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Author(s): **Kent Lightfoot**

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CULTURE CONTACT STUDIES: REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN PREHISTORIC AND HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Kent G. Lightfoot

Archaeology is poised to play a pivotal role in the reconfiguration of historical anthropology. Archaeology provides not only a temporal baseline that spans both prehistory and history, but the means to study the material remains of ethnic laborers in pluralistic colonial communities who are poorly represented in written accounts. Taken together, archaeology is ideally suited for examining the multicultural roots of modern America. But before archaeology's full potential to contribute to culture contact studies can be realized, we must address several systemic problems resulting from the separation of "prehistoric" and "historical" archaeology into distinct subfields. In this paper, I examine the implications of increasing temporal/regional specialization in archaeology on (1) the use of historical documents in archaeological research, (2) the study of long-term culture change, and (3) the implementation of pan-regional comparative analyses.

La arqueología está destinada a jugar un papel vital en la reconfiguración de la antropología histórica. La arqueología provee no solamente un marco de referencia temporal que cubre tanto la prehistoria como la historia, sino también un medio de estudio de los restos materiales de los trabajadores étnicos en comunidades coloniales pluralistas, quienes están pobremente representados en documentos históricos. Vista en conjunto, la arqueología es ideal para examinar las raíces multiculturales de la América moderna. Sin embargo, antes de podamos tomar ventaja del potencial de la arqueología para el estudio de contacto cultural, debemos resolver muchos problemas sistémicos que resultan de la separación de la arqueología en dos campos distintos, "prehistórica" e "histórica." En este artículo examino las implicaciones de una mayor especialización temporal/regional en la arqueología con relación a (1) el uso de documentos históricos en la investigación arqueológica, (2) el estudio de cambio cultural a largo plazo, y (3) la implementación de análisis comparativos pan-regionales.

An important focus of social theory and studies of culture change in anthropology today is understanding how indigenous peoples responded to European contact and colonialism, and how the outcomes of these encounters influenced cultural developments in postcolonial contexts (Biersack 1991; Ohnuki-Tierney 1990; Sahlins 1985, 1991, 1992; Simmons 1988; Wolf 1982). After three decades of considering Levi-Strauss's synchronic model of "cold" societies (Ohnuki-Tierney 1990:2-5), anthropologists are now experimenting with diachronic theoretical concepts, including those from the Annales school of French history who advocate

the study of culture change over very long time spans (i.e., the *longue durée*). The resurgence of historical anthropology, as evidenced by the flurry of research marking the recent Columbian Quincentennial, offers a refreshing alternative to the proliferation of narrowly defined, specialized subfields in anthropology. Representing an interface of common concern, culture contact studies may revitalize holistic anthropological approaches that consider multiple lines of evidence from ethnohistorical accounts, ethnographic observations, linguistic data, native oral traditions, archaeological materials, and biological remains (Hantman 1990; Kirch 1992;

Kent G. Lightfoot ■ Archaeological Research Facility, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-3710

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Larsen 1990; Rushforth and Upham 1992; Sahlins 1992; Schuyler 1988; Schrire 1991; Simmons 1988; Stahl 1991, 1993, 1994; Thomas 1987; Wilson and Rogers 1993a).

Archaeology is poised to play a pivotal role in the reconfiguration of historical anthropology in the United States. Ideally suited for studying long-term change that transcends the boundary between prehistory and history, archaeology provides a common baseline for comparing the recent past to the deep past. A strong grounding in prehistory is critical for understanding the full magnitude of European exploration and colonization. We now recognize that Native American societies were undergoing cultural transformations before their first face-to-face contact with Europeans (Deetz 1991:5-6; Wilson and Rogers 1993a: 6). Prior to any written observations, many native societies were already responding to the widespread exchange of European goods (Trigger 1981:11-13), the rapid spread of alien plants and animals (Crosby 1986:145-194), and the assault of virulent epidemics (Dobyns 1983:25-26; Dunnell 1991; Perttula 1991:514-515; Ramenofsky 1987:173-175; Upham 1986). The implication is clear—any historical anthropological study that attempts to understand the long-term implications of culture contact must consider the archaeology of pre-contact contexts. Without this prehistoric perspective, one cannot undertake comparative analyses of cultural transformations that took place before, during, and after European contact and colonialism.

However, before archaeology's full potential to contribute to historical anthropology can be realized, the current practice of dividing historical and prehistoric archaeology into distinct subfields must be addressed. The purpose of this paper is to voice my concerns that the current separation of prehistoric and historical archaeology detracts greatly from the study of long-term culture change, especially in multi-ethnic contexts. I begin by considering the critical role that pluralism should play in contemporary culture contact research. I then consider the implications of separating "prehistoric" and "historical" ar-

chaeology into distinct subfields. I finally discuss three problems that follow from this practice involving (1) the use of ethnohistorical and ethnographic sources in archaeological research, (2) the study of long-term culture change using archaeological materials, and (3) the implementation of pan-regional comparative analyses.

The Archaeology of Pluralism

Until recently, our perception of and research on early culture contact has focused almost exclusively on the relationship between local native peoples and colonists with monolithic cultures from several western European nations (primarily Spain, England, France, and the Netherlands). In reality, the social environment of most North American colonies was considerably more complex, involving one or more local native populations, European peoples of varied nationalities and backgrounds, and many "other" peoples of color.

