

**Christine D. Beaulé, John G. Douglass, eds.** *The Global Spanish Empire: Five Hundred Years of Place Making and Pluralism*. Amerind Studies in Anthropology Series. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2020. Maps, charts, tables. 320 pp. \$65.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8165-4084-6.

**Reviewed by** Christine Delucia (Williams College)

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This volume explores the enormous variety of “place making” projects that unfolded across the globe in Indigenous spaces affected by Spanish colonialism. The collected essays originated from a session at the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) annual meeting and underwent further revision with SAA-Amerind Foundation Award support. The resulting collection, organized largely chronologically, offers a rich and wide-ranging survey of local experiences with Spanish colonialism, with special focus on diverse Indigenous people’s dynamic strategies of response, resistance, and adaptation. Contributors steer away from homogenizing, static, or essentialist conceptions of identity and social practice, instead stressing the heterogeneity, complexity, and continuous evolution of communities and their intersections with one another. There is no singular Spanish colonial identity or project but rather a shifting array of ambitions, affiliations, practices, and compromises. Nor is there a monolithic Indigenous experience or method of contending with frequently violent and extractive Euro-colonial presences. The contributors nonetheless all remain attentive to commonalities spanning the wider Iberian enterprise of empire building and the overarching policies, bureaucratic structures, and cultural outlooks that shaped colonizers’ trajectories in places as far-

flung yet interconnected as Ghana, Florida, the Andean highlands, and Oceania.

The collection’s focus on “place” reflects maturing scholarly literature in multiple disciplines about locality, geography, and the co-created relationships between human societies and their environments. As many place-based historical works and theorizations of recent decades have emphasized, understanding histories of social change in place requires careful attention not only to material factors of emplacement—the physical terrain in which communities situate and sustain themselves—but also to imaginative, ideological, cultural, religious, and other frameworks for devising meaning and senses of belonging. Editors Christine D. Beaulé and John G. Douglass unpack these ideas in their introduction, where they delineate key contours of “place making”: “Place making in the geographic sense is illustrated by the attachment of culturally specific meaning to a location on the landscape, while place making in the social sense involves the creation or modification of a group’s place in a socially or politically diverse setting” (p. 22).

In centering pluralism, the volume emphasizes the multiplicity of populations, identities, and forms of ethnogenesis that took shape in local contexts. Contributors probe the uneven nature and

impacts of Spanish colonialism, taking care to differentiate between stated colonialist objectives and the much more contested, ambiguous realities of encounter and intercultural negotiation on the ground. In many of the locales featured in the volume, Spaniards were, at least initially, vastly outnumbered by Indigenous people—themselves often from diverse backgrounds—and the would-be colonizers' power remained severely constricted or outright thwarted. Even in zones of "conquest" where Indigenous people endured enormous trauma and demographic losses, Native survivors and their descendants strongly influenced the formation of new ways of being and devised highly variable responses to Spanish military, economic, religious, and other pressures.

A major strength of the volume is the essays' deep attunement to the local, the particular, and the material. Many of the contributors are archaeologists/anthropologists, and their projects explore "the material residues of this cross-cultural interaction" (p. 4). They delve into assemblages of ceramics, floral and faunal remains, glass, stone, metal, and other items to interrogate the lived experiences of navigating cultural changes and to recognize in fine-grained ways how objects' uses and values frequently shifted away from their makers' original intentions. Many contributors deploy methods of historical archaeology to braid together documentary and artifactual evidence, and in some instances also draw on collaborations with present-day communities to frame their interpretations. The resulting analyses offer a potent counterpart to modes of inquiry based more strictly in archival sources. They pose significant questions about the formation and implications of documentary silences (as well as techniques for working around them), and invite scholars from several disciplines to reckon with multimedia and place-based sources. While the book is organized chronologically, the comments below follow more thematic lines in order to highlight salient pathways through the essays.

