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Between the Longue Durée and the Short Purée

POSTCOLONIAL ARCHAEOLOGIES OF INDIGENOUS HISTORY IN
COLONIAL NORTH AMERICA

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ARCHAEOLOGISTS WHO STUDY INDIGENOUS CULTURES in the context of European colonialism are frequently caught in a conundrum of temporal scale. How do we represent, render, and interpret Indigenous practices and peoples in ways that not only respect the complexities of the colonial world and their actions therein but also situate their lives in the context of their own unique short- and long-term cultural histories? Capturing this duality has not been easy. Part of the problem is that archaeologists have not fully heeded the call by Lightfoot (1995) to conduct truly multiscalar, diachronic studies of colonialism and Indigenous responses to its many forms. Part of it also relates to the ways that archaeological concepts, terms, and methods are not yet decolonized and not yet attuned to the ways that people, past and present, relate to their own histories.

On the one hand, some archaeologists (and other historical scholars) have interpreted colonial encounters and settlements as the decisive moment in Indigenous histories, a moment that either halts those histories or redirects them (see Hart et al., this volume). Indigenous people who pass through that pivotal gateway are often seen as significantly altered, as an amalgamation of different cultures, as disconnected from their traditions, as completely novel cultural forms, or, worse, as inauthentic. This might be called the short purée—the mixing and mashing of Indigenous and colonial cultures in relatively short order. The short purée takes an extreme form with the work of demographic nihilists, but other variants can be found in those approaches

that privilege the novel or creative experience of colonialism—a kind of “free play” of symbols and things—at the expense of the situated knowledges and experiences of Indigenous social actors. It also has a deep legacy in the acculturation approaches of the mid-twentieth century.

On the other hand, some archaeologists and a few historical anthropologists opt to downplay the impact of colonialism, or at least recontextualize it, in light of long-term Indigenous histories that span centuries, if not millennia, before the arrival of European colonists. Regardless of its various theoretical origins, I will refer to this as an orientation to the *longue durée*. This reorientation grants primacy to Indigenous agency, tradition, and cultural structures that both predate and rival those of colonists and settlers, and it permits a view of Indigenous action as contributing, in part, to the direction of history. Such a view sometimes draws either metaphorically or conceptually on the *Annales* school of history. Other takes can be seen in the famous work of Marshall Sahlins in the Pacific (Sahlins 1981, 1985) or in newer work emphasizing Indigenous myths and metaphors (Vitelli 2011).

Both perspectives have value, but they also have their limitations in the study of Indigenous histories across the “great divide” of so-called prehistoric-historic or precontact-postcontact periods (see Scheiber and Mitchell 2010). My objective in this chapter is to outline the positions and their problems and to propose a reorientation to the *scale* of memory and practice (see Stahl, this volume) as a way of potentially resolving some of the issues raised by these heuristically polar opposites. This resolution arises from, and can contribute to, decolonizing collaborative approaches to archaeology and history. In fact, my own thinking about this derives from the intersection of postcolonial theory, social theories of memory, archaeological data, and my long-term community partnership with the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation of southeastern Connecticut to study their past. I recount some of the interpretations and context of that research here to make these conceptual points.

The Short Purée

In the short purée perspective, colonialism serves as the most prominent inflection point in the arc of Indigenous histories. In its most extreme version, a “fatal impact” model proposes that Indigenous cultures and peoples were fundamentally altered by the presence of European colonists and colonies, frequently to the point of becoming unrecognizable in terms of their previous cultural ways. This narrative remains entrenched in the general American public’s perception of Native American history and deserves

some attention here, although it has faded from most archaeological research agendas. The mechanism of fatal impact varies, though. Some see European-introduced pathogens as the major debilitating agent, contributing as they did to pandemics and significant mortality. Those passing through this bottleneck are thought to have lost much of their cultural integrity and to have become something new, particularly with recombinations of different cultural groups (Dobyns 1991; Dunnell 1991). Such perspectives identify postcontact forms—ethnohistoric, ethnographic, and contemporary Native communities—as puréed and disconnected from their long-term histories.

