PART 3

Discussion and Comparative Viewpoints
INTRODUCTION

The chapters in this book present a fresh, state-of-the-art perspective on the complex histories of native and colonial entanglements in the American Southwest using diverse data sets, including archaeological materials, historical sources, and native narratives. In exploring various theoretical questions and methodological approaches to the study of colonialism, the authors examine the complicated social, political, and economic relationships that transformed the Southwest beginning with the Coronado expedition in 1540–42 and continuing through Spanish and later Mexican colonization from the late 1500s to the mid-1800s. The case studies focus on two primary areas: the New Mexico Colony, which encompassed present-day northeastern Arizona to north and central New Mexico, and the Pimería Alta, in the northern Sonora Desert of southern Arizona and Sonora Mexico.

In commenting on these chapters, my purpose is not to impart additional information or historical content on the events and processes of colonialism that unfolded in these two areas, which is superbly done in the introduction.
(chapter 1) and other chapters in the book. Rather, my purpose is to comment on the chapters from the vantage point of someone who not only has some familiarity with Southwestern archaeology dating back to my graduate student days at Arizona State University in the 1970s, but who has now been working in the adjacent California region for the last twenty-five years. Thus, my goal is to compare the chapters in this book with developments taking place in the archaeology of colonialism in Alta California, and, where appropriate, across the broader Spanish borderlands of North America.

My task is greatly facilitated by John Douglass and William Graves, who present an exceptional introduction to the broad sweep of humanity that engulfed the Southwest during three centuries of Spanish and Mexican colonialism. They not only present a succinct and readable account of the events and processes of colonialism in the New Mexico Colony and Pimería Alta, but they interpret these developments building on the latest theoretical advances in the archaeology of colonialism. As John G. Douglass and William M. Graves emphasize in chapter 1, the multiethnic, polycultural, and multifaceted political relationships that unfolded in the American Southwest resulted in trajectories of both cultural change and cultural persistence that are still evident today. This introductory chapter (along with others in the book) accentuates why the American Southwest is such a superb place to undertake research on colonialism. The region stands out because of its cutting-edge archaeological investigations, its long tradition of notable research in colonial history, and the potential to undertake collaborative research with multiple tribes who have powerful and relevant oral traditions concerning past colonial engagements. Consequently, the American Southwest offers a fantastic opportunity to compare and contrast the practices and processes of colonialism in the broader Spanish borderlands of North America, including Florida, Texas, northern Mexico, Baja California, and Alta California.

In reading and commenting on the chapters, I am struck by both the similarities and differences in how colonial entanglements unfolded in the American Southwest when compared to Alta California. Both areas were explored by the Spanish Crown beginning in the early decades of the 1500s, but while the New Mexico Colony and the Pimería Alta were populated by foreign intruders beginning in the 1590s and late 1600s, respectively, Alta California was not settled by Spanish colonists until 1769. The Franciscan order administered and staffed the Catholic missions established in both the New Mexico Colony and Alta California, as well as in the Pimería Alta when the Jesuits were expelled in 1767. However, the missionaries and other colonists interacted with a diverse range of native societies characterized by distinctive political economies, including complex hunter-gatherers in coastal California and nomadic hunter-gatherers and settled agrarian communities in the American Southwest. It is from this comparative perspective
encompassing similarities and differences in the colonial entanglements in the American Southwest and Alta California that I comment on the chapters.

My commentary on the chapters addresses four major themes. The first theme examines early encounters that unfolded between native peoples and Spanish explorers in the American Southwest and Alta California. The second theme is the continuation of exemplary archaeological studies of colonial settlements—particularly presidios and missions—that are providing new insights about the colonists and their interactions with indigenous populations. The third theme concerns the recent trend of emphasizing native political economies and indigenous landscapes in understanding the processes and outcomes of colonialism in the Spanish borderlands. The final theme addresses the importance of studying the archaeology of the recent past to better understand the legacies of colonialism and how they have shaped our contemporary human-environmental interactions and the identity, composition, and political influence of modern communities.

**THEME ONE: EARLY COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS**

Early Spanish explorations of both the American Southwest and Alta California have received considerable attention by colonial historians over the years (Bolton 1916; Hammond and Rey 1940; Quinn [1542–43] 1979e; Wagner 1924). These studies make it very clear that while both regions were first explored by Europeans in the 1500s, how these expeditions were mounted, supplied, and ultimately interacted with indigenous populations differed dramatically. In reading the chapters in this volume, I am struck by how the distinctive outcomes of these initial colonial encounters may have fostered long-term consequences in the kinds of social relationships and antagonisms that unfolded in later colonial times.