There is growing recognition that the Spanish and British colonies in the American Southeast were composed of a very diverse mix of European, Native American, and African peoples (Deagan 1990a, 1990b; Ferguson 1992; Ferguson and Green 1983; Landers 1990), and that Spanish/Mexican settlements in colonial California were comprised of few Spaniards but many Mexican Indians (most from west Mexico), mestizos, mulattoes, Native Californians, and peoples of African ancestry (Frierman 1992:12; Greenwood 1989:452). Beyond the Spanish borderland, in much of western North America and along the North Pacific Rim, fur trade companies established a network of multi-ethnic trade outposts by recruiting cheap sources of labor from across Europe, North America, and the Pacific Islands (Crowell 1994:12-28; Lightfoot et al. 1993:162-163; Pyszczuk 1989:220-221; Ray 1988:343; Swagerty 1988:365, 370). Depending on the specific company, a small managerial class of erudite European or European American men administered an extensive labor force of lower class Scots, French Canadians, eastern Europeans, European Americans, *Métis*, and

other "mixed bloods," Native Americans (Iroquois, Crees, Aleuts, Pacific Eskimos, etc.), Hawaiians, Filipinos, and even a few Africans. The pluralistic communities associated with trade outposts provided the social setting in which sustained contact was first made with many native populations in western North America (Lightfoot et al. 1991:4-6).

The establishment of European colonies also had a rippling effect well beyond the colonial frontier, as native villages in defensible, inaccessible places became refuges where peoples from many different homelands congregated for mutual protection (see Heizer 1941:105-112; Ferguson 1992:44; 49-50; Merrill 1994; Phillips 1981:33-40). These renegade communities provided safe havens for runaway slaves, escaped neophytes, criminals, and disenfranchised peoples. As Merrill (1994:126-133) stresses, some of these enclaves, especially those involved in raiding colonial settlements, were quite diverse in ethnic composition, including members of different native tribes, many peoples of "mixed-blood," escaped Africans, and outlaw Europeans.

The study of multi-ethnic interactions in these varied colonial settings is critical for understanding the early composition and development of modern African American, European American, Hispanic, and Native American cultures in the United States (see Deagan 1990b:297-298, 1991:101). Colonial settlements were pluralistic entrepôts where peoples of diverse backgrounds and nationalities lived, worked, socialized, and procreated. Considerable social interaction took place among the laboring classes, and inter-ethnic marriage and cohabitation were common (Deagan 1990a, 1990b, 1991; Hurtado 1992:375; Lightfoot et al. 1993:162; Swagerty 1988:371; Whelan 1993:254). Furthermore, the close interaction of ethnic groups from different homelands may have stimulated the selective cultural exchange and accommodation of architectural styles, material goods, methods of craft production, subsistence pursuits, diet, dress, and ceremonial practices. For example, European men in interethnic households accommodated new in-

novations in food, architectural forms, kitchen tools, and other material culture (see Deagan 1990a:240, 1990b:307-308; Crowell 1994:160-181), while native women, related kinspeople, and their offspring were exposed to various manifestations of European "culture," as well as a diverse range of cultural practices from Africa and from across North America and the Pacific Ocean.

Unfortunately, most colonial accounts were written from the perspective of affluent European men who documented little about the lifeways of lower class laborers and their relations with local native men, women, and children. Ethnohistorical research often provides little or highly selective information on the pluralistic laboring class in colonial settlements. Yet while these people were largely invisible in written documents, the material remains they left behind are recoverable and interpretable by archaeologists. Archaeology is the field of choice for examining the lifeways and interactions of poorly documented peoples in the past (see Deagan 1991:108-109; Deetz 1991:6). The study of culture change in multi-ethnic colonies is indeed an area where archaeologists can make significant contributions to historical anthropology.

We must recognize, however, that the archaeology of pluralism is very much in its infancy. A significant challenge for archaeology in the 1990s is the development of theoretical models and methodological practices for undertaking diachronic analyses of material culture derived from multi-ethnic contexts (e.g., Deagan 1990a, 1990b; Ferguson 1992). Since 1988, I have experimented with one such approach in the ongoing study of the early nineteenth-century Russian colony of Fort Ross in northern California (1812-1841). A collaborative team of scholars from the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the University of California at Berkeley is examining the long-term effects of interethnic interactions between Europeans, native Californians (Kashaya Pomo, Coast Miwok), native Alaskans (Koniag and Chugach Eskimos, Aleuts, Tanaina and Tlingit Indians), native Siberians (Yakuts), native

Hawaiians, and at least one African American who lived and worked at the mercantile settlement of Ross.

The approach we employ at the Fort Ross State Historic Park is holistic, diachronic, and broadly comparative in scope. It is holistic because information is drawn from archaeological, ethnohistorical, ethnographic sources, as well as native oral traditions. It is diachronic because multiple lines of evidence are temporally ordered in a series of "windows" or points along a continuum spanning prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic times. And it is broadly comparative because it compares and contrasts our findings at Fort Ross with the spatial organization of material remains in the ethnic homelands of the workers stationed at Ross. My purpose here is not to describe the results to date of research at Fort Ross, which are presented elsewhere (see Farris 1989a, 1989b, 1990; Goldstein 1992; Lightfoot et al. 1991, 1993; Lightfoot 1994; Martinez 1994; Mills 1994; Murley 1994; Osborn 1992; Parkman 1994a, 1994b; Wake 1994). Rather, it is to provide the context in which I first recognized the problems presented by the separation of prehistoric and historical archaeology into distinct subfields.

Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology

The separation of prehistoric and historical archaeology has important implications for how and by whom investigations of the material remains of ethnic groups take place in North America. The artificial division between "prehistoric" and "historical" archaeology has a long history in North America, its roots situated in an earlier segregated view of the past. Native American villages were viewed as separate and distinct entities from European and European American settlements, and their study involved different teams of researchers. While prehistorians were developing methods and theories for the investigation of Native Americans, historical archaeologists initiated the study of colonial European material culture beginning in the

1920s in Williamsburg, Virginia (Ferguson 1992:5). As historical archaeologists expanded their investigations to other eastern cities (e.g., Jamestown, Plymouth, St. Augustine), they continued to focus on the European component of early colonial towns and the reconstruction of forts, battlegrounds, and plantations (Ferguson 1992:5-6; Fitzhugh 1985:3-4). This division of labor continued into the early 1980s, as archaeologists trained primarily as prehistorians investigated native villages in *both* prehistoric and protohistoric contexts, and those trained as historical archaeologists specialized in the study of European architectural remains and artifacts.

In the last 15 years, the segregated view of the past has undergone a radical transformation as researchers began recognizing the full extent to which multi-ethnic encounters took place in most colonial settlements. Several developments contributed to this awareness of pluralism, including (1) symposia and research undertaken in preparation for the Columbian Quincentennial (e.g., Thomas 1989, 1990, 1991); (2) Deagan's (1983) innovative research on interethnic households at St. Augustine; and (3) a growing recognition that the classic "European" colonial settlements where historical archaeologists cut their teeth were actually comprised of many peoples of "color" (e.g., Ferguson 1992:3-6). Historical archaeologists have now broadened their scope of research beyond European material culture by examining the spread of the European world system and its subsequent impact on native peoples worldwide (Deetz 1991:1).

While the segregated ethnic domains of prehistoric and historical archaeology are breaking down, strong arguments continue for maintaining them as distinct subfields. The advocacy for prehistoric archaeology is voiced most vociferously by scholars who consider the implications of European-introduced diseases. Dobyns (1983, 1991) and Dunnell (1991) argue that catastrophic depopulations from epidemics at contact may have produced profound discontinuities between prehistoric and historical native pop-

ulations. That is, native peoples prior to the introduction of lethal epidemics were fundamentally different in their population levels, economic practices, and sociopolitical organizations than the remnant survivors who followed. As Dunnell (1991:573) succinctly states, “[M]odern Indians, both biologically and culturally, are very much a phenomenon of contact and derive from only a small fraction of peoples and cultural variability of the early sixteenth century.” These scholars champion prehistoric archaeological methods for studying native societies prior to and during the formative years of European culture contact. They eschew ethnographic analogy and, more specifically, the use of the direct historical approach (see also Ramenofsky 1991). Dunnell (1991:573) contends that “the entire relation between past and present, between history and archaeology must be rethought.”

Deagan (1988) and Beaudry (1988:1) argue that historical archaeology should be viewed as a separate intellectual field from prehistoric archaeology. They maintain that historical archaeology has been hindered in the past by the wholesale adoption of concepts and techniques from prehistorians. They seek the development of methods and theories in historical archaeology that are distinct from the scholarly roots of the study of prehistory (see also Mrozowski 1993:107–109). In this view, historical archaeology differs from prehistoric archaeology in that it employs *both* archaeological data and historical documents in the study of “New World colonialism, Western expansion, and the rise of capitalism” (Deagan 1988:9), as well as the evolution of the modern urban society (Mrozowski 1988:18–19).

The upshot of maintaining separate subfields is that the archaeological remains of native peoples in any one region are being investigated by different teams of specialists who employ very different theoretical approaches and methodological techniques. While prehistorians investigate pre-contact sites, there is greater ambiguity in the study of post-contact Native American archae-

ology, depending largely on whether or not the material remains are associated with European colonies. Historical archaeologists tend to study the remains of native peoples who lived and labored in European and European American settlements (plantations, missions, trade outposts, and towns). On the other hand, post-contact sites of native peoples, which are not physically associated with broader European colonial communities, are typically investigated by the same scholars who undertake prehistoric archaeology in the region. They often do not identify themselves as historical archaeologists (see Kirch 1992:26; Wilson and Rogers 1993a:7). This practice is further institutionalized and highly structured in the context of cultural resource management, where fieldwork in a region is typically subcontracted to “prehistoric” and “historical” specialists depending on the age and physical relation of the archaeological remains to European and European American settlements.

I first became aware of the pervasiveness of this division of labor when I began working at Fort Ross in the late 1980s. The investigation of the administrative offices and elite residences of Russian-American Company officials was undertaken by scholars trained in historical archaeology, while prehistoric cultural remains in the nearby hinterland were studied by prehistorians (see Farris 1989a:490–92; Lightfoot et al. 1991:43–52). Post-contact native remains fell into a fuzzy domain: house remains and midden deposits located close to company offices and Russian residences were incorporated into historical archaeological projects (e.g., Thomas 1976; Treganza 1954), while Kashaya Pomo villages in the outlying hinterland, where agricultural laborers resided while working at Fort Ross, were investigated by archaeologists trained as prehistorians (e.g., Stillinger 1975).