Other scholars see colonial systems of authority, religious proselytization, forced resettlements, acculturative programs, and the introduction and adoption of new material culture as mechanisms of the short purée. The latter, initially framed as acculturation research, has offered a major point of entry for archaeologists to measure cultural change and continuity in Indigenous societies. Those who tracked so-called acculturation frequently viewed the purée as under way when items of European-derived material culture appeared in Native American cultural contexts. On the other hand, those who studied resistance looked closely for subversive Native American agents and practices that short-circuited the purée. This acknowledged the impending purée potential but permitted a mechanism for dodging it.

No one could deny the severe and sometimes immediate impacts of violence, disease, marginalization, racism, genocide, and cultural attack on Indigenous societies, but these analytical positions have limitations and colonize historiography in several ways. They situate Indigenous histories within, rather than intersecting, colonialism, thereby shortening them. They discourage archaeological research on more recent Indigenous histories, because they privilege precontact realms as more pristine (that is, more “Native”) and more interesting (see critique in Lightfoot 1995). This is a subtle, but dangerous element—one need only tabulate the number of archaeological projects on “first encounters” and “early contact periods” compared to studies on those centuries well into colonialism and settler nationhood. A focus on earlier periods often occurs despite the greater richness of archival information on those later periods, dimensions that could afford a more enriched historical archaeology. Furthermore, such emphases on these early periods sever present Indigenous communities from their pasts and their abilities to exert claims on them, not only by the rhetoric of fatal impact but also by the practice of not studying more recent links in their historical chains (Lightfoot 2006). This severance has enormous political import in a world framed by challenges to Indigenous rights and histories in a variety of settler nations such as the United States.

A double standard is at work. Those groups and individuals therein who made tough decisions to survive a colonial onslaught now receive blame for their presumed changes, despite the fact that colonialism set much of that context with policies of dislocation, violence, and marginalization. As a *purée*, the process appears as a jumble or dilution rather than as strategic accommodations that permitted cultural survival. Ways of changing in the context of their own unique histories—their *longue durée*—often go unrecognized. Such interpretations of colonialism excuse newcomers and disadvantage those who had lived on particular landscapes for many generations. Those newcomers who carried forth explicit colonial projects move forward in time as more of themselves—that is, the British become more British because of colonialism, even though the role of colonialism is often hidden (Johnson 2006)—while those who frequently suffered under these colonial projects became less of themselves, at least according to long-standing indices of cultural change used by archaeologists, anthropologists, and others. If colonialism constitutes part of national becoming for the British, the French, the Spanish, and the Anglo-American, why can it not be for the Mohawk, the Hopi, and the Tlingit as well? The answer: Native Americans, conceptually, have been *puréed*, while colonizers and their descendants remained unmixed, despite a number of additions and accommodations resulting from their interactions—economic, social, political, personal, intimate—with Indigenous people. This conclusion remains firm in the public mind and often in academic ones as well, despite extensive research in places like Spanish La Florida that demonstrates sharing of cultural elements between colonizer and colonized in a process of transculturation (Deagan 1998).

Recent postcolonial approaches have attempted to reexamine this short *purée* with a sharper eye toward understanding Indigenous negotiations of these new colonial circumstances in creative and novel ways. The emphases on hybridity and social agency have circumvented some of the harsher edges of the short *purée*, but they tend to downplay some of the long-term historicities of Indigenous practices in the colonial world. That is, actions in the colonial present are represented as ways of going forward, or being ironic (e.g., the concept of mimicry introduced by Homi Bhabha [1985]), rather than ways of also linking backward. I fear that my own work encouraging archaeologists to pull back from “culture contact” terminology when trying to interpret what are otherwise quite colonial contexts (Silliman 2005) may be misread as encouraging this kind of *purée* within a decisive colonial process (Jordan 2009). Foregrounding colonialism as a (the?) critical feature of Indigenous life in recent times may emphasize short-term transformation, hybridity, and novelty at the expense of long-term, grounded cultural practice,

but it does not have to if appropriate multiscalar perspectives are applied to this kind of entanglement (Silliman 2009; Thomas 1994).