Mathew E. Schmader (chapter 2) presents a provocative analysis of the Coronado Expedition of 1540–42 based on his recent archaeological investigations and a critical reading of relevant ethnohistorical sources. His study describes how the expedition was funded, who participated in it, and the various interactions and negotiations that took place with Southwestern indigenous peoples. He emphasizes that the majority of the expedition comprised *indios amigos* warriors from central and western Mexico (peoples of Tarascan, Tenochca, Tlatelolca, and Mexica descent) who were equipped with their traditional armor and weapons. Schmader’s insightful analysis of the expedition’s documents reveals common patterns in how southwestern peoples negotiated with the Spanish and Native Mexican intruders, including their use of long-distance information networks to keep abreast of the expedition’s movements; ritualized practices in dealing with foreigners (such as orations, food giving, etc.); and various defensive, deceptive, and offensive tactics to thwart the advancement of the foreign intruders.
The Coronado expedition, consisting of 375 European men-at-arms, at least 1,300 Native Mexican warriors, an unknown number of women and various camp followers, and thousands of head of livestock, lived off the land by trading, stealing, or taking by force food and goods from native southwestern communities. It is clear from Schmader’s chapter (2) that this practice, combined with the abuse of indigenous women and other hostilities, fostered a recurrent pattern of brutal and violent colonial encounters that sometimes escalated into armed confrontations and pitched battles. The latter is exemplified by the archaeological investigation of Piedras Marcadas Pueblo in New Mexico, where a suite of low-impact geophysical and surface collection methods are delineating the spatial distribution of features and artifacts across the pueblo site. The spatial analysis of artifacts, including sixteenth-century Spanish military objects (musket balls, chainmail, boltheads, etc.), Mexican arms, and Puebloan projectile points, is providing new insights into the strategies of armed conflict that took place between Coronado’s men and the Pueblo warriors.

Thomas E. Sheridan and Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa (chapter 9) present another important study of early native encounters with Spanish colonists from a different vantage point—tribal oral traditions. The Hopi History Project, a collaborative venture of the University of Arizona and the Hopi Tribe, is collecting Hopi accounts of their interactions with early Spanish explorers and colonists, many of which have been orally transmitted from one generation to the next over more than four centuries. The Hopi Tribe has a long and lucid memory of these early encounters, including Coronado’s army destroying a Hopi village in 1540, which was evidently not described in any known Spanish accounts of the entrada. However, many of the recollections pertain to the early mission period (pre–Pueblo Revolt), when, beginning in 1619, the Franciscans established missions in several Hopi villages. The oral narratives highlight the maltreatment of the Hopi people by Coronado and the later missionaries, including the physical abuse of some men and women, and how these colonial entanglements created significant disruptions in their tribal lifeways, cultural practices, and religious activities. While I will return to this notable chapter below, it is clear that more than 400 years after their first encounters with the Spanish, the intergenerational traumatic memory of these events have left deep scars among the Hopi people.

The broader implications of Schmader’s (chapter 2) and Sheridan and Koyiyumptewa’s chapters (chapter 4) is that the early show of force and brutality by Coronado and his army in 1540–42, which appears to have been reintroduced by some early missionaries in their interactions with local Indian communities in 1600s, set the tone for antagonistic and distrustful relations between tribal groups and Spanish colonists for decades to come.

In comparing these early encounters with those in Alta California, a very different picture emerges. The initial exploration of Alta California, which took
place during the period of 1542 to 1603, was undertaken by four Spanish (Cabrillo, Unamuno, Cermeño, Vizcaíno) and one English (Drake) maritime expeditions whose ships made periodic landfalls for short durations in coastal places inhabited by native communities (Bolton 1916; Quinn 1979a, [1584–85] 1979b, 1979c, 1979d, [1542–43] 1979e, [1584–85] 1979f; Wagner 1929). With the exception of these landfalls, the sailors remained on their ships and lived primarily off provisions stored on board. Consequently, a different rhythm of encounters transpired in which California Indian delegations would typically meet the maritime explorers as they landed, greeting them with long orations and gift giving of food and goods that were performed according to ceremonial and honorific protocols (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998). In turn, the explorers exchanged ship’s biscuits, clothing (hats, shirts), cloth, and glass beads to the Indian leaders, and performed public masses on the beaches.

Although some abuses took place in the early encounters in Alta California, particularly when sailors stayed in port for any length of time, these coastal interactions rarely led to armed confrontations, raids, and battles, which appear to have been a common occurrence in the American Southwest. How these different kinds of early encounters may have influenced and structured later colonial relationships in both regions is a topic deserving future investigation. But while Native Californian tribes have intense memories of the later Franciscan missionaries and Spanish colonists, I am not aware of any extant oral traditions concerning the 1542–43 Cabrillo voyage. This contrasts sharply with the Hopi’s recollections of the dreadful consequences of the 1540 Coronado expedition that transpired more than 400 years ago. It seems clear that the colonial enterprises in the American Southwest and Alta California got off to very different starts.