The above practice is exemplified in the current renaissance in Franciscan mission archaeology taking place in California. Undertaken primarily by historical archaeologists, these studies are expanding our understanding of the spatial organization of mission

complexes, the architecture of neophyte residences, and their associated material remains (see Costello and Hornbeck 1989; Farris 1991; Farnsworth 1987, 1992; Hoover 1989, 1992; Hoover and Costello 1985; Hornbeck 1989). Archaeologists are employing field techniques refined over the last 25 years (e.g., South 1977:277–314) that involve broadscale excavation exposures, the use of cultural and natural levels (when possible), and an emphasis on the spatial organization of architectural features and artifacts. The organization of internal and external space (including the placement of hearths, the patterned deposition of refuse, the segregation of work areas) is well documented in and around neophyte barracks at La Purísima Mission, Mission Soledad, and Mission San Antonio (Deetz 1963; Farnsworth 1987; Hoover and Costello 1985).

However, mission archaeologists focus their research almost exclusively on the mission quadrangle and outlying buildings and agricultural features. The scope of their research is often defined explicitly by cultural resource management concerns and contract funding. Native American sites found outside mission complexes, regardless of age, still fall within the purview of archaeologists trained as prehistorians. Since prehistoric archaeologists in California have long been concerned with chronological construction, the application of eco-evolutionary models, and the reconstruction of ethnolinguistic units (Hughes 1992; Lightfoot 1993), the theoretical models and excavation strategies they employ differ greatly from mission archaeologists. Excavation strategies have tended to focus on midden deposits with high densities of food remains and artifacts, and until recently, grave lots containing temporally sensitive artifacts. The consequence of this practice is that Indian neophyte barracks associated with missions will be excavated, analyzed, and interpreted in a very different methodological and theoretical context than contemporaneous native villages in the outlying hinterland, a point that I return to below.

The Use of Ethnohistorical and Ethnographic Sources

One implication of separate prehistoric and historical subfields is the ambiguous role that ethnohistorical and ethnographic sources play in archaeological research today. Advocates for a separate prehistoric subfield recognize that the “tribal” groups recorded by ethnographers were greatly transformed and even “created” as a consequence of culture contact resulting from massive epidemics, dislocations from traditional homelands, and the amalgamation of people from many different homelands into colonial settlements or native refugee camps. They argue that written accounts of native peoples may be distorting our perception of the prehistoric past (e.g., Dunnell 1991).

Yet this perspective assumes a rather narrow and problematic use of ethnohistorical and ethnographic accounts in archaeological research—that of employing ethnographic observations as “simple” analogues (Wylie 1988) for reconstructing the past. Known as “specific” analogy, “specific historic” analogy, or “direct historic” analogy, this method of ethnographic analogy is predicated on the assumption of cultural conservatism (Ascher 1961; Charlton 1981). By assuming minimal culture change over time, early ethnohistorical documents, later ethnographic accounts, and still later interviews with native elders about their childhoods are used to reconstruct the prehistoric past. This rather unsophisticated use of simple analogy tends to stress similarities between source and subject, and to be conspicuously ahistorical in its approach (Wylie 1982, 1988). Ethnohistorical and ethnographic observations of native peoples over several centuries are often collapsed or conflated into a single account of the “traditional” lifeways of a group which is then projected back into prehistory (Stahl 1993:246).

The question we should be asking is not whether North American archaeologists should use ethnohistorical and ethnographic documents, but rather *how* they should be

employed most effectively in archaeological research. If critically read, there is a wealth of information in written documents that can be employed by archaeologists in studies of culture change. This perspective was first advocated by Heizer (1941), Steward (1940, 1942), Strong (1935, 1940, 1953), Wedel (1938, 1940) and others who employed the direct historical approach to examine the dynamics of culture change in historic, proto-historic, and prehistoric native societies using archaeological, ethnohistorical, ethnographic, and linguistic data (see also VanStone 1970). Instead of stressing cultural conservatism and employing ethnographic data to reconstruct the past directly, they advanced the study of culture change by comparing and contrasting different lines of evidence in a diachronic framework. Wylie (1988:142) likens the diachronic research of Strong and Wedel of Plains Indians to more sophisticated analogical models. These models move back and forth between the source and subject in a temporal framework, identifying similarities and anomalies. She (1989: 10–17) suggests this “vertical tacking” may identify similar social processes taking place over time, as well as significant differences that characterize the past and present. For example, Strong (1935) analyzed the similarities and differences in the material culture, architecture, and village layout of nomadic, buffalo-hunting “horse” tribes described ethnographically with earlier proto-historic and prehistoric populations in the same area who inhabited sedentary or semi-sedentary horticultural villages.

A great strength of this kind of comparative approach, as Stahl (1993:250–252) notes, is that independently constituted lines of evidence drawn from archaeology, ethnohistory, ethnography, and linguistics may be employed to evaluate interpretations generated from particular historical contexts. The convergence of these different lines of evidence may either strongly support, refute, or modify one’s proposed interpretations (see Wylie 1989:15–16). Rather than viewing ethnohistorical and ethnographic sources as simple

analogues for directly reconstructing the past, they should be viewed as revealing of the time when they were recorded, and as end sequences of long-term developments in native societies (see Kirch and Green 1987; VanStone 1970:50–51). As Kirch (1992:5) emphasizes, historical observations of native peoples represent additional lines of evidence for evaluating culture change in the *longue durée*, and are not a mirror of the prehistoric past.