The Longue Durée

Archaeologists pride themselves on their ability to track cultural changes and continuities over the long term. This extensive time depth marks, in fact, one of the key contributions of archaeology to historical inquiry and social science. From Binford's archaeological palimpsests (Binford 1981) and long-term environmental histories, to the engagement with the *Annales* school of history (Knapp 1992) and the debates about time perspectivism (Bailey 2007; Holdaway and Wandsnider 2008; Murray 1999), many archaeologists have gravitated toward the interpretation of deeply diachronic trends in human societies, as one of the only disciplines with the power to do so. Debates have raged over whether certain historical and cultural patterns operate outside the perception and beyond the life cycle of human social agents, and whether the archaeological record should be interpreted with different temporal scales and theoretical frameworks than those normally applied to ethnographic settings. This does remain a strength of archaeology.

Many cultural resource management reports in the United States offer a different variation on this focus on deep histories. Even those reports that concern the most recent of periods and perhaps even the archaeology of non-Native sites contain the obligatory “background section” on the area's “prehistory,” often including everything back to the most ancient Paleoindian period. This practice seems to have developed from an archaeological approach to the history of the land rather than to a history of social, cultural, economic, and political processes that may or may not have intersected with such ancient histories. I mention this not to suggest that such backgrounds are unimportant or irrelevant, since we do need better appreciation of history's details in particular places and times and of long-term Indigenous presence, but rather to wonder about the slippery and uncritical use of extended histories by archaeologists simply because we have the ability to access them.

Several studies of long-term Indigenous histories in colonial North America have highlighted the value of such extended views as a counterpoint to *puréed*, short-term histories. Kulisheck (2010) has identified the ways that long-term Pueblo mobility, aggregation, and migration patterns set the context for demographic change in the wake of Spanish colonization in the American Southwest. Gallivan (2004, 2007) has demonstrated the impacts of four centuries of Indigenous life in Tidewater Virginia on particular Native

American responses to English colonization in the early seventeenth century (see also Hantman 1990). In a landmark study, Lightfoot and colleagues (1998) revealed how the deeper histories of Native Californians and Native Alaskans guided and informed their actions in a Russian colony in nineteenth-century northern California.

These perspectives do not stretch the length of the *longue durée* as do some “prehistorians” in the aforementioned debates about scale and the archaeological record, but they reveal the power and promise of situating Indigenous histories in their proper origins and trajectories. However, the allure of the *longue durée* must be tempered with a multiscale perspective and an appreciation for what takes place at those scales (Lightfoot 1995; Silliman 2009; Richard, this volume; Tveskov 2007). Just because we *can* study histories as long-term spatial and cultural patterns over many centuries or millennia does not mean that we always *should*. Diachronic study is not merely pushing a study’s historical context as far back as possible. History has to be narrated, remembered, embodied, institutionalized, or otherwise conveyed to have impact (Trouillot 1995). Perhaps people of the past did not even know the scales of history that archaeologists can now envision through the material record, or perhaps they knew of them but chose not to mobilize those memory resources as they negotiated change and continuity in their own lifetimes. These must be established in real contexts rather than assumed at the outset. In other words, we should focus at least as much on *their* social memory and its mechanisms for retrieval or encouragement as on *ours*. We need to use more narrative time than chronological time to link our archaeological interpretations to past people’s engagements with the histories we associate with them (Lucas 2005). Furthermore, we should avoid the trap of assuming that archaeology is limited to longer sweeps of history in the colonial era (e.g., Fagan 1997:34), when it can clearly access distinct households and events that might span a mere decade or less.

