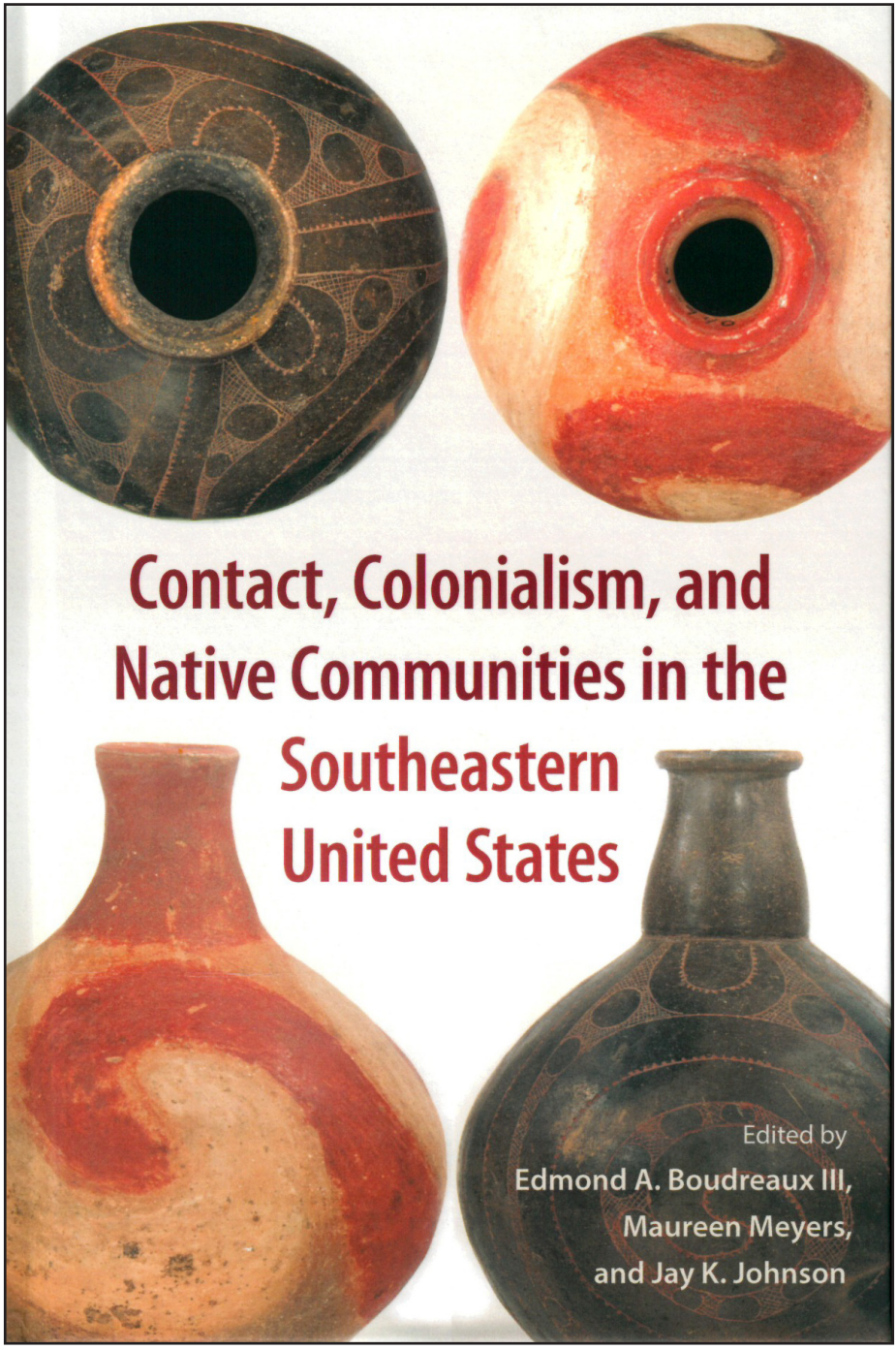

CONTENTS

"An important volume that will become an indispensable resource, providing a much-needed update on early contact in the North American Southeast with a rich emphasis on the agency and social lives of past indigenous communities."
—DAVID H. DYE, editor of *New Deal Archaeology in Tennessee: Intellectual, Methodological, and Theoretical Contributions*

