

Contributions To Global Historical Archaeology

Sandra Montón-Subías  
María Cruz Berrocal  
Apen Ruiz Martínez *Editors*

# Archaeologies of Early Modern Spanish Colonialism

 Springer

# Contributions To Global Historical Archaeology

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# Archaeologies of Early Modern Spanish Colonialism

 Springer

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# Chapter 1

## Towards a Comparative Approach to Archaeologies of Early Modern Spanish Colonialism

Sandra Montón-Subías, María Cruz Berrocal and Apen Ruiz

This book seeks to contribute a global comparative archaeological approach to processes of colonialism and the ‘first globalization’ connected to the Hispanic Monarchy of the late fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To refer to these processes, we have used the expression ‘Early Modern Spanish Colonialism’. We are aware of the difficulties that underscore the use of the term ‘Spanish’ in reference to these undertakings, with some contributors to the volume preferring alternative names such as Castilian colonialism (for instance, Onrubia and González Marrero). However, we are convinced that the title as the one used here is a useful and functional analytical rubric to the debate.

Though this historical conjuncture will not be elaborated upon in detail at this time (see, for instance, Payne 1973; Lynch 1991; Elliot 2002), we would like to highlight that the Hispanic Monarchy was composed of different kingdoms, which also included the Crown of Portugal during the period 1580–1640 (represented in the volume by Fernández). It is important to note that although the particular colonial experiences parading under our rubric were multifarious and heterogeneous (as our different case examples show), and although it is not possible to delineate a robust, emphatic fracture with posterior colonialism, the ideological, political and administrative logics of the colonial expansion under the Habsburgs can be singularized in relation to both former and later processes of colonialism.

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Most of the contributions to this volume are the result of a workshop of the same title that was held in Barcelona, Spain, June 2013. For those unfamiliar with Spanish archaeology, it is necessary to point out that general interest in historical archaeology, in the chronological narrow sense used here, i.e. as archaeology of the processes of interaction resulting from European expansion, invasion, conquest and colonization that began towards the end of the Middle Ages, is fairly recent in Spanish academia. The only exception is the Canary Islands, where for years there has been research into modern colonialism from an archaeological perspective (for a recent overview, see González Marrero and Tejera 2011). It is easy to understand why, since these islands—like other territories in the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania—also endured colonization under the Hispanic Monarchy.

In the remaining parts of the country, and as it happens in most of Europe, the term ‘historical’ to qualify only a certain type of archaeology is often met with surprise. Archaeology has always been deeply moored within History as a field, and therefore all branches of the discipline—including those focused on prehistory—are seen to be generating historical knowledge on par with any other ‘historical’ approach; as such, Hicks and Beaudry noted that the notion of historical archaeology in these countries could even be ‘tautological’ (2006, p. 1; see also Azkarate and Escribano 2014; Montón Subías and Abejez 2015; Cruz Berrocal this volume; Onrubia and González Marrero this volume).

Fortunately, however, in recent years the number of researchers interested in the problems of historical archaeology has increased, and the subject of this book is gaining pace as a research topic. As a project situated within a specific academic framework and locality, our workshop also wanted to assert the relevance of historical archaeology by way of contributing to its increased presence within Spain.

## 1.1 Early Modern Spanish Colonialism in this Book

As previously mentioned, this book focuses on colonial processes connected to the Hispanic Monarchy of the late fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On various levels, these centuries witnessed the rise of historical processes of global magnitude that shaped, and continue to shape, our complex contemporary world. We are well aware that the history of humankind is the history of cultural encounters and dis-encounters and that the contact between groups with different socio-economic complexity was previous to the period we are dealing with here. We are also aware that, though present societies result from continuous flows of humans, animals, goods, material cultures, ideas, illnesses and so forth that began in prehistory, the modern era saw a substantial turning point in terms of both temporal and spatial dimensions. As a result, new social realities emerged, and—especially since the first 1521 Magallanes’ circumnavigation—an unprecedented acceleration in the search for global interconnections began to take place.

Building from Trouillot’s claim that the narrative of globalization is a massive silencing of the past (1995) and from Foucauldian critiques of alliances between historical narratives and power, our workshop examined possible modes of unmuting



the past and explored angles and cases of colonialism usually not included in dominant narratives. Through this focus on non-hegemonic accounts, we aimed at integrating previously (un)considered ‘peripheries’ from a global comparative perspective (peripheral cases, territories, methodologies and academic traditions outside of hegemonic centers of knowledge production).

### ***1.1.1 Geographical Scope***

The notion of an Atlantic History has been widely adopted by scholars studying imperial and colonial expansions that, since the fifteenth century, connected Africa, Europe and the Americas (see, for instance, Mintz 1985; Elliot 1989, 2006; Gilroy 1993; Crosby 2009). The Barcelona workshop also drew from this idea of connectedness, but focused on integrating territories in Africa and Asia-Pacific more rarely considered—specifically in archaeology—under the rubric of Spanish colonialism; a colonial expansion associated primarily with the Americas both within the popular imagination and the academic scholarship. Wanting to reflect the global character of this phenomenon in order to compare its archaeological manifestations across the world, we brought together archaeologists whose expertise spanned the length and breadth of the world. As stated by Kay Tarble, ‘a comparison of the archaeology of the modern Spanish Colonialism as it played out throughout the world provides a fascinating opportunity to contrast and compare strategies and tactics of colonial intervention, their transformations through time, and local actions, interactions, and negotiations that ensued throughout the extremely diverse geographical and cultural situations encountered’ (Chap.4 this volume, p. 63).

It is now commonplace in literature to refer to the polyhedral nature of colonialism, and our book is no exception. A global comparative perspective places special emphasis on this picture. At first sight, cordial relationships between Basque fishers and Montagnais hunter-gatherers in Canada has little to do with the fierce battle for the conquest of Aztec Tenochtitlan or the Jesuit Missions established in Ethiopia, to mention geographies that appear in this book. Not only were groups and societies contacted and colonized of very different socioeconomic complexity (from hunter-gatherers to states and even empires), which necessarily implied different colonizing strategies, but the very reasons driving expeditions and colonization were also diverse, as were the attitudes of the natives towards the newcomers, and the later local and regional histories. However, as we have just mentioned, all these processes constituted the colonial matrix of the Hispanic Monarchy.

### ***1.1.2 ‘Peripheral’ and ‘Minor’ Cases of Colonialism***

Most of the case studies presented here lay outside of the standardized narrative of Spanish colonialism and areas of study most usually researched. For some time now, and in different branches of knowledge, it has been emphasized that the

extraordinary and the unusual—or what has been considered extraordinary and unusual—may hold the key in explaining the ordinary and the usual (see, for instance, Taleb 2007; Montón-Subías 2010). Contributors to this volume, on the other hand, underscore how mainstream accounts of Spanish colonialism have usually regarded some colonial events as ‘outliers’ and thus irrelevant and inconsequential. Far from agreeing with this assessment, our authors show that, by incorporating dismissed observations, we can proceed to a higher level of insights and understanding of the whole process.

Our particular ‘outliers’ encompass short-term colonial events in present-day Argentina, Taiwan, Morocco, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; the Basque fisheries in current Canada; and colonial experiences in present-day Equatorial Guinea and Guam. All of them have been considered either peculiar, marginal, peripheral, unsuccessful and/or accorded minor importance (see, in this volume, Azkarate and Escribano; Bayman and Peterson; Cruz Berrocal; Flexner et al.; Gibbs; González-Ruibal et al. and Onrubia and González Marrero). However, by embedding these ‘outliers’ in our picture of the past, it is made evident that ‘Spanish early colonialism cannot be defined as a uniform process that went in a single, inexorable direction’ (Azkarate and Escribano this volume, p. 112), and that we reach ‘a greater sense of the diversity of colonizing experiences, extending beyond the current monolithic view of the Spanish empire’ (Gibbs this volume, p. 253). Understanding Spanish colonialism from the standpoint of the peripheral, or what has been regarded as such, contributes to a better understanding of not only the different localized particularities of each of these colonial endeavours, but also provides knowledge of the general colonial matrix (including power relations and weaknesses) in which they took place.

### ***1.1.3 Colonial Processes and Local Histories***

A long-term approach to colonialism has, for a long time, been emphasized as fundamental to understanding the phenomenon in its full breadth; on these grounds, most of the projects presented here share this philosophy. While obviously bonded to the study of colonial processes within the modern era, some case studies comprise much broader cultural sequences, sometimes encompassing archaeological sequences that span from the Neolithic or the Iron Age to the contemporary period. Indeed, situating colonial processes within broader chronological arrangements to include both post- and prior events allows us to better understand the social interplay between change and permanence over vast lapses of time in specific locations and, thus, colonialism’s real magnitude and consequences.

A deep knowledge of the different local histories is fundamental to implementing the comparative perspective that we have been highlighting. Probably never before had the bonds between the local, the regional and the global been as close as they came to be during these early colonial experiences. When it comes to grasping how these scales became articulated in a tangible form, archaeology affords a

particularly relevant perspective through its focus on the materiality of local, specific contexts. When the local is explored in all its dimensions, global comparisons are enriched and codetermination between the different scales is better understood. Moreover, situating colonialism within a larger historical framework is also useful to collate different colonial experiences in specific localities; to give again examples from this volume, Taiwan, Guam, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands or Ethiopia were all later invaded and/or colonized by imperial powers other than the Hispanic Monarchy, as some of our contributors develop upon (see particularly, González Ruibal et al. and Flexner et al.).

Early globalization during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also implied the first globalization of the Western gender system. This fact had tremendous repercussions on the lives of many women, children and men around the planet and encompassed dramatic changes in quotidian lifestyles, daily work, family life, sexuality, reproduction and the socialization of children, among other things (on this issue, see Bidaseca and Vazquez 2011; Segato 2014). Although our papers do not specifically focus on new perspectives or methodological approaches to understand how gender as a category of historical analysis is brought to bear on colonialism as a world-historical phenomenon, attention is paid to household material culture and consumption, domestic knowledge and domestic technology transfer (see Therrien; Rodríguez-Alegría and Bayman and Peterson). Attention to long-term developments previously mentioned and focus on households may help develop a better understanding of how these changes were materialized in particular historical situations. In this vein, households can be regarded as crossroads of global and local processes through everyday consumption and knowledge transfer.

#### ***1.1.4 Colonialism from Material Culture***

Archaeology, by virtue of its own *raison d'être*, brings a material dimension into the understanding of colonialism. Unfortunately, historical narratives of colonialism as well as postcolonial efforts to deconstruct the canon have less often been engaged with this issue; indeed, while post-colonial and de-colonial studies have critiqued previous discourses on colonialism and contributed new and thought-provoking insights, material culture is yet to receive enough attention. Although we will not expand at this point on the benefits that material culture can bring to an understanding of colonialism (the different papers in the volume demonstrate this clearly), we would like to briefly note two aspects that were particularly emphasized during the workshop: (a) the fact that our chronological scope includes the initial stages of culture contact and colonization, and (b) the need to de-essentialize material culture and understand the complex logic played by it in the different cultural contexts.

The first instances of culture contact and colonization pose a fascinating case for archaeology. Interaction between groups extremely different from a sociocultural point of view also implies the interaction between very different material worlds. The chapters in this book illustrate several possible ways in which material culture

functioned to shape resulting transculturation processes. When taking a global perspective to Spanish colonialism, the role of material culture in fostering or avoiding communication, dialogue, violence or even misunderstandings among groups of people appears to be a promising endeavour for future work. Are there significant differences when a global comparative perspective is implemented? If so, which and why?

We are well aware that answers to the previous questions still mean a desideratum rather than an actual achievement, and that much research remains to be done. It is clear, however, that a global perspective calls for flexibility, for a challenging of background beliefs and taken for granted assumptions about mechanical associations between people and material culture (see also Orser 2012, p. 746). The chapters in this volume show that material culture—along with their presences and absences—can be instrumentalized in a plethora of diverse, and sometimes unsuspected, ways. In this sense, some traditional assumptions are challenged and deconstructed, like the association of imported European material culture with social elites, or the association of natives with tradition, and colonizers with innovation.

In this sense, one of the most discussed aspects of the workshop was the fact that European colonization and material culture did not always go hand in hand. Contributions dealing with the Pacific area, for instance, draw attention to the few Spanish material culture recovered in their excavations and the need for a global comparative perspective also on this particular aspect (see Bayman and Peterson and Cruz Berrocal). Conversely, and although fast forwarding to a later date, the project that focuses in Equatorial Guinea has shown a generalized use of European material culture by local natives. In fact, this project has mainly recovered European material culture, which could lead to mistaken conclusions if we were to follow the mechanical material partnership between European culture and the presence of European settlers.

### ***1.1.5 Attitudes Towards Spanish Colonial Heritage***

Another topic that this book covers is the issue of public attitudes towards colonial heritage. Although Spanish colonialism did not always generate remains enduring enough to eventually become heritage (as is shown here by the examples of Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Taiwan), it is the first historical process that produced it at a quasi-global scale. Its presence today is variable in terms of its materiality and the different public positions towards it: from vindication to rejection, through indifference or negation.

The reasons for these different attitudes are varied and context-dependent, but have to do with the processes of national independence, the creation of national identities and/or dominant politico-ideological discourses and emotional attachments, all being interdependent factors. Indeed, in different areas of the globe, Spanish colonialism is ‘part of the living memory of many individuals’ (Skowroneck 2009, p. 488). Its archaeology ‘is particularly susceptible to political and ideological influence, since its referent is more recent, and often, more emotionally

charged than the more remote past' (Tarble this volume, p. 63). While in some Latin-American countries, such as Peru or Mexico, discourses associated with national independence searched for references in pre-Hispanic cultures, in contradistinction to the era of Spanish rule (see, for instance, Jamieson 2005; Fournier and Velasquez 2014), in other areas of the world, such as Guam, the Spanish legacy has been vindicated in Chamorro's particular process of ethnogenesis (see, for instance, Atienza and Coello 2012; Bayman and Peterson this volume).

Celebrated, rejected, ignored or dismissed, the truth is, however, that the archaeology of Spanish colonialism—and historical archaeology, in general—is everywhere less developed than the archaeology of the previous periods. Rigid boundaries between disciplines that still perceive the study of Modern colonialism as the sole domain of historians working with written sources form a self-perpetuating dialectic (see Therrien and Rodríguez-Alegría this volume). Contributions to this body of work aim at breaking such disciplinary boundaries and at combining historical documents and material culture in order to move the subject beyond the state of the art.

## 1.2 Some Final Notes on the Scheme of the Book

Following our original idea of bringing together under one book different case studies related to early modern Spanish colonialism all over the world, we have used a geographical criterion to present them here. Beginning with the better known Americas, we have followed with Africa and the Pacific in our wish to explore Spanish colonialism beyond the parameters of existing research. As previously noted, there has been a preference for peripheral cases, many of them not yet well known and not yet present in the mainstream scholarly discourse. Even in the Americas section, cases such as those in present-day Canada, Argentina or Venezuela are defined as marginal by their researchers. In this sense, we want to highlight research included in this volume on the Canary Islands. Rarely covered in international archaeological debates about Modern Colonialism, it is nevertheless highly relevant in the development of a comparative approach. Scholars frame the occupation of the Canary Islands within the first phase of the expansion of the Hispanic Monarchy to the Atlantic (see, for instance, Chaunu 1972; Martínez Shaw and Alfonso 1999) and consider their conquest and colonization as a prelude to what happened in America, although its first occupation was connected with the control of the African coast in the competitive framework between the kingdoms of Castille and Portugal (Onrubia and González Marrero this volume).

With the range of case studies presented here, we have aimed at striking a balance between theoretical, methodological and empirical issues; at critically examining the construction of categories and discourses of colonialism, furthering issues raised by post-colonial and Latin American de-colonial theories; and at questioning the ideological underpinnings behind the source material required to address our topic. To us, it was self-evident that different case studies and theoretical/methodological works from various academic traditions were valuable resources rather

than obstacles. Ultimately, we attempted at offering an archaeological, global comparative perspective on colonial processes and colonial situations related to the Hispanic Monarchy, and the ways in which they were experienced daily by the different peoples involved. It is our firm conviction that the following volume will represent a preliminary step towards such an understanding.

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**Part I**  
**Archaeologies of Early Modern Spanish**  
**Colonialism in the Americas**

## Chapter 2

# Displacing Dominant Meanings in the Archaeology of Urban Policies and Emergence of Santafé de Bogotá (Colombia)

Monika Therrien

### 2.1 A Historical Archaeology Program for Bogotá

The Historical Archaeology Program of Bogotá (Colombia) finds its basis on questions about processes that emerge from the contact between European colonizers and the Muisca (Therrien 1991), the indigenous population that occupied the territory where the cities (and provinces) of Santafé de Bogotá (1538) and Tunja (1539) were founded by the Spanish conquistadors (Fig. 2.1). Despite numerous investigations of the pre-Hispanic Muisca (Enciso and Therrien 1996) and ethnohistorical studies on the aftermath of colonization (Broadbent 1964; Villamarín 1975; Hernández 1978; Villamarín and Villamarín 1979; Londoño 1990, 1991, 1995, 1996, 2001; López 2001; Rodríguez 2002; Zambrano 2008), only a few ambiguous archaeological indicators of contact have been established, based primarily on the presence of foreign-style pottery (Haury and Cubillos 1953; Broadbent 1986).

Most archaeological sites, even today, are assumed to pertain only to pre-Hispanic periods. Moreover, when foreign influence is evident, its study is usually avoided. When, eventually, contact sites are studied, comprehensive and comparative analyses of the remains and the interpretation of the impacts and ongoing processes, before and after colonization, are omitted. The boundaries set for ‘pre-Hispanic’ or ‘colonial’ archaeology have limited the understanding of how the contact was experienced and practiced in pluralistic contexts (Lightfoot 1995; Dipaolo 2001; Silliman 2001), and how it was generated by policies such as Hispanic American urbanism, Catholic indoctrination, and the new political economic order.

Archaeological studies of Bogotá and its surroundings (although the same pattern is repeated in most of the country) constrain their findings to a time frame, the year 1600, and expand their analyses preferably to the Early Muisca (300/600–1100 AD) and Late Muisca (1100–1600 AD) periods. The Muisca society was more than a pyramidal political unity under the reign of two chiefs, with a common language

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**Fig. 2.1** The New Kingdom of Granada covered the settlement areas of various indigenous groups that were distributed at low (500 m above the sea level) and high (more than 3000 m above sea level) lands. In the highlands occupied by the Muisca groups, the cities of Santafé de Bogotá (circle below) and Tunja (circle above) were founded (*Terra Firma et Novum Regnum Granatense et Popayan, Amstelodami Jannes Janssonius excudit, 1671*)

and cultural traits, as usually portrayed in earlier Muisca studies (Broadbent 1964; Falchetti and Plazas 1973; Hernández 1978). There is now a greater consensus on the lack of a homogeneous overall structure in the Muisca society, as well as evidence of the existence of different dialects within its territory (Gamboa 2010). The Muisca territorial and structural organization appears to have been based on a shifting network of political and social alliances, commercial circuits, and religious services and rituals, which also depended on the location of their settlements with respect to greater centers of power and a heterogeneous Andean geography.

Recent discussions have focused on demonstrating the Muisca's complexity and hierarchical sociopolitical organization processes, addressing power strategies, agency, alliances, and other mechanisms for acquiring and displaying status and gaining hierarchical positions, supported by produce accumulation, circulation of luxury goods, ritual services, and feast patronage (Langebaek 2001; Boada 2007, 2013; Henderson 2008). While the analysis of the pre-Hispanic period focuses on these processes and the elite positions they endowed in the making of native leaders

and chiefs, for the ‘colonial’ or ‘modern’ period historians have taken over these discussions by representing the Muisca as passive and subject to the lifestyle introduced by Spaniards, the new elite in Hispanic America.

Thus, for archaeology, as far as the interpretation of the evidence allows, the natives quickly disappeared under the colonization process due to demographical devastation or their inaction against exogenous forces. The use of precarious analytical indicators leads to the conclusion that the Muisca suffered cultural impoverishment, as their material culture after contact is represented by the presence of a few imported or foreign-style objects. Also questionable are the criteria and indicators that archaeologists apply in analyzing the territorial organization of the Muisca settlements in the period immediately preceding the Spanish conquest. Archaeological studies based on extensive regional surveys and excavations have reached a consensus on the presence of larger Muisca settlements and greater population concentrations when Europeans arrived (Late Muisca period), indicating trends of integration and centralization of communities (Boada 2013), determined by the spatial patterns and higher concentrations of artifacts, primarily ceramics.

However, the absence of reliable analytical indicators for the identification of ‘colonial’ or ‘modern’ materials prevents us from determining how much of this dense clustering and spatial patterning of artifacts is due to Hispanic American urban policies, which resulted in the displacement of natives from their settlements and lands, and their concentration or aggregation in *Pueblos de Indios*<sup>1</sup> [Indian villages] (Gutiérrez 1993) and *Resguardos de Indios*<sup>2</sup> [Indian reservations] (González 1979). Under these views of a sturdy sociopolitical complexity and population growth process, the conceptualization of the Muisca in the midst of a centralizing and hierarchical evolutionary cycle interrupted by the conquest persists. This is similar to what has been described in the scholar version of the Black Legend (Liebmann and Murphy 2010, p. 6), in which the cruelty, obscurantism, and tyranny of Spain ended the formation of complex and multi-tiered hierarchical indigenous society.

Because of the lack of analytical indicators of the natives’ trajectory after the Spanish conquest in the once-Muisca territory, one of the first challenges was to provide archaeological data with which to define the characteristics of their organization and settlements before and after contact. In this context, the Historical Archaeology Program has its roots in several research projects conducted since the

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<sup>1</sup> The planning of the *Pueblos de Indios* was designed to congregate or reduce the natives in order to exercise more effective political, economic, and religious control over them. The stipulated strategy was to concentrate the indigenous people, given the Spaniards’ perception of the disperse manner in which they inhabited a territory (Gutiérrez 1993, pp. 21–23). The Spaniards’ ideal was to have the *Pueblos de Indios* resemble the layout of the Hispanic American cities, with their main squares and churches.

<sup>2</sup> So that the *encomenderos* [Conquerors, Captains, and their families] would not continue to benefit from the personal services of the Indians, the Hispanic Monarchy implemented a tribute system. Under this system, the *encomenderos* would be paid by the indigenous people in the form of forced labor and in-kind payments, which would be derived from what was produced on the *Resguardo* lands that delimited these people. The ideal was to have each *resguardo* consisting of plots for individual use, forests, and communal fields for collective farming (González 1979, pp. 23–25).



**Fig. 2.2** Location of the first archaeological sites studied to verify the impact of contact between the Muisca groups and Europeans, particularly in the production of local material culture. These sites correspond to a pottery workshop in the *Resguardo de Indios* of Ráquira, the *Pueblo de Indios* of Gachantivá, and *Villa de Leyva*, the town founded to house the Spanish soldiers who were not granted plots in the city of Tunja (Falchetti 1975)

1990s in marginal areas under the colonial regime of the *Real Audiencia de Santafé de Bogotá*. This included the survey and excavation of a pottery workshop within the *Resguardo* of Ráquira (Therrien 1991), the *Villa* of Leyva founded for Spanish soldiers (Therrien 1996a, 2008a), and the *Pueblo* of Gachantivá (Lobo Guerrero 2001), all located in the northern area of the Muisca territory and corresponding to the colonial jurisdiction of the Province of Tunja (Fig. 2.2).

These sites were selected because of the absence of archaeological analysis of contact between Spaniards and Muisca, and the conviction with which colonial historiography of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s represented the natives as an oppressed and rapidly acculturated workforce (Colmenares 1997), thus affecting the interpretation of the archaeological evidence related to the periods after the conquest. According to previous archaeological and ethnohistorical studies, the first Muisca settlers arrived in this region during a dry period, which forced them to dwell on the more fertile lands and near water sources (Langebaek 2001, p. 49). Archaeological data indicate the development in the Early Muisca period of two sites with a higher density of materials (basically ceramics), one related to a megalithic astronomical site (Boada et al. 1988) and the other to the proliferation of pottery workshops (Falchetti 1975). However, demographic calculations point to a low percentage of inhabitants in each of these areas in comparison with the Late Muisca period, for which there is evidence of a significant increase in the population in these and other sites, as well as the occupation of less fertile lands (Langebaek 2001, pp. 54–57).

On this basis, the Program selected contact sites that were distant from the new centers of colonial power, in this case the city of Tunja, and even from *Villa de Ley-*

va. The Program assumed that policies of domination would be lax at these sites, while interaction between Europeans and natives would have been occasional, so it would be possible to compare and understand the changes endured by the Muisca. The analytical indicators built from these cases would serve as well to confront the interpretations of the concentration and centralization of the settlements in the Late Muisca period.

Since most of the archaeological surveys rely on ceramics and the spatial patterning of these artifacts, the Program sought to analyze pottery production in a region acknowledged even today for its ancient tradition (Falchetti 1975), in order to build analytical indicators related to this line of evidence. The sites studied corresponded to a workshop in the *Resguardo de Indios* of Ráquira (Therrien 1991), located in a distant mountainous area at least 3 km from its *pueblo*, but near the clay deposits and wood necessary for manufacturing and firing ceramics, and the survey and excavations at the *pueblo* of Gachantivá.

By implementing technological and stylistic criteria (shape, decoration, and function), the Program verified the continuity of the local pottery tradition, a craft originally developed in the valley area in the Early Muisca period (Falchetti 1975; Boada et al. 1988), where ceramic production persists today (Mora de Jaramillo 1974). The results indicate that well into the eighteenth century, the vessel's styles and the knowledge of techniques of manufacture transmitted from one generation of potters to the next suffered gradual transformations, as they continued to provide households with utilitarian goods needed for cooking, transporting, and consuming food, while also being used to make in-kind tribute to the *Encomenderos*. Similarly, the celebration of vernacular agricultural and Catholic feasts generated demand for the increasingly scarce refined ceramic objects (Fig. 2.3) used for the consumption of *chicha*, a fermented beverage made from corn (Llano and Campuzano 1994; Therrien 1996b); this scarceness was presumably provoked by the demands for utilitarian vessels from the *Encomenderos* and the urban markets. There is also evidence that, parallel to the persistence of these household and festive objects, mummification of political and religious leaders was still practiced after the conquest in Gachantivá (Cárdenas 1989, 2001), the *pueblo* near that of Ráquira.

The results obtained from the pottery workshop and the *pueblo* of Gachantivá raised questions concerning issues of direct and indirect contacts, the interaction between groups with different origins in both circumstances, and its effects on the emergent processes that followed. In this regard, it was necessary to intensify the analysis of the material culture associated with native traditions, to identify changes, and thus establish it as the chronological tool for interpreting the Muisca's developments after conquest. Moreover, this was deemed indispensable, since the materiality of the dominant, that is, European artifacts, or artifacts with European influence, was either scarce or insignificant for purposes of understanding the effects of the Hispanic policies in this territory.

The excavation of several buildings in Villa de Leyva, a settlement founded in 1572 for soldiers who were not granted plots and land in the city of Tunja, provided very different indicators. In the archaeological strata formed in the early-seventeenth century at the convent of the Augustinian religious order, a small and what





**Fig. 2.3** The pottery workshop in Ráquira is located in an area still recognized by this kind of manufacture. After the conquest, potters introduced new production techniques, such as furnaces for firing ceramics (*left kiln in Ráquira today*). At the same time, they retained some of the ceramic styles almost till the end of the eighteenth century (*above: pitcher associated with Late Muisca period found in Sáchica, below: pitcher excavated at the pottery workshop in Ráquira*)

was then considered unusual set of sherds was unearthed. The analysis of this sample evidences the attempts made by one or more potters to mix the decorative styles of native and European ceramic traditions, leading to novel results, contrary to what was found in the *Pueblo de Indios* of Gachantivá or in the workshop in Ráquira.

This is also the first indicator of the presence of potters in urban settlements erected for Spaniards and of their ability to experiment and innovate by crossing styles (Fig. 2.4). It can also be taken as an indicator of syncretism, observable not only in paintings and in mural art, but also in ceramic objects, manufactured with the apparent intention of also serving religious purposes. In contrast, in the *Pueblos de Indios*, pottery manufacture appears to be more conservative, attached to native technological traditions, with only gradual changes in the conventional shapes and decorative motifs, in spite of what would be expected with the introduction of Catholic rites and celebrations and other domination policies of the colonizers.

On the other hand, the arid conditions of this territory allows one to observe the layout of the *Pueblo* of Gachantivá, showing that it was contiguous with, but did not overlap, the Muisca's ancient settlement (Lobo Guerrero 2001). Ethnohistorical studies have stated that this Hispanic urban plan was implemented after a long



**Fig. 2.4** Some of the sherds obtained from the earliest strata of the archaeological sites of Villa de Leyva evidence how the potters briefly experimented with techniques and styles (shape/motifs) to produce their vessels. Tin glaze was combined with green-leaded glaze, introduced by the Europeans, in addition to the decorative motifs associated to the Late Muisca ceramics (*above: sherds from the site of St Augustine convent in Villa de Leyva*). Also, in urban areas, there is evidence of the production of European vessel shapes decorated with traditional native motifs (*below: left plate, right cup*)

and conflictive process (Salcedo 1993), which probably resulted in a simultaneous occupation of both the ancient and new settlements. In addition to this, pottery analysis has demonstrated that almost throughout the entire eighteenth century, the artifacts that prevailed in these *pueblos* were derived from pre-Hispanic traditions. Both results should put into question what has been interpreted from the extension and concentration of the settlements from the Late Muisca period. The deliberate concentration of natives, the demarcation of the land provided for *Resguardos de Indios*, and the restriction of settlements to less fertile lands were policies that did not rapidly alter Muisca daily practices, as was verified in Gachantivá. Even after contact and through the expansion of the colonial regime, the natives maintained their craftsmanship in addition to their domestic and agricultural practices, while other labors were learned, adapted, and incorporated (Therrien 1996b).

The results evidence how, despite the intent to impose policies such as Catholic indoctrination (religious and profane feasting), Hispanic American urbanism (*pueblos* and *resguardos de indios*), and those regarding trading and tribute (for local subsistence as well as for the *Encomienda* colonial institution), the Muisca continued with their routine activities beyond the year 1600. This contradicts the strict chronological and spatial boundaries set here by archaeologists (Therrien et al. 2003b; Therrien 2013), as well as the tacit belief in the interruption of the evolutionary trend of centralization and demographic growth of the Muisca settlements prior to the conquest.

These results also suggest how precedent rhythms of the Muisca organization, coupled with the rugged Andean geographical environment, shaped territories in

which the implementation of Hispanic policies did alter their trajectories, but by re-activating preexisting networks between settlements and creating new networks and contact spaces where populations with different origins converged. This fact, together with emergent cultural practices such as pottery production in different contact locations, particularly those derived from native ceramics traditions in the cities and *villas* founded for the Spaniards, was used to further the analysis and ensure chronological indicators. This is a valuable tool for reviewing not only Muisca settlement patterns immediately before and after colonization, but also its development and characteristics in urban environments.

In this context, the Historical Archaeology Program of Bogotá intends to further issues, with reliable analytical indicators, on the Muisca settlements and organization discussed not only by pre-Hispanic archaeology studies, but also by studies on social and economic history, the history of urbanism (Fundación Misión Colombia 1988; Zambrano and Oliver 1993), architecture (Martínez 1967, 1988), and everyday life (Avellaneda 1996) in Santafé de Bogotá. The Program is based on the view of the city as a pluralistic context (Lightfoot 1995), analyzed from a pluriverse ontology, that is, dealing with more than one cosmology, such as Western cosmology in colonial situations, thus entangling pluriverse understandings and meanings (Mignolo 1995).

In consequence, the development of methodologies with which historical sources and archaeological data could be entangled/intersected and with which this pluralistic and pluriverse setting could be made evident became the main objective. Therefore, rather than developing the methodologies based on an elite point of view or the dominant categories imposed by the colonizers, the methodological experimentation is grounded on the common practices and activities carried out routinely by the city's inhabitants. It constitutes a search for how they grew accustomed to their conditions of existence, which legitimated and naturalized difference and inequality (García-Canclini 1988; Escobar 1999) in a new urban environment.

## 2.2 Grounding Alternative Theorizations

Understanding urban space in a pluralistic colonial setting, and the routine of living and surviving in Santafé de Bogotá with different lifestyles, have been the focus of the methodological experimentation of the Historical Archaeology Program. In particular, the Program aims to intersect multiple data from different sources and to develop an analysis from a transdisciplinary perspective. Among the main challenges of this methodological experimentation is the crossing of information from at least four data sources: stratigraphy of the excavated sites, archaeological remains, documentary sources, and geographical context, with the specific purpose of examining how colonization denatured, adjusted, and recreated routines within populations of different origins (Pratt 1992).

Even the most recent publications on the history of Bogotá (Mejía 2012) consist of an update on the details of erecting a colonial city on American soil, framed by

the regulatory provisions designed by the Hispanic Monarchy to populate and govern their overseas possessions. Thus, the methodologies followed by most historical and archaeological studies are based on abstract assumptions contained in colonial settlement laws. Cities and settlements are construed by using these colonial notions, through a selection of unique entries from official chronicles and documents produced locally, in order to explain how these policies were implemented. These narratives replicate and privilege the roles played by Spanish officers and *Criollo* (descendants of Spaniards born in America) leaders, as agents who triggered actions and achievements at all levels in the city. Furthermore, the colonial narratives also construe those dominated as monolithic cultures (Lightfoot 1995), *Indios* and *Negros*, and their representation is maintained in subordinate roles (Colmenares 1997).

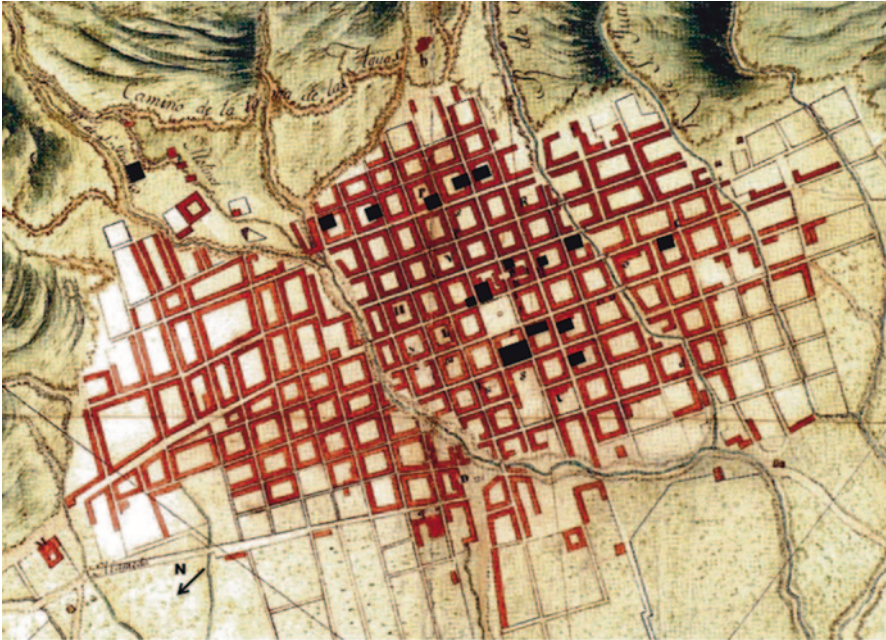
Beyond determining how domination came into being and how power was exercised, the Program has been oriented to understanding the events that made this a reality for all people. One of the methodologies applied for this purpose is *grounded theory*, of widespread use among the social sciences, particularly sociology and anthropology. Grounded theory is based on data rather than an abstract framework, as it describes and relates the events that produce data and answers questions (Charmaz 2006), through long-term research from which theoretical categories emerge and explain specific social processes (Strauss and Corbin 2002).

In the Historical Archaeology Program of Bogotá, this methodology has been used mainly to analyze archival sources, particularly documents related to contact spaces and common practices, from which specific codes and categories emerge and are intersected with the analytical indicators provided by archaeological data. It is a tentative exercise that seeks to contrast and confront the dominant categories of the colonizers, introduced naturally by many researchers in their writings, by coding and categorizing the terms and logic that emerge from the voices and common practices of all people.

This required a comprehensive review of files, seeking documents related to everyday events and not just laws, and mandates emanating from the Hispanic Monarchy or the local *Audiencia de Santafé de Bogotá*. Events related to police control, urban and family networks, alliances through guilds, the construction of a house, shop, or religious convent, wills and debts, lawsuits and litigations were identified by the transcription of more than 800 documents from the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries (Therrien 2008b). The results of coding and relating these events provide data on how individuals defined, signified, and assumed the transformation of their territory, settlements, and transit across different places, and their trades and social, religious and political networks.

As an additional level of analysis, these codes and relations were crossed with data on the urban location or contact spaces, the dates of the events, and the actors who took part in them, including their origins, kinship, and other types of relationships and working status, among other information. The results are being compared to the data obtained from more than 15 archaeological sites excavated in the Historical Archaeology Program of Bogotá (Therrien 1998; Therrien et al. 2003a; Therrien and Jaramillo 2004; Ome 2006; Rivera 2006; Fundación Erigaie 2007; Lobo Guerrero and Gaitán 2008) (Fig. 2.5). By applying Harris' principles of archaeological





**Fig. 2.5** The data in this chapter come from the excavation of 15 archaeological sites in the Historical Archaeology Program of Bogotá. Most of the sites were selected to verify the implantation process and urban development of the city. Although by the eighteenth century, the city was represented as being distributed evenly in all directions from the *Plaza Mayor*, archaeological evidence indicates that it had evolved into an elongated shape between the north and south of the main square (*Nuevo y único plano geométrico o icnográfico de Santafé de Bogotá*, Domingo Esquiagui, 1791)

stratigraphy (1989), it has been possible to reconstruct the stratigraphic sequences in what were houses, religious convents, and public buildings. In parallel, the amount of archaeological remains, mainly pottery, has contributed to the refinement of the ongoing analysis of the native ceramic tradition, the most abundant evidence in Santafé de Bogotá and, as such, a necessary chronological indicator.

In summary, the documentary sources provide evidence of the many events and activities that generated contact spaces and cultural practices that became common for the inhabitants of Santafé de Bogotá. In addition, archaeological remains evidence how the actors were involved in these processes and what was at hand to carry them out. These sources entail the routines that led to the formalization and legitimization of the existence of a city, together with the adaptation and adjustment of those who lived and reproduced in it. Documents and artifacts evidence the rupture that the conquest represents for all people, where the social world amid their subjective and objective structures loses its character as a natural phenomenon (Therrien and Jaramillo 2004). In the process of contact and in contact spaces, the line between what is objective and subjective is redrawn, with notions previously perceived as unassailable being called into question. Conceptions that commanded

the daily lives of the Muisca in their territory and their relations with local leaders, kinship, residence, rituals, environment, and exchange networks are de-naturalized, confronted, and compared with those introduced by, and emergent from, the new social order. Everyone will have different options for action within this order, not only from the collective consciousness, but also from the practical consciousness (Giddens 1995).

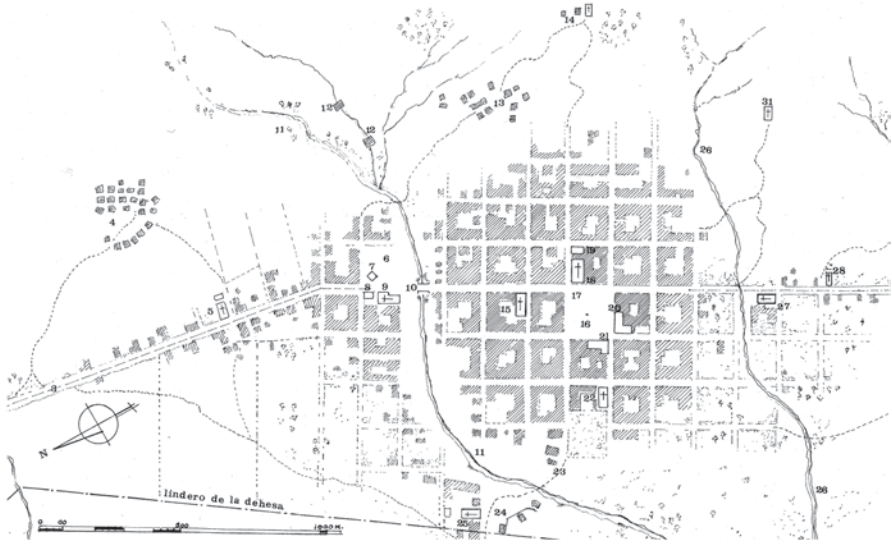
### 2.3 The City as a Practiced Space

Challenging the monolithic view of normative discourses, originated from reconquering or colonizing territories for the Hispanic Monarchy, demands studying the impact of the Monarchy's policies on the practical reality lived by the populations that converged in these lands. In particular, the Historical Archaeology Program seeks to understand how the implementation of policies related to Hispanic American urbanism, Catholic indoctrination and trade, among others, became widespread among the inhabitants of Santafé de Bogotá.

Regarding Hispanic American urbanism, throughout the first half of the twentieth century and until the late 1960s, discussions centered on Santafé de Bogotá's date and place of foundation and on how normative rules materialized in the urban plan. Much of the debate focused on whether Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada, the conqueror of the Muisca territory (Avellaneda 1995), had literally followed the Hispanic Monarchy's stipulations for the erection of cities. On arrival at the *Sabana* of Bogotá, in 1538, Quesada and his troops initially established a *Real* [Military camp] in the surroundings of the settlement of Bogotá, where the senior Muisca leader of that area resided. Several months later, after looting and setting on fire this and other settlements, and after the death of the chief, Quesada moved the military camp to an entirely different geographical environment. The Muisca chief's settlement was situated near a large river (today the Bogotá River), in a flood area controlled by the natives through a system of raised crop fields (Broadbent 1987; Boada 2006; Cavellier 2006). Unlike the natives, the colonizers chose to base their *Real* approximately 20 km to the east, in a high mountain plateau located 2600 m above sea level, which peaks at 3150 m above the sea level. Three years after its founding, Santafé de Bogotá was given the status of city.

In the Hispanic American urban plan designed by the Castilian Crown (Konetzke 1985; Salcedo 1996), the *Plaza Mayor* [Main plaza], presided over by a cathedral, and with royal institutions and notable settlers established around it, constituted the central node from which the dominant way of life radiated and reproduced. This is the ideal view addressed by the main studies on the history and architecture of the Latin American city (Rueda 1988; Aprile-Gnisset 1991; Gutiérrez 1992; Romero 1999).

The hypothetical reconstruction of Santafé de Bogotá's town plan in 1600 (Martínez 1988) (Fig. 2.6), using a layout that is still replicated in many urban history studies, is based on this given model. However, documentary analysis and archaeological evidence suggest an urban pattern that diverges from this interpretation.

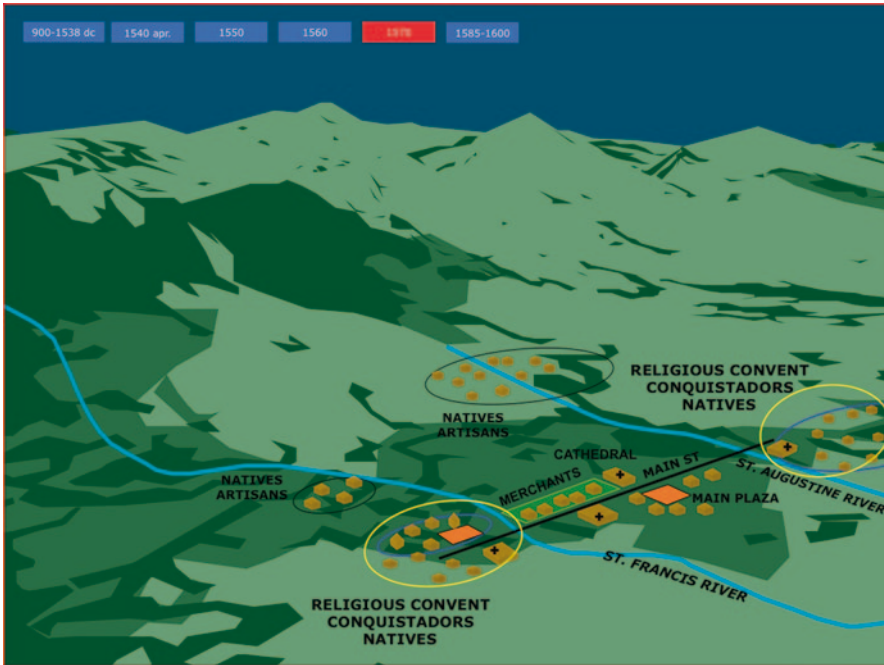


**Fig. 2.6** Hypothetical map of the city of Santafé de Bogotá by 1600. The map privileges the demonstration of the correct implementation of the Hispanic American model of urbanism and highlights the dominant religious and political institutions. Similarly, the main square becomes the axis around which the life in the city revolves (Martínez 1988, p. 85)

Coding and intersecting data on the social uses of space in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicate that the city took on a linear form as a result of the role played by merchants and artisans, the interests of religious convents, the struggles and factions within the conquering troops and the urban concentration of natives, as well as the natural geography of its surroundings.

This arrangement took shape when Santafé de Bogotá changed from the military settlement that the conquistador Jiménez de Quesada established based on a settlement model acquired from his participation in the *Reconquista* of the Iberian Peninsula and a way of life that depended on looting and exchanging resources with the natives in the new world. After a decade of adjustments, the city experienced a metamorphosis in order to serve the pressing needs of its inhabitants. Thus, the Dominican and Franciscan religious communities settled in the extreme north and south of the city in 1550, while the merchants and artisans were concentrated in the northern area of the main street, *Calle Mayor* [Main street], which connected the two convents (Fig. 2.7):

En la ciudad de Santafé a 29 dias del mes de marzo de mil y quinientos y sesenta y un años por los señores presidentes y oydores de la audiencia de su magestad el auto expedido sobre lo de los buhios de paja que estan en la calle mayor dijeron que mandaban e mandaron que se notifique a los dueños de los buhios donde vive Rodrigo Alvarez, sastre y Caro, tendero y maestre Juan Gallego y Gaspar Ruiz, herrero y Alonso de Soto, calcetero y Francisco de Cuellar, zapatero que dentro de un mes proximo siguiente derriben y quiten los dichos buhios de paja que estan en la dicha calle mayor con apercebimiento que pasando el dicho



**Fig. 2.7** Proposed image of the city viewed as an aggregate of spaces of contact, where most city dwellers of all conditions converged for a variety of activities that changed over time. The convergence in these spaces of contact made residents aware of the coexistence of different habits, practices, needs, and ways of interpreting the new order in the city of Santaafé de Bogotá

termino se quitaran y derribaran a su costa y asi lo mandaron. (Archivo General de la Nación (Colombia), AGN, Fondo Conventos, Tomo 47, Folio 155r, 1561)<sup>3</sup>

Although named *Calle Mayor* and soon after *Calle Real* [Royal street], during its first decades, the street was also known popularly as *Calle de los Mercaderes* [The Merchants' Street] due to its evident commercial character. Because of the services and products provided by the merchants, it became the largest area of confluence of the city's dwellers and, therefore, a major space of contact. In this zone, the population benefited from the artisans' labors and was provided by merchants with foreign goods and goods from preexisting indigenous exchange networks. Satisfying the inhabitants' needs was also a stimulus for the merchants' permanence in the city.

Within this urban scheme, leading members of the conquering troops divided into factions and settled mainly toward the limits of the city, in the surroundings of the two religious communities. In general, the city was a pluralistic setting, where people of different position, background, or ethnic origins followed the European

<sup>3</sup> On the 29 March 1561, an Act issued by the royal officers of the *Audiencia de Santaafé* ordered that all wooden huts located on the main street be torn down and replaced by more stable structures. A tailor, a merchant, a blacksmith, a hosier, a shoemaker, and a master builder owned these huts.

model of property ownership and legalized the possession, purchase, and inheritance of properties with little or no restrictions on their location; no exclusive or segregated areas have been identified in this early period.

Since the early development of Santafé de Bogotá, the urban rhythms differed south and north of the main square. Initially, the Dominican convent was located at the northern border, and in its square Quesada's house and the houses of members of his troop were erected. On the other hand, the Franciscan monastery was erected to the south, where another faction of the conquering expeditions, which included Captain Juan de Céspedes, had its seat and where there was a remarkable concentration of Muisca property owners.

The mention of Spanish leaders, such as Quesada or Céspedes, or of religious orders, is not intended to praise the heroic narrative of the conquest, but to indicate how, from their own practices, they set out diverse strategies in pursuit of their individual goals, which acted as mechanisms that contributed to the alteration of the urban planning. In this regard, urban space analysis evidences the struggles between former members of conquering troops and the resulting factions, through social, political, and economic alliances, which ended up affecting the evolution of the city. Specifically, Céspedes is mentioned in various lawsuits, another significant space of contact since it entailed the presence of witnesses and allies, evidencing his relationship with other Spaniards and Muisca natives, for which he enjoyed greater visibility and followers than the founder himself, who for extended periods was frequently absent from the city.

Other contributing factors to this linear arrangement stretching from north to south were related to what was developing at the main square. The construction and reconstruction of the cathedral throughout most of the sixteenth century, due to structural problems, affected the celebration of ritual services and diminished its importance as a contact space. In addition, the *Real Audiencia* lacked a proper place of its own, so during its first years it functioned in one half of a house owned by Céspedes, until the headquarters were finally built.

Documentary analysis concerning daily life events provides sufficient information about the city's continuous transformation, in its spaces of contact, practices, and materiality. By the beginning of 1560, both religious communities were moving their convent. Dominicans installed their convent in the busiest area of commerce, on the main street (The Merchants' Street), while the Franciscans moved to the north. Both moves provoked protests from the inhabitants of Santafé de Bogotá. On the one hand, merchants resented the presence and pressure imposed by Dominicans, who profited from the chaplaincy taxes imposed on the merchants' properties and reported to the authorities the threat of fire posed by the merchant's wooden huts. On the other hand, the relocation of Franciscans represented a proximity to the busiest area in the city; although the new convent was erected at the same distance from the main square as before, it was nearer to The Merchants' Street. The argument for leaving their former location was its remoteness and isolation, confirmed when a new order established in this monastery:

[...] la dicha casa y monasterio de nuestra señora del carmen esta fundada en parte tan comoda y decente de esta ciudad que en ninguna parte de ella se pudiera fundar en parte tan



comoda como esta porque demas de ser en cabo de la ciudad de la yglesia mayor a ella ay gran distancia y en medio ni de alli pafuera del pueblo ni a ningun lado no hay otra yglesia ni monasterio y que alli concurren todas las gentes de aquella parte asi naturales que de alli pa fuera del pueblo biben como españoles que biben cercanos ya [] de la dicha casa asi entre semana como domingos y fiestas y que antes que se fundase por estar tan lejos de la iglesia dejaban muchos los domingos de ber mysa lo qual se a evitado por averse alli fundado la dicha casa. (AGN, Fondo Conventos, Tomo 56, Folios 577r, 1569)<sup>4</sup>

The void left by the Franciscans south of the city was perceived by the monastery's neighbors (including Céspedes) as having a negative effect on Catholic indoctrination. And it was perceived by Spaniards and natives as being disrespectful of the dead:

[fundado] el monasterio del señor San Francisco muchos años y bendecido el lugar y despues que se mudo el dicho monasterio estuvo profanado y hecho corral de vacas aviendo como ay enterrados en el gran cantidad de difuntos asi españoles como naturales, siendo cosa mal considerada y lastimosa que aviendose celebrado en el dicho lugar y abia estado el santisimo sacramento estuviese lleno de estiercol que ynmundo y suzio a cuya causa muchos yndios y españoles que tienen en el dicho sitio enterrados sus mugeres, padres, hijos e hijas se escandalizaron diciendo que como se sufría tan gran menosprecio de culto divino y una cosa tan abominable como lo susodicho llorando tan gran daño [...]. (AGN, Fondo Conventos Tomo 56, Folio 571r, 1569)<sup>5</sup>

This situation in 1561 was repeated in 1569 when the Carmelite religious community, after occupying this former convent, was forced out of the New Kingdom of Granada:

si saben que a sido y es muy grande el escandalo que a esta ciudad se a dado en despoblar el dicho monasterio [el Carmen] en especial entre los naturales que dizen que como quieren que sean cristianos y se conviertan a nuestra santa fe catolica pues los cristianos quitan una casa que tanto querian y donde todos tenian sus sepulturas y donde tanta dotrina les daban como era en la dicha casa y monasterio de Nuestra Señora del Carmen. (AGN, Fondo Conventos, Tomo 56, Folio 656r, 1569)<sup>6</sup>

From the analysis of this account about a very significant contact space for the residents of the southern area of Santafé de Bogotá emerge a number of rich codes that may be interpreted from pluriverse meanings (Mignolo 1995). As residents in the newly founded city, the Muisca were forced to rapidly change their animistic beliefs and practices, including those related to burials. In accordance with Muisca customs, the dead were buried under or near their dwellings (Boada 2000), as their bodies fed the house, considered to be another living body that needed to be nour-

<sup>4</sup> With the establishment of the Carmelite religious order in the old Franciscan monastery, all those that lived near and far from it could once again attend Mass regularly, since the other churches were very distant from this part of the city.

<sup>5</sup> Several inhabitants denounced the fact that years after its founding, the monastery of San Francisco turned into a cow shed when it was abandoned, with the animals lingering over the burials of natives and Spaniards, in what was considered a scandalous condition that scorned sacred rituals.

<sup>6</sup> Residents of this area were shocked by the new void left with the expulsion of the Carmelites, more so because of the inconsistencies of Catholic Indoctrination policies, since natives could not understand how they were to become Christians if they were deprived of rituals such as visiting burial sites and receiving doctrine in the house they cherished.

ished (Henderson and Ostler 2005). This belief probably eased the adoption of the new practice of burial in churches (built by natives), but it also created confusion and rejection when feeding the house/church turned into feeding European cows. This was not the only sign of disrespect displayed by a religious community. The demolition of the Dominican convent had the same effect for the Muisca, as it involved destroying the walls and thatched roof of the church that was once fed by the dead.

In this early period, spatial distribution and practices in Santafé de Bogotá continued shifting. Beginning in 1570, some of the most visible changes occurred on The Merchants' Street, which was one of the most active contact spaces, when huts began being replaced by stone and tile houses, and more shops were built, all of which probably contributed to changing its name to Royal Street. By 1592, parish churches were erected both north and south of the city for the benefit of the natives concentrated in these areas, while the cathedral's construction was finally completed in 1590, consolidating the main square's central urban role. The continuous growth of the city also meant that a larger population with diverse origins, new alliances, expanding commercial circuits, and other social, political, and economic networks among residents stimulated the creation or emergence of alternate contact spaces throughout the city.

## 2.4 Crafting Traditions

The most frequent activities recorded in documentary sources in Santafé de Bogotá, on a daily basis, were the renting or selling of shops and the acquisition of debts or loans for obtaining merchants' goods or learning a trade, among other endeavors. Artisans and merchants were the main support of city dwellers, and as such came in contact with a wider diversity of people and generated spaces of continuous interaction and transmission of knowledge, tastes, and practices. As was usual throughout the Hispanic Monarchy's domain, becoming an artisan required being trained by a master and passing an examination:

[...] personas que buscan el oficio de herreros y zerrajeros y freneros en este [] real del Nuevo Reino de Granada y unos piden ser examinados de los dichos oficios atentos a ser abiles y suficientes para usar y ejecutar y otros no le quieren a causa de hacer en los dichos oficios quienes parece [...]. (AGN, Fondo Miscelánea, Tomo 22, Folio 520, 1571)<sup>7</sup>

Although the documentary sources mention a great array of trades when identifying individuals, none refers to potters. Ceramic vessels were essential in daily life for storing, preparing, cooking, serving, consuming, and transporting food, as well as for other multiple domestic and even religious uses, and because of their fragility they became one of the most common types of evidence in archaeology.

<sup>7</sup> Some blacksmiths, locksmiths, and bridle makers preferred to be examined as a means of demonstrating their sufficiency, while others thought it useless since apparently no control existed over who could exercise the trade.

Elsewhere, it has been widely discussed that, in contact situations, there is an evident tendency to refer and associate the production and use of ceramics with an ethnic identity, framed within the categories, used by Spaniards, of white/Spanish, Indian or black, assumed to constitute discrete and homogeneous cultural units.

In other interpretations, pottery is considered to be a basic component when analyzing prestige or socioeconomic mobility, based on the presence or accumulation of luxury and exotic objects, usually foreign, which reflect affordability restricted to an exclusive white elite (Lightfoot et al. 1998). However, when those foreign objects of prestige are related to indigenous or African populations, they are explained as a sign of acculturation, and, when absent, as indicators of the degree of resistance or reduced dependence of ethnic groups.

When of ethnic origin, the objects' timelessness is assumed (as pre-Hispanic), while imported materials, particularly from Europe, are represented as unique and dynamic, an indicator that supports interpretations of ambition and power strategies held by elites or those aspiring to become part of them. This last indicator, used to study the emergence of elites and leaders, and identified by the accumulation and circulation of luxury goods, particularly fine and foreign wares, is also frequently used when analyzing evidence from pre-Hispanic Muisca sites. In general, a critical examination of these interpretations has made apparent the differential treatment in the analysis of artifacts.

In contrast to all the above, from the statistical analysis of archaeological remains of Santafé de Bogotá emerges a very different situation. A homogeneous pattern is evident in the proportion of ceramic wares excavated from each site in Santafé de Bogotá, be this a convent, a house, or a public building, near or far from the main square, and the same is evident through different periods. Questions regarding this pattern were raised in order to understand its uniformity, in a city where documentary sources evidence the presence of hundreds of natives and a lesser number of Spaniards and other Europeans, as well as African slaves and *libertos*. As such, and to complement the information from documentary sources, inquiries focused on identifying the contact spaces from where daily practices emerged and spread throughout the city, and how people from different origins acted in and shared them, giving pluriverse meaning to the materiality that mediated their interactions in such a pluralistic and intercultural context (Grimson 2000) as that of Santafé de Bogotá.

In almost all of the archaeological sites, the most abundant pottery present was produced with a technology based on pre-Hispanic Muisca pottery tradition: earthenware manufactured using coil rolls, sherd-tempered clay, and low firing, although with differences in the decorative motifs and vessel shapes (Ome 2006). Just as abundant as this earthenware is the *Criollo* pottery, which comprises locally produced goods manufactured based on European technological and stylistic parameters. In Santafé de Bogotá, this pottery consisted mostly of a wheel thrown, green lead glazed ware with a lustrous appearance. Foreign ware appears in a very low proportion, of which the most abundant corresponds to *botijas*, used to store abundant and varied liquids.

These two sets of locally produced pottery comprise nearly all ceramic remains at many of the city's archaeological sites, and because of the absence of a previ-



ous typological analysis for historical periods, it was necessary to identify their characteristics and create a catalog (Therrien et al. 2002), according to contexts and periods of production and circulation of these products in the New Kingdom of Granada. Criteria such as style and stratigraphic position were crucial for identifying variations across time and space in Santafé de Bogotá, which in turn evidenced the most popular and most used vessels, and aided in recognizing the preferences of the majority, the main techniques used in pottery production, and the activities that generated their demand in the city.

One of these activities consisted of supplying water for human consumption. Even in the nineteenth-century Santafé de Bogotá, this system relied mostly on women and men who gathered water from public fountains and transported it in large pitchers to the households; few families or institutions had access to the liquid through their own water fountains. This trade became an intense contact space of interaction between individuals who gathered at public fountainheads and with those to whom they delivered the water to the houses. Furthermore, it was an activity that may have demanded large quantities of pottery, and that led to the creation of a distinctive vessel shape and decorative motif. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, potters developed larger pitchers with more rounded bodies, than those from the Late Muisca period. The surfaces of these pitchers, which in pre-Hispanic Muisca pottery, were decorated with geometric patterns and darker colors, consisted now of multicolored spiral and floral motifs, particularly in what appears to be the representation of an open pomegranate [granada], evoking its origin in the New Kingdom of Granada (Fig. 2.8).

Commensality is another powerful contact space, where sharing foods and transmitting manners, tastes, foodways, and the meanings of what is eaten takes place. It is

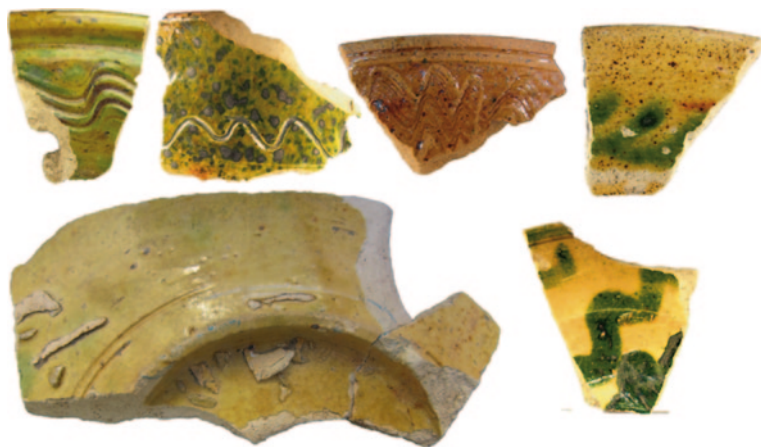


**Fig. 2.8** One of the trades that generated spaces of contact was the supply of drinking water to the houses. In Santafé de Bogotá, there were few aqueducts and these were poorly made, so public water fountains were constructed in different areas of the city. Potters manufactured distinctive water pitchers for distribution, in which the pomegranate [granada in Spanish] stands out as a new decorative motif, alluding to the New Kingdom of Granada (*reconstructed pitcher and sherds with the pomegranate motif*)

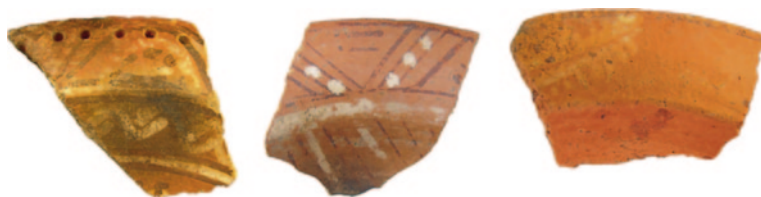
also a routine daily practice that naturalizes why and how meals are served. This, then, is a space that also demanded pottery; particularly green lead glaze plates and *escudillas* [cups] were the most popular (for an analysis of the health effects of this ware, see Therrien et al. 2015). This ware is present in all archaeological sites, while the imported material was scarce and featured the most common tableware brought from Spain (Sevilla Blue on Blue, Sevilla White, Talavera White on Blue, among others).

Potters from Santafé de Bogotá who manufactured green glazed ceramic or *vedrios* [glasses], as it is named in some testaments, introduced very few transformations in vessel shapes and decorative motifs. Since its introduction, glazed plates displayed somewhat outdated shapes, resembling those brought by early colonizers from Europe to the Caribbean (such as the Morisco ware plates, Lister and Lister 1982, p. 47). To decorate *escudillas* and bowls, potters used fairly simple motifs, consisting of wavy striations located at the vessels' brims (Fig. 2.9). This style of tableware remained practically unchanged until the early-nineteenth century, pointing to a widespread acceptance of this ceramic by both potters and buyers. Only pottery produced in the Jesuits' workshop, from the mid-17th century until their expulsion from America in 1767, reflected some variation, mainly because it offered green decorative motifs over yellow lead glaze wares.

On the other hand, the earthen tableware produced by potters in Santafé de Bogotá was not so popular, but it did present major innovations. In the emergence of the newly founded city, Muisca pottery was the most widely used in all domestic activities, and therefore satisfied the needs of Europeans, *Criollos*, and native and African residents, both poor and rich. As mentioned earlier, the technological knowledge and stylistic codes of the earthenware were derived from the Muisca potters'



**Fig. 2.9** The more intimate spaces of contact were in the houses and one of the activities that recreated practices and traditions was commensality, gathering and sharing around eating. The tableware most commonly used throughout the city was the lead-glazed and preferably green colored. The potters who produced this ware in Santafé de Bogotá introduced very few changes to their shapes and motifs until the introduction of industrial ware (*lead-glazed sherds with the conventional decorative motif and shapes*)



**Fig. 2.10** Earthenware was the main utensil in the kitchens of houses and institutions. Because of the high demand of this ware, native styles of pottery were preserved but also new shapes were introduced to meet different domestic needs. The potters also produced earthenware plates, which evolved over time, particularly in their decorative motifs; however, these plates disappeared in the eighteenth century (*sherds of early, middle, and late colonial period earthenware plates*)

tradition, although there is also evidence of experimentation with new shapes, for example, following the shapes of majolica plates and cups (such as the Guadalupe ware; Lister and Lister 1982, p. 67).

Pottery making is another active contact space where the productive network is basic but also involves knowledge and transmission of skills. Within all forms of crafts, imitation is a common behavior among artisans (Herzfeld 2004) and can be used as an indicator of how and why knowledge may be conserved, changed, molded, and recreated in contact spaces, and how exogenous references can be ignored or introduced in cultural practices such as pottery making. In pottery making, this is an indicator that is represented by differences in decorative motifs, among other criteria, which in earthenware varied according to the workshop and period in which the pottery was made (Fig. 2.10).

The production of fine earthenware plates, in particular, was dynamic, and changes in their style codes were characteristic in Santafé de Bogotá until the eighteenth century, when they disappear from the archaeological record. The steady decline in the demand of this fine earthenware, deduced from the statistical analysis, may be related to two contributing factors: the clear preference and popularity over the centuries for the more conservative green-glazed tableware, and an increasing need for kitchen ware. Pressed by the need to provide pitchers, pots, bowls, and other vessels, essential for the day-to-day lives of city dwellers, potters kept the earthenware manufacturing tradition very much alive, but at the expense of the fine earthenware plates.

In summary, owning or accumulating foreign pottery did not play a major role in the strategies of displaying wealth and power in Santafé de Bogotá or of spreading dominant discourses and habits. Ideas and meanings were shared in contact spaces such as public fountainheads and households, at the table and in the kitchen, in artisans' workshops and merchants' shops, where gossip, commensality, transmission, and exchange gave way to the adoption of practices, tastes, and beliefs that became dominant and widespread. On the other hand, the chronological indicators built from the typological criteria used to analyze historical ceramics, specifically earthenware and lead glaze ware, are the basis for identifying the processes of occupation and expansion of the city over time.

## 2.5 Epilogue: Displacing Dominant Meanings

Historical archaeology has been focused for many years on examining data based on perspectives of discourse and domination (Foucault 1998), and practice and resistance (Scott 1990), which became a *sine qua non* in the interpretation of colonialism (Paynter and McGuire 1991; Miller et al. 1995). From these perspectives, material culture such as pottery (Fournier and Charlton 1996; Rodríguez-Alegría 2003), architecture (Jamieson 2000a, b), and foodways (Yentsch 1991), among others, has been examined as instrumental in strategies for gaining power and prestige and exercising dominance, as well as an indicator of ethnic resistance.

Recently, to further these archaeological discussions on contemporary global issues, in which inequality is ever present, other studies have focused on ‘lines that divide’ (Mrozowski et al. 2000), with the intention of generating analytical constructs such as gender, class, and race, and examining them from local experiences and data. A central matter in material culture analysis has been the shift from linking artifacts to ethnic or other identity categories, to understanding complex social dynamics in pluralistic settings; such is the case when defining what is to be analyzed in colonoware (Singleton and Bograd 2000). Parallel to these postures, which stem from discursive concerns, in search of eroding dominant meanings are those directed toward everyday practices and agency, in which material culture, such as dress (Dipaolo 2001), ceramics (Charlton and Fournier 2010), cooking (Rodríguez-Alegría and Graff 2012), and lithics (Silliman 2001), is assumed as a way of producing and negotiating meanings in cross-cultural scenarios.

These discussions in historical archaeology have contributed to introducing or revisiting concepts such as encounters and interregional interaction (Stein 2005), contact, domination and resistance (Liebmann and Murphy 2010), and transition (Hart et al. 2012) when analyzing colonialism. These perspectives also have led to a critical view of current attitudes toward ethnicity and claims by ethnic groups against the consequences of colonialism. Nevertheless, current policies on multiculturalism and citizenship rights, among others, have somehow influenced the identification and treatment of indigenous and black populations once again as monolithic cultures. Additionally, this contributes to the maintenance of disciplinary barriers; in modern narratives about the past of nation-states, archaeology praises the pre-Hispanic populations, as the indigenous people vanish from the record because of their loss of a pristine essence and authenticity after contact. Historians take advantage of this perception of weakness of the indigenous populations to enhance the dominant culture and the strategies implemented by an exclusive sector of society, usually Spanish, to impose it.

Methodological experimentation remains an alternative for proposing research programs from a transdisciplinary stance and a pluriverse ontology. However, little has been discussed about methodologies that may support interpretations under these conceptual frameworks, other than suggestions of the use of a multiscalar approach (Silliman 2012), a collaborative archaeology (Lightfoot 2005), and toward the refinement of chronologies and making data comparable (Rogers 2005). The long-term research that I initiated in 1990 focused on these aspects and experimented with other methodologies to allow transdisciplinary interpretations.

One of the main purposes of this long-term research was to create chronological markers based on pottery manufactured locally (from native and *Criollo* traditions), applying criteria that allowed for the identification of changes over time. Using categories such as styles, based on shapes and decorative motifs, and types, based on production technologies, we defined markers for conquest, early, middle, late colonial, and republican periods (Therrien et al. 2002). However, when comparing ceramics from different archaeological sites—cities, villas, *pueblos*, and *resguardos de indios*—it is evident that chronological typologies are not literally transferable from one site to another. Factors such as distance, demand, networks, and intensity of contact, stemming from direct or indirect contact of people with different origins, are some aspects to reflect on, and have to be taken into consideration when analyzing other material culture evidence (the spatial arrangement of settlements, burials, and faunal remains, among others).

In the Historical Archaeology Program of Bogotá, methodological experimentation became another objective for obtaining historical analytical data as support in the interpretation of archaeological contexts. Grounded theory and coding of written records were implemented as a means of obtaining and analyzing data from archival documents and establishing relationships with the archaeological analytical indicators. Many archaeologists dismiss the use of written sources, as they consider them to be instruments of the dominant. Nevertheless, my experimentation included identifying documents related to events in which most of the city dwellers participated and which generated spaces of pluralistic contact.

Understanding pluralism and pluriverse meanings from a fairly homogeneous materiality evidenced in the archaeological sites of Santafé de Bogotá has been one of the main challenges of this Program. Thus, although this homogeneity is evident, the events that took place in the contact spaces and the specific practices that they engendered led to questions about beliefs, habits, and tastes, which in turn may have affected the use and meaning of material culture. Moreover, basic needs and routines generated a materiality that became the mainstream of houses and institutions, although it was not dominant, but rather predominant, in the city.

In the case of the abandonment and demolition of the Dominican and Franciscan temples, different codes emerge from the same circumstance. To Spaniards, it meant a rupture of the policy of Catholic indoctrination of natives, while for the Muisca, who had relatives buried in these temples, it meant breaking the contact between the living and the dead, ending the feeding of the building, and questioning imposed Catholic ritual practices. What do burials represent for Spaniards and natives when interpreting them in an archaeological context? How do people attribute burials distinct meanings over time? In turn, events such as the abandonment of the temples would have been discussed in other contact spaces, around activities of commensality or fetching water from the city's fountains, where explanations were given according to people's own beliefs.

These events also call into question the interpretation of the kitchen and tablewares as evidence of these pluriverse meanings. Although these wares present a fairly homogeneous style, what people discussed within the household or institution when eating, such as the religious beliefs that were transgressed with the sacrile-

gious treatment of the dead, attached very different meanings to the wares during the sharing of commensal spaces.

Methodologically, it was also necessary to locate contact spaces by identifying where the majority of inhabitants converged and where beliefs, habits, and tastes were transmitted or produced. This results from crossing data from emergent codes of written sources with information about those individuals who participated in these spaces, and their origins, occupation, kinship, and political alliances (Therrien 2008b). The case explored, The Merchants' Street, a primary node for the survival of the city, became the central area of encounter and interaction, the main contact space of Santafé de Bogotá. The results obtained from coding texts and mapping these codes are a great aid in understanding the archaeological record, since it can be predicted that a larger variability of ceramics with a slightly higher percentage of European pottery would be found in this area, associated with what were the very humble huts of the merchants.

This construction of analytical indicators presupposes a critical reflection on the interpretation of material culture, according to its location in the city. Contact spaces varied geographically over time and throughout the city. At least in the early contact period, this would mean observing and comparing the patterns of artifacts at the southern and northern borders, as well as in the surroundings of the main plaza. How these variations are represented in the archaeological record and to what events they can be related are issues that must be addressed not only in a long-term research project, but also from a *longue-durée* perspective.

