to examine both its historical and modern responses. A comparative approach is useful for drawing together generalizable concepts including the imposition or resistance to colonial power, and also assessing if there are common outcomes. The crosscutting perspective allows for critical consideration of ideas and concepts associated with colonialism. It creates a space that indicates that there is much variety in the experiences of people on both sides of colonialism and these people and experiences are “variously gendered, racialized, aged, and occupied peoples of a multitude of faiths, desires, associations, and constraints” (Hayes and Cipolla 2015:1). In this review, several of the chapters are highlighted to indicate key ideas.

The stated goals of the volume are to make use of critical comparative perspectives related to the processes of colonialism, and to examine the impact of those processes on contemporary communities. Hayes and Cipolla note the importance of considering that scalar tensions, such as “the specific versus the general, the historical versus the anthropological, and the broadly drawn perspective on human history versus the local and individual experiences, help identify common concepts and categories of colonialism, and that these tensions can also be used to deconstruct those” (Hayes and Cipolla:3). The editors call for and achieve a balanced approach that recognizes the variation amongst the experiences of both the colonizers and the colonized. Most of the works within the volume meet or make a serious effort to meet the goals put forth.

Cipolla (Ch. 2), in his stand-alone chapter describes work related to the Brothertown Indians of New York and Wisconsin and the Eastern Pequot of Connecticut and the shift in architectural, material, and commemorative practices of these groups in response to

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colonialism. Paul Mullins and Timo Ylimaunu (Ch. 3) discuss the implications of using poverty as a point of entry for archaeologists (Ch. 3). Katherine Hayes' (Ch. 4) work examines the concepts of Indigeneity and Diaspora using case studies from seventeenth century sites in the eastern and western portions of the Algonquian world. Peter Wells' (Ch. 5) examines Etruscan and Greek imports and considers trade as a way of establishing ties without establishing colonial settlements, while Per Cornell (Chapter 6) examines settlements outside of the area of direct colonial control in Latin and South America and the Mediterranean. Stephen Mrozowski, D. Rae Gould, and Heather Law Pezzarossi in their chapter "Rethinking Colonialism: Indigenous Innovation and Colonial Inevitability" (Ch. 7) do an excellent job of connecting the struggles faced by current Native American groups that are compared to a static perception of indigenosity by the Federal recognition process. They question how innovation and tradition are considered as oppositional ideas rather than interdependent ones. Christina Hodge, Diana Loren, and Patricia Capone for their part (Ch. 8) examine the impacts of colonialism, Puritan values, English language education, and extensive comingling of English and Native American students in the institutional setting of Harvard College in the seventeenth century.

Richard Hingley's chapter (9) "Working with Descendent Communities in the Study of Roman Britain: Fragments of an Ethnographic Project Design" while containing little in the way of archaeological data, does explore ways that archaeologists interact with descendent communities. To be frank, when I first started into this article I was thinking several things about the title and concept of the project; "ridiculous, preposterous, how can this be applicably studied?" But by the end the chapter, Hingley had me thoroughly convinced of the importance of this project. He rightly suggests that academic and heritage resource practitioners need to more fully engage with the public and consider treating the modern British public as descendant communities of the Roman expansion and colonialism into Britain. Their communications should emphasize a wider variety of contexts, rather than focusing research on cities, forts, villas, and roads that provide a limited perspective, often excluding sites that may provide attention to the lives of slaves, women, and peasants. Most historical archaeologists in the United States have already taken steps towards widening this context. Archaeologists and heritage practitioners need to continue to work through the challenges that occur when archaeologists and descendant groups disagree with the use and meaning of places and items. The solution advocated broadly by the comparative framework of this book and within specific chapters is one of critical engagement with the impact of colonial circumstances on both our disciplinary assumptions and contemporary political and/or heritage studies. Lucio Menezes Ferreira and Pedro Paulo A. Funari (Ch. 10) document the lasting impact of colonialism and the opportunity that the impact has afforded classical archaeologists in Brazil to take a lead in the archaeological studies of slavery and resistance.

Stephen Silliman (Ch. 11) and Audrey Horning (Ch. 12) produce chapters that push to consider the role of comparative colonialism. Both acknowledge that critical comparative archaeologies of colonialism create tensions and that we should avoid trying

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to resolve the tensions that come from competing perspectives. Authors in this book state that we should rely on, and struggle with, varying viewpoints and perspectives of colonialism. We should do this because it will help us develop a broadened view of colonialism, which would help us “decolonize our language, practice, and scholarship” (Hayes and Cipolla:11). Silliman, (213) in his chapter “Comparative Colonialism and Indigenous Archaeology: Exploring the Intersections” clearly defines the benefits of comparative colonialism as: improving broader understandings of colonialism; fine tuning its applications in specific contexts; placing archaeologists in conversations about “colonies, colonization, colonialism, postcolonialism, cultural entanglement, empire, indigeneity, power, and the very fundamentals of culture change and continuity.” He then provides an examination of the critiques of indigenous archaeology. One of the main takeaways from Horning’s chapter “Comparative Colonialism: Scales of Analysis and Contemporary Resonances” is the idea that scales of analysis matter and that efforts to flatten the macro and micro scales are important, but must also be used cautiously. Other ideas that Horning sees as critical are the struggle between structure and agency; issues related to authenticity are not strictly academic; legacies of the past are critical to contemporary identity and contemporary conflict.

The volume successfully contributes to the understanding of colonialism and forcefully argues for a comparative approach to its study. The volume avoids arguing for a single form or method for studying colonialism and rather opens up a variety of tools within the umbrella of comparative colonialism. It presents a wide variety of case studies useful for considering comparative colonialism, and according to Horning it does “so in a manner that showcases rather than mutes the value of locally rooted, textually and materially informed case studies.” From my perspective, the volume achieves its goal in providing case studies that stimulate thoughtful consideration of colonialism and its impacts in both the past and present.

The volume provides theoretical and methodological case studies from a variety of contexts both geographically and temporally and as such would make a good source for a graduate or upper level undergraduate archaeological theory class. The role of comparative studies typically includes developing universal concepts or ideas and exploring those at a broader scale and this work does serve its purpose. Academic archaeologists will find this a useful resource. For those of you who may question the role of highly theoretical approaches that often exclude archaeologically collected data, there are both chapters that will support your ire and those that do make use of archaeology and material culture. I have found that after reading this book I am considering its applicability in my own work and work throughout the mid-continent region. It seems that a rethinking of colonialism is certainly possible and likely necessary. Cipolla and Hayes and the contributing authors have provided a useful resource for that reevaluation.