

# Modeling Entradas

Sixteenth-Century Assemblages in North America

Edited by Clay Mathers

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"Brings the archaeology of first contact between Europeans and American Indians front and center. A major contribution to the archaeology, ethnohistory, and history of early colonial America."—**ROBBIE ETHRIDGE**, author of *From Chicaza to Chickasaw: The European Invasion and the Transformation of the Mississippian World, 1540–1715*

"Provides a wealth of new scholarship addressing the archaeology of sixteenth-century Spanish entradas. Focusing on European-made artifacts, the authors reveal new insights into the Spanish expeditions that impacted Native American societies across much of the North American Southeast and Southwest."—**JON BERNARD MARCOUX**, author of *The Cherokees of Tuckaleechee Cove*

**I**N *MODELING ENTRADAS*, Clay Mathers brings together leading archaeologists working across the American South to offer a comprehensive, comparative analysis of Spanish entrada assemblages. These expeditions into the interior of the North American continent were among the first contacts between New and Old World communities, and the study of how they were organized and the routes they took—based on the artifacts they left behind—illuminates much about the sixteenth-century Indigenous world and the colonizing efforts of Spain.

Focusing on the entradas of conquistadors Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, Hernando de Soto, Tristán de Luna y Arellano, and Juan Pardo, contributors offer insights from recently discovered sites including encampments, battlefields, and shipwrecks. Using the latest interpretive perspectives, they turn the narrative of conquest from a simple story of domination to one of happenstance, circumstance, and interactions between competing social, political, and cultural worlds. These essays delve into the dynamic relationships between Native Americans and Europeans in a variety of contexts including exchange, disease, conflict, and material production.

This volume offers valuable models for evaluating, synthesizing, and comparing early expeditions, showing how object-oriented and site-focused analyses connect to the anthropological dimensions of early contact, patterns of regional settlement, and broader historical trajectories such as globalization.

**CLAY MATHERS**, a registered professional archaeologist based in Albuquerque, is the coeditor of *Native and Spanish New Worlds: Sixteenth-Century Entradas in the American Southwest and Southeast* and *Heritage of Value, Archaeology of Renown: Reshaping Archaeological Assessment and Significance*.

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

*Front cover, background:* Baron de Crenay map, 1733. *Bottom, left inset:* axe head material from Stark Farm; *right inset:* ground iron celts from Stark Farm. Insets courtesy of South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology.

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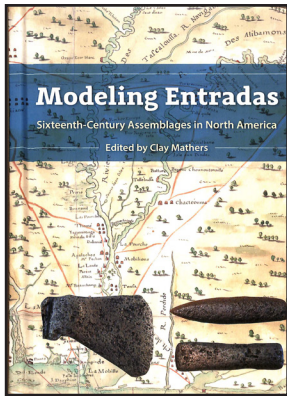


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## Modeling Entradas: Sixteenth-Century Assemblages in North America

Clay Mathers, Ed. 2020. [University of Florida Press](#), Gainesville. xv+310 pp., 52 figures, 18 tables. \$95 (Hardcover).

*Reviewed by Kurt W. Haas.*

The study of Entradas, the armed exploratory expeditions of the early Spanish colonial military, has been historically limited by a dependence on vague historic sources and the scholastic assumptions resulting associated with them. In

*Modeling Entradas*, the latest volume in the Florida Museum of Natural History's *Ripley P. Bullen* series, Dr. Clay Mathers seeks to address this blind spot with a robust set of new, interpretative assemblage analyses. For those interested in both the application of assemblage theory, and early Spanish colonial archaeology, this volume should provide critical reference material in the future.

The work consists of an introductory Chapter 1, eight further chapters, each on the artifact assemblage of a different site in the American South, and a short Conclusion. The introduction serves mainly to describe the utility of assemblage theory, especially in the challenging field of studying Entradas. As displayed in Chapter 2, archaeological studies have proven necessary to the study of the Spanish contact period, as traditional historic records have proven to be vague at best. The chapter describes efforts to identify Spanish camps and battle sites described in the (often frustratingly vague) reports of the Coronado expedition. Analyzing both the local geography and the archaeological assemblage from contemporary local settlements, Mathers shies away from definitively naming locations, but offers potential sites, and more importantly to the book's intent, reveals and describes enough evidence to convincingly argue for a reevaluation not just of our current understanding of the immediate issue (Spanish expeditions in the Southwest), but of the discipline's analytic framework. Chapter 2 can be viewed as a microcosm of the volume as a whole; it acknowledges that there is no 'magic bullet' that can thoroughly elucidate such a murky period of history, while clearly demonstrating the benefits and potential of new interpretative methodologies in advancing our understanding.

The following chapters cover a diverse geographic range, and perhaps an even more diverse range of typologies, from collections of specific materials, such as the Chevron Bead analysis of Daniel M. Seinfeld and Munir Humayun's Chapter 5, to entire assemblages without any particular focus, as in John E. Worth and John R. Bratten's Chapter 6. The contributors demonstrate quite well the fact that their analyses function to expand and add new dimensions to our understanding of Entradas as a process, changing the divergent nature of the assemblages from a liability into one of the work's strengths. Each succeeding chapter makes our model of the expedition from start to finish a little more holistic, and the wide range of circumstances in which relational and assemblage analysis is used reinforces the general utility of the theory proposed by Mathers. The Final chapters of the work shift

the focus to the “acquisition and reuse of Entrada artifacts by Native Americans.” These chapters are perhaps the most challenging of the work; recreating the intangible methods of transmission that contextualize acquisition is a great challenge for any archaeologist, let alone those who have tied themselves to interpretation through such a materialistic ontology. However, through generating a typology of transmission and reuse types, the authors of this ninth chapter, Martin Smith and David Hally, make an impressive effort to materialize cognitive processes, and in doing so attempt to create a workable framework for future analyses.

Dr. Mathers is the executive director of the Coronado Institute, the culmination of a long career studying the dynamics of Spanish contact across North America. His work in this field has proven crucial in enabling him to edit and organize such an important volume. *Modeling Entradas* is not a book that attempts to clearly delineate and proclaim new truths about the mechanics of entradas, and in that sense the title may seem somewhat misleading. However, the volume proves a well-edited and thought-provoking summary of not only what our current understanding of the Entrada is, but also of which ontologies will be most useful in advancing said understanding in the future. The work elevates its argument through its cleanly presented data figures, and a consistent reinforcement of its premise in a diverse set of contexts. As such, *Modeling Entradas* serves not only to meaningfully guide future discussion in the field of Entrada and Spanish Contact studies, but also as an instructive example in effectively presenting theoretic frameworks.