THE YEARS AD 1500–1700 were a time of dramatic change for the indigenous inhabitants of southeastern North America, yet Native histories during this era have been difficult to reconstruct due to a scarcity of written records before the eighteenth century. Using archaeology to enhance our knowledge of the period, *Contact, Colonialism, and Native Communities in the Southeastern United States* presents new research on the ways Native societies responded to early contact with Europeans.

Featuring sites from Kentucky to Mississippi to Florida, these case studies investigate how indigenous groups were affected by the expeditions of explorers such as Hernando de Soto, Pánfilo de Narváez, and Juan Pardo. Contributors re-create the social geography of the Southeast during this time, trace the ways Native institutions changed as a result of colonial encounters, and emphasize the agency of indigenous populations in situations of contact. They demonstrate the importance of understanding the economic, political, and social variability that existed between Native and European groups.

Bridging the gap between historical records and material artifacts, this volume answers many questions and opens up further avenues for exploring these transformative centuries, pushing the field of early contact studies in new theoretical and methodological directions.

EDMOND A. BOUDREAUX III is director of the Center for Archaeological Research and associate professor of anthropology at the University of Mississippi. He is the author of *The Archaeology of Town Creek*. MAUREEN MEYERS, associate professor of anthropology at the University of Mississippi, is coeditor of *Archaeological Perspectives on the Southern Appalachians: A Multiscalar Approach*. JAY K. JOHNSON, professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Mississippi, is the editor of *Remote Sensing in Archaeology: An Explicitly North American Perspective*.

A volume in the Florida Museum of Natural History: Ripley P. Bullen Series

Front, top right and bottom left: Example of Dardenne-style "interlock scroll" motif application on Carson Red-on-Buff bottle. *Top left and bottom right*: Example of Dardenne-style "triskelion" motif applied to a Hodges Engraved var. Nix bottle. Photography by Rachel Tebbetts, Arkansas Archeological Survey.

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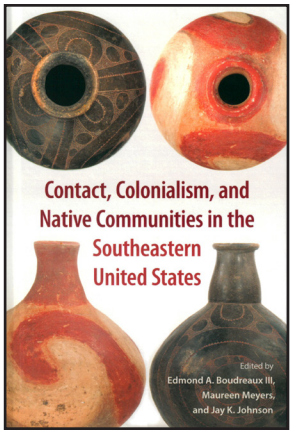

Contact, Colonialism, and Native Communities in the Southeastern United States

Edmond A. Boudreaux III, Maureen Meyers, and Jay K. Johnson, Eds. 2020. Florida Museum of Natural History: Ripley P. Bullen Series, University of Florida Press, Gainesville. xi+306 pp., 47 figures, 21 tables, references. $90.00 (Hardcover)

Reviewed by Mary Elizabeth Fitts, North Carolina Office of State Archaeology

Over the last two decades, historians and archaeologists have produced works demonstrating that Spanish entradas did not result in widespread epidemiological collapse within Native North America. With research grounded in critical re-assessments of archival records, disease ecology, and the identification of patterns in newly excavated and curated collections, we have begun to delineate the complexity of Native resilience in the colonial era. The edited volume *Contact, Colonialism, and Native Communities in the Southeastern United States* contributes to this body of work with a set of intriguing studies that focus on the Native history of the interior Southeast during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the wake of Hernando de Soto's march, what decisions did members of Native polities make as new opportunities and dangers presented themselves? In working to answer this question, the contributors to this volume use methodological approaches designed to investigate colonial impacts in areas where associated records are few and far between. The result is a text that foregrounds the significance of empirical approaches as well as the value of nuanced interpretation for writing histories of Native agency.