Almost every archaeologist working in North America employs ethnohistorical records and ethnographic observations at some time in their research, often giving priority to the written accounts over their own archaeological findings (Galloway 1991:457). The privileging of written documents over archaeological remains is especially prevalent among prehistorians who examine culture change that transcends the boundary between prehistory and history; historical narratives often take the place of archaeological analyses at that point in time when descriptions of native peoples were first recorded (see Graves and Erkelens 1991:9–10 for Hawaiian examples). By maintaining separate subfields, students trained as prehistorians are not taught to analyze critically written documents, and many of the biases and limitations of early Europeans’ accounts and later ethnographic studies are overlooked (Wood 1990:101–102). However, if archaeologists are to employ historical records in the study of culture change, then critical readings must be undertaken to define: (1) the time of the observation, (2) the cultural context in which the text was written, (3) the nature of the text (explorer’s journal, administrator’s letter, ethnographic report), (4) the training of the observer (explorer, missionary, ethnographer, etc.), (5) the method of observation (participant observation, interviewing elders, oral tradition, etc.), and (6) the degree to which different observations corroborate with one another (see Galloway 1991; Stahl 1993:247; Wood 1990). Historical archaeology can contribute to the greater field of archaeology by providing training in the analysis and critical

evaluation of historical documents and their relationship to the archaeological record. If every student of North American archaeology better understood the biases and limitations of different sources of written records, then many of the most flagrant abuses of direct historic analogy would probably cease, and the privileging of written records over archaeological materials might be curtailed.

The Study of Culture Change in Pluralistic Contexts

The separation of prehistoric and historical archaeological practices also has implications for the study of long-term culture change. The earliest studies of native responses to European encounters were predicated on a model of acculturation that stemmed from a segregated view of the past. Culture change, or acculturation, was viewed as the assimilation of native peoples into the material world of Europeans or European Americans, a process that involved their rejection of traditional lifeways and the adoption of European artifacts through force or choice. Since a segregated view of the past assumed that native residences and settlements were distinct from those of "other" peoples, artifact trait lists were employed to quantify the ratio of native and European materials in archaeological deposits (e.g., Deetz 1963; Di Peso 1974). The assumption underlying the use of these measures was that the greater the percentage of European goods in Native American contexts (houses, work areas, middens), then the greater the degree of acculturation. For example, in Deetz's (1963:179–186) innovative study of Indian neophyte rooms at La Purísima Mission in California, he argued that native men were acculturated into Hispanic culture more rapidly than native women. His argument is based on the high percentage of Hispanic artifacts (about 75 percent), the relative absence of chipped-stone artifacts (associated with native male activities), and the presence of basketry remains and milling equipment (associated with native female activities).

Archaeological studies of acculturation

have been criticized on two grounds. First, the model of acculturation is passive and directional in outcome, smacks of ethnocentrism, and is totally inadequate for considering multidimensional changes in multi-ethnic social environments (see Champagne 1994:217; Bragdon 1988:128; Ferguson 1992:150; Rogers and Wilson 1993b:17–18). We now recognize that the adoption and use of new technologies and materials in colonial frontiers were complex processes involving various economic, political, ideological, and engendered considerations, and that native peoples were active participants in selecting or modifying new artifact forms (Bragdon 1988:128; Kardulias 1990:29; Rogers 1990:9–12; Wilson and Rogers 1993a:5). New cultural traits were adopted, modified, and created to fit within the underlying ideological structure of both non-European and European peoples. Ferguson (1992:xli–xliii) describes this synergistic process as one of "creolization," where "interaction, exchange, and creativity" took place within multi-ethnic social environments, resulting in multiple cultural configurations that diverged in their architectural forms, artifacts, and foods from traditional Native American, African, and European societies.

Second, the shortcomings of early measures of culture change in acculturation research have been voiced (Deagan 1988:9–11; Fransworth 1992:22–24; Hoover 1992:41). Rather than straightforward measures of native acculturation, artifact ratios may actually mislead researchers into underrepresenting the direction and degree of culture change in multi-ethnic communities. In some cases, European artifacts—specifically produced for native consumption—functioned as direct replacements for native artifact forms with no apparent transformations taking place in other aspects of traditional native culture (Farnsworth 1992:25; Lohse 1988:401–402; O'Shea and Ludwickson 1992:269; Turnbaugh 1993:142–143). In other cases, European artifacts were integrated into non-European contexts that gave new cultural meanings to glass, ceramic, and metal materials

(see Ferguson 1992). On the other hand, “native” artifact types (chipped-stone or ground-stone materials, bone tools, as well as locally manufactured ceramics where there is a precedent), which are employed as indexes of cultural continuity in acculturation studies, may have been produced, used, or discarded by a diverse mix of Native American groups, Africans, Pacific Islanders, “mixed bloods,” or even European laborers. The synergism of multi-ethnic interactions may have fostered innovations in the technology, raw materials, and forms of “native” artifacts—significant changes in material culture that may be overlooked unless detailed comparisons are made with pre-contact assemblages. Without a solid grounding in prehistory, it may be impossible to determine the timing, magnitude, and sources of the changes involved, and to evaluate whether significant cultural transformations were really taking place.