**THEME TWO: RESEARCH ON COLONIAL SETTLEMENTS—PRESIDIOS AND MISSIONS**

Several chapters in the volume detail recent archaeological investigations of the Tucson Presidio (J. Homer Thiel [chapter 12]) and Pimería Alta missions (Barnet Pavao-Zuckerman [chapter 11]), and ongoing studies of Hopi Indians in Franciscan missions (Sheridan and Koyiyumptewa; Laurie D. Webster [chapter 4]). They are part of a venerable legacy in the American Southwest of undertaking scholarly archaeological investigations of colonial settlements that examine interactions with indigenous populations. In discussing this work in relation to Alta California, it is important from the outset to understand how this tradition of scholarly research differed from the trajectory of less rigorous, restoration projects that took place during the formative years of California archaeology.

As vividly described by David Thomas (1991a), the influence of Helen Hunt Jackson’s 1884 novel, *Ramona*, and the initiation of Mission Revival architecture shortly thereafter excited a flurry of major restoration projects at colonial-age
buildings throughout California. Many of the Franciscan missions had been neglected and pilfered in the postmission years, but the majority had been reclaimed and maintained by the Catholic Church since their return by the US government in 1862. By the early 1900s a series of restoration projects were initiated with archaeology serving primarily as a handmaiden for local church groups, historical societies, and restoration architects who were attempting to reconstruct the original appearance of crumbling mission quadrangles and other historic adobe buildings. Unfortunately, as Thomas details, most of these early restoration ventures were based more on a romanticized view of a mythical Californio past than detailed, rigorous academic investigations, which led to many inaccuracies and architectural whimsies.

Early historical archaeology in the American Southwest followed a more scholarly trajectory under the auspices of the School of American Archaeology, later renamed the School of American Research (now known as the School for Advanced Research), and other institutions whose research programs were geared toward the study and preservation of Spanish-era buildings and sites rather than in their reconstruction per se (Cordell 1989:32–33; Thomas 1991a:138–39). While relatively few well-documented archaeological studies of Spanish missions and ranchos took place in Alta California prior to the 1960s (for exceptions, see Bennyhoff and Elsasser 1954; Neuerburg 1987; Treganza 1956; Whitehead 1991), many of the leading archaeologists working in the Southwest participated in the excavation of Spanish-era sites in the early twentieth century (Brew 1937; Kidder 1916, 1924; Montgomery et al. 1949; Nelson 1916; Smith et al. 1966; Toulouse and Stephenson 1960; Vivian 1964). Much of this early interest stemmed from the development of early chronologies, since the Spanish occupations provided discrete time markers for dating ceramic seriations (Cordell 1989:32; Wilcox 2009:162).

The academic nature of early archaeological work in the American Southwest was probably also influenced by land ownership. While many of the Spanish sites in California are now situated in or near heavily urbanized coastal cities, southwestern colonial places (outside of Tucson and Albuquerque) tend to be found in rural areas on federal lands or on (or near) extant Indian reservations. The research protocols and oversight that were employed to work on colonial sites on federal lands and Indian reservations in the American Southwest appears to have differed markedly from those that transpired on private lands in coastal California prior to the 1960s, when many imaginative restorations of Spanish-era buildings took place.

Archaeological research of colonial settlements accelerated throughout the Spanish borderlands beginning in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s with the growing sophistication in the theory and method of historical archaeology, as well as the increased funding for colonial archaeological research provided by cultural resource management legislation and the Columbian Quincentenary (Deagan
Thus, I believe the exemplary chapters in this volume have benefited greatly from the solid foundation of colonial archaeology in the American Southwest that has developed over the last century, as well as by recent advances in the field of historical archaeology.

Homer Thiel (chapter 12) presents a succinct overview of twenty years of research at the Presidio San Agustín del Tucson undertaken by Archaeology Southwest and Desert Archaeology. His chapter contextualizes the historical importance of the Tucson Presidio in the Spanish colonization of the Pimería Alta. The extensive ethnohistorical and archaeological investigations have resulted in a wealth of information about the presidio—how it was built over time, the spatial layout of the community, and the kinds of relationships the colonists had with nearby indigenous populations. A significant contribution of this work is elucidating the social interactions and exchange networks that the presidio community maintained with local O’odham peoples, Mexican towns, and the broader world through the study of a diverse range of material goods recovered from archaeological contexts, including indigenous pottery vessels, majolica dishes, transfer-printed ceramics, buttons, buckles, beads, and so on.

The long-term, intensive investigation of the Tucson Presidio provides an excellent opportunity to examine the similarities and differences of presidio communities elsewhere in the Spanish borderlands. Thiel (chapter 12, this volume) notes that some of the cultural practices revolving around food set the Tucson colonists apart from local native people. A similar observation has been made in archaeological investigations of the contemporaneous San Francisco Presidio in Alta California (Voss 2005, 2008). This observation raises the question about whether similar processes of ethnogenesis that bonded the members of the presidio community together in San Francisco, but distinguished them from local Ohlone Indians, may have been unfolding in Tucson.