This book contains an introductory chapter by the editors, twelve chapters summarizing original research, and concludes with a synthetic review essay by Robbie Ethridge. Ethridge, author and editor of numerous books on the history of the Native Southeast, expertly situates the assembled body of work in the context of Charles Hudson's oeuvre regarding Southeastern Indians. While much of the region is represented in this volume, there is an emphasis on the interior Southeast—a landscape where people either witnessed or heard about Spanish incursions but had minimal interaction with Europeans for the next several generations. The chapters are organized geographically, beginning with studies situated in present Arkansas and moving eastward to Georgia, then touching on Florida contexts before moving northward to the peripheries of the Mississippian world in the Appalachian Mountains and Ohio Valley. The final studies address groups that adopted mobile settlement strategies during the early colonial period, necessitating research areas that cross state lines.

Maureen Meyers and her co-editors identify two themes that connect the chapters in this volume (p. 11): an emphasis on the agency of Native peoples as manifest in their choices, motivations, and interactions; and recognition of the political, economic, and social variability that existed among Native groups and Europeans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These themes are crucial for understanding transformations in Native

societies during the colonial era, and they distinguish current approaches from earlier ones that did not seek to conceptualize the cultural, economic, and political dynamics at play in Native households, communities of practice, and diplomatic spheres.

Additional topics and theoretical considerations also span multiple chapters in this volume. One of these is the identification of sites visited by Hernando de Soto. Such places not only have the potential to provide archaeological evidence about the process of the entrada but also allow for the development of more nuanced reconstructions of contemporaneous Native societies. Dennis Blanton and John Worth each consider the types of artifacts and assemblages that can be used to differentiate the remains of Spanish military and domestic occupations from those of Native people who had obtained imported materials from their Southeastern friends and enemies. Both of these studies make good use of data from multiple sites, with Blanton employing correspondence analysis to build upon previous classification systems for sixteenth-century assemblages, and Worth providing an overview of the economic structure of the Florida mission system, which was the source for most Spanish-imported artifacts that entered the interior Southeast. While the expansive distribution of such items manifests the networking activities of Southeastern polities during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Christopher Rodning calls attention to the coincident decline in the circulation of marine shell. Rodning suggests that one reason for this phenomenon may be an apparent replacement of Native-produced prestige goods with imported ones; if so, associated transformations in craft production and ceremonialism may be attributable to Spanish colonialism.

Another topic addressed in this volume is the intensification of hide procurement for incipient export markets. Jay Johnson and co-author Ryan Parish, along with Mathew Davidson, present the results of detailed analyses of chipped stone hide scrapers to identify changes in their production and use over time. Teasing information from these artifacts using metric and non-metric attributes, use-wear, and reflectance spectroscopy, these authors identify moderate evidence for intensification in hide processing, as well as indications of potential changes in landscape use and the organization of labor. Davidson highlights gendered division of labor in his analysis, arguing that hide production came to be controlled by women during the ca. 1550–1625 Fort Ancient occupation at the Hardin site. Such changes in the organization of labor likely affected foodways. Although no chapters focus on this topic, Edmond Boudreaux III and his colleagues present faunal and ethnobotanical data from the Stark Farm site on the Black Prairie that appear to indicate a decline in the diversity of processed foods overall, coupled with an intensification of maize production during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The theoretical perspective that receives the most explicit attention in this volume is frontier theory. Ramie Gougeon traces the history of the concept from Frederick Turner's initial formulation to Kent Lightfoot and colleagues' reconsiderations that emphasize frontiers and borderlands as spaces where differences are emphasized and manipulated to create new communities. Gougeon applies the concept to good effect in his study of the "Mississippianization" of the Gulf Coast, as does Meyers in her

examination of the strategies employed by the Westo and Savannah, whose participation in the seventeenth-century Indian slave trade was facilitated by crossing and manipulating frontiers. Another theoretical perspective referenced by multiple authors in this volume is practice theory. Although not examined at length, practice theory is used in ceramic analyses as a reminder that pottery, like all productive practices, is a product of communities of teachers and learners.