History is oriented differently, when emphasizing a heavy or uncritical focus on the *longue durée*. Extending Indigenous histories into deep time serves a political goal of further situating people in their landscapes and respecting the possibilities of their ancestral connections. Many, especially Native American scholars and community members, would support such worthy goals, and these efforts should be given due weight. However, a danger lurks in more extreme versions, because the perspective also assumes that Indigenous people may be more “traditional” and bound to their pasts and therefore less capable of reframing their social, cultural, economic, and political realms in cases of severe empirical risk like that brought about by colonialism. That is, their negotiations of social memory may be positioned

wrongly within *archaeological* time rather than within their own perceptions of the past. Their strategic continuities may be seen as passive changes. None of this negates the fact that many Indigenous people have far more secure connections to their deeper pasts than do many non-Indigenous people in settler nations. It only accentuates a need to know how these “connections” happen, and a recognition of how those deeper connections become used against “traditional” people who make choices to “change” and become labeled as no longer the same people and consequently without rights or claims.

In addition, archaeologists need to account for the differential application of deep histories. How far back do we extend this *longue durée*, and why does that extension seem to vary depending on whether the group in question is Indigenous or colonist? Most archaeologists would likely be interested in thinking about the long-term cultural patterns, particularly mindsets or *mentalités*, that might link seventeenth-century Pueblo groups with Chaco Canyon 500–600 years before, or Caddo groups in the eighteenth century in the Mississippi Valley with Cahokia and other Mississippian chiefdoms from 500 to 700 years prior. Yet how many would regularly pursue twelfth-century England as a key source for understanding of colonists’ cultural patterns in seventeenth-century Jamestown or Plymouth on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States? I am not arguing that either approach is right or wrong, but instead am commenting on their prevalence as a function of presumed appropriateness. Stated more extremely, we can more easily imagine archaeologists thinking that 5,000-year-old Archaic earthen mounds of northeastern Louisiana have some relevance to Native American cultures encountered by the French and Spanish in the colonial Southeast of North America long before they would consider the role of Stonehenge in British colonial cultures. The absolute time scale is the same, so the difference lies in the perceptions of change and cultural distance.

Perhaps these hypotheticals overstate the case, but let me ground this point about scale in a more prevalent deployment of problematic long-term scales of history. When researching the dimensions of culture change and continuity among Native American societies in North America, archaeologists regularly set an “ethnographic baseline” for comparison that includes the cultural practices known from the immediate precontact period. This baseline may be developed using first-encounter historical observations or intensive archaeological research, provided that care is taken not to collapse time for the sake of creating a single analog (Stahl 1993). This approach remains highly valuable for assessing immediate postcontact or early colonial culture change and continuity in Native American or other Indigenous societies, as demonstrated in such classics as Lightfoot et al. (1998). Yet how long does such a baseline make sense for assessing culture change and continuity,

and do we use a similar approach to assessing *European* culture change and continuity in colonial settings?

The answer to the former depends on the scale under consideration, but in practice, archaeologists tend to hold to the baseline for all subsequent comparisons. As a result, many archaeological sites associated with Native Americans in the postcontact/colonial era, if not evaluated critically, can be easily interpreted as representing change (in contrast to continuity) when compared to distant baselines (see Silliman 2009). This point of comparison does not move forward in time as the Indigenous cultures or groups in question do. Some archaeologists have begun to push at those boundaries, though (e.g., Harrison 2002; Hodge 2005). For instance, Wagner (2010) demonstrates how the Midwest “nativists” who wanted to protect their “Indian” way of life in the late 1700s and early 1800s did not emphasize a timeless, millennia-old suite of unchanged practices, but rather emphasized a coherent amalgamation of cultural practices that developed over several generations as a result of interactions with neighboring Native Americans and Europeans. Archaeological approaches to Native American revitalization movements in the colonial era have also revealed similar creative, anchored, and variably temporalized practices (Liebmann 2008).