It is clear that simply computing the percentage of European and native artifacts in archaeological deposits tells us little about the process of culture change in pluralistic colonies. What is needed is a diachronic “contextual” approach that examines changes in the ideological structure of people in prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic contexts. I believe that such an approach can be implemented by considering the broader spatial organization of the archaeological record.

There is great promise in undertaking analyses of “built environments” in long-term diachronic frameworks to evaluate changes in cultural values and worldviews as actualized in social practice (Bourdieu 1973; Donley 1982, 1987; Donley-Reid 1990; Glassie 1975; Moore 1986; Rapoport 1990). It also provides the best available approach for identifying ethnic affiliations in the archaeological record, and for examining the consequences of ethnic interactions over time (De Corse 1989:138; McGuire 1982:163; Stevenson 1989:282–291).

The contextual relationship of artifacts, ecofacts, and features, both inside and outside structures, across residential settlements, and over broader regional landscapes, can

provide insights into the organizational principles of households and communities. A key consideration is the organization and use of space over time—the construction, maintenance, and abandonment of house structures, extramural space, public buildings, midden deposits, and mortuary complexes across the landscape. The organizational principles of households and communities are manifested in the spatial arrangement of domestic, recreational, and ceremonial activities across space (Ladefoged 1991; Newell 1987; Oswalt 1980; Oswalt and VanStone 1967; Sweeney 1992; VanStone 1968, 1970); in the definition of public and private space (Donley 1982; Lawrence 1990; Sanders 1990); in the maintenance of gender, social, prestige, and dominant/subordinate relations in spatial contexts (Donley-Reid 1990; Gargett and Hayden 1991; Kus and Raharijaona 1990; Lawrence 1990; Moore 1986:107–120); and in the units of measurements employed in the construction of space (Farris 1983; Glassie 1975:22–26; Layne 1987:351–353).

By employing spatial contexts as the unit of analysis, we may evaluate whether significant transformations were taking place in the organizational principles of households and communities before, during, and after European contact and colonization. Was there continuity in how space was constructed, used, and abandoned over time? While new artifact forms, raw materials, and construction methods were introduced during culture contact, were the spatial patternings of material remains in houses, extramural areas, midden deposits, and mortuary contexts replicated over time, or were new organizational principles introduced (see, for example, Layne 1987; Newell 1987; O’Shea and Ludwickson 1992:247–270)? How did the site structure change during the formation of multi-ethnic communities and mixed ethnic households? That is, did significant changes take place in the spatial layout of houses, the organization of space by men, women, and children, the ways in which houses and extramural areas were cleaned, the ways in which foods were processed, consumed and discarded, etc.?

The study of spatial contexts in a diachronic framework raises a significant problem in the current separation of prehistoric and historical archaeology. Direct comparisons of archaeological remains recovered from different aged contexts are critical to evaluate the full effects of culture change over time. In his pioneering study, Duncan Strong (1935: 291–292) argued that adequate samples of house structures, pits, and other archaeological features were needed from prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic deposits so that diachronic comparisons would not be skewed. Yet the present trend to divide prehistoric and historical archaeology into distinct subfields is not conducive to comparative analyses of archaeological materials from different aged contexts. Prehistoric and historical archaeologists often address very diverse kinds of research problems, implementing field strategies that differ markedly in sampling designs, areal coverage, and recovery techniques. The result is that controlled comparisons of archaeological materials from historical and prehistoric excavations are often difficult, if not impossible.

I first discovered this problem in attempting to implement a diachronic, contextual approach at Fort Ross. In 1991 we began the excavation of the Native Alaskan Village at Fort Ross where native Alaskan workers and their families resided (Schiff 1994). Census data indicated that the great majority of two-person or larger households were interethnic in composition, composed primarily of Kon-iag Eskimo men and Kashaya Pomo/Coast Miwok women (Lightfoot et al. 1993:162). We intended to compare and contrast the spatial organization of native Alaskan and interethnic residences with the spatial patterning of material remains from nearby Russian structures and Kashaya Pomo villages in the outlying hinterland. The stockade complex had been excavated by scholars trained in historical archaeology, who employed areal excavation strategies to expose the spatial organization of archaeological remains in and around Russian administrative and residential structures (e.g., Farris 1990).

However, we quickly realized that the field strategies employed in the study of prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic Pomo archaeological remains in the greater region were markedly different. Most were cultural resource management studies that involved pedestrian survey of specific project areas and limited subsurface testing of some sites to assess their age and depth, and the density of cultural materials (see Fredrickson 1984:526). While many of these studies are exemplary, given their purpose, identified research problems, and scope of investigation, until recently few large-scale, areal excavations of Pomo sites delineating house structures, extramural features, and village layouts have been undertaken (for notable exceptions, see Fredrickson and White 1994; Layton 1991; White 1989). Consequently, we began broadscale investigations of nearby Kashaya Pomo villages to provide the spatial context for undertaking our comparative analysis (Martinez 1994).