Pavao-Zuckerman in chapter 11 examines the zooarchaeological remains from recent excavations at two missions—Mission San Agustín de Tucson, located across the river from the Tucson Presidio, and Mission Nuestra Señora del Pilar y Santiago de Cocóspera in northern Sonora. She focuses on the importance of animal husbandry, specifically the production of cattle and sheep, as a lynchpin in the colonial regional economy. Not only did the cattle offer sustenance for the mission community, but dried meat, hides, and tallow (as evidenced by the heavy fragmentation of the cattle bone) provided much needed food and goods to the nearby presidio, rancho, and mining communities. She also emphasizes how livestock played a critical role in the raiding economy of the Apache groups that terrorized both O’odham and colonial settlements alike in the Pimería Alta region. Interestingly, the proportion of sheep and cattle found at colonial
settlements in the Southwest probably varied given local environmental factors, economic incentives, and raiding intensity, with cattle increasing in numbers during peaceful times.

Douglass and Graves, Pavao-Zuckerman, and others in this volume highlight several salient differences in the history of missionization between the American Southwest and Alta California. First, most missions in the Southwest were generally established in extant Indian communities. In California, local hunter-gatherer polities were relocated to central locations where mission complexes were established. Second, as discussed by Pavao-Zuckerman (chapter 11), while the Indian neophytes in Pimería Alta labored in mission agrarian and craft enterprises three days a week, they were allowed to work their own fields for another three days each week. In contrast, California Indian neophytes worked exclusively on mission economic enterprises throughout the workweek, and they did not control their own fields or agrarian products. A third significant difference is the scale and intensity of raiding in the American Southwest by various nomadic groups (e.g., Apache, Navajo, Comanche), which provided a powerful reason for some agrarian communities (O’odham, Pueblo peoples) to decide to enter into alliances with the Spanish. This was never a major factor in the Alta California missions. Finally, the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* systems used to exact tribute and labor from settled communities in the American Southwest by Spanish colonists in the seventeenth century were never formally instituted in Alta California.

While future comparative work still needs to be undertaken to understand how these differences influenced the processes and outcomes of colonial entanglements in the American Southwest and Alta California (Lightfoot, Panich, Schneider, Gonzalez, et al. 2013), it is clear from this volume that the potential of some Southwestern tribes to remain in their ancestral lands in extant villages did not lessen the trauma and stress of colonization, particularly in the 1600s and 1700s. The Hopi History Project makes this point crystal clear (Sheridan and Koyiyumptewa [chapter 9]). Missionary abuses involving corporal punishment, such as those recorded by the colonial government concerning Padre Fray Salvador de Guerra, are still very much remembered by the Hopi.

Webster’s stellar study of Hopi weaving (chapter 4) dovetails nicely with the points made by Sheridan and Koyiyumptewa. She shows how the abusive demands for textiles by colonial agents through the *encomienda* system, as well as by some missionaries, resulted in forced labor practices that involved major transformations in the organization and composition of textile work groups. For example, an increasing number of women worked on cloth production outside of kivas, where men had traditionally woven cotton textiles. Colonialism also resulted in the increasing use of wool, new knitting techniques, and the adoption of imported dyes. Significantly, Webster’s painstaking analysis demonstrates that despite the excessive textile demands of colonial men, such as Padre Guerra,
in the 1600s; the Pueblo Revolt; and the painful destruction of Awatovi, many continuities were maintained in the production of Hopi textiles, particularly in the weaving of cotton goods for ceremonial use within the Pueblo communities.

THEME THREE: COLONIALISM IN INDIGENOUS LANDSCAPES

A recent development in the archaeology of colonialism is the study of native political economies and understanding how they shaped the direction, intensity, and kinds of colonial interactions that unfolded (Lightfoot, Panich, Schneider, Gonzalez, et al. 2013; Oland et al. 2012; Panich and Schneider 2014; Rubertone 2000; Scheiber and Mitchell 2010; Silliman 2009). Spanish exploration and settlement across the North American borderlands took place in indigenous landscapes populated by diverse polities who had participated for centuries in complex systems of exchange, political alliances, social relationships, ceremonial associations, and raiding/warfare. How native peoples chose to negotiate and interact with colonial intruders was influenced greatly by these extant social, economic, and political relationships. Individuals, families, or entire polities might decide to ally with the Spanish based on the perceived advantages that it might provide them in regards to their access to new kinds of goods, protection from enemies, and providing competitive advantages over political factions. The creation of these new alliances, in turn, would have rippling effects across the landscape that might lead to antagonism and conflict among other rival social entities. Lee Panich and Tsim Schneider’s (Panich and Schneider 2014) edited book on the archaeology of Spanish borderland missions makes many of these points in a series of case studies that demonstrate the crucial insights that can be derived by analyzing colonial settlements as embedded places within broader indigenous landscapes.