Yet much work remains to be done on this front. In the public realm, how many US citizens think about contemporary Indian people in terms of sameness compared to their nineteenth- or even twentieth-century ancestors or in terms of their difference compared to early colonial periods? In New England today, for example, the Pequot are typically thought about only as the powerful tribe that was heavily decimated in the early seventeenth-century Pequot War by the British colonial militia and their allies *or* as the financially lucrative owners of Foxwoods Casino and Resort that opened in the 1990s (even though this latter reference pertains only to the Mashantucket Pequot and not their federally unrecognized cousins, the Eastern Pequot). Without a shifting baseline that accounts for the changes and continuities in the late seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, or what is just a few decades short of almost four hundred years from the Pequot War to Foxwoods Casino, observers of Pequot cultures and peoples assume that the people of today are radically different from the people of yesterday’s “contact period.” Academically, the obsessions that historians have had with the Pequot War, King Philip’s War, and others from the seventeenth century frequently leave subsequent eras devoid of Native culture and history, as though these Native American groups did not continue (but see exceptions in Den Ouden 2005; Mandell 2008; McBride 1990, 1993, 1996). The gap accentuates change, simplifies complex historical chains, and

serves as a recipe for problematic long-term comparisons. It produces a false sense of the *longue durée*, a point frozen in time that obscures the shorter-term strategies, decisions, and processes that link past and present and that give long durations of cultural patterns their actual power.

The answer to the second question—whether we apply these same scales to non-Indigenous societies—is an easy no, but it makes the same point. Do historical archaeologists interested in European colonial settlements set as their baseline the encounter between those colonists and Indigenous people and the pre-encounter (pre-Atlantic crossing) lifeways of European settlers? Not usually. The key point, though, is that this baseline, even if used, does not remain fixed in that encounter. Where are the studies that look at eighteenth-century transformation of British, Spanish, French, and then Euroamerican cultural practices set against their “precontact” patterns? Are British colonists judged as having changed significantly from those periods, or are they considered to be transformations of the same people? To be blunt, many people in the United States find that Native Americans driving cars, owning casinos, listening to hip-hop, and living in urban apartments must surely be different from their ancestors who might have—usually stereotypically imagined—ridden horses, worn buckskin, fought battles with the US Cavalry, and lived by hunting, gathering, or horticulture. Yet they do not see the same disconnect between their own cars, stereos, and apartments and their past ancestors’ horse-and-buggy transportation, white powdered wigs, flintlock rifles, and quill ink pens.

More poignantly, contemporary Euroamericans are not questioned about the sameness or the connections to their ancestors in the early decades of US nationhood in the late 1700s; yet Native Americans rarely get the benefit of even that short of a time scale for those social scientists, humanists, politicians, administrators, and lay public members who evaluate their changes and continuities. Part of this imbalance relates to unequal evaluative schemes applied to indigene and colonist, and part of it relates to political machinations and uncritical cultural discourse. And still part of it relates to greater scholarly and popular knowledge about the historical fibers that weave together (and push forward) Euroamerican histories, due in large part to an over-reliance on the written record when compared to the oral or material one. Such a fabric leaves those histories with a more seamless narrative, unpunctuated by the gaps that would suggest major cultural disruptions between those iconic early periods and the world of today. Archaeologists need to intervene in all three of these arenas, but they have to break out of some of the perspectives that undergird them.

Balancing the Scales: A New England Example

The dichotomies of short *purée* and long *durée* have been presented to make a series of points about how we think about time, culture, and materiality. They offer matters of perspective on history that we need to attend to so that our interpretations remain sensitive to past lived experience and to the political ramifications of how we frame our questions. My approach has not been to reconcile the short *purée* and long *durée* as though they represent the distinction between event versus long-term process, but rather to situate thinking about time in the context of those who lived it. Similarly, I am not advocating a kind of mesoscale of analysis as a fix for these issues. Other approaches to “the mesoscale” have proven quite convincing (Voss 2008), but these have focused on mesoscales of process and systems (such as labor and economics in colonial contexts), not necessarily of time. A mid-range scale of temporal analysis is not necessarily more suited to all colonial contexts than a deep-time or a shallow perspective, even though its benefits will be revealed in the case below. This depends on context. My argument is much less about the scale at which social, cultural, and historical phenomena manifest than about how people in the past knew about and mobilized short-, medium-, and long-term history and memory. Rather than reconciling scales, this approach rebalances them to be matched to the people who lived and remembered them.