The unevenness and ephemerality of material traces from early Iberian, and particularly Spanish, colonialism figure prominently in several chapters. Christopher R. DeCorse confronts the evident paucity of extant archaeological evidence pertaining to formative Iberian contacts in coastal West Africa. The most extensive work has been conducted at Elmina, the former slave-trading fort in Ghana, where Akan people residing in an African settlement (Aldea das Duas Partes, or Village of Two Parts) became enmeshed with Portuguese and later Dutch colonizers. Addressing the relatively "poor archaeological visibility" of Portuguese presence, DeCorse contends that the "limited amount of European artifacts speaks to both the archaeological (in)visibility of the European trade and the resilience of African cultural traditions," while also cautioning that even when European-produced import wares are evident, they do not constitute conclusive proof of "cultural transformation and ethnogenesis" (pp. 45, 47). In their discussion of the Solomon Islands of the Southwest Pacific, Martin Gibbs and David Roe assess initial encounters between Indigenous islanders and Spaniards in the late sixteenth century and the (mis)communications that resulted as participants engaged in performance, gesture, gift giving, and other forms of interaction. Noting the difficulty of locating cohesive archaeological evidence of these early colonial forays (the first being an exploratory voyage, the second expressly aimed at colonization), the authors unfold the challenges of ascertaining intentions and perceptions in liminal spaces. In both studies, scholars work around the paucity of material traces by engaging in close reading as well as speculative interpretation of written documents, while also addressing the inherent coloniality of this archive.

Spanish colonialism seriously affected Indigenous populations and settlement patterns, and several essays consider the reformation of social landscapes as Spanish policies attempted to relocate and contain Indigenous people. Corinne L. Hofman, Roberto Valcárcel Rojas, and Jorge Ulloa

Hung address the massive population dislocations caused by Spanish colonialism in the Caribbean, notably the forced removal of entire Indigenous groups from certain areas and their transit to other locales as a consequence of the slave trade. As Spaniards coercively relocated diverse Indigenous people across the Lesser and Greater Antilles to exploit their labor in arduous industries, such as pearl extraction and gold mining, colonizers attempted to impose notions of a “homogenized ‘Other’ and negated their likely diverse original ethnic identities” (p. 57). Yet the authors are keen to recover the social and cultural heterogeneity of Indigenous communities before and during this era of transformations, in order to articulate the highly variable ways Indigenous actors interacted with or resisted Spanish attempts at military and labor dominance. Using the concept of *conviven- cia* (living together), Laura Matthew and William R. Fowler comparatively examine two Spanish urban areas founded nearly simultaneously during a military conquest of 1527-28 in Maya, Nahuatl Pipil, and Xinka territories (Guatemala and El Salvador). These highly defensive towns “reveal how Hispanic idealizations of conquered, urbanized space were tempered by the military and multiethnic realities of their founding” (p. 131). In milieus where Europeans and Africans were minorities within predominantly Indigenous worlds, Spanish ambitions to create Castilian-style enclaves wound up compromising with much more distinctively Indigenous modes of dwelling and spatial organization.

Other essays spotlight the significance of inter-Indigenous networks, alliances, and forms of mobility as essential preconditions for comprehending Spanish colonial trajectories. Spaniards did not enter static or ahistorical Indigenous spaces. They arrived in dynamic settings in which Indigenous populations and politics regularly angled for influence, engaged in conflict and peacemaking, and underwent ethnogenesis. Christopher B. Rodning, Michelle M. Pigott, and Hannah G. Hoover explore Spanish incursions into La Florida in the North

American Southeast and the powerful Indigenous chiefdoms that pervasively shaped the nature, extent, and speed of colonialism’s impacts. “From an indigenous perspective,” they assert, “Spaniards were another group in an already pluralistic cultural landscape” (p. 95). It was a landscape already thoroughly shaped by Mississippian towns, mounds, and farming areas, across which Native polities exercised well-developed protocols for engaging with outsiders and newcomers. Within this terrain, early Spanish settlements “were relatively impermanent and in many cases were short-lived,” though the longer-term regional repercussions of Spanish colonization proved enormous (p. 93). Similarly, in the multiethnic Sierra Sur region of Nejapa, in Oaxaca, Mexico, Stacie M. King considers multiple waves of outsiders and invasions by the three “colonizing regimes” of the Zapotec, Aztec, and Spanish (p. 106). Characterizing Spanish colonizers as another variety of invading newcomer rather than an altogether unprecedented presence, she contends that in Nejapa “cultural pluralism had long been the tradition; in short, what was persistent through conquests and colonialisms was pluralism” (p. 107).