In reading the chapters in this volume, I believe that archaeologists in the American Southwest may be at the forefront in examining how native political economies and indigenous landscapes influenced the practices and processes of colonialism. In contrast to the archaeology of Alta California, where these kinds of studies are relatively recent (e.g., Bernard 2008; Gonzalez 2011; Hull 2009; Panich 2010; Peelo 2009; Russell 2011; Schneider 2010), there is a longer tradition in the American Southwest of emphasizing native influences in colonial entailments and how they impacted local histories. I suspect this may date back to those formative studies in Arizona and New Mexico involving the construction of ceramic chronologies using colonial-era sites and materials. Interestingly, this work was not conducted by scholars who specialized in Spanish historical archaeology per se, but rather by anthropological archaeologists interested in the culture history of indigenous societies that transcended both prehistory and history (e.g., Kidder 1924; Nelson 1916). Furthermore, the study of Spanish missions that are situated within contemporary Pueblo communities or on lands
controlled or overseen by tribal entities or federal agencies has probably influenced a more native-oriented inclusion in the research designs and protocols of Southwestern archaeologists in a manner that differs substantially from the history of research in the urbanized areas of coastal California.

Archaeologists now working in the American Southwest forefront native agency, cultural practices, and political relationships in the investigation of colonial-era revolts, food ways, regional exchange systems, regional settlement distributions, and the spatial organization of village sites (Liebmann 2012; Liebmann and Preucel 2007; Lycett 2014; Mills 2008; Preucel 2002; Spielmann et al. 2009; Spielmann et al, 2006; Wilcox 2009). Phillip O. Leckman’s contribution on the seventeenth-century Puebloan landscape (chapter 3) is an important contribution to this corpus of work. He discusses how Spanish settlements (missions, visitas, and estancias) were embedded within a Puebloan landscape of nested spatial tetrads composed of fields, shrines, and community lands of villages, which in turn were organized by plazas, roomblocks, and kivas. Significantly, the Spanish founded their convento complexes and Catholic churches and chapels, not in the central core of the villages, but in their margins—which is suggestive of the power Pueblo people maintained in controlling space in colonial contexts. Leckman’s chapter details the fundamental misrecognitions that the Spanish made in their interpretation of the built landscapes of Pueblo communities, and how this influenced the nature of colonial entanglements that unfolded over time. His analysis of the seventeenth-century archaeological remains at Paako illustrates how the foreign intruders attempted to co-opt the Pueblo landscape through the construction of a chapel (which was not finished), the destruction of at least one kiva, and the alteration of the Pueblo plaza into corrals and a metal-smelting facility. However, despite the various changes initiated by the missionaries, Leckman shows how a Puebloan sense of space and landscape was sustained within indigenous communities and in their broader hinterlands.

Other chapters in this volume illustrate the importance of analyzing colonial entanglements based on an understanding of indigenous political alliances, trade connections, factionalism, and antagonisms in the broader region. Lauren Jelinek and Dale Brenneman (chapter 10) highlight how the American Southwest is ideally suited for this kind of analysis given its long, rich history of archaeological, ethnohistoric, and ethnographic research. They demonstrate how previous studies of ceramics and exchange, in combination with relevant ethnohistoric sources, can be employed to build a better understanding of regional-scale social and economic interactions in the Pimería Alta prior to and during colonial encounters in 1600s and 1700s. Their overview provides insightful information on the political alliances and antagonisms of various O’odham- and Yuman-speaking groups through time and space.
Studies of the Pueblo Revolt (1680) and its aftermath exemplify some of the most sophisticated research in North American archaeology today that is examining how native political relationships influenced the historical trajectory of colonial interactions across broader indigenous landscapes (e.g., Liebmann 2012; Liebmann and Preucel 2007; Preucel 2002; Wilcox 2009). Matthew Liebmann, Robert Preucel, and Joseph Aguilar’s chapter (5) is a continuation of this fine work. Here they explicitly examine the alliances and factional rifts that existed between northern Rio Grande Pueblos before, during, and after the Pueblo Revolt. They ask an intriguing question—what happened to the Pan-Pueblo alliance that forced the Spanish out of the northern Southwest? In employing a sophisticated research program to address this question that scrutinizes the archaeological assemblages from Rio Grande mesa villages, they show how detailed petrographic and geochemical analyses of lithics and ceramics can reveal population movements, exchange relationships, political alliances, and factionalism. Their findings raise red flags about traditional interpretations concerning rifts that supposedly took place among some groups based on traditional historical sources. For example, they found evidence that an enduring coalition was maintained between the Tewa, Jemez, and Keres of Kotyiti. But their research also suggests that other Pueblo groups were continually negotiating their participation in this coalition as the political relationships of the indigenous landscape continued to change during the period of 1680–1700.