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# Chapter 3

## The Material Worlds of Colonizers in New Spain

Enrique Rodríguez-Alegría

### 3.1 Introduction

Scholars from different subfields of anthropology and from many disciplines and fields in the social sciences have examined many aspects of materiality in the past few decades (Appadurai 1986; Preda 1999; DeMarrais et al. 2004; Miller 2005; Keane 2006). Studies of materiality have resulted in an interesting debate on the relationship between the material world and the realm of ideas, leading many scholars to argue that ideas are often born and not formed exclusively in the minds of people, but out of interaction with the material world. Many of us no longer think that material culture is merely a reflection of the world of the mind. Material culture also shapes ideas and ideologies (e.g., DeMarrais et al. 1996, 2004; Renfrew 2004; Ingold 2013).

The study of Spanish colonizers in Latin America can help us build on the literature on materiality and ideas by examining a case in which colonizers apparently had rather specific ideas of what an adequate, acceptable, and desirable material world should be, and then had to confront those ideas against the daily realities of living in the Spanish colonies. How did these colonizers interact with the material world to meet their expectations of what an acceptable material life should be? How did they transform what was in the New World to create the material worlds they wanted? More important, did they share any idea of what their material world should be like, or did they live in somewhat different material worlds? To contribute to how we think of the relationship between ideas and materiality, I examine some aspects of the material worlds of Spanish colonizers in Mexico City.

Scholars have disagreed about the things, the material goods that Spanish colonizers used and consumed. Some scholars have argued that Spanish colonizers reconstructed a material world fashioned after their world in Spain, seeking distinction from indigenous people (e.g., Fournier 1990, 1997; Deagan 2001) and bringing

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what Arnold Bauer (2001) has called ‘civilizing goods’ to the natives. While most scholars have recognized that colonizers adopted many aspects of indigenous material culture, they have disagreed about the motivations behind the consumption patterns of colonizers. Some scholars have argued that colonizers sometimes adopted indigenous material culture out of necessity and due to impoverishment, adopting it simply for economic reasons (Carrasco 1991; Charlton and Fournier 2011). This perspective assumes that colonizers shared an idea of what material culture was acceptable and which kinds of material culture were more valuable than others. Other works have presented the idea that interaction with indigenous people in households, especially through intermarriage and by other means, led to the adoption of indigenous material culture in the houses of colonizers (Deagan 1983, 1998, 2001; Jamieson 2004). Scholars have also argued that colonizers sometimes adopted indigenous material culture out of political and social interests that varied depending on the context (Jamieson 2000, 2004), and sometimes even adopted indigenous things as a way of creating links to powerful indigenous people based in part on shared material culture (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005a). At stake in the debate between the different explanations regarding the adoption of indigenous material culture are issues of power and how we recreate the actions and strategies of both colonizers and indigenous people in colonial Mexico.

In this chapter, I reexamine the patterns of material consumption of Spanish colonizers in Mexico City, the former capital of the Aztec Empire, and the capital of New Spain after 1521, focusing on what the empirical data can tell us. The monumental remains of Spanish colonialism, the works of art, the gold, and the palaces of the elite, call our attention to the lifestyles of the rich and powerful in New Spain. Historical descriptions sometimes exaggerate the wealth and luxury of colonizers (e.g., Thompson 1985, 1958), conspiring with the standing monuments to present a simplified vision of the wealth of colonizers and their flair for European luxury (Bennett 2005, pp. 31–32). Studying the material lives of colonizers in detail can help us see variation in terms of consumption, and in turn, see a greater diversity among colonizers. Variation can help us see the actions of people, evaluate whether their actions were cohesive, whether they shared a monolithic vision of an adequate and acceptable material world, and whether their ideas changed or not during the process of colonization in the Americas.

To begin examining the material worlds of Spanish colonizers in New Spain, I present two main lines of data. First, I focus on the belongings of 39 Spanish colonizers in Mexico as detailed in the probate inventories held at the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville. The data from historical sources include information on a wide range of material culture owned by colonizers, including money, debt, furniture, clothing, shoes, slaves, cattle, real estate, tools, books, religious items, spices, food, and others. I focus only on colonizers’ wealth, ownership of slaves, and the use of local (American) and European cloth and clothing. Such a narrow focus allows me to examine goods that are typically not found archaeologically due to problems of preservation, or at least not readily recognized with our current methods, especially cloth and clothing, slaves, and wealth. This approach allows me to compare the data with archaeological data and take advantage of the differences between the two sources of information.

Then, I present data on households excavated by the *Programa de Arqueología Urbana* (PAU) in the historic center of Mexico City. The different house lots excavated by the PAU had been occupied before the Spanish conquest and in the colonial period, from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth century, and even after the independence of Mexico. Their chronology loosely corresponds to the chronology covered by the probate inventories, in the sense of including material from the sixteenth century, although the households were occupied for a longer time span than any of the individual probate inventories can cover. Given the different sampling methods and the overlapping but different chronologies, the probate inventories are not statistically comparable with the household assemblages, nor can they be integrated as a single data set. They must be treated as different data sets and integrated only at the level of inference. Still, the archaeological data are important and allow me to present a few basic observations of the colonizers' patterns of consumption of local and imported plants and animals, and their use of indigenous and imported ceramics. While such a cursory glance at the different lines of data precludes an in-depth development of any of the observations, the two rather different views of the material world of Spaniards made possible by combining historical and archaeological evidence complement each other. They provide a partial view of what the Spanish colonizers consumed in Mexico City and allow us to see both, common patterns and variation.

### 3.2 The Probate Inventories

Probate inventories provide the first line of evidence which is used to describe the material belongings of Spanish colonizers in Mexico City. Colonial officials in New Spain compiled lists of the belongings of Spanish decedents as part of the many transactions that managed their inheritance on behalf of their families in Spain. Briefly, when a colonizer died, authorities gathered the decedent's belongings, sold them in auction, and sent the inheritance in metallic coins to the decedent's family in Spain (Vila Vilar 1983; Canterla and de Tovar 1984). Many of the inventories are archived at the *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI) in Seville. They contain descriptions of material belongings, data on their value upon sale, details of the materials and conditions of the items, data on their place of manufacture, and other information that can help us understand the belongings of the decedent at the time of their death. I originally consulted these inventories hoping to find the inventories that corresponded to the owners of houses that had been excavated by the PAU until 1998, as part of my PhD dissertation research. But for a variety of reasons that I am unable to identify with any specificity, the inventories could not be found. These reasons may include the loss or destruction of the original documents, presence of the documents in other archives, and even the possibility that the individuals who lived in the houses in question never had their belongings inventoried and auctioned on behalf of their families in Spain. When I could not find such inventories, I decided to study any available inventories from the sixteenth century, even if they did not correspond to people who lived in any of the houses excavated by the PAU. Even

though I did not have the luxury of having inventories that belonged to the same people who lived in the houses that were excavated, the inventories complement our knowledge of the material belongings of Spanish colonizers in Mexico City.

The decedents that form part of this study include 37 men and 2 women who were born in Spain, sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, and eventually died in Mexico. The sample includes all of the inventories from sixteenth-century Mexico City that I could find in the archive, that contained a complete list of belongings with a clear beginning and a clear end of the list, and that were legible. Some inventories had missing pages or pages that were partially destroyed, or the writing had bled from one page to the next in a manner that made it impossible to read them, and they do not form part of this sample. At this point, whether the sample is the result of purposeful destruction of some inventories or is the result of chance preservation is speculative, and I cannot tell whether forces other than random preservation have shaped the information that is available in Table 3.1.

The decedents in the sample left over 11,000 items that are listed in the probate inventories examined here (Table 3.1). They died anytime between 1532 (merely 11 years after the conquest) and 1590. The demographic aspects of the sample, especially the fact that the decedents were all born in Spain and went to Mexico without their families, limit the inferences we can make from the information provided. Specifically, it is not possible to generalize about all Spanish colonizers based on the sample, and there is a possibility that people of Spanish descent who were born in the Americas had different ideas about the material world from those that came from Spain as adults. Keeping in mind that the sample reflects only a portion of the colonizer population, we can still use the data to see if that portion represented in the sample is homogeneous or if it varies in a significant manner.

Other demographic aspects of the sample, including the fact that most colonizers in the data set are males, may be less important sources of bias. The strong gender imbalance in the sample reflects the sex ratio among Spanish migrants. Boyd-Bowman (1968, p. xvi) compiled data to show that after 1521, women constituted only 6.3% of all passengers to the Indies. The occupation of the decedents in this study varied, including miners, merchants, muleteers, friars, clerics, and craftsmen of different sorts: tailors, shoemakers, seamstresses, and carpenters. The group lacks members of the upper classes or nobles, which formed only 2.2% of the immigrant population (Boyd-Bowman 1968, p. xix). But even without including absolutely all segments of colonial society, we can see variation within the data set, in terms of people's occupations, wealth, and material belongings.

### 3.2.1 *Wealth*

Wealth usually emerges as an explanation of patterns of consumption, under the assumption that the wealthier the colonizer, the more European goods consumed and the more expensive those goods were (e.g., Lister and Lister 1982; Fournier 1990, 1997). Calculation of the monetary worth of each inventory can provide an idea of the decedents' wealth as indicated by the value of their material belongings, debt,



**Table 3.1** Probate inventories consulted. All inventories are found at the Archivo General de Indias in Seville

Decedent	Date of document	Place of birth	Place of death	Occupation	Reference
Francisco de Sigüenza	1532		Tilatongo, Oaxaca	Tailor	Contratación 197, N.6
Mateo García	1538	Trebejo	Antequera de Oaxaca		Cont. 197, N.21 (14)
Martín López	1539	Alcaudete	Puebla		Cont. 5575, N.17
Salvador Márquez	1541	Castilla	Mexico City	Tailor	Cont. 5575, N.13
Rodrigo Ruano	1542	Villa de Alaejos	Mexico City	Merchant (probably)	Cont. 5575, N.37
Alonso de Castro	1545	Burgos	Mexico City	Muleteer	Cont. 197, N.21
Alonso García	1545	Ayamonte	Puebla (although he lived in Mexico City)		Cont. 197, N.21, (5)
Alonso Serrano	1545	Ribera	Antequera de Oaxaca		Cont. 197, N.21 (15)
Bartolomé González	1545	Almodóbar del Campo	Colima		Cont. 197, N.21 (2)
Bartolomé Hernández	1545	Sevilla	Tasco	Carpenter	Cont. 197, N.21 (22)
Hernando Ladrón	1545	Zurbano	Mexico City		Cont. 197 N.21
Juan de Campomanes	1545	Astorga	Mazatlán	Merchant (probably)	Cont. 197, N.21 (13)
Juan Díaz Caballero	1545	Zamora	Puebla		Cont. 197, N.21 (4)
Lope Hernández	1545	Yelbes	Chiapas	Miner or merchant	Cont. 197, N.21 (18)
Martín Carrasco	1545	Jaén	Antequera de Oaxaca	Clergy	Cont. 197, N.21 (10)
Martín García	1545	Espinar de Segovia	Tulancingo		Cont. 197, N.21, 6
Pedro Vázquez	1545	Alconchel	Antequera de Oaxaca		Cont. 197, N.21 (16)
Diego Delgado	1551	Salamanca	Chiapas (Ciudad Real)	Smith	Cont. 197, N.21 (7)
Bartolomé de Prado	1554	Compostela	Mexico City	Merchant	Cont. 198, N.1/1
Andrés de Plasencia	1560	unknown	Mexico City		Cont. 473, N.2, R.1, 1
Alonso de Zapardiel	1562	Medina del Campo	Mexico City	Shoemaker	Cont. 203, N4, R.8
Baltasar-Godínez	1562	Sevilla	Mexico City		Cont. 200, N.2, R.4, 1
Juan Bautista	1562		Mexico City	Cabin boy	Cont. 200, N.2, R.2



**Table 3.1** (continued)

Decedent	Date of document	Place of birth	Place of death	Occupation	Reference
Pedro de Algoibar	1562		Mexico City		Cont. 201, N.2, R.2, 1
María de Espinosa	1565	Sevilla	Mexico City		Cont. 210 N.1, R.2
Miguel Rodríguez	1568	Sevilla	Mexico City	Tailor	Cont. 208A, N.2, R.1
Lorenzo Hernández	1572	Ecija	Mexico City	Merchant	Cont. 209, N.1, R.2
Juan Negrete	1574	Jérez de Nava	Mexico City	Friar	Cont. 211, N.2, R.7
Maese Gregorio de Heredia	1574	Málaga	Mexico City	Carpenter	Cont. 211, N.1, R.9
Juan Gómez	1578	la Villa de Villalba, Sevilla	Mexico City		Cont. 229, N.1, R.5
Juan Gutiérrez de Grado	1578	Salamanca, Castilla	Mexico City		Cont. 226, N.1, R.1
Juana Bautista	1581	Sevilla	Trinidad barrio	Seamstress (probably)	Cont. 219, N.2, R.3
Pedro de Madrid	1581		Mexico City		Cont. 219, N.2, R.8
Salvador Franco	1581	Málaga	Mexico City		Cont. 219, N.2, R.2
Antonio Martínez	1586	Castilla	Mexico City	Priest	Cont. 228, N.1, R.1
Hernán Núñez Caballero	1586	Sanlúcar de Barrameda	Mexico City		Cont. 232, N.2, R.3
Cristóbal Rodríguez	1589	Azuaga	Mexico City		Cont. 235, N.1, R.20
Juan de Oliva	1590	Toledo, Castilla	Mexico City	Clergy	Cont. 235, N.1, R.16

and money upon their death. In this particular data set, it is not possible to examine whether the wealth of a person was directly associated with greater consumption of European or more expensive goods, because the wealth of the decedents will be calculated using the value of their belongings as reported in the inventories. The problem of circularity is inevitable if we only use this data set, although in the next section I will show how circularity can be avoided by combining archaeological and historical data to study the relationship between wealth and consumption of European goods. For now, the historical data are useful in examining the wealth of the decedents in comparison to each other and to people living in Seville during the sixteenth century.

The following observations are based on 26 of the 39 inventories. I selected them based on whether they were complete (if all the pages of the inventory were preserved), whether the different types of coins that were used was clear and recorded

systematically, whether the total worth of the inventory reported by the scribe was equal or very close to the total that I calculated, and whether I otherwise had little reason to believe that there were too many recording errors in the document. Thirteen of the 39 inventories simply contained too many errors or inconsistencies to be included in the sample. The errors could include a total value reported by the scribe that was significantly different from the total value that I calculated, and in a way that I could not explain or correct, and the use of different kinds of coins throughout the document without specifying consistently what kind of coin was being used. For example, the value of a peso of *tepuzque* was different from the value of a peso of *oro de minas*, which in turn was different from a peso of *oro común* (Seeger 1978; Céspedes del Castillo 1994). If a scribe sometimes specified different kinds of pesos in the document, but other times did not report the kind of peso being used, it was difficult to know how to calculate the total value of the inventory.

I used the same formula to calculate the total monetary value of each of the 26 inventories that I used in this calculation. First, I added the value of each item that was sold in auction. The value of the items is almost always reported on the right margin of the document. Then, I calculated the total amount of money in liquid that the decedent owned, which was often reported in the document. I then added any debt that the decedent had in their favor, also reported in the document as letters of debt in the possession of the decedent. Finally, I subtracted the value of debt from the deceased. Thus, the formula used was:

the sum of the value of each item sold in auction  
 plus the sum of the value of all debt owed to the decedent  
 minus the sum of the value of all debt the decedent owed to others  
 equals the value of the inventory.

To facilitate comparisons between the inventories, I converted the varied coins used to *maravedís*, a kind of coin used in Spain at the time, using the conversions of coins documented by Seeger (1978) and Céspedes del Castillo (1994).

The value of the 26 inventories consulted ranges from 6,281 *maravedís* to 6,704,930 *maravedís* (Table 3.2). It is useful to compare the wealth of these colonizers with the wealth of decedents in Seville in the sixteenth century. Antonio Rodríguez Vázquez (1995) calculated the worth of decedents in Seville in the sixteenth century based on probate inventories as well. Rodríguez Vázquez (1995, p. 26) argues that Sevillians whose belongings totaled less than 10,000 *maravedís* were poor. In the sixteenth century, approximately 30% of the population of Seville was poor (Rodríguez Vázquez 1995, p. 26). According to my calculations, only one of the 26 probate inventories from New Spain falls under the line of poverty, representing only 3.4% of the sample.

Perhaps the fact that only one of the inventories I consulted falls below the line of poverty could mean that Spanish colonizers were generally not poor. Still, almost all of the inventories I consulted fall under the 1,000,000 *maravedí* range. According to Rodríguez Vázquez, ‘popular classes’ in Seville consisted of people whose belongings totaled less than 1,000,000 *maravedís*, and they mostly consisted of craft specialists of different kinds (Rodríguez Vázquez 1995, p. 56). Given that almost

**Table 3.2** Value of inventories in maravedís

Decedent	Occupation	Value of inventory in maravedís
Bartolomé Hernández	Carpenter	6,281.00
Pedro de Madrid		14,737.50
Alonso García		27,114.00
Juan Bautista	Cabin boy	33,825.00
Salvador Franco	Scribe	36,709.38
Juan Díaz Caballero		38,069.98
Juan de Campomanes	Merchant?	48,654.00
María de Espinosa		65,475.00
Pedro Vázquez		68,901.25
Juana Bautista	Seamstress	79,762.50
Francisco de Sigüenza	Tailor	84,238.25
Baltasar Godínez		99,450.00
Miguel Rodríguez	Tailor	105,454.50
Martín López		107,698.50
Bartolomé de Prado	Merchant	107,762.45
Juan Gómez		115,075.00
Alonso de Castro	Muleteer	178,753.00
Andres de Plasencia		190,980.75
Juan Gutiérrez de Grado		201,731.28
Diego Delgado	Smith	206,144.25
Maese Gregorio de Heredia	Carpenter	351,351.50
Martín Carrasco	Cleric	441,257.65
Bartolomé González		516,588.75
Alonso Serrano		716,933.75
Antonio Martínez	Presbyter	1,597,950.00
Hernán Núñez Caballero		6,704,930.00

all of the 26 probate inventories that I consulted fall in this category of the popular classes in terms of their monetary wealth, the evidence suggests that most of these immigrants were certainly not wealthy. This economic range includes all of the craft specialists in the sample, such as carpenters, tailors, seamstresses, etc. The richest inventories belong to a presbyter and to an individual who was probably a knight. Of course, the idea that the immigrants were not wealthy ignores possible differences in the cost of living in Seville and Mexico City at the time. Perhaps money could be stretched farther in one place or the other. Still, the comparison is valid if one considers that the colonizers had families in Iberia and most likely measured their wealth and success in the context of their lives in Iberia.

Even though these individuals mostly belong to the category that Rodríguez Vázquez (1995) considered popular classes, I emphasize that the wealth of these individuals varied significantly in ways that are difficult to understand. We could consider them as belonging to one category composed of people whose belongings were worth less than 1 million maravedís, or we could consider them as a heterogeneous group of people whose belongings ranged from 6,000 maravedís to over 6 million maravedís. I continue my work trying to understand the meaning of such

a varied range in terms of monetary worth of the decedents. Future analysis will benefit from a study of dispersion of the values of the decedents' belongings.

### 3.2.2 *Slaves*

The belongings of these individuals are analytically important well beyond their monetary value. Perhaps the most striking personal belongings I repeatedly found in the documents were slaves. A total of 12 out of the 39 inventories contained slaves. Slave owners included five individuals whose occupation could not be determined, as well as a tailor, a shoemaker, an ironsmith, a merchant, an individual who was either a merchant or a miner (or both), and two priests. Priests emerge once again as wealthy, if one calculates the monetary value of their inventory, and powerful, based on their ability to control slave labor. It is difficult to determine exactly from the documents how many slaves there were, given that sometimes they were entered as 'slaves' (plural), without giving a clear indication of how many there were. Other times, the slaves were not only entered in plural, but they were also entered alongside batches of tools, underscoring the status of the slaves as material belongings rather than people. I estimated that there are at least 30 slaves in the lists I consulted and as many as 42. The slaves were variously described as 'black,' 'Indian,' or 'Chichimec,' showing that a variety of people were enslaved in the colonial Mexico City. It is remarkable that the slave population in this particular sample was almost as large, if not larger, than the population of immigrants, although not all immigrants in the sample owned slaves.

The ubiquity of slaves in the inventories is particularly interesting, given that enslaving indigenous people had been prohibited before the conquest by the Laws of Burgos in 1512, and after the conquest, by the New Laws in 1545. We know that these prohibitions were largely a failure, and the documents consulted add evidence of the persistence of indigenous slavery even after its prohibition, alongside African slavery (Ruiz Medrano 2010a, pp. 22–23). In part, the prohibitions of slavery failed because many colonizers expected to own slaves and felt that they deserved slaves (Gibson 1964, pp. 77, 154, 221).

### 3.2.3 *Clothing and Cloth*

Other material belongings are much more common than slaves. Among the items, the most frequently mentioned in the inventories are shoes, clothing, and cloth. The vocabulary corresponds mostly to Spanish terms for clothing including *sayo* and *herrerruelo* (capes), *camisa* (shirt), *jubón* (bodice), *calzas* (hose), and a rather long list of clothing, jewelry, and accessories. The use of indigenous terms for clothing is rare. This indicates, not surprisingly, that Spaniards continued to use their traditional clothes in Mexico. Other historical data support this conclusion, and the presence of Spanish clothing in paintings and figurines clearly shows the continued use of Spanish clothing in Mexico (e.g., Von Winning 1988; Umberger 1996; Bauer 2001).

Still, it is important to note that even if the vocabulary to describe the clothes is mostly Spanish, a good percentage of the clothes, and perhaps the clothing, were made by indigenous producers. A total of 1,120 items, or 9.62% of the total cases in the data set, have a clear designation of their place of manufacture in the inventory. The means for determining the place of manufacture are never specified in the inventories, and they most likely depended on the ability of the person compiling the inventory to distinguish between cloth and clothing manufactured in different places. It is difficult to determine whether this is a random sample because scribes could be inclined to record the provenience of some items more than others. A total of 684 items, or 61% of all entries that have a designation of the place of manufacture, are made in the Americas. The vocabulary is mostly vague in the sense that it does not specify whether the items were made by indigenous people or Spaniards. Items that were clearly indicated as being made by indigenous producers (not just made in the Americas, but made specifically by indigenous people) constitute 7.1% ( $n = 80$ ) of the items for which we have provenience information. This figure most likely underestimates the abundance of indigenous items in Spanish hands. A figure of 7.1% is certainly well below the percentage of indigenous ceramics used in Spanish houses in Mexico City, as discussed below.

I argue that the items made in the Americas were most likely made by indigenous people. The labor pool in the Americas was mostly indigenous. Indigenous people in many places also learned to make European style items very quickly after the conquest, as was documented by chroniclers, who found that indigenous artisans began producing European-style goods after the conquest and selling them to colonizers. They produced cloth and clothing, items made of leather, and a variety of metal goods (Motolinía 1950, p. 242; Gibson 1964, p. 354). Colonizers also demanded tribute cloth from indigenous weavers, who supplied both cloth and specific items of clothing to colonizers (Villanueva 1985).

European goods make up 38.9% ( $n = 436$ ) of the items with a provenience. These items include objects clearly labeled as coming from specific cities or countries in Europe, including Seville, Castile, London, Britain, Flanders, and Germany. Most of the items came from Castile and Seville. The presence and ubiquity of imported clothing are not surprising. Many scholars have argued that imported clothing was important for marking social status and identity among colonizers (e.g., Deagan 1983, 1995, 2001; Bauer 2001, pp. 74–75). Colonizers dressed the part in Spanish garb, and when they could not obtain enough imported clothes, they had them made with local (American) cloth.

### 3.2.4 *Summation*

In sum, what we see in these documents is a combination of imported and American material culture. Almost two thirds of the objects were made in the Americas, and they were most likely made by indigenous producers who made up the bulk of the productive force. They learned how to make Spanish-style goods from friars and probably other colonists, and they rendered tribute to colonizers often in cloth and clothing made in Spanish forms. If colonizers were trying to reproduce a Spanish

material world, they did so in part by importing goods across the Atlantic, but mostly by obtaining the goods that they desired from indigenous producers.

The data from the probate inventories are rich, and I have only scratched the surface of what they can reveal about the material world of colonizers. In spite of their richness, the probate inventories are silent about two categories of material culture that were daily necessities for Spanish colonizers and were used or consumed in large quantities. These categories include food and pottery. To learn about food and pottery, I rely on archaeological evidence excavated from houses of Spanish colonizers in the center of Mexico City by the *Programa de Arqueología Urbana*.

### 3.3 Archaeological Data on Food and Pottery

Mexico City is an incredible combination of ancient ruins and archaeological deposits, colonial buildings, and modern architecture and infrastructure. It was once Mexico-Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec empire, and in 1521 it became known as Mexico City, the capital of New Spain and the main focus of immigration among Spaniards. Soon after conquering the Aztecs, the Spanish began what George Kubler has called ‘a prolific campaign of urban creation’ (1948, p. 68) in Mexico City. Perhaps it is better to think of it as urban destruction and rebuilding. The Spanish partially or completely destroyed many Aztec buildings and used some of the stones to build their own architecture on top of the city in ruins. Colonizers designated 100 city blocks surrounding the Templo Mayor of the Aztecs as *la traza*, an area that was in principle of exclusive Spanish residence, surrounded by indigenous *barrios* (Valero de García Lascuráin 1991, pp. 150–154; Martínez 1988, p. 27). *La traza* included houses for colonizers, the Metropolitan Cathedral, the Viceregal Palace, a large marketplace, the *Ayuntamiento* or City Hall, and other buildings of civil and religious administration (Flores Marini 1970, p. 14).

Colonizers often lived in *la traza*, where since 1990 the PAU has been excavating the ruins of Spanish houses that lay on top of the Aztec architecture. Excavations are mostly the result of engineering projects that require repairing the foundations of buildings that are currently in use. As buildings settle, their foundations and walls tend to crack, and major repairs are required to salvage the buildings. Sometimes, entire buildings need to be demolished due to safety concerns. As required by law, archaeologists lead the excavations that are necessary for repairing the buildings, and they work with engineers in these projects. Given that these houses are in the center of Mexico City, any excavation is likely to unearth both colonial and pre-Hispanic material (Matos Moctezuma et al. 1998; Hinojosa Hinojosa 1999; Matos Moctezuma 1999, 2003). The findings of archaeologists working for the PAU are an invaluable source of information on the material culture of colonizers, and by inference, their daily lives, and practices. I focus here on food and ceramics found in the Spanish houses excavated by the PAU. The sample included in this chapter focuses mostly on four houses excavated by the PAU before 2000, when I spent time doing research with the PAU in Mexico City. I chose the houses based on the availability of both archaeological material and historical information on the houses. Details of

the houses, their inhabitants, and the archaeological remains are provided elsewhere (Rodríguez-Alegría 2002).

### 3.3.1 Food

Botanical analysis in the contexts excavated by the PAU has helped identify an abundance of local plant remains in the houses of colonizers, including tomatoes, chilies, squash, and amaranth. All of these plants were unknown in Europe at the time, and all, except for amaranth, have become part of different cuisines in Europe. It is hard to imagine, for example, the cuisine of Italy without tomatoes. Archaeologists have also recovered European taxa in the Spanish houses in Mexico City, including remains of apricots, grapes, melons, and olives, although the only European taxon found in abundance is the peach (Montúfar López and Valentín Maldonado 1998; Montúfar López 2000).

Faunal analysis of the archaeological remains has helped identify white-tailed deer, armadillos, fish, and mollusks from the Gulf Coast of Mexico. The faunal analysis of contexts in Justo Sierra 33, one of the houses in the center of Mexico City, is interesting when examined in some detail. Less than half<sup>1</sup> of the faunal remains at Justo Sierra 33 belong to local Mexican animals. The only Mexican mammal found in Justo Sierra 33 is the rabbit, probably found in local markets and considered desirable because of its similarity with European hares. A variety of Mexican birds are also found in Justo Sierra 33, including water fowl, Cornish hen, and turkeys. All of these birds were available in local markets, indicating that perhaps colonizers in these houses did not bother hunting any of the animals they consumed. Local ducks may have been desirable given that they are similar to ducks found in Iberia (Valentín Maldonado 2003).

More than half of the faunal remains in Justo Sierra 33 belong to introduced Old World species. Sheep (*Ovis aries*) make up 33% of the total faunal remains, for a total of 30 individuals. Other introduced mammals include goat (*Capra sp.*), pig (*Sus scrofa*), and cattle (*Bos taurus*). Some patterns are visible in the fauna used in Justo Sierra 33. They include a preference for fauna that seemed familiar due to its similarities with taxa found in Europe, an expansion of the variety of the species of fish that were consumed in houses, and perhaps the rejection of some species that had been in use before the conquest but were not too appetizing for Spanish colonizers, including dogs, salamanders, weasels, gophers, snakes, moles, mice, worms, ants, frogs, water snakes, and grasshoppers, among others (Gibson 1964, pp. 341–346; Coe 1993; Suárez y Farías 1997; Montúfar López and Valentín Maldonado 1998; Montúfar López 2000). Once again, we see a mixture of the material

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<sup>1</sup> The publication by Valentín Maldonado (2003) twice states that introduced fauna constitutes 66% of the sample, whereas Mexican fauna constitutes 44% of the sample. The total adds up to 110%. The data provided are not sufficient to clarify whether it should be 66% introduced and 34% Mexican, or 56% introduced and 44% Mexican, but they give a clear idea that introduced fauna make up over half of the sample.



culture of two worlds, right in the houses of Spanish colonizers. The faunal data do not support a model of total cultural separatism that was based partially on using only imported ingredients.

### 3.3.2 Pottery

Ceramics found in the houses excavated by the PAU are also useful in understanding the material worlds of Spanish colonizers. Pottery is useful in part because it is found in abundance in archaeological sites. It was a daily necessity for colonizers and indigenous people alike. The varied forms, textures, colors, and decoration of ceramics make it a potential locus of symbolic expression and social display. People can judge others in part by their use of different kinds of ceramics, and they can also express hospitality by using the appropriate containers for presenting food and even for cooking and storing food (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005a).

I classified 9,607 ceramic fragments excavated from the houses in Mexico City, which included imported as well as local ceramics. Of these, 6,431 fragments were serving vessels, easily identifiable as plates, dishes, and bowls by the shape of the rims in comparison with complete pieces at the museum, and with specimens photographed and drawn in published typologies (e.g., Goggin 1968; Lister and Lister 1982). Body fragments without diagnostic features that make a designation of shape possible are not included in this count of serving vessels. The rest of the sample were either unidentified forms or Red Ware cooking and storage vessels (Rodríguez-Alegría 2002). I focus today on the 6,431 serving vessel sherds to facilitate a comparison between different types of serving vessels, without including storage vessels and unidentified forms that could potentially bias the sample.

The first general observation I can make is that Spanish colonizers used a variety of Aztec-tradition pottery, ceramics made by colonizers in Mexico, and pottery imported from Europe and Asia. Aztec-tradition Red Ware serving vessels (Fig. 3.1), characterized by a red slip and made into plates, bowls, jars, and many other forms, make up 32.77% ( $n=2,078$ ) of the serving vessel fragments found in the houses excavated by the PAU. These data indicate that the Spanish generally welcomed indigenous pottery, specifically serving vessels, into their houses and daily lives. The data do not support the idea that colonizers shared a unitary strategy of separatism from indigenous people and their material culture, given that we find indigenous plates and bowls in their own homes (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005b).

Historical documents support the idea that Spanish colonizers used indigenous pottery, and that it was not just indigenous servants who used it. The so-called Codex of Potters from Cuauhtitlan, from 1564, indicates clearly that a Spanish colonizer commissioned pottery made by indigenous people for his own use (Barlow 1951; Hernández Sánchez 2012, p. 96). Another document shows that Martín Cortés, Hernán Cortés' son, used ceramics from Cuauhtitlan to celebrate his son's baptism (Suárez de Peralta 1990 [1589], p. 185; Fournier 1990; Charlton et al. 1995). These documents show that Spaniards used and even appreciated indigenous pot-

**Fig. 3.1** Red Ware excavated in the historic center of Mexico City. (Photographed by author)



tery for their own use. Documents compiled by Orozco y Berra (1853, pp. 37–47) narrate a feast given by the Spanish colonizers in Mexico City in 1565, in part to obtain support for a rebellion against the Spanish king. The colonizers wanted to protest Spanish rule, overthrow the king, and establish rule in Mexico alongside indigenous nobility (Orozco y Berra 1853, pp. 37–47). As part of this feast, the Spanish colonizers dressed up theatrically as indigenous nobility and commissioned pottery made by indigenous potters to serve a combination of local and European dishes (Orozco y Berra 1853, pp. 38–39, 47; Ruiz Medrano 2010b).

A combination of the archaeological data and the documents shows that the colonizers used Aztec-tradition pottery for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, they used it out of necessity, given that it was widely available and appropriate for their own use. Other times they used it because they liked and admired it for its beauty. Sometimes they used it with political interests in mind, with the goal of expressing allegiance with locals, and even showing a willingness to break from Spanish rule. These varied strategies are difficult to identify or segregate analytically, but in combination, the archaeological and historical evidence shows that Spanish colonizers, and not just indigenous servants, used Aztec-tradition pottery in their houses (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005a). The archaeological data show how common the use of indigenous pottery was in these houses. The data also show that colonizers used indigenous pottery as it was during the time, without demanding changes to the pottery in terms of size, form, or decoration.

Colonizers also used a variety of ceramic imports, including pottery imported from Spain, Italy, Japan, and China (Figs. 3.2 and 3.3). Colonizers introduced majolica, or tin-enamelled pottery, in Mexico in the sixteenth century. Indigenous people previously did not cover their pottery with glazes (Hernández Sánchez 2012).

**Fig. 3.2** Spanish import excavated in the historic center of Mexico City. (Photographed by the author)



**Fig. 3.3** Chinese porcelain excavated in the historic center of Mexico City. (Photographed by author)



Spanish colonizers brought both the pottery and glazing techniques, and produced and used these highly desirable serving vessels in colonial Mexico.

Archaeological patterns show significant differences between the proportions of different kinds of pottery in the PAU-excavated houses. Some houses have assemblages that consist mostly of majolica with very little Red Ware. In contrast, other houses have much higher proportions of Red Ware and lower proportions of majolica (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005b). The variation in proportions between the different houses requires explanation, given that the use of different types of pottery could be associated with wealth or the purchasing power of different colonizers. It could also be guided by different social strategies, in the sense that some colonizers were more accepting of indigenous material goods than others either because they accepted indigenous material culture out of a sense of camaraderie with Indians or for political reasons. Perhaps those who favored separatism from indigenous people and their material culture used more majolica and less Red Ware. Others may have been less concerned with separation from indigenous people or perhaps even inclined to adopt a strategy of integration with indigenous people, and they found it useful to adopt Red Ware and other indigenous goods (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005b).

I have shown elsewhere (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005b) that a comparison of data from the different PAU-excavated houses does not support the idea that the richer colonizers or the more powerful figures in the local government used more imported pottery and fine majolica than poorer or less powerful colonizers. To show that there was no direct correlation between the wealth and the use of fine imported ceramics, it was necessary to use historical evidence to reconstruct a socioeconomic profile for the residents of each house, and then use the archaeological data to determine whether they used more or less majolica and porcelain than other houses.

The first line of evidence consists of historical information on the owners of houses excavated by the PAU. The archaeologists and historians working for the PAU have been able to identify the owners of different houses they have excavated by consulting historical maps, commemorative plaques on the building facades, and other sources of information. Historical documents may also provide biographical information of the residents of the different houses and provide ideas of their status, wealth, and occupation, among other factors. This historical line of evidence can then serve as context for the interpretation of archaeological material found in the houses that are excavated. For example, the house located in Guatemala Street #38 was owned by a priest from Spain who worked at the Cathedral. The house at Licenciado Verdad Street 2 was inhabited by poor residents who did not own the house and who were kicked out by wealthier owners in the early seventeenth century. The houses at Justo Sierra Street 33 and at Donceles St. 97 were inhabited by powerful colonizers and political figures in Mexico City in the sixteenth century (details provided in Rodríguez-Alegría 2002, pp. 172–174, 2005b).

A second line of evidence consists of the proportion of different types of pottery in each house. Reputedly, the most expensive, most desired pottery was porcelain. The second most expensive and desired were tin-enameled wares brought from Europe, followed by fine majolica made in the Spanish colonies. Archaeologists have argued that the cheapest types of ceramics were locally made ceramics, such as

Aztec Red Ware and other types. By tabulating the different types of pottery in each house, one can get an idea of the kinds of pottery that were used in each house, and whether the types were expensive or not. One can then compare the consumption patterns in the different houses and evaluate them against the expected patterns based on the historical information on the inhabitants. For example, one may check whether the poorest residents used more Aztec-tradition pottery than others, whether wealthier residents used more porcelain, and so forth (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005b).

The data do not support the idea that there is a positive correlation between wealth and consumption of fine, imported ceramics, or that there is a correlation between poverty and the use of cheap local majolica and indigenous serving vessels. Instead, the data indicate that some of the poorest families were the most invested in showing off and keeping up appearances by using the finest imported pottery, whereas some of the wealthiest families used a wide variety of imports as well as locally produced pottery. Perhaps the wealthier families were the least invested in a strategy of marking a separation from local indigenous material culture (Rodríguez-Alegría 2005b).

### 3.4 Conclusion

Even such a quick glance at different aspects of the material worlds of Spanish colonizers can help us come closer to some observations about why colonizers used the things they used. The data can help see that colonizers had vastly different fortunes in terms of material and monetary wealth obtained in the colonies. Historical documents show that some colonizers, including craft specialists and priests, had indigenous and African slaves, whom they considered part of their personal belongings. They tended to prefer wearing Spanish clothes, but they used plenty of indigenous cloth, and perhaps clothing made by indigenous people. They also imported clothing from different cities in Spain and Europe. The archaeological data show that some colonizers ate plenty of indigenous ingredients, including vegetables and animals, along with ingredients that they brought from Europe. They used European and Asian pottery as well as indigenous serving vessels in their houses.

The sort of combination of European and indigenous material culture used to be seen as evidence that the Spanish colonizers also changed, just like indigenous people, at a time when scholars were mostly focused on indigenous change and concepts related to *acculturation*. More recently, the combination of imported and local material culture has been seen as evidence that even though Spanish colonizers valued *hispanidad*<sup>2</sup> or Spanish cultural norms and material goods, they adapted or adjusted to the colonial situation (e.g., Deagan 2001). This category of adjustment to life in the indigenous world is the category that we can elaborate with the data presented here.

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<sup>2</sup> The term sometimes appears in the English literature as *Espanidad*, although the correct term in Spanish is *hispanidad*, as it appears in the dictionary of the Real Academia Española.

The data show that adjusting to local conditions can mean several things. First, adjusting to local conditions meant adopting aspects of material culture that could resemble life in Iberia. For example, for some colonizers local food ingredients served as appropriate substitutes for ingredients available in Spain. Local cloth could also be transformed into clothing that colonizers found familiar and attractive. The second aspect of adjusting to local conditions was the transformation of local material culture into familiar goods for some colonizers, in the process of both adoption and domestication. By domestication, I mean transforming local goods into clothing, food, and other kinds of material culture that were seen as fit to be consumed or used by colonizers.

The third aspect of adjusting to local conditions could mean adopting material culture and engaging in practices that could help negotiate political and social relations with locals and colonial powers. For example, some colonizers sometimes ate local ingredients and foods and used indigenous pottery, in a way that signaled an affiliation with local life, that recognized the power of local indigenous rulers, and that showed a desire to strengthen social relations with locals and break away from the power of the Spanish king. The symbolically charged meals that colonizers ate with indigenous people described above are a good example of this aspect of adjusting to local conditions.

The fourth aspect of adjusting to local conditions stands out: controlling productive forces and labor. We see this aspect in terms of enslavement of Africans and indigenous people, as well as in the demands for tribute cloth and food. Not all colonizers owned slaves, but some owned quite a few. The fifth aspect of adjustment to local conditions meant using imported material culture as display goods. Some of the poorest families in the houses excavated by the PAU used some of the fanciest imported pottery, perhaps in an attempt at keeping up appearances among colonizers and in distinction from indigenous people.

In conclusion, by examining the material belongings of Spanish colonizers and considering the aspects of how these material belongings were obtained and what they reveal, we can see that the patterns of consumption were varied, and that the strategies of colonizers were varied as well. The aspirations, goals, and desires of colonizers cannot be summarized only as attempts at reproducing a Spanish lifestyle. They engaged with local conditions in different ways. Some recognized the power of some indigenous people and tried to form alliances. Some controlled indigenous labor when they could, and even attempted to reject Spanish power on occasions. These observations are only a few, among many, that reveal the power of combining both historical documents and archaeological evidence in understanding the processes of colonialism in Mexico and Latin America.

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# Chapter 4

## Historical Archaeology and the Politics of Empowerment in Venezuela

Kay Tarble de Scaramelli

*Decolonization is quite simply the 'replacement of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men'. The replacement of a species of being is the replacement of the world constituting and defining that being. Decolonization, whose object is the transformation of the world, can then be seen as a cosmological process, since the world is transformed when the order of relationships defining the world is transformed. We can then see how the decolonization process as here defined is the essence of primordial politics, since its goal is the creation of a world, a new order. If decolonization is the description of primordial politics, then it follows that every relationship within the world becomes immediately politicized (Amoda 1974, p. 38).*

### 4.1 Prologue

The day was October 12, 2004, during the commemoration of Columbus Day (Día de la Raza)<sup>1</sup>, now officially renamed in Venezuela as the 'Day of Indigenous Resistance.' On the same day that in Spain a great parade celebrating Spanish culture was taking place, in Caracas a large multitude of indigenous activists and university students pulled down Rafael de la Cova's bronze statue of Cristóbal Colón from the pedestal where it had been erected over 100 years ago. The statue was

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<sup>1</sup> Day of the Race.

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**Fig. 4.1** Pedestal of the statue of Cristobal Colón following its toppling, October 2004. (Photographed by Franz Scaramelli)



brought down with ropes and was dragged to the Teresa Carreño Theater in the center of Caracas where hundreds of people had gathered to commemorate the ‘Day of Indigenous Resistance’ with songs and dances. Various groups openly took responsibility for the symbolic lynching of the statue of the famous navigator, whose head had been painted blood red to produce dramatic effects (Fig. 4.1). The participants proclaimed to the governmental authorities and the television cameras that the statue was a hateful symbol of colonialism, invasion, and genocide. Following these events, a large crowd of indigenous peoples—in a further act of emblematic resistance—performed a symbolic trial of Colón. They inscribed the pedestal of the statue with anticolonial messages and used the occasion to present a formal request to the government for the demolition of every single image of Colón in the country. Also, the National Indian Council (CONIVE), in representation of the 36 Venezuelan indigenous peoples, requested these to be substituted by statues of the great Cacique Guaiacaipuro, known for his resistance to the Spanish invasion. Following these events, the remains of the sculpture have been shot, broken, painted, and

exhibited in pieces to produce a sense of defiance and repudiation to his role in the discovery and colonization of America. In 2009, the last standing statue of Colón in Caracas was dismantled and removed.

## 4.2 Introduction

A comparison of the archaeology of modern Spanish colonialism as it played out throughout the world provides a fascinating opportunity to contrast and compare strategies and tactics of colonial intervention, their transformations through time, and local actions, interactions, and negotiations that ensued throughout the extremely diverse geographical and cultural situations encountered. Much attention was turned to these issues following the quincentennial of the arrival of Colón to America. From a different perspective, a comparison of the kinds of archaeologies developed to investigate colonial situations offers an opportunity to reflect on the uses of the past in the dynamics of nation building and identity construction of states attempting to shed their colonial guise. As archaeologists have become increasingly aware, the past, as we know it, is a social construction of the present that is deeply influenced by political interests and ideologies. As these interests and ideologies change, different archaeologies arise and different pasts are created. Historical archaeology, especially the archaeology of modern colonialism, is particularly susceptible to political and ideological influence since its referent is more recent and often more emotionally charged than the more remote past. In this chapter, I use the Venezuelan case to illustrate the manner in which the interplay between politics, national identity, and changing attitudes toward the past and its protagonists has affected the definition of cultural and historical patrimony, on the one hand, and influenced the types of archaeological research that prevailed at different conjunctures, on the other. I pay particular attention to the effects of the past 15 years of the Bolivarian Revolution in its attempt to redefine and reconstruct the foundations of the nation-state as well as to promote a new vision of the past and its contribution to the present. To contextualize the founding of the Fifth Republic of Venezuela, I refer to the theories of decolonization that have inspired a rethinking of Latin American constitutionalism and the place of subalterns in the production of knowledge and power. I then explore the trajectory of historical archaeology in Venezuela as it evolved from an essentially colonialist archaeology (Trigger 1984) that sought to describe the civilizing effect of the Spanish occupation to more nuanced approaches to the archaeology of colonialism that attempted to shift the emphasis away from the Occidental gaze to perspectives that recognize the devastating, asymmetrical relationship of the impact even while recognizing the role of local agency and negotiation in different situations of colonialism. Finally, using case studies, I illustrate the impact on archaeological practice of the two foundational discourses that have served to legitimize the Bolivarian Revolution: Bolivarianism and Indigeneity, or Guaicaipurism, as coined by Angosto (Angosto 2008), the first

referring to Simón Bolívar's figure as liberator, and the second seeking to glorify the indigenous resistance to colonial rule.

The Venezuelan case is illustrative of the colonial process on the periphery of the main thrust of Spanish intervention in America. Although Venezuela was the site for one of the earliest cities built by Spanish colonizers, seeking to exploit pearl fisheries in Cubagua, off the eastern coast of the mainland in 1511 and recognized as the city of Nueva Cadiz in 1528, this enterprise lasted only for 30 some years and was abandoned once the pearls, and the indigenous labor, were exhausted. The mainland of Venezuela was of minor importance to Spanish colonial plans, especially when compared to the undertakings in the viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru. Following the futile search for the fabled gold of El Dorado, colonial Venezuela settled into an agricultural economy based primarily on cacao plantations employing slave labor on the coast and ranching in the central regions of the country. Commerce, much of it illicit, thrived with neighboring Dutch and English holdings. The colonization of the southern part of the country, including the Orinoco basin, was divided between religious orders that established a series of missions aimed at reducing the indigenous population to settlements and indoctrinating them to Catholicism. More secular aims in this region included the maintenance of a fluvial connection between Santa Fe de Bogotá and the Atlantic Coast, and the prevention of English, Dutch, and Portuguese expansion from their colonies to the south and southeast.

The indigenous inhabitants of what is today known as Venezuela were primarily agricultural societies, with predominantly non-stratified sociopolitical systems, although more hierarchical polities, sometimes referred to as chiefdoms or cacicazgos, have been described for the western Llanos and sub-Andean areas. The reaction to the European conquest varied through time and space, depending on the intentions and attitudes of the colonizers, and ranged from cooperation, trade, retreat to less accessible areas, resistance, and outright warfare. The indigenous population in northern Venezuela was drastically reduced through violent conflict, exploitation, disease, and assimilation, whereas in southern Venezuela and on the western borders between modern Venezuela and Colombia, where geographical conditions were less accessible and attractive to the Spanish colonizers, over 36 recognized indigenous peoples survived the conquest and continue to maintain their identity, constituting 2.7% of the population today.

This brief characterization of the Venezuelan colonial situation serves as a backdrop to understand prevailing attitudes to both the pre-Columbian and the colonial past and to its study. Put bluntly, neither the pre-Columbian nor the Colonial periods served as a source of national pride nor as a symbolic component for the construction of national identity prior to the advent of the recent Chávez Revolution (Tarble 2001). Rather, it was the figure of Bolívar, the liberator, and the period of the War of Independence that epitomized the nationalistic feelings of Venezuelans, and that marked the significant starting point of Venezuelan history in the collective imagination. The attitude toward the indigenous past can be summarized by official history texts of the twentieth century that flatly denied the indigenous contribution to the conformation of Venezuelan culture, aside from its 'torrent of blood' and a





Fig. 4.2 Mural in downtown Caracas showing multiple racial components of Venezuela helping to build a new nation. (Photographed by Franz Scaramelli)

few elements to be found in the folklore.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the colonial period was viewed as a time of oppression and restraint that was heroically overthrown by the republicans under the leadership of Simon Bolívar. An ideology of *mestizaje* dominated the discourse of national identity following independence that proclaimed a nation drawn from three sources—African, European, and Indian—but which purportedly had no significant racial distinctions (Fig. 4.2). This discourse served to veil structural asymmetries that hailed back to the colonial caste system in which status was

<sup>2</sup> ‘La colaboración que la raza indígena ha prestado a la formación del pueblo venezolano, se ha de medir por esa mestización ocurrida durante los tres primeros siglos de historia criolla, que fue el tiempo fundamental para constituir la nacionalidad actual. Sin duda que ciertos rasgos culturales del folklore y de la economía provienen del aborigen.... Pero sería insostenible considerar que la cultura venezolana en el rango de civilización histórica se basa en la cultura aborigen... todo ello no estructura, no configura el modo histórico de la actual cultura venezolana. *Nuestro pueblo tiene elevado rango de cultura intelectual, gracias a que los moldes son europeos, hispanos propiamente.* Es necesario estar advertidos sobre esta realidad histórica. Pero conviene asimismo fijar el aporte del aborigen, que se ha realizado sólo en dos direcciones, debido a la posibilidad del estadio cultural que logró alcanzar: una, mediante el torrente de sangre vaciado en el criollo a lo largo de tres siglos, especialmente; otra por los rasgos menores de cultura expresados hoy en el folklore nacional’ (Morón 1956, p. 12, my italics).



ascribed from light to dark, with power and resources concentrated in the lighter, upper strata.

Following growing disillusionment with the traditional political parties that had governed in Venezuela for over 40 years, Venezuelans elected Hugo Chávez Frías as president in 1998 by an overwhelming majority. The adoption of the Constitution of 1999 marks the foundation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, also known as the Fifth Republic. The Constitution and ensuing laws grant full recognition to the popular sectors that constitute Venezuelan identity and guarantee respect and recognition of the equality of cultures, in this way counteracting the prevailing ideology of *mestizaje* and homogeneity. Furthermore, these laws promote local agency in the recognition and conservation of cultural and historical patrimony. The implications of this legislation have had profound and far-reaching consequences for the conception of the past, its actors, its study, and its conservation.

### 4.3 The Constituent Assembly and the Refounding of the Venezuelan Republic

Following the victory of President Hugo Chávez, in 1999, a constituent assembly drafted a new constitution that was approved by a large majority of voters. It was widely proclaimed as a model for its inclusiveness, refounding the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as a ‘democratic, participative and protagonistic, multiethnic and pluricultural society, in a just, federal, and decentralized State’ (*Preámbulo de la Constitución de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela*, 1999; my translation). At the center of the refoundation of the Venezuelan Republic, and the move to distance it from the neoliberal policy of the preceding republics, was a shift in discourse in which the indigenous populations, past and present, were recognized as being the first nations (*pueblos originarios*), to whom an enormous historic debt was owed. The constituent assembly explicitly recognized the rights of heretofore-marginalized sectors of the population. It acknowledged indigenous rights to language, culture, religion, economic practices, and territory (Articles 9, 119, 121, 122, 123). At the same time, it guaranteed interculturality and respect for collective knowledge (Article 124) and the right to political participation of all sectors.

Although Afro-Venezuelans did not figure as a distinctive sector in the Constitution, in spite of efforts to be included (interview with Jesus ‘Chucho’ Garcia, 2004, <http://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/322>, consulted March 2013), the Chávez government enacted several policies to increase the visibility of this sector: a law designed to counter racial discrimination (Law against Racial Discrimination, 2011), the inclusion of Afro-descendants in the national census, and recognition in the Organic Law of Education, which stipulates that Afro-descendant history shall be included in the official curriculum, and the establishment of a Liaison Office for Afro-descendants at the Ministry of Popular Power of Culture. Indigenous rights were further defined and protected through the enactment of various laws and ordi-

nances including the Law for Demarcation and Guarantee of the Habitat and Land of the Indigenous Peoples (2001), the Organic Law for the Indigenous Peoples and Communities (2005), the Law for Indigenous Languages (2008), and the Law for the Cultural Patrimony of the Indigenous Peoples and Communities (2008). The Presidential Decree 2028 (2002) declared that the celebration of October 12th, previously commemorating Colón's arrival to the Americas, was to be redesignated the Day of Indigenous Resistance.

The 1999 Constitution also proclaimed Venezuela to be a participative democracy. This new project was designed to provide grassroots participation in policy- and decision-making at the municipal level, specifying the rights of each municipality to organize, govern, and administer according to local geographic, historic, and cultural conditions, with explicit reference to auto-determination in the case of those municipalities with indigenous population. In accordance with more recent legislation, communes and community councils were declared to be responsible for the identification of local needs and the development of projects to address them (*Ley de Consejos Comunales* 2006). This was to go hand in hand with the numerous *ad hoc* 'missions' designed to address nationwide issues such as adult literacy, health care, housing, nutrition, aid to single mothers, children, and the homeless, culture, and sports. New ministries, all designated with the prefix of Ministry of Popular Power (*Ministerio del Poder Popular*), were created to oversee and institutionalize these different missions as a part of long-term plans to achieve goals of autonomy, economic growth, and well-being for the people, an example of which is the *Ministerio del Poder Popular para los Pueblos Indígenas* (Ministry of the People's Power for Indigenous Peoples) created in 2007.

#### 4.4 Decoloniality and Empowerment

The tone of the new constitution and the policies that followed clearly reflect the theoretical underpinnings of decoloniality that had been gestating in Latin America in recent decades (Coronil 1996, 2007; Mignolo 1996, 2012; Lander 1997, 2000; Quijano 2000; Walsh 2007). It marks a radical break with previous neoliberal conceptions of the state, of the people, and of the geopolitical structures of power that had prevailed in earlier regimes. Decolonization embraces the recognition and empowerment of the disenfranchised, the marginalized, and invisible sectors of society. This political project recognizes several axes of coloniality (power, knowledge, self) that permeate Latin American society in spite of the 200 plus years that have passed since the Wars of Independence. The perception of the coloniality of power present in the independent, but still unliberated Latin American nations, as proposed by Quijano (2000), recognizes the living legacy of colonialism that is expressed in discrimination based on the generic 'racial-gender' classes or castes that were forged in early colonial times when capitalism and labor were interlocked and naturalized in the pervasive hierarchical scheme: white/*mestizo* (male) (owner/capitalist), Indian (serf), and black (slave). This colonial power structure resulted in



Fig. 4.3 Denominations of the *Bolívar Fuerte*, new bills issued during the Chávez government

a caste system, with Spaniards ranked at the top, while Indians and blacks, whose phenotypic traits and culture were presumed to be inferior, were placed at the bottom. This globalized racial/economic scheme dominated the social and economic structure of the colony and continues to be reflected in these structures of modern postcolonial societies, despite efforts to overcome it<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 4.3).

The new Venezuelan Constitution signals a break with the neoliberal ideology of the Venezuelan population conceived as a melting pot of three additive parts: white (European), Indian, and black, and the idea that the *mestizo* result was the normative, civilized, whitened product of the mix. The last 15 years in Venezuela have witnessed an awakening of ethnic, racial, and class-consciousness, as gender relations have also come under scrutiny and a reevaluation of the past and its role in the present has surfaced (Navarrete 2005). An emphasis on interculturality (Walsh 2007), as opposed to multiculturalism, and the ground-up ideal underlying a participatory democracy, as set out in the Constitution, opens the door to the option of self-government and acceptance on equal grounds of alternative forms of justice, economic enterprise, and knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> A graphic illustration of this pervading scheme can be seen in the design of the new set of bills released in 2007, showcasing national heroes, flora, and fauna. For the first time, bills included subaltern images, but curiously, the order of the bills closely parallels the caste and gender hierarchy of the colonial period: BsF 50: Simón Rodríguez (white male, Bolívar's teacher and mentor). BsF 20: Luisa Cáceres de Arismendi (white, female heroine of the independence movement). BsF 10: Cacique Guaicaipuro (indigenous male, led resistance to Spanish colonizers). BsF 5: Pedro Camejo, Negro Primero (Afro-descendant male, former slave who fought in the Independence Movement, only black official in Bolívar's army).

This is not to say that theory equals practice. The constituent assembly of 1999 had to deal with conflicting views on sovereignty, nationalism, and territory that were irreconcilable, and even today, the failure to comply with the demarcation of indigenous lands or to recognize indigenous systems of justice has much to owe to these discrepancies and ambiguities (Mansutti 2006; Zent and Zent 2006; Caballero 2007; Angosto 2008).<sup>4</sup>

Another axis of the decolonial political project underlying many of the constitutional reforms and later legislation in Venezuela revolves around what is perceived as the Coloniality of Knowledge, understood as the privileging of Western, universal, rational, scientific pursuit of knowledge, its centers of production, and its languages of production, predominantly English and French (Mignolo 1996, 2012), whereas epistemic alternatives are considered prescientific and inferior. This axis of coloniality is also manifested in the asymmetrical relationship underlying the geopolitics of knowledge in which Latin America has typically been construed as the consumer rather than the producer of knowledge. Along similar lines, locally produced knowledge typically has been incorporated into the center (First World academia) as data to be redistributed later as components of grand syntheses or models. The links have historically been between individual researchers in Latin American countries with US or European mentors, with little or no horizontal networking among Latin American researchers themselves. Increased access to the Internet has been a useful tool in overcoming these asymmetries and difficulties in communication beyond national boundaries, and recent efforts to create Inter-(Latin) American intellectual and academic circles underlie much contemporary academic activity and the exchanges among decoloniality theorists themselves (Lander 2000).

## 4.5 Decoloniality and Politics of Patrimony in Venezuela

In Venezuela, only in recent years have the politics of empowerment begun to impact policies related to historical and cultural patrimony. Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth century, patrimony was given an object-oriented definition as something material that exists and that can be identified, protected, and conserved. As stated in the 1945 Law of Protection and Defense of Cultural Patrimony, ‘The artistic and historic patrimony of the nation is constituted by the historical and artistic monuments and other works of art correlated or not with National History that are found or enter into the territory of the Republic, regardless who is the owner’ (1945, Law for the Protection and Defense of Cultural Patrimony; my translation). During this time, monuments were privileged as the recipients of the distinction as

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<sup>4</sup> Following Chávez’s reelection in 2006, a new set of reforms known as the new Geometry of Power delineated a more centralized plan, to be effected through the development of *comunas*, consolidating *consejos comunales*, all of which were organized according to established schemes that did not take into account local forms of organization and, particularly, indigenous alternatives for social, legal, and economic modes that did not embrace the ‘endogenous development’ promoted by the national government through its different ministries, including the newly created Ministerio del Poder Popular de los Pueblos Indígenas (Angosto 2010).

patrimony, especially those honoring Bolívar, the Venezuelan liberator. Only when threatened with total destruction were the few remaining architectural elements of the colonial period given attention and restored in different parts of the country. Perhaps due to their non-monumental character, other archaeological remains, of both pre- and post-European contact eras, were underplayed in official definitions of patrimony, and archaeological research in Venezuela was relatively undeveloped up until the mid-twentieth century. This disregard for the indigenous past was clearly expressed by one of the ideologues of the Pérez Jiménez regime in 1957, who claimed that the country would be better off if the ‘insignificant bits of ceramic plates and idols’ were turned under by a tractor and replaced by real cities and agriculture<sup>5</sup> (Vallenilla Lanz 1957, cited in González and Vicente 2000, p. 164). As Molina (2007, pp. 137–138) points out, this Western conception of patrimony did not make any reference to the cultural, ethnic, and regional diversity of the nation or to discourses related to different conceptions of the past held by the non-elite sectors of Venezuelan society. Nor did it recognize the existence of divergent or even conflicting uses of cultural patrimony, nor its potential role in the definition of non-hegemonic identities. Even the more recent law of 1993 (*Ley de Patrimonio*) maintains the definition of patrimony as a given rather than as a dynamic and changing cultural construction (Molina 2000b, p. 150, 2007, p. 138).

The 1999 Constitution takes into consideration some changes in the definition of patrimony even as it maintains a top-down and static vision of patrimony (Molina 2007). In the arena of cultural and historical patrimony, the new constitution designates the state as the entity in charge of guaranteeing the protection, preservation, enrichment, conservation, and restoration of the tangible and intangible cultural patrimony and the historical memory of the nation (Chap. VI, Article 99). The popular culture that constitutes Venezuelan identity is given special attention, respecting interculturality under the principle of the equality of cultures (Article 100), and indigenous languages are explicitly recognized in Article 9, Title 1, as ‘cultural patrimony of the Nation and Humanity.’

Although the 1999 Constitution recognizes both tangible and intangible patrimony and the rights of communities and local organizations to participate in its conservation, by law, the authority to officially recognize and declare patrimony remains in the hands of the Institute for Cultural Patrimony (*Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural*, IPC). In an attempt to amplify and democratize the concept of cultural and historical patrimony, the IPC, in conjunction with different municipalities, undertook a census of objects, constructions, individual creations, oral tradition, and collective manifestations (*Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural* 1997), which were then declared to be cultural patrimony (Fig. 4.4). This was an important step away from

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Desde el punto de vista estético son insignificantes los cacharros de arcilla y los ídolos que improvisados etnólogos y arqueólogos vernáculos presentan como prueba de pretéritas civilizaciones. Bien está pues, que el tractor orientado con sentido revolucionario eche por tierra toda esa tradición de bahareque, de telaraña y de literatura mohosa, penetrando también en la selva para crear verdaderas ciudades y un verdadero agro y sustituir el araguato y otros simios con hombres que piensan, trabajan y produzcan conforme a las necesidades de lo que es, por fin, una nueva Venezuela.’ (Vallenilla Lanz, cited in González and Vicente 2000, p. 164).





izquierda, mientras que con la mano derecha porta un escapulario. Viste túnica marrón con manto color hueso y decoraciones doradas, mientras que sobre su cabeza porta una corona y una aureola doradas. El Niño tiene los brazos abiertos y un escapulario en la mano y viste túnica verde. La Virgen del Rosario, figura de pie con el Niño en los brazos, lleva en la mano derecha un rosario que se enlaza con la mano de Jesús. Viste túnica rosada, manto azul y velo blanco, mientras que el Niño Jesús viste de blanco. La Virgen de Fátima es representada parada, con las manos juntas a la altura del pecho, vestida de blanco y con corona dorada. Otras representaciones de Jesucristo son las de Jesús Misericordioso, imagen de Jesús vestido de blanco con los rayos rojo y blanco que le salen del corazón, que está dentro de una pequeña vitrina de madera, y la del Cristo de San Damián, reproducción del crucifijo bizantino que le habló a San Francisco, ícono del siglo XII.

**LOS OBJETOS**



Se trata de una colección que se ha venido haciendo a lo largo del tiempo. Está integrada por una variedad de piezas de uso cotidiano en el pasado como las piedras de moler o metates que se usaban en la cocina para triturar granos, aliños o condimentos. Posee varios ejemplares de estos utensilios. También tiene poncheras de metal, grandes, usadas como recipiente de agua; vajillas de café, lámparas, sillas, muñecos e imágenes de santos, cajas de fósforos de la serie de tauromaquía o de las tradiciones venezolanas y otras. Destacan vasijas de arcilla que alguna vez sirvieron como tinajas o recipientes para cargar agua, además de una serie de postales fotográficas de artistas y cantantes, como Paquita Escaribano, actores y actrices del cine mudo de las primeras décadas del siglo XX como Francesco Bertini y muchas otras.

**Colección de objetos de la familia Trujillo Hernández**

[CIUDAD/CENTRO POBLADO] Los Teques
[DIRECCIÓN] Calle Acosta
[ADSCRIPCIÓN] Privada
[PROPIETARIO] Familia Trujillo Hernández



**Colección de imágenes del Colegio María Auxiliadora**

[CIUDAD/CENTRO POBLADO] Los Teques
[DIRECCIÓN] Calle Miranda
[ADSCRIPCIÓN] Privada
[ADMINISTRADOR/CUSTODIO O RESPONSABLE] Diócesis de Los Teques



MUNICIPIO GUAICAIPURO 18

Fig. 4.4 Page from the Censo de Patrimonio, Miranda State. Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural (<http://www.ipc.gob.ve/images/stories/mapa/RegionCentroOriente/Miranda/Guaicaipuro.pdf>.)

the previous conception of patrimony as tangible, constructed, especially architectural, entities. Nonetheless, several difficulties arose with the new policy. First, although laws exist to protect this newly defined patrimony, there is very little local infrastructure to guarantee its protection, conservation, or diffusion. At the same time, the census created expectations as to the possible economic benefits to be derived from the declarations, for example, through tourism, that neither the IPC nor the municipal governments were able to follow up on. Furthermore, although the census strove to broaden the definition of patrimony and involve the people in its definition, in practice it freezes that which in reality can better be understood as a dynamic, living, and changing set of traditions (Molina 2007). In the case of archaeological remains, other problems arose. By placing the recognition of historical patrimony in the hands of local communities, with little or no background in archaeology, many sites were not identified or included in the census, and when they were, the criteria utilized were often object or collection based, rather than related to any problem-related research design, and with no regard to context or systematic collection and excavation protocols (see, e.g., catalogues of declared cultural patrimony by municipalities <http://www.ipc.gob.ve/images/stories/animacionmapa2.html>, consulted 26 April 2013).

As the centralized entity charged with defining the nation's patrimony, the IPC has undertaken several projects that align with the two ideological underpinnings of the Fifth Republic mentioned above: Bolivarianism and Guaicaipurism. As part of the celebration of the 200 years of the War of Independence, the IPC has sponsored a project entitled 'Pueblo Admirable' and has sponsored archaeological investigations at sites relevant to the life of Simón Bolívar, such as his birthplace (Molina Centeno 2010a) and the War of Independence such as Angostura, San Mateo, San Isidro, Casa el Balcón, Hacienda Palacios, among others. The artifacts recovered in the archaeological investigations formed the basis for the exhibition *En los Tiempos de Bolívar: Una Evocación Arqueológica de la Vida Cotidiana durante la Época del Libertador* (*In the Times of Bolívar: An Archaeological Evocation of Daily Life during the Epoch of Bolívar*), inaugurated in Caracas on December 17, 2006, the anniversary of Bolívar's death (Navarrete 2006; Fig. 4.5). The exhibition celebrated aspects of daily life characteristic of the times of the liberator, including the foods prepared and consumed, tableware, beverages, medicines and tonics, commerce, agriculture, industry, and warfare, with the goal of bringing the figure of Bolívar closer to the citizens of today.<sup>6</sup> The IPC also sponsored an ambitious archaeological survey and excavations designed to substantiate and justify the projects to declare as Patrimony of Humanity the early colonial sites of Cubagua (<http://www.ipc.gob.ve/index.php/acciones/postulaciones-a-patrimonio-mundial/nueva-cadiz-de-cubagua>) and Ciudad Bolívar at Angostura del Orinoco, a pivotal region of indigenous

<sup>6</sup> 'De un tiempo para acá, el calor político que estamos viviendo en nuestro país ha derretido el frío bronce para hacer que Bolívar, el de todos los días, se acerque al ciudadano, no como héroe inorgánico sino como el mejor de los baquianos posibles para guiarlo en el tránsito por los agrestes caminos hacia una mejor Venezuela. Este Bolívar orgánico, orientador y guía permanente de nuestro propio andar hacia el socialismo es el que queremos que nos acompañe' (Navarrete 2006, p. 260).



**Fig. 4.5** Commemorative plate honoring Simón Bolívar. (Colección Bolivariana: Año bicentenario del natalicio del Libertador Simón Bolívar, 1783-Fundación John Boulton, Caracas, Editorial Arte, 1983, p. 59)



and colonial settlement and stage for the later independence movement (Navarrete Sánchez 2004b).

An example of Guaicaipurism or the focus on indigenous values and ancestral rights can be found in the IPC's campaign to return the Piedra Kueka, a 30-ton boulder of jasper exported to Germany for exposition in a public park. The Pemón, an indigenous people who occupy the territory where the boulder was originally found, claim that it represents the grandmother Kueka, an ancestor converted into stone. The Pemón qualify this act as 'kidnapping, torture and death of a sacred being of their community and recalls the colonial practices of yesteryear, when the imperialist countries took the patrimony from the American peoples with no respect for ancestral rights nor international agreements' (<http://www.ipc.gob.ve/index.php/acciones/piedra-kueka>, consulted 29 January 2013, my translation).

## 4.6 Historical Archaeology and the Changing Faces of the Past

As mentioned earlier, archaeology as a profession became established only recently in Venezuela (Gassón and Wagner 1992; Navarrete Sánchez 1998, 2004a; Vargas Arenas 1986, 1998). Important precursors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries laid the groundwork for the advent of systematic archaeology in the 1930s and 1940s. Although the study of the pre-Columbian past has dominated the

field, historical archaeology, understood in Venezuela as the investigation of the period following European colonization, has had its own evolution in the country. Early work was dominated by a chronological/descriptive approach that laid the foundations for the identification of sites, chronological types, and the reconstruction of social and economic aspects of colonial Venezuela, with an emphasis on the impact of Spanish/European culture (Cruxent 1955, 1969, 1971, 1980; Cruxent and Vaz 1975). This type of descriptive work has continued in Venezuela and lays the foundation for subsequent interpretive studies (Molina 1999; Zucchi and Navarrete 1991; Sanoja et al. 1995; Zucchi 2010b). In the 1990s, World Systems theory inspired the archaeological analysis of the centers of colonial development in Venezuela, with an emphasis on the role of technology and the control of resources as the key to the establishment of European and *Criollo* domination (Molina and Amodio 1998; Sanoja 1998a, 2006; Molina 2000a; Sanoja and Vargas-Arenas 2002, 2005). More recent work has introduced notions of ethnogenesis, agency, identity, resilience, and negotiation, with greater attention to rural (Arvelo 2000), indigenous (Scaramelli and Tarble 1999, 2000; Navarrete 2000; Vidal 2000a, b; Zucchi and Vidal 2000; Tarble and Scaramelli 2004; Scaramelli and Tarble de Scaramelli 2005; Zucchi 2010a; Tarble de Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2011, 2012), and Afro-descendant sectors (Rivas 2000; Altez and Rivas 2002). Gender differences, as they played out in the colonial endeavor, also began to be taken into account at this time (Tarble de Scaramelli 2012; Tarble de Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2012). This recent work coincides chronologically with the emphasis on politics of empowerment discussed above.

#### ***4.6.1 Archaeology of the Colonial Period (Chronological Descriptive Investigations)***

The most outstanding contributor to pioneering work on colonial sites in Venezuela was J. M. Cruxent, a Catalan who immigrated to Venezuela following the Spanish Civil War. Between 1955 and 1961, he carried out extensive excavations in Nueva Cádiz, Cubagua, the first city founded in South America that flourished briefly due to a rich pearl fishery (Cruxent 1955, 1969; Rouse and Cruxent 1963). Cruxent's collaboration with John Goggin resulted in a sound chronology based on ceramic remains that served for the rest of the Caribbean area and beyond (Goggin 1968). At Cubagua, Cruxent's team exposed and consolidated the masonry walls of the site, leading to hypotheses about the occupation of the site by Europeans, Indians, and African slaves. A new ceramic style, characterized by simple forms and coarse-painted paste, was defined for the site and interpreted to be a simplified indigenous ware resulting from contact. Cruxent continued his interest in the Spanish conquest and colonization of Venezuela (Cruxent 1971, 1980; Cruxent and Vaz 1975) and other parts of the Caribbean (Deagan and Cruxent 1994, 2002). The IPC is currently in the process of nominating the site of the city of Nueva Cádiz on the island of Cubagua as World Heritage site, with a radically different ideological justification

**Fig. 4.6** Plaque placed by the Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural at the site of Nueva Cádiz, Cubagua. Photograph found on the website of the Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural, Caracas, Venezuela, May 2012



for its historical significance that places emphasis on its role in the rise of the global capitalist expansion<sup>7</sup> (<http://www.ipc.gob.ve/index.php/acciones/postulaciones-a-patrimonio-mundial/nueva-cadiz-de-cubagua>; Fig. 4.6).

Other descriptive work on colonial sites in Venezuela was carried out in the context of rescue work at historical monuments and other buildings undergoing architectural reconstruction, most of them in Caracas. Molina has recently published an excellent summary of these investigations (Molina 2011). Archaeological investigations in the city of Caracas include: Simón Bolívar's birthplace (Molina Centeno 2010a), Teatro Ayacucho (Vargas 1994), Teatro Municipal (Vargas et al.