Several chapters critically contextualize encounters between Indigenous spiritual systems and Spanish missions, reevaluating the dynamics of place making as colonizers endeavored to enter and at times forcefully overwrite Indigenous sacred geographies. Kevin Lane examines longstanding Indigenous Andean traditions of spatially organized sacrality and the nuanced manner in which Spanish Catholicism entered this domain. This was not a monodirectional process or one that neatly effaced Indigenous beliefs and practices in order to replace them with new monotheistic arrivals—even if Catholic colonizers aspired to that supplantation. Instead, using detailed place-base investigation, Lane identifies continuities of Indigenous spiritualities (whether overtly maintained or subversively continued) and matrices of multiple meanings wherein Spanish religious structures and activities became intricately

interlayered with already extant, yet continuously evolving, Indigenous ones. Turning to the borderlands of northeastern Mexico and Texas, Steve A. Tomka considers how Indigenous communities grappled with the expansion of Catholic missions into traditional homelands, where communities already had extensive experience navigating differences (for example, in the context of bison hunting in overlapping territories). Within mission spaces, Coahuiltecan people participated in dramatically altered social configurations where dominant and underrepresented groups angled for influence and engaged in intergroup marriages that fostered new identities. They devised ways of continuing elaborate ceremonial systems (for example, mitotes, or dances) that served crucial social roles, within a setting where paternalistic Spanish religious leaders sought to sharply constrain or eradicate non-Catholic beliefs and expressions.

Geography itself became strategically mobilized by Indigenous and African communities to evade Spanish efforts at surveillance, control, and imposed change. Stephen Acabado and Grace Barretto-Tesoro comparatively assess Indigenous place-based responses to Spanish colonialism in the Philippines. In the highlands, Ifugao people developed landscape management systems involving wet-rice cultivation and terracing that allowed them to consolidate distinct identities, facilitated by distance from centers of Spanish governance. (By contrast, for Tagalog people in more urbanized Pinagbayanan, *reducción* caused immense reorganizations in space, while it also presented opportunities for articulating new social statuses.) Considering Chamorro society in the Mariana Islands, James M. Bayman, Boyd M. Dixon, Sandra Montón-Subías, and Natalia Moragas Segura explore strategies Chamorro people employed at *lãnchos* (ranch-farms) to evade surveillance and imposed change by colonizers. These remote areas “facilitated the persistence of intangible cultural heritage” and precolonial traditions, contrary to colonial designs upon transforming

social identities and cultures (p. 235). In a related fashion, Juliet Wiersema examines the “multicultural backwater” of the Dagua River in Nueva Granada in the eighteenth century, a remote region where geographic separation from Spanish surveillance—enforced by arduous, lengthy travel routes to emerging colonial centers—facilitated Africans’ autonomous development of identities that transcended prior ethnic differences (p. 267). Her essay offers an innovative close reading and contextualization of a 1764 manuscript map of the river area, unpacking how African people who were coercively brought to work in gold extraction leveraged skills such as canoe navigation to assert independence from colonial repression.

This collection presents innovative case studies illuminating the diversity of Indigenous and Spanish spaces of encounter on a global scale, presented in a manner that will be most accessible to specialists interested in thinking across multiple localities and historical moments. The essays productively re-periodize encounters with Spanish colonialism by not assuming them to be pivotal turning points that demarcated a neat Indigenous “before and after.” Instead, they situate Spaniards’ arrivals within already dynamic histories of encounter, violence, invasion, and ethnogenesis. Accompanied by well-selected maps, charts, and tables, they invite further reading in each author’s larger body of work. As with any multivocal endeavor, the authors diverge in small and larger ways about the implications of their findings. Some contributions assert the relative continuity of Indigenous cosmologies, beliefs, and practices, maintained despite the upheavals of Spanish colonialism. Others stress disruption, transformation, and creation of new social orders and ways of being, characterizing Spanish colonization as a key historical inflection point.

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