Problems in the comparability of archaeological remains recovered from prehistoric, protohistoric, and historical contexts are not unique to the Fort Ross project. Archaeologists working on missions in California have employed sophisticated excavation methods to expose broad areas of Indian neophyte residences and work space that are well suited for the above contextual approach. The effects of Franciscan colonial policies on local native populations could be addressed by examining how the organizational principles of native households were transformed from pre-mission to mission contexts. The organization of space in and around neophyte barracks could be compared to the spatial arrangement of artifacts, features, and faunal remains in house structures, extramural areas, and midden deposits in nearby late prehistoric and protohistoric Indian villages. Unfortunately, archaeological investigations of nearby native Californian sites have not employed similar kinds of broadscale areal excavation strategies for many of the same reasons that they have not been widely employed in the Fort Ross region. Surprisingly

little is known about the internal spatial organization of prehistoric and protohistoric hunter-gatherer villages in most regions of California (see Gamble 1991:48–70; Lightfoot 1993:185).

The study of long-term culture change in California (and other areas of North America) will be greatly facilitated by developing an integrated approach to prehistory and history. On the one hand, a more contextual approach by prehistoric archaeologists will not only provide a better understanding of the spatial organization of pre-contact household complexes and villages, but it may also compel some to rethink the conventional excavation strategies such as placing small excavation units (1 x 1 m) across archaeological places using random sampling procedures and the reliance on arbitrary 10 cm levels. On the other hand, rather than having to rely primarily on artifact ratios to measure acculturation (e.g., Farnsworth 1992), historical archaeologists may then undertake detailed comparisons of the spatial organization of different aged contexts to evaluate transformations in the organizational principles of native households in the formation of Spanish missions.

Pan-regional Comparisons

The division of prehistoric and historical archaeology into separate subfields is symptomatic of a broader trend of specialization in both anthropology and archaeology. As Deetz (1991:2) stresses, there is a growing trend for students of archaeology to specialize not only in prehistoric or historical periods, but also with in local regions in North America (e.g., northern California, Desert Southwest, Plateau Southwest, coastal New England, etc.). After working in three different areas of North America (American Southwest, New England, California) over the last 20 years, I believe there is little doubt that North American archaeology is becoming increasingly provincial in its outlook. Of course, many will justify this trend to specialize given the current tempo of archaeological research. Most scholars are overwhelmed by the sheer

number of reports and monographs produced in their local regions, especially those in the “gray” literature, often making it seem a Herculean task to keep up with the latest findings.

However, the study of culture contact in multi-ethnic contexts demands that we strike a balance between local specialization and a broader, comparative perspective. The focus of study becomes not only the native peoples of the local region, but the diverse ethnic groups who interacted with indigenous peoples in colonial communities. Background studies should be undertaken on how different ethnic groups constructed, maintained, and abandoned space in their traditional homelands. The purpose is to define the range of variation employed by members of specific ethnic groups in constructing their “built environments” (household complexes, residential communities, outlying locations) across the regional landscape. These cultural landscape models can then be compared and contrasted to the archaeological spatial patterns unearthed at multi-ethnic colonial settlements. Cross-cultural, comparative analyses may facilitate the identification of ethnic affiliations in the archaeological record and define the spatial association of materials that have little or no concordance with the landscape models. These latter anomalies are of special interest since they may reflect cultural practices of interethnic households, cultural transformations that have taken place in multi-ethnic communities, and/or explicit colonial policies that structured the organization of the cultural landscape.

The comparative analyses should be undertaken at a *pan-regional* scale, since the archaeological remains of local natives are compared and contrasted to the cultural practices of historically recognized ethnic groups from homelands across the globe. In their investigation of pluralistic colonial communities in the American Southeast, Ferguson (1992) and his students are undertaking comparative analyses of pottery, tobacco pipes, foodways, and house structures from western Africa with ceramic assemblages, food remains, and architectural features excavated

in South Carolina and Virginia sites. Scholars addressing the consequences of Spanish colonization in California are considering not only the archaeology, ethnohistory, and ethnography of local native peoples, but also late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Spanish, Mexican Indians, mestizos, mulattoes, and African peoples (e.g., Farnsworth 1987; Frierman 1992; Greenwood 1989). Investigations on the consequences of British trade outposts in the American Northwest is stimulating not only background studies on the local native peoples, Métis, Hawaiians, French Canadians, and Europeans who participated in the fur trade (e.g., Carley 1982; Pryczyk 1989), but also research on the hundreds of laborers recruited from eastern Native American tribes, including the Iroquois and Cree (Swagerty 1988).

In our study of Fort Ross, we are comparing and contrasting archaeological remains from the Native Alaskan Village site not only to nearby Russian structures and Kashaya Pomo villages, but also to the settlement layout of Koniag Eskimo villages on Kodiak Island, Alaska, and other Russian trade outposts in the North Pacific where Koniag Eskimos were employed (e.g., Clark 1974; Crowell 1994; Jordan and Knecht 1988; Shubin 1990). The purpose of our analysis is to identify concordances and anomalies in the spatial organization of interethnic residences at Fort Ross when compared to other pertinent case studies of Kashaya Pomo, Koniag Eskimo, and Russian culture landscapes. Concordances may facilitate the identification of ethnic affiliations in the archaeological record, while anomalies may represent new innovations or cultural practices resulting from interethnic relationships. Whether innovations in interethnic households at Fort Ross can be observed in the archaeological record and were these innovations transmitted back to Kodiak Island or to nearby Kashaya Pomo villages are questions that guide our ongoing research.