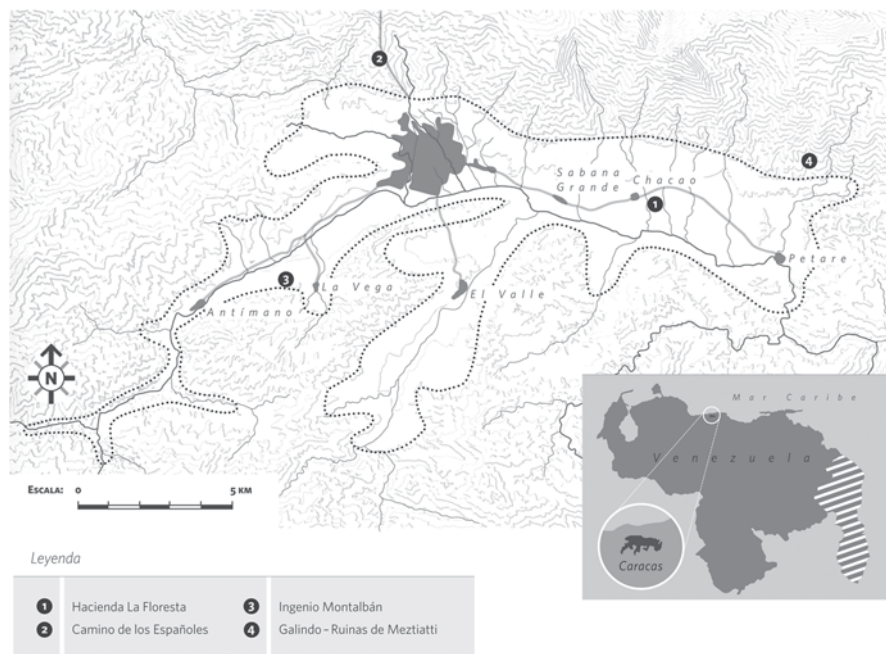
<sup>7</sup> Whereas the earlier studies stressed the civilizing aspects of the Spanish presence, the petition to nominate Nueva Cádiz as a World Heritage site emphasizes the role of the city in the rise of capitalist expansion, in the origins of a grid-like urban layout, in the establishment of laws and ordinances that served to create the legal bases for the colonial project in the New World, and as a referent for the establishment of the Venezuelan national identity and geographic domain following the creation of the Province of Venezuela in 1528. At the same time, Nueva Cádiz is cited as an example of the enslavement of indigenous peoples and was the site of the first importation of African slaves in America. Its ephemeral existence is an illustration of the 'savage exploitation of natural resources' that depleted the pearl fisheries in only a few years, with practices that resulted in the illness and death of the workers who were forced to dive in deep waters to retrieve the pearls.



**Fig. 4.7** Archaeological investigations on historical sites in the center of Caracas. Figure from Molina (2011)

1998), Escuela de Música José Ángel Lamas (Sanoja et al. 1998), Cuartel San Carlos (Sanoja and Vargas 1998; Flores 2007), Cathedral of Caracas (Molina 1989a), etc. (Fig. 4.7). Archaeological research on areas peripheral to the urban center of the city includes sugar mills (Molina 2005), estates dedicated to coffee production (Molina 1989b), suburban areas of Caracas (Molina 2006; Molina Centeno 2010b), and the network of roads connecting Caracas to the port of La Guaira on the northern coast (Amodio et al. 1997; Fig. 4.8). Important information on the early foundations of Caracas and later occupational sequences has been derived from these relatively limited opportunities to excavate. Unfortunately, archaeological investigation was not incorporated into some of the more extensive development projects in Caracas, such as the construction of the Metro.

In many of these studies, imported materials and industrial items have received much more attention than those of local manufacture, and the emphasis has been on the dominant European/Criollo sector of the population, with little attention given to subalterns. Nonetheless, increasingly, excavations have gone hand in hand with the examination of archival sources, leading to more accurate interpretations of the sequences and occupational history of the sites (Molina 2011). In an attempt to amplify and diversify the type of archaeological investigation on the post-contact period in Venezuela, which had concentrated its efforts on ecclesiastical, military, or other public and private edifications, Molina proposed the need to investigate units of production (Molina 1999). Molina's own archaeological and archival research on



**Fig. 4.8** Archaeological investigations on historical sites in the periphery of Caracas. Figure from Molina (2011)

sugar production has focused on the definition of ‘technological schemes’ that were developed to process the cane and on their impact on the landscape of Caracas and outlying valleys well into the twentieth century (Molina 1999, 2000a, 2005).

Limited archaeological excavations have been carried out on historical period sites outside of the metropolitan area, permitting the development of local occupational sequences in Falcón (Zucchi 1997, 2010b), the Andes (Wagner 1967), the lower Orinoco (Sanoja et al. 1995; Sanoja 1998b; Sanoja and Vargas Arenas 2005), the middle Orinoco (Scaramelli and Tarble 2005; Scaramelli and Tarble de Scaramelli 2005; Scaramelli 2006), the Rio Negro (Zucchi 2000), Lara (Arvelo 2000), and the northern coast (Altez and Rivas 2002).

#### 4.6.2 *Venezuela as Part of the World System*

Once a basic occupational sequence had been worked out in Caracas and the Lower Orinoco, interpretive frameworks followed close behind. As a part of the influential Latin American Social Archaeology program, Sanoja, Vargas, and others throughout Latin America adopted historical materialism as their interpretive framework (Politis 1995; Vargas-Arenas and Sanoja 1993). Sanoja and Vargas, invoking World Systems Theory, have been concerned with the forms of control developed by the



European colonists as they imposed a capitalist mode of production, especially through the monopolization of key resources such as the access to water in Caracas (Sanoja 1998a; Sanoja and Vargas-Arenas 2002) and the exploitation of mineral and agricultural resources in Guayana (Sanoja 1998a, b). Under the auspices of their Urban Archaeology Project, these authors tied several of the rescue projects into an analysis of the transformation of the city of Caracas from what they have defined as the Tribal Mode of Life through the Colonial Mode of Life, and finally the National Mode of Life (Vargas Arenas and Vivas Yépez 1999). Through a comparative analysis of the geo-historical regions they defined for Venezuela based on archaeological and documental sources, they argue that, since the sixteenth century, the dynamics of the production of space and power structures were characterized by a process of accumulation dominated by mercantile capital that propitiated and consolidated relations of colonial and neocolonial dependency (Vargas Arenas and Vivas Yépez 1999; Sanoja and Vargas-Arenas 2002; Sanoja Obediente and Vargas Arenas 2004). Because the territory that was being colonized had already been occupied for millennia, these authors have proposed that the significant geo-historical variations of Indo-Hispanic and modern day Venezuela have their foundation in pre-conquest configurations. Nonetheless, the Spanish sector gained prominence through indoctrination, coercive tactics, and outright violence in an effort to impose a new colonial order while, at the same time, decimating indigenous population and deteriorating the environment.

According to these authors, the spread of the Spanish language permitted the imposition of a normative code that was to give order to the domestic and public daily life of the new society (Sanoja Obediente and Vargas Arenas 2004). They maintain that in spite of the superficial homogeneity of common language and other cultural institutions, the relations of power and dependency established between the elite and lower classes led to naturalized, asymmetrical relations and a (neo) colonial ideology of self-deprecation and passive resistance in the work-place.<sup>8</sup> These authors consider this negative synergy between sectors to be a dead weight and an impediment to the construction of a 'truly just, democratic and sovereign society' (Sanoja Obediente and Vargas Arenas 2004). Founded in a Marxist analysis, these studies offer an elegant explanation for the expansion of capitalism and the appearance of a global economy based on asymmetrical relations between the so-called Centers and Peripheries, and coincides with the growing decoloniality literature that was gaining ascendance among the anti-imperialist, anticapitalist political movements of recent decades throughout Latin America. Their emphasis on the role of dominant sectors of the Colonial period, characterized as an oligarchy of consumerists, especially of European imported goods, on the one hand, and as absentee landholders unconcerned with the development of local production beyond cash crops such

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<sup>8</sup> 'Aquella sinergia entre los caracteres negativos de ambos sectores, dominante y subordinado, devino en verdaderamente neocolonial a partir del siglo XIX con las nuevas formas de dependencia política, económica y cultural que maniataron a la sociedad venezolana a partir de 1823. Su carga ideológica, a menos que logremos rectificarla, seguirá siendo el pesado lastre que dificulta nuestros esfuerzos para lograr una sociedad verdaderamente justa, democrática y soberana' (Sanoja Obediente and Vargas Arenas 2004, p. 429).

as cacao, animal hides, or raw materials for export, on the other, places the blame for current relations of dependence on this small, elite sector of the Venezuelan population. This is the sector demonized in the Chávez government's discourse as 'escuálidos,' 'oligarcas,' and 'vende-patrias' (squalid, oligarchy, and sellers of the country) even while the middle class, made up of professionals and small business owners, are accused of upholding the (neo) colonial ideals of private property and succumbing to the lure of exogenous materialist values. As ideologues for the Fifth Republic, and in line with their Marxist theoretical framework, these authors have used their archaeological findings of imported glassware, pottery, alcoholic beverages, perfumes, and medicines as evidence of a consumer-driven elite that exercised its power to monopolize land and resources and exploit the vast majority of the *mestizo*, landless poor (Vargas Arenas 1995; Vargas Arenas and Vivas Yépez 1999).

These models have, nonetheless, been criticized for being Eurocentric and have obscured the active role of indigenous and subaltern sectors in the conformation of the World System itself (Sahlins 1988, 1996; Dietler 1995, 1998; Scaramelli 2005; Scaramelli and Tarble de Scaramelli 2005). In the case of the research cited earlier, it is noteworthy that the archaeological investigations have centered on the dominant sector, both in Caracas and in Guayana (Sanoja 1998a, b; Sanoja and Vargas-Arenas 2002, 2005), where the excavations concentrated on edifications, fortifications, and mission sites. Through a research strategy that focused on major constructions and infrastructure, the material evidence for the life ways and spatial configurations of the subalterns was largely ignored. Locally produced ceramic wares, for example, are simply lumped as colono-wares, or indigenous wares, with no attempt to delve into the actual relations that played out between the makers of these wares and the colonial elite. The voice of the slave, the neophyte, or the poor *mestizo* is not sought in the archaeological record, and the resulting analysis portrays the colonial process as a one-way imposition and an unsuccessful resistance. This blame placed on a small, dominant elite of the past and onto imperialist, capitalist forces of the present has fostered the resentment so clearly voiced by sectors that feel victimized by this process. The politics of empowerment feed on the bitterness and anger of historically under-recognized sectors while summarizing their role as one of resistance rather than as active social players.

## 4.7 Agency, Identity, Resilience, Negotiation

Following the quincentennial anniversary of European contact, historical archaeology throughout the Americas refocused its efforts to comprehend the process of colonization and its impact. A move away from unilinear models of culture change directed attention to ethnogenesis, indigenous agency, the creative reinterpretation of novel artifacts into existing categories of meaning, and the role of material culture in the construction of identity. Without denying the coercive and often violent mechanisms used by European powers to impose new social, political, and economic regimes, some archaeologists have begun to pay closer attention to differ-



ent indigenous strategies that included cooperation, negotiation, passive and active resistance, and outright opposition. In Venezuela, several archaeological projects have centered on the subaltern and the diverse colonial processes that played out in different regions of the territory, with an eye on transformations in settlement pattern, demographics, productive regimes, and trade (Arvelo 2000; Navarrete 2000; Rivas 2000; Altez and Rivas 2002; Gil et al. 2003; Arvelo and Ruetter 2005; Díaz 2005; Rodríguez 2005; Scaramelli 2005, 2006; Scaramelli and Tarble de Scaramelli 2005). At the same time, the ideological shift in Venezuelan politics that promoted an alternative view of indigenous, rural Criollo and Afro-Venezuelan resistance has had profound influence on the attitude of these sectors toward the past and their role as curators of cultural patrimony. Archaeologists and communities have engaged in projects aimed to clarify territorial claims and to promote local history and identity. Below, I offer a few examples of the recent research that illustrate these trends.

#### 4.7.1 *Afro-descendant Identity and Archaeological Objects*

The Archaeology of Carruao Project is one of the few projects that have been carried out in Afro-descendant communities in Venezuela. Altez and Rivas (Rivas 2000; Altez and Rivas 2002) have worked in several communities on the northern coast of Venezuela where Afro-descendant slaves and indigenous peoples labored in the cacao plantations. Unequivocal archaeological evidence for the presence of Afro-descendants has proven elusive since only imported materials have been found in the excavations. This has led Rivas to state that rather than investigating slave communities, they may have only found remains of the administrators or owners of the production units and that the slaves may have made their artifacts from perishable materials such as wood or bark that were not preserved in the record (Rivas 2000, p. 88). Altez and Rivas expressed surprise at several of their findings. On the one hand, one of the present-day communities denied any participation in slavery in the past and claimed to be a ‘pueblo de negros libres’ (a town of free blacks) in spite of documentation that attests to the presence of slavery in the area (Fig. 4.9). The other unexpected finding was the claim on the part of the members of the Afro-descendant communities that certain archaeological remains that are most probably attributable to the original indigenous inhabitants of the region, such as petroglyphs and stone hand axes, had been manufactured by ancestral Afro-Americans. In another case, the Afro-descendants claim Amerindian origins rather than African, despite strong phenotypic characteristics that would point to the latter (Rivas 2000, p. 89). These findings resonate with investigations carried out in Palmares, a maroon settlement in eastern Brazil, where contradictory visions of the past of the *quilombo* derive from different theoretical models and from diverse political intentions (Allen 1998; Funari 2004, 2006). The lesson to be learned here is that archaeological evidence, while concrete, does not ‘speak for itself’ but rather is susceptible to multiple readings and even conflicting conclusions, congruent with the inherent contradictions of society itself.

**Fig. 4.9** Mural on wall of the town of La Sabana, declaring it to be a town founded by free blacks. (Photographed by Franz Scaramelli)



### 4.7.2 *Mapoyo Territory and Mukuruni Museum*

For over two decades, Franz Scaramelli and I have collaborated with the Mapoyo indigenous community of Palomo in the Bolívar state of Venezuela. In 1992, we were invited to carry out archaeological research in the area following a territorial dispute with the neighboring Piaroa. The captain, Simón Bastidas, and several other members of the community have taken an active part in the regional survey and site recordation in their ancient territory, and the archaeological remains we recovered allowed us to construct a sequence that spans the late precontact occupations up to recent times. This sequence based on settlement location, local and imported ceramics, and lithic, glass, and metal items attests to the continuity and transformation of settlement pattern, productive practices, and forms of organization and interaction through time. Archaeological remains bear witness to the impact of Jesuit and Franciscan missions in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries and the interchange of goods, technologies, and ideologies. The archaeological findings gave voice to the indigenous inhabitants of the area in and beyond the missions. They attest to the crucial role of native knowledge of forest products, hunting, fishing, agricultural production and food processing, construction materials and design, modes of transport, and other essential technological systems in providing sustenance to the incipient mission settlements and, at the same time, giving the indigenous neophytes leverage in the decisions as to settlement location and activities (Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2015). These were settlements in which the well-being of the neophytes decided the eventual decision to stay or to flee, and the missionaries often expressed their frustration as to the fickleness of their charges (Tarble and Scaramelli 2004). Following the expulsion of the missionaries after the War of Independence, the archaeological remains trace the regrouping of local communities and their participation in different productive and commercial activities that promoted the maintenance of certain subsistence forms, indigenous identity, and territorial continuity even while engaging in cash cropping and extractive activities that gave them ac-

cess to desirable trade goods (Falconi 2003; Scaramelli 2005; Tarble de Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2011, 2012; Torrealba 2011; Meza 2013; Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2015). These findings support the proposal that in this part of the country, as in others, the colonial project cannot be conceived as the unilinear imposition of a new regime, but as a negotiated interaction, albeit asymmetrical, of different actors with clashing interests and goals that continues even to this day.

The Mapoyo have taken active interest in the archaeological investigations undertaken in the area as a means to demonstrate territorial continuity in the face of different invasions of their traditional territory and expropriations by state owned mining corporations (CVG, BAUXILUM). Through the intertwining of oral tradition, written sources, and archaeological evidence, a solid case supporting territorial claims has been submitted to government authorities, resulting in a land grant finalized in 2014. Throughout the project, community members actively sought out new sites and have offered comments on the function of different materials obtained. These collected objects and collective knowledge led to increased interest and curiosity, as well as occasional suspicion and animosity, as some members of the community feared for the loss of the ‘evidence of the Mapoyo past’ as it was now perceived. In response to these sentiments, once the materials had been catalogued, classified, and analyzed, we offered to transfer the collection to the community and to aid in the design of a community museum, where the results of the research could be displayed. The communal council prepared a project that eventually received financial support from two institutions, resulting in the construction of the museum and the transfer of the collection for display (Fig. 4.10). Texts, created by members of the community and translated into the Mapoyo language, bear out their interpretation of the archaeological remains as informed by our research and their oral history. The Chávez government celebrated the creation of the museum,



Fig. 4.10 Murukuni Museum, Palomo, Bolívar State. (Photographed by Franz Scaramelli)

**Fig. 4.11** Capitán Simón Bastidas with sword and dagger from the War of Independence. (Photographed by Franz Scaramelli)



and in December 2012, Captain Simón Bastidas was invited to Caracas to display the sword and dagger that was purportedly given to the Mapoyo following their participation in the War of Independence on the side of the Republicans (Fig. 4.11) in an act that recognized their heroic contribution to the construction of the new republic. In 2014, following joint efforts by the community, linguists, anthropologists, and archaeologists, UNESCO included the language and oral tradition of the Venezuelan indigenous community Mapoyo of Bolívar State in the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (<http://www.avn.info.ve/contenido/unesco-reconocimiento-mapoyo-triumph-cultural-struggle-venezuelan-indigeno>).

This example documents two aspects of the politics of empowerment. On the one hand, it shows how indigenous collaboration in archaeological projects contributes to a ground-up appreciation of cultural and historical patrimony and a sense of empowerment in the face of territorial invasions and attributions of acculturation and loss of indigenous identity (Henley 1975; Perera 1992). On the other hand, the use of the Mapoyo past by the government illustrates the *Guaicaipurismo* discourse mentioned earlier in which valiant resistance, in this case to royalist forces, is exalted. It is ironic that in the case of the Mapoyo, it has been precisely their capacity to negotiate and take advantage of different opportunities for interaction (commercial, educational, intermarriage, etc.), rather than violent resistance, that has been a key to their long-term survival and the maintenance of their indigenous identity.

## 4.8 Final Remarks

This brief review of the trajectory of historical archaeology in Venezuela illustrates the powerful role of politics in the construction of the past as it is used politically in the present. The earliest projects, originating in the 1950s, focused on Spanish colonization and the civilizing aspects of the colonial process. Archaeological research focused on early colonial occupations and routes of penetration. Monumental architecture, in the form of colonial period churches, forts, and other edifications, overwhelmingly dominated the roster of declared patrimony (Molina 1999, p. 48). The emphasis on these features of the colonial past reflects the ideology of *mestizaje* and the valorization of the Spanish language, religion, and cultural norms in the foundation of the Venezuelan Republic. In the 1970s and 1980s, this ideology came under scrutiny, and archaeological research was directed toward the colonial origins of the asymmetrical relations characterizing the World System. Archaeologists explored the technological systems and the monopolization of resources that promoted the relations of domination characteristic of emerging capitalism (Molina 2005). Following the quincentennial, increasing attention was given to social and political factors in the analysis of the diverse responses to conquest and colonization. These studies attempted to account for the roles played by subaltern and less visible sectors in the colonial situation as it evolved in different regions of Venezuela. A greater appreciation for the diversity of the process in time and space grew out of this research. This coincides with the launching of the Bolivarian Revolution, which, in its desire to refound the republic and to radically alter the homogenizing mask of *mestizaje*, sought to assert influence on the construction of the past that empowered indigenous, Afro-Venezuelan, and marginalized *Criollo* sectors that had heretofore been silenced or ignored while, at the same time, exalting Bolívar as the anti-imperialist, *nuestroamericano* (Our American)<sup>9</sup>, liberator. The discourses of Guaicaipurismo and Bolivarianismo permeate newly inaugurated museums, exhibitions, magazines, textbooks, and websites created to promote the new version of decolonized history and cultural patrimony.

This is not to say that the decolonizing process has achieved its goals or that it has evolved without opposition. Turning 500 years of history on its head is no easy task, and deeply entrenched prejudices and structural inequalities are not readily overcome. Contradictions in the very mechanisms of governance have created impasses

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<sup>9</sup> This is a term used to distinguish what is known as Latin America as Our America and its inhabitants as 'Our Americans' rather than Hispanic Americans or Latin Americans. It is an attempt to rebaptize America, with the exclusion of the North American whites, to embrace the authentic, original, *mestizo* identity as summarized in the following quote: 'America, a secas estaria muy bien si pudiéramos erradicar de su contenido a los rubios nortños. Proclamemos entonces el rebautismo, y llamemos a nuestra hermosa geografía 'nuestra América', sabiendo muy bien a quiénes estamos excluyendo. Y sintiéndonos los que habitamos esta tierra de color verde esperanza, los 'nuestroamericanos'. Así haremos justicia con nuestra historia, con nuestra identidad y, sobre todo, con nuestra dignidad' (Rebautizar América (IV Parte) NUESTRA AMÉRICA Y NUESTROAMERICANOS (Horacio A. López) <http://www.centrocultural.coop/blogs/nuestroamericanos/2011/10/03/rebautizar-america-iv-parte-nuestra-america-y-nuestroamericanos/>).



on many fronts. Even while espousing participative democracy, the Chávez political policy was concentrated in the patriarchal figure of the president, who ruled more as a *Caudillo* than as a facilitator of local initiatives. Indigenous leaders have had to face physical violence, intractable bureaucracy and powerful military and economic interests that have effectively impeded the materialization of indigenous territorial claims (Mansutti 2006; Bello 2011). Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples still struggle with discrimination and prejudice that is manifest in all spheres of life and face increasing pressure to accept centralized forms of governmental control in order to gain access to funds and services (Consejos Comunales, Comunas) that contradict local forms of organization (Kelly 2011). The laws regulating patrimony, in its definition and management through the IPC, continue to operate as a top-down process and promote a static conception of patrimony as something to be declared by authorities rather than defined, displayed, disputed, and deployed by different sectors of the population (Molina 2007). Even more revealing is the emphasis still placed on postcolonial history through the postulation of colonial centers such as Coro, Nueva Cádiz, and Ciudad Bolívar as World Heritage Sites and a nationalist archaeology (Trigger 1984) that continues to reify Bolivarianism through generous financial support for research on the life and times of the liberator while relegating archaeology of the vast indigenous period to the back burner, in spite of lip service to Guaicaipurism.

Other aspects of decoloniality bring to mind questions regarding the study of the past and the role of archaeology in the process. In rejecting a Eurocentric perspective on knowledge and knowledge production, what is proposed to take its place? How do we ‘re-imagine’ the world from an indigenous perspective, or an Afro-Venezuelan, or a ‘from-the-barrio’ perspective without slipping into essentialism? Are ‘emic’ interpretations necessarily the most valid? Does this imply that only local communities should have access to investigate the archaeological sites in their territory or that they are the only persons who should give authorization to archaeological work? What happens in the case of multicultural communities, where several indigenous and *Criollo* groups may be present, each with different agendas? What will be the role of the professional archaeologist, and how will we guarantee high standards of excavation, recordation, analysis, conservation, and diffusion? Should all collections be returned to the communities where they were found? Who is the ‘rightful’ owner or curator of remains that may or may not derive from ancestral communities? And in the case of very ancient remains, can any of these criteria be applied?

As political factors increasingly take a forefront in archaeological research, we must reflect on the long-term consequences of the decolonization of scientific endeavors. By rejecting the ‘universal’ languages and venues of publication, how do we guarantee the widespread access to results? At this point, which languages are *not* related to colonial enterprise, including the Spanish language? A focus on the local or ground-up tends to anchor research to local communities with local concerns. Who will ask the larger questions and how can we place local work into a broader context? How do we deal with the inevitable contradictions that will arise from the different versions of the past without declaring a postmodern ‘anything goes’



attitude? Successful partnering with various constituents will challenge archaeologists to explore the different agendas of the various participants in order to comply both with high standards of research and with local interests. These and many other questions arise when we face the challenges of inclusion and empowerment. The ground is shifting, and as a profession we would be wise to prepare for situations that will require negotiation and compromise in the construction of new versions of colonial entanglement.

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# Chapter 5

## Thoughts on Early Spanish Colonialism Through Two American Case Studies: Basque Fisheries (Canada) and Sancti Spiritus Settlement (Argentina)

Agustín Azkarate, Sergio Escribano-Ruiz, Iban Sánchez-Pinto and Verónica Benedet

### List of Abbreviations Used in Documentary References

AGS, GA	Archivo General de Simancas, Guerra Antigua
ARChV, JMV (O)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Juzgado Mayor de Vizcaya, Pleitos olvidados
ARChV, PPCC, Alonso Rodríguez (F/D)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Alonso Rodríguez (Fenecidos/Depositados)
ARChV, PPCC, Fernando Alonso (F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Fernando Alonso (Fenecidos)

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ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F/O)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Lapuerta (Fenecidos/Olvidados)
ARChV, PPCC, Masas (O/F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Masas (Olvidados/Fenecidos)
ARChV, PPCC, Moreno (F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Moreno (Fenecidos)
ARChV, PPCC, Quevedo (D/F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Quevedo (Depositados/Fenecidos)
ARChV, PPCC, Taboada (F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Taboada (Fenecidos)
ARChV, PPCC, Varela (O/F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Varela (Olvidados/Fenecidos)
ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona y Balboa (O/F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Zarandona y Balboa (Olvidados/Fenecidos)
ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona y Walls (O/F)	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid, Pleitos Civiles, Escribanía Zarandona y Walls (Olvidados/Fenecidos)

## 5.1 Introduction

Both the case of the fisheries that Basques set up on the east coast of Canada in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the brief colonizing attempt led by Sebastian Cabot in the Parana Basin, when he explored the area and founded Sancti Spiritus, represent the complexity and diversity of the early colonization of America. But they do also share some important and paradigmatic features. In the following lines we introduce both cases and, as a final exercise, we make a brief reflection on how these poles-apart examples depict the early colonization of the Americas.

## 5.2 Basque Fisheries in Canada<sup>1</sup>

### 5.2.1 *Historical Context*

Early modern European explorers of Eastern Canada were looking for a channel that should connect, in their opinion, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Although it was never found, the vast marine resources discovered instead made possible the development of a successful fishing industry based on whale hunting and cod fishing. Therefore, the current Canadian territories became a new scenario for the principal European communities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which Basques, in particular, played a leading role. While the development of a pre-industrial fishery in far-off waters can be traced to the Middle Ages and the 'Ireland fishery' (Barkham 2000, p. 45), exploitation of the massive fish stocks in Newfoundland triggered a process of economic expansion that turned the Basque merchant community into one of Europe's leading exporters of fishery products in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Basque traders supplied European markets with products derived from whaling, mainly oil used for lighting, shipbuilding, and in textile mills, but also baleen for the corset industry beginning in the seventeenth century (Fig. 5.1). Besides, Basques marketed large quantities of cod, primarily destined for Basque and Iberian markets. Not least, Basque maritime merchants developed an extensive commercial network that was embedded in a dynamic intercontinental economy, with various mechanisms of participation and capital investment.

### 5.2.2 *Basque Fisheries Overseas: Trying to Define an Unclear Interpretative Model*

The first archaeological study on the Basque fisheries in Canada was conducted in the 1980s, when various whaling stations in Labrador were identified and excavated. Since then, a number of researchers have focused their attention on the first Basque transcontinental enterprise from intermittent and unilateral angles and aims (for a comprehensive summary, see Loewen and Delmas 2012). A commonly accepted historical model took shape, yet it fails to portray all the intricacies of the proto-colonial process.

While some authors maintain that we still know very little (Azkarate et al. 1992, p. 253) and that many questions remain to be answered (Fitzhugh et al. 2011, pp. 101–102), most authors consider it a closed chapter of history, constantly alluded to without giving critical thought to the inferences that can be drawn from the written and material sources. Thus, the model we expose and analyze deeply

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<sup>1</sup> This section reproduces partially, but in English, a paper published in 2014 (Azkarate and Escribano-Ruiz 2014), and was translated by Traductores-Intérpretes GDS, S.L. Section 3 also reproduces partially another paper (Azkarate et al. 2014) translated by the same company.



**Fig. 5.1** Remains of a Basque fishery in Chateau Bay (Labrador). *Upper image:* General view of the excavation works, with an accumulation of baleen cuttings marked with a circle. *Bottom, left:* tryworks for transforming blubber into oil. *Bottom, right:* details of a barrel to stock up and transport whale oil. (Photographed by Agustín Azkarate)

in this section is perpetuated. Even when new findings raise questions and require clarifications, they go unheeded by historiography, whose interest in the fisheries has faded in the recent decades (Escribano-Ruiz 2014).

Taking this historiographical context into account, we would like to give critical thought on the interpretative model used to explain the nature and development of the Basque fishing industry in Canada. To do this, we follow the periods established by this model and question some of them using key bibliographic sources and a selection of documents from the Peninsular Basque archives.

### **The Genesis of the Basque Transatlantic Fisheries**

The origin of the Basques on the Canadian coasts is a much discussed issue. Following the influential stance taken by Estienne Cleirac in the seventeenth century (Azkarate et al. 1992, p. 22), the more romantic notions defend that the Basques had

known about the Canadian coasts since the Middle Ages, although they had kept it secret (Kurlansky 1998, pp. 19–25, 1999, p. 56). This would predate John Cabot's official discovery for the English Crown in 1497 (Kurlansky 1999, pp. 57–60). However, the lack of material and documentary evidence to support this notion is pointed out by current historiography, which focuses on deconstructing the relationship between the history and the legend of Basque sailors in Canada (Azkarate et al. 1992, pp. 21–24; Azpiazu 2008, pp. 9–15; Ciriquiain-Gaiztarro 2010[1961], pp. 135–158).

Nonetheless, the current consensus places the Basque enterprise in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, long after Canada was first occupied by the Norse. Today it is generally recognized that the sailors from the Kingdom of Castile, including the Peninsular Basques, landed in Newfoundland after the British, the Portuguese, and the French (Huxley-Barkham 1987, p. 28; Ménard 2006, pp. 228–229). Selma Huxley-Barkham (1987) suggests that 1517 is the oldest date for which there is documentary evidence of the Basque presence in Newfoundland<sup>2</sup>. That date, however, refers to a cod fishing expedition made by Continental Basques, who were subjects of the French Crown. A few years later, in 1530, the first whaling expedition was documented but that, too, sailed from the Basque lands in the French Kingdom (Huxley-Barkham 1987, p. 28, 30). Other authors, such as Fernández de Navarrete, consider the decade of the 1520s as the first reference in written sources regarding the presence of the Peninsular Basques in Newfoundland, but refer to indirect evidence (Barkham 2000, p. 55). Nonetheless, Selma Huxley-Barkham confirms their presence in 1531 and 1532 (1987, p. 28, 36). On the latter dates, two vessels sailed from Lekeitio to the other side of the Atlantic on a mixed whaling and cod fishing expedition (Barkham 2000, p. 55).

So far, this proposal appears to be free from disagreement in the official historiography of Basque Fisheries. However, there are far more divergent propositions that account for the intricacies of the process under study. Most of them study specific aspects of the Basque enterprise, with special emphasis on cod fishing. Some authors suggest the period 1530–1540 as the interval for the arrival of Peninsular Basque fishers and 1541 as the period on which the first vessels reached Newfoundland (Rose 2007, p. 189). Other authors maintain that the first cod fishing in Newfoundland occurred in 1532 (Ménard 2006, p. 228), regardless of the aforementioned contributions. Most archaeological research, however, avoid entering into the issue directly and establish the time frame in the 1530s (Tuck and Grenier 1989; Azkarate et al. 1992; Fitzhugh et al. 2011; Loewen and Delmas 2011, 2012) according to the first written references available.

The documentary sample we compiled to test the model does not contribute to this discussion, as the first mention was made decades later than the aforementioned dates. In fact, the first allusion to Newfoundland in the documents we studied is in 1553<sup>3</sup>, and it involves a lawsuit on the inheritance of a seaman from Orio (Gipuzkoa province) who died in Newfoundland. The same archive provides other dates for the

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<sup>2</sup> The works of Selma Huxley-Barkham (1974, 1979, 1980, 1984 and 1987) point many subsequent propositions that are discussed in this section.

<sup>3</sup> ARChV, PPCC, Quevedo (F), C 915/8 L 206.

first period, 1554 and 1556<sup>4</sup>; and we found also another two documents, in two family archives<sup>5</sup>, describing more expeditions. At least, we can establish a quantitative and qualitative approximation for the 1550s. The archives provided evidence of five voyages for that period, at the rate of one voyage per year. Most of the references in the archives were of whaling expeditions, whereas only one alluded to cod fishing.

We can also use our study documents to reflect on the end of this period. The document dated 1557, highlighting Crown intervention in the fishing business, is particularly relevant to settle this issue. Thus, it implements an exemption to customs tax, making it mandatory to produce a breakdown of the volume of commercial transactions. This document is also related to another document issued by the Crown the same year, which grants the citizens of Gipuzkoa, Biscay, and four villages of Cantabria permission to go to Newfoundland (Laburu 2006, p. 161). This lends credence to the idea of the Crown's tentative intervention in the 1550s.

In our opinion, official regulation of fishing activities is more useful for establishing the end of one period and the beginning of another than other factors such as the wars between France and Spain that ended in 1559. This last date is used in the model under revision as a decisive factor but, in fact, the aforementioned archives provide evidence that production and trade continued despite the 1551–1559 wars and were not affected by them.

### The Height of Overseas Basque Fisheries

The above line of argument leads to the obvious conclusion that the overseas fishing industry that emerged in the preceding period was consolidated during this second period. Once fishing was regulated and protected by the institutions, the Spanish Basque fisheries experienced a period of prosperity. According to the documentary records, the period was much longer than formerly believed. The 1550s were equally prosperous from a quantitative viewpoint, even if it is the period traditionally related to the decline in the Basque fisheries' fortunes.

The documents we studied showed that at least 16 vessels were in Newfoundland in 1561–1581<sup>6</sup>. The frequency was 0.8 voyages per year, an incidence similar to other periods; therefore, the truism that this brief period was a golden age bears

<sup>4</sup> 1554 (ARChV, PPCC, Taboada (F), C 1464/1, L 256). 1556 (ARChV, PPCC, Varela (F), C 120/3, L 23).

<sup>5</sup> 1557 (Archivo de la Casa de Heriz, legajo 2, nº 44). 1558 (Archivo de la Casa de Zavala, Contrato 214.6).

<sup>6</sup> 1561 (ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F), C 778/3 -L 161). 1566 (ARChV, PPCC, Alonso Rodríguez (F), C 721/1). 1567 (ARChV, PPCC, Moreno (F), C 289/3—L 54). 1568 (ARChV, PPCC, Taboada (F), C 1023/2—L 185). 1570 (ARChV, PPCC, Varela (O), C 935/4—L 303). 1571 (ARChV, PPCC, Fernando Alonso (F), C 847/3—L 169). 1572 (ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona and Walls (F), C 160/1—L 32; ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona and Walls (O), C 895/4—L 196). 1573 (ARChV, PPCC, Masas (O), C 1257/1—L 210; ARChV, PPCC, Quevedo (D), 57/8—L 10). 1574 (ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F), C 1341/1—L 271). 1576 (ARChV, PPCC, Masas (F), C 953/6; ARChV, PPCC, Alonso Rodríguez (F), C 312/1). 1577 (ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F), C 383/3—L 77). 1580 (ARChV, PPCC, Moreno (F), C 69/6, L 14). 1581 (AGS, GA, XI, 177, L 341/79).



revision (Priotti 2005, p. 66). Like in the preceding period, most of the Basque crews in Canada were hunting whales, as attested by 81 % of the documentary references. Although some documents point to the mixed nature of the enterprise, the total count of the references shows that whale oil production predominated over cod commerce.

### Decline of the Canadian Basque Fisheries?

As pointed out in the preceding section, the period associated with a decline in the fishing industry should be reviewed. Despite the downturn or recession that actually did take place during this period, it did not occur until the 1620s. In 1585–1618, our study documents indicate 21 voyages to Newfoundland<sup>7</sup>, with a frequency of 0.6 voyages per year. Therefore, the fishing industry had gradually diminished, although the frequency remained similar to both the golden age and the period of purported decline.

These dates and frequencies contradict the trend observed by other authors. A surprisingly high number of voyages were made during the Anglo-Spanish War (1585–1604). Equally puzzling is the absence of voyages in 1607–1613, the longest period of documentary silence since the activity was first regulated in the 1550s. It coincides with the end of the Anglo-Spanish War, when the Basque ports in Spain received a massive influx of foreign vessels (Barkham 2000, p. 71), along with the prohibition to board them.

In 1613–1618, despite isolated prohibitions to sail to Newfoundland, the overseas industry seemed to pick up again, but the illusion was short-lived. The silence in the documents is even more pronounced in 1618–1678, with the latter being the last time any mention was made. This enables us to establish a time frame for the actual decline of the Peninsular Basque fishing industry in Canada. The process is reinforced by qualitative information on the last voyages, in which an account of the damages inflicted by the English (1614 and 1617) and the French (1617 and 1618) put an end to the Peninsular Basque voyages to Canada.

This period was also notable given the growing importance of the cod industry as opposed to whale hunting. Whaling totals 63 % of the references in the documents, but the number was proportionately less frequent than for the preceding periods, in which 75 and 81 %, respectively were recorded.

<sup>7</sup> 1585 (ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona and Walls (O), C 543/13—L 118). 1586 (Archivo histórico Municipal de Mutriku, Fondos Judiciales y notariales, Civiles C/252–08). 1588 (AGS, GA, XI, 183, L49/109). 1589 (AGS, GA, XI, 183, L49/444–445). 1591 (ARChV, PPCC, Quevedo (F), C 4382/2—L 144). 1592 (Archivo Municipal de Azpeitia, Órganos de Gobierno, Expedientes Judiciales 682–21). 1593 (ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona and Balboa (O), C 1725/2). 1594 (ARChV, PPCC, Moreno (F), C 367/1, L 69). 1596 (ARChV, JMV (O), C 4338, L 3). 1600 (ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F), C 520/1—L 106). 1602 (ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F), C 520/2). 1604 (1600 (ARChV, PPCC, Alonso Rodríguez (D), C 226/1—L 65; ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (F), C 471/3—L 95). 1606 (AGS, GA, XI, 177, L662). 1607 (ARChV, PPCC, Lapuerta (O), C 575/8—L 223; ARChV, JMV, C 2823). 1613 (ARChV, PPCC, Zarandona and Walls (F), C 1979/3—L 390). 1614 (AGS, GA, XI, 177, L 794). 1617 (ARChV, PPCC, Varela (O), C 1520/2—L 496; ARChV, PPCC, Alonso Rodríguez (F), C 1855/2—L 344). 1618 (AGS, GA, XI, 177, L 833).

## Other Potential Propositions

The periodization that we have just criticized, majority in the literature, was put forward by S. Huxley-Barkham (1987) and M. Barkham (2000), mainly based on political reasons and making great emphasis on the impact of the European wars. Other periodizations have been suggested, some of which are based on the socio-economic context (e.g., Loewen and Delmas 2011, 2012). However, perhaps the Basque fishing model should be redefined after conducting further and more exhaustive documentary and archaeological research. Our contribution, based on the preliminary study of a systematic selection of documents, is intended as a fresh appeal to undertake the task. We propose a new date for the golden age of the Basque fishing industry, starting in the decade around 1550, when it was officially recognized and recorded in the documents often to become a normal occurrence that drew the attention of the Crown of Castile.

We have also sought to cast doubt on the duration of the golden age which, in our view, should be extended to the second decade of the seventeenth century; and we have demanded to bring the importance of the European fishing disputes into perspective. In fact, perhaps more importance should be given to Colonialism as a process than to the punctual wars fought from time to time, since the former marked the context where the beginning of the fishing industry and its eventual decline occurred. The romantic idea of Basques' freedom of action fades in this study. On the contrary, their movements derived clearly and directly from the colonization undertaken by the European powers.

Finally, we suggest a three-stage time frame: 1530s–1550s (the beginning), 1550s–1620s (the consolidation), and 1620s–1713s (the end). This sequence contrasts, as explained above, with that of other authors who suggested that the main periods of Basque presence in Canada were 1500–1545, 1560–1585, 1585–1650 (Barkham 2000) or 1530–1580, 1580–1630, 1630–1713 (Loewen and Delmas 2011, 2012).

### 5.2.3 *Basques, English, and French: the Projection of the Colonial Race in Canada*

We shall now study the relationship between the subjects of the different European kingdoms, including those Basques who may have been viewed as French by the Peninsular Basques<sup>8</sup>. A war in the sixteenth century between the kingdoms

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<sup>8</sup> A global Basque cultural interpretation should not be attempted at a moment in history when the Basques were vassals of two Crowns that were intent on conquering the world. We defend the need to deconstruct the Basque community that crossed the Atlantic. First, the Basques in each area need to be studied separately, and then a unified narrative can be constructed in which their social, economic, and cultural relationships can be assessed in a common context. This epistemic aim requires an assessment of the sources available in each case and how they have been used. These are aspects that have not received sufficient attention to date (Escribano-Ruiz 2014). Therefore, in our brief study based on Peninsular Basque documents, we consider that those who are referred to as French in these documents are French.

of Spain and France is a very clear example of this. Judging by the documents, the Basques played a very active role during the wars in the Canadian territory. During the conflict in 1551–1559 (Barkham 2000, p. 57), we know about the distribution of blubber taken from a French vessel in 1554<sup>9</sup>, and the magnitude of conflicts that date back to 1551 is described in 1555 (Ménard 2006, pp. 248–249). Another document dated 1558 points in the same direction. It describes an agreement between an inhabitant of Pasaia and one in Hondarribia who chartered a galleon to fight against the French, particularly those who were fishing in the eastern coast of Canada, many of whom were Continental Basques.

When the war between France and Spain ended, further examples of the colonial struggle between the two Crowns' subjects can be found. For instance, in 1561 a man from Errenteria incurred debt to arm a ship to fight against the French in exchange for whale blubber or cod fish. From the seventeenth century onwards, however, the Basques were hit the hardest by the colonial wars, as shown from the theft of ships by French reported in 1618 and 1678. They also suffered attacks by the English in 1588, 1613, and 1614.

The examples given provide a brief summary of the development of the Basque fisheries in Canada and highlight the importance of the colonial context, as opposed to specific wars, in the development of Basque fisheries overseas. This idea is backed by other examples, as well. For instance, in 1572, supposedly a period of peace, a Basque ship was dedicated to piracy against the English and French, whereas in 1617 the latter attacked the Peninsular Basque seamen. It was no longer a question of specific wars between Crowns. The colonial process was spreading throughout the world, with Canada standing in the wings but completely immersed in the colonization process in America. First, English and French tried to diminish the supremacy of the Peninsular Basques in Canada and later tried to completely expel them (Grafe 2003, p. 6). This process suited perfectly the strategy developed by the English and French against the Spanish in the colonization of America.

#### ***5.2.4 The Kingdom of Castile and the Fishing Industry: the Long Shadow of Spanish Colonialism***

The Spanish Crown's policy with regards to the fisheries was a conditioning factor, but it was also contingent and, up to a point, even naïve. From the beginning, the fishing industry was not considered a sufficiently profitable business to develop a policy of permanent settlement, as the Crown's aspirations were focused on precious metals. Diego Ribero's opinion of Spain's second official expedition is illustrative, for he considers the fisheries to be of little worth and esteem (Ménard 2006, p. 229; Laburu 2006, p. 150). Of course, this attitude was contrary to the policy followed by the English in America, who owed much of their development to cod fishing, a circumstance that is generally underestimated (Grafe 2003, pp. 19–22).

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<sup>9</sup> This document has already been mentioned. The following mentions allude also to documents already cited, and we will not refer to them again as they are easy to find by year.

Since fishing as such roused little interest for the Crown, the volume of business would bring about a change of attitude, coupled with the importance of the maritime fleet deployed in the fisheries, which ensured dominance in an area in dispute between the main European powers. These circumstances made it possible for the Basque fishers to develop their business in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence strategically, by blocking the French and English intention to create settlements (Loewen and Delmas 2011, p. 31, 2012, p. 223).

Exemplifying this policy, the Spanish Crown sent emissaries to watch the Portuguese, who were planning to settle in Newfoundland in 1568, although the Spanish Crown claimed it was a Spanish possession (Ménard 2006, pp. 252–253). It is not by chance that the Peninsular Basque seamen acted as though it were. Another example of the strategic value of the fisheries in the colonial wars can be found in the policy of commercializing blubber. Aware of the Basque whaler's monopoly, the Spanish Crown prohibited the sale of blubber to the English in 1570, as an act of repression in the looming war (Azkarate et al. 1992, p. 203).

The Basque dominant situation began to be questioned immediately after the Spanish Crown lost the war against the English in the late sixteenth century. However, this does not mean that the frequency of the expeditions diminished immediately. Rather, they had to face a far more difficult situation, adding to the human and material damage wrought by constant wars and pirate attacks, the growing interest in the Newfoundland fisheries shown by the French and English Crowns. Above all, these adversities were not countered by a Spanish colonial policy.

To the contrary, the Spanish Crown repeated its prohibitions to fishing in Newfoundland in 1591 and 1617, while at the same time turning its attention definitively southwards. In the early seventeenth century, Spain continued to keep a close watch on the English and French attempts to settle in Newfoundland, but this did not stem from a direct interest in Canada. Indeed, in the opinion of Felipe II, Canada 'has no gold or silver; and the land is cold and unhealthy' (Ménard 2006, p. 307). Nonetheless, Spain feared that the settlement could be used as a vantage point for attacking other Spanish possessions, especially those currently in the USA. The setting up of permanent English and French fisheries in Newfoundland and their following transition from a seasonal industry-trade model to a stable whaling-agricultural model and settlement (Staniforth 2008, p. 125), coupled with the obvious disinterest of Spain's monarchy, progressively divested the Peninsular Basques of their dominance in cod fishing and whaling.

The difficulties found in maintaining the overseas fisheries and the protectionism promoted by the Crown meant that the needs of Basque merchants and leaders were not met. Therefore, they ignored the prohibitions as much as they could, allowing products from Newfoundland to be unloaded and merchants from abroad to establish themselves in the Basque ports (Grafe 2003, 2005). Besides, they continued marketing cod and whale oil in Spain. This relative independence from Castile, and the collaboration with foreign powers, was a key factor for the recovery of the Peninsular Basque trade in the seventeenth century (Grafe 2005, p. 135).

### 5.2.5 *Multicultural Interaction, Basques, Europeans and the First Nations*

Our documentary sample does not provide information on interactions between the Basques and the original communities in what is now known as Canada. Such information is not generally easy to find in the literature, yet it can be reconstructed from archaeological records, the narratives of contemporary witnesses, and philological evidence. There are also other problems, such as the difficulty in differentiating the Basques from the Iberian Peninsula and the Basques from the Continent, or the idealization of the role of the Basques in their interaction with the local communities.

There is a consensus on the existence of a positive interaction between the Basques and some of the Algonquin communities, as the Innu or Montagnais (Bakker 2002, p. 106; Martijn et al. 2003, p. 198), and with other societies, like the Micmacs (Bakker 2002, p. 106; Moussette 2009, p. 34). Basque-Algonquin pidgin (Bakker 1991) is the most decisive evidence, and, in general terms, the interaction between the Basques and the local cultures is considered to have been harmonious. It has even been suggested that there may have been a network of collaboration between the local communities and Basque mariners.

There does seem to be evidence that the Innu collaborated with the Basque, at least in the words of Lope de Isasti, a Basque historian who, in the early seventeenth century, gave an account of the good relationship and cooperation between the Basques and the Montagnais (Ciriquiain-Gaiztarro 2010, p. 166). The interaction can be confirmed by the words of Richard Whitbourne, who wrote in 1622 that the ‘people of Biscay’ had told him that the Montagnais were people one could deal with and ready to cooperate in the production of blubber in exchange for little more than some bread (Martijn et al. 2003, p. 199). Moreover, some authors point out that such cooperation also occurred in the fur trade (Bakker 2002, p. 106; Martijn et al. 2003, p. 114, 201).

Similarly, although apparently more intensely, the Micmacs also cooperated with the Basques in the fur trade and fishing tasks. In addition to the language, the Micmacs adopted the Basque’s shallop (*txalupa* in Basque), a type of boat that became a symbol of their identity and prestige (Loewen *in press*). Some authors attribute to the Micmacs the role of intermediaries between the Basque mariners and several native communities (Moussette 2009), due to artifacts recovered from archaeological digs in regions far away from the areas where the Basques carried out their business (objects made of metal and glass, in particular).

With regards to the Inuit or Eskimo, most authors sustain that there was no positive interaction (Martijn et al. 2003, p. 199; Ciriquiain-Gaiztarro 2010, pp. 64–166), especially since they were rivals for marine resources. Other authors, however, encouraged by new archaeological findings, defend the existence of a cooperative relationship, at least at a very advanced stage of the Basque enterprise in Canada (Fitzhugh 2009). Contrary to the evidence amassed to date, albeit scarce and specific, they pose the possibility that Eskimo or Inuit families may have worked as servants, assistants (Fitzhugh 2006, p. 61), or even guardians of the Basque fisheries in winter (Fitzhugh et al. 2011, p. 122).

## 5.3 Sancti Spiritus Settlement, Argentina

### 5.3.1 *Historical Background*

It is well known that following the discovery of America by Colón and litigation between the Spanish and Portuguese monarchs, the Treaty of Tordesillas was signed on June 7, 1494. The Treaty demarcated the spheres of influence of the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns and set the scenario for the ruthless conquest and colonization of the newly discovered continent. It is in this context of expansion that we should understand the European voyages to America in the first half of the sixteenth century. Moreover, the Spaniards were obsessed with opening a new trade route directly to the Moluccas that would not conflict with Portuguese interests.

Sebastian Cabot arrived in Spain in 1512, after spending some time in the service of the British Crown. By the end of the year, he had been appointed as the captain for the *Casa de Contratación* (House of Trade). It was not until the early 1518 that he was promoted to the position of Pilot-Major to the Council of the Indies, replacing the deceased Juan Díaz de Solís, an examiner of the pilots who were to navigate to the Indies. This latter position, combined with his former ties with the *Casa de Contratación*, gave him the first-hand knowledge of the voyages promoted by the Spanish Crown.

After discovery of Brazil by Cabral in 1500 and a series of other scarcely recorded voyages (Medina 1908a; Laguarda Trias 1964, 1973; Spate 2006 [1979], p. 77; Maura 2007, pp. 2–6) that were also a source of highly relevant information, we presume that Cabot was aware of the expeditions undertaken along the south coast of America early in the century under the aegis of the Portuguese Crown (Laguarda Trias 1988). Naturally, he had prior news of a whole series of expeditions<sup>10</sup> or learned about them during his voyages.

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<sup>10</sup> These expeditions include the voyage of Vicente Yáñez Pinzón (1499–1500) in which he reached the Amazon River (Marañón) a few months before Pedro Alvarez Cabral (Medina 1897: XCIII); the voyage of Diego de Lepe (1500) and Vélez de Mendoza, who repeated Pinzon's voyage (Medina 1897); the third voyage (1501–1502) of Vespucci, who explored the coast of Brazil until he reached Todosos Santos Bay (Laguarda Trias 1988, pp. 58–59; Medina 1897: XCIII); Vespucci's fourth voyage (1503–1504) when he navigated 260 leagues beyond Todosos Santos Bay (Medina 1897: XCVI); the expedition of Juan de Lisboa and Esteban Froes, or Flores (1511–1512) who, financed by Cristobal de Haro, inspected the Río de la Plata estuary and returned with information on the White King which had been transmitted to them in Port Los Patos (Laguarda Trias 1973; 1988, pp. 58–59; Cerezo Martínez 1994, p. 151); the voyage of Juan Diaz de Solís (1515–1516) (Medina 1897); the return of Esteban Gomez in 1521, a member of Magallanes' crew who deserted after the expedition they made to Río de la Plata, where they stayed for a month (Medina 1908b); the voyage of Magallanes and Elcano (1519–1522) (Pigafetta 1536); Cristovão Jacques expedition to the Río de la Plata estuary in 1521 (Laguarda Trias 1964; Medina 1908a, p. 125); the expedition of García Jofre de Loáisía in 1525, who set sail from La Coruña, heading for the Moluccas through the Strait of Magellan (Medina 1889); and finally, the voyage of Diego García de Mogueer (1526–1529).



## 5.4 Cabot's Voyage

On April 3, 1526, Sebastian Cabot sailed from Sanlúcar with the mission to discover the Indies and to help the commander Loaísa, who was already sailing to the Moluccas (AGI, PATRONATO, 44, R.1). In other words, they were to consolidate the route opened by Magallanes' expedition. What caused Sebastian Cabot to break his word and betray the trust placed on him? To answer this question, we will make a brief study of the principal details of his expedition.

Cabot set out from Sanlúcar with a squadron of three ships, a caravel and 220 men, headed for the island of La Palma, where they stopped for 17 days to stock provisions. The first quarrels between Cabot and the captains of some of the other ships arose during this stopover since Cabot refused to tell them the course they should follow (Medina 1908a, Vol. II). After many protests, the captain gave orders to head for Cabo Verde. From there, he ordered a course that he subsequently changed to one quarter from South West towards South (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, pp. 224–256). The change implied setting course for the coast of Brazil which, considering the time of the year, meant that they would face very severe weather conditions. Finally, on June 3, they arrived at the coast of Brazil, where they anchored for 2 days on Cape St. Agustin (Maura 2007, p. 22).

At this point, it should be mentioned that previous explorers as Solís (Medina 1897), Magallanes (Pigafetta 1536) and Loaísa (Medina 1889) had made technical stopovers on the same Cape, and therefore Sebastian Cabot only had to follow the same course as his predecessors.

Resuming their voyage, they arrived at Pernambuco (Medina 1908a, Vol. I, p. 121; Maura 2007, p. 22), where the king of Portugal had a factory (Cuesta 1984, p. 361; Maura 2007, p. 22) occupied by Portuguese settlers. There are two aspects of the expedition's sojourn in the settlement that are worth highlighting:

1. The Portuguese told Cabot about the enormous amount of wealth to be found in the upper reaches of Río de Solís. They also spoke of two seamen from Solís squadron living in Los Patos Bay who could confirm their information. The Portuguese got the information during the above-mentioned voyage they made to Los Patos area with Cristovão Jacques (Medina 1908a, Vol. I, p. 125; Laguarda Triás 1964). Cabot relayed the news and tried to persuade his captains to change course and set sail in the search of wealth. The captains hesitated, but in the end most of them agreed (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 219). It is surprising that the letter that Luis Ramírez, one of the members of Cabot's expedition, wrote to his father (Maura 2007) makes no mention of this event.
2. The second aspect we find interesting is the reference to the expedition's stopover in Pernambuco. To date, there has been no evidence to confirm that the expedition settled on land. It can be inferred from the literature that the members of the expedition lived on their ships during that time. When the Portuguese who had settled on the shore met with the captain, they generally went out to the ship, although the meetings also took place on shore on some occasions (Maura 2007,

p. 23). Therefore, no buildings were erected on the site. It should not be forgotten that the territories belonged to the Portuguese monarch, due to the Treaty of Tordesillas.

Once the arguments regarding the new intentions of Cabot were solved, they set sail on September 29, heading towards the Port Los Patos in search of the mariners who had survived the Solís expedition. Cabot also managed to persuade Jorge Gómez, one of the Portuguese seamen who had sailed with Cristovão Jacques, to join his adventure (Laguarda Trías 1988, p. 67). The letter of Ramírez, in contrast, narrates the landing in the vicinity of Port Los Patos as though it was an ordinary event in the course of the voyage (Maura 2007, p. 24), and makes no mention of the intention to seek the survivors of Solís shipwrecks.

The expedition arrived in the vicinity of Santa Catalina Island on October 19, 1526, with the need to build a new rowboat. The island was in the vicinity of the Port Los Patos, where the survivors of the Solís expedition lived. The seamen told the captain tales about the wealth that could be found by sailing up the Paraná River (Maura 2007, pp. 25–26) and assured him that if he decided to head in that direction, they would go with him. Cabot called his captains again to share the information the survivors had given him, with the firm idea of setting a new course for the voyage. After a tense meeting, most of them agreed to change course in search of Río de la Plata (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 477). In his letter, Ramírez offers another version, pointing out that only after listening to the survivors he decided to change his course (Maura 2007, p. 26). Thus, there are two versions of the same event.

On October 28, they decided to move in the direction of Port Los Patos to build the rowboat, but the flagship ran aground and sank, losing part of the provisions it carried. Therefore, they settled for a time on Santa Catalina Island (Maura 2007, p. 28), built houses to live in because there was no room for the entire crew on the ships, also built a hospital where the crew's illness could be controlled, and a galliot to transport the members of the expedition. When referring to the ephemeral settlement, on one occasion it was called a *real*. According to Ramírez it was after these three events, and no earlier, when Cabot decided to recover the losses by setting out for Río de la Plata (Maura 2007, p. 27).

Finally, the expedition sailed from the port in Santa Catalina on February 15, 1527, with all the Christians who lived on the island on board. Once the initial mission was totally neglected, and the new idea was almost entirely accepted, they set sail in search of those mountains full of silver, in the land of the White King, as the survivors of Solís expedition mentioned.

## 5.5 Cabot Disobeys

Let us take a look now at the milestones of his new adventure after he changed course and set out to Río de la Plata, presently called Río de Solís.

### 5.5.1 *Sancti Lazaro*

When Sebastian Cabot started to sail up the Río de la Plata estuary, he arrived at a port on the mainland that he called Sancti Lazaro, where he met Francisco del Puerto, the only surviving member of the expedition that had landed with Solís. Del Puerto confirmed the stories they had heard of richness in the lands of the *White King* (Medina 1908a, Vol. I, p. 158; Maura 2007, p. 29). The expedition stayed at the port for 1 month before Cabot departed again with a galliot and a caravel, leaving most of the supplies he carried and 10–12 people in Sancti Lazaro (Maura 2007, p. 29). There is no further record of the ephemeral settlement.

We have found very little news of the settlement. In his letter, Ramírez (Maura 2007, p. 30), referring to one of his outings in search of food, mentioned that they had to travel 12 leagues from the *real*. This is the second time Ramírez employs the term *real* in his letter. Unfortunately, he makes no mention of the type of buildings that were erected during the month they spent waiting for the ship that would transport them to the future Sancti Spiritus settlement. Presumably, Harrise points out (1896, p. 212), a warehouse was built to keep the provisions and baggage.

### 5.5.2 *San Salvador*

When Cabot sailed from Sancti Lazaro, he sent Antón de Grajeda and 30 men to search for a safe port in which to anchor the remaining ships. The place they found would be called the port of San Salvador, on the coast of present-day Uruguay. Recent findings show that vestiges of a fort built by Cabot's expedition in 1527 were found where the San Salvador River flows into the Uruguay River, as well as the city Zaratina de San Salvador, built by Juan Ortiz de Zárate in 1574. For the moment, the vestiges are a series of sunken ships, one of which dates from the sixteenth century, and abundant material: European and native pottery, and also metal artifacts (Presidencia República Oriental del Uruguay 2012).

This is not the place to discuss whether San Salvador or Sancti Spiritus was the first European settlement in Río de la Plata. It is to be hoped that current archaeological prospecting conducted by our Uruguayan colleagues in the area will bear fruit and confirm the existence of the settlement. Nonetheless, it is worth pointing out that the name given in the documents to the settlement in San Salvador is *Puerto de las naos*, according to the letters written by Luis Ramírez (Maura 2007) and Diego García de Moguer (Varnhagen 1852; Medina 1908c), and the documents on the Cabot proceeding after the seaman returned to Spain (Medina 1908a, Vol. II). In this respect, it is significant that when Diego García de Moguer arrived at the Paraná delta and met Antón de Grajeda in San Salvador, they are always referred to as parleying on the ship; there is no mention that they had a settlement on land.

There is no mention of a settlement on land in the readily available documentary information, and much less of the construction of a *real*. The definitions of the terms *real* and *Puerto* given by Amarilla Fretes (1942) and Lafuente Machain (1936) are

worthy of note. The two authors mention that in the sixteenth century, the term *puerto* referred to a mooring place on a shore and that *real* and *fuerte* referred specifically to a fortified camp. It is puzzling that the chroniclers of the period and the members of the expeditions either fail to mention the existence of a construction in San Salvador or call it the *real de San Salvador*, instead of a port. A chronicle by Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas (1730, p. 260) provides one of the earliest references to a fort in San Salvador.

Finally, after leaving the settlements in San Lazaro and San Salvador, Cabot arrived at the place where the Carcarañá River joins the Coronda River. At this strategic vantage point, where he had a commanding view of the surrounding territory and waterways, he built the settlement and fort of Sancti Spiritus.

## 5.6 The Founding of Sancti Spiritus

So far, the written sources had provided very little information on the settlement built by Cabot's expedition in this new location. We did not know exactly where it was or its characteristics. The closest documentary evidence was the chronicle by Fernández de Oviedo (1852, Book XXIII. Chap. III, p. 173), who mentioned that the expedition arrived at a river called Carcarañá. From the documents on the Cabot proceeding when he returned to Spain we can infer that a fort was erected along with 20 houses, and that this settlement was called Sancti Spiritus (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 105). References to the fort also provide a tentative idea of what its appearance may have been. We know that it was walled and had a straw and wooden roof (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 158); and that it had two bastions, one of which was located close to the Carcarañá River (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 129). In addition, we know that one of the bastions had a gate leading into the fort, since it is mentioned when describing the fort being attacked by Indians (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 129).

One of the towers was used as a larder where wineskins and other things were stored. The marine sandglass was kept somewhere in the fort, under constant guard. Sebastian Cabot's chamber, where Mass was held on Sundays, Mondays, and Fridays, was also inside the walled enclosure. When it was not being used as a chapel, the room was kept under key. Although the statements do not indicate the dimensions of the bastions, there is strong evidence that they must have been higher than the earthen wall. Gregorio Caro remarks that when a gust of wind knocked one of the bastions down, the captain told him to make them lower and cover them with fresh straw (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 265). As seen below, the settlers' documents concealed highly relevant information that recent archaeological research has revealed.

The archaeological works started in 2006 when a multidisciplinary Argentinean team designed a project to find the exact location of the settlement. To that end, they systematically surveyed an area of 17.5 km<sup>2</sup>, identifying several settlements, including one place called *Eucalyptus* where they recorded large amounts of European and native materials. After the preliminary survey, they probed the area until

they identified the precise location of the Sancti Spiritus settlement (Cocco et al. 2011).

A new phase started in 2010, when researchers from the University of the Basque Country joined the project (Azkarate et al. 2012). Conventional field survey methods were discarded (grid strategy and arbitrary excavation process) and newer, more effective methods and operations were integrated (open area excavation in stratigraphical units). The results soon followed, giving a ‘Copernican turn’ to former information on the site.

### 5.6.1 *Settlement by the Natives*

Perhaps the most unexpected and revealing outcome was the discovery that Sebastian Cabot did not find Sancti Spiritus in a natural and unpopulated area, but on an Indian settlement that had control over a highly strategic communication hub less than a century earlier: the place where the Coronda and Carcarañá rivers joined. It was particularly important, as rivers were the main travel and trade routes for the natives and the European newcomers.

It is also worth noting that the new European settlement partially destroyed the native settlement. The stratigraphical record makes this clear by revealing how the Spanish fort’s walls and fosse overlay and cut the postholes of the Indian settlement’s huts (Fig. 5.2). The partial destruction of the native settlement must have been imposed by the newcomers (Azkarate et al. 2012).

The documents written by the settlers should be viewed with caution in this regard. It is hard to believe the testimony given in the proceeding against Sebastian Cabot, for instance, when it asserts that, once the town was built, they lived in peace with the natives and that the fort was built after that period, and not before (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 105). It suffices to read the letter by Luis Ramírez again to ascertain that the time must have been shorter, since less than 4 months elapsed between the day Cabot sailed from Sancti Lazaro and Ramírez arrived in Sancti Spiritus, and by then a fort had been built to guard the goods they carried (Medina 1908a, Vol. II, p. 106). Moreover, the events that would soon take place when the fort was attacked and destroyed seem to contradict the idealized description of this first encounter between the Europeans and the native population. The fact seems to have gone unnoticed, however, in written accounts.

In the 150 m<sup>2</sup> excavated in the 2010–2012 campaigns, more than 350 postholes were documented. Most of them belonged to the huts of the settlement that predated Cabot’s arrival, which, mysteriously enough, the literature does not mention. Radio-carbon dating carried out on samples of charcoal from the fill in one of the postholes gives a time range between 1405 and 1455 AD<sup>11</sup>. Next to the unequivocal postholes, there are larger pits, circular in shape and with a concave section, which do not

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<sup>11</sup> UE-372, (Ua 43569). Date BP 476±30. Calibrated with OxCal v3.10 software, it provides the following time ranges. At 95.4% or 2  $\delta$ : 1405–1455 AD. At 68.2% or 1  $\delta$ : 1415–1445 AD.





**Fig. 5.2** *Upper image:* Layout of the excavation of Sancti Spiritus, with structures of the Spanish fort signaled. *Bottom image:* detail of the structures cut by construction work on the Spanish fort. (Photographed by Gustavo Frittegotto)



correspond to the placement of wooden elements. This fact leads to the assumption that they must have served a different purpose. In our opinion, these structures may be related to the storage or discarding of waste, in view of the fill present in the pits.

### ***5.6.2 The Spanish Settlement***

The archaeological excavations confirmed the existence of the military structure that Sebastian Cabot ordered to be built. To date, the documented remains of the fort in the archaeological record are limited to the fosse dug as a foundation for the earth wall, the wall as such (around 120 cm or four and a half feet wide), and a defensive fosse. A set of European materials (pottery, glass, beads, dice made of bone, and metal elements), mixed with native pottery, has been recovered from the layers excavated.

Archaeometrical analyses conducted on a fragment of the earth wall have allowed its components to be separated, revealing the presence of certain minerals, including anhydrite in the form of calcium sulfite, in sufficient quantities to infer that they were used intentionally in building the earth wall<sup>12</sup>.

There is neither record, to date, of the 20 houses alluded to in the documents, which were scattered around the fort, nor of the houses of the Indians who lived close by. Likewise, there is no evidence of Cabot's residence, the storage room, or the location of the marine sandglass. The surface area excavated is still very small, and therefore future archaeological campaigns are expected to provide further information.

### ***5.6.3 The Settlement After the Cabot Episode***

Apparently, the fort was not completely destroyed in 1529 by the local communities, for one of the bastions remained standing. It became a point of reference for the mariners who sailed up the river over the following decades and for descriptions of the routes that traversed the territory. The attempts to repopulate the area in the sixteenth century are evidence of this event, although they were only temporary settlements of little consequence.

In his first voyage to Río de la Plata, in 1536, Juan de Ayolas visited the place where the fort Sancti Spiritus had stood. On June 15, 1536, he built a new fort at the mouth of the Carcarañá, necessarily in the vicinity of Cabot's settlement, which he called Corpus Christi (Kleinpenning 2011, p. 67). Shortly after it was erected, in the second half of September, Pedro de Mendoza ordered it to be dismantled and moved to a new site that he called Nuestra Señora de la Buena Esperanza (Kleinpenning

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<sup>12</sup> The rammed-earth was analyzed by Romualdo Seva Román (University of Alicante).

2011, p. 67). The new settlement was short-lived, for it was abandoned in 1539 (Astiz and Tomé 1987, p. 239).

Soon after, Francisco de Mendoza—a member of Diego de Rojas expedition, who sailed from Cuzco in 1543—in his voyage along the coast of Tucumán in 1545, reached Río de la Plata and mentioned the existence of Sancti Spiritus (Ledesma Medina 1978; Berberían 1987, pp. 131–134). The fort was abandoned by then, but he recorded the presence of innumerable Indians who spoke Spanish, having learned it from the Spaniards who had been there with Ayolas (Berberían 1987, p. 29).

Other members of different expeditions, particularly in the second half of the sixteenth century, indicate the need for reoccupying the settlement due to its strategic position overlooking the Carcarañá and Coronda rivers. In a letter to the king in 1566, lawyer Matienzo writes that Cabot's fort is at a halfway point on the river between Asunción and Buenos Aires, and therefore he deemed that it was essential to build a new settlement there (Berberían 1987, p. 205, 209).

## 5.7 Conclusion

The case studies presented here are considered by the official historiography peripheral examples of colonialism, minor colonial episodes, either because they did not occur at the orders of the Spanish Crown or because their outcome was not positive for the Crown's colonial policies. Contrary to this triumphalist view, we defend that the two episodes are vital to understand the colonial process in America. Both Canadian and Argentinean cases are paradigmatic examples of the genesis of colonialism, which was marked by a series of fortuitous events and individual determination. The exploration of a direct route to the Moluccas Islands or the search of a passage that would connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans are similar objectives that make our case studies comparable. They are actions that move the Spanish colonialism from being a casual circumstance to becoming a causal enterprise.

Moreover, the obvious differences between the two case studies endow the colonization of America with a diversity that is commensurate with the unpredictable nature of the origin and development of colonialism. And not only the responses of the colonizers were different, but also the attitudes of the several indigenous groups they encountered. The interpretation of the two case studies together, therefore, emphasizes that Spanish early colonialism cannot be defined as a uniform process that went in a single, inexorable direction. Quite the opposite; a comparison of the two cases redound upon the same idea: The initial colonization of America was a complex, nonlinear, and contingent historical process arising from multiple historical contexts. It was the final result of a holistic sum of very diverse historical processes and social structures, both European and Native American.

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**Part II**  
**Archaeologies of Early Modern Spanish**  
**Colonialism in Africa**



# Chapter 6

## The Archaeology of the Early Castilian Colonialism in Atlantic Africa. The Canary Islands and Western Barbary (1478–1526)

Jorge Onrubia Pintado and María del Cristo González Marrero

### 6.1 Introduction

The exploration, conquest and resettlement of the Canary Islands and the incursions into the coast of Africa by the Crown of Castile between the mid-fourteenth century and the fifteenth century, in the context of the growing rival attempts between Castile and Portugal to dominate the mid-Atlantic, are usually considered as the first step of modern European colonialism, which reached the dimension of a genuine, early globalization in the sixteenth century (Gruzinski 2004, 2012).

However, this early colonial expansion is no more than the first stage in the material and symbolic construction of the Eurocentric pattern of power and exploitation that has dominated the world over the last 500 years, closely tied to the consecration of modern rationality and emotionality and the development of capitalism, as the important and extensive group of Latin American social scientists attached to the ‘Modernity/Coloniality’ programme have highlighted (Quijano 2000; Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel 2007; Mignolo 2012). For this very reason, and to avoid the complacent fiction which imagines that this pattern of knowledge and action has disappeared with the decolonization movements of the second half of the twentieth century, perhaps it would be more appropriate to refer to this colonialism using the term that the group coined for it: ‘coloniality’.

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Without passing judgement on their historiography, the boom in post-colonial studies and decolonial perspectives<sup>1</sup> has undeniably made an invaluable contribution to the critical analysis of colonialism, or coloniality. As a result, the understanding of this historic process has gained in both richness and complexity, thus—fortunately—overcoming the reductionist schematicism established between colonizers and the colonized, between dominators and the dominated, which is of little use from the point of view of interpretation. The process is now approached from a multi-scalar perspective, which unites the global with the local contexts and the specific historic trajectories. It is approached considering social space and relational and heterarchical power (Kontopoulos 1993) in order to uncover the real nature of colonial ties and identities, and of the corresponding strategies of assimilation and resistance. Needless to say, in this context, culture—and material culture—cannot be considered as a simple result of economy, or just another element of the superstructure of the Marxist Bible. Both culture and economy are social fields that are interlinked in what, in the words of Pierre Bourdieu (1980), could be called the ‘economy of social practises’.

Archaeology, historically associated with coloniality as a tool for constructing ‘exoticism’ and generating practical knowledge to dominate and justify the modern-colonial European project, has not escaped the impact of post-colonialism and the ‘decolonial turn’ (Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002; Gosden 2004, 2012; Van Dommelen 2006; Stein 2005; Lyons and Rizvi 2010; Voss and Casella 2012). This breath of fresh air has brought about a proliferation of historiographical analyses of the discourses and representations of an archaeology tailor-made to serve colonial ‘science’. More importantly, we have also witnessed a renovation in our approach to material culture in the processes of colonial transition. Drawing from Anglo-Saxon anthropology focused on material culture studies (Appadurai 1986; Miller 1987; Thomas 1991) and from post-processual archaeology closely bound to tropes like agency and materiality, issues related to the material expressions of hybridization and *mestizaje*, or to the intertwining between material culture and strategies to manifest, hide or deny subaltern identities (such as age, gender or status), have been incorporated into archaeology’s research agenda.