The discussion thus far accentuates the scalar problems facing the archaeology of Indigenous people well before, into, and through the colonial period, particularly vis-à-vis the archaeology of European colonists. The remainder of this chapter considers how these problems might be mediated through careful attention to temporal scale and materiality in a specific case study. Many of the details have been presented elsewhere (Silliman 2009), but I want to further develop the ideas presented herein in that empirical case.

The Eastern Pequot reservation in North Stonington, Connecticut, provides an ideal setting for studying colonialism and Indigenous histories as one of the first and longest-occupied reservations in what is now the United States (Figure 6.1). Granted in 1683 after decades of Dutch and British colonialism—including the infamous Pequot War of 1636–1637—in southern New England, the previously 280-acre, but now 225-acre, property has seen almost exclusive residence by Eastern Pequot community members, both long-standing and new through marriage, with the only European/Euroamerican infiltration happening mainly through pasturage and border fence dismantling. Although not large, the reservation remains remarkably undisturbed, with secondary forest, few dirt roads and trails, and occupied residences located on the perimeter away from many known archaeological

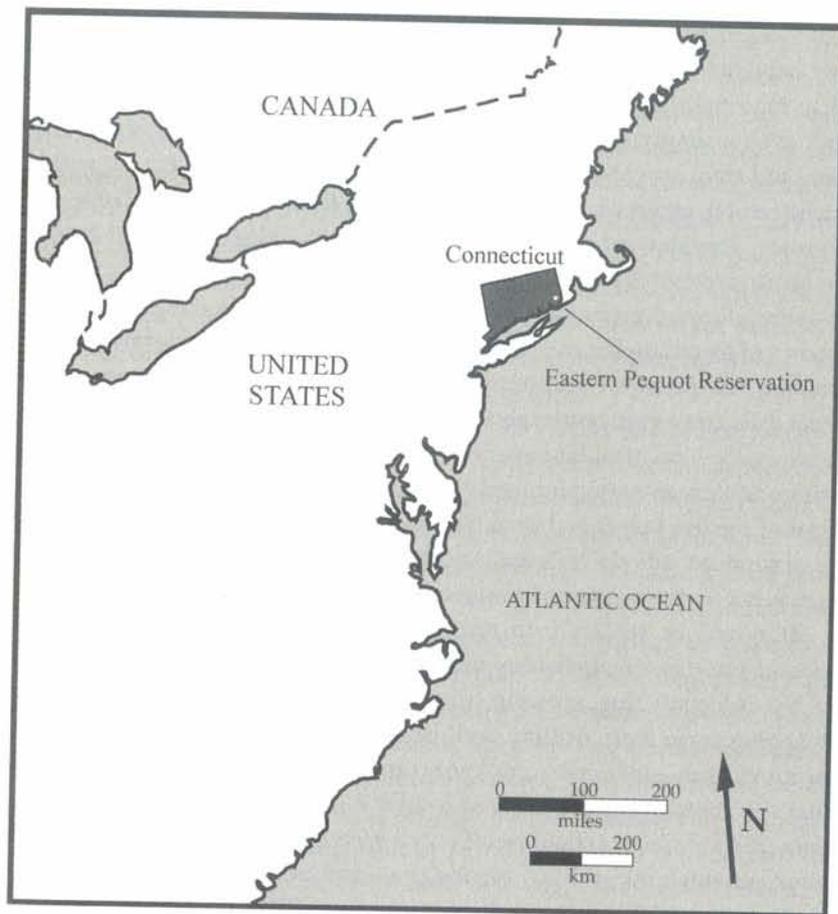


FIGURE 6.1. Map of eastern North America with the State of Connecticut and Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation reservation shown.

sites. The reservation also serves as an active cultural and historical space for the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation that provides a unique venue for collaborative research between archaeologists and Indigenous people (Silliman and Sebastian Dring 2008). Since its inception in 2003, the research project known as the Eastern Pequot Archaeological Field School has had as a primary goal the documentation of spatial and temporal variability of Eastern Pequot households from the late seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, using a variety of mapping efforts, surface and subsurface surveys, and full-scale excavation.