This volume successfully highlights differences among Native societies and their strategies for dealing with colonialism. In a call to "put some order on the variations," Ethridge (p. 226) proposes characterizing regional differences in Native interactions with Europeans. In addition to identifying such spatial patterns, it may be useful to organize the strategies Native groups adopted in the early colonial era along continuums of mobility and engagement. The groups Meyers discusses employed mobility and an interest in directly partnering with Europeans to achieve prominence, a strategy which proved precarious. Denise Bossy considers another group that employed mobility, the Yamasee. While the Yamasee also sought to benefit from trade and diplomacy with colonial agents, they simultaneously cultivated alliances with other Native polities, which allowed them to disengage from any given colonial space with the assurance they could obtain safe harbor as needed. Other groups seem to have chosen a strategy of disengagement. Gregory Waselkov and Philip Carr consider the history of the Towasas, who maintained minimal contact with Spanish and French colonists. Moving as needed to maintain their sovereignty but avoiding political entanglements, the Towasas fell victim to slave raids in the early eighteenth century.

Groups that sought to maintain a more sedentary existence frequently established coalescent communities. One such polity is discussed by George Sabo III and colleagues. Based on a sophisticated analysis of ceramic motifs and the spatial organization of households, they suggest that the inhabitants of the ca. 1600–1650 Carden Bottoms site on the Arkansas River produced a newly consolidated community that synthesized earlier Mississippian and Caddoan ideologies. Similarly, while Boudreaux and colleagues note that several lines of evidence indicate continuity of lifeways in the Black Prairie pre- and post-Soto, increasing population density in the Starkville locale may suggest the formation of a coalescent polity associated with Chicasa. This is also the case along the Nolichucky Valley in the Appalachians, where Nathan Shreve and colleagues trace the emergence of an Overhill Cherokee identity. For many Native groups of the interior Southeast, coalescence proved a successful way to maintain security and sovereignty when Mississippian polities became unstable. Several examples of coalescence discussed in this volume appear to pre-date the Indian slave trade and may be associated with political and economic developments in the Northeast, as well as Spanish colonial activities.

Coincident with an emphasis on Native agency that has accompanied recent efforts to decolonize the practice of archaeology and the writing of history has been a critical assessment of the terminology used by scholars when writing histories of Native peoples. The word "contact" is one term that deserves reconsideration, as its benign connotations do not accurately reflect the differential power relations that characterize

colonialism. This is not to suggest that instances of "first contact" are not worthy of study. Indeed, as is the case with this trope in science fiction, events of first contact are of anthropological interest as they lead us to wonder about the possibilities of communication across difference, as well as apprehensions regarding the motives of Others that must have accompanied these instances of creativity and peril. However, it seems important to differentiate between events of first contact and the networks and arrangements that followed; the designation "Contact Period" does not accurately characterize this time in the history of Native North American societies. In their acknowledgements for this volume, the editors thank three individuals, two of whom are anonymous reviewers. The responses of individual authors to the suggestions of Reviewer 2, ranging from the decision of the editors to retain the term "Contact Period" for the sake of convention to the outright rejection of the term by Waselkov, Carr, and Ethridge, illuminate a community of practice that is still grappling with the implications of incorporating Indigenous perspectives.

Conventions of nomenclature aside, this book contains an important body of work by scholars seeking to bridge the gap between Mississippian worlds and Native polities of the eighteenth century. Beyond those interested in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century studies and research concerning Native resilience, it will be useful to readers seeking to trace the routes of Spanish entradas, studying coalescent societies, or examining change and continuity in Native economies related to the expansion of globalized markets. Finally, it should be noted that the final individual acknowledged by the editors is recently-departed Judy Knight, whose commitment to the dissemination of research in Southeastern archaeology has been, and will likely remain, unparalleled.