This has brought the archaeology of colonialism, like other fields of archaeology, back in contact with Marcel Mauss’ old project (2012) of using a technical event, that is considered both an efficient action and at the same time a total social fact, to overcome the dichotomy between objects and social contexts; of recognizing once and for all, that people and things are permanent and therefore can only be studied and represented within a thickly woven, constantly changing web of material and symbolic relations. But it is not just a question of ‘reading’ a set of objects

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<sup>1</sup> As we know, post-colonial studies, which triumphed in Australian, British and American universities in the 1990s, tap a variety of sources, including the famous founding text by Said (2003), published in 1978, consecrated to criticising Orientalism. Post-colonial literature is now abundant. Interested readers can find a useful and concise synthesis in the article Young (2003) and a stimulating, sharp critical vision in Bayart (2010). The ‘de-colonial turn’, on the other hand, is associated with the aforementioned Latin American group ‘Modernity/Coloniality’ whose origins, close to post-colonial positions, date back to the 1990s too (Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel 2007).

converted into signs in a text to be deciphered, or ‘getting them to talk’. Contrary to the widespread interpretative techniques of British and North American material culture studies, which generally take their inspiration from the ‘French theory’ (Buchli 2002; Coupaye and Douny 2009; Hicks and Beaudry 2010), the real challenge is to return to the matter and hence to the objects and the body language, as proclaimed by Tim Ingold (2007) and in the light of recent research by Pierre Lemonnier (2012), to see how and why, in this case, the marks left by both sides allow us to think the ‘unthinkable’ and speak the ‘unspeakable’ about colonialism in a way that can only be expressed by them, or at the very least, is better expressed by them.

It is true that the sum of temporalities, or ‘social lives’ (Appadurai 1986) that converge in archaeological material, means that the challenge has a better chance of success with a memorialistic and heritage approach. In other words, archaeology must be aware that the remains and traces it studies only exist and make real sense in the present. Needless to say, things become even more complex when archaeologists add—with unequal fortune—the production of historical knowledge to this unavoidable memorial contemporaneous dimension. This is despite the fact that there has been no shortage of other sources of information during the 500 years of European colonialism—a subject usually studied by a subdiscipline that goes by the tautologous name of ‘historical archaeology’—such as written and oral sources, even if these do have their own raft of specific problems of analysis, understanding and interpretation (Montón Subías and Abejz 2015).

## **6.2 The Colonization of the Sovereign Canary Islands and the Castilian Incursion into the Western Barbary Coast: A Process with Many Scenarios**

The colonial expansion along the Atlantic seaboard of Africa led by the Iberian kingdoms and Mediterranean republics goes back to the last 60 years of the fourteenth century (Fernández Armesto 1982; Baucells Mesa 2013). During this time, which coincides with the ‘invention’ of a new territory and a different humankind, built on a gradual emergence of an ‘exterior’ otherness that differed from that of the Muslims or the Jews (the interior ‘others’), the seas of the Canary Islands were frequented by people from different places, such as Majorca, Catalonia and Genoa, as well as Castilians and Portuguese. The intentions and reasons for their presence varied: raids, to spread the word of God—including establishing the Obispado de la Fortuna (Bishopric of Fortune) in 1352 by Majorcan missionaries—, and trading and fishing expeditions.

These expeditions became more regular towards the end of the fourteenth century. Castile then took the initiative with several incursions into the Canary Islands and the neighbouring African coast, like the famous raid of 1393 (Rumeu de Armas 1986, pp. 111–121). Shortly afterwards, these expeditions culminated in the conquest of Lanzarote (1402), Fuerteventura (1402–1405) and El Hierro (1405),

and in the subjugation of the native Canary Island-Amazigh<sup>2</sup> people by an eclectic expeditionary force that set sail from Seville under the protection of Henry III of Castile, led by French conquerors Jean de Béthencourt and Gadifer de la Salle. This expedition started what is known as the feudal conquest of the islands, which was to continue later with the annexation of La Gomera (1420) by noble families from Andalusia who claimed the islands as their fiefdom. These islands were used as a bridgehead for several attempted incursions into Gran Canaria, La Palma, Tenerife and the Saharan coast, which alternated trading missions and pirate raids with an active ‘spiritual conquest’ led by Franciscan missionaries from their monastery in Fuerteventura. These events occurred against the backdrop of permanent conflict with Portugal which repeatedly tried to take over the Islands, either de facto or with Papal support, as a base for their colonial expansion to the coasts of the Gulf of Guinea. The intention of the Portuguese, as we know, was to cut the trans-Sahara caravan traffic and force the gold and slave trading routes down to the coast to benefit them. The fortified trading posts or towers built by the Portuguese all along the coast of West Africa from 1445, when the fort on the Island of Arguín was probably built (Monod 1983), were to play an essential role in this strategy (DeCorse 2010; Newitt 2010).

The situation changed substantially in 1477. The Crown of Castile bought the rights over the islands that still remained unconquered from the lords of the islands. This started a genuine state-driven project of colonization, under the auspices of the Catholic Monarchs (Aznar Vallejo 2009, 2011), and it is the archaeology of this project that is the aim of this chapter.

The Castilian colonialist project was designed with a double objective. On the one hand, the aim was to conquer and resettle Gran Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife (Fig. 6.1), thus commencing what is known as the sovereign phase of annexation of the Islands. The second objective was to use the islands as a bridgehead to gain a foothold on the neighbouring Saharan coast to tap into the caravan trade, facilitate slaving raids and protect and preserve the activities of the Castilian fishing fleet in the area, which came mainly from Andalusia (Rumeu de Armas 1996). This project was helped by the diplomatic agreements struck between Castile and Portugal with the end of the Castilian-Portuguese war of 1475–1480. The treaties of Alcaçovas

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<sup>2</sup> The ties of the people that the Europeans found on their arrival in the Islands with the North African Amazighs (Berbers) are now beyond any doubt. That is why we refer to them in general terms this way. Although we do have some well-documented ethnic terms, such as *Guanche* (the name the inhabitants of the island of Tenerife used for themselves), in this paper, we will more often use the term ‘native’ or one of its synonyms: ‘natural’, ‘indigenous’, ‘aborigine’. This is despite the fact that the genesis of all of them is closely related with a whole series of dichotomies constructed by modern-colonial thought that repeatedly hides their inevitable relational (dialogical) nature. The adjective ‘pre-Hispanic’, widespread and undoubtedly referring to an irrefutable socio-cultural and linguistic reality—such as the complete hispanization of the Islands and their oldest inhabitants—is not exempt from Euro-centric connotations that we should be wary of using nowadays. Although their use is certainly preferable to ‘pre-historic’, ‘proto-historic’ or even ‘pre-European’, a term that adds to its ethno-centricity an anachronistic reduction to an alleged ‘pan-European’ identity of a motley social reality comprising highly heterogeneous ‘national’ identities (from Andalusia, Portugal, Castile, Genoa, Flanders, etc.).



Fig. 6.1 Canary Islands and Western Barbary Coast

(1480) and Tordesillas (1494) consecrated Castilian sovereignty over the Canary Islands and Western Barbary, the coast between Cape Ghir and Cape Boujdour (Fig. 6.1).

The conquest of Gran Canaria (1478–1483), La Palma (1492–1493) and Tenerife (1494–1496) was a long- and oft-interrupted process (Rumeu de Armas 1975; Viña Brito 1997; Lobo Cabrera 2012). Basically this was due to lack of resources and men and the fact that the Crown considered the annexation as secondary, from an economic and strategic point of view, in comparison with the war of Granada or the incipient colonization of the Americas. This same attitude also acted as an impediment to resolving the problems posed by the fact that they were islands, by the geo-ecological features of the territories that the Crown intended to conquer and by their distance from mainland bases. The supply problem was only partially off-set by the potential for support and victualing afforded by the feudal islands, and the rebellious islands too as they were conquered. Then there were the problems concerning the demographics, the degree of articulation and cohesion and the resilience of the indigenous peoples of the islands, above all of the natives of Gran Canaria and the *Guanches* (of Tenerife), whose final resistance to the form of ‘rebel bands’ continued well beyond the official date of the conquest of the respective islands.

Despite their undisputed differences, these operations do have a series of common characteristics. It was a ‘frontier war’ and the immediate reference would undoubtedly be the conflict between Christians and Nasrid Muslims (González and Larraz 2001; Aznar Vallejo 2011). As with the mainland frontier campaigns, the

strategy was based on establishing fortified camps or *reales*, often laid out around a tower, where the expeditionary troops would settle. Where necessary, these *reales* were supplemented with a series of forward out-posts consisting of towers. From what we have learned from texts, and to a lesser extent from archaeology, the location and construction techniques used in most of these fortifications followed a common pattern (González and Larraz 2001). As we shall see, this pattern was to be repeated in the African fortifications that, in fact, provide us with valuable archaeological indications for reconstructing the Canary Islands prototypes.

With respect to their location, most of these towers and fortifications were built close to the coastline that offered ideal conditions for mooring and provided easy access to the interior. They only started building these fortresses inland late in the conquest, when control over the territory was assured, as in the case of El Real de Los Realejos (Tenerife) for example, or the Gáldar Fortress (Gran Canaria), which we will refer to later. In our opinion, the choice of coastal sites for these fortifications was not a defensive strategy to protect themselves from the natives, or even from attacks from abroad—highly unlikely since peace treaties with Portugal had been signed. The location was a strategy that took into account the fact that their garrisons could be supplied and reinforced by friendly fleets during their battles with the aborigines.

With respect to their building characteristics, it appears that both the towers that presided over the *reales* and out-posts were always built to a square floor plan. When they were made of stone, more masonry than ashlar was used in building them, although the use of rammed earth walls is well documented. The towers were sometimes surrounded by a walled compound, as were the fortified camps, and we know that this was sometimes made of rammed earth too.

A war of attrition was fought from the *reales* and towers, consisting of continuous raids and skirmishes that very rarely took the form of real ‘battles’ (Aruacas, Ajódar or Acentejo). Most of this intimidation and punishment was aimed at strangling the indigenous population economically by capturing or destroying their food resources and reserves, through assaults on granaries, burning cereal crops and cutting down fig trees. In the case of Tenerife and perhaps in the case of Gran Canaria (Onrubia Pintado 2003; Rodríguez-Martín and Hernández 2005), the mortality caused by epidemics of diseases brought to the Islands by the conquerors helped wearing the indigenous population down.

Military action was always accompanied by negotiations and agreements with the natives in order to divide them. The aim was to take advantage of rivalries and tribal fission and thus break down their cohesion and facilitate their submission. This led to the appearance of what were known as ‘bands of war’ and ‘bands of peace’ on the three islands. The former were the main enemy to be defeated, to be sold into slavery and deported en masse. The latter, who were not always protected from the arbitrary nature and cruelty of the conquering generals, would go as far as collaborating with the Castilians, serving as auxiliary troops in the expeditionary forces. The best example of this collaboration is undoubtedly the natives of Gran Canaria who, probably due to the indigenous beliefs of accumulating ‘noble’ honour (Onrubia Pintado 2003), helped the Castilians to conquer their own island,



crush the native up-rising in La Gomera in 1488, conquer La Palma and Tenerife and also collaborate in the attempts to penetrate Western Barbary. As we can see from their demand of 1514 to be exempted from taking part in these African raids, in which they declare themselves to be like the Castilians in everything and ask to be treated like ‘old Christians’, it is interesting to note how the feeling of identity of these native Gran Canaria Islanders was to be forged in contact with, and by opposition to their relations with the indigenous peoples of these other islands. This is particularly the case as we know that, thanks to their role as interpreters, they must have been fully aware of the close family ties between their own language and the Amazigh languages and dialects of both the other islands and the Barbary Coast.

Despite the obvious demographic catastrophe wrought on the indigenous peoples by the conquest of their islands and whatever their degree of deculturation may have been, the natives of Gran Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife would continue to account for a large proportion of the population of the islands (Onrubia Pintado 2003; Betancor Quintana 2003; Baucells Mesa 2013). The reasons for this include the measures dictated by the Crown for the gradual return of the deportees and the enfranchisement of the Canary Islands captives who, by the way, failed to arouse the interest of mainland slave markets in the end, with the arrival of large numbers of black and Muslim slaves. There has been much discussion about the number and composition of these native contingents. In the well-known letter that Inquisitor Bartolomé López de Tribaldos sent to Seville in the early sixteenth century accompanied by a census of natives, he talks about a population of 1200 families for all the islands (Millares Torres 1977, p. 192, note 73), without counting the many cases of intermarriage between indigenous people and settlers. As for the composition, this information and other written sources suggest that there were more women, which has been confirmed by the recent molecular biology studies conducted among both the current populations of the island and archaeological samples (Fregel et al. 2009).

A varying number of settlers would also join the native population on the different islands, some from the conquering armies, initially benefitting from the distribution of land and water, but more were settlers of different origins (Andalusia, Portugal, Castile, Biscay, Genoa, etc.) arriving from mainland ports. On top of these, there were the Moorish and black slaves that started to arrive in the Canary Islands, the latter to meet the demand for servile labour in the incipient sugar industry. This resulted in a motley, mixed-race population mosaic whose cultural hybridization would occur at the same time as they progressively forged their ‘island’ character, with its corresponding material and symbolic practises.

The new population settled in new towns and places that were often constructed from the fortified camps of the conquerors. The former indigenous hamlets also continued to act as residential settlements with the arrival of new settlers, especially in the case of Gran Canaria. The population gradually spread to new settlements as more land was broken for farming and sugar mills were built. The settlement process and the emergence of new places and villages can be easily tracked with the timeline of the churches and chapels that were built and gradually spread from the main parishes. This occurred as the island systems of government were implemented alongside the institutions and the people representing the Crown (the

*gobernación* and the *Gobernadores* in Gran Canaria; the *adelantamiento* and the *Adelantados* in La Palma and Tenerife), the island councils (*concejos*) and their oligarchical governments (*regimientos*), with rules and regulations (*ordenanzas*) that were taken directly from the system that governed the municipal districts of Andalusia at the time (Aznar Vallejo 2009).

Settlers were attracted to the islands and persuaded to stay by a distribution system of the land or ‘allotments’ (*repartimientos*), and sometimes water rights too, appropriated by the Crown in accordance with the right of conquest, and by granting fiscal privileges (Aznar Vallejo 2009, 2011). The settlers had to meet a series of obligations, such as taking possession and residing on their lands with their families within a given period of time, otherwise they could lose their rights to exploit it. Needless to say, the distributions of land made by the representatives of the Crown in the islands were not exempt from excesses and corruption and they ended up concentrating the ownership of farmland in the hands of the island elites, creating a local land-owning mesocracy.

The land distributed provided the support for subsistence farming (mainly cereals, grape vines and vegetables) but was not enough to ensure that the islands were self-sufficient in food. This forced the island *concejos* to ban any export of grain, which they often had to import from the feudal islands, the mainland, and even from the Barbary Coast. These properties also saw a proliferation of cane plantations driven by the flourishing sugar industry that would become the real economic powerhouse of the three islands. Although the owners of the mills always included a large number of the conquering elite right from the outset, such as *Gobernador* Pedro de Vera and *Adelantado* Alonso Fernández de Lugo, the business was soon monopolized by Genoese companies, and the owners of these companies thus reaped the return on the investment they had made in financing the conquest of the islands.

Apart from growing crops, farming also included animal husbandry, an activity originally closely associated with the indigenous population and the captive Moors, and forestry, which was soon governed by highly protectionist regulations laid down by the Crown and the island governments because of the intense early deforestation triggered by the demand for wood for sugar mills. The economy also included activities such as fishing, harvesting Orchilla (*Roccella canariensis*) and gathering shells, the latter for the African trade, and a whole series of trading, handicraft and service activities (Aznar Vallejo 2009).

Even though this colonial pattern was to impregnate the economic, social and cultural life of the islands for many years, together with the symbolic universe of its inhabitants, we can safely say that a new stage started in 1526 with the creation of the Canary Islands appellate court (*Audiencia de Canarias*). Although the decisive steps for bringing the three islands under the Crown such as establishing the system of customs duties known as *almojarifazgo* and the reform of ecclesiastical benefits came slightly later, we can consider the colonial transition phase of Gran Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife to be drawing to a close at this time. The foundations of political power had been laid and they were established at an island level, thanks to the fact that the local elites of large land owners, owners of water rights and sugar mills had managed to consolidate their power. The repopulation of the

islands by European settlers was progressing in parallel with the full integration of the last groups of indigenous peoples, whether of their own accord or by force; and, in short, the economic model of capitalism based on the incipient sugar industry was working flat out, although it would take a while yet to reach its high-point, in the mid-sixteenth century.

The year 1526 can also be considered significant as the moment that marks the end of the Crown of Castile's attempts to colonize Western Barbary as the *terra firma* of the Archipelago. The sovereign tower of Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña was finally abandoned, having been built in 1496, immediately after the final conquest of Tenerife by an expeditionary force that sailed directly from Gran Canaria (Rumeu de Armas 1996; Aznar et al. 2000). From here, the settlers in the islands were to organize a policy of trade and diplomacy to tap into the caravan traffic heading for Wadi Nun and the major trans-Saharan 'port' of Tagawst. The most significant milestones of this policy were the flourishing trade that grew up around Tagawst, the signing of the Bu-Tata Pact (1499) and the construction of the fortress of San Miguel de Asaca (1500).

Despite the fact that archaeology undeniably has much to offer in the study of colonialism, as materials have shown that they can often express things we do not find in words or texts, the process has scarcely been studied from this point of view, either in the Canary Islands or on the neighbouring African coast. There is, therefore, very little work or information available. This is the reason why only two case studies will be presented in this chapter: one concerning the Canary Islands and the other, North Africa, based on the results of several on-going archaeological research projects.

### 6.3 Archaeology of the Conquest and Resettlement of Gran Canaria: The Territory of Gáldar

When Castilian troops disembarked in the bay of Las Isletas to fortify their position in the Real de Las Palmas in the summer of 1478, discarding the original idea of rebuilding the feudal tower of Gando, Gran Canaria and its native inhabitants already had almost a century-and-a-half of experience of colonial conflicts and contacts (Figs. 6.2 and 6.3). At that time, the island probably had some 15,000 inhabitants scattered among some 30 main settlements and villages (Onrubia Pintado 2003).

Gáldar (or Agáldar), along with Telde, played a central role in what was apparently a dual system of island power. Although Telde had been the largest indigenous town, at least since the mid-fourteenth century, when the Majorcans established the episcopal seat of the Bishopric of La Fortuna there, Gáldar was more important from a political and mythical-ritualistic point of view. This can be seen by the fact that Gáldar was the venue for the meetings of the island councils, which the elders of the different clans of the native 'nobility' had to attend. The reason for its importance probably lies in its legitimacy and its genealogical precedent. According to indigenous traditions, Gáldar was the cradle of the clan that ruled the whole island at the time. Both the *Guanartemes* ('kings' or 'lords') and the *Fayzagues* ('bishops')

Fig 6.2 Gran Canaria

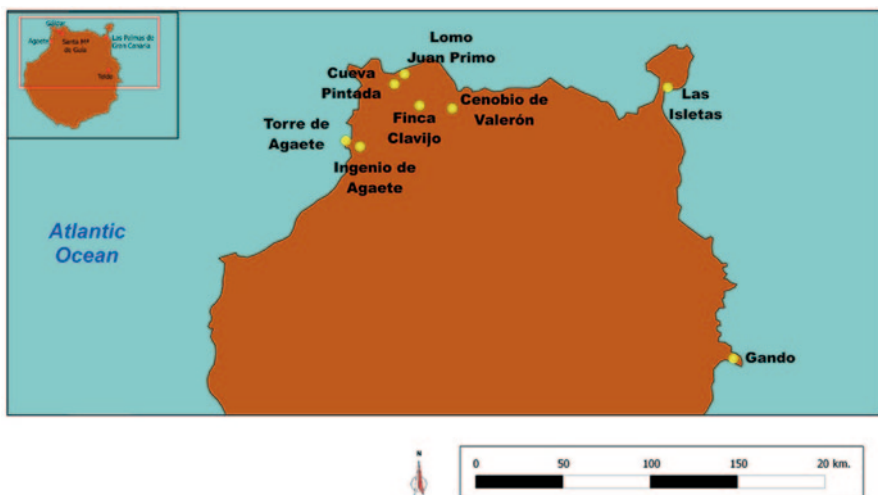
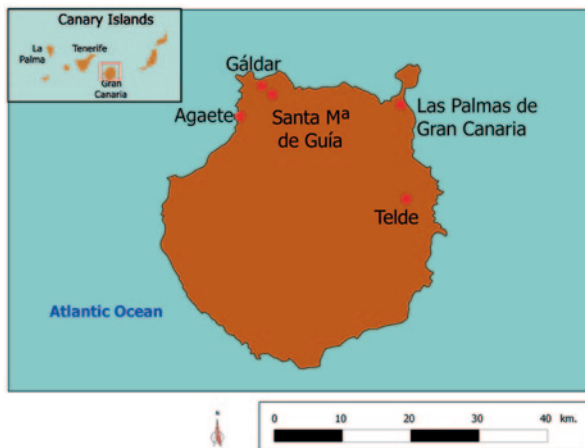


Fig. 6.3 Archaeological sites in the north of Gran Canaria

or ‘priests’) were recruited from this clan, which also occupied Telde due to a tribal fission that formed part of the myths of their own origin. The holders of these posts sat at the head of a highly stratified society, in an apparent separation of political and religious power, undoubtedly distorted by the filter of colonial eyes.

Family networks and clan loyalties made Gáldar the centre of a tribal territory in conflict with Telde. Written sources refer to these tribal areas as ‘parties’ or ‘bands’. Contrary to some later texts and a significant number of authors (i.e. Santana and Pérez 1991, pp. 491–492; Santana Santana 1992, p. 284), it is not clear that there was a genuine border, or frontier between the two territories. In our opinion, these territories were fluid and changing, rather than fixed. This boundary could be ex-

plained initially as the transposition of a Euclidian and cadastral organization of space, associated with the idea of a feudal manor, to the indigenous geography and the first division of the island into parishes and districts to be shared out in accordance with the typical colonial concept of land.

What does appear to be certain is that the tribal territory of Gáldar encompassed a large part of the districts that make up what are now the municipalities of Guía, Gáldar and Agaete. There were several indigenous sites and villages in this area. The most important of these, and the better known, is undoubtedly Gáldar, thanks to the archaeological work that has been done there and the information available from texts.

The site and boundaries of the indigenous Gáldar coincide roughly with the current city centre and the area that is now known as Cuevas del Patronato (Onrubia Pintado 2003; Figs. 6.3 and 6.4). It was dominated by a public area, located in what is now Plaza de Santiago, which was the site of a series of ceremonial buildings:

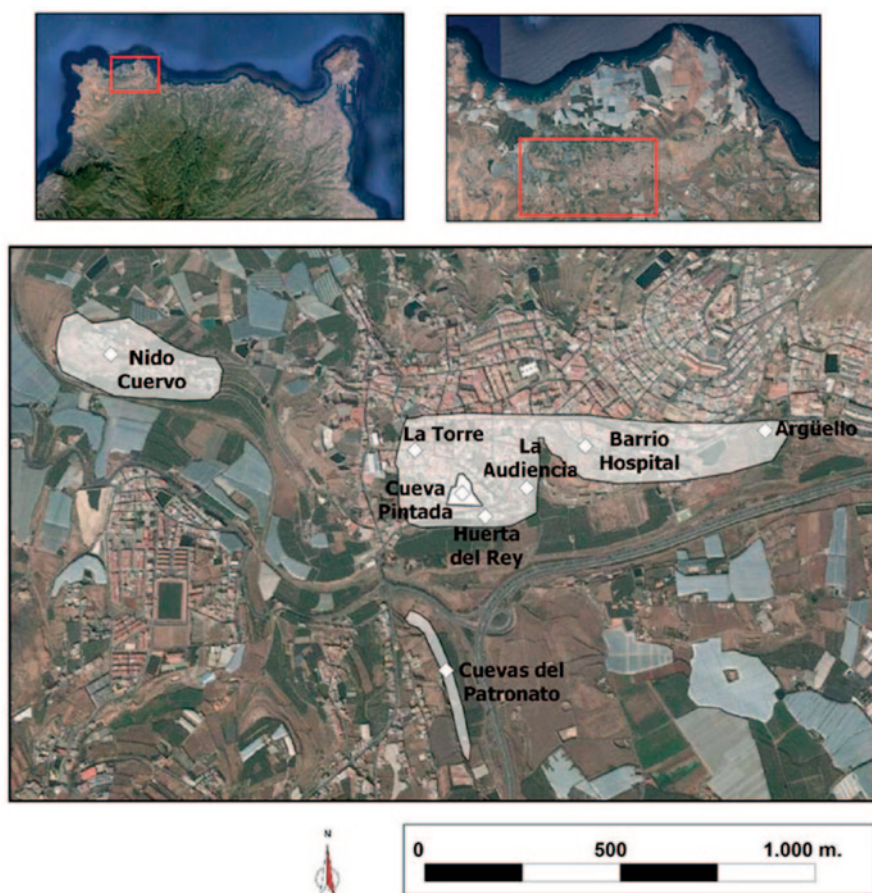


Fig. 6.4 The indigenous neighbourhood of Gáldar



the great enclosed square, the venue for ritual challenges and games and probably the meeting place for the island councils; a house that served as a place of reclusion for the *Maguadas* ('Virgin Priestesses'); a building referred to as *roma* in the texts, whose function is unknown, but could be associated with storing grain and other supplies; and finally, a small room that probably acted as a sanctuary. Descending towards the bed of the gully, there were clusters of dwelling, now fossilized by the current urban layout, which may have been built and organized on a broad basis of kinship and residence. Their structure seems to be in line with what is known in the anthropological literature as *sociétés à maisons* or house societies (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995; Godelier 2013, pp. 197–225). Although it appears probable, we do not know if this kind of kinship organization was also applied to the cemeteries, whose locations and structures are practically unknown to us. The location of the recently documented tombs on El Lomo de Juan Primo does not allow us to tie them to any of these districts with any certainty, and furthermore, the timeline only runs up until the early years of the fifteenth century (Mendoza et al. 2008; Santana Cabrera 2009–2010). The data on burials in artificial caves on the slopes of the gully do not cast any more light on the matter either, nor do the old beliefs that talk of a great burial ground of mounds and pits laid out at the foot of the Amagro Mountain (Onrubia Pintado 2003).

Thanks to the archaeological excavations carried out at La Cueva Pintada<sup>3</sup> since 1987, we have a good idea of how one of these kinship compounds was organized. The houses were built in stone in the shape of a cross on the inside and elliptical outside (Fig. 6.5). They were built around a set of caves, one of the houses was painted with murals (Fig. 6.6) that gave the site its name (Onrubia Pintado 2003, *in press*). The cave complex, probably a multipurpose space combining residential ('noble' housing), funereal (pantheon of the tribal ancestors) and economic uses (granary), was the clan's real 'house of origins'. The chronicles that describe the 'palace' of the *Guanartemes* of Gáldar probably referred to a 'house' of this kind, rather than anything else.

The different places and hamlets scattered over the territory are part of an agricultural landscape characterized by the irrigated plots that were laid out on the alluvial terraces of the gullies, including the large fertile terraces of La Vega de Gáldar. The deep agricultural and planning transformations that these districts have undergone, especially since the nineteenth century, prevent us from discovering practically anything about how land was divided here, and even less about the dry-land farming areas, where some introduced crops, such as grape vines, undoubtedly already proliferated by this time, thanks to contact with the Europeans (Onrubia Pintado 2003).

Consequently, we have to be satisfied with the information we can glean from written sources about their irrigation systems of canals and pools to store and channel the water, as there is no archaeological proof whatsoever. Ignorance also means we cannot shed much light on the fortified granaries, singular buildings closely

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<sup>3</sup> These archaeological fieldworks have taken place as part of an ambitious research, conservation and heritage project which culminated in 2006 with the opening of the Museum and Archaeological Park Cueva Pintada (Onrubia et al. 2007).



**Fig. 6.5** Archaeological site La Cueva Pintada (Gran Canaria)



**Fig. 6.6** Painted camera of La Cueva Pintada



related to these farming landscapes. Without a reliable timeline, we are not in a position at this point to decide which of the different indigenous granaries to be found in the territory were in use at this time, including the imposing Valerón Granary (Onrubia Pintado 1995) recently dated between the end of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

There is very little we can say about the networks of trails and tracks that connected the different settlements and provided access to farms and grazing areas. We can do little more than sense that they existed, or imagine their layout by extrapolat-

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://dataciones.grancanariapatrimonio.com/yacimiento.php?code=23017&s=>.

ing more recent data. Fortunately, we do have more information on something of capital importance in the construction and perception of the indigenous landscapes of Gáldar: the sacred nature for the natives of the Amagro Mountain that rises majestically in the very centre of the 'tribal' territory.

During the Castilian conquest of the island, we know that an army corps under Bishop Juan de Frías, who shared responsibility for the military operations with Juan Rejón, entered Gáldar between August and September 1479. From what we know, the expeditionary force did not build any lasting defences here at the time before withdrawing to the *real* in Las Palmas, pressed by the problems of water supplies and unhappy about the rivalries between their captain-generals.

This was not the case sometime later when *Gobernador* Pedro de Vera, who had arrived on the island in 1480 to take over the military operations from Rejón, decided to open a second front and ordered the construction of the Agaete Tower. This was built between August and September 1481 by Alonso Fernández de Lugo, *Alcaide* ('head of the garrison') of the fortress and future *Adelantado* and Captain General of the conquests of La Palma and Tenerife. No trace remains of this tower and its location has generated controversy, but everything leads us to believe that it was placed at what is now Puerto de Las Nieves, very close to the coastline (Onrubia Pintado 2003). From the information available, it was built from rammed earth and wooden palisades, probably using a technique very similar to the one used almost 20 years later in the construction of the African tower of San Miguel de Asaca, also by Fernández de Lugo. It was surrounded by a quadrangular defensive wall made of dry stone with a perimeter of about 80 m, perhaps built from the material of an old structure from the indigenous village that was located there. A *coracha* (stretch of wall with arrow slits) ran from the fortified compound all the way down to the ocean shore.

The garrison from the Agaete Tower (Fig. 6.3), reinforced by a contingent of native troops from La Gomera under the command of Hernán Peraza, made continual incursions into the interior in an attempt to reach Gáldar. This pressure, together with the negotiation process conducted by Alonso Fernández de Lugo, gave rise to an agreement in early 1482 involving the guaranteed surrender of Fernando Guanarteme, also known as Fernando de Gáldar, the indigenous aristocrat who was the chief of the Gáldar 'band' at the time.

The terms of this agreement guaranteed the safety of the Castilians, enabling them to settle in this territory, where they built another tower that was completed by mid-December 1482. Its first *Alcaide* was Rodrigo de Vera, one of the sons of the *Gobernador*. As with Agaete fort, there is no archaeological evidence of this tower. The many tales and chronicles that mention it do, however, enable us to locate its position accurately and give us an idea about its building characteristics. It was built at the highest point of what is now the old quarter of the city, close to the indigenous house known as the *roma* and the great enclosed square, or maybe even within the square to take advantage of the defences provided by its strong stone walls. We know that it was built of stone, perhaps quarried stone, and it had gates and stairs. Although we cannot be absolutely sure, it may have been built to plans that were

used some years later by *Gobernador* Alonso de Fajardo when he built Las Isletas Tower in 1494 (Cuenca et al. 2005).

We know that there was a native house in the proximity of the tower, which acted as the original church, probably from the very moment that the expeditionary forces arrived in Gáldar. Captain Miguel de Mújica, ‘servant’ of King Ferdinand the Catholic Monarchs, and the soldiers who lost their lives in the battle of Ajódar were buried in the proximities of this church, dedicated to Santiago, in 1483. A group of native auxiliaries also fought in this battle under the command of Fernando Guanarteme. There is documentary evidence that work started on building a new church around 1486, perhaps on the site of the old one. The reason for this was probably the progressive arrival of increasing numbers of Castilian settlers attracted by the land hand-outs that started at that time. This church was involved in a series of successive transformations and refurbishments up until 1824, when it was destroyed and replaced by the current church of Santiago. Its location, characteristics and history are relatively well known from documents, including some interesting plans drawn by Cayetano González shortly before it was demolished, and also thanks to archaeological diggings made in 2003 in Plaza Santiago, which discovered some burials, undoubtedly linked to the church (Sáenz Sagasti 2006).

A large indigenous community continued to live in the territory of Gáldar after the conquest, initially closely watched by the garrison that remained in the tower and by the members of the island council, who wanted to ensure that the indigenous people did not out-number the settlers. Originally, this group consisted of around 150 ‘relatives’ of Fernando Guanarteme who were exempted from the mass deportations decreed by the Crown, thanks to their collaboration in the conquest of the island. Apart from the ‘fighting men’, the contingent also included several women of the indigenous aristocracy who married Castilian conquerors and settlers. The group was also gradually joined by other natives who had remained on the island in conditions of semi-slavery and Gran Canaria Island natives who managed to return from exile on the mainland.

Unfortunately, few documents about the first *repartimientos* of land made in Gran Canaria after 1485 (Gambín García 2014) have been conserved, but we do know that the traditional rights that some of these indigenous peoples held over their land and waters were confirmed, after being initially expropriated en masse, or they were given new lands as conquerors (Betancor Quintana 2003). This was the case of Fernando Guanarteme, for example, who was given the Guayedra valley and the area ‘around’ by royal decree, which, contrary to what has been suggested (Moreno Santana 2014), was not a kind of feudal manor. The same was true in the case of the natives who brought a claim at Court in 1500 against the people who had diverted the water that used to irrigate their lands in Agaete, causing them great damage, undoubtedly including the owner of the sugar mill situated there.

The granting and breaking of new land gave rise to a population mosaic in the colonial territories of European conquerors and settlers of different origins (Andalusia, Portugal, Castile, Biscay, Genoa, etc.), natives of other islands—who were sometimes given land too—Moorish and black slaves, as well as the indigenous population of Gran Canaria. Slave numbers were directly related to the progress

of the sugar industry. This multiracial population, with increasing racial mixing, gradually settled throughout the territory, concentrating preferentially in Gáldar and what were to become the towns of Guía and Agaete, which answered to the mayor 'of the land' of Gáldar at the time.

Guía was granted the mayor's staff in 1526, and its consequent separation from Gáldar, because of the growing pressure brought to bear by the colonial elite residing there, coincided with the demand for franchises and privileges driven by two women of the indigenous aristocracy married to Castilian conquerors or settlers: Margarita Fernández Guanarteme (1526), daughter of Fernando Guanarteme, and Luisa de Betancor (1528), cousin of Catalina de Guzmán, daughter of another *Guanarteme* known from the texts as Guanarteme el Bueno ('Guanarteme the Good'). These documents, together with the edicts of the 1531 Council, which do not differentiate the aborigines as a distinct ethnic minority, prove the full process of integration that the indigenous nobility and their off-spring had undergone. This is evident testimony to the fact that the process of colonial transition was coming to an end, thus justifying the time limit chosen for this chapter.

Once again, Gáldar is both the largest and best known of all these colonial places and villages, thanks to written records and archaeology (Fig. 6.7). That is how we know that the flourishing Hispanic-Canarian town was laid out around an original main square crossed by a main street, which was the destination and origin of the network of paths that were gradually laid out, undoubtedly built on top of the aboriginal trails and paths in many cases. It was not situated in the current Plaza de Santiago, where, as we have seen, the tower of the conquest rises up and the original church was founded. In fact, it was close to the bed of the gully, in the area that is now the district of La Audiencia, which undoubtedly takes its name from the original Castilian court that was situated there, despite some insistent attempts to associate the place name with the indigenous population. Apart from this place, where the mayor and the bailiff of 'the land' appointed by the Council dealt with the civil and criminal affairs that fell within their limited competence, there were other public compounds of the growing colonial town in this area, such as the Council *corral*, a community compound used for animals and as an occasional meeting place.

The church and the hospital of San Pedro Mártir, no longer there but whose memory survives in the place name of the Hospital District that this part of the city goes by today, were very close to the main square. Apart from these buildings, there were other religious buildings not far from this square that played an essential role in the colonial space and mentality, together with the church of Santiago. There was the Church of San Sebastián, built at the end of the fifteenth century or beginning of the sixteenth century and still in use, and the Franciscan Convent of San Antonio de Padua, founded in 1520 on the opposite edge of the gully, although practically no trace of these remains can be seen today (Cruz y Saavedra 2009).

The residential space was organized around this central point, probably adapting initially to the 'cellular' layout of the indigenous village as we know that the original 'colonial' hamlet comprised aboriginal dwellings, although the extent of these is difficult to specify. These houses, many of which were reoccupied and reused until the eighteenth century, would exist alongside, or would be replaced by, new houses,



Fig. 6.7 The Hispanic-Canarian town of Gáldar

but we know nothing of the details of this process. It is true that these new houses included rooms excavated out of caves. But, contrary to popular belief, it remains to be seen whether these cave dwellings are closely related to aboriginal architectural traditions and ‘poetics’ of the space (Bachelard 2012), above and beyond the constraints imposed by the rock material used.

The indigenous neighbourhood of La Cueva Pintada is, yet again, the best example of this ‘new’ village. The archaeological material shows that the dwellings were in use in the final years of the fifteenth century and that at least some of them were also in use in the first years of the sixteenth century. None of the houses appears to have been built from scratch at that time, although this cannot be ruled out entirely. What is virtually certain is that some of these dwellings underwent refurbishment, reforms and extensions during this period of time, as we can see from the lime whitewash that appears on several of the walls.



The material associated with these dwellings suggests that this neighbourhood was occupied by a population with indigenous roots, in line with what we know from the texts. But colonial importations (pottery, metal, coins, glass, etc.) are found next to the aboriginal objects, substantiating the materiality of a society in transition that is not always easy to interpret and portray (Onrubia et al. 1998; Onrubia and González 2004; González et al. 2013).

The materials, including a whole set of colonial objects (bronze and copper thimbles and pins, string-shaped glass bracelets, etc.) seem to confirm that the home remained the woman's domain and, therefore, the showcase of the gender-based division of work. Everything seems to indicate that the women who lived in these houses were natives. This is accredited, for example, by the abundance of indigenous pottery, which maybe directly related to a 'local' style of hand made pottery, but of a type adapted to new uses; but this remains to be proven. Some objects from the mainland, however, such as plates and tableware in general for serving food, seem to be related to the emergence of new eating habits and 'table manners' that do not appear to be totally compatible with this alleged leading role played by indigenous women, and their domestic practices. It is possible that the native Gran Canaria Islanders lost their culture so fast and so completely, and were integrated as rapidly and as profoundly as they suggest in their declarations, which we have referred to above. Alternatively, these were mixed native-settler families, which we consider more likely and is in line with the information gleaned from written sources. Based on the archaeological evidence provided by some finds (Pino et al. *in press*), the settlers probably included indigenous people from other islands, such as La Gomera, thus confirming once again what we know from the texts.

Whatever the case, it seems clear that these dwellings, by virtue of the women who inhabited them and their belongings, constituted the centre of the symbolic resistance and the immaterial subversion exercised by the dominated. It is no surprise therefore that, in the face of the material determination and the mental torture imposed by the colonial order, these houses ended up as the last refuge in which the native Gran Canaria Islanders could read the scraps of their own world, and where they still intended to have an impact on it.

It should be pointed out that there is nothing to indicate that the cave complex where the decorated chamber is situated lost its leading role as the centre of the village at this time. On the contrary, everything seems to suggest that the 'tribal pantheon', and the mummies it houses, continued to be 'respected' for a long time. There is also little doubt that this was also true of the thousands of funerary remains buried in all the indigenous cemeteries of the Gáldar territory, where the possibility of burials following native funeral customs later on in the conquest without arousing the ire of the Inquisition, as happened in the district of Telde around 1505 (Millares Torres 1977, p. 322), cannot be entirely ruled out. Contrary to what a biased and unfounded perception of the facts seems to suggest, the necropolis, and probably the sacred indigenous sites too, were voluntarily preserved after the conquest of the island, very probably because of the importance acquired by the aboriginal contingent among the colonial elite. The importance that this was to have on forming the archaeological record cannot of course be underestimated.



As with the indigenous agricultural landscapes, little or nothing is known of the archaeology of the new agricultural layout of the land—including a whole series of water infrastructures—that gradually took over the territory of Gáldar, one of the three districts from which the first distribution of island's lands and water were made in 1485. Fortunately, the same is not true of sugar mills and presses related with sugarcane, which was one of the main crops.

Although the exact numbers and locations are not known, we do know that there were several facilities for milling and processing sugarcane from very early on (Camacho y Pérez Galdós 1961; Ronquillo Rubio 2008). We have archaeological evidence of this. At Cueva Pintada, the remains of *formas* (moulds for sugar 'loaf') have been found, along with other pieces of pottery associated with sugar processing, indicating that probably there was a *casa de purgación* ('purging house' or 'curing house' where the moulds were stocked to let the molasses drain off and to obtain the complete crystallization of sugar) in the proximities. Everything suggests that this could be one of the rooms of a sugar mill located very close to this indigenous village. As far as we know, the only thing that remains is the place name: El Trapiche (The Mill). An archaeological dig carried out between Gáldar and Guía in 2009 in the area known as Finca Clavijo, on the other hand, has brought to light a cemetery dating back from the end of the fifteenth century to beginning of the sixteenth century. Based on a study of the burial site and the DNA analysis of the remains recovered, the archaeologists' interpretation suggests that this could be a slave cemetery for blacks, Moors and even some natives from other islands, probably associated with some nearby sugar mill (Fig. 6.6).

The archaeological literature concerning the large sugar mill in Agaete is both more abundant and more significant. Around 1486, Captain Alonso Fernández de Lugo founded a sugar mill on 90 *fanegadas* (1 *fanegada* = 6425 m<sup>2</sup>) that he was granted in the Agaete valley, close to the tower that was built in Puerto de las Nieves under his supervision. Sometime later, Fernández de Lugo sold this property to Francisco de Palomares, a Genoese merchant, to finance his African campaigns, which we will come back to. Palomares moved the mill and its out-houses up the river in 1494, where it remained in operation until the seventeenth century under the management first of his brother Antón Cerezo, with varying success, and thereafter under a series of different owners (Gambín García 2008).

The remains of this sugar mill came to light in 2005, together with several indigenous tombs and buildings, when archaeologists were monitoring the earth-moving operations that were being carried out to build the Las Candelarias housing estate. Apart from the canal and the aqueduct that carried the water to the sugar mill, a set of out-houses including the remains of the mill have been recorded, along with tanneries for curing hides and a set of square or rectangular independent modules arranged around a larger room. In 2013, excavations were undertaken, concentrating on these out-houses. The work confirmed the importance, from both a quality and a quantity point of view, of the range of material found comprising a large number of fragments of sugar *formas* and a wide variety of fragments from recipients of different kinds and origins. The collection includes an abundance of plates and bowls of clearly Andalusian origin and pottery of local manufacture, hand made without a

wheel. Apart from the recipients, there are also countless tile fragments. Along with this vast set of artefacts, there is also an interesting batch of metal pieces such as pins, nails and coins, the latter coined in the name of the Catholic Monarchs (Barroso et al. 2014).

#### 6.4 Archaeology of the Castilian Enclaves in the South of Morocco: The Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña and San Miguel de Asaca Towers

At the end of the fifteenth century, the African coast opposite the Canary Islands, the Western Barbary Coast, was undergoing a period of transition. Apart from its role as the geographic limit between the Atlas Mountains and the Saharan plains, and between the coast and the interior, it was also an ethnic and sociocultural boundary. It was populated by sedentary peoples who had settled in the oases of the more northerly *wadis*, basically Wadi Nun and Wadi Draâ, alongside pastoral groups and nomadic tribes that travelled the whole length of the coastal platform and occupied the Seguia al-Hamrâ basin. There was also a mixture of Berber and Arabic speakers.

The Wadi Nun basin was undoubtedly the political and economic centre of this whole region. Thanks to the text of the treaty signed in 1499 between the Catholic Monarchs, represented on the occasion by the Governor of Gran Canaria, Lope Sánchez de Valenzuela, and the tribal chiefs of this immense territory, referred to in the treaty as the ‘kingdom’ of the Bu-Tata, where we get a clear idea of its layout and organization (Rumeu de Armas 1996; Naïmi 1987). From the caravan city of Tagawst, the ‘capital’ of the ‘kingdom’ at the time, the Awlad Âmar, Arabic-speaking nomads, of the Beni Maâquil tribes who had probably inhabited the area since the thirteenth century and certainly since the fourteenth century, exercised their sovereignty over a conglomerate of tribes, clans and lineages. These included the Berber-speaking Illmmiden (Lamta) and Iznagen (Zanaga) who, in turn, overlaid an old substrate composed of dark-skinned, sedentary farmers and craftsmen (Haratin) and Jewish minorities (Naïmi 1987, 2004).

Apart from Tagawst, the ‘kingdom’ of the Bu-Tata, which seemed to have had complete autonomy from central Marīnid and Wattasid power, was made up of a series of tribal populations and entities, referred to in the text as ‘fiefs’ or ‘captaincies’, which included, from west to east: Ifni, Tighmert, Ifran of the Anti-Atlas and, spilling down towards the Wad Draâ basin, Tamanart (Fig. 6.8). Despite having lost all its economic and political power to Tagawst a century before, the symbolic role of Tighmert and its territory, heir to the splendour of the old caravan city of Nul Lamta, was still important. The descendants of the last ‘king’ of Bu-Tata still lived there.

In the fifteenth century, Tagawst was a major farming, livestock and trade centre. It was one of the northern ‘ports’ of the caravan route that continued to cross the western-most part of the Sahara Desert to what are now Wādān and Chinguetti and,

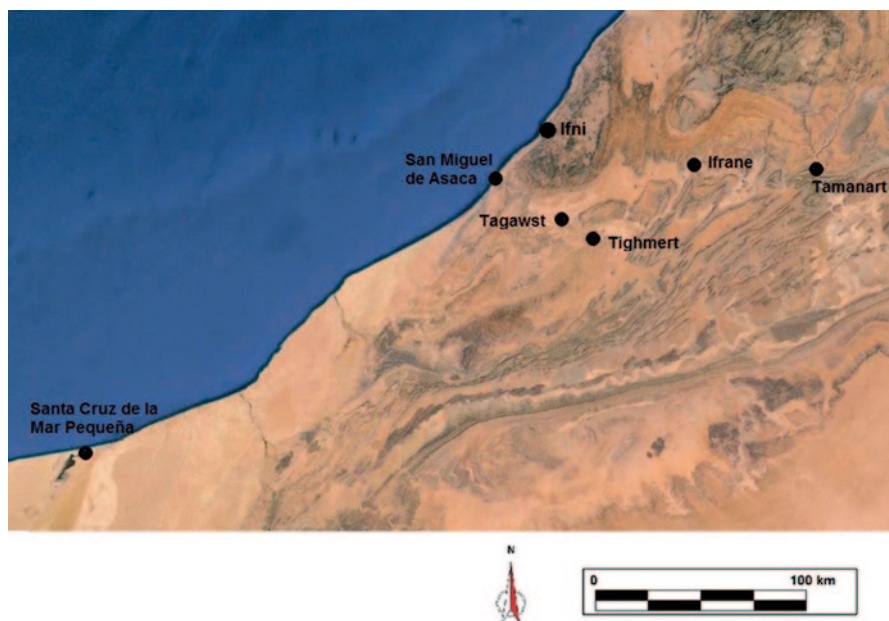


Fig. 6.8 Archaeological sites and localities in the south of Morocco

from there, to Walata and Timbuktu (Mauny 1961; Insoll 2003, pp. 213–262; Lydon 2009, pp. 59–99; Devisse 2011). In the early sixteenth century, Leo Africanus, who visited the city personally in 1513 on a mission to buy black slaves for the Sultan, described it vaguely, and perhaps exaggeratedly, as the largest town in the Sus (L’Africain 1980, pp. 92–93). According to him, it was surrounded by a rammed earth wall and contained 8000 ‘homes’ (houses) whose inhabitants were organized in three leagues or ‘parties’ in permanent conflict.

The traditional location proposed for Tagawst (Monteil 1948, p. 21) has been confirmed, thanks to the excavation work done in 2012 and 2014 in the Hamlet of Ksabi (Bokbot et al. 2013a), situated to the west of Guelmim, as part of the Sus-Tekna Project, a joint Hispano–Moroccan archaeological research programme that begun in 1995. This work has also thrown light on other enclaves and places that could be linked to the ‘kingdom’ of Bu-Tata. In this sense, what is perhaps one of the most suggestive pieces of information comes from the archaeological study of the Asrir Oasis, also situated in the proximities of Guelmim, where the work done has made it possible to locate the medieval caravan city of Nul Lamta (Bokbot et al. 2013b) with complete certainty. A large domestic building has been documented in the eastern-most sector of the Agwidir Fortress in the oasis that was still in use at the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century, the result of refurbishing the original fortification, probably built in Almoravid times (Bokbot et al. 2013a). Given that Asrir was not among the places mentioned in the treaty of

1499, this finding enables us to suggest that this is the same fortress, that this singular ‘palace’ could even be the residence of the last ‘kings’ of Bu-Tata.

As we have already pointed out, as soon as the conquest of Tenerife was complete, the Catholic Monarchs ordered the Governor of Gran Canaria, Alonso de Fajardo, to build a ‘tower-factory’, or fortified trading post, at Mar Pequeña for reasons that included tapping into the caravan traffic that departed from and arrived in Tagawst and its territory. Thanks to written sources (Aznar et al. 2000), we know that it was standing at the end of 1496 and that a large group of indigenous people from Gran Canaria took part in supervising the works of building it first, and defending it later. For several decades, this tower, christened Santa Cruz, was to become a flourishing trading post visited regularly by merchants from both the islands and from Andalusia (Rumeu de Armas 1996; Gambín García 2012). After a chequered history, including several destructions and reconstructions, the Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña Tower was finally abandoned around 1526.

Ever since it was founded, the Santa Cruz fortified trading post acted as a base for major trade with the city of Tagawst, where records show that some merchants managed to stay in houses provided by its inhabitants, although, for now, we still cannot be absolutely certain whether or not there was a genuine commercial factory there. Trade continued in parallel with the Crown’s interest in consolidating its penetration into the region. This ended in 1499 in the Bu-Tata pact that we mentioned above. Its later ratification in Castile in the presence of the ambassadors appointed by the nobility of the ‘kingdom’ (Rumeu de Armas 1996) drove the Catholic Monarchs to consolidate their power on the African coast. Before the end of 1499, they capitulated to the *Adelantado* Alonso Fernández de Lugo, appointed Captain General of Africa, and three new fortresses were planned. The planned location of all of these is made clear in the documentation: the mouth of Wadi Assaka, Tagawst itself and Cape Boujdour (Rumeu de Armas 1996). All in all, we know that only the tower of San Miguel de Asaca was built. Completed in the autumn of 1500 by a Hispanic–Canarian expeditionary army that included a contingent of natives of Gran Canaria closely linked to Fernández de Lugo, it appears to have had a short life. If we trust the written sources, it did not survive the complete defeat of the Castilian troops in the bloody battle of Las Torres (1500), in which many Canarian natives met their death. As far as we know, the casualties included Pedro Manidra, Fernando Guarteme’s brother, and Juan Delgado, son-in-law of the *Fayzague* of Telde.

We know, however, that merchants from the Canary Islands maintained a presence in the region, even after the battle. Nor was there any lack of people to organize these raids and incursions, or any decline in the Crown’s interest in these territories. They tried to use the Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña Tower as a bridgehead to penetrate the area at Cape Ghir until it was finally abandoned. It was here that Alonso Fernández de Lugo attempted to build a new fortress, but pressure from the Portuguese forced him to retreat before he completed the building works (Rumeu de Armas 1996, pp. 410–653).

After a long and heated controversy over its exact location (Rumeu de Armas 1996), which had profound political implications right into the twentieth century as it was directly related to the Spanish colonial occupation of the enclave of Ifni

**Fig. 6.9** Tower of Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña (Khnifiss lagoon)



(García Figueras 1941), the location of the sovereign tower of Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña is, thanks to Paul Pascon and Théodore Monod (Pascon 1963; Monod 1976), beyond any doubt.

We had the chance to visit these remains in the spring of 2013, taking advantage of the fact that a dissemination and valorization strategy carried out by a Moroccan government agency that had sought our advice was going to clear the sand that had covered the remains since 2005. In that year, a historic flash flood of Wadi Aouedri, the mouth of which is situated to the immediate west of this site, caused a shift in the string of dunes that blocked its bed. Enormous quantities of sand were then re-distributed along the edge of the lagoon, completely burying the ruins.

The exploration has enabled us to certify that the identification was well founded and has provided more colour to some of the interpretations at the same time, but a detailed archaeological study is yet to be done. The tower consists of a square compound made of 8-m-long quarried stone walls (Fig. 6.9). From what we now know, this module is the same as the one used by Alonso de Fajardo himself in the Las Isletas Fortress (Cuenca et al. 2005, pp. 61–64), which is undoubtedly another piece of evidence that guarantees its identity. But contrary to what Pascon and Monod suggest, the visible remains do not belong to the superior part of the tower, but to the foundations of the building.

A detailed observation of the visible remains, and the rich documentation available, proves that this is an exceptional and powerful foundation plinth almost certainly used to safeguard the construction built on a sandy base. The alleged arrow slits, whose inclination and type struck even Pascon and Monod as unusual, are none other than the seats where the *aspas* ('sails') or stanchions abutted, which have turned completely red from the heat of continued combustion. We can see from the typology of the seats used and from accounts of the construction of the tower (Aznar et al. 2000, p. 2254) that these *aspas* or stanchions were long, stout wedges of mahogany that were used to chock and 'tie' the *cepa* ('stump'), a thick trunk of Canary Island pine that ensured the building was sound. Perhaps the wood found by



Pascon in his searches, together with green glazed pottery and copper and bronze metal remains (Pascon 1963, p. 8), had something to do with these pieces. But we know nothing from him, unfortunately, as it had already disappeared in 1975 when Monod conducted his exploration (Monod 1976, p. 458).

On top of this masonry plinth, there was a masonry base locked together with lime mortar, some of which remains in situ, which almost certainly supported layers of rammed earth. As the authors of the detailed publication of these accounts have pointed out, this can be easily deduced from their own references to *tablas de costado* (side planks), indicating that they were used for moulding and constructing the rammed earth. But, in our opinion, the use of the rammed earth technique can also be deduced from the perforations that appear on the corners (Monod 1976; Fig. 3, lám. VIII). Everything suggests these were the places where the bases of four thick *esteos*, vertical wooden posts frequently used to reinforce mud buildings, would be set.

Even if there are small differences, the building details allow us to relate these remains directly to an interesting description made by Canary Island canon José de Viera y Clavijo in his work *Historia de Canarias* published between 1772 and 1783 (Viera y Clavijo 1982, pp. 613–614).<sup>5</sup> From this, we can deduce that the burned wood of the *aspas* and the *cepa* was still visible in the ruins of the tower when the exploration that triggered this description was conducted. We can also assume that the fortress of Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña was surrounded by a rectangular stone wall about 35 m long and 25 m wide, in line with what we know of some of its Canary Islands forefathers. The line that surrounds the tower on the plans of the lagoon drawn by Glas (Rumeu de Armas 1996, pp. 54–57, 273), often interpreted as a small ‘island’ on which this construction was built, could in fact be this stone wall.

We do not know, however, anything about the annexes that would probably have been around the tower-trading post. Maybe we will find them in future archaeological works. But it is also possible that they were built of perishable materials, which would hinder, if not prevent, their discovery on a site that is now completely covered in sand. What can be seen, on the other hand, are several human-made piles of stone in different areas of the lagoon that may have been related in some way with a signalling system to guide ships through the mouth of the lagoon. The place name of Suq er-Rumi (‘Christian market’) has been documented in the proximities, which suggests that there was a trading post, despite no archaeological evidence having been found to date (Monod 1976, p. 459).

The location of the fortress of San Miguel de Asaca has posed a series of problems, although to a lesser extent than the tower of Santa Cruz de la Mar Pequeña, despite the fact that its location should not have entailed any great difficulty with the data available (Hernández-Pacheco et al. 1949, pp. 129–135). On the one hand, the Wadi Assaka place name that designates the lower course of Wadi Nun from where it runs into the massif of Aït Baâmran (Ifni) has been conserved even now. On the

<sup>5</sup> We do not know the date of this information, or where it came from, but, contrary to what has been suggested, it does not seem to come from George Glas, a Scot who visited Khnifiss Lagoon in 1764 in an aborted attempt to set up a trading post there: Port Hillsborough (Monod 1976).



other hand, the chronicles of the events of 1500, the *Anales de la Corona de Aragón* (Annals of the Crown of Aragon) by Jerónimo Zurita, chronicler to King Ferdinand the Catholic, expressly indicate that the fortification consisting of a wooden fort defended by a perimeter wall, surrounded in turn by an exterior moat, was located 'next to a river that ran into the perimeter wall and was a stone's throw from the sea...' (Zurita 1670, t. 5, Libro 4º, 184v).

Thanks to the archaeological prospections carried out at the mouth of Wadi As-saka as part of the aforementioned Sus-Tekna Project, we have recorded a range of different archaeological evidence in this site since 1995. But the first detailed study of this area was not made until 2011 as part of rescue archaeological works. Its purpose was to assess to what extent the archaeological remains had been affected by the highly aggressive and illegal works carried out in 2007 to build a housing estate on the right-hand side of this water course.

The reconnaissance and assessment work focused on a small promontory just over 7 m high situated on the lower terrace of the *wadi*. The remains that are visible on the surface are spread over an irregular oval-shaped area of around 2500 m<sup>2</sup> bordering with the right bank of the Assaka on its south-west flank. The rest of the perimeter seemed to be delimited by an artificial moat and by what could be a wall built on a masonry base. Most of the dwelling structures that can be seen on the surface are concentrated at the northern tip of this area. The remains of an old *maqbara* (Muslim cemetery) were identified about 140 m to the north-east of this site, although its chronology has not yet been determined. This cemetery was almost completely destroyed by some of the earth-moving that was done during the partial urbanization works carried out in the area.

The archaeological work consisted of making four test pits to determine the origins and chronology of the different deposits that made up the site, and to establish its dimensions. The work also aimed to confirm whether the visible remains could be identified, at least partially, with the brief Hispano-Canarian occupation of San Miguel de Asaca, as everything seemed to indicate. The works carried out made it possible to document three different moments of occupation. The last one of these, in fact, coincides with a brief period of time between the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Several dwelling structures were recorded in this phase, during what was known as Test Pit 1, belonging to an *adobe* (mud brick) and rammed earth building with a masonry base (Fig. 6.10). Test Pit 2 detected a stretch of the rammed earth perimeter wall, reinforced with stone inserts, which defended the compound. This 1-m-thick perimeter wall seemed to have been preceded by an artificial moat dug into the ground in some sections of the site. Finally, Test Pit 3 identified strata rich in materials from that time that must be interpreted as waste products.

At least three phases of building have been documented in Test Pit 1, with alterations that substantially modified the layout. The fact that there is only a single floor level, and the small amount of the filling associated with moments of use and abandonment, lead us to assume, however, that the space was occupied for a short period of time, which is consistent with the absence of any rebuilding or reoccupation of the building.

**Fig. 6.10** Archaeological site San Miguel de Asaca (Sidi Ifni)



The archaeological material recovered includes an interesting pottery assemblage of pots, plates, bowls, jars, urns and canteens. A detailed analysis of these artefacts shows that they are mostly Iberian in origin, more specifically from the area of Seville and Valencia (de Juan et al. *in press*). In general terms, they can be dated between what is considered the height of the Mudejar period, including the fifteenth century, and the late Mudejar, in the sixteenth century (Pleguezuelo Hernández 1998, p. 354). The forms, technology and decorations of the material reflect both early medieval traditions and more modern traditions of what is known as ‘Moorish’ pottery. The interpretation of these artefacts as a whole must therefore suggest that they form part of the attempts made at the time by the Castilians and Portuguese to penetrate this area. Furthermore, along with these interesting specimens, there are also pieces made by the local south-western Moroccan populations. They are basically hand made, and the overall study of this site in the future should be able to establish a more accurate chronology for these less-known local products. Finding these different kinds of pottery together is fascinating from a research point of view as it clearly establishes the fact that the pottery of European origin was contemporary to the pottery from the Atlantic Coast of Africa.

The study of the archaeofauna is also in progress, but we can already report the important role of hunting, fishing and shellfish gathering among the inhabitants of this enclave.

If we combine all the previous data with the information provided by written sources and historic maps, we may confirm this site as the fort of San Miguel de Asaca. A detailed archaeological study will be conducted in the near future, and will include an archaeological approach to the battle of Las Torres.

## 6.5 Conclusions

The archaeological analysis of the colonial project of the Crown of Castile on the Atlantic Coast of Africa requires a combination of a global perspective and a variety of local approaches. First of all, and going beyond the common ground of consider-

ing this a mere extension of the Iberian reconquest, the global vision must focus first and foremost on the context of the rivalry between Castile and Portugal to control the shipping routes in West Africa and, thereby, the Saharan caravan traffic. From this point of view, special attention needs to be paid to the material dimension of the organization and evolution of these trans-Saharan circuits in the western-most areas of Africa from the fourteenth century. This includes mapping the tracks, identifying the stages and the caravan 'ports', the gold supply and trade networks, and the situation and evolution of the slave markets. This is undoubtedly a prior requisite for any approach to studying the strategies and the areas of colonial penetration. It is also important to avoid any temptation to undertake a neocolonial archaeological approach to this process, that is, one solely interested in the Hispanic heritage and 'legacy'.

On the other hand, this global perspective cannot ignore the change of direction that the 'invention' and conquest of America was to mean for Castilian Atlantic colonialism. One cannot forget that the annexation of La Palma and Tenerife, and the Crown of Castile taking real possession of the area following the Treaty of Alcaçovas on the African Mainland, coincides in time with the start of the American colonial adventure. In the end, faced with the difficulties of the African project and the size of the American enterprise, the former was abandoned in favour of the latter. Also the Canary Islands, the bridgehead for penetrating Africa, became a stop-over port on the route to America. This is when the Canarian Archipelago turned its back on its *terra firma*, its continental hinterland. Spain would not return its gaze and its colonial ambitions to these African territories in the form of a renewed colonialism until the nineteenth century.

The local contexts are represented by the islands of Gran Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife, and by the Western Barbary Coast. Here too, and insofar as we are talking about a single process, a series of recurring elements can be traced that coexist with specific historical dynamics. For instance, resemblances in 'frontier' colonization strategies are evident, particularly between the Canary Islands conquest towers and the African 'factories' and forts. The archaeology of each one of them complements the others and gives us a reliable idea of the appearance and the building techniques used in all of them. It is also important to observe how the island of Gran Canaria and its inhabitants, be they natives, conquerors or settlers, played a central role as the backbone of the whole process from the time it was conquered. This was so much the case that it can be illustrated to a large extent with individual biographies and the collective social life that make up this dense web of relationships of power, real or fictitious family links and loyalties that would unite the group of indigenous Gran Canaria 'nobles' from Gáldar with the *Adelantado* and Captain General of Africa, Alonso Fernández de Lugo, and his family band. It is certainly an interesting exercise of material and emotional micro-history.

But there are many differences too, and they are obvious. Castile faced the penetration in the Islands with a strategy of open warfare and a total strangulation of the material bases and the mental and mythical-ritual universes of the natives, but they did not do so on the African mainland. On the mainland, faced with the difficulties of subjecting a large and highly resilient and increasingly hostile population, they

tried to forge formal links of subordination between the Crown and the tribal elite, a pattern of colonial domination with a largely symbolic content that soon failed.

Needless to say, much archaeological work is still necessary in each and every one of these contexts. At the moment, one of our priorities is to explore in depth the nature and scope of the colonial materialities and their contribution to the process of social and individual identity construction.

The heterogeneity of the colonial population in the Islands favoured the coexistence of a whole range of partially overlapping and changing collective feelings of belonging that were affirmed, not without conflict, by their opposition to distinct 'othernesses' that complemented them in a genuine dialogical relationship, as complementary oppositions, rather than dialectically. In the end, the social space of Gran Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife, was to become progressively 'insularized', as happened with the feudal islands. Among this hybrid mosaic of Europeans, Aborigines, Moors and blacks, gradually converted into 'people of the islands', the processes of circulation and amassing of capital by the different social fields (political, social, cultural, etc.), and the consequent material and symbolic mechanisms of social differentiation, finally relied more on status than on ethnic or 'national' identities. It is significant to see to what extent this process of building the island identities is directly related with the attempts to penetrate the Western Barbary Coast and, later on, with the threats of the Barbary pirates, who became the 'other' islanders *par excellence*.

A symmetrical phenomenon found on the African coast, although in the other direction: *Jihad* ('holy war') against the infidels from the islands, proclaimed by the Marabout movement, originally from Seguia al-Hamrâ, was to act in the end as an element that united rival tribes against a common enemy. Andalusians, Castilians, Portuguese, newly converted natives, renegade Moors, all brought together under the cross of Christianity, came to accept an extreme 'otherness' compared to one affirmed by individual and collective roots. As is the case with the expression 'time of the Moors' on the Iberian Peninsula, this ethnic and religious exteriority came to refer to a historical anteriority, a pre-Islamic dawn of time that populated the Moroccan Sus with the remains of Christian (*agadir arumi*) and Portuguese (*agadir burtuguez*) fortresses. In Wadi Nun itself, in the proximities of Tagawst, Agwidir Nuna, the ruins of a fortified granary of undetermined age, was the home of a Christian queen who, according to oral traditions, had come from the Canary Islands many years before this area was converted to Islam. From the lasting imprints they have left on the landscape, and in the local memory, these 'Christian' fortresses, and the hundreds of tombs attributed to holy men and pious combatants fallen in the holy war against the infidel, we can see the construction of a 'subaltern archaeology', understood here pursuant to its meaning of a community archaeology that has its undeniable historic reference in Iberian colonialism.

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(Tibicena. Arqueología y Patrimonio SL) in turn, have done the same with the as yet unpublished data of the inestimable work they have done on the Agaete Sugar Mill and the Finca Clavijo Cemetery, respectively. We would like to express our most sincere gratitude to the three of them. We also wish to thank Ángel Marchante Ortega for his assistance in preparing the figures accompanying the text.

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Finally, we acknowledge that this chapter would not have been possible without the data provided by several on-going research projects: ‘Archaeological research in the archaeological zone of La Cueva Pintada de Gáldar (Gran Canaria)’ (Ministry of Culture—Canary Islands Government—Cabildo de Gran Canaria), ‘Sus-Tekna Project—Archaeological research in the Sus-Tekna region (Morocco)’ (Ministry of Culture—AECID (Spanish International Co-operation Agency)—Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Morocco), ‘Archaeology of acculturation and colonization. European people, objects, animals and plants in Gran Canaria (fourteenth–sixteenth centuries)’ (Canary Islands Agency for Research, Innovation and the Information Society of the Canary Islands Government—FEDER ProID20100180) and ‘The social relations of production in Gran Canaria Island during the pre-Hispanic and Colonial stages’. Two colonization process in one territory (Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness—Government of Spain—HAR2013-41934-P).

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# Chapter 7

## The Jesuit Mission to Ethiopia (1557–1632) and the Origins of Gondärine Architecture (Seventeenth–Eighteenth Centuries)

Victor M. Fernández

### 7.1 The Jesuit Mission in Ethiopia: Main Architectural Features

From 1557 until their expulsion from the country in 1633, a group of Jesuit missionaries—mostly of Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish origin—lived in the Ethiopian Highlands with the aim of converting the local Orthodox population to the Roman Catholic faith (their ‘reduction,’ in Ignatian terms; Pennec 2003; Cohen and Martínez 2007; Cohen 2009; Martínez d’Àlos-Moner 2008, 2015; Fernández 2013; Fernández et al. [in press](#)). Since the twelfth century, a legend was well known in Europe that in the east lived a saintly king, the Prester John, who was both a priest or patriarch and a political ruler, and even a descendant of one of the three Magi. He was strategically located to the rear of the Muslim lands and thus was a very convenient ally to the European Christian kingdoms. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there were contacts between the Ethiopian Solomonic monarchy (the *Preste*) and the Portuguese kings interested in gaining a regional partner in the Red Sea area to control the trade across its waters and those of the Indian Ocean, which were recently explored and exploited by Portuguese travelers. The acquaintance gathered drive when, between 1528 and 1543, a small Portuguese army commanded by Christovão da Gama, son of the renowned explorer Vasco da Gama, was essential in the eventual victory of the Ethiopian Christians against the strong Muslim forces from the eastern Sultanate of Adal, headed by the Somali leader Aḥmad Grañ, who had been on the verge of liquidating Christianity, widely followed in the Ethiopian Highlands from the fourth century.

Nevertheless, the expected help of the *Preste* to the Portuguese venture in Africa and Asia was irrelevant, given that the Christian kingdom was almost completely

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isolated in the Highlands and surrounded by Muslim polities all through its possible coastal communication corridors. As a result, the travel of the missionaries to the kingdom heartland was very hazardous, some of them perishing or falling captive by the Turks or pirates, and the actual situation of the mission members was of at least partial isolation most of the time.

It was to attend spiritually to the members of that force and their offspring (half-caste ‘Luso-Ethiopians’), whom the Portuguese crown considered as their subjects, that the first Jesuits arrived to the Highlands in 1557 (Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2010). The first period of the mission ended in 1597 with the death of the last surviving father, Francisco Lopes, without any substantial achievement. With the arrival of the Castilian father Pedro Páez in 1603 began the second period, when significant progress was made with the conversion of the Ethiopian *nəguś* Susənyos to Catholicism in 1621. The time of more than one decade between that date and the Jesuits’ expulsion after 1632 was a period of great activity, with around 20 missionaries living in some 13 missions across the country, serving to about 150,000 converted Catholics, according to the fathers’ own sources (Fig. 7.1).

The Ethiopian state was a developed political and bureaucratic organization, where the *nəguś* and his entourage could grant lands, allocate tributes and monetary benefits, and give permissions to erect churches and monasteries. The genius of Páez was to go through the Ethiopian political area so that the mission could be granted the necessary favors needed to expand: lands, provisions, and juridical and military protection (Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2008, p. 99). Thus, the missions were incorporated to the Ethiopian feudal-like system, and often their granted lands (seemingly on a permanent basis; cf. Pennec 2003, pp. 169–170) had been previously seized to those originally entrusted to them, thus giving rise to increasing conflicts (Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2008, pp. 277–278; Almeida in RASO XII, pp. 295–296). Given the paucity of missionaries and Luso-Ethiopians (a maximum of c. 3,500 people at the end of the mission period, cf. Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2008, Table 4), however, the enterprise was far from human colonial occupation of the country and followed, in some way, the model of Portuguese exploration and occupation of trade-posts throughout the African and Indian coasts (Russell-Wood 1992, pp. 21–22).

Gradually, the theological controversies, conflicts over lands, and the king’s administrative, cultural, and religious reforms made discontent grow among monks, ecclesiastics, and the population at large. Rebellions led by regional rulers provoked a bloody civil war that eventually forced Susənyos to abolish the measures taken in favor of Catholicism and proclaim the freedom of faith, shortly before the king’s death in 1632. His successor, king Fasilädäs, restored orthodoxy and ordered the expulsion of the Jesuits, by then seen by the local population as enemies of the Christian faith and often referred to with many negative epithets as ‘Chalcedonians’ (as the Ethiopian ‘Copts’ had split from the main Christian stream in the council of Chalcedon in 451 AD), ‘enemies of Mary,’ ‘Turks,’ or ‘wolves’ (Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2008, 253 ff.).

Though a few missionaries remained in the country, hidden and protected by some religious and political leaders, all of them had died around 1640, mostly at the hand of the Orthodox, and the Catholic community gradually disappeared. The ‘Ethio-Portuguese’ or ‘Luso-Ethiopians’, descendants of the soldiers that first arrived to the country with Christovão da Gama to assist the Christian forces, were



Fig. 7.1 Circles, Jesuit missions and related sites in Central-Northern Ethiopia and Eritrea. Gray circles, sites with preserved architectural remains. (Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2008, p. 75)

definitely expelled in 1669 under king Yohannəs, though half-caste people with *Burtukan* descent remained in the country, and their memory was not totally lost (Martínez d’Alòs-Moner 2006, 2010).