The combined research strategies have permitted research on several sites and non-site contexts that span the period from ca. 1740 to 1850 (Cipolla

2008; Silliman 2009; Silliman and Witt 2010). Suffice it to say here that the five households thus far extensively excavated from that century—two more than reported in Silliman (2009) were excavated in the summers of 2008 and 2009—supply a view of Eastern Pequot cultural practices on ancestral land and amid struggles to survive in colonial New England, but set within architectural, artifactual, and food parameters marked largely by European/Euroamerican-derived materials and technologies. That is, Eastern Pequot residents represented by these households used imported ceramics such as redware, slipware, creamware, pearlware, stoneware, and porcelain; utilized a variety of metal implements such as knives, forks, and locks; anchored architectural and perhaps furniture wood with metal nails and fasteners; drank from dark green glass bottles and clear glass tumblers; wore or made clothing with a variety of metal buttons; cooked in iron kettles; ate and perhaps kept livestock such as cows, pigs, and sheep; and often used local coin currency. Four of the five homes had been framed wooden houses with nails and glass pane windows, and the fifth one may have been a hybrid structure somewhere between a traditional *weetu* (or wigwam) and a framed house.

It would be tempting in certain archaeological circles to argue that each of these five households—when compared to the precontact baseline of hunting, gathering, growing crops, shellfishing, fishing, making pottery, knapping stone tools, drilling shell beads, moving seasonally, and living in *weetu* villages—indicates significant cultural change. One might also claim that this revealed a short *purée* or a colonial swamping of traditional practices. A mild counter could be mounted with the archaeological recovery of some, although not many, lithic materials and the incorporation of fishing, shellfishing, and hunting into dietary practices. These could indicate active connections to ancestral ways. Or perhaps even hybrid practices could be mentioned with the occasional flaked glass object or bifacially worked gunflint, and the presence of glass beads in small numbers (ubiquitously, though) at the sites. The discovery of three stone tools likely several thousand years old that had been curated in a nineteenth-century Eastern Pequot house might also contribute to that counterargument (Silliman 2009:221, 224). These might strike a balance between the short *purée* of colonial influx and the *longue durée* of Native ancestral ways. Despite the possible strength of this counter, the argument would still rely on a static baseline for comparison and on preset cultural identifiers of material objects, the latter of which are addressed more fully elsewhere (Silliman 2009). They would fall squarely into still-colonized notions of time, culture, and materiality.

In contrast, the archaeological patterns could be scaled to that century of these household members living on the reservation. With this analytical viewpoint, the material culture suggests strong continuity in different households

at different places on the reservation for those hundred years. The perspective underscores the ways that household practices and individual memories might have maintained community and well-being through new materials, technologies, and foods. It frees those particular Eastern Pequot individuals in the past from having had to draw on their “precontact baseline” *on our terms* to remain Native American or to culturally survive. It permits the possibility that Eastern Pequot community members drew variably on their pasts depending on age, gender, economic position, and other factors rather than presumes that all Native Americans in this community (or any other) drew on the same suite of knowledges, practices, and memories that we expect them to—that is, the “traditional past”—regardless of the passage of time.

Similarly, it guarantees a kind of authenticity in action for those residents in the early nineteenth century who drew upon recent ancestral actions from the late eighteenth century, ones that secured a hold on the reservation in difficult economic and political times, rather than blames them for increasing distance to their precontact antecedents from two hundred years prior. Finally, it recognizes that European-derived technologies and materials may have become components of household practices and perhaps even family or community traditions. Successive generations of Eastern Pequot (or other Native Americans) did not each have their parents *adopting* market goods, such as ceramics and metal implements. They were *using* them. A focus on the immovable ethnographic baseline forgets that aspect, assessing as we frequently do each instance of “European” or “Native” material culture in sites spanning generations as though they were the direct result of an immediate, conscious, and constant choice between new-old, colonizer-colonized, or European-Indigenous. Such dichotomies begin to unravel rather immediately after so-called contact between Europeans and Indigenous people (see also Hart, this volume; Rodríguez-Alegría, this volume).