The provocative chapter by Severin Fowles, Jimmy Arterberry, Lindsay Montgomery, and Heather Atherton on the Comanche expansion into the New Mexico Colony (chapter 6) highlights the importance of undertaking archaeological research in the broader hinterland of indigenous landscapes well beyond the placement of colonial settlements. In presenting a succinct update on Comanche research in western North America, they highlight the impact that Pekka Hämäläinen’s (2008) book, The Comanche Empire, has had on colonial scholarship given its far-reaching implications for understanding the nature and power dynamics of indigenous and colonial relationships in eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century interactions in the Southern Plains. They note that despite the importance of the Comanche in structuring Spanish movements, settlement distributions, and alliances with other native groups in northern New Mexico, very little is known about Comanche archaeology. In part this is because the Comanche traveled light and left few identifiable materials behind. But as Fowles and colleagues emphasize, it is also because archaeologists have not been very proactive in their study of Comanche archaeology. They describe recent fieldwork in the Rio Grande Gorge region west of Taos where archaeological remains of Jicarilla Apache, Ute, and Comanche peoples are being detected. At the Vista Verde Site, where a possible buried dance floor and tipi rings are being mapped, a series of spectacular panels of etched rock art have now been
recorded. The art style resembles the Plains Biographic Tradition that is found in ancestral Comanche territory in northern Colorado and Wyoming.

Fowles and colleagues’ chapter emphasizes that archaeological research of indigenous landscapes is crucial for understanding how native peoples maintained their cultural lifeways and values in the face of colonialism. In the case of Comanche ethnogenesis that unfolded in the Spanish borderlands, this involved cultural innovations and reorganizations that transformed local groups into formidable equestrian military forces. While traditional cultural values were maintained and built upon as evident in the rock art and spatial patterning of archaeological materials, the Comanche adopted horses, guns, knives, and flour into their dynamic way of life.

Similar kinds of research projects are now underway in Alta California. Well beyond the Spanish presidios, ranchos, and missions, archaeological investigations are revealing how native peoples maintained their cultural values and practices while transforming themselves in the face of colonial entanglements. The most innovative work is now focusing on refugee sites where people attempted to keep a low profile from Russian and Spanish colonists (Bernard 2008; Schneider 2010; Schneider et al. 2012). Similar to Comanche sites, these archaeological places tend to be difficult to detect as they are located in concealed places and typically contain relatively few material remains. Furthermore, it is now apparent that California Indians often reused ancestral places that had spiritual meaning and offered excellent vantages for harvesting traditional resources. Consequently, distinguishing these historical contexts from earlier precontact deposits can be challenging, particularly if relatively few introduced foods or goods were intentionally used at these sites (see Graesch et al. 2010; Schneider 2010).

THEME FOUR: THE LEGACIES OF COLONIALISM

The archaeology of the recent past has much to contribute to our understanding of the legacies of colonialism and their impacts on our modern world. As outlined elsewhere, the archaeology of the last two or three centuries can be of great importance to many descendant communities immersed in the contemporary politics of indigenous landscape management practices, cultural heritage issues, identity inquiries, tribal territorial boundaries, federal recognition, and repatriation (Flexner 2010; Hart 2012; Lightfoot, Panich, Schneider, Gonzalez, et al. 2013; Mrozowski et al. 2009; Panich 2013). The archaeology of the recent past can be extremely challenging, however, given the increasingly polycultural and multiethnic construction of local communities and households who differentially participated in the global market economy and increasingly incorporated mass-produced goods and foreign foods into their lives. This is particularly true during the height of American repression in the western United States in the mid-to
late 1800s, when many people of color had to disperse, hide, or even change their outward identities to endure (Heizer and Almquist 1971; Lightfoot 2006:281–84). In coastal Alta California, these later historical indigenous archaeological sites are often difficult to detect given the propensity of Native Californians to keep a low profile, such as in refugee sites discussed above, or when they were integrated (hidden) within more complex urbanized environments.

The recent past that transcends earlier colonial times and the present is crucial for understanding how descendant communities negotiated with the emerging modern world and devised strategies for survival and persistence (Panich 2013; Silliman 2009). It is also a critical time for understanding how long-term human-environmental interactions, as instituted by indigenous populations in precolonial and colonial times, underwent significant modifications and transformations with the growth of industrialized farming and ranching that continue to shape our modern landscapes in many rural areas (Lightfoot, Panich, Schneider, Gonzalez 2013; Mrozowski 2006). Several chapters in this volume make significant contributions to the growing corpus of archaeological research on the legacies of colonialism in the American West.

Colleen Strawhacker (chapter 13) presents a case study of how the O’odham people along the middle Gila River in southern Arizona participated in the emerging market economy of the 1700s and 1800s through agricultural intensification. Her broader project is examining how irrigation economies influenced the people and lands of the Middle Gila region in the longue durée—beginning with the prehistoric Hohokam communities and continuing with the later O’odham farmers. Strawhacker’s chapter focuses on how the O’odham chose to intensify wheat production by initially selling their produce to Spanish colonists, and later to American settlers and the US Army until water was cut off to their irrigation system by upstream farmers in the 1870s. Strawhacker’s analysis suggests that an understanding of the agrarian practices of the ancestral Hohokam was retained by the O’odham, and that this knowledge was probably tapped into when they chose to intensify their output from irrigation agriculture. Her project has tremendous potential for examining the social and ecological impacts that agricultural intensification has had on a local region spanning prehistoric, colonial, and later historic times.