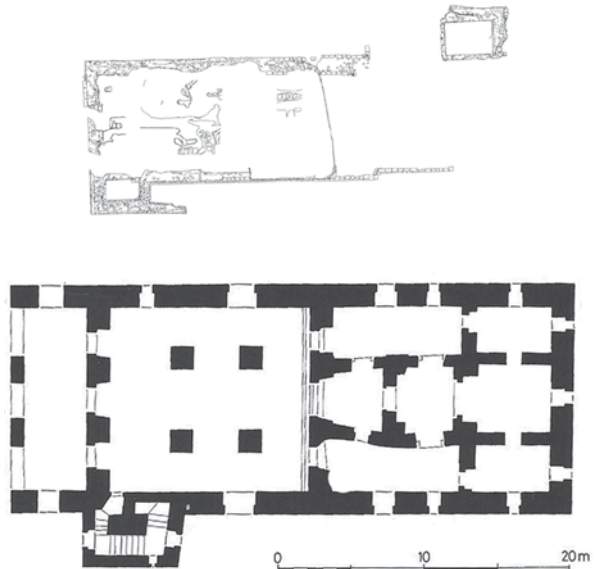


The missionaries exploited the technical superiority of the European society and, at the same time, of the Roman faith over what they perceived to be ‘backward’ Africans. Ignatius of Loyola insisted that the Jesuits should bring to Ethiopia doctors, surgeons, experts in law and agriculture, technicians that knew how to make bridges and hospitals, etc. (Loyola in RASO I, pp. 244–251; Pennec 2003, p. 70). Conversely, many of those technical advances, especially the military, were the main reason for the attraction that the Ethiopians felt since the very beginning toward the Portuguese and Catholic culture and envoys. Besides the new, though short-lived, designs that they introduced for the churches layout, opposing the traditional ‘oriental’ styles of concentric, closed sections, the defensive architecture was probably the main asset that the missionaries offered to the local dominant classes. Both royalty and aristocracy were in great need of those advances because of the recurrent attacks suffered in the Highlands—Muslim Somalis from the east and pagan Oromo from the south, apart from recurring domestic unrest.

Church architecture after the missionary period, however, shows some influences of the Catholic layout. Without reverting to the basilical plan of the first Christian centuries in the country (Phillipson 2009, *passim*), the increase in number of square churches after the seventeenth century, even if the round plan continued to prevail, could be attributed to that influx (Phillipson 2009, p. 27). The inside plan of the square buildings kept to the Oriental, closed tripartite model, just the opposite of the new ideas that the Jesuits had implemented in their churches, with a single, fully open nave to favor the attendance of the faithful and their control by the priests (Rodríguez G. de Ceballos 2002, p. 27). As we could document during our archaeological survey, several Jesuit buildings, both churches and secular constructions, were transformed after the missionaries’ departure to adapt to the Orthodox model by dividing the internal space in three parts using new walls, perpendicular to the earlier ones. Another impact was probably the belfries that the priests erected at least in one of their churches, Azäzo Gannätä Iyäsus (RASO VI, p. 388; XI, p. 417) and whose remains were discovered in our excavations. The bell tower of the Maryam Tsion church in Aksum, Ethiopia’s mother-church reconstructed in the mid-seventeenth century shortly after the missionaries’ departure (Phillipson 2009, pp. 37–40, Fig. 44), was placed at the same side of the building and, most probably, was inspired by the Azäzo’s building (Fig. 7.2).

In addition to churches, whose remains are relatively preserved in five mission places (Gorgora Nova, Azäzo, Dänqāz, Sārka, and Märtulā Maryam), the Jesuits erected several other types of civil constructions: residences, schools, water cisterns and conduits, fortifications, etc. In Gorgora Nova, the ruins can be seen of a typical Christian monastery residence with 11 squared rooms, where priests, novices, and students could live in, since there was a school at the site and it was also the place where the annual meetings of the congregation took place at the end of the period. The two corner rooms were in the shape of squared two-storied towers with a clear defensive function as well as the squared tower placed at the entrance corner of the church and the battlemented walls enclosing the inner yard between the church and the residence. The arches over doors and windows, made of a kind of white cal-

**Fig. 7.2** The plans of the churches of Azäzo-Gannätä Iyäsus (*up*) and Aksum Maryam Psion (*down*), both with the squared belfry at the building southwest corner (after the Azäzo excavation project and Phillipson 2009, Fig. 44)



citic sandstone, were typical of all the architectural work made by the missionaries (Fig. 7.3).

The Jesuit chroniclers attribute to technicians brought from India by Patriarch Afonso Mendes the construction of the royal palace of Dänqäz, a ‘work never seen neither imagined in the country’ (*‘obra pera a terra nunca vista nem imaginada’*) (Almeida in RASO VI, p. 382), though the Susənyos chronicle says the ‘masters’ of stone and limework were an Indian and an Egyptian as well as ‘many others’ (Pereira 1990, p. 224). The palace had two stories with six big rooms in each floor, stucco paintings of rosettes and other designs over the mortar-coated walls (including the unfinished sketch of two dogs in clear Renaissance style), big fireplaces with internal chimneys, and also a high-squared, closed, stone-and-mortar structure annex to one of the corners, which probably was the cesspit of a latrine at the first floor. The arches over the windows were of a better quality than those normally found in the missionary buildings, in some cases alternating two different kinds of stone and with single bracket capitals (Fig. 7.3b). In spite of its beauty and magnificence, it was not endorsed with big defensive structures, though it was surrounded by two walls (RASO VI, p. 382). The inner circle, made of good stone-and-mortar masonry and with a big height in some parts (approaching a rectangle of 48 × 36 m), can still be seen surrounding the palace ruins and incorporating a big, subterranean water cistern walls in its perimeter.

The mission of Däbsan was the residence of Patriarch Afonso Mendes between 1625 and 1632, and it has preserved the remains of a rectangular building with four doors at each side and one big window in its wider southern extension, probably the patriarch’s room; all of them were topped by stone, and in some cases firebrick,



**Fig. 7.3** The arches over windows and doors at the Jesuit residences of Gorgora Nova (a), and Däbsan (c–d; c with an arch made of bricks), and at the royal palace of Dänqāz (b). (Photographed by author)

arches (Fig. 7.3c and 7.3d). Though the best specialist in the period, the French archaeologist Francis Anfray (1980–1981, p. 11, 1988, p. 16), guessed the building was a church (probably it was transformed for this function after the mission demise), the original structure is more secular than religious (Pennec 2003, p. 182). Scattered around the building are the remains of other stone constructions, completely dismantled as they were made of stone and mud in the usual Ethiopian way; it does not seem probable that the important ‘house of the Patriarch,’ mentioned in the Jesuit texts, was one of those flimsy structures. The extant remains of an enclosing wall, approximately circular with 50–60 m of diameter, are still visible around the house and the nearby water cistern, made with stone and mud and with two square buildings in its northern and western sides and a main entrance gate with two stone-and-mortar side walls.

The other important mission site in the region north of Lake Ṭana, Dämbəya, is Azāzo near Gondär, where the church of Gännätä Iyäsus (‘Garden or Paradise of Jesus’) was erected. Here most of the remains have disappeared from the surface and are only reachable through archaeological excavations, which our team undertook from 2008 to 2011. The importance of the site for the history of the mission and the Gondärine architecture makes it deserve a more thorough treatment in a later section of this chapter.

South of Lake Ṭana, in the region of Goḡgam, there were other six missionary sites with stone churches, of which the location of four is known: Sārka, Qʷälläla, Ənnäbäse (Märtulä Maryam), and Lejjä Nəguś. The remains of two other missions, Tamqha and Hadasha, were unsuccessfully searched for by our team in 2011. Even though the place names are nowadays known and their geographical features match almost perfectly the missionaries' descriptions (especially Hadasha, where an old earthen rampart to defend the area is still visible), the rest of any stone structure from the period has seemingly disappeared.

The place of Märtulä Maryam, called Ənnäbäse in the Jesuit's time, was an important religious and royal center before the arrival of the missionaries. The remains of the church, with three naves and an exuberant architectural decoration, have puzzled the researchers ever since its discovery, to the point that one renowned specialist, Paul B. Henze (2004), thought it was a palace rather than a church. The church and its annexed water cistern, together with a modern Orthodox church and other recent constructions, are today surrounded by a well-preserved circular fortification that probably corresponds to the post-Jesuit period.

Sārka has been identified with the remains of a small, rectangular building and a nearby large fortified compound surrounding the ruins of a small 'palace' over an elongated hill near the village of Däbrä Mäwi<sup>2</sup>, south of Bahir Dar; the place is locally known as Gəmb Gyiorgis-Gəmb Maryam. The small building corresponds to a church consecrated to the Virgin Mary by the Jesuits in 1625, and since it was always described as being besides the capital of the province and residence of its ruler and brother of Susənyos, Ras Səʿälä Krəstos, the fortifications and the palace are supposed to be the leader's residence. While the latter building may be reasonably ascribed to the mission period as well as a subterranean room that was probably a prison (Fernández 2013), the fortified compound (encircling c. 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>) was most likely erected thereafter. The high battlemented walls and square and circular towers and guard posts completing its design are a clear reminder of later Gondarine architecture, yet the best reason to date it to that period is the fact that the Jesuit chroniclers never mentioned this important structure (only the Ras' *arrayal*, residence).

From the old Jesuit missions of Qʷälläla and Lejjä Nəguś, there remain sections of highly fortified walls (in the latter, there is also a squared building and a very well-preserved, two-chambered water deposit). The Lejjä Nəguś wall was endorsed with a line of big, rectangular loopholes of a type unknown in other mission sites (Gorgora Nova, Azäzo), where they are smaller in dimension.

The Jesuits made its biggest fortification in the northern site of Fəremona, near Aksum, where the first mission was installed around 1560–1565. Throughout the whole period, the place was the first stop of the priests after the dangerous trip from India, and from there the Jesuits controlled the strong Catholic community of Təgray. Part of the high defensive wall and two of their circular bastions are still standing to bear witness of the missionary military expertise to make a stronghold 'inexpugnable pera as armas da terra' (impregnable with the country's armory; Mendes in RASO, XII, p. 159). As they were probably erected before the 'discovery' and reintroduction of lime mortar technology in Ethiopia (in Azäzo in 1624,

**Fig. 7.4** The Føremona Mission hill from the north-west, with the remains of the stone-and-mud wall, partially collapsed, and the two preserved round bastions. (Photographed by author)



see below), its defensive system was constructed with stone and mud. Yet, as father Almeida wrote (in RASO VI, p. 502), the Føremona mud ‘liga quasi tanto como ella’ (it binds almost as well as [lime]). The missionary skillfulness is attested by the conservation of a great part of the work almost four centuries thereafter (Fig. 7.4).

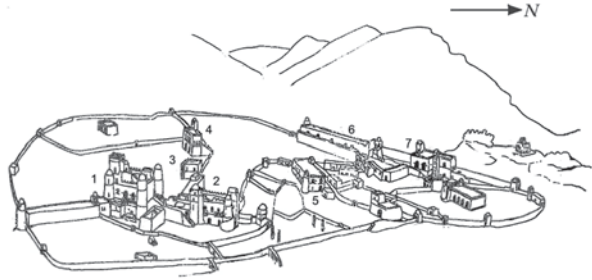
## 7.2 The Gondärine Architecture

For about one-and-a-half century (from the 1630s to the 1670s), the Abyssinian royalty and important aristocrats and clerics built significant stone-and-mortar constructions, both secular and religious, in the big region around Lake Ṭana. Since there is no written information about many of the buildings, the historians have tended to believe the oral data provided about their foundation by local people or priests. The sharpest researchers soon acknowledged that some of these data could be misleading, as very often there is a predisposition to attribute to the most famous kings (i.e., Susənyos or his son Fasilädäs) the monuments whose authorship is not clearly known (Anfray 1980–1981, p. 10). Other chronological problems are caused by the fact that kings names can be confused (many had several names or throne-names), or the foundation date may refer to that of the *tabot* (the stone or wooden plaque symbolizing the Mosaic Tables, which both represents and sanctifies the church), which often moved from one church to another (Phillipson 2009, p. 184). Furthermore, the provided date of foundation can refer to the first installation and not to the actual building, which might be a posterior addition or reform.

After the first thorough study of the Gondär city monuments by Alessandro Augusto Monti della Corte in 1938, the task of synthesizing the general features of the period was mainly undertaken by Sandro Angelini (1971), Francis Anfray (1988, pp. 9–10), and LaVerle Berry (2005). Restricting the analysis to the secular buildings, they are usually two storied and have corner towers, more often conical than



**Fig. 7.5** Sketch of the Royal Enclosure of Gondär, after Monti della Corte (1938), with the main buildings: 1. castle of Fasilädäs, 2. castle of Iyasu I, 3. library of Yoḥannäs I, 4. chancellery of Yoḥannäs I, 5. throne hall of Dawit III, 6. castle of Bäkäffa, 7. palace of Məntəwaab



squared, with upper, oval rather than semicircular, domes, and battlemented parapets. Also, the monumental entrance staircases are abundant, with doors and windows with well-dressed arches resting on single- or double-bracket capitals, string courses to facilitate drainage, wooden balconies and occasionally barrel vaulting, flat or curved, in some rooms. The masonry was uncoursed, using dark volcanic stones of different sizes bound with strong lime mortar; some interior walls were finely coated with lime plaster. A few decorative elements are known in the interior (Fasilädäs) or exterior (Məntəwaab) of some palaces.

Though a complete catalog of Gondärine buildings has not yet been done, the descriptive lists published by Francis Anfray in 1980–1981 and 1988, including only the known sites outside Gondär city, are fairly comprehensive and useful. Some of the sites have been approached with more detail in a few recent publications and especially in that impressive piece of scholarship, which is the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* edited by Siegbert Uhlig and Alessandro Bausi in the University of Hamburg from 2003 to 2014. The Anfray's list comprises eight sites of Jesuit (i.e., pre-Gondärine) chronology, 3 squared churches, 13 round churches, 3 churches of unknown shape, 11 bridges, 10 civil buildings (towers, fortifications, and residences), and 3 ruins of unknown function. The most impressive buildings are obviously those inside the fortified royal compound in Gondär, known as Fasil Ghebbi or Fasil Gəmb, enclosed by a battlemented wall with 15 entrance gates (Fig. 7.5). The 7 palaces correspond to kings Fasilädäs (reigned 1632–1667) (Fig. 7.5: 1; Fig. 7.6), Yoḥannäs I (1667–1682) (Fig. 7.5: 2), Iyasu I (1682–1706), who made two buildings (Fig. 7.5: 3–4), Dawit III (1716–1721) (Fig. 7.5: 5), Bäkäffa (1721–1730) (Fig. 7.5: 6), and regent queen Məntəwaab (1755–1769) (Fig. 7.5: 7; Fig. 7.7).

Two other Gondärine buildings are especially important, since their construction was attributed by oral sources to a time previous to Fasilädäs' reign and so they could be the architectural precedents of the whole style: the church of Baḥrəy Gəmb Mikael and the palace of Guzara (Fig. 7.8). The first building has a strange, pointed oval dome over the central part of the church and is dated by tradition to the reign of Ləbnä Dəngəl (1508–1540), yet its construction was interrupted, and probably the initial church destroyed, by the Muslim invasions in the 1540s, and a recent research tend to attribute the actual building to the late Gondärine period (Anfray 1988, p. 15; Mulatu 2003, p. 448; Berry 2005, p. 844).



**Fig. 7.6** The palace of king Fasilädäs (1632–1667) in Gondär. (Photographed by author)



**Fig. 7.7** The palace of queen Məntəwaab (1755–1769) in Gondär. (Photographed by author)



**Fig. 7.8** The castle of Guzara, near Enfraz. (Photographed by author)



The palace of Guzara (Fig. 7.8), near the village of Ānfraz, east of Lake Ṭana, was the residence of king Sārsa Dəngəl, who built a ‘palace’ there, which eventually became a fortress (*makfad*) around 1586, with an ‘admirable exterior.’ Several authors have interpreted this building as being actually the present stone-and-mortar castle, perhaps modeled on the castle of Debarwa in the north, against whose army the king had fought earlier in his reign (e.g., Pankhurst 1982, pp. 95–96; Merid Wolde Aregay 1984, pp. 135–136; Berry 2005, p. 844). The building is virtually a copy of Fasilādās’ palace in Gondār, though smaller and with only two round towers instead of four. If this building is really the same as the one mentioned by the sixteenth-century chronicles, the Gondārine architecture would have started some 50 years before the date usually accepted, the beginning of the reign of Fasilādās (1632–1667). On the other hand, the Jesuit writings never mentioned this palace. Pedro Páez referred to the royal capital or ‘city’ of Gubai (the probable ancient name of Guzara, cf. Biosc-Tiessé 2005), consisting of small huts made of stone and mud with a thatched roof (Páez in RASO II, p. 203). Almeida mentioned the place of Gubae, claiming that usually every emperor had multiple winter camps like this, which at the time was not more than fields *ubi Troia fuit* (where Troy once stood, a text by Roman poet Virgil) (Almeida in RASO VI, pp. 155–156); that is, almost nothing was left of the constructions after the camp abandonment. All these pieces of evidence have prompted a part of recent research to suggest a more modern chronology, most probably after Fasilādās’ reign, for this building (e.g., Anfray 1988, p. 17; Pankhurst 2004, p. 6).

Thus, most, if not all, the so-called ‘Gondārine’ monuments are thought to date to the period immediately after the establishment of the Abyssinian kingdom capital at Gondār, by Fasilādās in 1632. This is not the case with the Jesuit-attributed buildings seen in the previous section, which are referred by historical sources (Jesuit and local royal chronicles in some cases) to the previous decades. A fundamental information on this chronological dichotomy refers to the construction techniques: in several instances, the missionaries wrote that lime mortar was unknown in the country until its introduction by technicians that they had brought from India in 1624 for the royal residence erected in Azāzo (e.g., Almeida in RASO VI, pp. 389–390). Some researchers have contended that mortar technology was already known in Ethiopia since the Aksumite times (e.g., Merid Wolde Aregay 1984), but the recorded examples are very few (Plant 1985, p. 15; Anfray 1988, p. 24; Phillipson 2009, p. 17) and are all located in far north Ṭəgray. During the Middle Ages, the great majority of Ṭəgrayan buildings and all those erected in the Amhara region were either rock-hewn or built with dry-stone or stone-and-mud masonry.

The few first-hand visitors to Gondār in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wrote that the palaces had been constructed by Indian technicians, sometimes specifying that they had been instructed by the Jesuits (see a good summary of data in Chiari 2012, pp. 43–44). Yet, most of the travelers to Ethiopia in the nineteenth century popularized the idea that the old mortar buildings in the country were ‘Portuguese’ (e.g., Vigoni 1881, *passim*). At the time of the Italian occupation (1936–1941), the scholars admitted that many of the works were locally made and posterior to the missionary period, but clearly stating that their constructors had

been half-caste people with Portuguese descent and instruction (e.g., Monti della Corte 1938, pp. 11–12). As a natural reaction to the downgrading of indigenous participation in the Gondarine architecture during the colonial period, the specialized and general publications dealing with this matter in the last decades have tended to inflate the local or ‘Oriental’ involvement to such an extent that they even come to conceal any kind of European, specially Jesuit, merit (e.g., Berry 2005; see below).

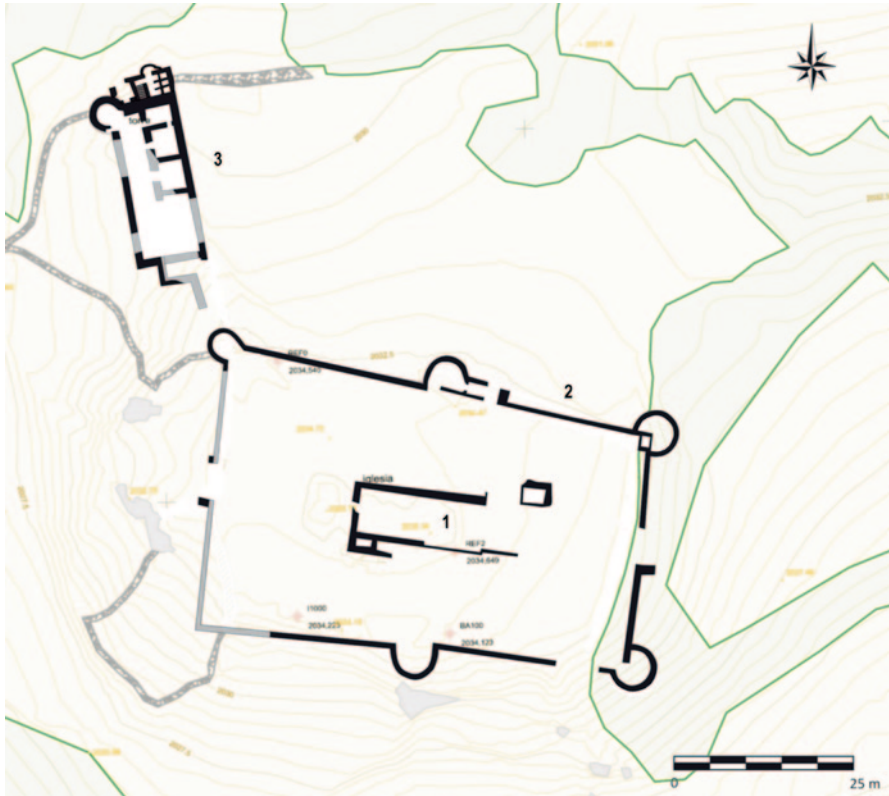
### 7.3 The Archaeological Excavations at Azäzo-Gannätä Iyäsus

The place called by the Jesuits *Ganet* or *Ganeta* was one of the main missionary centers in the Lake Ṭana area. It is located 13 km southwest of the city of Gondär and has been excavated by the archaeological team of the Complutense University of Madrid, directed by the author, from 2008 to 2011 (Fernández et al. 2012; Fernández 2013; see fieldwork preliminary reports in <http://ipce.mcu.es/difusion/publicaciones/revistas-inf.html>). The ruins had also been treated in some detail by Francis Anfray (1988, p. 13) and, especially, Ian Campbell (1994, 2004). The excavations concentrated mainly in three important areas: the Catholic church on the top of the hill, the fortifications surrounding that church, and a buried rectangular building, from which only the ruins of a circular tower and part of a wall were extant before our intervention (Fig. 7.9).

To celebrate the conversion of *nəguś* Susənyos to Catholicism on November 1 1621, a church was erected at Azäzo, being finished and consecrated in 1623 (Almeida in RASO VI, p. 388). As the lime mortar was not reintroduced in the country until a year later, the church was constructed with dry stone. The rectangular building that was excavated by our team had a foundation of rectangular ashlar dressing without mortar, but the scant remains left of the upper walls were made with lime mortar masonry, probably because the church was repaired with mortar at a later date than 1623 (Almeida in RASO XII, p. 266).

Around 1628, the emperor ordered to enclose the church with a fortification with a rectangular wall and rounded bastions, all made with mortar: [the emperor] ‘logo mandou faser á roda da igreia huma cerca de muro e baluartes, com que ficou huma boa fortaleza pera a terra’ ([The emperor] ... then ordered to make around the church a fence with a wall and bastions, and thus, he made a good fortress for the land) (Almeida in RASO VI, p. 390). The remains of this rectangular fence were clearly seen at the place before the archaeological investigation—though they had caused almost no commentaries among the specialists that visited the site—and the excavations have but revealed their great importance.

The fortified area is approximately rectangular, measuring 60 m in the E–W direction and 37 m (average width) in the N–S direction; thus, it encloses an area of about 2200 m<sup>2</sup>. Our excavations have examined the remains of three towers clearly visible before the digging, at north, south, and northwest, and uncovered the bur-



**Fig. 7.9** The general plan of the Azäzo church and palace compound. 1. Catholic church. 2. Fortified enclosure with rounded bastions. 3. Royal residence. (Plan by the Jesuit Missions Project-Universidad Complutense)

ied rests of the two eastern towers, the biggest of all the system (Fig. 7.10). The southwestern tower seems to have disappeared completely, as not one single rest was found after a thorough excavation of the corner area. One explanation could be that its stones were plundered, but after our experience in the Jesuit site of Gorgora Nova, where there is evidence that the buildings had not been completed at the time of the missionaries' expulsion, we now think the same could have happened here. Indeed, Almeida (Ibid.) said that the time necessary to finish the royal residence was 3 or 4 years (after its beginning in 1624) due to the lack of experienced workers and that 'afterwards' (*logo*) the church enclosure was begun. Maybe the time lapse between 1628 and the mission demise in 1632 was all too short for the work to be concluded.

The diameters of the conserved bastions are: 4.5 m (northwestern), 6 m (mid-northern), 6 m (northeastern), 7 m (southeastern), and 6 m (mid-southern); the dimensions are approximate averages as the remains of the constructions, deprived of the external plaster (well conserved only in the northwestern one) are not completely



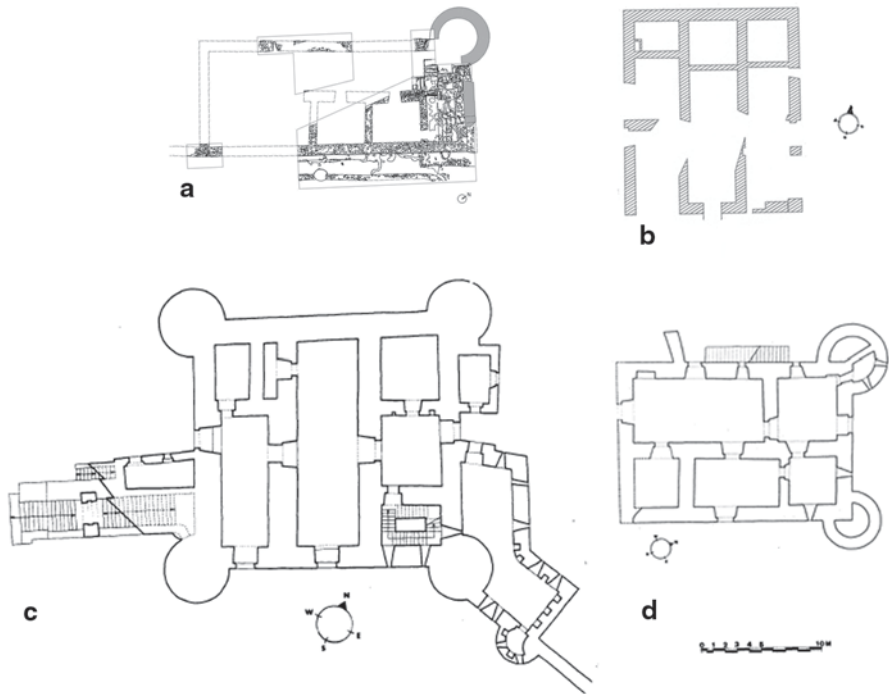


**Fig. 7.10** The bastions of the Azäzo church fortress, clockwise from upper left: northwestern, middle northern, southeastern, northeastern. Courtesy of the Jesuit Missions Project-Universidad Complutense

circular. Unfortunately, we have no information about the complete towers' height, yet they should be bigger than the connecting walls, whose preserved dimension is around 1.5 m in the northern side. Most of the dimensions of the Gondär palaces towers are smaller. Those of Fasilädäs' have 5.5 m as the maximum diameter in the ground floor and the Bäkaffa's tower is only 4 m width, the same dimension as the Məntəwwab palace tower at Qwəsqwam in Gondär, though the big tower in the Iyasu castle has a 7.20 m diameter in its lower part (Angelini 1971).

A rectangular building, 11 m north of the northwestern corner of the church fortress, was also partially excavated. The building was  $22.6 \times 9.7$  m and still preserved an extant round tower in its northwestern corner. The digging revealed five or six large rooms on the eastern side and what seems to be a wide corridor on the west. Almeida (in RASO VI, p. 390) described the residence made in Azäzo for Susənyos: 'no fim do anno de 1624 começou em Ganeta Jesus junto á igreja huns fermosos paços de pedra e cal, de dous sobrados, com seu terrado, duas salas, e coatro camaras nos baixos e outras tantas nos altos, afora dous como cubellos ou baluartes em dous cantos com que ficarao seguros e com alguma semelhança de fortaleza'<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> ('at the end of the year 1624 [the emperor] begun in Ganeta Jesus [Azäzo] close to the church several beautiful houses of stone and mortar, with two floors, with its terrace, two big rooms, and four small rooms in the lower floor and as many in the upper floor, in the outside there are two kind of towers or bastions in two corners that will maintain [the occupants] sure and with some resemblance of fortitude')



**Fig. 7.11** Plans of the palaces of **a.** Azäzo **b.** Dänqāz (both from the Jesuit period) **c.** Gondär (Fasilädäs) and **d.** Guzara. (Plans by the Jesuit Missions Project-Universidad Complutense and Angelini 1971 (Gondär-Fasil and Guzara))

Though there exist some doubts about the excavated building being the king's residence mentioned by the missionaries, some of its features support the identification. They are the large-sized rooms and walls, the monumental features of the doors between two of the rooms, the complicated system of underground water circulation (with a tripartite latrine or bath in the northern side connecting through a subterranean channel to the nearby river), the circular tower still preserved and the elegant staircases discovered at the northern side entrance of the building. A comparison between the plan of this construction and those of other important historical palaces in the Gondär region provides additional support to the hypothesis (Fig. 7.11).

For unknown reasons, the round tower of the residence was preserved extant, and today it can be still seen up to a height of 5.14 m. A local tradition recorded by Ian Campbell (2004, p. 44) informed that these ruins were once the residence of the *eččäge*, the abbot of the Däbrä Libanos monastic order, who occupied Azäzo immediately after the expulsion of the Catholic fathers. However, the possibility that this construction is datable after the mission demise can be, with some confidence, ruled out. The residence is connected to the church enclosure by a wall, from which a part still survives extant, and the construction technique of the buried walls and



the tower, a masonry consisting mainly of horizontal parallel courses of flat stones, is characteristic and has been recorded in other Jesuit buildings (the Azäzo church enclosure, Däbsan, Dänqáz, etc.), being quite different to the irregular stone masonry typical of the Gondärine buildings.

In sum, the evidence is at hand that a few years before the erection of the first and most prominent example of Gondärine architecture, the Fasilädäs castle, probably between 1638 and 1648 (Ranasinghe 2001, pp. 10–11), only a few kilometers apart, there were some constructions whose features strongly resembled those later reproduced in Gondär. Though parallels and influences can be found in many other places, both at west and east, why to look far away when the architects and masons had such a good model so near?

#### 7.4 On the Sources of Gondärine Architecture, or How to Cope with Colonial and Post-Colonial Prejudices

One of the most important and most frequently romanticized episodes of Ethiopian history was the short war between King Tewodros II (reigned 1855–1868), who reunified the country after the anarchical century following the Gondärine period and introduced it into the modern world, and the British Empire. Before the Napier expedition won the battle held in the king's last stronghold, Mäqdäla, on April 10 1868, Tewodros committed suicide and entered into the Abyssinian mythology. The face of the king, longhaired and somewhat recalling the Che's legendary portrait, appears today on thousands of T-shirts and on the ubiquitous paintings over the walls of many bars and cafes all through the country. A recent novel by the English writer Philip Marsden (2008), with the evocative title of 'The barefoot emperor,' has contributed to enlarge his fame among the western audiences.

Tewodros's tragedy is relevant because the purpose of the British attack was to liberate several European captives held by the emperor ('The Abyssinian question' in Britain). This was perhaps the first of a historical series of recent misunderstandings between Ethiopians and Westerners. When a few decades later, the *nəguś* Mənilək II spectacularly defeated the Italian troops in the battle of 'Adwa (1896), Ethiopia began a double-sided international career, both as a petty and miserable power daring to challenge the superior and seemingly invincible Western Civilization and as a contemporary David, symbolizing the growing struggle of dominated peoples against the Goliath of colonialism. It is amazing that the Jesuit remains would play a role in that tragedy. On the one hand, the image of classical Abyssinia as an age-old state in the heart of Africa, popularized in Europe through the missionary writings and Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* book, contributed to exclude Ethiopia from the shameful sharing out of the continent at the Berlin conference in 1884 (Martínez d'Alòs-Moner 2003). Yet, other actors of this play tended to use the strangeness of the seemingly western buildings in the Highlands as a proof of the local incompetence for technical advances.

To the second strand belong all kinds of intellectual derisions about indigenous capacities, and one of the first was expressed by a German missionary who was a member of the group of captives by Tewodros, Henry Stern. In a book published shortly after (Stern 1868), he said that at the site of Azäzo, there were ‘some gardens and a church which remind the vain Abyssinian of the superiority of the Franks [i.e. the westerners]’ (quoted in Pankhurst 1982, p. 112).

For not extending his story for too long, the next chapter of the lengthy construction of a derogatory image of Ethiopians as builders may well be the already mentioned book by Monti della Corte on the Gondär castles, written when the whole country was occupied by the Italian army. For him, with the exception of a few ‘Moresque curves’ or windows, the palaces show one common south-European imprint, which was clearly ‘ours’ (*nostrama*) (Monti della Corte 1938, p. 11). The palaces are ‘clothes of our own house’ (*roba di casa nostra*), a very useful consideration in the della Corte’s opinion, which could be addressed to those people, who in Europe complained about the Italian cruelty over an African state coming from an ancient civilization (of course, both ‘civilization’ and ‘cruelty’ were bracketed) (Monti della Corte 1938, p. 13). Ethiopia owes its ‘extremely modest’ archaeological heritage to the sons of St. Ignatius (Monti della Corte 1938, p. 18) or to the half-caste inheritors of the Portuguese soldiers who arrived in the country shortly before (Monti della Corte 1938, *passim*), whose characters can still be seen in the physical features of some Gondärine people of ‘European’ appearance (Monti della Corte 1938, p. 12–13). The monuments were built to the memory of the ‘great’ local kings, a greatness that has to be measured, of course, with the standard of Amharic ‘greatness’ (Monti della Corte 1938, p. 43). Other improprieties hurled by Conti included calling the Ethiopians ‘extremely lazy,’ dirty, or ‘fanatically xenophobic.’ The book cover is also an instructive example of colonial ideology, with the majestic palaces in the background of a bucolic and primitive African farming scene (Fig. 7.12).

An endless list of similar opinions can be easily tracked down in the European writings from the first half of the twentieth century, mostly, yet by no means all of them, Italian. No wonder, then, that the authors that wrote in the aftermath of the Ethiopian independence after the World War II, or later in the outburst of newly independent African countries in the 1960s and those who were later inspired by the powerful intellectual movement of ‘post-colonial’ theory, adopted a radically opposing view.

The acceptance of the local influence, both in design and man-power for the Gondärine monuments, came in parallel with a new derogatory view of the Jesuit period and its influx on the Ethiopian course of history, both by local and foreign scholars. Thus, in her impassionate book about Ethiopia, Sylvia Pankhurst (1955, p. 351) refers to the emperor Susənyos as falling ‘victim of the dangerous influence of Pero Pais [Pedro Páez, the Jesuit superior since 1603]’. Sylvia’s son, the historian and dean of Ethiopian Studies, Richard Pankhurst (1998, p. 108) was not more indulgent: ‘The Jesuits ... disappeared ignominiously from the Ethiopian stage, leaving relatively little in the country, apart from a few palaces and churches, to show for their efforts.’ The historian Donald Crummey (2000, p. 69) expressed another still more adverse opinion: ‘The Ethiopian encounter with Catholicism was disastrous ... it added misery to misery.’ Unsurprisingly, Ethiopian historians

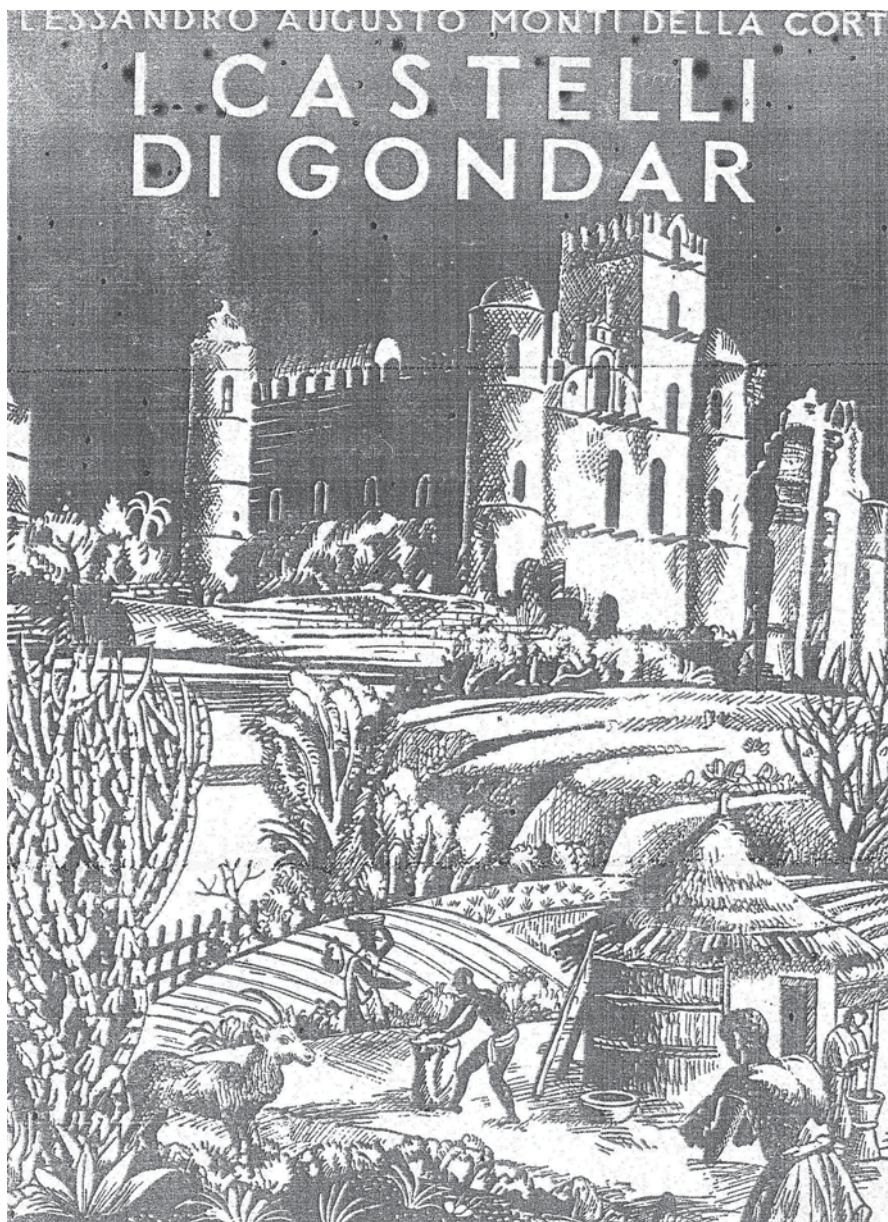


Fig. 7.12 'I Castelli di Gondär' by A.A. Monti della Corte (1938). Book cover

openly coincided with their international counterparts, and for example, the late Merid Wolde Aregay (1998, p. 55) wrote that 'the ruinous civil wars, the fatuous controversies of the clergy and, at the same time, the limited achievements in art and architecture which characterize the Gondärine period were all the legacy of Susinyos' brief flirtation with Jesuit missionaries.'



It is my modest opinion that time is ripe for a better understanding of the Jesuit period in Ethiopia. The local elites, especially the religious centers and monastic orders, had been practicing a sophisticated church architecture since before the end of the Aksumite kingdom, combining local and foreign, particularly Oriental, influences in an extraordinarily attractive and original style; its more outstanding examples being the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela (Phillipson 2009). Quite the contrary, civil architecture had forgotten the style of inventive Aksumite palaces and no remains are known from the royal or aristocratic residences in the country for more than one millennium. Recent archaeological excavations at the site of a Medieval royal camp have confirmed what was previously known by historical sources, that the houses and compounds were made of perishable materials that left few or no remains at all when abandoned (Hirsch and Poissonnier 2000).

As it has been pointed out (e.g., Pennec 2003; Martínez d'Àlos-Moner 2015), one of the most enduring influences of the missionary activity in the country was the building of a modern form of State by the Ethiopian royal class. This included the establishment of a fixed capital (in Gondär) and was unmistakably accompanied and reinforced by the stone-and-mortar durable architecture for palaces and fortifications. It has also been signaled that the military aspect of Gondärine palaces is more apparent than real, more symbolic than functional. As Shaalini Ranasinghe (2001, p. 107) very aptly said, 'as a means of security, a fortified structure would have limited entrances and openings, however, all four façades of the [Fasilädäs] palace are pierced by one to three large wooden doors that lead immediately into the prime interior spaces without any buffer area.' 'Curiously, this seemed to be also the intention of the missionaries with their fortifications, which had only 'some resemblance of fortitude,' as we saw above, yet they were 'good enough for the land.'

Going beyond the material aspects of the architecture just explored in this chapter, we could profit from recent theoretical views of colonial intercourse between dominants and dominated, which have highlighted the indubitable advantages of hybridization and imitation as a means of resistance (Bhabha 2004). The Ethiopian local elites took advantage from the technical innovations brought by Portuguese technicians and missionaries, both to reject domination of the country by an external power, disguised in the shape of a variant of their own religion, and to consolidate their own power over the regional aristocracy and the much poorer farming communities for centuries to come. As Cañete and Torres (in preparation) pertinently said, it is 'essential to go beyond the mere dichotomous scheme of the European versus the local, to define the particular social relations and representations that were significant in that specific context.'

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# Chapter 8

## Colonial Encounters in Spanish Equatorial Africa (Eighteenth–Twentieth Centuries)

Alfredo González-Ruibal, Llorenç Picornell Gelabert  
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### 8.1 Introduction: An Archaeology of Coloniality in Equatorial Africa

In this chapter, we would like to explore an unlikely Spanish colony from an archaeological point of view: Equatorial Guinea. Despite the apparent irrelevance of the territory, it is our contention that the country offers a perfect example of the work of coloniality and, as such, it is of great interest to understand modern colonialism, the slave trade, racism, and capitalist expansion in Africa and the Americas. A caveat is needed: We speak of colonial encounters in Spanish Equatorial Guinea rather than Spanish colonialism. Paradoxically, Spaniards were absent from their own colony for a long time. Our narration, then, covers the interactions between Africans and diverse European powers in a territory that was nominally Spanish from the late eighteenth century.

Spanish colonialism is associated with the Americas—for good reasons. It is there where the greater amount of historical archaeology has been carried out to date, from the city of Buenos Aires to the missions of northern California. However, Spain had other colonial possessions on all continents which have been scarcely studied from an archaeological point of view. In the case of Africa, it occupied—

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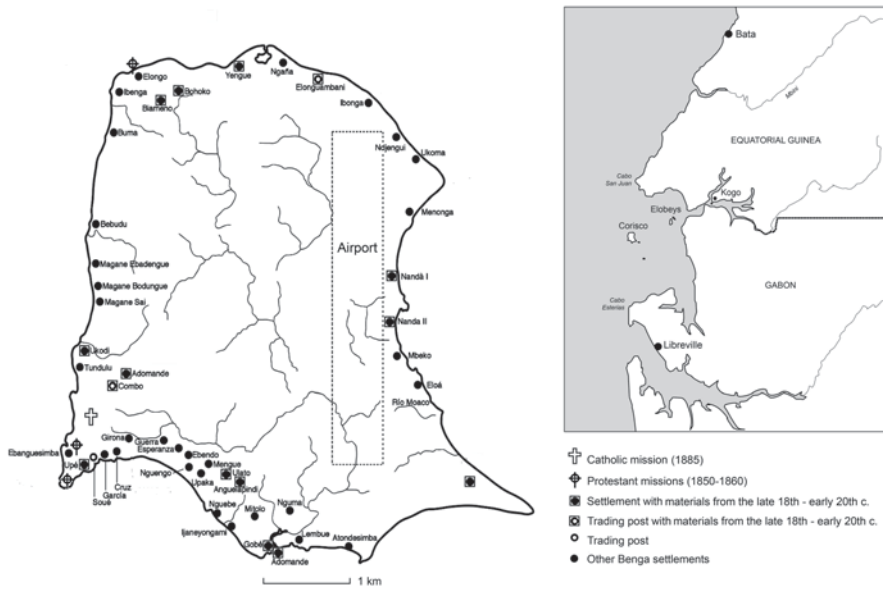
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and in some cases still occupies—territories in northern Morocco, Ifni, the Western Sahara, and Equatorial Guinea. The Spanish (or Iberian) presence in these areas can be traced back to the fifteenth century even if the actual colonization of the regions was not carried out until the mid-nineteenth century.

Among all the colonial possessions of Spain, one of the most peculiar was Equatorial Guinea, a tiny territory of 28,000 km<sup>2</sup> located just north of the equator line. It became part of Spain officially in 1777 as a result of the Treaty of San Ildefonso, by which Spain and Portugal exchanged territories (Castro and Calle 1992). For the African possessions, Spain gave away Colonia del Sacramento (Uruguay). Spain was interested in occupying some coastal territories in Africa that could provide slaves to the South American colonies. The territories in question were a series of islands (Bioko, Annobon, Corisco, and Elobays) of which only Bioko, with 2000 km<sup>2</sup>, was of a notable size. The others were minuscule (Corisco: 15 km<sup>2</sup>, Elobey Chico 0.02 km<sup>2</sup>). They had been first encountered by the Portuguese during the travels in search for an alternate route to China in the 1470s, but by 1600, when historical records become more abundant, this coast appears to be a multinational trading destination. The Spaniards soon found that the Portuguese claim to the land was rather unsubstantiated: They had no permanent presence and they were by no means the only or more important merchants there, the Dutch and French having the upper hand. Disappointed, the Spaniards abandoned the newly acquired islands already in 1780, and they did not return in earnest until 1843. During the interlude, the British established Port Clarence on Bioko Island (now Malabo, the capital of the country), allegedly to chase slave traders in the Gulf of Guinea. The great thrust to the colonization enterprise was the scramble for Africa during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In fact, the annexation of the continental part of Equatorial Guinea did not really start before the first decade of the twentieth century (Nerin 2010).

In this chapter, we will present the archaeological evidence on coloniality gathered as part of a project developed between 2009 and 2012 in the Muni estuary, in the southernmost part of Equatorial Guinea (Fig. 8.1) and more specifically on the island of Corisco. On this island, we conducted a systematic survey that covered 30% of the island's surface, profiting from works carried out at that moment of our research for the construction of an airstrip, an airport terminal, and various roads and touristic buildings. Through the surveys, 32 archaeological sites were documented (15 corresponding to prehistoric occupations and 17 to historical sites), which is equivalent to a density of two sites per km<sup>2</sup>. We carried out open area excavations in the Iron Age site of Nandá and sondages in two other contemporary sites. Our work in historical archaeology consisted in the excavation of a rubbish dump (village of Biameno) and the recording of surface materials in all other sites. Especial attention was paid to architectural remains from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which were recorded and mapped (missions, commercial outposts, and cemeteries). The same strategy was developed on the island of Elobey Chico, which was a regional capital for a while. We surveyed the entire surface of the island and documented several sites (commercial outposts, government buildings, the Catholic mission, and the cemetery).



**Fig. 8.1** Historical sites in Corisco (toponyms after Alba Valenciano Mañé) and location of the area of study: The Muni estuary goes from Kogo to the island of Corisco

We use the term ‘coloniality’ because proper colonialism was only really at work between the 1880s and 1968, whereas archaeological data of interactions with Europeans go back to the seventeenth century. These interactions can be described as within the confines of the coloniality of power. This term, coined by Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2000), refers to the new articulation of power, labor, and knowledge that emerged as a result of the Iberian expansion in the Americas at the end of the fifteenth century. It comprises both direct colonial occupation and exploitation and other forms of economic and cultural violence determined by the racial, sexual, and epistemic hierarchies of the Western capitalist expansion. From this point of view, the relations between Africa and Europe can be deemed ‘colonial’ before proper colonies were established during the nineteenth century. But we can also speak of coloniality for the present interactions between Africa and the West (and now China and India).

## 8.2 Before Coloniality: The Iron Age

The prehistoric past of Central Africa has remained unknown for a large period of time. It has been only from the 1970s onwards that archaeology has finally developed in the region. Most of the largest fieldwork projects have been linked to infrastructure works, by which archaeologists have had the chance to penetrate the dense rainforest that covers almost all Central Africa (e.g., Lavachery et al. 2010).

Unfortunately, most of the work has been limited to test pits or small trenches and long-term open excavations are still very rare—our excavations in Corisco (with almost 1000 m<sup>2</sup> uncovered) are an exception to this. Despite its limitations, these activities have helped to develop a more accurate picture of Central African precolonial times, albeit a very fragmented one.

Archaeologists agree in setting the beginning of the Iron Age in west-central Africa during the first millennium BC (Lanfranchi and Clist 1991). The information available from the coastal fringe that runs from the south of Cameroon to the north of Gabon is still meager, although it has considerably increased in the past few years. The most usual archaeological features from this period in all this area are refuse pits, generally filled with pottery sherds and oil palm nuts. Pits and postholes have been documented in archaeological sites from Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon, suggesting an economy based on horticulture, but highly dependent on gathering and hunting (Clist 2005; Eggert et al. 2006).

Apart from these modest domestic remains, Iron Age funerary contexts have also been documented in west-central Africa. The most spectacular are those that we have excavated in the site of Nandá, a large cemetery on the island of Corisco (González-Ruibal et al. 2011, 2013), but graves have also been documented in Cameroon (Meister 2010) and Gabon (Clist 1995, pp. 167–168). They have yielded an important array of metal and ceramic materials which allow us to reconstruct important social aspects of the Late Prehistory of the area.

Before extensive archaeological data were available, Vansina (1990) suggested the existence of an ‘ancient and common tradition’ widely shared by the precolonial peoples of Central Africa, a tradition that comprised a set of common beliefs, practices, and attitudes. His argumentation was almost completely based on linguistic and oral sources and very little on archaeology. However, the development of the latter confirmed Vansina’s hypothesis (González-Ruibal et al. 2013). Vansina argued that precolonial West-African societies were based on the House as the main social unit (Vansina 1990, p. 73). Every House was governed by a big man, whose political power was not inherited but rather achieved by virtue of his own personal abilities, charisma, and ritual knowledge. He had the responsibility of creating a large family by marrying several women through bridewealth. In this society, status would have much to do with spiritual abilities such as magical knowledge and with wealth in the shape of iron. In an environment dominated by tropical rainforest, where cattle are almost impossible to raise due to diseases, iron objects became the main repository of wealth. Every big man had to be the owner of a high number of iron objects. Archaeology has shown that this hypothetical picture is quite accurate (and ancient): Early Iron Age graves of big men have been found in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea with axes, hoes, special-purpose money, knives, spoons, spear-heads, sickle knives, necklaces, bracelets, and anklets.

In the particular case of Corisco, all these objects have been found in the burial area of Nandá. The cemetery was used during the first and early second millennia AD in two phases where two different funerary rituals were performed. Unfortunately, very few human remains have been recovered from the tombs since the acidity of the rainforest soil prevents their conservation. The extant remains make it im-

possible to specify the gender of the buried. During the first phase (ca. 50 BC–400 AD), secondary interment was the norm: It consisted in the deposition of human bones in shallow pits with iron currency (for bridewealth), adornments, axes, and other objects. During the second phase (ca. 1000–1200 AD), we find graves with primary inhumations. In them, the corpses lay surrounded by pots with offerings, most notably small clay bottles probably containing liquor. While some burials are wealthier during this second phase, the general impression is that of a non-ranked society, quite different to other societies that developed as kingdoms further north (Nigeria) or south (Congo). Non-ranked societies with petty chiefs subjected to social surveillance prevailed in the area until the implementation of colonialism.

The Iron Age in Corisco came to an end around the thirteenth century AD, when the island was definitely abandoned. However, Iron Age traditions and societies survived for some centuries on the coast and in the interior of the continent, only to disappear under the pressure of colonialism during the twentieth century.

### **8.3 The Settlement of the ‘Indigenous’ People: The Benga**

The islands of the Muni remained virtually empty for several centuries of both indigenous and Europeans. The latter established some ephemeral forts, whose traces in some cases we were able to locate. Ironically, the present ‘indigenous’ inhabitants of Corisco did not arrive at the estuary until well after the Europeans started to visit the island, and, in fact, their arrival coincides almost exactly with the Spanish acquisition of the territory. The people in question, the Benga, came in large numbers only after the mid-eighteenth century and more likely around the 1770s. We can infer this from oral history and the lack of European references to the people before that date (Nerín 2015).

#### **8.3.1 Oral History**

The Benga are a Bantu ethnic group of the Ndowé family, currently inhabiting the coastal areas between southern Cameroon and northern Gabon. Benga oral traditions tell that the people arrived at the coastal area of the Muni and at the islands from a distant land. The episodes narrated by the Benga are similar to the rest of the Ndowé epic poems of origin, and chrono-linguistic studies coincide in considering that the Benga and their neighbors have coexisted and interacted in the area for several centuries (Nerín 2015). Ndowé epic poems of origin coincide in pointing out that the original land of the people was in northeast Africa, providing a diversity of homelands that link the Ndowé with great nations such as pharaonic Egypt, the Sabeian Kingdom of Ethiopia, or the Hebrews (Creus 2006, p. 186). Epic poems are a living and malleable cultural expression, adaptable to the needs and perspectives of a specific time, and, as such, they have changed before, during, and after the

creation of the discourses of colonial historiography to become a political tool for the community (Creus 2006, p. 208). Nevertheless, it is clear that the different versions of the oral memory of the arrival of the Benga and the Ndowé communities are mainly coincident and coherent (cf. Andeke 2005; Creus 2006; Nerín 2015). The motivation to start the voyage to the coast is either because they heard about the profitable trade with the Europeans (Andeke 2005, p. 15) or because there was a revelation from the ancestors (Creus 2006). The Benga arrived after an extraordinary and dangerous journey that displaced the entire people to the land they presently inhabit, overcoming important risks with heroism and eluding hostile enemy tribes (Creus 2006, p. 184). The essential structure of the narration has recurrent and relevant milestones, such as the episode when the group, pursued by enemies, is blocked at the Lokondje, a fast-flowing river of dark water—usually identified with the Dja River in Cameroon (Andeke 2005, p. 77). It was a small antelope, called Ndjombé, which showed an imperceptible ford to an old woman, which allowed the Benga to cross and escape from their enemies.

After this and other episodes, the Benga arrived at the coast, to the north of the Muni estuary. Ekela Mbengo, one of the leaders of the community, settled in Djeke, on the coast of the estuary, and found there the village from where the Benga that discovered the islands of Corisco and Elobeys set sail (Andeke 2005, pp. 15–18). Once a year, in September, the Benga of Corisco (called Mandji by them) celebrated the Ndjombé as a commemoration of the travel that brought them to the island. During the Ndjombé, they perform through the landscape the most important episodes of the epic tale: the war against the enemies, the Ndjombé antelope in the Lokondje river, the discovering of the ford that allowed them to cross the river, a big tree that blocked them again, the arrival to the sea, and the final discovery of the islands (Andeke 2005).

According to the old people who we interviewed, the settlement in Corisco began in two different areas: in the central part of the northern coast, between Ibonga and Bohoko, and in the southeastern part, between Cruz and Ulato. These places coincide with the densest areas of population. Archaeological evidence supports this picture, as the earliest archaeological evidence comes from the surroundings of Cruz, in the south, and Biameno, adjacent to Bohoko, in the north.

### **8.3.2 *The Archaeological Evidence***

A late eighteenth century date for the earliest Benga settlement is suggested by the archaeological materials identified during our survey. Most historic places of the Benga that we documented can be traced back to the last quarter of the eighteenth century, but not before. The large majority of the oldest imported materials in Corisco (pearlwares of the edge-decorated and underglaze blue hand-painted types) have a chronological range of 1770–1830 (Fig. 8.2). There is only one exception: four fragments from two Nottingham stonewares from the site of Biameno. This production is dated between 1690 and 1800, but it started to decline after 1775. This



is consistent, however, with our proposed date for the arrival of the Benga in the 1760s–1770s. Virtually no indigenous materials have been documented, not even in the earliest Benga settlements. Only some surface findings and materials from old excavations in the southwest could be linked to the persistence of an indigenous material culture during the very beginning of the settlement.

The problem is that the earliest archaeological evidence that can be related to an indigenous population is sparse, ambiguous, and often out of context. The most interesting materials were gathered by missionary Ramón Perramón in the 1960s in a site located in the southwestern part of the island, known as Cruz and that at the time was occupied by the barracks of the colonial guards. The excavations, conducted with no method whatsoever yielded several artifacts that can be related to the earliest occupation of the island by the Benga. Perramón (1968, 1969) speaks vaguely of ‘glass, iron objects and pipes’ that he identifies (wrongly) as evidence of the Corisco Company. He mentions ‘innumerable pipe stems’ spread all over the surface of the site, human and faunal remains, many glass beads, iron nails, copper and iron frag-



**Fig. 8.2** Early European artifacts from Corisco (late eighteenth century): 1 Pipes (Cruz), 2 Brass manilla (Ibenga), 3 Brass manilla (Nandá), 4 Scalloped rim with impressed curved lines (Gobé), 5 Hand-painted monochrome blue underglaze tureen lid (Biameno), and 6 Nottingham stoneware (Biameno)

ments and objects, charcoal and other traces of metallurgical work. The illustrations that accompany his publications show a glass bead and five clay pipes or fragments of pipes, of which two are European and three African. The only complete European piece is a stub-stemmed pipe with the characteristic heel or spur under the bowl. It is either English or Dutch and dated to the second half of the eighteenth century. A similar example was found recently in Hoko Point.

We excavated several test pits in the grounds of the former camp of the colonial guard and conducted an intensive survey in the surroundings. The excavation revealed that the stratigraphy had been completely altered and only furnished two items related to the European trade: a red glass bead and a small fragment of a knife. It is not completely certain that Perramón found the pipes in the place we dug. It is possible that they come from a location just opposite the camp to the east, today completely razed by one of the bases of the construction company operating on the island (SOMAGEC). We were told that during the bulldozing of the area pottery and bronze manillas turned up, and indeed some sherds were still visible in 2009. Some of the plain pottery documented at the SOMAGEC base and its surroundings could be related to the first Benga settlement of Corisco. The same can be said of bronze or brass manillas, which were only used in this region after the arrival of the Portuguese. We have found brass manillas or bracelets in three other sites of the island during survey (Nandá, UIato, and Ibenga), and in the latter place we were told that people used to find old burials with similar bracelets.

The contact period is not much better known in neighboring Gabon (Clist 2005, pp. 681–688), where the 1500–1900 period has been tentatively labeled as ‘Group IV,’ due to the lack of a well-researched site to name it (Clist 1995, pp. 168–169). Two indigenous settlements have been studied in Libreville that yield local pottery, glass beads, and clay pipes (Dutch and English). The date of the materials places the sites again in a rather late period, not before 1740. The indigenous pottery shows an impoverishment in quality after the European contact.

All the archaeological and historical evidence for the region, then, suggests that European–African interactions were very limited until the mid- to late eighteenth century. The area between Cameroon and Gabon remained a backwater, a situation that only changed with the growing demand for slaves and the difficulties met by the trade along the northern shores of the Gulf of Guinea after the British ban in 1807. The arrival of the Benga people seems to have been at least partially motivated by a desire to trade with Europeans, and indeed the displacement of the slave trade to the south gave them the opportunity to thrive.

## 8.4 Consumption

The archaeological record of the Benga is, in fact, characterized by the overwhelming presence of Western industrial artifacts from the time of the settlement to the present. There is virtually nothing that can be identified as African per se: Almost 100% of the material culture that we documented from the 1770s onwards was produced by Western industries. Particularly astonishing is the sudden and wholesale

replacement of iron tools, a technology in which Africans had excelled for around two millennia, by industrial ones. The old site of Biameno (1770s–1910s), for instance, has yielded numerous industrial, imported iron objects, such as three-legged iron cast pots (which are ubiquitous elsewhere on the island), two machetes, a knife, an axe, a chisel, and a large hinge from a gate. In the bridewealth list provided by Benga Jack Romando in the 1820s, there are 11 iron bars, 6 knives, and 2 cutlasses (Boteler 1835, p. 404). This evinces the social relevance of iron in marriage transactions, a phenomenon that we have traced back to the Early Iron Age: The old special purpose currency, however, has been replaced by industrial iron artifacts. In this section, we will describe four categories of things: bodies, houses, wares, and social drugs. The social implications of these materials will be dealt with in more detail in the final section of this chapter.

### 8.4.1 *Dress and the Body*

During the precolonial and early colonial Iron Age, the peoples of the Muni and Gabon estuaries wore different kinds of raffia and bark cloth. Archaeologically, this is attested in a raffia palm kernel from the fifth century AD found at the site of Nandá (González-Ruibal et al. 2013, p. 136) and the decoration of Late Iron Age pots, whose patterns are strikingly similar to those of Central African textiles (Denbow 2012, p. 403). The situation, however, changed dramatically with the arrival of the Europeans. Already by the late seventeenth century, cloth was in large demand. Speaking of the Gabon river, Willem Bosman (1705, p. 403) notes that the indigenous people wear ‘hats, perukes, coats’ and specifies that they do it ‘in a very dismal manner.’ Some decades later, we know that the short-lived Corisco Company is trading in a variety of fabrics and dresses (Silveira 1954, pp. 7, 9), and a century later cloth is still described as ‘the article in most request’ (Boteler 1835, p. 408). This passion for dressing explains the extraordinary success of sewing machines by the late nineteenth century: Dozens of sewing machine tables have been documented in sites all over the island. Photos of the late nineteenth century, in fact, show the Benga wearing a variety of European dresses as well as long gowns of West-African style: Imported fabric was arranged to local taste using the machines (as they are still today).

The same local taste is apparent in the acquisition of glass beads, where there is a clear preference toward blue and turquoise beads. This preference is probably rooted in Benga values. This would explain Mary Kingsley’s assertion, referring to house painting, that ‘Cobalt blue seems a great feature in this island.... One rarely sees any other coloured paint’ (Kingsley 2010, p. 411). Blue transfer pottery and annular ware in blue and white were also exceedingly popular (see below). What were (or are) the specific cultural connotations of blue for the Benga are still unclear to us: Still today, cobalt and turquoise are the most popular colors in local houses.

Despite these African appropriations, the truth is that the spread of fabric and dresses ended with a certain form of bodily expression, for which partial nudity was crucial. The work of the Presbyterians was essential to the dressing of the Benga

in a Western way (since dresses they had already) (Nerín 2015). Clothing the body implied a transformation of bodily gestures and bodily habits: The non-repressed body would survive in the form of the Mekuyo, the masked dancers that engage in a furious dance, covered in a raffia cloak.

The colonization of the body is not limited to dress, adornments, and the gestures implied by them. The body underwent a deep sensuous transformation, outwards and inwards. In relation to the inside, we should mention the medicines that have been found in different sites, mostly for the period between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Unfortunately, medicinal bottles are notoriously difficult to identify when they do not have inscriptions on the glass, as in this case, because similar containers were used for different substances. The appearance of medicines do not imply necessarily a complete reconceptualization of the body, as traditional and modern remedies still cohabit in different ways here and in other parts of Africa. Perhaps more relevant is the overabundance of perfume bottles, whose proliferation was already noted by traveler Mary Kingsley (2010, p. 412), when she described a table inside a Benga house covered with ‘glass scent bottles.’ These are not always easy to distinguish from medicines, but in Biameno we found 14 small flasks, of which 10 belong undoubtedly to perfume. Four other sites yielded complete perfume bottles during survey. They can be dated from the late nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. We could only identify one name, Floralia, an inexpensive Spanish brand from Madrid that was popular during the 1920s and 1930s.

#### 8.4.2 *Wares*

Pottery is a good witness to Benga history from the late eighteenth century onwards. Interestingly, written sources hardly mention the import of wares, glass artifacts, and other objects that are plentiful in the archaeological record. They were probably considered of little importance in economic terms, although they certainly were relevant from a social point of view. Proof of this is again the testimony of Jack Romando: The payment for his best wife included 16 pieces of tableware (four dishes, four plates, four mugs, and four glasses). The categories of objects match well those that we have documented in our surveys and excavations.

We found 15 sites that yielded materials from between the 1770s and the 1910s. Of these, we studied the findings of 11. Only one site was excavated (Biameno), pottery from the other 10 comes from surface survey. However, in all cases the materials come from dumps where artifacts from different periods appear mixed together. We were able to single out a minimum number of 226 individual vessels from these sites (all of them imported), of which 171 correspond to decorated vessels whose type we could identify (Table 8.1). There are three periods which are well represented in the wares, roughly coinciding with the early, middle, and late nineteenth centuries.

The earliest phase, from the time of the settlement to the 1840s, is completely monopolized by English pearlwares and creamwares (Fig. 8.3). The types documented in Corisco correspond to those usually found in the Caribbean, the USA, or

**Table 8.1** Types of imported pottery in Corisco per site

	Gobé-Adomande	Gobé-Alto	Ulato	Ibonga	Biameno	Upé	Misión	Nandá	Yengue	Cor-16	Combo	Total per type	Phase
Shell-edged early	3	1	2		3						2	11	I
Nottingham stoneware					2							2	I
Blue underglaze		2			4							6	I
Annular brown			1	1								2	I
Blue transfer	2		3	1	7		2				1	18	I/II
Blue transfer Willow			4	1	5	1	2			1	1	13	I/II
Shell-edged late					2			1				3	II
Annular blue	4	1	4		1							10	II
Black/red transfer	1		3		3				1			8	II
Flow blue/black	1		3			1	1			1		6	II
Splatter	1				1							2	II
Hand-painted floral polychrome	3		8		5	2	3				1	22	III
Stamped spongeware	7	2	10		9	2			2	1	3	36	III
Other hand-painted	1		1		2							4	III
Lusteware			1		1							1	III
Spanish earthenware			1		1							1	III
Porcelain												3	III
Other stonewares	4	1	8		3			1	1	1	2	21	I-III
<b>Total per site</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>171</b>	



**Fig. 8.3** Main types of imported ware in the Muni (1770s–1910s). *Phase I*: 1 Staffordshire blue transfer with Willow pattern (Upé). 2 Blue Willow transfer (Ulato). 3 Blue Willow transfer (Biameno). 4 Scalloped rims with impressed curved lines (Combo). 5 Early annular ware (Ibonga). 6 Hand-painted blue underglaze (Biameno). *Phase II*: 7 Annular ware (Ulato). 8 Annular ware (Biameno). 9 Flown blue dish (Upé). 10 Unscalped impressed rim (Nandá). *Phase III*: 11 Early cut spongeware with hand-painted motifs (Biameno). 12 Late cut spongeware (Upé). 13 Floral hand-painted underglaze polychrome ware (Ulato). The sherds on the right follow the Gaudy Dutch pattern. 14 Hand-painted spongeware (Biameno)

the Southern Cone for this period: We have annular ware in earthy colors, shell-edged wares with scalloped rim and blue painting, some blue underglaze hand-painted wares with floral motifs, and the ubiquitous blue transferware. From the latter we have several examples of Chinoiserie, very typical of the first third of the nineteenth century (including the famous Willow pattern), classical motifs and scenes of gardens and the European countryside. One of the best-preserved Willow-patterned transferwares has a Staffordshire stamp. In general, the assemblage from this period is perfectly compatible with contemporary Western bourgeois sets.

The second period (ca. 1840–1870) is still almost exclusively dominated by English imports. This is more striking, since at this time there were already Spanish traders on the island and the estuary had been officially incorporated into Spain, as we have seen, but the English trade continued to predominate in the Gulf of Guinea until the 1860s, when they were replaced by the Germans (Knoll and Hiery 2010, p. 20). Whitewares prevail, decorated with a variety of transfer prints (blue, black, and red). Apart from floral patterns, we have other figurative scenes, such as gothic ruins or flying swallows. Related to these is the flowing colors ware, which appears in blue and black and in both scenic and flowery patterns. Also belonging to these periods are unscalloped impressed rims in blue which replaced feather and shell-edged wares. There are also many annular wares of a later type with blue-white wide strips and the first examples of hand-painted pottery, of which we have at least a good example of the ‘Gaudy Dutch’ style from the site of Ulato.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the quality of the ware plummeted and English ceramics start sharing the market with cheap German, Dutch, Scottish, and Spanish products. An indication of the impoverishment of the Benga, related to their loss of autonomy and the end of the slave trade, is the fact that transferwares became less and less frequent until they virtually disappear by the end of the century. The last transferwares are from the Cartuja de Sevilla factory in southern Spain and can be dated to the early twentieth century. After the First World War, imported wares diminish visibly, but they still come in some numbers—all or almost all from Spain. Another indication of decline is the growth of polychrome hand-painted wares, of very poor quality, that reach their peak at the end of the nineteenth century. Some were produced by the German Villeroy & Boch Company, which is to be related with the establishment in the estuary of C. Woermann, a trading company from Hamburg. The most complete stamp indicates that the wares come from Wallerfangen, a factory that worked between 1874 and 1909, precisely the most active period of Woermann in west-central Africa.

The most popular product during the second half of the nineteenth century, however, is stamped spongeware. These cheap, colorful ceramics were produced for export by Dutch, English, and particularly Scottish factories and are extremely abundant all over Africa, the Americas and other colonized territories (India and Indonesia) during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. In Africa, they have been dug up in large numbers in Ghana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zanzibar (Hall et al 1990; Kinahan 2001, pp. 72–85; Bredwa-Mensah 2004, p. 215; Croucher 2011; Apoh 2013, p. 367). In Corisco, low-quality hand-painted and spongewares represent around 38% of all pottery documented for



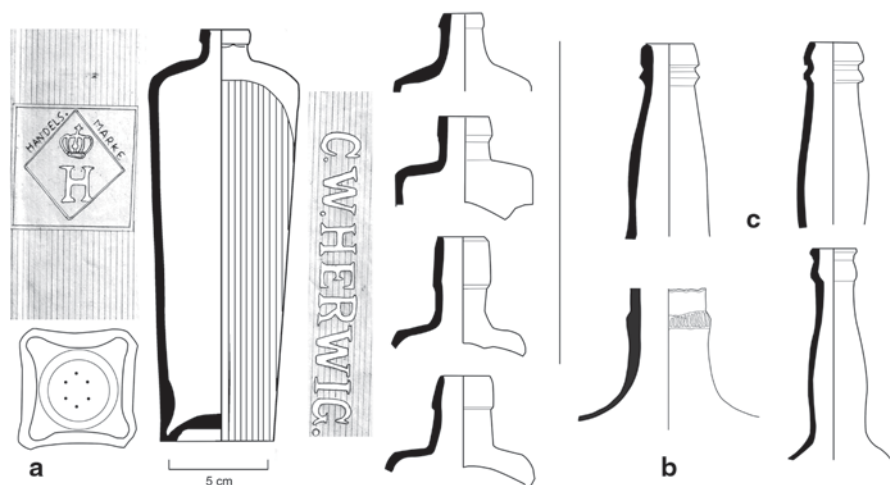
the 1770–1910 period and around 90% of all the pottery from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The abundance of imported European wares in the Muni estuary and the absolute absence of any indigenous materials whatsoever that have been preserved in the archaeological record (pottery, stone, metal) set it apart from other African regions subjected to a regime of coloniality. The usual situation is that local materials remain predominant, whereas imported vessels are either marginal (e.g., Apoh 2013, p. 368) or at least much less abundant than local productions (Thiaw 2012, p. 57).

### 8.4.3 *Drinking and Smoking*

The arrival of the Europeans also meant the arrival of drugs. While the people of the region had alcoholic drinks already (probably palm wine), these were consumed collectively and in festive and ritual occasions: As we noted, many gourd-shaped clay bottles are found in precolonial Late Iron Age burials. European products (rum first, later gin and wine) created a strong dependency on beverages of high alcoholic content and favored the spread of individual consumption and alcoholism. Already in the late seventeenth century, Africans were consuming considerable amounts of imported alcohol. Willem Bosman (1705, p. 403) says that ‘excessive brandy drinking seems the innate vice of all Negroes,’ but the people from Gabon ‘exceed all others that have ever conversed with.’ Bosman seems oblivious of the fact that it was Europeans who introduced binge drinking in Africa. For the seventeenth century we only have the evidence from Elobey Chico published by Perramón (1968). He mentions Dutch stoneware bottles inscribed ‘Rotterdam.’

We can see in the archaeological record how the consumption of alcohol increases steadily from the late eighteenth century to the present. Alcohol first arrived in stoneware bottles, which are not very abundant. These continued arriving until the late nineteenth century, although from the 1880s they are massively replaced by glass case bottles (Fig. 8.4). The change is related to the Germans taking hold of the trade in the area. During the period between the 1880s and the beginning of the First World War, gin is the most popular alcoholic drink, judging from the amount of bottles present in dumps. In the site of Biameno for the 1890–1910 period, out of a minimum number of 70 bottles, we have 52% of gin (MNI=37), 42% of wine (MNI=30), and 6% of other alcoholic beverages (MNI=3; the proportion of gin is close to 60% if we consider stoneware bottles and not only glass). Other late nineteenth century dumps, such as those of Domande and Elobey Chico, although not quantified, show a clear majority of gin case bottles. The most popular brand is C. W. Herwig, a shipping company that was established in Hamburg in 1862, a few years later than C. Woermann. From this period are also a bottle of Kümmel, spiced liquor, from J. A. Gilka (Berlin), and a ‘torpedo bottle’ from the Island of Man. This type of container was used predominantly for sodas and nonalcoholic beverages between the 1870s and 1910s.