This new perspective arises from a theoretical and empirical consideration of temporal scale and cultural action. Theoretically, it ensures that archaeologists do not err too much on the side of the short *purée*. This might render the Eastern Pequot simply as market consumers alongside other settler and minority groups who sought to express their own agency and meaning-making in the capitalist context without any recognition of their grounded and defended histories on that reservation for 100–200 years, a place that also rested within most residents’ ancestral landscape well before the arrival of Europeans. It also ensures that archaeologists do not slip too easily into the *longue durée* in a search for only millennia-old practices as a litmus test for social action. A lack of social citation to those more ancient ways in everyday practices by Eastern Pequot in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries indicates not an unawareness of those traditional and important pasts, but rather their habitual and strategic

summoning of certain *other* pasts in everyday life. Sometimes that involved redware vessels that parents had used, while at other times it involved adding lithic tools produced millennia before into a nineteenth-century household.

Stated differently, the approach focuses on a temporal mesoscale to negotiate the oppositions of short- and long-term histories. I argued above that the mesoscale of time does not offer a panacea for dilemmas in the archaeology of colonialism, but in this case, it certainly reveals important features. It accomplishes this by repositioning interpretations to align more with the scale of household and generational memories, which are frequently the more proximate social resources upon which individuals draw (e.g., Tveskov 2007). Archaeologists have usually neglected this temporal scale, even when they have considered the role of household archaeology for decades now. Importantly, though, these do not represent just theoretical positions drawn from intellectual effort far removed from field archaeology. They are developed through engagement with empirical data from excavated sites that sit comfortably in a mesoscale, stretching individually across two or three decades and collectively across more than a hundred years.

Equally relevant is the development of these ideas in the collaborative spaces of Indigenous archaeology (see Hart, this volume). I have learned much from my Eastern Pequot friends, students, colleagues, and advisers during the course of the project, and that learning opened my eyes to the challenges and histories of "being Native American" in New England generally and in the Eastern Pequot case specifically, whether in 1700, 1800, 1900, or 2000. It helped me to understand the nature of public official attacks on community history and cultural integrity and anthropologists' unfortunate contribution to part of that problem with outmoded conceptual frameworks. It forced me to start accounting for how we track the long fibers of history that connect communities of the present with their ancestral pasts. That accounting led to a deeper understanding that those "hows" still deserve our decolonizing efforts on conceptual, methodological, practical, terminological, and political fronts.

Conclusion

Native Americans in the centuries following colonial settlement performed a variety of connections to the past. Lands, materials, houses, and stories all served as historical and contemporary repositories of social memory and cultural materialities upon which community members could draw in their daily practices. Sometimes individuals drew on parents' practices that structured their childhood; sometimes they turned to grandparents and their stories and

teachings; and at other times, they drew on those memories sedimented in the landscape for centuries through oral histories, built environments, or the material objects that archaeologists know existed in the ground into which they plowed, dug, and built houses. Therefore, we should not consider those objects of European origin or materials in Native American daily life to be simply part of a cultural purée, despite their recent appearance, nor can we assume that every practice that these objects (or more "traditional" and "local" material culture) supported was always (or should be) anchored in the *longue durée*. These are contextual questions to be answered, rather than elements to be assumed. These material elements all comprised conscious and unconscious, mental and bodily, active and subdued, backward- and forward-looking strategies of cultural survivance. Survivance "is more than survival, more than endurance or mere response. . . . [S]urvivance is an active repudiation of dominance, tragedy, and victimry" (Vizenor 1998:15; see Silliman n.d.).

By permitting a fluidity of temporal scale in archaeological analysis and by investigating the ways that social agents performed history in their cultural practices of everyday life, we can more carefully balance the promises and the problems of the *longue durée* and the short purée. Sometimes, a mesoscale of time may well serve as a conceptual and temporal bridge that resolves those dichotomies, and other times we simply need to attend to people's own uses of time and history in their actions of the past. Focusing on social memory and material practices highlights the problematic colonial legacies in our academic and public taxonomies of Native American–European, change–continuity, prehistory–history, and past–present and suggests more nuanced ways to interpret the past and to work with those communities who descend from and value it.

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