One consequence of implementing pan-regional comparisons is to promote changes in the scale and organization of collaborative

research (e.g., Deagan and Scardaville 1985). Investigating the diverse ethnic groups represented in colonial settlements requires an expertise beyond the proficiency of any one scholar and most institutional research teams. Greater collaboration among scholars working in different regions of North America and the world will necessitate innovations in the organization of projects that facilitate inter-institutional cooperation and international participation. For example, we are collaborating with a diverse range of Californian and Alaskan specialists, Russian historians and archaeologists, and Koniag Eskimo and Kashaya Pomo tribal scholars in our study of Fort Ross. Valery Shubin, a Russian collaborator at the Sakhalin Regional Museum (Sakhalin Island, Siberia), in cooperation with Rick Knecht of the Kodiak Area Native Association (Kodiak Island, Alaska), is proposing to formalize an international program for investigating the dispersal of Koniag Eskimo workers in Russian colonies across the North Pacific. The program would involve the joint participation of Russian and American archaeologists and ethnohistorians with tribal scholars in the excavation of pluralistic colonial communities on the Kurile Islands, Kodiak Island, in northern California, and elsewhere.

Conclusion

Archaeology can play a critical role in the reconfiguration of historical anthropology in the United States. The study of long-term change in *both* prehistoric and historic contexts is necessary to evaluate the *full* implications of Columbian consequences (epidemics, novel trade goods, alien fauna and flora), European exploration, and the formation of multi-ethnic colonial communities. Modern African American, European American, Hispanic, and Native American cultures are rooted in the prehistory of the Americas and the colonial policies involving massive movements of ethnic laborers into indigenous homelands. These cultures share a common heritage—close interactions with local native peoples that resulted in the exchange

of ideas, material culture, and genes. Archaeology contributes the primary database for considering the genesis and growth of prehistoric Native American societies, while multiple lines of evidence drawn from archaeology, ethnohistory, ethnography, linguistics, and native oral traditions can then be employed in the analysis of culture change in colonial and postcolonial settings. Furthermore, archaeology provides the principal means of inquiry for investigating the interactions of poorly documented ethnic workers in pluralistic communities.

However, the full potential of archaeology to contribute to culture contact studies is hindered by the current practice of dividing prehistory and history into separate subfields. The temporal scales at which archaeologists work should be defined by the research problems being addressed, rather than by arbitrarily created subfields. Culture contact studies necessitate an integrated approach to prehistory and history. Yet the current schism in archaeology is contributing to systemic problems in the study of long-term change. These problems include: (1) the continued practice of using historical records as direct historic analogues, (2) the privileging of written documents over archaeological materials, (3) the implementation of different research agendas and field strategies whose results are not comparable in prehistoric and historic contexts, (4) the reliance on artifact ratios alone to measure culture change in colonial settings, and (5) increasing specialization among students of archaeology in particular time periods and local regions.

The advocacy for maintaining a separate subfield of prehistoric archaeology is supported by some who consider the implications of European-introduced diseases. Dobyns (1991) and Dunnell (1991) raise important concerns about the potentially devastating consequences of early epidemics, the problems of using historic accounts to reconstruct directly the prehistoric past, and the relevance of employing archaeological evidence to estimate pre-contact population levels. However, it does not follow, as Dunnell

implies, that we should view prehistoric and historic populations as separate phenomena. Rather, the full implications of epidemics will only be understood by examining long-term changes in human populations. The systematic study of populations in prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic contexts is necessary to determine the timing of lethal infections, to evaluate whether demographic collapses took place, and to examine the aftermath of epidemics in succeeding generations of survivors. If significant discontinuities occurred in local regions, then what kinds of cultural transformations took place?

Deagan (1988), Beaudry (1988), Deetz (1991) and others make convincing arguments for why prehistoric method and theory did little to advance the early developments of historical archaeology. However, I think the dissatisfactions voiced by historical archaeologists may reflect more the shortcomings of earlier processual approaches in archaeology, rather than the relationship between prehistory and history per se. By addressing research questions in common on native peoples, ethnic pluralism, and the expansion of the European world system, an integrated approach to prehistory and history may be generated. This kind of approach will not only revitalize the study of long-term change in archaeology, but will benefit the broader field of archaeology.

As outlined in this paper, an integrated approach to prehistory and history will promote a more sophisticated use of historical documents. Rather than viewing historical documents as analogues for reconstructing the past, they can be used as revelations of the time at which they were recorded, and as additional sources for comparison with archaeological interpretations. An integrated approach to prehistory and history also will encourage the development of more refined methods for measuring culture change. By shifting the unit of analysis from artifact ratios to the spatial organization of the archaeological record, integrated research designs can be implemented for examining transformations in the organizational principles of

household and communities in prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic contexts. Pan-regional, comparative analyses on the construction, maintenance, and abandonment of space can then be employed to identify ethnic affiliations in colonial communities and to define innovative cultural practices that resulted from interethnic interactions.

North American archaeologists can choose to participate in the reconfiguration of historical anthropology, and redirect the practice of archaeology back to the study of long-term change. Or we can contribute to the growing disintegration of holistic anthropology by continuing the proliferation of narrowly defined, specialized subfields.

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