**Fig. 8.4** Typical glass bottles from 1890s–1910s in the Muni, **a** German gin case bottles, **b** Large wine bottle (*garrafón*), **c** Wine bottles. All from a dump in Biameno

Wine becomes increasingly popular during the early twentieth century, mainly because the German companies lose access to Africa during the First World War and Spain mostly exports wines. Twentieth century sites, such as the later Biameno, Upé or Gobé, are littered with wine bottles. Pedro Domecq products, in particular, are very abundant and appear in many sites of Corisco. The most popular wine, based on the containers documented to date, was sherry. This can be explained for the high alcoholic content of sherries (15°–25°) in comparison to normal wines. The Spanish control of the market also meant the arrival of other national products, such as brandy, anisette, and beer. Bottles of Osborne brandy have been found in different sites, such as Combo. A bottle of Puigmal anisette from Barcelona (1910s) appeared in the Benga settlement of Upé. Ironically, the name of the liquor was *Patria* ('fatherland'). Bottles from other Catalanian alcohols are quite frequent, which evinces the implication of Catalonia in the colonization of Equatorial Guinea. They shipped alcohol—and priests—as we will see.

By the mid-twentieth century, the rate of gin containers decreases around 10% in comparison with the 1900s and beer is attested in the archaeological record for the first time: It represents 15% of all alcoholic beverages in Biameno. It is important to note, however, that gin is by then produced in Spain and the containers are 20% bigger than the old German bottles. Nevertheless, wine also arrives in large bottles (*garrafones*), with a capacity of several liters, which are very frequent in most sites from the 1890s (Adomande, Gobé, Biameno, and Hoko) up to the mid-twentieth century, when they are eventually superseded by 75 cc bottles. Alcoholic containers located in Biameno for the mid-twentieth century represent 95% of all glass containers, whereas they were only 72% at the turn of the century, the rest being medicines, perfumes, glasses, and other objects. All these artifacts vanish from the archaeological record, another evidence of the impoverishment of the Benga. It is

important to note some exceptions to this panorama of increasing alcoholism and decreasing cosmopolitanism: An alcoholic flask was found in Upé with the legend ‘Federal Law forbids the sale or re-use of this bottle.’ The legend was mandatory for all liquor bottles produced in the USA between 1935 and 1964,<sup>1</sup> that is, the final phase of Spanish colonialism in Guinea. It might have contained whisky. In addition, the site of Gobé yielded two bottles of Coca-Cola produced in French Equatorial Africa. Soft drinks became popular by the end of the twentieth century and today represent around 20% of the containers found in dumps (as opposed to 5% in mid-twentieth-century Biameño). The rate of alcoholism is very high in Equatorial Guinea at present: A long-term collateral damage of the coloniality of power, since Spain, unlike other colonies, did little to prevent the selling of alcohol to Africans (Perlasia 2009).

Smoking has an uneven history. According to the written sources, it was the most-demanded European good at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Boteler 1835). Today, however, while alcoholism is rife, tobacco consumption is not so widespread. Clay pipes are relatively abundant in the estuary. The islanders find smoking pipes frequently, and they identify the habit of smoking with something their ancestors did (as the consumption of gin, which was described to us as a practice typical of the ‘strong old men of olden times’). That the habit of smoking was rooted in the local population is proved by the African pipes, which, as we have pointed out, are to be dated at the onset of the Benga settlement of Corisco. The most abundant pipes, however, are plain white clay items. In addition, we have located three pipes that do not correspond to this model (apart from those older ones mentioned in a previous section): a fluted stem, a stamped one with the name of the Hatton & Cookson trading company (both from Elobey Chico), and a well-preserved pipe with the head of a Turk, a typical British product of the Victorian era.

#### 8.4.4 *Domestic Space*

Benga architecture underwent important changes throughout the nineteenth century, and it became a material expression of Benga distinction in relation to other ethnic groups. All groups in the area introduced European elements in their vernacular architectures: Rectangular layouts became common with the Fang and Mpongwe of the mainland and the Bubi of Bioko Island. However, the Benga houses not only adopted the rectangular floor plan but also introduced important changes outdoors and indoors and in the materials used for building the structures. Thatching with palm leaves was replaced by corrugated metal sheet, and concrete was incorporated in the construction of houses. The process started already in the nineteenth century, well before tin roofs became common in Bioko or the continent.

We have documented different Benga homesteads made with permanent materials and following a colonial style. Their typology clearly sets them apart from

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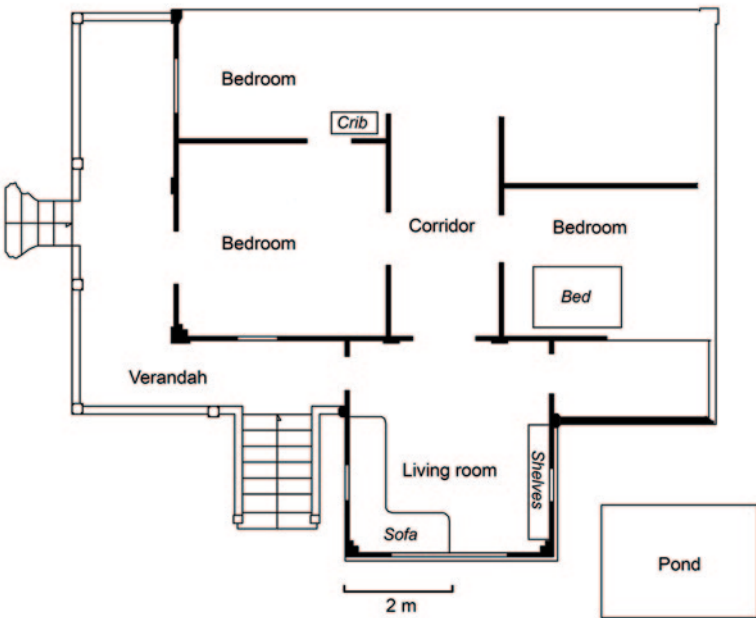
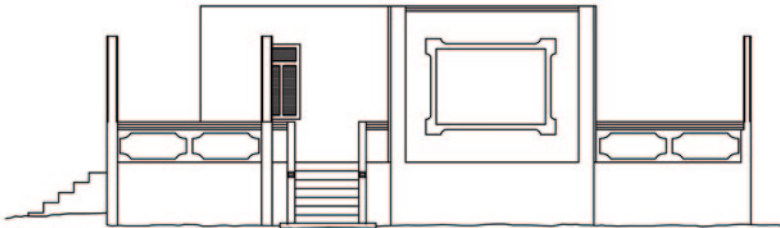
<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sha.org/bottle/liquor.htm>.

vernacular constructions. In the village of Buma, we studied a house located 30 m away from a trading post, which belonged to a Benga man who had worked for the colonial administration in Elobey Chico and who probably was the owner of the post (Fig. 8.5). The building follows the typology of the colonial houses common to Equatorial Guinea and Gabon: The house is surrounded by a veranda with columns and has large windows in the main living room, facing the beach, and monumental stairs. The roof is made of corrugated metal sheet. The main stairs have a molded banister, and the exterior decoration of the façade, which follows the style found in the trading posts of Elobey Chico, is present in pilasters and windows with Venetian shutters. The distribution of the interior space is organized around a central corridor.

The surroundings of the house also show a colonial influence, with a garden delimited by palm trees, a concrete pond, marked pathways, and other permanent structures now covered by vegetation. One interesting element is a concrete platform around which we found fragments of tableware, glass bottles, and metal cooking pots. These findings indicate that the kitchen was located outdoors. This is an important element of the vernacular organization of domestic space that has persisted to date, despite massive Western influence.

A few other examples of Benga houses made in colonial style and using durable materials have been found elsewhere on the island (Magane and Ukodi), dated to the mid-twentieth century, but the most common type is a house with a concrete base, wooden walls, and metallic roof. Style and structure are similar in both wooden and concrete houses. Both have verandas, stairs, Venetian shutters, and a divided indoor space. Kitchens, as in Buma, are systematically located in independent buildings near the main house. This means that changes in gastro-politics were stronger in eating performances (where imported wares were lavishly used, see below) than in cooking. Eating took place inside the house, in the living room, surrounded by European bourgeois paraphernalia: crockery, furniture, porcelain figures, and lamps—all of which have been found in our surveys and excavations. Partition walls, furniture, and individual bedrooms indicate changing notions of individuality, privacy, and intimacy. In contrast to this, the preparation of food, performed by women, was done outside the bourgeois home, in a separate space, and the organization of the kitchen has remained very traditional as well as the objects attached to it (wooden mortar, baskets, smoking platform, stools, etc.).

Gardening and landscaping is another European feature visible in different parts of the island: We find gardens delimited by palm trees or breadfruit trees (*Artocarpus altilis*) at the entrance of the villages. The *Artocarpus* was introduced by the Presbyterian missionaries as an ornamental plant. We have documented rows of these trees flanking the entrance to the deserted village of Biameno. They were probably planted during the mid- or late nineteenth century. Gardening implies an important change in the perception of the landscape, which is ordered and disciplined in a European way: The island of Elobey Chico which saw the densest European settlement was largely deforested by the late nineteenth century, and the few extant trees were planted in rows for decoration, flanking the rectilinear paths that crisscrossed the island. Something that did not change in the landscape was the settlement pattern.



**Fig. 8.5** Above: a vernacular Benga wooden house, similar to those in use already during the late nineteenth century (Ibonga). Below: ruins of a colonial-style Benga house in concrete from the early twentieth century (Buma)

Whereas on the remote island of Annobon the colonizers resettled the population in rigid, orthogonal villages built ex novo, in the Muni the Benga continued living in highly dispersed small settlements of just three or four homesteads linked by kin ties.

## 8.5 A Colonial Landscape

A colonial landscape started to develop in the Muni estuary in the 1830s with the permanent settlement of the first Europeans. The pioneer settlers were Spanish merchants trying to profit from the slave trade in the late 1830s. Soon after, the Benga theoretically accepted Spanish rule (1843). We say theoretically because the Benga never effectively complied with the clear political hierarchies promoted by the coloniality of power. They never recognized a common ‘king’ or ‘chief’ who had a real hierarchical control of all the Benga population, or even of the Benga inhabiting the islands of the Muni estuary or just in Corisco. In any case, both Bengas and Spaniards had a common interest in promoting the slave trade. With British pressure, the trade was eventually abandoned; Spanish traders left and other Whites came: Presbyterian missionaries from New Jersey in 1850, French, German, and British merchants, Spanish Catholic missionaries, and finally administrators and soldiers.

They would be responsible for the expansion and solidification of a monumental colonial landscape during the second half of the nineteenth century. This process would be short lived, since colonial architecture would start to decay already by the beginning of the twentieth century. Between 1884 and 1926, the island of Elobey Chico became the capital of the regional subgovernment. That latter year the capital was transferred to the mainland. This displacement and the collapse of economic globalization caused by the First World War triggered a process of decadence that only stopped at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In what follows, we will describe the three main shapes (religious, administrative, and commercial) that took the colonial landscape during its period of splendor.

### 8.5.1 *The Religious Landscape: The Materiality of the Spirit*

Despite its small size and population (less than a thousand inhabitants), Corisco was evangelized by both Protestants and Catholics simultaneously. The former arrived in 1850, the latter in 1860 and cohabited uneasily for half a century. The material landscapes that they left behind are radically different and express the divergent ways in which evangelization was understood.

The traces of the Presbyterian presence are flimsy. The first mission was founded in Evanguésimba, in the southeastern part of Corisco: A church was built in 1856 and a school for girls. Later they constructed another station in Ugobi, in a cape further south, and another one in Elongo, in the northern edge of Corisco (Nassau



1888, p. 6). Today the remains of the first mission are covered in thick jungle. We were able to document the stone-and-concrete foundations of one building, whose walls were originally made of wood. The station in Elongo is half abandoned, but not in ruins: A small church was built relatively recently in concrete, showing continuity in the cult; there are also several abandoned wooden shacks with corrugated iron roofs. Some of the objects in the site roughly date to the period of the mission, such as a large Bristol stoneware jar (second half of the nineteenth century) and a Singer sewing machine table (late nineteenth–early twentieth century). The sites of Evanguesimba and Elongo are hardly distinguishable from any Benga settlement in either style or size.

The most monumental remains belong to the cemetery in Evanguesimba that is still cleared of vegetation more or less regularly. The cemetery occupies a small plot between the Presbyterian mission and the Catholic. It is made of a dozen graves (Fig. 8.6), some of them belonging to the American missionaries mentioned by Nassau (1888, pp. 5–6), some to the small children of the missionaries, who succumbed

**Fig. 8.6** Tombstone of Presbyterian Reverend George McQueen, from Schenectady, New York, deceased in 1859 at the age of 32. Evanguesimba (Corisco)



to tropical diseases, and one to a certain Captain Stewart, a Mason, who was assassinated in Elobey in 1852. English traveler Mary Kingsley, who visited Corisco in 1895 noted that dead white people are there in ‘sad quantities,’ due to the ravages of disease among the missionaries, who wrongly considered that the island would be healthier than the continent (Kingsley 2010, p. 394). All tombstones date to the 1850s and 1860s: The Corisco church started to decline in 1875, when the missionaries moved to the continent (Nerín 2015). The monuments are made in marble or limestone, follow the fashionable styles at the time and were sculpted abroad and shipped to Corisco: One bears an inscription saying ‘Sent from Penn[sylvania] by the F[oreign] M[ission] S[ervice] of the U.S.A.’ The absence of African tombs indicates that the local population continued to bury their dead inside the domestic compounds, as they had been doing for centuries.

Another Protestant cemetery was documented on the island of Elobey Chico. It is a large cemetery that occupies a large portion of the small island, although only a fraction of the enclosure is occupied by the Protestant cemetery—the rest is Catholic. Inside the Protestant enclosure there are only four tombstones, although there might be more burials, two of German and two of British merchants. The German ones are both from Hamburg, the hometown of the companies trading with Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, as we have seen, and the date of death is 1899 in both cases (different months). The British tombstones are dated in 1894 and 1911. As in the case of Evanguésimba, the stones were clearly fashioned abroad.

The contrast of the Protestant landscape with the Catholic one could not be greater. It was the Claretians, an order from Catalonia, who were in charge of winning the Benga to the Catholic faith since 1885 (after a brief, failed stint by the Jesuits). Like the Presbyterians, they found enormous obstacles, and they died in great numbers: A monument to the deceased was built in the cemetery of Elobey, and its ruins are visible today. It is telling that, as opposed to the individualized tombstones of the Protestants, the Catholic missionaries lay in graves without inscription around a common monument.

Despite massive state support to the Claretians, their efforts were not completely successful. Still today, the Benga are divided among Catholics and Protestants, pre-Christian traditions and customs persist and religious buildings are in ruins. The buildings are not only impressive, but conceived to be so. In the Muni, we have the remains of three missions: one on the mainland (Cape San Juan) and two on the islands (Elobey Chico and Corisco). In addition, a large church was built in Kogo, also on the continent. All the Claretian missions in Equatorial Guinea (six by 1890) were built at the same time during the 1880s and share style and structure. Regarding the structure, they all have a church, a house for the missionaries, and a boarding school. In terms of style, the buildings resorted to a historicist style with gothic elements, which is similar to Protestant and Catholic missions elsewhere in Africa.

There are three elements that we would like to emphasize, because they are eloquent of the character of the colonization. First, Catholic buildings were, by far, the most spectacular structures that were built in the colony during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The administrative, industrial, and commercial architectures pale in comparison to the churches and missions. Second, the setting of the religious buildings is in no way haphazard. It has been chosen carefully in all cases for the

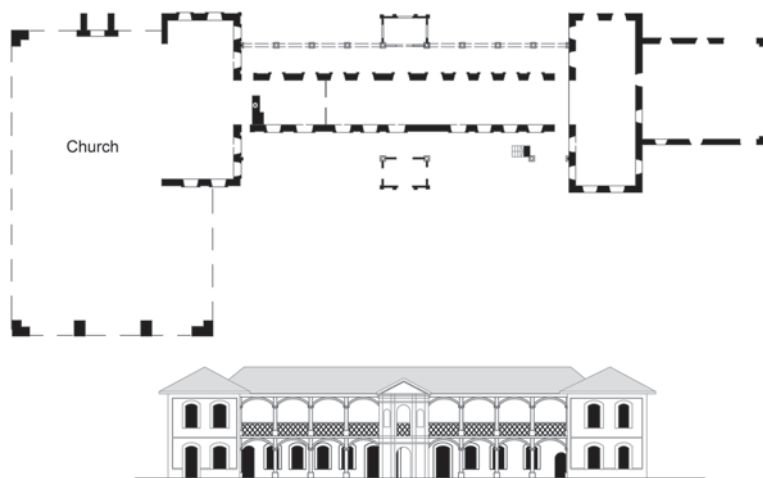


Fig. 8.7 The Claretian mission of Corisco (ca. 1885). (Map by Sonia García)

greatest scenic effect. All three churches that we visited (Kogo, Elobey Chico, and Corisco) are located in the same kind of emplacement: in a topographically prominent place and facing the sea. They are (or were) very conspicuous, and, in fact, the approach to the building from the coast seems to be designed to be awe-inspiring—particularly so in Corisco and Kogo. In the latter place, a long stair emphasizes the impression. Third, there is ample use of trompe-l’oeil in all these buildings. On the one hand, they look bigger than they actually are. On the other, certain elements that do not have a practical function but an aesthetic one are oversized. This makes churches appear particularly tall. The mission of Corisco (Fig. 8.7) is a particularly good example of the use of trompe l’oeil. Seen from the beach, the building seems enormous, because the longest side runs parallel to the coast. However, the structure is very narrow and offers rather limited functional space in relation to the overall size. Practical function was clearly not as important as aesthetics.

The material logic of the religious landscapes of the Muni is in keeping with the respective religious ideals of the Protestants and the Catholics. The Protestant made a larger investment in nonmaterial aspects (Benga learning, Bible translation, and reading). The Catholics, in typical Counter-Reformation style, invested in the realm of the sensuous. In different ways, they were trying to reach the same end: The conversion of the heathen and the transformation of the ‘savages,’ whom they despised, into ‘civilized.’

### 8.5.2 *The Administrative Landscape: The Materiality of Politics*

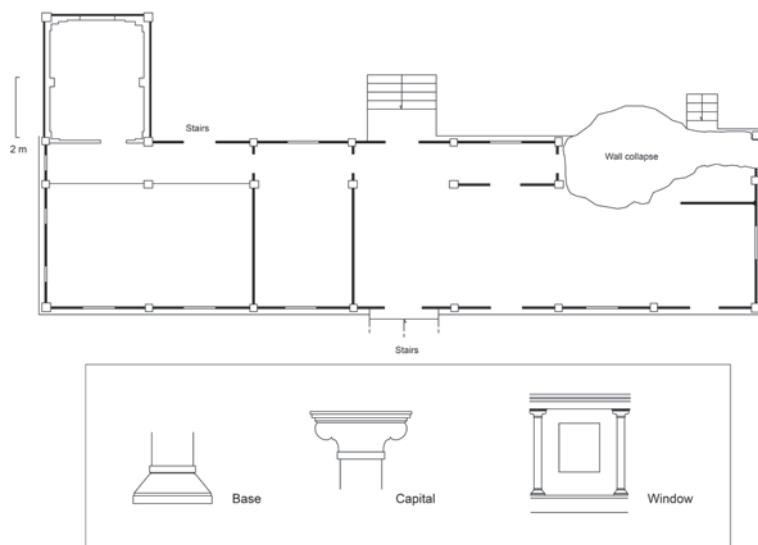
In 1884, the Spanish crown definitively created a subgovernment in Elobey Chico, which became a colonial capital in miniature (the island has only 19 ha). A building for the government and a camp for the colonial guard were established. The former,

even if not impressive in size, especially if compared to the religious architecture of the Muni, was a rather sumptuous house. It was organized into three different blocks, with a longer, central one. The two lateral blocks have verandas along the façade and stairs that give access to the building, which is raised on a 1 m high base-ment. Walls are noticeably sturdier (40 cm thick) than those of other neighboring buildings and were constructed with sandstone blocks fixed with cement mortar. Partition walls were made of bricks. The decorative elements are completely foreign to the Spanish colonial architecture and draw instead upon the fashionable Central European style of the period, which is perceptible in the arches and windowsills, the double windows with a central column or the multiplicity of internal doors communicating spaces. Altogether, they express a concern for the shape and decoration of the building as a symbol of refinement and civilization.

In contrast to the elaboration of administrative and religious buildings, military architecture was not devised to cause an impression, but simply on utilitarian grounds. Evidences of Spanish military camps are scarce. The original headquarters of the Colonial Guard in Corisco was originally located near the village of Cruz, in the southwestern part of the island, but we found no traces of it during our excavations. The barracks were originally made of wood and disappeared (or were recycled) soon after the place was abandoned. During the twentieth, the headquarters of the Colonial Guard were moved to the Benga village of Gobé, on the southern shore of Corisco. Only the stone and concrete foundations of the barracks are preserved under the vegetation and they are difficult to distinguish from civil houses that also existed there. Near the camp, there is a benchmark of the Spanish Navy made in concrete and dated in 1950. More abundant remains are to be found on the island of Elobey Chico. The headquarters of the Colonial Guard was built on the site of the old Dutch fort and today is covered by secondary forest. However, the concrete foundations of two structures are still visible: a housing block and the latrines.

### **8.5.3 *The Commercial Landscape: The Materiality of Trade***

The more numerous remains related to the European presence in the Muni are *factorías*, trading posts, of the British, German, French, and Spanish. Most companies were established in Elobey Chico, which was the capital of the commerce in the Muni estuary from the 1850s. At the turn of the twentieth century, the main trading company was the German C. Woermann, followed by the English (Hatton & Cookson and John Holt). Woermann and Holt had established posts in Elobey in 1871–1872 (Morillas 2002, p. 488). Before that date, there were already some French traders in the area. Spaniards were mostly absent until 1887, when the Compañía Transatlántica established a base in Elobey (Morillas 2002, pp. 489). Secondary posts were established in Corisco and a few in Elobey Grande. The first buildings had concrete and stone foundations and wooden walls, with iron pillars to sustain the second floor in some cases. From the 1880s onwards larger buildings develop, made of precast concrete shipped from Europe.



**Fig. 8.8** Building of the Woermann Company in Elobey Chico. (Map by Sonia García)

In Elobey, the jungle made it difficult to identify the remains and even more to map them. However, we were able to document four buildings belonging to different companies. Two of them, close together in the south, are the remains of the English and German posts existing there in the 1870s (Unzueta y Yuste 1944, p. 32). They had walls of corrugated metal sheet and wooden boards set on concrete and stone foundations. In the surroundings, there are scatters of whiteware and gin case bottles. In the eastern shore, we found several traces of commercial activities: a dump with many gin and wine bottles (1890–1910); the ruins of a trading post, and a dock with a floating pontoon, in whose surroundings we retrieved two clay pipes, one with a stamp from Hatton & Cookson. The ruins of the factory belong in all likelihood to this latter post, which had its own peer. It was made in perishable materials, except the concrete platform and pillars that sustained a second story, which are the only remains preserved to date. The most impressive structure, however, is on the western shore. It is a large, L-shaped, two-storied building with seven rooms. It has an elegant design, enhanced with molded pilasters and capitals, all in concrete. It is probably the post of the Woermann Company, and it can be dated to the 1890s (Fig. 8.8). With 140 m<sup>2</sup> of floor surface, it was one of the largest, nonreligious buildings in the Muni during the nineteenth century.

In Corisco, we documented trading posts in four places, two in the southeast (Sowe, Combo), one in the north (Elonguambani), and one in the east (Buma). They are located close to the two natural berths on the islands. They are all small, simple structures with precast concrete walling. They belonged to C. Woermann, except the one in Buma. Style, structure, and decoration are similar to the buildings found in Elobey, and particularly to the large Woermann house (although in smaller size). They can be probably dated to the 1890s as well.

## 8.6 Understanding Coloniality Through the Archaeological Record

There are two archaeological threads that we would like to follow to finish this chapter. The first has to do with the way in which the *Benga* were transformed through the colonial encounters with Europeans and Americans. The second is the nature of Spanish colonialism in Africa.

The first thread reveals a downward itinerary for the *Benga*, from bourgeois to pariah. During the period between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century, wares and other objects place the *Benga* within the Western bourgeois class. After the mid-nineteenth century, they are expelled from the ranks of the global middle class and forced to join the world of the subaltern. Their ware is the same as that of the colonized peoples elsewhere in the world from the Antilles to Indonesia, but also of the internal colonized within Europe: the peasants, the proletariat, and the poor. It is worth noting that the ubiquitous hand-painted wares of Corisco were considered a ‘peasant style’ in Europe, that is, uncouth and tacky, for the simple people of the countryside (the ‘Gaudy Dutch’). The situation of the *Benga* was not unique. Elsewhere on the continent, Africans were being displaced by white entrepreneurs and administrators (Kaplow 1977). The situation is particularly dramatic in the case of the Namibian Bastards. They had mixed Boer and Hottentot ancestry. Like the *Benga*, they eagerly embraced European civilization. Eugen Fischer, the scientist who would decisively influence racial laws in Nazi Germany, studied the Bastards in the early twentieth century and concluded that they had to be treated like indigenous peoples, that is, expelled from the bourgeois world that they had carved for themselves. He suggested that they could be employed for menial jobs (Fischer 1913, pp. 303–304).

The situation is not restricted to Africa. Historical archaeologists in the USA have consistently documented the impoverishment of thriving communities of African-Americans. Groups that could be considered as middle class or with an important bourgeois element at the end of the nineteenth century ended up ghettoized by the mid-twentieth through a combination of capitalist crises and racial ideology (e.g., Meyer 1996; Mullins 2006). The same process hit the *Benga*: They suffered the cycles of capitalism (the end of the slave trade, the ivory trade, and the rubber boom) and the stiffening of racial hierarchies after the 1880s. The combination of both ended with their wealth and status at the turn of the century. What we see in the archaeological record is the coloniality of power at work: ‘The new historical identities produced around the foundation of the idea of race in the new global structure of the control of labor were associated with social roles and geohistorical places. In this way, both race and the division of labor remained structurally linked and mutually reinforcing, in spite of the fact that neither of them were necessarily dependent on the other in order to exist or change. In this way, a systematic racial division of labor was imposed’ (Quijano 2000, p. 536). The systematic division of labor imposed by coloniality decided that the Bastards had to be menial workers and *Benga* women concubines for the white.



The pots tell us about the impoverishment of the Benga throughout the nineteenth century, but also about other changes in Benga society: a colonial process of civilization. This is part of the myth of modernity, which is based on the assumption that European civilization is the most developed and superior and has to be followed by all peoples in the world (Dussel 1993, p. 75). Yet, this superior civilization is not restricted to the realm of ideas, knowledge, and values. It is also a process of civilization in the sense described by Norbert Elias (1989), that is, a cultural process of subjectification that is played out in manners and taste. It is through subjectification that the values of coloniality are thoroughly incorporated by non-European peoples and subjectification is produced materially, through wares, furniture, perfumes, and the use of space.

The wares that we have documented are very different from the point of view of its social use to those that we have for the Iron Age, despite the fact that the Benga and the Iron Age communities shared the same cultural background and many social values (González-Ruibal et al. 2013). Thus, while there are tureens and platters for serving food, the large majority of ceramics after the late eighteenth century belongs to individual dishes and mugs, which are, of course, absent in the Iron Age record, where communal pots are the norm. Dishes, cups, and mugs come along with glasses (another evidence of individual consumption) and tables, where food is presented and eaten, and individual chairs where diners seat. New objects are also chamber pots, which again indicate a particular technology of the body in keeping with Western ideas of civilization. The habitus of civilization was not only transmitted through artifacts that implied bodily habits, gestures, and dispositions but also through the iconography represented in many of the vessels: European landscapes, architectures, and history (classic and medieval ruins). They were part of the construction of a colonized subjectivity for the Benga, which would be later reinforced through education. Not surprising, therefore, that the inhabitants of Equatorial Guinea know today about Pompeii or Iron Age Iberia, but not about their own history. Coloniality also suppresses the Other's past.

The other thread has to do with the nature of Spanish colonialism in Equatorial Africa. Ruins speak volumes of this colonial enterprise. We have ruins of Spanish churches and missions, but virtually not of Spanish traders. The main commercial houses were English and German. The same can be said of the products that were imported, at least between the 1770s and the 1910s. Spain was an undeveloped country, which had missed the industrial revolution and which lacked an entrepreneurial bourgeois class. In Germany, it was capitalist companies such as C. Woermann that were pressing the government to provide military and political cover to their economic expansion (Fitzpatrick 2008, p. 88); in Spain, colonialism would be Ancien-Régime style: a venture of priests and soldiers. It is not strange, then, that the colonial landscape of Equatorial Guinea looks so anachronistic: It is a colonialism of the sixteenth century. As Marx famously said, history repeats itself, but the first time as a tragedy and the second as a farce. Compared to the genocidal grandeur of the conquest of America, the mean colonization of tiny Equatorial Guinea is a farce revealed at best in its materiality: fake missions that are just a facade,

churches that crumble, a minuscule capital on an island without water, an economy in the hands of foreign powers.

Yet, it could also be argued that colonialism, per se, was an anachronism in the late nineteenth century, a phenomenon from Roman times or the sixteenth century, out of synchrony with the period (a century after Enlightenment). From this point of view, the materiality of Spanish colonialism in Africa is, perhaps, more authentic and more revealing of the true nature of the second wave of European imperialism, because it shows coloniality as it truly is: a continuum, from the fifteenth century to the present. The Dutch were trading cheap gin in the early seventeenth century, and it is still cheap gin that we found in contemporary dumps in Corisco. Coloniality has changed less than we might think. And archaeology is there to prove it.

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**Part III**  
**Archaeologies of Early Modern Spanish**  
**Colonialism in the Pacific**

# Chapter 9

## Beginning Historical Archaeology in Vanuatu: Recent Projects on the Archaeology of Spanish, French, and Anglophone Colonialism

James Flexner, Matthew Spriggs, Stuart Bedford and Marcelin Abong

### 9.1 Introduction

Some of the surprise findings of the Southeast Solomon Islands Culture History Project in 1970 included features and artifacts associated with early Spanish settlements from the 1595 voyages of Mendaña and Quirós on the islands of Santa Cruz (also called Nendö or Ndeni) and Makira (formerly San Cristobal). Notably, diagnostic glazed pottery on sites with defensive ditch and bank features was found that relates to this early colonial encounter between Spanish explorers and Melanesian islanders (Allen and Green 1972; Green 1973; Allen 1976; see also Gibbs this volume). A critical interpretation of the Spanish settlement on Pamua (Makira) is that the duration of occupation was best considered in terms of ‘a period which must be reckoned in months not years’ (Green 1973, p. 27). This issue of duration is an important one when trying to understand the visibility of early colonial archaeological sites on Pacific landscapes and for interpreting the impacts that early contacts had on island societies.

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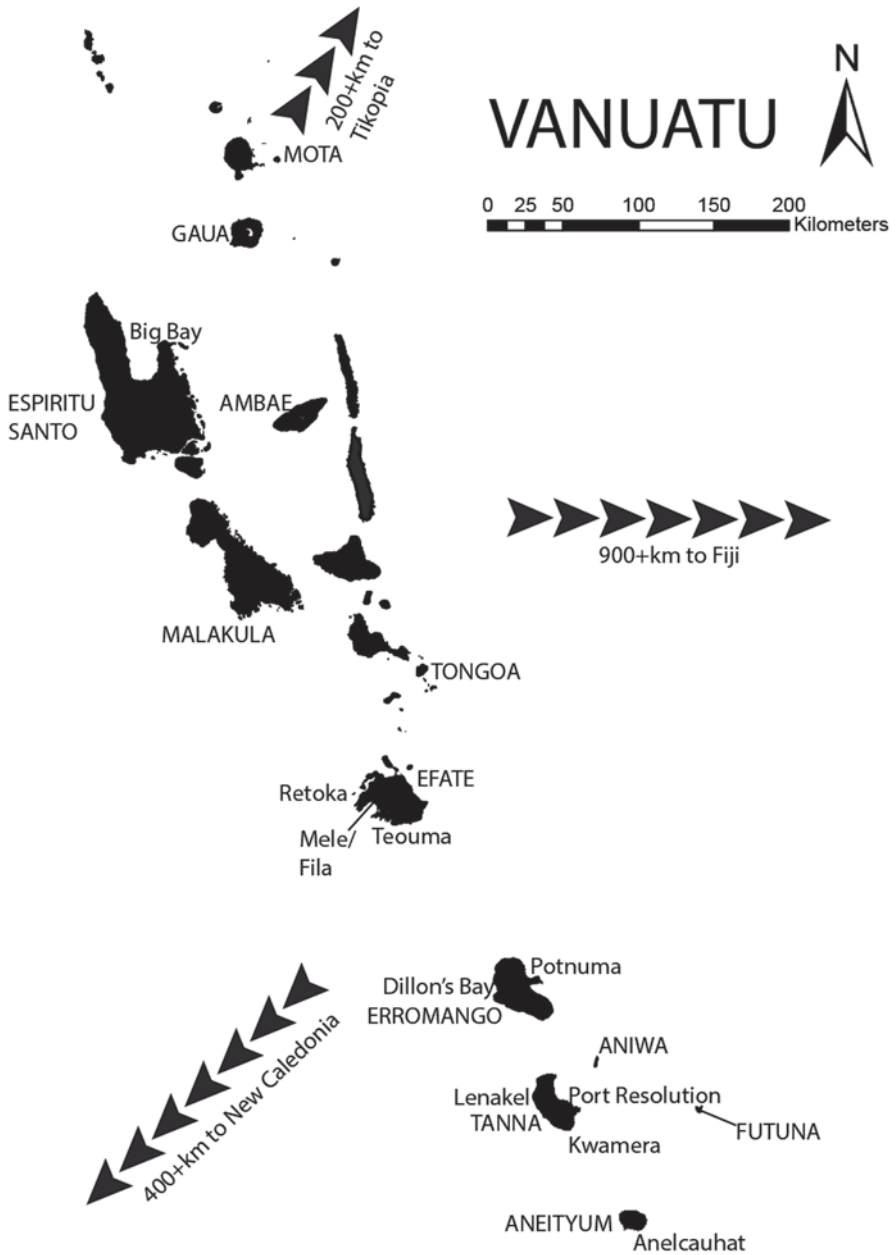
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In the island nation of Vanuatu, historical archaeology is still very much in an exploratory phase; and indeed this could be said for Island Melanesia in general, Allen and Green's pioneering work on the sixteenth-century Spanish sites notwithstanding. That said, there is enormous potential for research in the archaeology of European colonialism in the region (Walter et al. 2004; Gibbs 2011, this volume; Blake and Gibbs 2013; Kelloway et al. 2013). Vanuatu, which is roughly 2,000 km east from the northeast tip of Australia, is located in the central part of Island Melanesia, lying to the west of Fiji, north of New Caledonia, and south of the Solomon Islands (Fig. 9.1). Much fieldwork remains to be done, but the existing research on historical archaeology in Vanuatu has begun to document some of the areas in which Spanish as well as British and French colonialism influenced settlement patterns, demography, ecosystems, economics, religious practices, and material culture in the islands. In addition, while the number of documented sites and artifacts remains relatively low at this point, several important themes relating to the history of colonialism have emerged from initial research. Future work will help to clarify patterns for which we currently have hints as well as doubtless reveal new ones.

The themes that we can explore so far in developing a historical archaeology of colonialism for Vanuatu include:

- Developing an understanding of the long-term nature of cross-cultural contacts in the region, notably through ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence for Polynesian-Melanesian interactions in the period before European contact as well as the perhaps more influential contacts with Fiji, New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands (Kirch 1984; Spriggs 1997, pp. 187–222; Bedford and Spriggs 2008, *in press*; Carson 2012).
- Keeping with the theme of this volume, documenting the nature of early interactions with Spanish explorers, both in places where there was actual Spanish settlement, and in tracing foreign materials through local trade networks (e.g., Bedford et al. 2009b).
- Exploring the longer term, more intensive colonial incursions associated with British and French interests in the New Hebrides (as Vanuatu was called from 1774 with Cook's 'discovery' of the islands until independence in 1980), including the sandalwood and labor trades as well as missionary interests, through to formal colonial possession of the islands in the early twentieth century (e.g., Spriggs 1985; Flexner 2013).
- Looking across and between the materials related to each of these specific themes, there are some more general theoretical and methodological concerns that emerge. One involves the practical issues of scale and duration as they affect site visibility on the landscape, especially when comparing Spanish and Anglo-French colonialism. Second is the centrality of the Melanesian people in shaping the nature of interactions with outsiders across time and space. The ancestors of today's indigenous ni-Vanuatu were not simply passive observers of cultural contact. Rather, they played a key, and at times dominant, role in the emergence of a multicultural society in their islands.



**Fig. 9.1** Map of Vanuatu, showing the location of islands (*in all caps*) and sites (*in lowercase*) mentioned in the text, along with archaeologically and ethnographically known long-distance indigenous trade routes

## 9.2 Pre-European Contacts in Vanuatu

When Pedro Fernández de Quirós sighted the islands that he would call ‘La Austrialia del Espíritu Santo’ in 1606, he was ‘discovering’ a place that had been inhabited for over 2,600 years, initially colonized by the producers of the distinctive, dentate-stamped Lapita pottery that is a marker of an early settlement in this region (e.g., Bedford, pp. 259–260; Bedford et al. 2006; Spriggs 2006; Bedford et al. 2009a; Petchey et al. 2011). Nor were these people isolated after the initial settlement of the islands that would become Vanuatu. Rather, extensive contacts and interaction with people from some distant islands were an integral part of human experience across the history of occupation in Vanuatu; from the initial circulation of Lapita pots of Grande Terre, New Caledonia, to Efate (Dickinson et al. 2013), to later regional differentiation and trade in stone objects, among other things (Spriggs 1997; Bedford 2006; Bedford and Spriggs 2008; see below). As Bedford (2006, pp. 217–218) noted, preliminary evidence hints at widespread interaction across the Melanesia/Polynesia divide as well as close connections between southern Vanuatu and New Caledonia, though there is much more ‘archaeological homework’ to be done to elucidate the scope and nature of these interactions (see also Spriggs 1997, pp. 187–222; Bedford and Spriggs 2008).

Perhaps the most dramatic evidence for interaction between local Melanesian populations and outsiders in the pre-contact period comes from the Polynesian outliers (Feinberg and Scaglione 2012), islands with Polynesian languages and cultural traits that lie outside of the classic ‘Polynesian Triangle’ anchored by Hawaii, Rapa Nui (Easter Island), and Aotearoa (New Zealand). Archaeologists have generally accepted that the Polynesian outlier cultures emerged from voyages out of the east, referred to as the ‘blow-back’ model, though there is obviously complexity and variation from island to island in this regard (Kirch 1984; Carson 2012). There are a number of Polynesian outliers in Vanuatu, which running roughly from south to north include West Futuna, Aniwa, Fila, Mele, and Emae.

Archaeological research on the Polynesian outliers of Vanuatu has been limited, although the excavations that have been done (e.g., Shutler and Shutler 1966; Shutler 1968; Shutler et al. 2002; Hoffman 2003) have revealed a few interesting patterns. On West Futuna, the earliest archaeological evidence, consisting of midden assemblages lacking ceramics, is associated with the Polynesian colonization of the island. Future research is likely to change this story, however, as Lapita pottery-bearing sites are present on the nearby islands of Efate, Erromango, and Aneityum (Bedford and Spriggs in press). Such sites almost certainly exist on the surrounding Polynesian outliers, simply awaiting discovery. On Mele and Fila Islands, which are close to the large island of Efate, local Mangaasi-style pottery was recovered, but it disappeared by about 1200 AD at the very latest, as is the case across Efate and the Shepherd Islands. Unique shell ornaments have been found in assemblages from Mele and Fila and the graves associated with the burial of Roy Mata on Retoka Island, which dates back to 400 BP (Garanger 1972; re-dating in Bedford et al. 1998, pp. 187–188). This evidence has been interpreted to suggest the development of a

local craft industry in central Vanuatu that was distinctive from the material culture of the Vanuatu islands to the north and south. Specifically, these ornaments and other artifacts may represent a possible marker of Polynesian identity (Carson 2012, pp. 35, 39–40) or at least an evidence of increased Polynesian contact (Bedford and Spriggs 2008; Valentin et al. 2011).

Contact with outsiders in Vanuatu prehistory was not limited to the incursion of Polynesians, however, as volcanic glass artifacts from northern Vanuatu have been found outside of the archipelago on Tikopia in the Southeast Solomons (Kirch 1984, p. 233; Spriggs et al. 2010). Contacts with Fiji have also been suggested for the last thousand years, though there is some debate about the nature and extent of these contacts (Bedford and Spriggs 2008, pp. 108–109; Valentin et al. 2011, p. 62). Greenstone artifacts recorded across the islands of southern Vanuatu at first contact were sourced from New Caledonia (Aubert de la Rüe 1938), evidence of another long-distance exchange network in which a part of Vanuatu could be seen as a ‘hub’ (Spriggs 1986). More dramatically, ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence points to episodes of secondary colonization of the islands of Lifu and possibly Uvea, as well as the main island of Grande Terre in New Caledonia, by Aneityumese people known as the Xetriwaan (Spriggs 1997, pp. 219–220; Guiart 2013).

Oral histories have proven valuable for our understanding of Vanuatu’s archaeology. Chief Roy Mata, once thought to be a mythical figure, was convincingly connected to a particular burial site on Retoka Island just off Efate, which matched precisely the oral traditions of the location and arrangement of his final resting place (Fig. 9.2). Additional archaeological work confirmed traditions about the volcanic eruption of Kuwae, dated back to the 1450s AD, which is one of the ten largest eruptive events of the last 10,000 years. The resulting disruption and dispersal of local communities resulted in chiefly migration, and then re-establishment of settlement on the remnants of Kuwae, witnessed by a burial site on Tongoa Island (Garanger 1972, 1982, 1996; Spriggs 1997, pp. 207–218; most recent dating of the Kuwae

**Fig. 9.2** Chief Roy Mata’s burial site, Retoka Island. Roy Mata is buried under the large upright stone in the back left of the picture



eruption in Plummer et al. 2012). The archaeology of oral tradition has great potential for our understanding of the Melanesian colonial and precolonial past in Vanuatu (Flexner 2014b).

Carson (2012) suggested that the Polynesian populations often settled on marginal islands or areas of islands in order to minimize competition and potential conflict with the local Melanesian populations, where the two settled close to one another. Further, the suggestion is that smaller, non-dominant Polynesian populations would often be ‘assimilated’ into the local Melanesian communities. However, chiefly burials from central Vanuatu, including Roy Mata, as well as from Aneityum in the south, suggest a Polynesian connection where institutions of rank and power were installed on new islands (Spriggs 1997, p. 212, 218; Valentin et al. 2011). In northern Vanuatu, in contrast, Polynesian contacts appear to have been much less common and not particularly important in the long run (Bedford and Spriggs 2008, pp. 109–110). While further research is needed to clarify the role of Polynesian interactions with Melanesians, whether peripheral or central to sociopolitical evolution, it is most likely that archaeologists will find a great degree of variability in this dynamic; and that islands must be taken on a case-by-case basis, as has often been mentioned in relation to the study of the Polynesian outliers (Kirch 1984; Spriggs 1986; Carson 2012). Regardless, it is clear from this evidence that the incursion of Europeans into Island Melanesia in the late 1500s was not the first time that local islanders came into contact and negotiated relationships with people who were phenotypically, linguistically, and culturally different (Spriggs 1997, p. 223, 249).

### 9.3 Tierra Australialia del Espiritu Santo: History and Archaeology

Pedro Fernández de Quirós and the men he commanded were the first Europeans to visit the islands, currently known as Vanuatu, in 1606. This story has been presented from a variety of perspectives, ranging from original narratives by people with firsthand knowledge of the expedition (e.g., Markham 1904; Kelly 1966) to later summaries and synthetic treatments of the different versions of the voyage’s narratives (e.g., Burney 1806, pp. 273–317; Beaglehole 1966, pp. 81–107; Spate 1979, pp. 132–141; Luque and Mondragón 2005; Angleviel 2007; Jolly 2009, pp. 60–71). In addition to the written narratives, there has been limited archaeological evidence related to this voyage (see below; Bedford et al. 2009), though nothing on the scale of evidence from the 1595 voyage led by Mendaña to the Solomon Islands, in which Quirós played an important role (Allen and Green 1972; Green 1973; Gibbs this volume).

Quirós’ second voyage in the South Pacific began in late December 1605 when a small fleet departed from Callao, Peru, with three ships: the *San Pedro y Pablo*, the *San Pedro*, and a smaller-draught vessel called a *zabra*, dubbed *Los Tres Reyes Magos*. This was after Quirós had spent several years after returning from his 1595

voyage stubbornly and eventually successfully attempting to obtain support from the Spanish Crown for a return trip to the Pacific. Quirós argued passionately for further voyages of discovery in search of the legendary *Terra Australis Incognita*, the great south land that was thought to balance the mass of northern lands, imagined as a place of unimaginable riches. The voyage of the three ships across the Pacific was relatively uneventful, if made difficult by personal tensions among the crew and leadership of the expedition, which were exacerbated by Quirós' ill health and by a near-constant lack of fresh water (Beaglehole 1966, pp. 84–87; Spate 1979, pp. 132–135). After passing a number of mostly uninhabited atolls, the ships eventually arrived at Taumako, a Polynesian outlier in what are today the Solomon Islands, on April 6 1606 (see Leach and Davidson 2008 for the archaeology of Taumako). Here, they were entertained by Tumai, a local chief (notably called *Jalique*, almost certainly a Spanish orthography of the Polynesian *Ariki* or chief; Markham 1904, p. 225) with whom they established friendly relations. After less than 2 weeks, the ships moved on in search of the southern continent with four captive islanders on board, three of whom subsequently escaped. In late April, Quirós led the expedition through what are now the Banks Islands in northern Vanuatu, sighting Mere Lava and landing briefly at Gaua. Ambae was also likely sighted in the distance (Markham 1904, pp. 232–240). Then on May 1 1606, the ships approached the island that Quirós dubbed 'Austrialia del Espiritu Santo', in honor of Spain's Habsburgs or *Austrias* as well as the famed *Terra Australis Incognita*, still known as *Espiritu Santo* today.

The fleet landed in a large bay named Bahía de San Felipe y Santiago, today simply known as Big Bay. In spite of Quirós' admonitions to the contrary, relations with the local people quickly turned violent within the first few days of the encounter. Dismayed, but not willing to turn back, Quirós determined to claim the land for Spain and for the Catholic Faith. He established a 'city', which he called La Nueva Jerusalem, creating a Ministry of War and various magistrates and other 'official' posts for the new colony, which were presented to various officers. In a gesture that is probably indicative of Quirós' mental state at the time, he even established an Order, the Knights of the Holy Spirit, which included the entire crew. Quirós distributed blue silk crosses to be worn as a mark of membership in the Order, 'about three *dedos* [a unit of measurement] wide and one *palmo* and four *dedos* long' for officers, 'one *palmo* long and 1.5 *dedos* wide' for the rest of the men (Kelly 1966, p. 216). Whenever the Spanish attempted to make contact with the local islanders, the islanders either fled or led the explorers into an ambush. Most of the crew appeared to have been quite ill and spent most of the time aboard the expedition's ships, coming ashore for various religious festivals that took place during their time on *Espiritu Santo* (see Markham 1904, pp. 240–286, 371–395; Kelly 1966, pp. 204–232).

After about a month, Quirós decided to abandon the fledgling settlement in order to continue searching for a large southern continent. As one account of the voyage has it, 'on the pinnacle of glory, he [Quirós] turned his back' (Beaglehole 1966, p. 96). During their departure from La Austrialia del *Espiritu Santo*, Quirós' ship



became separated from the other two, eventually returning to Acapulco, Mexico, in November 1606 after a long, trying journey via the Mariana Islands in Micronesia. Meanwhile, Luis Vázquez de Torres led the other ships of the expedition west, coasting the south of New Guinea via the straits that now bear his name and confirming that this landmass was indeed a large island and not a continent, arriving in Manila in May 1607 (Beaglehole 1966, pp. 98–103).

Recent analyses of this voyage have tended to focus on the historiography of Quirós and what it tells us about the legacies, past and present of the Spanish ‘discovery’ of Vanuatu, especially around the 400th anniversary of these events (Luque and Mondragón 2005; Angleviel 2007). Perspectives have been much more limited from historical archaeology, involving a detailed critical reading of texts as well as analysis of landscapes and artifacts to understand past cultures. Of course, we must be careful of taking these accounts too literally, especially considering that Quirós’ interest in finding support for yet another voyage in search of *Terra Australis Incognita* might have caused him to exaggerate the richness and attractiveness of the land. In one of his memorials of the expedition submitted to the King of Spain, Quirós claimed that Espiritu Santo was a land ‘better than Spain’ (debatable, at least, but ultimately a matter of opinion), ‘an earthly paradise’, full of ‘riches ... silver and pearls ... and gold’, which ‘will be made so rich that it alone will suffice to supply America and enrich Spain’ (there are no naturally occurring precious metals on Espiritu Santo). Further, the Bay of San Felipe y Santiago was lauded to be ‘all clear and free from obstacles ... can be entered either by day or night ... is so capacious that room could be found in it for a thousand vessels’ (Markham 1904,



**Fig. 9.3** ‘Natives of the Bay of San Felipe y Santiago’, from Quirós’ 1606 expedition. (Archivo General de Simancas, Mapas, Planos y Dibujos, XVIII, 81)

pp. 478–483). Admittedly, Big Bay is quite large and relatively clear of reefs and shoals but would probably be somewhat crowded with 1,000 vessels in it.

We do get some useful insights into the extent of indigenous voyaging and exchange networks from the written record. For example, Tumai pointed out the directions and distances of ‘as many as 60 islands’ to Quirós, including ‘Indeni’ (Ndeni) and ‘Mami’ as well as ‘a very large land, which he called Manicolo’ (identified variously as Vanikoro and Malakula, but probably the former; see Markham 1904, pp. 226–227). It is from this voyage that we also get the first European depictions of Melanesian culture in Vanuatu, including the first images of these ‘cultural others’ (Fig. 9.3; Kelly 1966, Plate V, VI; Spriggs 1997, p. 230; Luque and Mondragón 2005; Angleviel 2007). These descriptions tend to be fairly general but provide a good sense of the Spanish perception of Melanesian people as ‘simple heathens’, who ‘do not know any kind of art, fortified places, nor army, kings, nor law’, but who are nonetheless ‘a decent people, clean, cheerful, and reasonable’ (Markham 1904, p. 479). Their material culture is also described generally:

The houses are of wood, roofed with palm leaves. They use pots of clay, weave cloths, and have clothing and mats of reed. They work stone and marble [coral], and make flutes, drums and spoons of varnished wood. They have places for prayer and places for sepulchre, as well as farms well formed, with encircling ditches and palisades [possibly a description of yam mounds or garden fences?]. They make much use of mother-of-pearl shells for chisels, planes, saws; while they wear large and small plates of it round their necks (Markham 1904, p. 479).

Quirós also noted his high esteem for the islanders’ sailing canoes, which became a refrain in European explorers’ accounts of the South Pacific. Crops and animals were described in detail, and Quirós took the presence of castrated boars as an indication of the proximity of ‘more civilized’ people (Markham 1904, pp. 479–480).

Beyond mutual first impressions for Europeans and Melanesians in Vanuatu, what can we say about the long-term effects of this encounter? Much more archaeological and archival research would be necessary to examine the possible impacts of introduced diseases on local populations between 1606 and the next encounters with Europeans in the late 1700s, though this is a fascinating possible line of research (Spriggs 1997, p. 235). The ships’ crew did make regular visits to the shore and interacted with the local inhabitants. However, the only record of anything being constructed indicates a rudimentary church and stockade made up of local materials and subsequently dismantled (Kelly 1966, p. 211, 213, 217). We do know that the Spanish planted crops, including ‘maize, cotton, onions, melons, pumpkin, beans, pulse, and other seeds of our country’ (Markham 1904, p. 255). It is thus possible that these early Spanish encounters had long-term effects on local crop suites. While serious palaeobotanical research would be needed to show whether this is the case or not, Yen (1973, p. 36) provides the tantalizing hint that lemon and orange trees (*Citrus* spp.) were observed growing on Espiritu Santo by Quirós in 1606. Perhaps these tree crops, not usually considered part of the original ‘suite’ of Oceanic domesticates, spread throughout the islands after the 1595 Spanish encounter.

Actual material evidence for Quirós’ expedition has thus far been extremely limited. The only possible artifacts that could be associated with the voyage consist of a collection of sherds of a single ceramic pot identified as a *botija* or Spanish olive

jar from Mota in the Banks islands, which was identified on the basis of form, the clearly nonlocal red clay paste, and petrographic analysis to be of an exotic origin and most likely to be associated with the Spanish voyages of either 1595 or 1606 (Bedford et al. 2009b, pp. 78–84). Again, the presence of this pot over 160 km northeast from Big Bay (and even further from the Southeast Solomons) is likely an indicator of the extent and intensity of indigenous trade networks during the seventeenth century in Vanuatu. In archaeological investigations at Big Bay, Bedford and Spriggs (2008, p. 112) did not find any remains that could be definitively associated with the Spanish settlement. An extensive metal detector survey by Bedford and Spriggs of the area of present-day Matantas village in 2008 (following suggestions in Luque and Mondragon 2005, pp. 142–144) failed to reveal any evidence of the Spanish occupation. A 2010 metal-detector survey of another site situated close to the Jordan River and associated in oral tradition with the Spanish visit also produced negative results. In part, we interpret this as relating to the short-term occupation of La Nueva Jerusalem, and the possibility that most of the materials that could be ‘salvaged’ after Quirós and company departed, such as clay pots or metal items, were dispersed through the aforementioned exchange networks, possibly as prestige goods given their exotic origins.

While the need for further research on the impact of the Spanish contact for Vanuatu cannot be stressed enough, we might say from a preliminary perspective that this encounter was perhaps, except in a few notable ways, experienced by local people to be similar to the incursion of the Polynesian voyagers who landed on larger Melanesian islands; the presence of the outsiders was peripheral, short lived, and ultimately the outsiders were either assimilated into the local culture, killed, or as happened to the Spanish, eventually driven away (cf. Spriggs 1997, p. 223, 249). Of course, from the Spanish perspective, the eventual failure of the settlement might have been attributed to problems of leadership or the great distance from major trade routes and crucial resources. Without Melanesian cooperation, however, this colonial endeavor on behalf of the Spanish empire in the Pacific could not, and eventually did not, succeed.

#### **9.4 British and French Colonialism in the New Hebrides/ Les Nouvelles Hébrides**

After the failed Spanish settlement on Espiritu Santo, it would be over a century and a half before further direct contact with European ships in Vanuatu, though there were occasional visits to neighboring islands in the Solomons and Bismarck Archipelago of which news may have filtered via the extant indigenous Melanesian trading routes. The major eighteenth century and early nineteenth century contacts in Vanuatu were with the French explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville in 1768, the British James Cook in 1774, and the Russian Vasili Mijáilovich Golovnin in 1809 (Spriggs 1997, pp. 240–253). Cook had the most extensive contacts with the indigenous people in Vanuatu during the voyages of the *Resolution* and *Discovery*,

his second trip through the Pacific, where he visited islands in the north, center, and south of the group (Beaglehole 1961). His first extended visit was Port Sandwich on the southeast coast of Malakula where the ships stayed for 6 days. Relations were generally cordial. Cook even gifted male and female dogs from the Society Islands to some local villagers (Beaglehole 1961, p. 468), although thefts of some other items increased tensions. Cook might have stayed longer, but the inadvertent poisoning of a number of his officers after eating reef fish precipitated their departure (Beaglehole 1961). On Erromango, a watering party that went ashore near today's Port Narvin settlement had a brief but tense encounter with the local people, who attempted to steal the ship's boat (Beaglehole 1961, pp. 475–481). Cook spent much more time on Tanna, where he was more successful in trading for food and fresh water and able to observe more of the local culture (Beaglehole 1961, pp. 481–509).

The legacy of this encounter can be seen in modern toponyms, such as Port Sandwich on Malakula; the Maskelyne Islands off southern Malakula; Port Resolution, the harbor in south Tanna where Cook spent the longest time; and in the colonial name of the New Hebrides. Cook is memorialized locally, as on a sandstone outcrop that bears his name in Turtle Bay, south Tanna, where he was said to have stood to make some cartographic observations in 1774 (Fig. 9.4; Flexner 2012, p. 44). The presence of various explorers, from Quirós to Cook, had important influence on local social memories (Angleviel 2007; Jolly 2009) and likely had serious demographic effects, though this has to be explored further (e.g., Spriggs 1997, pp. 235, 253–254, 2007). More intensive colonial encounters in the New Hebrides did not begin until well into the nineteenth century, particularly after the discovery of valuable sandalwood at Dillon's Bay, Erromango in 1828 (Shineberg 1967).

After the inevitable boom and bust of sandalwooding, Europeans became interested in the New Hebrides as a place to establish plantations and as a source of cheap labor. 'Blackbirding,' as the labor trade became known, resulted in the movement of thousands of indigenous people from the New Hebrides to work on sugar plantations in Australia and Fiji (Docker 1970; Hayes 2002). Whaling stations, such

**Fig. 9.4** 'Captain Cook', the sandstone outcrop near Port Resolution memorializing the visit of the *Resolution* and *Endeavour* in 1774



as those established on Aneityum, were another forum for contact. Whaling voyages had been taking place in Vanuatu waters since the early 1800s and represent a largely unrecorded set of cultural encounters (Spriggs 1997, pp. 252–253). A missionary presence was established in Vanuatu from 1839 onwards, partly because missionaries saw themselves as a tempering factor in the relationships between the native peoples of the New Hebrides and unscrupulous European traders (see below). These topics (sandalwooding, whaling, blackbirding, and missions) represent part of the enormous untapped potential for historical archaeology in Vanuatu.

By the end of the 1700s, the Spanish influence in the Pacific was essentially finished leaving the British and French as the two major imperial powers in the region over the course of the nineteenth century. The New Hebrides or Nouvelles Hébrides played an interesting historical role in Anglo-French rivalry, as both powers appeared reluctant to take any decisive action towards establishing an official colonial regime. Rather it took about 70 years from the arrival of the earliest European settlers, of both British and French origin, for an official colonial government to be established despite intense rivalries between the two groups sometimes. The establishment of a Joint Naval Commission to administer the New Hebrides in 1887, which evolved into the Anglo-French ‘Condominium’ government in 1906, may have partly solidified because of concerns about German interests in the region but equally, if not more so from Anglophone concerns regarding the enthusiasm for French annexation being voiced from New Caledonia. The Condominium’s relationship with local people was until after World War II largely one of neglect, with the main functions of government apparently being to settle land disputes among settlers, to ‘police’ the unruly natives, and to maintain the appearance of equality between the British and French colonial power. This largely dysfunctional arrangement would last until 1980, when Vanuatu would finally be granted independence after less than a century of largely hands-off colonial rule (see Jacomb 1914; Van Trease 1987, 2005; Bonnemaïson 1994, pp. 39–96; Rodman 2001).

We are just beginning to explore the archaeology of Vanuatu’s more intensive period of European colonialism. Bedford and Abong have begun a collaborative project exploring the archaeology of two French military camps, one at Havannah Harbor, Efate and the other at Port Sandwich, Malakula. These military encampments were constructed in 1886 by French marines from New Caledonia, said to be a response to increasing conflicts between Francophone settlers and natives. Protests from Australian and British missionaries led to the eventual abandonment of these places after less than 2 years. However, they do represent important places in Vanuatu’s colonial history, especially as their construction arguably precipitated the formation of the Joint Naval Commission as a temporary measure to avoid Anglo-French conflict in the islands. Activities by the US Military during World War II have seriously altered the landscape of north Efate, making archaeological research on the Havannah Harbor site very difficult, but the Port Sandwich site has great potential for historical archaeology, and investigations are ongoing on Malakula (Abong 2008; Bedford 2010).

A turning point in the history of the New Hebrides occurred in 1839, with the death of London Mission Society missionaries John Williams and James Harris



at Dillon's Bay, Erromango. This dramatic event is still remembered vividly by local people in ways intimately tied to features on the landscape that have been documented in archaeological survey (Flexner 2014b). It also provided the key moment in the call for missionaries to 'bring light to the dark isles' of the New Hebrides (e.g., American Sunday School Union 1844; Gordon 1863; Robertson 1902). Mission work in the New Hebrides was a significant international endeavor, with missionaries coming from Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia drawing from financial and material resources in their home countries. Much of the early work was done by the Anglican Melanesian Mission, which took promising islanders back to the mission school, first at Mission Bay near Auckland, New Zealand, and later at St. Barnabas College on Norfolk Island to learn literacy and other 'useful arts'. The students were then expected to return to their home islands to help convert indigenous communities (e.g., Armstrong 1900; Hilliard 1978; Ross 1983). The Melanesian Mission met with mixed success, as apparently enthusiastic converts often showed a remarkable propensity to forget their lessons when they returned home.

The Presbyterian Church also responded vigorously to this call. Presbyterian missionaries came from Canada, New Zealand, and Scotland, working alongside Polynesian catechists from Samoa and the Cook Islands, who were often the first wave of missionary settlers in the New Hebrides (Miller 1978, 1981; Liua'ana 1996). The first mission stronghold was established on Aneityum in the 1840s under Rev. John Geddie. Mission period archaeology commenced in Vanuatu with Spriggs' PhD research on Aneityum in 1978–1980. Spriggs (1985, 2007) has used documentary sources as well as landscape features to analyze the effects of mission activity on settlement patterns and demography on the first Christianized Island in Melanesia. He sought to establish the population of Aneityum at first recorded European contact in 1830, and used the extensive missionary accounts, which began in 1841 and became particularly detailed after the first resident missionary, John Geddie, arrived in 1848. The missionaries gave population figures for particular named districts and chiefdoms and boasted by 1858 to have placed a school in every district—56 in total.

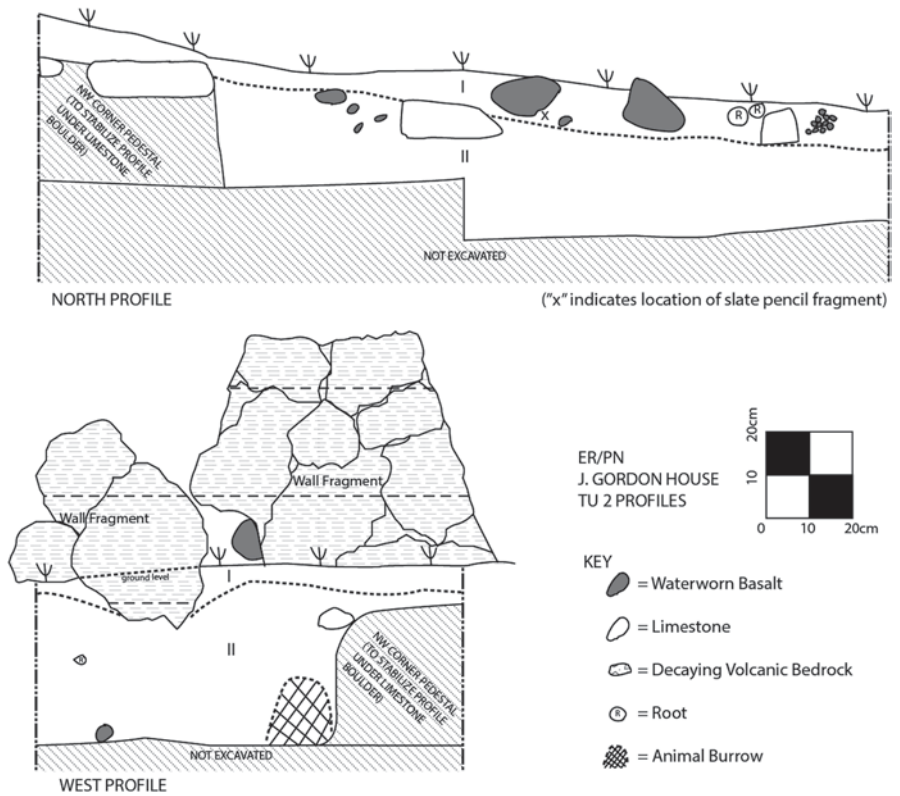
Archaeological survey was undertaken with local landowners to locate the districts named in mission sources and to identify the sites of churches and schoolhouses on the island, in part to examine the nature of missionization (Spriggs 1981, 1985). However, no excavations at mission sites were carried out during this project, and in large measure the mission sources were used only as a basis for demographic reconstruction (Spriggs 2007). More recently, we have taken initial steps towards documenting the standing remains of the church and mission house at Geddie's main station at Anelcauhat, Aneityum, which are likely the oldest extant European structures in the region (Jones 2013). An Australian National University field school program focused on the mission remains at Anelcauhat began in 2013 and will continue to 2015. This research program is ongoing, but it is already yielding some interesting results.

Outside of Aneityum, the expansion of the mission field was more hard fought. On Erromango, known as 'The Martyr Isle' in mission communications (e.g., Gor-



don 1863; Robertson 1902), the first two attempts to establish Presbyterian mission stations failed when the missionaries were killed by local people. This happened to George Gordon and his wife Ellen at Dillon’s Bay in 1861, and James Gordon at Potnuma in 1872. On Tanna, the early missionaries were periodically chased off the island as well, with documentary sources indicating missionaries fleeing back to Aneityum in 1843, 1846, 1852, 1861, and 1862 (e.g., Miller 1978, 1981; Adams 1984). Often, missionaries were blamed for epidemics of measles and other diseases that were causing large number of deaths among indigenous populations during this period (Spriggs 2007). Certainly, mission stations became focal points for visiting ships, which often brought with them disease-ridden crew and passengers.

The largest focused historical archaeology project to take place in Vanuatu to date has been a survey of Presbyterian mission sites on the southern islands of Tanna and Erromango (Flexner 2013). Documented sites have ranged from the traditional archaeological array of buildings and related features at mission stations, especially stone houses and church foundations, to rock art sites and other features



**Fig. 9.5** Excavations at the James Gordon House revealed a single, shallow occupation layer (layer I), reflecting the brief (in archaeological terms) period when the area was used as a mission station

related to local social memories. While archaeological research has documented features associated in local oral histories with specific events, most of the work done thus far has focused on the places of everyday life within mission contexts. Because Protestant missionaries in the 1800s focused not only on conversion of the soul, but also on the transformation of material conditions, archaeological work on missions can provide valuable insights into the ways that colonial mission interactions were structured (e.g., Middleton 2008; Lydon 2009). Where many studies focus on a specific mission site, Flexner (2013) has carried out a more extensive survey that provides a sense of the variability of mission stations in the southern New Hebrides across time and space. Mission houses are seen as especially important to this study as the spaces where the work of conversion most often took place (e.g., Watt 1896, pp. 88–89, 92–93).

In this research, the scale and duration of colonial encounters are reflected in archaeological remains. For example, test excavations at Dillon's Bay, Erromango were carried out at both George and Ellen Gordons' mission house, which was inhabited from 1856 until their murder in 1861, and at the house of Hugh and Christina Robertson, which was inhabited from 1872 through the early 1900s. At George and Ellen Gordon's House, which is located high on a cliff above the main settlement at Dillon's Bay, excavations revealed a single, shallow cultural layer (less than 10 cm thick) with a relatively small concentration of artifacts. James Gordon, brother of George, also inhabited a short-lived mission station at Potnuma, on the east coast of Erromango, from 1868 until he was killed in 1872. Excavations at the site likewise revealed a single, shallow occupation layer (Fig. 9.5), though the artifact assemblage found at this house was much richer than at the early Dillon's Bay mission house. At the Robertson House, in contrast, excavation of cultural layers continued to well over 1 m below the surface, across a complex stratigraphic sequence with variable artifact concentration.

It is important to note that in the artifact assemblages in all of the Erromango mission houses, in addition to the mission house at Anelcauhat, Aneityum, indigenous material culture was found alongside the bottle glass, metal nails, and ceramics of the European occupants. Additionally, the lime mortar of documented mission buildings was almost certainly a product of local indigenous labor. Thus, while these were structures built by colonizing Europeans, the assemblages are hybrid in nature, possibly involving processes of reliance on local labor, the use of local tools, and an interest in 'curiosities' from the local culture (Flexner 2013). Especially intriguing for the study of 'curiosities' collected by the missionaries are sherds of indigenous red-slipped pottery from James Gordon's mission house, which petrographic analysis can tentatively identify as coming from Ambae, some 400 km to the north (Dickinson 2014). Other sherds from Geddie's mission station on Aneityum are recognizably of pottery deriving from Espiritu Santo, still a location of traditional pottery making today.

The different sizes of deposits at these mission houses reflect more than a simple equation between length of occupation period and stratigraphic depth. Part of the stratigraphic sequence at the Robertson House relates to modern occupation in Dillon's Bay, since the site is still used for the local medical clinic. However, excava-

tions revealed that the lime mortar foundations of the Robertson House were poured to a total depth of over 130 cm from the base of the foundation to the floor level of the house. This reflects, then, not only a shift in temporal scale reflecting the longer term success of the mission but also a shift in the volume of building materials used for building mission structures. In contrast, excavations at the mission house built by William and Agnes Watt at Kwamera, south Tanna, which was inhabited for a similar amount of time, had foundations laid to just 20–30 cm below the ground surface (Fig. 9.6). This is an important observation, as the amount of construction material in a structure could be used as a proxy for labor input on mission buildings from the local indigenous community. Indeed, it appears that Robertson constructed all of the components at his Erromango mission on a more monumental scale than his predecessors, as with the stone walls with which he surrounded the compound, making a statement about what he perceived to be the future permanence of Christianity on this island (Flexner 2013, pp. 16–18).



**Fig. 9.6** Comparison of the depth of foundations at the Robertson mission, Dillon’s Bay, and the Watt mission, Kwamera

**Fig. 9.7** The prefabricated timber church at Lenakel, Tanna, built in 1912



Over time, missionaries in the New Hebrides had increasing access to resources and support from the outside world. This was reflected in many aspects of mission activity, notably the construction of church buildings, where initially modest structures of local thatch would be replaced by more elaborate buildings of lime mortar and timber. The 1912 mission church at Lenakel, Tanna Island, could be seen to represent an important point in the evolution of the New Hebrides mission buildings (Fig. 9.7). The structure is built from a prefabricated kit of precut timbers, ordered from the Sydney firm Saxton and Binns (later Saxton Island Homes), which made all kinds of buildings for Pacific colonial settings (Saxton and Binns 1910; Rodman 2001, pp. 132–134).

Archaeological and archival research on the 1912 Tanna church has revealed a construction sequence that included earlier church buildings at the same site, all of which were built with local labor. This particular church also integrates components from throughout the British Empire, including corrugated roofing iron from Bristol and door locks from England's 'Black Country'. Timber samples analyzed from the church indicated the use of wood from Australia, New Zealand, North America, and Europe, further revealing the global networks from which materials were sourced for prefabricated buildings. In short, this building encapsulates the larger British Imperial network on which the Presbyterian missionaries could draw by the 1900s, a far cry from the almost complete reliance on local resources that marked interactions during the early years of the mission. That said, indigenous labor was crucial to the construction of the 1912 Lenakel church, which was largely organized by local chiefs, who would become the first Presbyterian Church Elders on west Tanna (Flexner et al. 2015).

Archaeological and ethnohistoric research on the New Hebrides missions has shed important light on the role of local indigenous people in the history of Christianity on the islands. Heroic accounts usually penned by the missionaries themselves tell a particular version of this story, one which obviously privileges white, and usually male, voices (e.g., Patterson 1886; Robertson 1902; Paton 1907; Miller 1978, 1981), though not always (Watt 1896; Paton 1903; Paton 1905). Local oral traditions and archaeological remains, however, offer a different perspective. Rock art sites sometimes record the native version of church history, which often foregrounds the exploits of local chiefs and elders. For example, a pecked cupule arrangement on a volcanic outcrop near Port Narvin, Erromango, records the story of Sousou, one of the early 'defenders of the faith' on this difficult island. A site in south Tanna where the indigenous chief Yeni Iarisi was said to have brought the gospel from Aneityum before the first missionaries reached that island has begun to reveal interesting evidence about early Melanesian encounters with Christianity (Flexner 2014b). While there is much more research to be done on this front, initial indications suggest that mission archaeology in Vanuatu reflects more processes of indigenization of Christianity rather than colonial dominance by outsiders, especially in the early years (Flexner and Spriggs 2015).