I am currently participating in a similar kind of project that is examining the long-term implications of changing human-environmental relationships in precolonial, colonial, and modern times on the central coast of Alta California. But rather than the irrigation economies of the Hohokam and O’odham peoples, this study is examining the advent and modifications of hunter-gatherer landscape management practices, particularly that of prescribed burning to enhance the productivity, diversity, and sustainability of economic plants and animals exploited by local groups. Our interdisciplinary research team is examining
how these indigenous management practices underwent transformations in colonial times, and how colonial and later American government prohibitions outlawing fires ignited by California Indians have had a detrimental impact on the health and vitality of coastal grassland and woodland habitats in recent years (Cuthrell 2013; Cuthrell et al. 2012; Lightfoot, Cuthrell, Boone, et al. 2013; Lightfoot, Cuthrell, Striplen, et al. 2013). As Strawhacker (chapter 13) and our ongoing project demonstrate, there is much promise for archaeologists to evaluate contemporary environmental issues in the American West through detailed historical-ecological studies that incorporate landscape management practices of the recent past with those from earlier colonial and precolonial times.

Two complementary chapters by J. Andrew Darling and B. Sunday Eiselt (chapter 7) and Kelly L. Jenks (chapter 8) explore identity construction and the creation of multiethnic communities in the New Mexico Colony during the 1700s and early 1800s. Both chapters illustrate nicely that the creation of the Vecino identity was not based on ethnicity per se, but rather on how people lived—their place of residence and accepted membership in a Hispanic corporate community as tax-paying, property-owning Catholic families. Darling and Eiselt present a succinct historical overview on the demographic rise of Vecino communities as part of the Bourbon reforms initiated to protect the northern Spanish frontier from nomadic Indian raiders and other European colonial ventures in the late 1700s. By receiving land grants and support for military service, Vecino families populated the Rio Grande Valley in increasing numbers after 1790. In undertaking a synthesis of archaeological research in the Rio del Oso land grant, the authors show how significant transformations took place over time from the defensive, segregated nature of early colonial sites to the more open, integrated Vecino settlements where membership was based on property ownership and marriage associations rather than ethnic relationships.

In her detailed examination of twenty-five sites along the Rio Grande Valley, Jenks (chapter 8) discusses the similarities and differences across both space and time in Vecino villages with regard to their spatial layouts, food way, trade practices, and corporate organizations. She emphasizes the difficulties of defining clear-cut “ethnicities” in these late colonial settlements using archaeological materials. She makes an excellent case for why a practice-oriented approach provides a more effective way to analyze late colonial communities. It is through the study of shared practices of space, food, material goods, and economic practices that archaeologists can understand the composition and identify of Vecino villages.

The chapters by Darling and Eiselt and Jenks on the construction of Vecino villages in the Rio Grande provide a nice model for examining the creation of Californio communities in Alta California that also emerged in the late 1700s and 1800s. The latter involved a process of ethnogenesis that emphasized
Spanish ancestry and common cultural practices among a diverse group of people from Sonora, Sinaloa, Baja California, and Alta California. While Barb Voss (2005, 2008) completed a cutting-edge study on the emergence of Californio identities in the Presidio of San Francisco from 1776 to 1821, detailed archaeological investigations of the Californio experience has not been well developed outside the presidio context. While considerable work has been done over the years on rancho archaeology—in the early years through the restoration of adobe structures and then later by Cultural Resource Management (CRM) projects—there have been few synthesizes that pull this material together to examine the rise of Californio communities and their relationship to indigenous populations (but see Farris 1997, 1999; Silliman 2004). The Darling and Eiselt chapter provides an excellent example of how to synthesize the indigenous and colonial archaeological remains from one land grant into a research program. Jenks offers a nice model for undertaking a regional-scale comparative analysis of the spatial layout, architecture, food ways, and artifacts from a range of colonial sites dispersed across a broad area. The archaeology of colonialism in Alta California will benefit greatly by similar synthetic overviews that integrate together various kinds of indigenous and colonial sites recorded by CRM projects and other archaeological investigations within the territories of specific Californio ranchos.

CONCLUSIONS

The chapters in this book highlight why the American Southwest holds such promise for undertaking innovative and leading-edge research in the archaeology of colonialism. For more than a century, a cadre of exceptional archaeologists have made significant contributions to our understanding of the precolonial and colonial histories of the region, providing an extraordinary database for examining cultural change and persistence that transcends the last 500 years. The American Southwest is also well known for its strong tradition of scholarship in colonial history and ethnography. Most important, Southwestern tribal nations retain long and vivid memories of colonial entanglements going back to the Coronado entrada that offer a much-needed native perspective to the study of colonialism. As demonstrated in this book, scholars can employ these different evidentiary sources to evaluate diverse questions concerning the practices, processes, and outcomes of colonialism from the initial stage of exploration, through the early phases of Spanish and later Mexican occupation, and into the American period and contemporary times.