## 9.5 Scale and Duration in Melanesian Colonial Encounters

While research in historical archaeology in Vanuatu is still very much in a preliminary, exploratory phase, we can begin to construct some sense of the variability of colonial sites in the islands. As highlighted above, a major aspect of site visibility has to do with issues of spatial scale and temporal duration of occupation, which are important if sometimes under-theorized aspects of archaeological research (e.g., Mathieu and Scott 2004; Lock and Molyneux 2006). Traits such as the absolute size of the site, how long it was occupied, and how long ago relate to issues of site discovery (bigger sites, more recent sites, and sites with a long, intensive history of occupation tend to be relatively easier to find). Questions of the scale of the colonial endeavors from the past that we are attempting to document also become relevant in this regard. For example, the size of the colonial or imperial networks that could be drawn upon, as well as the relative isolation of a site from those networks would affect the kinds of nonlocal resources that would be expected. The intensity of the colonization process is important as well, and may relate to the intended duration of occupation on the part of the colonizer. Was a colony meant to be a temporary one or a permanent one? To what extent did colonizers expect to be reliant on local communities? Did colonization take place rapidly over a short period of time, or gradually over many years or generations?

In addition to consideration of the scale of the work of colonizing groups, we must not forget the exchange networks of local indigenous people as they can impact the archaeological record of European colonial sites, amplifying the webs in which foreign objects might become entangled. For example, where nonlocal artifacts, such as Spanish pottery, are found far from known sites of contact, we must take multiple factors into account to decide if these are previously unknown colonial settlements (e.g., Green 1973), or the result of foreign artifacts moving through local communities (e.g., Clark 2003; Bedford and Spriggs 2008; Bedford et al. 2009b). Thus, the concept of scale works across multiple levels of analysis and has a number of ramifications, both practical and theoretical that should ring true across Melanesia. On the one hand, issues of site visibility related to scale will be important as problems of heritage preservation and management emerge in the context of accelerating development on the islands. On the other hand, the conceptual treatment of scale can have important theoretical ramifications when it comes to thinking through concepts such as the nature of power in colonial encounters in Oceania (Flexner 2014a). While these issues will vary from site to site, community to community, island to island, they at least provide a preliminary set of questions that can structure inquiry and analysis as we develop historical archaeology in this region.



## 9.6 Conclusion

Beyond just regional implications, the study of historical archaeology in Vanuatu has broader relevance. There are the theoretical and methodological issues alluded to above, which will be of interest to archaeologists working in many settings. Outside of the discipline, this research matters from the perspective of understanding the global past. Places like Vanuatu and elsewhere in the South Pacific are usually written off as remote backwaters, whose archaeology has little to tell us that is of worldwide interest, even as living Melanesians are used as images of an exotic ethnographic ‘other’ (cf. Golson 1972; Spriggs 2008). Yet, by centering our narratives on the lives of Melanesians themselves and the ways that they engaged with outsiders, we begin to understand the importance of the world’s ‘peripheries’ (*sensu* Wallerstein 1974), not only for what they tell us about globalization, but for what they can tell us about places where globalizing processes followed unusual or unexpected trajectories, as they were adapted by local people.

In the modern world, forces such as capitalism, Christianity, and imperialism are thought to have spread, homogenizing global society. Places such as Vanuatu show us that there are still different ways of experiencing and creating local cultures even within a global context. Archaeology has a crucial role to play in understanding the past in the Pacific, especially since the ‘ethnographic’ cultures of the present have often experienced dramatic change alongside remarkable continuities within the past two centuries or less in response to the upheavals of capitalism and globalization (Spriggs 1999, 2008; Bedford and Spriggs 2008). Our knowledge about the past is not only absolutely crucial for understanding the legacy of colonialism in a Melanesian present, but also for forming our understanding of what is possible in a Melanesian future (Spriggs 1997, pp. 286–291).

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# Chapter 10

## Spanish Colonial History and Archaeology in the Mariana Islands: Echoes from the Western Pacific

James M. Bayman and John A. Peterson

### 10.1 Introduction

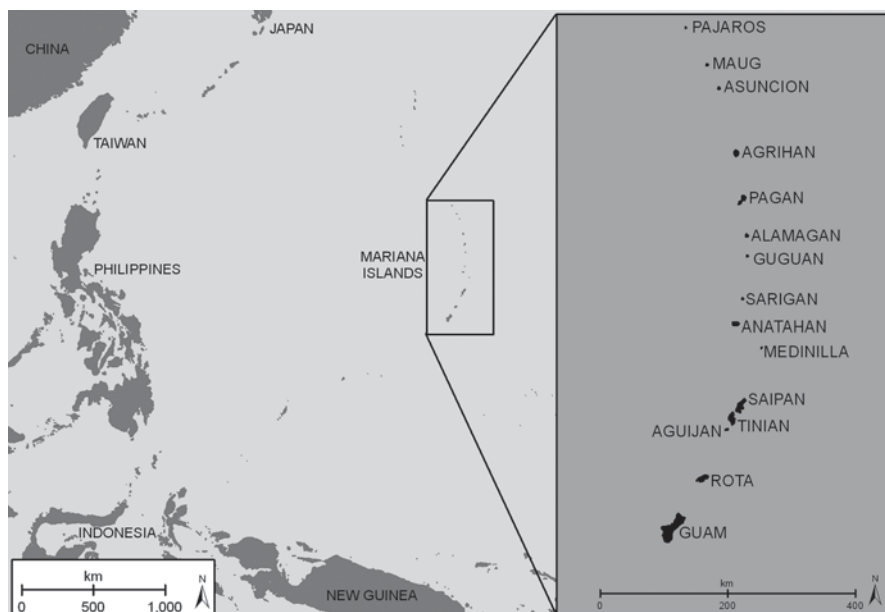
The Mariana Islands are a nexus of Spanish colonial archaeology and history, and their involvement with the Spanish galleon trade formed an economic and cultural bridge between the Old and New Worlds from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries (Fig. 10.1). Scholarship on Spanish colonialism in the archipelago has long emphasized documentary information from archival repositories in Spain, Mexico, the Philippines, and elsewhere (e.g., Spate 1979; Driver 1989; Lévesque 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998a, 1998b, 1999; Coello 2011, 2013; Buschmann et al. 2014). More recently, archaeological research on Spanish period sites in the Mariana Islands (e.g., Mathers and Shaw 1993; Hunter-Anderson 2007; Dixon et al. 2010; Jalandoni 2011; McKinnon and Raupp 2011; Bayman et al. 2012a, 2012b; Moore 2013) is offering substantive information on the nature of Iberian colonialism in the Pacific. Such studies provide a valuable comparative perspective on Spanish colonialism in the Americas (e.g., see Voss 2008; Van Buren 2010).

In this chapter, we review and integrate critical archaeological and documentary sources that inform on Spanish contact and colonialism in the Mariana Islands. We focus on the consequences of Spanish colonialism with respect to the following five interrelated themes: (1) trade and political economy; (2) diet and food production; (3) architecture and transportation; (4) labor and gender relations; and (5) contemporary heritage and identity. We are mindful throughout our review that these domains operated across nested scales ranging from households, villages, and

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**Fig. 10.1** Location of the Mariana Islands in the Western Pacific. (Courtesy of Mike T. Carson)

islands within the greater archipelago. Our selection of these topics is guided by two underlying factors: their relevance to a comparative understanding of Spanish colonialism across the world and their accessibility in the archaeological record of the Western Pacific.

Two other factors also affect the depth and breadth of our coverage: (1) the nascent state of archaeological study of Spanish colonialism in the Mariana Islands and (2) the destructive impact of the twentieth-century natural and anthropogenic disturbances on the archaeological record (e.g., earthquakes, typhoons, World War II bombing) (Reed 1952, p. 94, 1954, p. 878; Skowronek 2009, pp. 493–494). Fortunately, however, fieldwork in the Mariana Islands (particularly in Guam) has recovered well-preserved, Spanish-period archaeological materials. We conclude our review by acknowledging the fundamental significance of Spanish colonial history and heritage in the Mariana Islands to contemporary Chamorro society.

Before we summarize the archaeological record of Spanish colonialism in the Marianas, we sketch its documentary history. Studies of primary documentary records that are relevant to Marianas history have been undertaken by Driver (1989; Driver and Brunal-Perry 1996) and other scholars (e.g., Madrid 2006). Our review below derives largely from these and related research (Hezel 1982, 2013; Rogers 1995; Russell 1998; Brunal-Perry 2009).

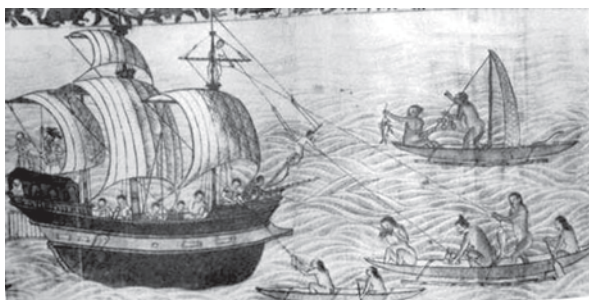


## 10.2 Documentary Record of Spanish Colonialism

On 6 March 1521, Fernando de Magallanes, the first European to cross the Pacific Ocean, encountered Guam during his exploration for the Spanish Crown (Pigafetta 1969). Guam, the southernmost island in the Marianas archipelago (Fig. 10.1), was the first inhabited Pacific island witnessed by Europeans and the Spanish contact-period in the Mariana Islands began with Magallanes' visit. Within a few weeks, Magallanes was killed on Mactan Island Philippines, at the hands of Lapu-Lapu, a celebrated hero in the Philippines for his resistance to the Spanish incursion. Seventeenth-century Spanish accounts of trade with the indigenous Chamorro underscore their strong desire for iron and other nonlocal goods. Early Spanish–Chamorro contact remained volatile, so trade was undertaken by raising and lowering baskets along ropes that connected European ships and Chamorro canoes (Fig. 10.2). Spanish accounts charged that the Chamorro people were crafty traders and offered baskets with thin layers of fish and fruit atop rocks and sand. It is perhaps for these reasons that the Spanish name for the Mariana Islands, *Islas de los Ladrones*, translates into English as Islands of the Thieves (Russell 1998, p. 13).

These accounts offer a decidedly negative portrait of Chamorro traditional life (Fig. 10.3). Although there are documentary, traditional, linguistic, and artistic indications of hierarchical social stratification among Chamorro people during the contact period (e.g., Freycinet 2003; Thompson 1945), archaeological evidence of such inequality is debated by archaeologists (e.g., Cordy 1983; Graves 1986). The most influential documentary claim of Chamorro stratification was advanced in the early nineteenth century—1839—by Louis Freycinet (2003), roughly 300 years after the European contact. Freycinet identified specific words in the Chamorro language that were used to denote three different social classes: the *matua* (upper-class nobles), the *atachaot* (the middle class), and the *mangatchang* (the lowest class; Thompson 1945, p. 13). Understandably, interpretations of social stratification by European writers such as Freycinet (2003) were likely influenced by their own citizenship in feudal societies (Russell 1998, p. 143). Similarly, some archaeologists have also argued that precontact Chamorro society was highly stratified (e.g., Graves 1986) but other archaeologists argue that it was not (e.g., Cordy 1983). Traditional Mariana Islands' architecture and the so-called *latte* buildings are among the most visible and well-studied hallmarks of local archaeology (Fig. 10.4; see contributors in

**Fig. 10.2** Early contact-period drawing of Chamorros trading with a Spanish galleon in 1590. This illustration (from the Boxer Codex) was produced when a Spanish ship visited the Mariana Islands in 1590. (Courtesy of Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam)



**Fig. 10.3** Village life in Guam, painted by J.A. Pel-  
lion in 1819. (Courtesy of the  
Micronesian Area Research  
Center, University of Guam)



Carson 2012). *Latte* buildings were first constructed in 1000 AD, about five centuries before Magallanes' visit in 1521 AD. Variation in the size and distribution of *latte* buildings has been invoked by some archaeologists (e.g., Graves 1986) to argue for significant social inequality in Chamorro society before European contact. However, other archaeologists (e.g., Craib 1986) note that even large *latte* buildings could have been constructed by an extended family or kin group, rather than members of a lower class who were mobilized by elites.

*Latte* buildings were still in use in Guam and Rota when the Spanish arrived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Graves 1986, p. 142) and, in certain instances, during part of the eighteenth century (Graves 1986, p. 143). Curiously, however, detailed descriptions or drawings illustrating their layout were not made by early European visitors (Russell 1998, p. 221). It is likely that the construction of traditional *latte* buildings began to wane after Spain's formal claim to the Mariana Islands by Miguel López de Legazpi and the inception of the galleon trade in 1565; these events brought disease epidemics to the Chamorro and their populations diminished. Following the establishment of the mission in 1668, Chamorro popu-

**Fig. 10.4** Drawing of Euro-  
peans inspecting a *latte* ruin  
in Rota in 1819. (Courtesy  
of the Micronesian Area  
Research Center, University  
of Guam)



lations dropped much more rapidly (Underwood 1976, p. 203). Throughout this period, however, Guam served as a stepping stone for provisioning the galleon ships that traveled between Cavite in Manila Bay, Philippines and Acapulco, Mexico. These ships linked the economies of Asia, the Americas, and Europe.

The Spanish galleon crossed the Pacific for 250 years (i.e., 1565–1815) until the Mexican War of Independence in 1815 (Shurtz 1959; Guzmán-Rivas 1960; Bjork 1998, p. 25; Van der Porten 2005; Junco 2011). The export of New World silver (e.g., Andes) to China—in exchange for spices, porcelains (Nogami 2006), silk, and other luxury goods—was a source of great wealth for Spanish elites in the New World, Southeast Asia, and the Mariana Islands. Chamorro and Spanish residents of the Mariana Islands profited from their trade with the galleon during its annual visits in May or June, on its return to the Philippines from Acapulco. Galleon ships averaged 1700–2000 tons and were loaded with up to 1000 passengers along with mail, supplies, and silver to trade for oriental valuables once they arrived in the Philippines. Spanish America (i.e., Mexico and Peru) exported no less than 150,000 tons of silver to Asia between 1500 and 1800 (Flynn and Giráldez 1995, p. 202), underscoring the vitality of galleon trade in the global economy. As the galleon trade captured the attention of competing world powers, such as France and Britain, the Spanish constructed forts in Guam to protect their dominance of Pacific maritime trade before and during the nineteenth century.

The inception of the Spanish galleon in the Pacific in 1565 and the establishment of the first Jesuit mission in Guam in 1668 by Padre Diego Luis de Sanvitores affected profound changes in the islands, which were renamed as Mariana Islands, in honor of Doña Mariana de Austria, the regent queen of Spain at the time (Rogers 1995, p. 47). An early map of Guam during the establishment of the mission reveals numerous settlements and churches along the coast of the island (Fig. 10.5). Shortly thereafter, however, a forcible relocation of rural Chamorro into large villages on the southern islands of Saipan, Rota, and Guam, known as the *reducción* (1697–1698), was instigated by the Spanish governors in partnership with the military and the Jesuit clergy. Not all Chamorro welcomed the Jesuit mission, and violent conflict ensued for three decades until Spanish governors and their soldiers stifled indigenous opposition in 1698 (Rogers 1995, pp. 58–73).

During the *reducción*, the Spanish colonial government, under authority by Governor Quiroga y Losada, divided the island of Guam into six administrative districts (*partidos*) to facilitate its rule (i.e., Hagatña, Inapsan, Pago, Agat, Umatac, and Inarajan). Although the Chamorro word for the colonial capital is ‘Hagatña,’ this word is pronounced in Spanish and English as ‘Agaña,’ and the two words are often used interchangeably. Each district was anchored by a central *pueblo* (village) and a parish church. Governor-appointed *alcaldes* (mayors) ruled each district with support by a hierarchy of priests, soldiers, and converted Chamorro leaders (*principales*) whose families comprised an indigenous upper class (Rogers 1995, p. 64). Chamorro were not required to tithe or pay taxes; yet *alcalde* administrated agricultural production and ranching on crown lands that relied on the labor of landless households, and such labor sustained the Spanish rulers and clergy. Chamorro who managed to retain access to their ancestral lands worked them as *lanchos* (ranch-farms) where they cultivated crops such as corn, sweet potato, rice, and fruit trees; and they

**Fig. 10.5** Map of mission churches and villages in Guam that was produced about 1672 by Father Alonso López, a member of the San Vitores mission. (Courtesy of Micronesia Area Research Center, University of Guam)



husbanded pigs, chickens, and cattle (Rogers 1995, p. 75). As Chamorro were compelled to attend weekly religious services, many families practiced a dual-residence system in which they worked their rural *lancho* during the week and returned to their district village to attend weekend services.

The religious and political domination of the Mariana Islands instigated significant changes among the Chamorro. New World crops, such as maize (corn), sweet potato, and cassava, supplemented a traditional diet (see discussion below) that originally focused on Pacific and Southeast Asian crops such as taro, yams, breadfruit, banana, and rice (Pollock 1986). Although Chamorro subsistence had not changed much by the end of the nineteenth century, the earlier introduction of Spanish cattle and Asian water buffalo had facilitated the intensification of rice production via wooden plows instead of digging sticks (Thompson 1947, p. 112). The introduction of ox carts with wooden wheels sped the movement of agricultural goods and other materials across islands in the archipelago. Blacksmithing and other crafts (such as wheel-writing) were introduced to Guam by Governor Mariano Tobias in 1771, when he brought instructors to train Chamorro in these trades. Almost 50 years later, Freycinet (2003, p. 176) reported that nine or ten blacksmiths were practicing their trade in 1819. These introduced technologies instigated the manufacture of iron tools that replaced traditional tools of shell, wood, and plant fi-



**Fig. 10.6** Governor's palace remnant at Plaza de España, Hagatña, Guam



ber. The construction of roads and bridges, beginning in the late-1700s and continuing to the mid-1800s, enhanced the circulation of raw materials, goods, and people that sustained the Spanish governors, their soldiers, the clergy; local Chamorro elite also benefitted from these changes. The Spanish construction of El Camino Real with Chamorro laborers is documented in documentary texts, and its remnants are preserved in the archaeological record (see discussion below in Architecture and Transportation).

Spanish contact and colonialism also brought tragedy as Chamorro population plummeted in the face of diseases that arrived with the Spanish galleon, mission clergy, and soldiers. This was especially true in the southern islands (e.g., Guam, Rota, Saipan) that experienced the earliest and most frequent contact with the Spanish; in contrast, some of the northern Mariana Islands (e.g., Pagan and Sarigan) maintained their relatively high populations until they were relocated during the *reducción* (1697–1698) (Athens 2011, p. 328). An estimated 50,000–150,000 Chamorro resided in the Marianas at the onset of the Spanish mission, but their population decreased to 5,000 or less by the early eighteenth century (Underwood 1976, p. 203). More than 50 Spanish governors ruled the Marianas for 230 years; most of those who ruled after 1744 resided in the Plaza de España, the governor's palace (Fig. 10.6). Following the Spanish–American War in 1898, Guam was released from Spanish political control and it became a colony of the USA, along with the Philippines and Puerto Rico (Rogers 1995, pp. 112–113).

## 10.3 Archaeological Record of Spanish Colonialism

### 10.3.1 Trade and Political Economy

The archaeological record of trade in the Mariana Islands stems from its role in provisioning the Spanish galleon, which integrated the world economy. Together,

excavations of three Spanish shipwrecks (i.e., *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* [1638], *Santa Margarita* [1601], and *Nuestra Señora del Pilar* [1690]) document the astonishing array of goods and commodities that crossed the Pacific (and in some cases) were introduced to the archipelago. Materials from these excavations include iron nails, fasteners, ship fittings, brass tacks, gold filigree jewelry, silver coins, iron cannon balls, Chinese and Japanese porcelains, English and American earthenware and stoneware containers, glass bottles and beads, claws from Mexican black bears, and Chamorro-made earthenwares (Mathers et al. 1990; Mathers and Shaw 1993; IOTA Partners 1996; Skowronek 2009, pp. 496–497).

Links between Spanish colonial-period trade and political economy are apparent in the islands' terrestrial archaeological record, particularly in Guam, where the largest populations were concentrated. Aside from shipwrecks, archaeological signatures of trade are most abundant in locales that were constructed and used for the benefit of the ruling Spanish elite, particularly in the capital of Hagatña, in Guam. Excavations at the governor's palace, adjacent to the Plaza de España (Fig. 10.6), yielded iron objects and glass and ceramic containers including majolicas and burnished earthenwares from Mexico, Asian porcelains, and European and American ceramics (Schuetz 2007, pp. 105–119). This assemblage is a tangible hallmark of the Spanish galleon and the control that elites exercised over international trade. Excavations at the cathedral bordering the Plaza de España (e.g., Welch and McNeill 2006) yielded introduced fauna including cattle, pigs, goats, deer, and chicken. Old Pago Village was one of the six Spanish-period settlements that were established in Guam during the *reducción*. Although Spanish-period coins are rarely recovered in the Marianas (Patacsil 1998), excavations at Old Pago Village produced a silver coin which was minted in Mexico City and embossed with the date of 1779 (Moore 2013, p. 168).

Documentary records note Chamorro and European trade during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and traces of such exchanges have been reported in excavation reports on *latte* terrestrial sites across the Mariana Islands. Archaeological evidence of such trade includes copper objects from a *latte* site in Rota (Spoehr 1957, p. 167); Southeast Asian glazed stoneware ceramics in Tinian (Butler 1992, p. 197); an iron knife, iron spearpoint, copper object, and metal bell in Saipan (Spoehr 1957, p. 167; Butler 1995, p. 345); and a Carnelian bead, a Chinese porcelain, and pieces of metal with wood attachments in Pagan (Egami and Saito 1973, p. 208). Archaeological evidence of trade in Guam includes iron nails, a blue-and-white East Asian porcelain, and a glass bead at a *latte* site at Ritidian in northern Guam (Bayman et al. 2012a); a white glass bead, a green glass bead, and a white glass bead with red stripes at Inarajan in southern Guam (Reinman 1966, p. 123); blue and white porcelains, fragments of metal, and kiln-fired pottery in northeast Guam (Reinman n.d., p. 5); and glazed Spanish ceramics at Tumon along the western coast of Guam (Osborne 1947, p. 11).

Although such goods are notable, the relatively limited evidence of exchange during the Spanish colonial period may reflect archaeological preservation. However, goods such as iron, the material that Chamorro most desired according to documentary sources (Quimby 2011), should be evident in the archaeological record if



it was traded regularly. Accordingly, the relatively sparse evidence of trade in the archaeological record of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may signal its limited scope and intensity, even following the inception of the Spanish galleon and the local desire to provision its ships. Apparently, local elites, particularly the Spanish governors and their families, initially enjoyed the greatest opportunities to consume goods acquired through international trade. In the late-eighteenth century, Governor don Felipe de Ceraín (1776–1786) issued a proclamation that sanctioned free trade by the general population, including the Chamorro (Driver 2005, pp. 45–56).

### 10.3.2 *Diet and Food Production*

Traditional Chamorro foods such as taro, yams, bananas, breadfruit, rice, and a rich variety of marine resources were supplemented, and in some cases replaced with foods introduced after contact. Spanish prohibitions on inter-island travel forced Chamorro men to abandon the high-performance *proa* (outrigger canoes) that were used for long-distance travel and fishing on the open sea. This restriction was intended to prevent subjugated Chamorro (who were forced to reside in Guam and Rota) from escaping to the Northern Mariana Islands or the Caroline Islands (Rogers 1995, p. 33). By the 1870s, the Chamorro *proa* was no longer used (Rogers 1995, p. 33). Instead, Chamorro fishermen relied on simple canoes, such as dug-outs, that hugged the coasts. Access to pelagic fish in the open sea was therefore constrained, and marine resource consumption was narrowed to shellfish that were gathered in shallow waters along the beach and small reef or shoreline fish that were captured by casting nets or by constructing weirs. Chamorro stone fishing weirs (*gigao*) were reported to Louis Freycinet in 1819, and such weirs have been confirmed archaeologically (Dixon et al. 2013). The archaeological study of the impact of Spanish colonialism on Chamorro fishing is not yet well studied (see Amesbury and Hunter-Anderson 2008 for a notable exception) and requires attention.

Similarly, although the introduction of Old and New World crops (e.g., corn, cassava, sweet potato) and animals (e.g., pig, chicken, turkey, dog, water buffalo, horse, and cattle) is well known in documentary records, detailed archaeological studies are necessary to clarify the precise timing and cultural context within which various food items such as the chili, pepper, spices, and corn were added to the traditional diet and locally cultivated (see de Vos 2006 for a relevant discussion). Certain foods, such as corn, were originally introduced to satisfy the tastes of the Spanish (Dixon et al. 2010, p. 292); only later did the Chamorro adopt this crop. The first mention of corn was recorded in 1676 by Padre Francisco García who noted that Chamorro destroyed a maize field that was planted for missionaries and soldiers (Briggs 1920, p. 150). Other introduced plant products included cacao and tobacco.

Certain foods (e.g., sweet potato) that were introduced by the Spanish and cultivated in the Marianas (Yen 1974; Green 2005) were amenable to relatively long-term storage and were used to provision galleon ships that crossed the waters

between Mexico and the Philippines. Archaeological evidence of the sweet potato in the Marianas before Spanish contact in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is lacking, but it has been archaeologically documented in pre-European (i.e., 1000–1100 AD) deposits in Polynesia (e.g., Hawaii, Cook Islands, New Zealand) (Yen 1974; Hather and Kirch 1991; Green 2005; Storey et al. 2011, pp. 125–126). Traditional Chamorro farming techniques, such as shifting cultivation, initially constrained participation in the new ‘market economy’ of ship provisioning since such non-intensive, household farming could not produce surplus yields. Agricultural production during the Spanish period was characterized by changes like the construction of stone features (e.g., mounds, walls) that conserved water in rain-fed fields (Dixon et al. 2010, p. 306) and enhanced the development of soils in rocky areas like the limestone plateau of northern Guam (Peterson 2010).

Further archaeological study of Chamorro ceramic technology is necessary to examine changes in traditional food preparation and cooking: traditional pottery was likely made into the Spanish period and yet no descriptions of the industry are known (Moore 2012, p. 121). Archaeologists in the Marianas have long assumed that ceramic vessels were used for boiling starchy foods such as breadfruit and rice, and perhaps mollusks and other sources of animal protein, but direct evidence has been lacking. However, recent analyses of residues on Marianas ceramic assemblages have recovered plant microfossils including pollen, starch, phytoliths, raphides, and cellulose fibers (Moore 2012, pp. 134–136, Table 5). The recovery of marine shell particles and feather fragments hints that mollusks and bird were also boiled or steamed in ceramic vessels (Moore 2012, p. 137). Notably, sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) was identified in ceramic residues at a seventeenth-century *latte* site at Ritidian, a Spanish mission in northern Guam (Bayman et al. 2012b, p. 265).

Chamorro adopted new foods with Spanish contact and also new technologies of food preparation. Prheat corn tortillas (Hunter-ior to Spanish contact, Chamorro used stone mortars and pestles for processing edible plant foods such as rice and federico nuts. Following Spanish contact, Mexican-style *metates* were used for processing maize (corn); there is archaeological evidence of their use (e.g., McKinnon and Raupp 2011, p. 10) but a more detailed documentation of them is warranted. The Spanish introduction of *metate* is corroborated by the Chamorro word *metâti*, which are used for preparing tortillas (*titiyas* in Chamorro). Besides corn, *titiyas* were at times made of wheat, coconut, and other plant foods. Underground granaries for storing maize were established by Felipe de la Corte, governor of Guam from 1855 to 1866; one of these Spanish granaries was observed during the early twentieth century (Briggs 1920, p. 150).

Archaeological study of a Spanish-period site in Guam hints that Chamorro adopted yet another food preparation technique from the New World: the use of flat stone (or ceramic) *comales* or griddles to heat corn tortillas (Hunter-Anderson 2007, pp. 54–59; Fig. 10.7). Flat stones excavated artifacts at Pago Village, Guam, are remarkably similar in shape to *comales* that were used by Pueblo and Maya Indians before and after Spanish contact. Notably, the Chamorro words *kommat* (Topping et al. 1975, p. 265) or *comat* (Briggs 1920, p. 151) refer to round or oval cast-iron

**Fig. 10.7** Chamorro women preparing *titiyas* (tortillas) in the presence of Chamorro and Spanish men. This drawing was produced by Jacques Etienne Victor Arago in 1825. (Courtesy of Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam)



or heavy steel griddles for cooking corn tortillas (Hunter-Anderson 2007, p. 54). To date, however, no description of stone *kommat* has yet been identified in Mariana historic records (Hunter-Anderson 2007, p. 56); additional archaeological study is necessary. This example highlights the value of archaeology for discovering the use of particular food preparation technologies and implements such as *comales*. Although *comales* are not described in Spanish-period documentary accounts, their apparent recovery at Pago Village is worthy of further study. In other instances and contexts, traditional food preparation implements in the Marianas were repurposed to process introduced foods. For example, Chamorro mortars and pestles that were originally used to process wild fadang or federico nuts of the cycad tree (*Cycas circinalis*) were later deployed to make corn tortillas (Pollock 1986, p. 137). The Spanish-introduced *metate* and *mano* enabled Chamorro to further intensify their production of plant foods made with cycad flour. Tragically, however, elevated consumption of cycad may have increased the incidence of two progressive and fatal diseases (i.e., amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and Parkinsonism-dementia) in Guam during the mid-to late-Spanish period (ca. 1700–1800) (Prasad and Kurland 1997).

Chamorro also adopted domed ‘beehive’ ovens (*hotno* or *hotnu* in Chamorro, *horno* in Spanish); the precise timing of their introduction is unknown, but 20 ovens have been identified in Guam alone (Moore and Steffy 2008, p. 37; Fig. 10.8). Such ovens may have been constructed into two types: one type that served as a kiln to bake clay tiles, bricks, and pottery vessels, and another type that was used to bake and roast various foods such as breadfruit, meat (e.g., deer, chicken, pig), and European-style bread and pastries made with corn, tapioca, arrowroot, and cycad flour (Moore and Steffy 2008, p. 5). The size and shape of *hotno* changed through time, as did the materials used to make them; early ovens were made of limestone rock and mortar and later ovens were made of red clay bricks and/or tiles. The possibility that red clay bricks and tiles were imported to Guam from the Philippines, Mexico, or elsewhere merits investigation. These were eventually replaced by ‘heat-resistant’ bricks (Moore and Steffy 2008, p. 39), which were first made in the USA in

**Fig. 10.8** Spanish–Chamorro *hotno* (*horno* in Spanish, oven in English). (Courtesy of R. Douglas K. Herman and Pacific Worlds)



1836 and could have been imported to Guam. In either case, the local production of clay tiles and bricks in Guam was vital for the Spanish-period construction of forts, bridges, buildings (see discussion below), and the ovens themselves.

The availability of metal pots for boiling rice and other foods as early as the 1600s may have contributed to the declining use of traditional subterranean pit ovens (*chahan* in Chamorro) (Pollock 1986, p. 139), but archaeological study of this question is warranted. Areal excavations at Chamorro habitation sites that post-date the 1600s would offer one approach, particularly if such locales can be well dated through the analysis of imported ceramics and other nonlocal artifacts, such as coins.

Little archaeological work has focused on small family ranch-farms (*lanchos*) where Chamorro raised cattle, pigs, chickens, and fruit trees (Rogers 1995, p. 75). After the *reducción*, when Chamorro were forcibly resettled into a few large villages (so that they could be more easily controlled by the Spanish), land tenure was reorganized. Sizable *hacienda* (plantation) estates owned by the church and other wealthy landowners appeared and were a catalyst for the development of inequality between landless Chamorro who leased *lancho* lands and those who owned them (e.g., the church, Spanish, and Chamorro elites). Inventories of nine of these *lanchos* were recorded when the Jesuits were dispelled from Guam in 1769; these rural properties included (but were not limited to) sizable herds of cattle and *mampostería* (coral, stone, mortar) buildings with tile roofs.

### 10.3.3 *Architecture and Transportation*

Traditional Chamorro (i.e., pre-Spanish) architecture is well preserved in the stone and coral megaliths that were used to elevate their buildings above the ground. As noted earlier, *latte* buildings were first constructed about five centuries before Magallanes' visit in 1521 AD, but, for a variety of reasons, their construction and

use for domestic habitation diminished in a few decades. Although Chamorro initially continued their custom of residing in houses of wood and perishable plant fibers, they were no longer constructed atop large stone or coral pillars (*haligi* in Chamorro) as they did before the Spanish contact. Instead, houses were elevated on simple wood posts.

Spanish architectural styles were adopted and constructed in the Mariana Islands by elite Chamorro and their colonizers during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Some structures, especially civic buildings such as the governor's palace, were constructed of timber frames, and *mampostería* comprised of coral rocks that were cemented with slaked limestone mortar. Buildings of *mampostería* could withstand typhoons and were far more durable than traditional Chamorro buildings made of wood and other plant fibers; indeed, some endured for more than two centuries before they were destroyed by earthquakes. Most Spanish style buildings in Guam and the Marianas were destroyed during World War II, but the standing remnants of the governor's palace (Fig. 10.6) is one of the surviving examples that are amenable to archaeological study.

Buildings of *mampostería* and/or cut stone like the Spanish governor's palace contrasted markedly with the vernacular buildings of wood and plant fibers used by nonelite Chamorro in the *reducción* villages; elite Chamorro resided in houses of coral masonry in the colonial capital of Agaña. Although the architecture of the governor's palace and Plaza de España (Fig. 10.6) illustrates the presence of Spanish power in the Mariana Islands, the relative paucity of excavated Spanish artifacts is notable. The dearth of Spanish artifacts is likely due to looting along with a lack of targeted excavation in areas where such materials would have been discarded most frequently. Excavations in the kitchen and its neighboring midden—where food for the governors and their families was prepared—would promise to yield more Spanish artifacts. Archaeological recovery of such remains would illuminate Spanish elite consumption in the Pacific. Such materials could be compared with domestic assemblages of contemporary Spanish elites who ruled in Mexico, the Philippines, and elsewhere.

*Mampostería* and cut stone architecture were also used for constructing mission churches (e.g., St. Anthony's church, Umatac), fortifications (e.g., Fort Santa Agueda, Fort Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, Fort San Jose, and Fort Santo Angel), schools (e.g., Colegio de San Juan de Letrán), and bridges (e.g., Hagatña Spanish Bridge, Taelayag Spanish Bridge, Sella Bay Spanish Bridge, San Antonio Bridge). Elite Chamorro families who lived in the capital of Agaña typically resided in *mampostería* houses (Rogers 1995, p. 75). Limited archaeological excavation at Fort Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, overlooking Umatac Harbor, documented the foundations and layout of its *mampostería* construction.

The construction of roads and bridges (Fig. 10.9) was vital, and until recently is an understudied archaeological signature of architecture and transportation during the Spanish period (see Vernon 2013). *El Camino Real*, 'The Royal Road,' paralleled the southwestern coast of Guam for approximately 29 km (Vernon 2013, p. 1). It was initially constructed in the late-1700s to enhance communication, military control, and the circulation of goods. The importance of *El Camino Real* is underscored by its linkage of three of the resettlement villages of the *reducción*: Umatac,



**Fig. 10.9** San Antonio Bridge, Hagatña, Guam. (Courtesy of the US National Park Service)



Agat, and Hagatña (Agaña). *El Camino Real* was especially important because it linked Umatac, the port village where the galleon ships were received, with Guam's administrative capital of Agaña (Vernon 2013). *El Camino Real* most likely followed footpaths that were used before the Spanish incursion. The Spanish period, however, witnessed the addition of a *cascajo* (gravel) pavement that was supplemented with *mampostería* bridges, causeways, retaining walls, and parapets.

Spanish importation of horses, donkeys, mules, and carabao (water buffalo) from Manila and Acapulco, along with wheeled carts and carriages, enhanced the movement of soldiers, as well as goods and materials on *El Camino Real* and various pre-Spanish trails. To date, 12 Spanish-period archaeological features and sites associated with *El Camino Real* have been reported including 2 apparent roadbed remnants, a cobble and mortar abutment, 3 bridges (i.e., Taleyfac Bridge, Taelayag Bridge, and Sella Bridge), a fort (i.e., Fort San José), a shine (Atantano), an oven (Sella Bay Oven), and 2 subsurface archaeological deposits (Vernon 2013).

Archaeological studies of Spanish colonial architecture are only now beginning and should include comparisons with contemporary structures elsewhere in the Spanish colonial world. Variation in geological substrates among different world regions (e.g., Philippines and New Spain) would have required the adaptation of Spanish building technology to local circumstances. For example, the abundance of limestone and coral on the island of Guam distinguished it from other locales in the world that were dominated by hard volcanic stone, rather than friable limestone. Differences in such materials would have influenced the investment of labor in the construction and maintenance of buildings, roads, and bridges.

### **10.3.4 Labor and Gender Relations**

Few archaeological studies (e.g., Dixon et al. 2006; Bayman et al. 2012b) have focused on domestic labor and gender relations in Chamorro society before and



during Spanish colonialism. Studies of Spanish and other European documentary accounts (e.g., Thompson 1945; Driver 1989) indicate that household labor was gendered during the early contact period. In 1602, Juan Pobre de Zamora, a Catholic lay missionary, visited Rota for several months and made general observations of Chamorro household economy. This documentary account was integrated with other sources of information and synthesized into a general model of Chamorro domestic labor and gender relations (see Russell 1998). These sources of information include illustrations by European visitors, along with studies of Chamorro language, customs, oral traditions, and material culture (e.g., Fritz 1989). Although European documentary accounts frequently reflect a Western bias, they provide observations that can be confirmed or challenged through archaeological studies (Russell 1998, p. 14).

According to Antonio Pigafetta, who chronicled his visit to Guam with Magallanes in 1521, Chamorro women engaged in childcare, shellfish gathering, cooking, and plant-fiber crafting of mats, baskets, blankets, and hats. Specific information on the production of ceramic pots during the Spanish period is lacking, but cross-cultural studies of ceramic production indicate that it is most frequently undertaken by women (Arnold 1985, pp. 99–108). Cross-cultural studies indicate that pottery production in small-scale societies (like the contact-period Chamorro) is most frequently practiced by women on a part-time basis, in tandem with other household activities (Arnold 1985, pp. 99–108). Chamorro women could have integrated part-time pot-making with other household activities (e.g., childcare and cooking). Men, in contrast, crafted canoes and fishing gear, undertook deep-sea fishing, and engaged in inter-island trade and warfare, until they were later prohibited from doing so. Women, men, and children all participated in horticulture and net-fishing.

Archaeological excavations of two mid-seventeenth-century *latte* building foundations in Guam (Bayman et al. 2012a, b) revealed that Chamorro household economy paralleled that in Polynesian societies (e.g., Hawaiians) in the Pacific. Contact-period Hawaiian women and men used separate eating houses (Malo 1951, pp. 27–28); other structures were used as canoe sheds and/or as men's houses (Handy and Pukui 1958). Excavations at two Chamorro *latte* foundations on the island of Guam revealed that one building was used for cooking and other female activities (i.e., plant-fiber crafting, ceramic production), whereas the other building was used for male activities, such as the fabrication of fishing gear and canoes.

This archaeological pattern suggests that household labor in contact-period Chamorro society (like contact-period Hawaiian society) was spatially segregated according to gender. Males and females undertook their respective economic activities in separate buildings and locales. Still, gendered segregation in the Marianas may not have been as strictly demarcated as that in Hawai'i and elsewhere in Polynesia (e.g., Samoa), even if the division of labor was gendered in both kinds of societies. Ethnohistoric and ethnographic accounts indicate that descent and inheritance in traditional Chamorro society was matrilineal. Matrilineal organization in the Mariana Islands ensured that Chamorro women exercised more power than their counterparts in Polynesian societies, such as Hawaiian, that were governed through systems of patrilineal organization.

This traditional Chamorro pattern was altered, however, in the decades following early Spanish contact and the establishment of the first Jesuit mission in 1668. In 1741, King Philip V issued a *cédula* (edict) that restricted women from work ‘not appropriate to their sex’ and dictated that ‘men shall cultivate the land’ (Freycinet 1839, p. 499; Souder 1992, p. 75). Spanish and French documents indicate that activities considered proper for women included crafting of sails, mats, and roof coverings; improper activities for women included hard physical labor (e.g., farming) and participation in government (Souder 1992, pp. 75–76). Some scholars (e.g., Souder 1992, p. 75) argue that because labor for Spanish colonial initiatives was in short supply due to disease and the decimation of Chamorro population, Philip V’s decree was intended to ameliorate this problem by facilitating the production of children. In either case, the imposition of Christianity and Spanish colonial policies weakened the matrilineal organization of Chamorro society (Atienza and Coello 2012, p. 463). These institutions also enhanced the development of a male-dominated structure outside the home (Souder 1992, pp. 43–77) as well as male primogeniture inheritance (Rogers 1995, p. 75). Moreover, Spanish policies sanctioned government ownership of land for defense and other functions, along with private ownership of land by individuals (Rogers 1995, pp. 74–75). As the custom of awarding *encomiendas* (land grants) to individual Spaniards was not practiced in the Marianas (as it was done in other Spanish colonies), Chamorro retained much of their traditional lands. However, Chamorro land tenure changed; the inheritance of property through the clan matrilineal system was replaced by the Spanish custom of male primogeniture.

Finally, Jesuit clergy noted the use of communal buildings in each village—the so-called *uritao* (or *ulitao*)—for sexual liaisons between unmarried men and women who sometimes later married. Detailed information on the implementation of the *uritao* system is limited and biased because the Jesuits were profoundly opposed to its practice (Russell 1998, p. 149). Apparently, however, young men offered valuable goods to the families of young women they desired. Although such relations were a culturally sanctioned institution, so Chamorro families could acquire valuables (e.g., turtle shell and iron) and their children could secure suitable spouses, they were an affront to Jesuits who eventually eliminated such practices. Evidently, the *uritao* system offered an institutional context for the payment of bride price if, and when, a couple desired to marry. *Uritao* played other roles in the socialization of males too. When young men were initiated in a *uritao*, they learned to fish and practice other activities (e.g., construction of canoes) that were required of them. An archaeological example of a *uritao* might be present in the contact-period *latte* building at Ritidian where male economic activities, such as the production of canoes and fishing gear, were practiced (Bayman et al. 2012a, b).

### 10.3.5 Contemporary Heritage and Identity

Although Spanish colonialism ended in Guam at the close of the nineteenth century, Chamorro people celebrate certain Spanish influences like Catholicism as a part

of their ethnic heritage (Atienza and Coello 2012, pp. 461–462). The construction of Chamorro identity (like all identities) is fluid, dynamic, and is characterized by continuity (Underwood 2012); intermarriage with Mexican, Filipino, and Caroline Islander immigrants instigated ethnogenesis of a post-contact identity. Similarly, other Spanish influences are readily apparent in their dietary customs: corn and chili pepper are integral to traditional Chamorro cuisine, Chamorro social organization is decidedly patrilineal outside the home, and Spanish loan words influence the Chamorro language.

The physical remnants of the Spanish period offer the most audible echoes of colonialism in the Mariana Islands (e.g., Yee and Allen 2011). Although a majority of the buildings (e.g., residences and forts) and other facilities (e.g., wells and bridges) that were constructed during the Spanish colonial period are no longer standing (Delgadillo et al. 1979), those that are intact are increasingly identified with commemorative plaques and/or interpretive signage. Tangible hallmarks of the Spanish period, such as Plaza de España, the Agaña Spanish Bridge, and Fort Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, are visited by locals and tourists alike. The *Chamorro Cultural Village*, in Hagatña, Guam, is a recently constructed (i.e., late-twentieth century) complex of Spanish-style buildings where Chamorro crafts and foods are sold and consumed, and traditional dances are enacted in the twenty-first century. Public education is also practiced at *Gef Pa'go*, an outdoor 'living museum' in southern Guam where local children and adult tourists can learn about Chamorro crafts and life-ways during and after the Spanish colonial period. Many other projects that are relevant to Guam's Spanish colonial heritage have been proposed (and in some cases completed) by the Guam Preservation Trust (GPT), a local nonprofit agency. These initiatives include the restoration of Spanish-style buildings and bridges, the publication of scholarly reports, the documentation of oral histories, and the development of *Guampedia*, an online digital clearing house for the preservation of Guam's history and culture (Guam Preservation Trust Master Plan 2007–2012).

Still, material symbols of the pre-Spanish period are represented even more frequently at places such as *Latte* Stone Park. *Latte* iconography is common in stylized colonnades, concrete walls, and stylized entry gates at civic buildings such as schools. Graphic representations of *latte* are used to advertise and market goods and services for both local and nonlocal consumption. Contemporary representations of Chamorro cultural heritage link Mariana Islanders to their ancient past and emergent future.

## 10.4 Directions for Future Research

Future research on Spanish colonial archaeology in the Mariana Islands—and elsewhere in the world—would benefit greatly from the kind of cross-cultural, comparative perspective that has been proposed by other scholars (e.g., Van Buren 2010, pp. 176–179). Different indigenous populations (Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and Asians) reacted to the Spanish and other European (e.g., Dutch) incursions

in myriad ways (e.g., Rothchild 2003; Lightfoot 2005). Differences in the cultural, political, economic, and technological dimensions of these populations influenced how they received, and at times resisted, Spanish, European, and American efforts at colonialism. Comparative study of the topics considered in this essay should be undertaken and include the following: (1) trade and political economy, (2) diet and food production, (3) architecture and transportation, (4) labor and gender relations, and (5) contemporary heritage and identity.

Conventional views of trade and political economy during the early modern period have long emphasized the centrality of Europe in world trade and the development of an 'East-versus-West' trade imbalance (Flynn and Giráldez 1995, p. 207). Although Europe featured prominently in world trade, this view overlooks prime movers, such as supply and demand, that would have driven this trade. Europeans functioned as 'middlemen' rather than prime movers in the global silver trade. Research on Spanish colonial archaeology would profit from considering the hypothesis that China's demand for silver, as a replacement for their grossly inflated paper money, was financially beneficial for the Spanish empire (Flynn and Giráldez 1995, p. 218). As the global galleon trade facilitated China's ability to meet its demand for silver, it enhanced Spain's ability to fund its imperial wars against the Ottomans, England, France, and in the Americas, and Asia, including the Philippines (Flynn and Giráldez 1995, pp. 2010–2011). Acknowledging Spain's indirect role in servicing the Chinese demand for silver—via the Pacific galleon trade—would help balance interpretations of the origin of world trade that are Eurocentric (Flynn and Giráldez 1995, p. 203).

Similarly, comparative analysis of changes in diet and food production during Spanish colonialism would benefit from considering the findings of bioarchaeology. In the Marianas, for example, bioarchaeological research indicates that the health and stature of indigenous Chamorro was altered by Spanish and/or American colonialism; the height of Chamorro during the late-twentieth century was 10 cm shorter than the height of pre-Spanish Chamorro (Pietrusewsky et al. 1997, p. 337). Additional skeletal and dental indicators imply that Chamorro health was robust prior to colonialism (Pietrusewsky et al. 1997, pp. 337–340). Did indigenous populations in other domains of the Spanish empire experience similar changes in their health and stature?

With respect to architecture, archaeological research in the Marianas would profit from comparing its Spanish mission architecture (Haynes and Wuerch 1993) with that in the Philippines and New Spain. Studies that investigate the relative uniformity or deviation from an ideal mission 'template' could illuminate the ways in which mission architecture and its layout was adapted to local circumstances (e.g., Saunders 1993). Comparative analyses of architecture could also inform studies of indigenous labor and gender relations under the footprint of the Spanish empire. The construction and use of Spanish colonial architecture surely impacted indigenous societies in different ways; some indigenous societies practiced patrilineal forms of social organization, whereas others, such as the Chamorro, were matrilineal. The influence of Spanish colonial architecture on labor and gender relations merits detailed consideration.

Finally, Spanish colonial archaeology would benefit from comparative studies of indigenous heritage and identity. Such studies could examine the relevance and consequences of Spanish colonial archaeology for the social construction of contemporary heritage and identity. In some nation states, such as the Philippines, the legacy of Spanish colonialism is not a widely celebrated dimension of their heritage. Statues in the Philippines that commemorate Lapu-Lapu, a celebrated hero for resisting Spanish colonialism through his execution of Fernando de Magallanes, offer tangible evidence of such anticolonial sentiments. In this respect, the Mariana Islands are quite different and many Chamorro honor their Spanish heritage. Indeed, Guam established a public holiday to commemorate Spanish contact; this holiday is known as ‘Discovery Day’ and ‘Magellan Day’ and it is celebrated on March 4 every year. Comparative studies of various views of indigenous peoples to their Spanish colonial heritage would strengthen the documentary and archaeological study of colonialism within and beyond the Pacific and Asia.

## 10.5 Summary and Conclusions

Spanish colonialism in the Mariana Islands was fueled, in part, by the economic imperatives of provisioning the galleon ships that transported materials, goods, and people among Asia, the Americas, and Europe. Although historians and archaeologists acknowledge the importance of both the Philippines and New Spain, way-points like the Mariana Islands offer complementary perspectives on Spanish colonialism. Archaeological investigations in the Mariana Islands provide valuable insights into technology and material culture during the Spanish colonial period in a distant corner of the world.

Our review identifies ways in which archaeological research on Spanish colonialism in the Mariana Islands remains in its infancy; many questions remain to be developed and studied. Until recently, archaeologists studied the pre-Spanish period when Chamorro society was still untouched by European contact that began with Ferdinand Magallanes in 1521. Such research is clearly important in its own right and provides a baseline for gauging the impact and consequences of Spanish colonialism. But as today’s Chamorro celebrate their Spanish heritage, the need for problem-oriented archaeological research on Spanish contact and colonialism in the Mariana Islands grows ever more relevant.

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# Chapter 11

## The Failed Sixteenth Century Spanish Colonizing Expeditions to the Solomon Islands, Southwest Pacific: The Archaeologies of Settlement Process and Indigenous Agency

Martin Gibbs

### 11.1 Introduction

Studies of early modern colonialism have tended to view the growth of the Spanish empire into the Americas and eventually into the fringes of Asia as a largely successful enterprise, with archaeological interest usually focused on the nature and operation of established settlements, including interactions with indigenous groups (van Buren 2010). There were, however, instances where Spanish colonial endeavors failed as a result of poor preparation and implementation of colonizing strategies, failure to cope with new environments, hostile interactions with indigenous groups, or as a consequence of internal political troubles and unrealistic expectations within the colonizing group (Gasco 2005, p. 70). Exploration of those situations of unsuccessful colonization provides us with a greater sense of the diversity of colonizing experiences, extending beyond the current monolithic view of the Spanish empire.

The author's 'Beyond the New World' project, funded by the Australian Research Council, explores the nature of several sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries failed Spanish colonization attempts in the Southwest Pacific, in the region now known as the Solomon Islands, located 700 km east of New Guinea (Fig. 11.1). In particular, it focuses on the 1568 and 1595 expeditions of Alvaro de Mendaña. A third expedition in 1606 under the command of Pedro Fernández de Quirós, which was closely related to the earlier expeditions but attempted to establish a colony in what is now Vanuatu, is only discussed briefly as it is dealt with elsewhere in this volume (see Chap. 9).

The project itself is twofold: the first part examining the structure of the colonization process, while the second part explores the indigenous interaction and agency in what was undoubtedly the first contact between Europeans and Melanesians in that part of the world. In particular, it considers variation between the different expeditions, their intentions versus the execution of the settlement strategies, and

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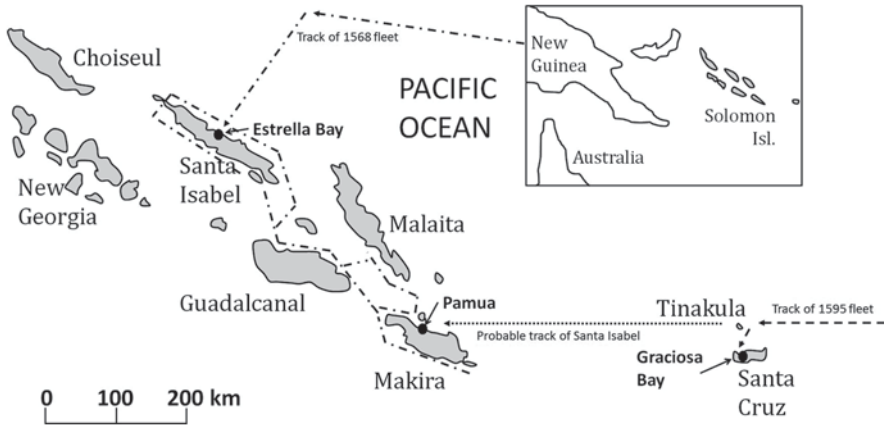


Fig. 11.1 Sites mentioned in the text

the role of indigenous agency in these episodes. As will be described, of special interest are the differences between the archaeological evidence of Mendaña's short-lived 1595 colony in Graciosa Bay on the island of Santa Cruz versus a site located at Pamua on Makira Island in which it appears the galleon *Santa Isabel* (which became separated from the main 1595 expedition) may have attempted to establish its own settlement. Whereas the Graciosa Bay settlement has a documentary and archaeological record, nothing is recorded of the Pamua site or the fate of the 180 men, women, and children that may have occupied it, other than the archaeological remains. In the broader project the processes of Spanish colonization are also contrasted to subsequent colonial activities by the British and to a lesser extent the French and Germans. This chapter provides a brief overview of the structure and current results of the project.

## 11.2 The Processes of Colonization

One of the core concerns with the 'Beyond the New World' project has been to understand the structure of the earliest phases of exploration and colonization including the role of indigenous interactions and agency in these processes, attempting to view the processes of encounter from both sides of the beach, to borrow a phrase from a renowned anthropologist of early Pacific contact, the late Greg Denning (1980). It is interesting to see in recent years that there has been a resurgence of literature on frontiers and colonization processes, including the now vast body literature on cross-cultural contact and the nature of colonialism (e.g., Harrison and Williamson 2004; Murray 2004). Many of these studies have considered indigenous participation in relation to frontier settlement and industry, addressing earlier concerns over the lack of recognition of indigenous agency.



In exploring the European (or more correctly non-indigenous) side of colonization, we need to consider both cognitive and material aspects of preparations for journeying to and establishing new settlements, the reactions and responses of colonists to the new environments and cultures they encountered, and the host of other internal and external factors which influenced them at every stage.

As I have noted elsewhere:

People's decisions and responses were expressed in the location and nature of sites (including their abandonment) and the selection, disposition and use of material culture. For new colonies, sometimes extremely isolated from their home cultures and without any form of support or supply, the situations they found themselves in could be very different from those originally anticipated, or could change suddenly and unexpectedly, and in some instances extremely radically. What had been prepared for suddenly became irrelevant as they struggled to survive (Gibbs 2011, page 143).

The essence of the project is therefore to understand the nature of adaptation and the capacity of a colonizing group to actively modify both conceptual and practical approaches to their circumstances. The documentary and archaeological records of failed settlements capture instances where a group's inability or unwillingness to cope with their situation has resulted in collapse or abandonment. It is important to note here that while I use the term 'European' as a convenient means of describing the Spanish colonizing venture, the Mendaña expeditions included a range of racial and ethnic groups from Europe, South America, Africa, and elsewhere, including mixed descent (mestizo) persons. These diverse persons, deployed in various ways within the hierarchies of the expedition, brought with them differing bodies of cultural and environmental knowledge, experiences, and perspectives which might have had a bearing on their decisions and reactions, influencing personal and group success.

An important part of the project has been the use of a comparative framework which breaks the colonization process into stages, and allows for an integration of the different archaeological, documentary, and oral historical or ethnographic data sets. An extended discussion of this structure is available elsewhere (Gibbs 2011), although a summary follows here.

### 11.3 Presettlement and Voyage

Colonization as a process began long before stepping ashore in a new land. It is necessary to consider the 'push' factors encouraging or even forcing movement to a new place, as well as 'pull' factors and conditions making colonization attractive (Rockman 2003, p. 9). Stein (2005, p. 11) has suggested a range of reasons behind the establishment of new colonies, including creating outposts for trade and exchange; bases for primary resource extraction or agriculture; 'settler colonies' for excess population; military or administrative outposts for conquered areas; refuges or points of resettlement for conquered populations; or outposts for the spread of specific ideologies (i.e., missions). The intention behind the new colony obviously

had major influences on its proposed and eventual political, legal, and administrative structures, as well as its physical layout and operation, including the composition of the population it housed and potentially its relations with indigenous populations and other settlements and polities.

The decision to go or not to go on a colonizing expedition, and once there to stay or not to stay, was a constant balance between positive and negative variables. The initial decision to colonize for whatever reasons involved both active and passive information collection from official and private sources. Based on this, organizers and participants developed expectations of the natural, social, and economic environments, as well as their own roles there, and consequently selected supplies and materials they felt were appropriate (Cameron 1981). In some instances these processes were flawed by inaccurate information, sometimes as a consequence of limited or differential access to relevant advice. Preparations could also be impaired by unrealistic expectations of roles and rights, or conditions or restraints imposed by those in authority including directives to locate, arrange, or operate settlements in certain prescribed ways.

The voyage itself was also a critical part of the presettlement phase, not only because it demanded its own organization and supplies but also because the best laid plans for colonization could be changed or abandoned en-route. External and internal factors could lead to shipwreck, changes in destination, shortages in supplies, illness and disease, conflict, and death of some or all of those aboard.

The pre-settlement preparation and voyage phase is also potentially evident archaeologically in a host of ways (Gibbs 2002, 2003, 2011).

## 11.4 Colonization

The structure of colonization process used in the project is based upon an earlier model used by Australian historical archaeologists (Birmingham and Jeans 1983), where newly arrived colonists potentially pass through three basic phases:

1. *Exploratory phase*, where colonists entered the new environment with their existing socioeconomic structures, technologies, skills, and material culture. In this period there was reliance upon imported stores of food and equipment while the colonists made a preliminary assessment of the environment and resources and selected a possible production system.
2. *Learning phase*, where the production system was implemented. If unsuccessful, the technologies or processes were either rejected or revised and tried again. If successful, the colonists passed into the Developmental phase.
3. *Developmental phase*, where further refinements were made to systems, influenced by arrivals of new technology, local innovations, changes in the commercial environment, or changes in and/or increased knowledge of the biophysical environment (Birmingham and Jeans 1983, p. 6).

The ability to engage with and proceed through and beyond each phase was closely linked to individual and corporate abilities to adapt to their new environment and circumstances, including their capacity to modify their original goals and introduce innovations in behavior and technology (see Kirch 1980, p. 125). Through all of these stages interaction with indigenous groups was a significant factor, not only as a means of accessing environmental knowledge and learning, but also in a diverse range of other dynamic social, economic, political, and other relationships (e.g., Rockman and Steele 2003; Harrison and Williamson 2004; Silliman 2005). The structure of these relationships was sometimes an integral and explicit part of colonization strategies, regulated by formal and informal expectations and rules.

## 11.5 Collapse and/or Abandonment

The decision to abandon a settlement could come as a result of a variety of internal or external political, social, and economic forces, or through a failure to adapt to the new environment and circumstances. The collective forces working against the short- and long-term survival of a settlement could eventually outweigh the push-pull factors which originally encouraged its foundation or continued existence. As noted above, circumstances might change rapidly and unexpectedly in unanticipated directions, forcing radical changes upon a group and its responses (as well as their capacity to respond). This could result in abandonment by all or part of the group, salvage of materials from the site and relocation to a new site, to another existing settlement, or back to the homeland, or even lead to death of all or some of the group (Blanton 2003).

One trajectory for the archaeological study of colonization might therefore be to focus itself on the interfaces between intention, practice, and outcome. Comparison between the colonization efforts of different groups, especially in situations where they would appear to have had similar intentions, capabilities, and circumstances but markedly different outcomes such as success versus failure/abandonment, has the potential to generate insights into how human societies handled this sort of variability. The sixteenth and early seventeenth century Spanish expeditions in search for the Islands of Solomon present us with one such comparative scenario.

## 11.6 Beyond the New World—The Spanish Expansion Toward Asia and the Southwest Pacific

One way of seeing the Iberian invasion and colonization of the New World is as an interlude, albeit a highly profitable and enduring one, in Spain's quest to find a route toward Asia. Following the 1492 discovery of the Bahamas by Colón, expansion across the Caribbean and beyond was relatively rapid. After Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama in 1513, settlements were established north and south along

the Pacific coast. In addition, there were several attempts to establish a foothold in North America (La Florida) (Milanich and Milbraith 1989, p. 3). As Kathleen Deagan has noted, the processes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Spanish colonial project were ‘simultaneously an invasion, a colonization effort, a social experiment, a religious crusade, and a highly structured economic enterprise’ (Deagan 2003, p. 3). The *conquistadores* who led successful expeditions were given lands, rights, titles, and honors, often becoming the governors of their new territories (Kicza 1992, p. 237). The Spanish experience in the Americas left them with a range of strategies and approaches toward their relationships with indigenous groups. One important structure from the mid-sixteenth century was the *repartimiento* or *encomienda* system, the legal and political structure which tied indigenous labor to these settlers in a form of vassalage. The expectation was that the indigenous populations would convert to Christianity and serve as an important structural aspect of the system promoting imperial and personal advancement of the Spanish colonists.

While Spain had been occupied with its American venture through the first half of the sixteenth century, Portugal had consolidated its presence in southern Asia, including establishing trade settlements in the Spice Islands (Indonesia) as entrepôts to Chinese markets. Spain re-engaged with its quest for Asia with Magallanes’ circumnavigation of the globe reaching Cebu in the Philippines in 1522. There were several attempts to probe across the Pacific toward Asia, but it was not until Urdaneta had established a viable return route from Asia to Acapulco in 1565 that permanent bases were established: at Cebu in 1565, Manila in 1571, and Vigan in 1574 (Jack-Hinton 1969; Skowronek 1998, p. 47).

The successes of the Manila Galleon trade have overshadowed other contemporary Spanish activities in the Pacific, including the several unsuccessful expeditions out of the Viceroyalty of Peru which are the subject of this research. These expeditions had several origins, including finding alternative routes toward Asia, the possibilities of locating the Ptolemaic great ‘southern land’ (Kelsey 1986), and the potential for discovering the biblical lands of Ophir and Tharshish from whence King Solomon derived his gold (Jack-Hinton 1969, p. 4). When Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa collected Quechua stories of Tupac Yupanqui’s fleet which had allegedly found islands to the west of Peru containing many black people and gold, there was great enthusiasm for a westward expedition (Spate 1979, p. 121; Camino 2005, p. 33). In the mid-1560s, Sarmiento approached the viceroy of Peru to approve and fund an expedition. The Viceroy, Lope García de Castro approved the voyage and provided two ships and 150 men. However, the possibility for personal and familial advancement was so great that he set aside Sarmiento as *Commander* and named his 25-year-old nephew Alvaro de Mendaña as the *Adelantado* with rights to conquer, claim, and govern any new territory found (Hill 1913, p. 656).

Mendaña’s expedition (with a deeply aggrieved Sarmiento aboard but reduced to navigator) set sail from Callao on 20 November 1567. On 7 February 1568 after sailing almost 14,000 km west from Peru, they encountered a new land which they named *Santa Isabel*, anchoring in the bay locally known to the indigenous Melanesians as Gehe, renamed by Mendaña as *Bahia de la Estrella* (Estrella Bay) (Spate 1979). Within 1 day they established a shore camp, built forges, and started felling

and cutting timber to construct a shallow draft *bergantín*, capable of carrying 20 men, which would allow them to navigate through reefs and shallows. The speed with which this took place suggests that many of the fittings and key parts must have already been in the expedition's supplies, indicating that this was an established part of the exploration strategy.

Encounters with the indigenous Melanesians had begun immediately upon Mendaña's ships arriving in Estrella Bay. The first contacts were amicable gift giving and trading ventures. It seems possible that initially the Spanish benefited from a case of mistaken identity, with some evidence that the people of Gehe possibly believed them to be Polynesians, who also had (comparatively) light skin and at that time sailed large voyaging canoes with white lateen sails. Inter-island trading expeditions were not unknown and the inhabitants of Gehe were almost certainly used to the arrival of what in later years they would term *mae vaka*, or 'ship men' (White 1991, p. 84). As a consequence of these trading networks, there are other later instances where the first Europeans on even remote Pacific islands were not necessarily greeted with awe, but as just another set of traders or travelers (cf. Torrence 2000). However, after several days and possibly as the Spanish failed to conform to the behaviors expected of visitors, relations changed somewhat, becoming more aggressive and including what appear to have been formal ritual responses. One such response, hinting that a spiritual dimension may have been involved, was what may have been a human sacrifice and offering of part of a child to the Spanish, although for what purpose is unclear (Amherst and Thomson 1901, p. xxvii). While claims of this sort are often controversial, there was a well-established tradition in the Solomon Islands of human sacrifice at critical ritual occasions or when spiritual intervention was required (see White 1991, p. 37). Although the Franciscan friars had instructed the crew aboard the expedition to avoid violence toward the islanders, within days the Spanish had already stolen food and shot a number of people in retaliation for attacks, as well as taken captives to train as interpreters and as leverage in trade negotiations or demands for food.

The *bergantín* (*Santiago*) was completed by early April and the Spanish then engaged in searching for gold across what they now realized was an archipelago of islands. Indigenous responses as they landed on many different islands and places ranged from friendly and curious (or in some cases indifferent), to hostility, violence, or spiritual reaction. It would appear that the intention was to establish a colony close to wherever gold was discovered, but as the months passed with no sign of the promised bounty and supplies dwindling, tempers began to fray. The nonviolence strictures of the expedition leaders were increasingly ignored, and demands were made to retreat to Peru. An additional incentive to leave was that supplies of gunpowder and ammunition were running low. After 5 months the crew voted to abandon the quest and return home, which was probably acceded to by Mendaña in the face of looming mutiny (with Sarmiento remaining one of his main antagonists). In preparation for the return voyage, the three vessels moored in a bay somewhere on the northeast coast of San Cristobal (now Makira), violently overrunning and occupying an indigenous village which they used as a base for the next several weeks while careening their ships before departure (Amherst and Thomson 1901, pp. 177, 206–207, 409–427).

## 11.7 Archaeology of the 1568 Expedition

The 1568 Mendaña expedition was almost certainly the first contact between Europeans and Melanesians in what were to become known after their return as the 'Islands of Solomon.' In particular, the initial camp in Estrella bay has the triple significance of being the first landing place of Europeans, the first place of contact between them and the indigenous Melanesians, and the site where the *bergantín* was constructed. The structure of any surviving physical remains would also give an insight into what this sort of initial exploration foothold looked like.

The actual location of the initial campsite is uncertain, with no surviving maps from the Mendaña expedition and virtually no textual clues in the several Spanish accounts which might assist with its location. For the same reasons, it is not even certain if the bay dubbed 'Estrella Bay' by nineteenth century British cartographers is the same place visited by the Spanish in 1568. The only hint that there may be a correlation is that in the 1930s there were apparently some oral legends amongst the Gehe community of the Spanish presence (Bogesi 1948, p. 354). The 2008 and 2012 archaeological surveys failed to locate any physical remains of the Spanish presence around the edges of Estrella Bay. In truth, other anchorages in adjacent bays (such as currently occupied by the modern village of Sisiga) may have been more sheltered as an anchorage for the small Spanish vessels and provided a better site for constructing the *bergantín*. Interviews with traditional owners elicited no oral histories ('kastom stories') beyond what is now common historical knowledge. Of some concern for the potential survival of archaeological sites is that the north coast of Santa Isabel is subject to cyclonic and tsunami surges and being close to a tectonic subduction zone is also sinking. Consequently, there is a good chance that the initial campsite, which was probably on or just above the high-tide mark, is likely to have been submerged or destroyed. However, a slim possibility remains for the site to still be discovered.

Most of the other landfall sites associated with Mendaña's 1568 expedition were ephemeral, although there is always the possibility of trade items being found on contemporary indigenous sites, especially in burial contexts. The final careening site in an indigenous village on the northeast San Cristobal (Makira) coast was the only other occupation of any length, although once again the descriptions of its location are extremely ambiguous (Amherst and Thomson 1901, p. 409). There are only a few reasonable anchorages in the area, with one possibility being Marou Bay. A brief visit was made to the area in 2011, although given the limited time and information available and the lack of local kastom knowledge, no survey was possible.

## 11.8 The 1595 Mendaña Expedition

After his return to Peru, Mendaña began to wage a relentless campaign in Spain and the Americas to be allowed to return to the Solomon Islands and claim his rights as 'Adelantado of the Western Isles' (Hill 1913, p. 656; Jack-Hinton 1969). Political



changes saw Mendaña lose support with the colonial administration and briefly imprisoned, while the financial difficulties of the Spanish Crown following the ill-fated Armada against England meant that there was limited support for repeating what had already been a failed colonizing venture. After 25 years Mendaña's persistence paid off, with the Crown granting permission to establish a new colony, together with some concessions to assist with preparations, although the expedition was financed by Mendaña himself. In part this funding came from the dowry from his marriage to Isabel Barreto, although in return several of her brothers were granted high positions in the expedition hierarchy (Spate 1979).

The other feature that made this effectively private expedition to the Solomon Islands different from many contemporary ventures was that women and children were included in the first colonizing fleet. The majority of the intending colonists were former soldiers and their wives, families, servants, and slaves, lured by the promise of land and wealth in the new lands. The viceroy of Peru also took the opportunity to rid his ports of undesirables, forcing men on to the ships crews who had little desire to travel to the far side of the world. With a detailed crew and passenger list available, we know that the expedition included a socially and racially diverse mix of Spanish, South Americans, mestizo, and Negro men, women, and children totaling between 378 and 400 people (Markham 1904, p. 18; Kelly 1965, pp. 161, 399).

After some difficulty finding suitable ships and supplies (and with inadequate supplies aboard even at the outset of the expedition—see Markham 1904, p. 4), on 6 June 1595 the galleons *San Jerónimo* and *Santa Isabel*, the galeot *San Felipe* and frigate *Santa Catalina* sailed for San Cristobal, Mendaña's last landfall in 1568, to establish a colony. Mendaña had anticipated a voyage of only 3 weeks and supplied accordingly, not realizing the 1568 vessels had been fortunate to pick up a fast seasonal current across the Pacific. The 1595 fleet moved much more slowly, and 3 months later, although traveling on the correct latitude, had still not found Makira. Conditions began to become desperate, with shortages of wood, water, and food (Markham 1904, p. 10). The situation worsened when on 7 September 1595 Mendaña aboard *San Jeronimo* sent signals to the fleet to stop when they encountered a thick cloud of smoke and ash, which we now know was from an eruption of the Tinakula volcano in the Santa Cruz group. One of the smaller vessels was sent to investigate if this meant there was land nearby. Despite further signaling to the fleet to halt for the night, by morning *Santa Isabel* under the command of Admiral Lope de Vega (Mendaña's brother in law) had vanished. Aboard there were between 130 and 180 men, women, and children, as well as many of the supplies for the intended colony during its crucial establishment phase (Kelly 1965, pp. 399–409). Mendaña and many others believed that the vessel had missed the signals and simply continued on toward the intended destination of San Cristobal, but despite several brief attempts to relocate the vessel it was never seen or heard of again.

Uncertain of the location of San Cristobal and with even fewer provisions available, Mendaña turned the remainder of the fleet southwards to the nearby island of Santa Cruz (Nendö). He decided to establish his colony there with the remaining 220 people, using this as a base from which further expeditions might be made.

The documentary record of the events of the next several weeks is significant as an insight into the processes of establishing a Spanish colony. Of particular interest is the interplay between the formal rules of settlement (Phillip II's ordinances, see Nuttall 1921), the decisions made by the ruling party (Mendaña as Adelantado and by extension his wife's family as principal investors in the expedition), and the actions and decisions of the people actually undertaking the establishment of the settlement, including the settlers who had staked their own fortunes on its success, as well as the sailors who did not want to be there. Similar to aspects of the 1568 expedition there was clearly a contest of wills at all levels and the single record of the expedition, clearly a somewhat biased political statement by the navigator Pedro Fernández de Quirós, shows that from the outset there was dissension. One complicating factor may have been that by the time of their arrival at Santa Cruz, Mendaña was unwell, possibly with malaria or typhus, forcing him to stay aboard while his camp master undertook much of the groundwork.