In reading the chapters in this book, I am convinced that the American Southwest has an important role to play in broader, comparative studies of colonialism, particularly in examining distinctive historical trajectories that unfolded in the Spanish borderlands of North America. In comparing the contributions
in this book to my understanding of the colonial history of Alta California, I conclude with four observations.

First, while much scholarship has focused on documenting the initial encounters between Spanish explorers and indigenous populations throughout the American borderlands, much less work has been expended on considering the long-term implications of these early engagements. The exploration programs initiated by the Spanish Crown in the American Southwest and Alta California in the 1540s differed dramatically. As detailed by Schmader (chapter 2), the overland Coronado entrada into Arizona and New Mexico lived off the land, appropriated native provisions and goods, brutalized local communities, and engaged in armed conflict with several tribes. The Cabrillo voyage to Alta California maintained stores on the ships, interacted with indigenous populations for relatively short durations during landfalls, and, for the most part, maintained relatively peaceful relations with local groups. The question I raise, particularly after reading Sheridan and Koyiyumptewa’s chapter (9), is how did the distinctive outcomes that took place during these initial colonial encounters affect native memories and influence the social relationships and negotiations that took place later when the Spanish returned to settle both areas.

Second, the archaeological investigations of presidios and missions in the American Southwest, as exemplified in Thiel (chapter 12) and Pavao-Zuckerman (chapter 11), present the opportunity for comparing how the colonist’s cultural practices and lifeways, as well as their relationships with indigenous populations, developed in different areas of the Spanish borderlands. I have long been intrigued by the distinctive Franciscan mission policies for working with different kinds of indigenous populations, in particular how the process of native resettlement (reducción) was implemented among settled agrarian populations and hunter-gatherer societies. However, as Sheridan and Koyiyumptewa (chapter 9), Pavao-Zuckerman (chapter 11), and Webster (chapter 4) illustrate, the ability of some Southwestern tribes to remain in their homeland villages did not reduce the trauma and stress of colonial occupations.

Third, the recent trend of examining the practices, processes, and outcomes of colonialism from the perspective of native political economies and indigenous landscapes may have stronger roots in the American Southwest than elsewhere in the Spanish borderlands. I believe this may stem from the seminal early work of anthropological archaeologists examining colonial-era sites from the perspective of indigenous culture history and chronology rather than as historical archaeologists who specialized in Spanish colonial history. The chapters in the book exemplify this fine tradition of placing at the forefront native agency and history in the archaeology of colonialism. Leckman (chapter 3) demonstrates how a Puebloan sense of landscape and space was maintained in the Rio Grande Valley in the face of Spanish colonialism, while Jelinek and
Brenneman (chapter 10), Liebmann, Preucel, and Aguilar (chapter 5) show why the Southwest is such an exceptional place to study the importance of native political alliances, social relationships, ceremonial associations, factional groups, and antagonisms for understanding the kinds of colonial entanglements that unfolded. Fowles, Arterberry, Montgomery, and Atherton in their presentation of Comanche archaeology (chapter 6) highlight the critical importance of undertaking archaeological research in indigenous landscapes many kilometers from missions, presidios, and rancho homesteads.

Fourth, we need to invest more time and energy in the study of colonial entanglements in the more recent past. The period spanning the last two or three centuries is crucial for understanding the creation of our contemporary world and how the legacies of colonialism have influenced our interactions with the environment and the identity, composition, and political relationships of modern communities in the American borderlands. Most of our research on Native American societies still focuses on precolonial and early colonial sites when specific groups can be identified and studied in the archaeological record. It is a much more difficult task to entangle and investigate indigenous archaeological remains from other peoples in late colonial times. Several chapters in this book make considerable progress in our study of the archaeology of the recent past. Strawhacker (chapter 13) presents a research program for examining long-term environmental changes associated with irrigation agriculture that transcends precolonial, colonial, and recent times. Darling and Eiselt’s (chapter 7) and Jenks’s (chapter 8) investigation of the creation of Vecino villages in the Rio Grande in the late 1700s and 1800s provide an excellent roadmap for examining the construction of similar communities elsewhere in the Spanish borderlands.

Finally in closing, it is clear given the major advances taking place in the archaeology of colonialism as amply demonstrated in this book that another major synthesis of Spanish borderlands scholarship is now needed. The last great overview—the seminal Columbian Consequences volumes—has been on the library shelf for more than twenty years. But I will leave this to my able colleague David Hurst Thomas to ponder . . .

REFERENCES CITED