Whereas Mendaña had chosen a location near the top of the bay which made access for the ships easy, the camp master disagreed and started clearing vegetation and constructing the settlement at a site in the far southeastern corner of the bay, next to a fresh water stream. While eventually forced to concede, Mendaña successfully rebuffed suggestions that the colonists simply overrun an existing settlement to save the work of clearing and construction, although the area chosen by the camp master was reported as not having an indigenous village on it (Markham 1904, p. 46). Despite these disagreements, there was progress in constructing huts, houses, and a church, establishing a defensive system, and surveying for a larger settlement. Further analysis of the components of the settlement mentioned in the account of the expedition, and how these may have aligned with the official ordinances, is presented elsewhere (Gibbs 2011). There is some ambiguity about whether the place where the Spanish camped was also the site of the intended township, and whether some or all of the features mentioned in Quirós' narrative were in the same place or spread across two locations (Markham 1904). This may have critical implications for interpreting the archaeology of the site.

Dealings with the indigenous Santa Cruz population had started amicably, although possibly with the same case of mistaken identity (that the Spanish were Polynesian traders) as for the 1568 expedition. Mendaña drew on his earlier experience to exchange names with Malopé, a chief of one of the villages around Graciosa Bay, thus creating a social and economic relationship which broadly aligned with traditional expectations. Initially the Graciosa Bay peoples extended great courtesy, facilitated by Malopé, providing food and assisting with the clearing and construction of the first houses. Spanish demands for food rapidly out-stripped the limited local horticultural production and hunting capacity. Pork was especially desired and the Spanish began to forcibly take pigs, not understanding that in Melanesian society these animals have specific ritual and status roles which ensured they were not normal dietary items. When demands were not met some of the soldiers and sailors began to burn down huts and destroy property, but even then Malopé tried to mediate and avoid violence, while Mendaña also tried to negotiate for a peaceful coexistence. As discontent in the Spanish camp grew a deliberate campaign to antagonize the local population and provoke an attack emerged, aimed at forcing a departure

and return to Peru. Several islanders including Malopé were brutally murdered, forcing Mendaña, urged on by his wife (who also feared for loss of their property rights), to try to deal with his factionalized colonists. Mendaña ordered the execution of the camp master and several of his followers, with their heads displayed on poles outside the camp to dissuade further dissent.

Within days Mendaña himself was dead, while the colony was gripped by an epidemic which soon saw between 40 and 50 people dead and buried in the graveyard. Isabel, Mendaña's wife, inherited the title of governor and despite her territorial ambitions soon had to concede that the settlement was doomed. The deteriorating condition of the ships and the fear that if left much longer escape would become impossible also encouraged exodus (Markham 1904, p. 66). The decision was made to abandon Santa Cruz and sail for the Philippines, departing 18 November 1595 or just over 2 months after their arrival (Green 1973; Camino 2005). On the near-disastrous outbound voyage, a further 50 people died, many of them because of starvation and dehydration, while Doña Isabel refused to share her personal water and provisions (Camino 2005, p. 56).

Mendaña's obsession with the Solomon Islands seems to have infected his navigator Pedro Fernández de Quirós, who after his eventual return to Peru also pressed for the right to establish a colony on Santa Cruz (which was unsuccessfully contested by Isabel and her new husband). Quirós' 1606 expedition had more of the aspect of a religious crusade than a mere colonizing venture, and support for his expedition came from the Pope himself. Quirós' deteriorating mental condition can be seen in his indecision about whether to go back to Santa Cruz, or find the Southland. En-route he ignored evidence that there had been survivors from *Santa Isabel* on an island only a few days sail away (Kelly 1966, p. 295). When he finally decided to establish a settlement named New Jerusalem on Espiritu Santo (Vanuatu), the crew engaged in clearance and construction activities which appear similar in nature to those seen at the Graciosa Bay settlement. However, after less than 3 weeks Quirós ordered the abandonment of the site and in effect provoked the collapse of the expedition (Camino 2005, also see Flexner et al. this volume).

## 11.9 Archaeology of the 1595 Expedition—Graciosa Bay (Santa Cruz)

In 1970 archaeologist Roger Green located non-indigenous pottery in the southeast corner of Graciosa Bay on Santa Cruz (Fig. 11.2). Based on his previous experience working on colonial sites in the USA, he was able to identify Spanish vessel forms and proposed the relationship between these materials and Mendaña's 1595 settlement (Allen and Green 1972). A brief follow-up survey and excavation was undertaken by Jim Allen, resulting in a total of 120 sherds, traces of a house floor which they conjectured was Spanish because it seemed rectangular (versus traditional Santa Cruz housing which was circular), a portion of a ca. 2 m wide curving ditch (originally 1.25 m deep, with a bank of soil on the inner/north side), which Green felt may have been part of a defensive system, and portions of two burials.

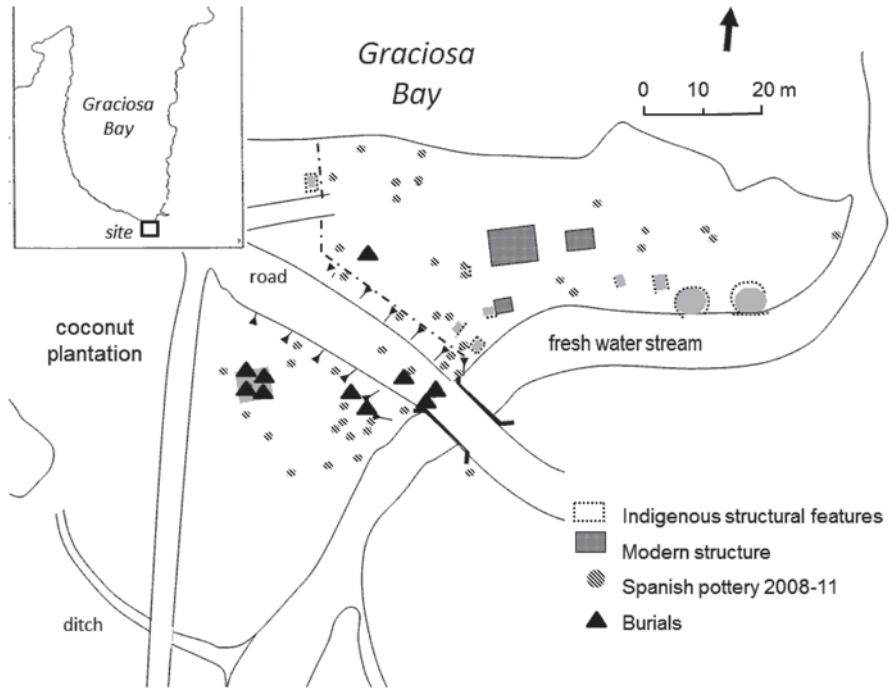


Fig. 11.2 Graciosa Bay site

However, no firm connection could be found between these latter features and the Spanish period, and no further research was undertaken (Allen and Green 1972; Allen 1976, 2010).

From 2008 to 2012 the author spent several seasons at the Santa Cruz site, surveying, undertaking extensive test-pitting across the site, and making several open area excavations. The aims were to confirm that this was the 1595 settlement, explore for structural remains and the graveyard, and locate any other evidence of the structure and operation of the colony and their relations with the indigenous population. The intervening 40 years since Green and Allen's work had seen much of the northern part of the site cleared of vegetation, with some construction. This made it possible to see a number of stone alignments, several circular in nature, as well as several coral pads which were possibly similar to that excavated in 1971. One of the latter was rectangular with dimensions of at least  $2 \times 3$  m, consistent with that excavated in 1971. The circular arrangements were almost certainly indigenous in origin, conforming to traditional house circles, while sample pits in and around the floor pads did not provide dateable material and may even relate to the early colonial period. The area of the 1971 excavations had been destroyed by a 1980s road cutting, during which another four burials had been uncovered, although again quite probably indigenous in origin and possibly subfloor inhumations. These remains had been reburied and could not be relocated. Green's 'defensive ditch' was also relocated but remains ambiguous as to its origin or purpose.

A relatively sparse scatter of Spanish pottery was recorded across an area only slightly wider than that discovered in the brief 1970 season. This material was generally found on the surface and above the indigenous structural features, or within the first 20 cm of deposit, although this buried material was probably pushed down from the surface by burrowing crabs. This suggests two possibilities. The first is that the Spanish camp was developed on top of an earlier but abandoned indigenous village site. The second is that this was not the site of the Spanish camp but a contemporary village which received or salvaged ceramics from the Spanish camp, but was possibly abandoned in the same period (see below).

Human bone was found on the surface in several areas, also brought to the surface by burrowing crabs, while further buried skeletal material was found through systematic test-pitting. In the hope this might indicate the Spanish burial ground, several larger excavations were made. In all cases these appear to have been indigenous burials, usually subfloor crouched inhumations where the long bones and crania had been removed, the former for arrows and the latter for inclusion in shrines. Of interest is that dates from these burials suggest occupation of the site immediately before and after, and possibly even contemporary with, the Spanish period.

One benefit of the extensive test pitting across the site is that there is evidence that there have been several major floods, extreme high tides, or tsunami events. These have caused some degree of stripping of surface layers, as well as possible erosion and rebuilding of beachfront. Oral histories indicate that such wash events are known, and several weeks after the completion of the 2012 season a tsunami associated with a tremor from the Tinakula volcano hit Graciosa Bay near the site. The extent of the impact of these events on archaeological deposits is difficult to determine.

Intensive survey was made in the areas surrounding the main site, especially on the east side of the freshwater stream and beyond for several hundred meters. However, no other pottery or evidence was discovered. Interviews with the traditional land owners and several other knowledgeable older men included the belief that the site where the pottery was found had never been the location of a village, and in fact the site was generally regarded with caution as the home of a potentially dangerous spirit being. These gentlemen also provided interesting information on traditional practices, such as protocols for treatment of visitors, as well as insights and interpretations of some of the historically documented events associated with the Spanish occupation. The field team were also taken to see the (supposed) site of Malopé's village, located further east on Graciosa Bay, but now largely eroded and fallen into the sea.

### **11.10 The Mystery of the Santa Isabel—A Second Settlement at Pamua (Makira)?**

Through an extraordinary feat of luck and insight, soon after Roger Green returned to New Zealand he spotted in the Otago Museum a number of pottery sherds identical to the Graciosa Bay material, but collected by early twentieth century missionar-

ies from Pamua on the coast of Makira (San Cristobal), 450 km west of Santa Cruz (Fig. 11.1) (Allen 1974; White 2002). Green and Allen eventually located a dense scatter of sherds on a 30 m high ridge above the coastal flats on Tauapuna Point, spread over a narrow 100×30 m area (Green 1973). Test pits produced charcoal dating 360±90 B.P. (I-6177) and 320±90 B.P. (I-6176), placing it in the Spanish period but without direct association to Spanish material. Typological and petrographic analysis proved the pottery was Spanish and from the same source as the Graciosa Bay sherds (Dickinson and Green 1973). While the 1568 Mendaña expedition was the only known Spanish visit to Makira (although not to the Pamua area), Green proposed that the Pamua site was associated with the lost *Santa Isabel* from 1595. As part of his historical analysis, Green also noted that Pamua was on almost the same latitude as that being traveled by Mendaña's fleet at the time it reached Tinakula, as if *Santa Isabel* had continued on its original course in the way conjectured by Mendaña (Green 1973).

In 1975 Michael W. Kaschko had returned to Pamua to examine the indigenous cultural sequence of the area. During this intensive archaeological survey and excavation he also found Spanish ceramics on the surface of the ancient indigenous village site of Mwanihuki, situated on the coastal flats behind Tauapuna Point, directly below the ridge site recorded by Green. The location of the Spanish sherds on the surface suggested to Kaschko that the European presence postdated the indigenous occupation or was perhaps contemporary with the terminal phase of its occupation (possibly causing it). The Mwanihuki site includes a variety of stone structures, which test excavations showed were associated with indigenous burials. However, Kaschko also chose to excavate a rectangular and partially stone-lined mound which he felt was unlike the others. Only 40 cm below the surface he uncovered an east–west-oriented extended burial, tentatively identified as a 17–24-year-old male (Carroll 1981), with a metal *aiglet* (a sheath used in the sixteenth century to cap the ends of the laces used to fasten clothing) in the area of its upper chest (Kaschko 1979; Deagan 2002, p. 175). Racial identification proved impossible at the time, so the question of whether this was a Spanish person buried in a shift or shirt, or an indigenous person, remained unresolved. Either identification would result in exciting interpretive opportunities.

The 2008–2011 seasons at Pamua explored both the indigenous and Spanish occupations. Several hundred further sherds were found on the ridge, although still in a narrow area, with further test excavations producing no evidence of structural remains or charcoal suitable for dating. Remote sensing with a magnetometer (Geoscan FM36) and later with a discriminating metal detector (Minelab) generated a series of anomalies, including two iron nails which may be of Spanish origin, although most proved to be modern materials. One notable feature of the ridge is that the pottery scatter was coincident with the spread of white stone (chert) flakes, unlike the multicolored chert flakes found elsewhere in the area. At least two stone alignments and a low mound which might have been the base of a shrine were also recorded on the ridge. Based on ethnographic observations in nearby areas, an elevated area behind a village was an appropriate place for a shrine to be located.



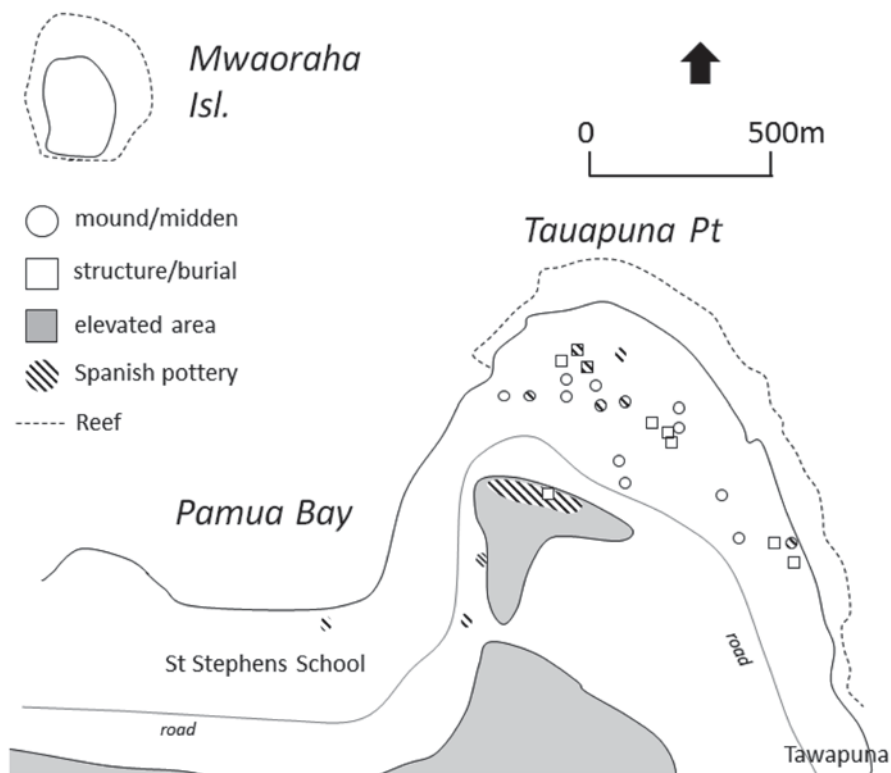


Fig. 11.3 Pamua site

Intensive survey across the coastal flats revealed many additional stone structures and anthropogenic mounds, with the excavated deposits from these showing that Mwanihuki was a large village site involved in intensive trade with neighboring areas and other islands for at least 400 years, before it was abandoned (Blake and Gibbs 2013). The Spanish sherds were present on the surface of a selection of these mounds and structures, rather than in-between the areas (Fig. 11.3). Most of these scatters were situated on structures and mounds along the western side of Tauapuna Point, although another concentration of pottery was found on mounds far to the east, close to Tawapuna village. A number of isolated pottery finds had also been made to the west, close to (and in) the grounds of St Stephens school. No structures associated with the Spanish were located, although it proved possible to relocate the burial mound found by Kaschko. Further excavations on this mound uncovered the traces of several additional east–west-oriented extended burials. Although none of these had Spanish material closely associated, a Spanish chevron bead was recovered from within the adjacent stone wall (Fig. 11.4). A long bone from the east–west burial uncovered in the 2011 excavation was submitted to University of Waikato for AMS dating. At 68.2% probability the calibrated age range for the individual is 1470–1620 AD (Wk34654) (Reimer et al. 2009). Artifacts recovered from Features

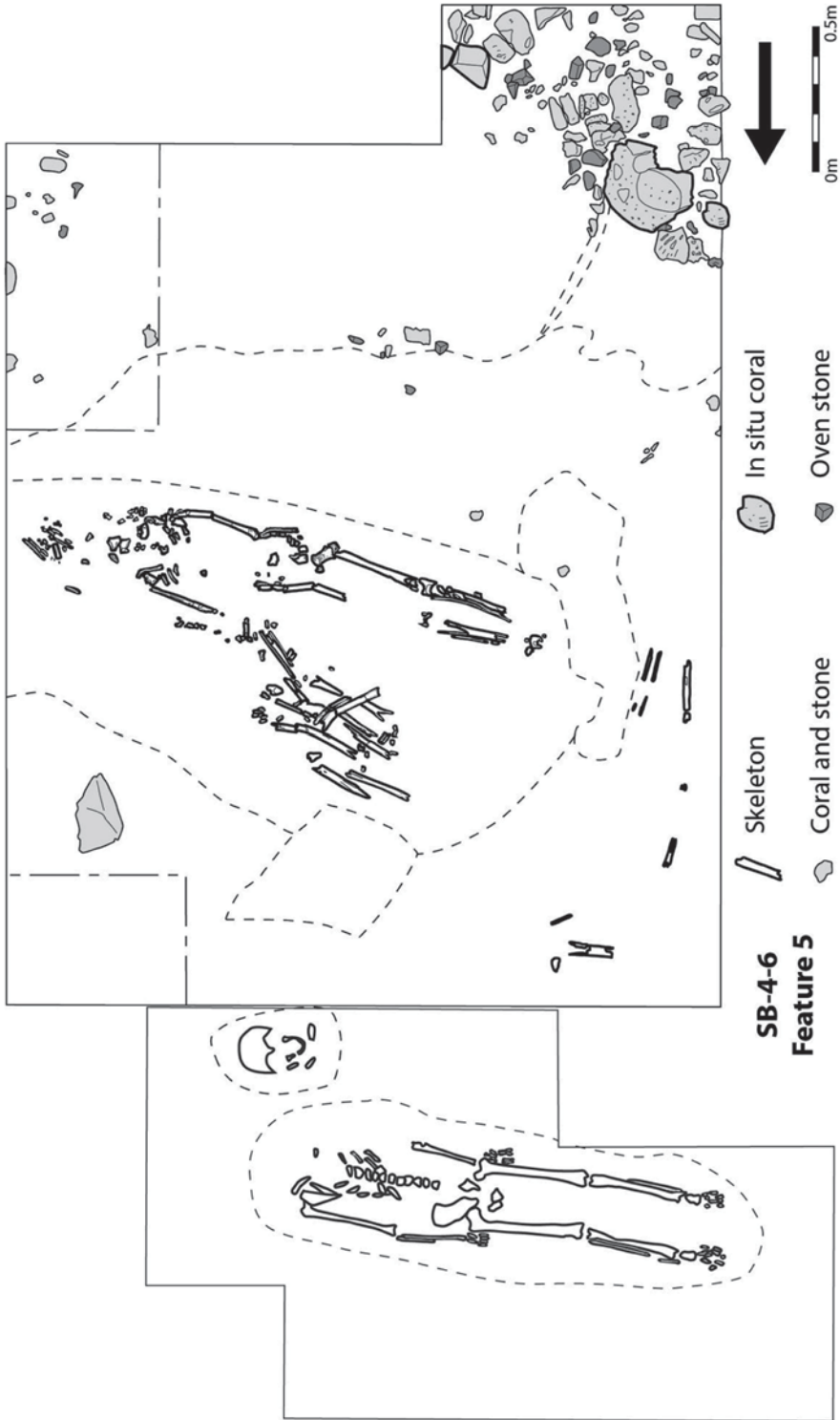


Fig. 11.4 Skeletal remains at Pamua. 1975 excavation to north; 2011 excavation to south. (Drawn by M. Gibbs and R. Tuffin)

2 and 5 teeth have been sent for isotope and DNA analysis which might provide racial origin, but no results have yet been returned.

Extensive oral interviews with local residents and especially the traditional ('kastom') owners of the Pamua area have provided limited insight. There were no stories specifically about the Spanish, although the most senior female kastom owner, Ms Noelene Haghamaoto, related that Mwanihuki had been her clan's original village. It was abandoned a long time ago when the 'white people' came (although she did not specifically connect this with the Spanish), after which her people moved into the mountainous interior. When asked why they had never returned, she said that this was because in the later period there had been hostilities between local indigenous groups, forcing them to stay in the mountains, after which the missionaries arrived in the area in 1911 (Fox 1958, p. 231).

Oral histories were collected from several older men regarding the possibility of a shipwreck in the area. There were several reports that teachers at Pamua had seen metal washed up on the reef at Tauapuna Point after storms. However, these persons had since moved away and none of the present teachers had seen the material or knew what had happened to it. In both this and the earlier instance, some caution has been taken with oral histories as it is possible that some information is a reworking of stories told to the community by Green and Kaschko in 1970–1975.

In 2011, magnetometer and sidescan surveys of Pamua Bay failed to locate any obvious anomalies associated with a possible wreck, although the process was made difficult in part by faulty equipment, volcanic sands and basalts resulting in false readings, and limited subsurface visibility, thanks to recent storms flushing sediments into the bay (Gibbs et al. 2015). Further survey is intended in the future, as finding the wreck would provide a significant advance in understanding the fate of those aboard (see below).

## 11.11 Discussion

For this discussion I would like to briefly consider two possibilities. The first is that the material remains of the Spanish found at Graciosa Bay and Pamua represent evidence of Spanish activity. The second is that these distributions are not the results of the Spanish, but reflect indigenous activities and manipulation of these objects.

The documented parts of the 1568, 1595, and 1606 expeditions suggest that in all instances these groups stayed firmly within the *Exploratory* stage of colonization. In each case the groups remained largely dependent upon supplies aboard ship (or from trade or theft from indigenous populations), had undertaken initial investigations and preparations for settlement, but not progressed into any form of production. There are many indications that the several groups carried with them considerable experience drawn from the decades of occupation of South America. This included rapid deployment of exploration strategies such as well-developed processes for engaging with and learning from indigenous groups (Amherst and Thomson 1901; Markham 1904; Kelly 1966).

The collapse of all three expeditions arose as a result of a variety of variables. Foremost of these was the failure to find the expected gold or other resources which had promoted the initial 'push-pull' factors for the colonists (Rockman 2003). In many cases these expectations were probably quite unrealistic. Kicza's analysis of the expansion of the Spanish overseas empire suggests a range of factors might result in the collapse of exploratory and colonizing ventures, including the failure to find any resources of value to export, being unable to sustain themselves independently, and being unable to control indigenous peoples (Kicza 1992, p. 244). Epidemics, inadequate transport systems, inability to cope with environmental conditions, and a host of other internal and external variables could also contribute. All three Solomon Islands expeditions suffered from serious internal political dissent, some originating from even before departure, and then exacerbated by the circumstances the would-be colonists found themselves, especially the lack of immediate reward.

Turning to the 1595 voyage, one of the attractive elements of the project is that we have two separated parts of the same expedition and can run a comparative exercise on their approaches to colonization. The Graciosa Bay colony provides us with documentary insight into what the core group did as well as the archaeological signature that resulted from those activities, which we can then compare to the archaeological signatures of the otherwise undocumented Pamua group.

For both the Santa Cruz and Makira groups, the *Pre-voyage* planning and aspects of equipage was the same. The basic intentions and expectations of processes for how a settlement was to be established, including their anticipated relations with indigenous groups, should also have been near-identical. However, potential for divergence in approach would have emerged almost immediately from the time of the two groups separating. These would come as a consequence of the stresses of the separation, concern for the fate of the other group, as well as the respective loss of supplies, command, administrative and military structures and expertise, and of course of people (which may have included separation of family and loved ones) and their associated skills. The different environments that the two groups found themselves in would inevitably have seen an immediate need to accommodate change. Several writers have also noted that the pattern of Spanish settlements experienced some variability in how they were founded due to local decision making (e.g., Gasco 2005; Van Buren 2010). The tension between Mendaña and his camp master over where to locate the Graciosa Bay settlement is a good example of this (Markham 1904, pp. 46–47).

As noted, the analysis of the activities on Santa Cruz does suggest that in broad terms the Graciosa Bay settlement processes aligned with King Philip II's 1573 *Royal Ordinances for New Towns* (Nuttall 1921; Gibbs 2011). There is evidence of the colonists actively planning for key components of the permanent settlement (Markham 1904, p. 60). However, much remains unknown about how these various elements of settlement layout and construction were expressed in real terms. As discussed, the archaeological scatter of ceramics focused on a small area is consistent with the Spanish descriptions of remaining within a defensible camp, although the lack of nonceramic evidence which might shed additional light on these details is frustrating.

South has described the imperatives of the Spanish colonial system as ‘economic exploitation, fortification for protection of the settlement population, and control of the native people through the mechanism of evangelization into the Catholic faith’ (South 1990, p. 331). These newly converted indigenous communities were also expected to provide food and labor (cf. South 1992; Ewen and Hann 1998; Beck et al. 2006; Deagan 2008). Mendaña was a product of *encomienda*, and it is likely that he anticipated initiating a system of land ownership, vassalage, and taxation comparable to what he had experienced in Peru, although casting himself as governor and possibly even viceroy. The records of the expedition supplies suggest that the colonists had various goods (including bells and beads) in readiness for trade, although whether these items were of significant value to the Santa Cruz islanders is questionable. Given the poor state of the Spanish food supplies, the immediate heavy demands for food and labor would have injured any reasonable relationship, despite heroic efforts by Malopé and Mendaña to negotiate and mediate. The fracturing of the Spanish into competing factions, with the murder of islanders and willful destruction of property as a way of inciting violence as an excuse to depart, exacerbated this already tenuous situation. Combined with the epidemic, the balance of the push–pull factors edged the remaining colonists into the decision to abandon.

If the Graciosa Bay site provides the benchmark for comparison, then the striking contrast is the wide dispersion of Spanish material on the Pamua landscape, across the flats of Tauapuna Point and on the ridge above it. This immediately suggests a range of different activities that took place there. Without a documentary record there are multiple potential hypotheses that might be found in the visible material. That the Spanish were at Pamua is certain, although for how long and doing what is harder to determine. Some of these potential scenarios are discussed in detail in a previous chapter, but we might consider possibilities such as:

- *Short duration stay* (days or weeks) while *Santa Isabel’s* crew waited for the remainder of the fleet, with the ceramics reflecting an initial period of trade or a brief occupation. After a brief period they abandoned the expedition and departed, only to be wrecked or lost elsewhere. The co-location of Spanish artifacts with indigenous landscape features could even suggest that unlike the Graciosa Bay group, which refrained from overrunning an indigenous village, the Pamua group decided this was a reasonable option and occupied an existing settlement while they waited, as did Mendaña in his 1568 stay on Makira.
- *Shipwreck* immediately upon arrival or soon after arrival forcing a settlement, with death of some or all of the group by disease or violence sometime afterwards, and possible voluntary/involuntary incorporation (assimilation) into indigenous populations, etc. (Gibbs 2002, p. 136; Stein 2005, p. 17).
- *Attempted colonization*, following the original imperative and especially given that *Santa Isabel* had the bulk of colonists and supplies. The spread of material beyond a tight area might suggest that they were there long enough to pass beyond the initial beachhead campsite, possibly entering the *Development* stage and initiating their own settlement/production system (such as small farms). Different clusters of artifacts could represent different family or social groups, or other alignments within the population. In this scenario, the ridge could have

been a special purpose site such as for a church, a separate status group, or even a defensive position adopted initially or *in extremis*.

There are numerous other scenarios and variants. It is also conceivable that the primary settlement site has not yet been located. For instance, immediately to the east of Tauapuna Point the current St Stephens school fronts on to a sheltered sandy beach, is surrounded by good agricultural land and has fresh water streams that runs across it. In many respects this would have been a far more desirable area for a beachhead camp or a settlement. Several isolated finds of pottery were even made in that area although these could not be compared with the dense scatters on the main Mwanihuki and ridge sites, while test pitting was not feasible. Why the Spanish might prefer Tauapuna Point and the ridge is unclear, other than they may have decided to occupy an existing village.

Relationships of one kind or another with the indigenous population would almost certainly have featured. As can be seen from analysis of the 1568, 1595, and 1606 documentary records, cross-cultural encounters between the Spanish and indigenous groups throughout the Solomon Islands were:

... fluid and complex, ranging from immediate economic and social rationalization to spiritual supplication, contests of symbols, and armed confrontation. For both sides encounters were influenced by local political and social circumstances and ambitions, the physical environment in which encounters took place, and the composition and disposition of each group at the time. Other factors, including growing Spanish familiarity with Melanesian cultural processes and vice versa, are also evident. As such there was no single Spanish 'experience', just as there was no single Melanesian 'response', with the situation changing rapidly depending upon context and circumstances (Gibbs 2011, p. 160).

We still await the results of the analysis of the burials to determine whether we have a Spanish graveyard, or indigenous converts wearing Spanish clothing, thus opening a window into the possible events and relationships.

At any point there was potential for one of the above scenarios to shift radically and rapidly into another. For instance, if a settlement was established, we could consider what might happen if *Santa Isabel*, already known to be in poor shape, had sunk at anchor due to storm or rotting, effectively turning the colonizing group into a stranded population with no means of escape. Similarly, indigenous attack or epidemic might have significantly shifted the nature of the colony. On this note, it is worth bearing in mind that *Santa Isabel's* arrival was only 25 years after Mendaña's 1568 group had taken over an indigenous village, *at most* only 40–50 km away, murdering a number of islanders in the process and destroying property. This was well within living memory and experience and could have sparked immediate attempts at retribution.

A further factor to consider is that the colonizing groups at both Graciosa Bay and Pamua were made up of a very diverse mix of people. There were different social classes, alliances based on family and other grounds, different racial groups, as well as a significant variety of experiences, skills and capabilities for both perceiving and coping with the environments and cultures they were encountering. All of these factors could bear on the potential to cope with the stresses of colonization and the encounter with new environments and peoples (e.g., Gasco 2005, p. 98;



Stein 2005, p. 9). It is conceivable for instance that the dark-skinned African slaves might have had a very different relationship with the islanders than did the light-skinned Spanish colonists. If the situation at Pamua broke down and violence ensued, it may have been to their benefit to align themselves with the local population instead of their Spanish masters.

To move to the second proposition, we also need to consider the possibility that the archaeological sites we see today are not the product of Spanish activities, but the result of indigenous agency.

For Santa Cruz, one issue which became apparent during the fieldwork is that while the presumed settlement site on the west side of the stream is on flat ground, close to a good shelving beach (for landing boats) and has a plentiful supply of fresh water, it is also a relatively narrow coastal strip of less than 200 m wide backed by a high cliff face. This would have seemed an obvious constraint to a proposed town site. In contrast, the east side of the stream opens into a wide valley which would have allowed for far greater growth. The Spanish accounts are clear that there was no indigenous village on the site, yet we appear to have indigenous skeletal dates which bracket the Spanish period. Admittedly, Melanesian villages did move periodically and this could have been at a time when the site genuinely was unoccupied. In addition, there is so far no evidence of any Spanish structural remains or materials other than ceramic sherds.

We might consider alternatives to the current site being the Spanish settlement, including that the pottery scatter marks the nearest indigenous village, and that the ceramics were received through trade or other processes. It is unclear from the accounts that the defensible initial camp used by the Spanish was in fact the same location as the proposed long-term settlement and town site. We could potentially see a scenario where the Spanish had their temporary beachhead defensible camp in one location (west side of the stream), but were constructing the full settlement nearby (east side). Interestingly, the kastom owners of the area stated that the eastern side of the stream was traditionally a taro 'swamp' and that a village had never been located there. However, to Spanish eyes this may not have been a problem. Although the east side of the stream was surveyed, oral and archaeological evidence shows that during World War II there was significant landscape modification and filling to develop the area as a Catalina flying boat base. The chances of locating evidence of the Spanish period are negligible.

Turning to Pamua, the co-location of pottery on burial sites and anthropogenic mounds, as well as on the ridge above the village (but not spread across the land surface as might be expected from a normal occupation, unless the Spanish were exceptionally neat with their discard), presents another possibility radically different from those proposed above.

Whether the Spanish departed quickly, stayed a longer period before leaving, died in place or were killed in conflict, or ended up integrated with the indigenous population, there would have been a degree of disruption to the local population. The short- and long-term biological and genetic consequences on indigenous populations also have to be considered, especially given the known impact of Spanish *entradas* and colonies upon indigenous populations in the Americas (Smith 1987;

Larsen 2001). It was another 200 years before Europeans returned to that part of the Solomon Islands, so the possibilities of epidemic are not known. How the indigenous populations of the area responded to that presence, or its consequences on a physical and spiritual level, needs to be considered.

There is a strong tradition throughout the Solomon Islands of placing ritually charged or spiritually dangerous objects into secure locations such as shrines (cf. Walter et al. 2004). The physical remnants of the Spanish in the form of pottery or other items might have been considered problematic in their potential to harbor unknown and uncontrollable forces. By placing them on ritually consecrated places such as the burial structures and mounds (which we believe may have had similar qualities in that landscape—see Blake and Gibbs 2013), these forces might then become negated or at least manageable. Similarly, there is evidence that the ridge above the site, which has the densest scatters of pottery, may once have been the location of one or more shrines. The coincident distribution of the Spanish sherds with the white chert flakes (which are unlike the stone flakes seen elsewhere on Mwanihuki), may also be a part of this spiritual management process. Abandonment of village sites in response to problematic events (natural disaster, epidemic, spiritual disfavor) was also a known strategy for Solomon Islands communities (Bennett 1987, pp. 8–9). Kaschko's (1979) original suggestion that the Spanish sherds represent the terminal occupation of Mwanihuki could well be true, with the arrival and activities of the foreigners forcing the abandonment of what had been a large and prosperous settlement for several centuries.

Reflecting back to the Graciosa Bay site, it is possible that the indigenous islanders obtained (and used) pottery for utilitarian purposes, discarding these items as they broke. However, a similar spiritual management argument as proposed for Pamua could also be extended to that site. While there is no overt evidence of decommissioning objects on ritual areas, there are at least some broad correlations between the pottery distributions and where burials were found. Like Pamua, oral history and some of the archaeological evidence also favors the long-term abandonment of the site. Local oral history also includes the interesting insight that they believe the collapse of the Spanish settlement was a consequence of the camp being inadvertently located next to the home of a malevolent spirit. This spirit causes illness (except to the kastom owners who know the relevant 'medicine'), and also steals souls or at least turns them into a form of spirit. It is believed that Mendaña himself was 'taken' by the spirit and in some form still inhabits the site today.

## 11.12 Conclusions

This chapter forms a reflection on two ways of viewing Spanish colonialism and colonizing activities, through relating information on the fates of the several failed sixteenth and seventeenth centuries expeditions to the Solomon Islands. The conventional approach presents the Spanish colonizing activities through a structural lens, breaking down the process into a series of stages. Each stage has distinct ma-

terial/archaeological correlates which lend themselves to comparative study of internal and external decisions and forces and ultimately an analysis of why some expeditions succeeded and others failed. Beyond internal comparison between the Solomon Island voyages, there is potential to contrast these experiences and activities to Spanish exploratory groups and settlements in many other environmental, social, and political circumstances (e.g., Deagan 1983, 1988, 2002; South 1990, 1992; Crouch 1991; Hoover 1992; Ewen and Hann 1998; Ewen 2000; Beck et al. 2006; Funari 2006). This might include comparative studies with aspects of the equipage of such groups as seen in the assemblages of colonizing vessels (Scott-Ireton 1998; Smith et al. 1998, 1999). In a broader sense there is also the potential to compare to failed colonies in the non-Spanish world and explore the causes of their demise (Wright 2009).

Seeing the archaeological remains on the Pamua and Graciosa Bay sites as the result of indigenous agency, specifically for managing the spiritual consequences of the Spanish presence, is presented here as a deliberately provocative challenge to the structural analysis of the colonization process. In truth, both sites may represent a combination of pragmatic utilitarian use and discard together with significance-laden and careful decommissioning of objects, both approaches contributing to their eventual distribution across the landscape. There have certainly been many studies of archaeological evidence of Spanish-Indigenous contact in the New World, which offers insights into ways to approach the Solomon Islands data (e.g., Smith 1987; Rothschild 2003; Gasco 2005; Voss 2005), as well as in the Philippines and elsewhere (Skowronek 1998, 2009). There are also many studies of the social, economic, and symbolic dimensions of early contacts between Europeans and Pacific Islanders (Polynesia and Melanesia), which demonstrate how dynamic, context-driven, and multivalent these engagements could be (e.g., Thomas 1991; Appadurai 1992; Sahlins 1996; Torrence and Clarke 2000; Gosden and Knowles 2001; Denning 2004). Hopefully, further studies of the abortive attempts toward the Spanish colonization of the Solomon Islands will not only elicit further archaeological evidence of their activities but also generate greater insight into how these events were negotiated and understood by indigenous groups.

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# Chapter 12

## Ilha Formosa, Seventeenth Century: Archaeology in Small Islands, History of Global Processes

María Cruz Berrocal

### 12.1 Introduction

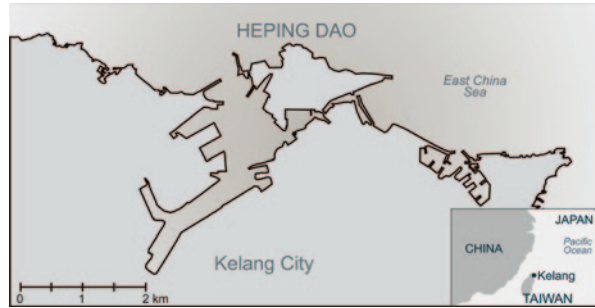
According to written historical records and maps, the Spanish colony of San Salvador de Quelang (now Hopping Dao, Keelung) was founded in 1626 in Hopping Dao, a small island on the northern part of Taiwan (Borao et al. 2001, 2002; Fig. 12.1). Understanding this historical episode—as well as the broader context of Iberian colonialism in Southeast Asia and the Pacific—is essential to throw light on some key historical developments in this region in the seventeenth century, and their subsequent global repercussions.

Before going into further detail as to the specifics of the Taiwanese case study, I will make some previous considerations in order to contextualize the chapter. Indeed, this task is not completely out of place given the relative novelty of historical archaeology in Spain, where the research presented here was initially conceived of, and in Taiwan, where it is still being developed. If Orser (2010, p. 111) can refer to an ‘explosion’ of this discipline when noting the works published since 2000 in the USA, the subsequent academic debate and the setting out of its main notions do not necessarily apply easily to Europe and specifically in countries where archaeology is not anthropology based. Furthermore, in the USA the term has been mainly identified as a proxy for post-Columbian archaeology (e.g., Deetz 1977; Orser 1996, 2010; Mayne 2008; Pykles 2011). Both this limited post-1492 sense and intellectual roots in anthropology are linked phenomena and define historical archaeology in the Anglo-American tradition (Orser 2010, p. 112), whereas in other contexts some justification is needed, since the label appears to be redundant. In Spain, where archaeology has always been deeply anchored within history and therefore archaeology as a whole is observed as a source of historical knowledge, the adjective ‘historical’

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**Fig. 12.1** Hoping Dao, Taiwan



may lack specificity. In this chapter, nonetheless, I choose to retain the narrow sense of post-Columbian historical archaeology which fits with the chronology of the processes I study. It also reflects the unprecedented scale and geographic spread of the historical developments under study, globe-spanning historical processes that were to shape today's world. And archaeology, firmly rooted in global history, provides relevant approaches to grasp the articulation of the short- and long-term projection of different processes; beyond the understanding of the specific event, archaeology throws light on the environmental effects generated when species of plants and animals were transported across continents in mass amounts; the demographic impact of the first European landings on local populations during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the spread of disease at an unprecedented pace over the entire globe (e.g., the project '*Global History of Health*,' [http://global.sbs.ohio-state.edu/european\\_module.htm](http://global.sbs.ohio-state.edu/european_module.htm)); or the transformation of power relations and gender roles brought about by contact. Indeed, Asia-Pacific and specifically some regions in it, though relatively neglected up to recent times, must be observed as core areas of worldwide transformations, especially (though not only) with the development of global commerce routes through the so-called Manila Galleon trade since the sixteenth century.

The Manila Galleon has been a substantial research topic for historians and its huge significance for the beginning of global trade has been gradually acknowledged (e.g., Flynn and Giráldez 1995; Clossey 2006). Archaeological research on this subject, however, is still scarce, and this is all the more unfortunate given the light it might throw on recent historical debates over the definition of 'globalization,' one of its main aspects being whether the emphasis is placed on consumption over production, or vice versa (McCants 2007). For economists, production has traditionally been the classical *locus* from which explanations of the origin of globally connected market systems must originate. And yet consumption and its transformation is increasingly being seen as the real trigger for global trade or even globalization itself (McCants 2007), whose chronological coordinates are thus shifted back to the early modern period. With its focus on material culture, archaeology is ideally equipped to make significant contributions to this debate.

The research presented in this chapter must also be located within the context of the Taiwanese (local native) population's historical trajectory, allowing for the impact of colonialism to be more accurately evaluated. This is a significant factor in

this project not the less due to the fact that the archaeologists involved in it have a background in prehistoric archaeology, having therefore an eye for peoples without a written voice and experience on the study of social dynamics extending across *deep time* (spanning millennia in some cases). This naturally affects the view of the archaeological record sustained by this project, which thus intends a loosening of a potential Eurocentric unique vision. Eurocentrism is indeed a most significant issue at the core of the entire discipline (Orser 2012), difficult to escape given the previous definition of what historical archaeology is, but much debated. It has abundantly been pointed out that the role played in early modern history by historical agents of non-European origin has been neglected (e.g., Stein 2005; Hicks and Beaudry 2006; Mayne 2008; Orser 2010), and in the Asia-Pacific region the charge is true with regard to native peoples (in Taiwan), Chinese, Japanese, other Southasian groups navigating and trading over the entire region, in addition to Muslim groups and the expansion of Islam. Most of these communities had been engaged in colonial expansion of sorts long before Colón reached America. The concept of colonialism itself may be reengineered to justify that only Europeans actually engaged in it, but even so, the exclusion of non-European agents is not tenable, whether we resort to the widespread notion of ‘cultural encounter,’ or to restrictive definitions of colonialism as wealth extraction. The game of exclusions seems to work at different scales; non-Chinese actors and sources, for instance, have also been consistently neglected within Southeast Asia at large (Stark and Allen 1998, pp. 163–164). This Russian doll-like mechanism of exclusions at the heart of many studies on early modern history and colonialism will probably need to be thoroughly addressed and dismantled in the coming years (e.g., Hall 2013). Part of the problem lies on the lack of written texts for these groups; but as historical archaeology has adopted as one of its core objectives the goal of revealing ‘the subaltern lives of oppressed groups’ of all kinds (Mayne 2008, p. 100), it has become a fundamental tool for the study of communities neglected by texts, an endeavor, by the way, which began within history itself, from micro-history to *Annales*, as well as through the impact of ‘anthropological history’ works such as Wolf’s 1982 *Europe and the People without History*. This influence can reframe historical archaeology as the study of peoples traditionally disregarded as passive recipients of others’ actions, the analysis of their agency, their negotiation with the colonists, their attitude toward the environment, or the colonists’ and locals’ daily practices in a colonial situation; all of the topics that can be seen as aspects of the development of social complexity, conflict, and social transformation, issues not far from (my own) prehistorical interests.

Both historical archaeology and the archaeology of early modern colonialism are openly political endeavors, dealing (needless to say not exclusively) with issues such as discrimination, poverty, liberty, repression, slavery, torture, and incarceration (e.g., Leone 2005; Funari et al. 2010; Orser 2011; DAACS: *Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery*, <http://www.daacs.org/>). It thus may—and wishes to—have an impact on current politics (e.g., Matthews et al. 2002). Indeed, the current concern for globalization and its links with neoliberalism, and the understanding of their origins are main inspirations for many authors working within historical archaeology.

## 12.2 Spanish Colonialism in Taiwan

The initiative to found a colony in Hoping Dao was launched by the Spanish government in the Philippines, which was under the jurisdiction of the Viceroyalty of New Spain (*Virreinato de Nueva España*) since 1565, when the trade route between Manila and Acapulco—the so-called Manila Galleon—was inaugurated. This commercial route (which lasted until 1815, when the Mexican War of Independence disrupted it) was for centuries the vector structuring three-way trade flows between Spain, its overseas domains in the Americas, and the Asia-Pacific region. It is therefore thought to be the first actual globe-spanning connection with significant repercussions, both in terms of the world economy (see Flynn and Giráldez 1995), as well as in terms of local lifestyles around different parts of the globe. The Manila Galleon trade is a fine illustration of the mutual interdependence of the global and the local. As Clossey puts it, ‘the China galleons (...) drew together the histories of peoples on opposite sides of the Pacific. The commodities transported did not upon arrival dissolve into inspectors’ account books; they took their places in everyday life. Their consumption, an ocean or more away from their origins, had cultural consequences’ (2006, p. 46).

After a long internal debate, the Spanish launched the conquest of Taiwan from the Philippines, finally establishing two colonies: San Salvador de Isla Hermosa (or San Salvador de Quelang), founded in present-day Hoping Dao (Keelung) in 1626, and Santo Domingo, founded in present-day Tamsui in 1628 (Borao et al. 2001, 2002). San Salvador held at least a fortress, three auxiliary forts, a church, and a convent—*Convento de Todos los Santos*—and several quarters including Spanish, Chinese (*Parian*), and native ones. ‘Quelang used to be incredibly busy: Spanish galleons from Manila used to ply there, ships were loaded for Japan, and Cavalangians came there with their merchandise. Quelang used to have a built-up area with streets and all kinds of shops, run by traders,’ as Lucas Kilas, a native informer for the Dutch, reported (Blussé and Everts 2006, p. 565).

The Spanish and their allies kept their presence in Tamsui until, after a native revolt, the fort of Santo Domingo was dismantled in 1637–1639. The grounds of the fort would later be occupied by the Dutch, and the Chinese after them. For centuries, the site has never ceased being in use, and in our times the restored remains of the successive edifications built to take advantage of its privileged position still bear witness to its strategic value. On its part, the fort of San Salvador, the main Spanish stronghold in Taiwan, remained in Spanish hands until 1642. At the end of August that year, the Dutch attacked from their main base at Fort Zeelandia in Tayouan (now the Anping District of Tainan City), launching a combined operation by land and sea that culminated in the taking of the strategic outposts of La Mira and La Retirada in Hoping Dao. Under these circumstances the fort of San Salvador, threatened by enemy artillery on higher grounds, had no choice but to surrender. It was the end of the Spanish presence on the island (for a full account of the action, see Borao 2009).

The Dutch lost the fort temporarily in 1662, when Fort Zeelandia also fell in Chinese hands. When, in 1664, the Dutch tried to regain a foothold on the island, Hoping Dao was chosen as their main base of operation. They occupied the old fort of San Salvador, as well as some of its outposts, and modified them to suit their needs. But this attempt never truly succeeded, and 4 years later, in 1668, they definitely left the fort and Taiwan.

It has been proposed that there were three main motivations behind Spain's attempt at colonial expansion in Taiwan: (a) counterbalancing Dutch power, (b) trade with China, and (c) evangelization (Borao 2009). Perhaps, it was the threat posed by the Dutch presence that was the single most decisive factor, given the context of fluctuating alliances and struggles, both among the region's neighboring countries (China and Japan) and European imperial powers (mainly the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Spanish, since the English had abandoned the area after the Amboina Incident in 1623). Since the 1600s the Dutch had been progressively increasing their presence in the area. After a failed attempt at seizing Macao in continental China, they settled in Pescadores (Penghu Islands) in 1622. Finally, in 1624, they agreed with the Chinese to shift their position to Tayouan, from where they continually disrupted Spanish trade routes between Fujian (China) and Manila. They effectively managed to cut down maritime commercial traffic between Manila and Fujian at the beginning of 1626. For the Spanish, the best option to neutralize these attacks, expel the Dutch from Tayouan, and defend the Philippines, involved the conquest of Taiwan. All this was happening, moreover, around 1624, when Japan cut off all ties with Manila, a situation that potentially created an opportunity to open new commercial routes through Taiwan, after repeated failures to establish Spanish trade posts in China and Japan.

On the other hand, the evangelization of China and Japan had been a constant obsession for different religious orders, and the Augustinians in particular had been lobbying the Spanish authorities to push their way into the region through the Philippines. Augustinian priests had been suggesting the conquest of China since 1569, and they kept on insisting throughout the rest of the sixteenth century (Ollé 2002). The first Spanish expeditions and embassies to China started with crew being sent from the Philippines in 1572, mainly led by Augustinians at the beginning, though the Jesuits took over from 1586.

In this context, seizing Taiwan was seen by the Spanish authorities as a stepping stone in the process leading to the evangelization of the region. In fact, Dominicans were prominently behind the colonization of the island. Not by chance, a church and convent was built in San Salvador de Isla Hermosa as soon as the colony was founded, and a number of Dominican missionaries reached Fujian from Taiwan during the 1630s. Despite the short time they had at their disposal, the impact of the presence of Spanish priests on native populations in Taiwan seems comparable to the effects they had in the Marianas or the Batanes islands, since they made a relevant number of converts, and local people kept a memory of their presence and referred to it in later dealings with the Dutch: 'The inhabitants, partly in earnest and partly in jest, have sometimes inquired if we Dutch people really be Christians, seeing that we make no show of Divine service, or try to bring them to the faith and



baptize their children—which latter they have, in truth, often and earnestly asked us to do. (...) Many of the natives in that northern region are able to read Spanish, and make use of the R.C. missionary books on religious and other subjects (...) Some people of Tamsuy have more than once requested us to baptize three or four children of Dutch or other Christian fathers who were not inhabitants of the place; and we consulted with the clergymen, but found it was impossible to do so' (letter from President Overtwater to the Governor-General of India, November 2, 1648, in Campbell 1903, p. 231); also, 'in 1651, during a period of famine, Teodoro [a Qui-maurrian elder] approached the Dutch asking for help and saying that in a similar situation the Spanish missionaries had helped them' (cited in Borao 2009, p. 101). Although the drive to convert China to Christianity has been studied in connection with further historical developments in the Asia-Pacific region (see Clossey 2006 for a recent example), the role of Taiwan in the whole process has not yet been sufficiently analyzed.

### 12.3 Archaeological Research in Taiwan

Evidence of early settlements in Taiwan during the Palaeolithic period, some 25,000 years ago, has been recently uncovered (see Tsang 2011). There seems to be, however, an intriguing gap in the archaeological record until the Neolithic, around 6,000 years ago. Ongoing debates about cultural change connected with migrations from the continent are far from being closed in Taiwan, and there are growing discussions on a number of issues such as the role of the island in the Austronesian expansion, the emergence of social complexity at the end of the Neolithic, and the significance of Taiwan within the regional network of contacts throughout prehistory (see, for instance, Hung et al. 2007 on the jade trade between Taiwan and the rest of the region in the Neolithic-Bronze Age periods). Probably as a result of Taiwan's complex history, the island has a surprisingly varied population, with at least 14 (recognized) ethnic groups. Interestingly enough, despite a long history of intense interaction with neighboring nation-states or fairly complex chiefdoms, annexation by Qing China as a province in the seventeenth century, and colonization by Japan in the late nineteenth century, a large part of the native population seem to have remained at a relatively low level of social complexity well into the twentieth century. The research presented here is trying to elucidate the social developments that may have occurred during the Neolithic, as well as the transition to the Iron Age, an open question in Taiwan—the concepts 'Neolithic' and 'Iron Age' (a 'Bronze Age' is not recognized in Taiwan) will be themselves objects of discussion in another publication.

If China's impact on Taiwan, especially between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, is still insufficiently understood, the same is true of early European colonialism in the seventeenth century. There are very scarce references to Taiwanese peoples in Chinese documents either before or after this period and up to the eighteenth century (Thompson 1964). The real turning point in documentation appears to happen when the Europeans need to manage their relationships with the locals in



**Fig. 12.2** a, b, and c Japanese excavation at San Salvador Fort, 1936. (Courtesy of National Taiwan University Museum, Department of Anthropology)

a profitable way. European sources of information comprise, among others, letters and official reports sent by the Spanish Governor in Taiwan to the Governor of the Philippines, reports from missionaries to their superiors (Borao et al. 2001, 2002), and Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) records (Blussé et al. 1999; Blussé and Everts 2000, 2006, 2010; Andrade 2008).

In line with previous projects in the region (to mention but a few examples: Junker 1998, and Peterson et al. 2005 in the Philippines; Lape 2002, 2005 in Island Southeast Asia [Banda and Timor]; Katsuyama-machi 2003, and Miyamoto 2004 in Japan; see also Skowronek 2009), archaeological research on early modern colonialism in Taiwan has been conducted in Tainan by Liu Yichang (personal communication); in Tamsui (Hsie 2007), and in Penghu Islands (Tsang 1992). Our excavations in Hoping Dao are, however, the first long-term comprehensive historical archaeology project in Taiwan. They began in 2011 within the framework of a bilateral Spanish–Taiwanese project (see acknowledgements). Previous excavations of the Spanish fortress of San Salvador were undertaken by a Japanese team from October 20 to November 10, 1936, focusing mainly on the northeastern bastion of the fort. However, the information obtained was never published, and it is for the most part now lost, although extensive photographic recording of the excavation has been preserved and can be seen at the database of the National Taiwan University Museum, Department of Anthropology (<http://acis.digital.ntu.edu.tw/image/main.php>, numbers 3068–3073, 3076–3156 and 3158–3170; Fig. 12.2a, b, and c).

**Fig. 12.3** Potential location of native settlements around San Salvador Fort (after Borao 2009)



Only a brief and sketchy collection of manuscript notes was discovered in the University of Tenri, Japan, after extensive research by J. Borao (unpublished). There is no archaeological material that can be unquestionably linked to the Japanese 1936 excavation of the fort, except maybe for some ceramic vessels and fragments of the Anping Hu type, currently kept in the National Taiwan Museum in Taipei.

This work in Hopping Dao is therefore the first systematic archaeological research in the settlement of San Salvador. This investigation aims not only at uncovering the remains of the Spanish enclave, but also at sketching an accurate picture of how landscapes and settlement evolved through time: the San Salvador site has a very complete sequence of occupation that includes prehistoric Taiwanese settlement, Chinese contact, European contact and colonization, Chinese later colonization, and Japanese imperialist occupation, ranging from at least the second millennium BC to the twentieth century. Though the density of urban settlement in the area makes it difficult to find building-free zones where the country's history itself has not erased its past, this project is trying to take advantage of relatively empty spots within and close to the Spanish colony (Fig. 12.3).

## 12.4 Main Research Issues

The issues attracting the project's interest can be condensed into four topics: interaction, disruption/accommodation, global trade, and environmental impacts.

### 12.4.1 Interaction

San Salvador de Isla Hermosa held a very complex demographic base and large variability in terms of ethnicity, class, gender, and occupation. Spanish, Filipino, Japanese, Chinese, and Dutch populations, along with the Taiwanese locals and even African slaves and other ethnicities, formed an intricate microcosm, richer

and more varied than might be reflected in the written sources (Fang *in press* has recently found references to ethnic groups previously unremarked).

Filipinos formed a sizable part of the demographic contingent deployed by the Spanish in Taiwan (in 1636, there were ‘allí ocupados 220 españoles, y una compañía de 100 indios de la Nueva Segovia.’<sup>1</sup>(Borao et al. 2001, p. 256), but any trace of their social, cultural, or religious identity must be determined through archaeology. The same may hold true for women, although there is in fact some information on the role of native women. A written account by Esquivel gives an image of San Salvador as having ‘a presidio de soldados, con un negro pueblecillo que se empieza ahora de soldados que se casan con las indias, y de algunas indiejuelas huidas de sus pueblos y que vienen a lo mismo, que ha de ser con el tiempo otra rochela.’<sup>2</sup>(Borao et al. 2001, p. 188). The study of this kind of accounts may be of great help to understand life in the colony; it seems that the practice of marriage between Spanish soldiers and indigenous women was encouraged by the Dominicans to promote social stability and to avoid illicit relations, and it continued during the Dutch period. Interestingly, the Dutch were particularly active in promoting marriages between Chinese men and local women.

The formation of new, creolized, or hybridized identities in this environment rises immediately as a legitimate topic for research. The study of material culture is crucial, and its variations are indicative of changing social understandings of the self. For that reason, ethnographic and archaeological examples of ‘mixed artifacts’ are especially interesting, although their chronological context still remains unclear. For instance, at the National Taiwan University Museum, and as part of the project, buttons added to certain precious garments, probably to replace more traditional shell beads (see e.g., Atayal clothing piece, VVAA 2004) have been recorded, in addition to coins employed in traditional headdresses. One of such coins was even a Chinese imitation of a Spanish coin (Borao et al. 2001, p. xvii). The project will aim to trace back in time the origins of this material hybridization whenever possible.

But colonists, as well as the Taiwanese, seem to have been using Taiwanese and Chinese material culture thoroughly, much easier for them to acquire than European goods. Of course, this creates a methodological challenge for the interpretation of the archaeological record that demands a global perspective on material culture and archaeological evidence from Taiwan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or even the region as a whole. The evidence coming from shipwrecks shows the existence of mixed cargos, as in the example of the *San Diego*, a Spanish galleon sunk in 1600 in front of Cavite port that carried Chinese export porcelain, Spanish ware and Filipino, Siamese, and Chinese domestic pottery for quotidian use in the ship. This should make clear the potential complexity that should be encountered in terrestrial sites in the area, such as San Salvador. However, the evidence up to now does not hold to these expectations. In San Salvador there is just one piece of

<sup>1</sup> ‘The 220 Spaniards and a company of 100 indios from Nueva Segovia.’

<sup>2</sup> ‘An encampment and a troublesome village to attend to, the soldiers have started to marry the native women, some of whom have left their villages to live near the fort, which can cause other frictions in the future.’

**Fig. 12.4** Native burial in the grounds of the San Salvador Fort, found by the Japanese excavators in 1936. (Courtesy of National Taiwan University Museum, Department of Anthropology)



European material culture (a buckle) that can be safely identified as such, and two pottery sherds that could potentially belong to Filipino traditions but are difficult to assess. The European presence is rather indirectly asserted by the abundant findings of Chinese material culture normally associated with it, such as Batavia porcelain, Chinese export porcelain from Jingdezhen and Zhangzhou, and Anping vessels. Since the colonial households have probably not been excavated yet, this feature could just be an artifact produced by our sampling. However, this trend appears in other colonial contexts in the region, prominently in the Marianas (see Bayman and Peterson, Chap. 10) and possibly in the Philippines. It could be a result of small contingents of Europeans being settled down in the area. This issue will be investigated more thoroughly in the following years.

In any case the blurring of cultural boundaries can be documented in other ways. During the Japanese excavation in Hoping Dao in 1936, a native burial of an adult was uncovered in spatial association with a large European building (Fig. 12.4). Again in December 2011, the native burial of a baby was found in San Salvador, in apparent spatial relationship to a European building. At first sight, these two burials could indicate a reutilization of spaces formerly used by the Europeans once they had been abandoned. But in 2014 three more adult burials were uncovered, also in



clear spatial association with a European building. The baby burial was at this time rightly placed in this context, and therefore four burials have been recorded by now, located on the southwestern side of a European building. Whereas the baby was interred following a well-documented native ritual, the three adults appear to have been interred according to a Christian ritual. This raises interesting questions as to the acceptance of native rituals or to the degrees of adoption of Christianity. DNA analyses will determine, if possible, the ethnicity of the deceased people.

Finally, another topic of great interest connected with the issue of cultural diversity is the coexistence of Spanish and Chinese. It is known that Spanish authorities in Manila kept a xenophobic attitude toward the Chinese (e.g., Chia 2006), as exemplified among other things by the massacres and several decrees of expulsion that were more or less strictly enforced. Given the fascination with China over all of Europe, this (almost state-sponsored) disposition in the Spanish community is worth comparing with the evidence from other predominantly Chinese colonial contexts, such as Hoping Dao, where racial policies may have been different.

#### ***12.4.2 Disruption/Accommodation***

Eurocentrism, considered above as one of the ‘original sins’ of historical archaeology, has affected the understanding of the role of three population groups in our study area: (1) Taiwanese natives, (2) Chinese, Japanese, and Muslims, and, interestingly, (3) particular groups of Europeans in Asia–Pacific and especially Oceania.

The inclusion of Taiwanese local peoples in our analysis is not just a matter of adding ‘local color’ to the study, as they were key agents in the colonial process. In the particular case of San Salvador site, the above-mentioned discussion about the continuity and/or potential disruption of native settlement during the Neolithic and the Iron Age in this area is especially relevant, because it places before us two very different potential scenarios: on the one hand, a millennia-long settlement was disrupted by the European irruption on the island; on the other hand, the possibility that previously Chinese and later European occupation in Hoping Dao actually attracted local peoples to settle down and possibly trade local goods with them (or marry). The archaeological record is still imprecise about this point, but it is an important issue to determine through future work, as it has diverse implications.

The situation appears to be somewhat clearer regarding the Chinese presence. Early Chinese presence seems to be attested throughout the Asia–Pacific region. In the Philippines, the earliest known Chinese records referring to trade dates back to the tenth century (Stark and Allen 1998). In the Batanes, there is evidence of Chinese pottery since at least the twelfth century (e.g., Mijares and Jago-on 2001). Chinese porcelain was highly valued in different cultures in Southeast Asia and can be found throughout the region since very early periods (Finlay 2010). As for Taiwan, there is a lively debate over the time of the arrival of Chinese traders in modern times. Contending hypotheses are based on different evidence, ranging from the dates for the appearance of Chinese porcelain in Shihshang in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries (Tsang 2010, p. 59), to their traces at the impressive



archaeological site of Kiwulan (Chen 2007) in the fourteenth century, to much more recent evidence dating from the seventeenth century (e.g., in Tainan Science Park, work currently being conducted by Prof. Tsang Chenghwa). Temporary Chinese and Japanese settlements may have also existed in Hoping Dao, as well as in other areas in Taiwan, before the arrival of Europeans. One of the names given to the San Salvador colony, Quelang (or Kelang), could be a Chinese loanword reinterpreted in accordance with Spanish phonetics. Indeed, the archaeological record at Hoping Dao shows Chinese presence on the site before the European presence, observed in the extremely abundant appearance of stoneware and even Celadon porcelain. The unclear nature of the Iron Age in Hoping Dao (and for that matter, in Taiwan) and the imprecise character of the record during the phases prior to the European presence makes it difficult at this point to give a straightforward answer to the question. However, it can be hypothesized that the Chinese presence in Hoping Dao and the links they had undoubtedly established with native peoples were key factors for the Spanish settlement there.

The Japanese presence prior to the Europeans is even more scarcely known. It is known that they led a revolt against the Dutch in Fort Zeelandia, which resulted in the Shogunate cutting off relations with the VOC until 1632 (Andrade 2008). The Dutch had tried to levy taxes on the Chinese and Japanese, who replied that they were already there before the Dutch arrived. In San Salvador, the Japanese presence prior to the Europeans is not clearly established either by written texts or by archaeology.

Establishing whether this kind of settlements really existed is important because it may have interesting implications regarding European colonization. Chinese and Europeans shared their commercial interests in Taiwan. The Chinese trade was conducted privately by entrepreneurs, and it is comparable to most colonial enterprises carried out by Europeans on a private basis. And without doubt, the Chinese (along with the Japanese) were the first colonial powers in the Asia–Pacific area. The main difference between the two seems to lie in the fact that European colonialism, supported by the state, formalized this preexisting relationship; Europeans became actual middlemen, and their colonies set the ground for later developments. In this sense, the European colonies might be regarded as a secondary, formal development over pre-fertilized ground.

This is not intended to imply that Europeans had no relevant impact on the region. On the contrary, their influence might have been underestimated (e.g., Campbell 2003). The influence of early Iberian colonialism beyond the Philippines, in South-east Asia, and the Pacific at large has recently been made clear at some particular spots (e.g., Bedford et al. 2009, p. 86) but it does not generally attract attention from dominant archaeological, historical, and anthropological historiographies. Spanish presence brought about the introduction of certain products in the Asia-Pacific region, such as sweet potato, which became a food staple in Melanesia, Micronesia, or China (Spriggs 2008; see also Clossey 2006, p. 46). Other products soon became part of local economies, social representations, and personal habits throughout the area, including Taiwan and Oceanic regions (e.g., tobacco, in Höllmann 1988), a fact that bears witness to both the intensity of local and regional dynamics

of exchange and social interaction, and the preexistence of socioeconomic niches that could easily accommodate new products. Colonial inputs may thus heighten certain local dynamics that would otherwise remain hardly archaeologically visible in many cases.

### **12.4.3 Global Trade**

What we might term ‘glocalism’ is clearly observable in certain settings if we turn our attention to material culture. Certain goods that were crucial to local economies were at the same time commodities moving through global networks. Such goods are highly significant archaeological markers providing information on the social interactions, the movement of commodities, and the patterns of consumption in colonial contexts.

I have identified four main archaeological markers that should a priori be useful in this case study: silver, beads, tobacco-related items, and pottery. Together they provide an archaeological characterization of global trade, showing how the threads formed by material culture are interwoven into the early processes of globalization, including changes in consumption patterns, health trends, and massive voyaging. For the time being, two of these markers have been identified in the record of San Salvador de Isla Hermosa.

#### **Beads**

Beads were the regular currency employed by Europeans in bartering with the Taiwanese and other local peoples. Apparently, the Spanish used to carry great quantities of a type of yellow bead that gained a lot of importance in the north of Taiwan, as it was employed for arranging marriages. In San Salvador one of these beads has been documented, although the context cannot be safely established. Other beads were obtained by the locals through Chinese traders, and some examples of these have also been found in San Salvador.

#### **Tobacco and Items Related to Its Consumption**

Tobacco seems to have been introduced in Taiwan from the Philippines. Due to its position in the regional trade network, the island probably had a role in this product’s quick dissemination throughout the Asia-Pacific area. In fact, in Taiwan tobacco became quite important in native societies, as can be deduced from ethnographic collections, although it is still too early to establish the precise date of its introduction. Kiwulan, an archaeological site located in northeastern Taiwan and dated to the seventeenth century, provides the best evidence of the impact of tobacco in the Taiwanese society. Here, almost 300 pipes have been recorded, made both in stone

and clay, all of them locally made, and many of them with apparent property marks. The very characteristic hand-made pottery considered typical of Kiwulan is also found in large quantities in Hoping Dao, so the relationship between both sites, and the indirect impact of Europeans in relatively distant places, in this case through tobacco, can be tentatively hypothesized.

Tobacco is an important marker of global consumption networks, and may yield relevant information bearing on the debate on ‘small luxuries’ as indexes of the living standards of entire populations, and the revolution in consumption that (allegedly) led to the first globalization (McCants 2007, p. 439). Tobacco, sugar, pepper, tea, and coffee are the most conspicuous ‘small luxuries,’ and among them, tobacco is the one most capable of becoming an archaeological marker, due to its inextricable association with specific material culture. In fact, historical archaeology has paid wide attention to tobacco through the study of clay pipes, a most ubiquitous archaeological remain all over the world since the seventeenth century (see e.g., the project *Clay tobacco pipe makers’ marks from London*, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/claypipes/index.asp>). In Asia, the consumption of small luxuries—and most specifically of tobacco—seems to have been as remarkable as in Europe, even becoming a public health issue in China by the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Melanesia seems to have been importing huge amounts of tobacco (Höllmann 1988), although as a region (like Micronesia for that matter) it can hardly be seen as one of the origin points where globalization was set in motion. The study of the transformation in living standards at such locations is nevertheless relevant, for we are dealing with huge areas of the world, where transformations in consumption patterns brought about by early globalization had great historical and social significance.

## Silver

Chinese demand for silver during the seventeenth century was high enough to transform the world economy (Flynn and Giráldez 1995; Frank 1998). The silver that found its way into China was produced both in Japan and in South America, but during the 1620s, the latter definitely replaced the former as the main supplier. Europeans took advantage of the enormous production of silver from America, and the metal reached China, in bullion and coin, mainly through the Manila Galleon. But much of this trade was illegal (Flynn and Giráldez 1995), and operated through very small-scale smuggling, therefore, outside control from Manila. This, of course, required a diversification of alternative trade posts, and Taiwan could have been one of them (‘...mercaderes que hurtan siempre al Rey sus fletes y derechos, y que no quieran embarcar una hilacha de ropa sin que primero quiten de la nao los cargadores,’<sup>3</sup> Borao et al. 2001, p. 187). Indeed, Chinese merchants introduced silver in Taiwan illegally, but to which degree the natives were introduced into

<sup>3</sup> ‘Merchants who always try to defraud the king of his taxes and rights, refusing to load even a single piece of cloth unless the inspectors and guards leave the ship.’

monetary economy through silver coins (Borao 2009, p. 90) can still be debated. In the view of Jacinto Esquivel, ‘la segunda cosa perniciosa es el rescatar con plata de los indios el pescado, caza, leña, sal y otras cosillas que nos venden. Los sangleyes, como andan con sus chucherías rescatando el oro que tienen, el azufre, bejuco, corambre (...) y las demás cosas, les han impuesto a los indios de la isla, con su gran codicia, el que pidan la paga en plata de lo que nos venden para tener de ellos más que recoger, y es cierto que les han sacado plata por este medio, y como estos indios de Quimaurri y Taparri son los que todo lo trajinan, llenaron de esta doctrina a los indios de Tamchuy que estaban harto inocentes del valor de ella, y a mi me sucedió que estando concertando un casamiento de un español con una india del río, y comprándoles la mujer, como ellos acostumbran, dando el precio de ella a sus parientes, en tibores, carars (...), mantas, y piedras, ellos se volvían atrás y no querían diciendo les dieran el precio de ella en pesos, pero si lo han hecho, y lo harán, teniendo tierra. Ahora no solo aquí en Tamchuy, sino también en la isla han dado todos el rescate con cuentas o piedras de las sobredichas, y sale todo muy barato porque nos está muy bien el precio en que los tienen puesto los sangleyes, y así los soldados juzgarán piedras como si fueran dinero, porque ellas son el dinero con que compran todo y sería muy bien pasar esto adelante, lo cual se podría hacer dándoles parte del socorro en ello, y parte en dinero con que poder vestirse’<sup>4</sup> (Borao et al. 2001, pp. 177–178). Thus, two possibilities (that the natives were engaged in monetary economy, and that the Spaniards were disengaged from it) could theoretically be proposed. If, in fact, Taiwan became a recipient of silver, which was already potentially impacting the local Taiwanese economy in the seventeenth century, this is difficult to assess through archaeological records. Silver apparently did not accumulate to a large extent during the Spanish times; rather, it appears to have been extremely socially mobile, and to have been channeled toward China, both through the Spanish colonists and Taiwanese native inhabitants. Indeed, scarce evidence of metal, generally speaking, has been found overall in Hoping Dao until now. However, Mexican silver has been attested to have been in use by local populations until the eighteenth century; this silver is named fōyín (佛銀) in Chinese sources (Chen Chen Fang, personal communication). Also, silver droplets in clothing are characteristic of Rukai nobility (VVAA 2004).

<sup>4</sup> ‘The second pernicious thing [in Taiwan, for the Spanish] is the practice of using silver to barter fish, game, logs, salt and other items that the natives sell to us. The sangleys, who go about bartering their trinkets for the natives’ gold, sulphur, liana, hide (...) and such things have, in their greed, required the natives of the island to ask us to pay for what they sell us in silver so that they (the sangleys) could collect more from them; and they have succeeded in getting more silver that way. The natives of Quimaurri and Taparri, who are wor[ld]ier and who know this way around, taught this practice to the natives of Tamsui, who were previously ignorant of the value of silver. I was once officiating the marriage of a Spaniard with a native girl from a town along the river. As it is customary, the girl was bought from her relatives with clay jars, carar (...), cloth, and stones. But they refused, asking instead to be paid in pesos, which was and will be done, since they had lands. Now, barter with beads and stones is done not only in Tamsui but also in the island. It turns out cheaper for us because of the price set by the sangleys. And so the soldiers would consider the beads as money, since these are used to buy everything. It is good to allow this to go on, and to give part of the aid to them in that form, and the other in money for clothes’.

## Pottery

Chinese porcelain also had a huge impact on the world economy, unleashing, among a wide array of other processes, a change in consumption patterns first in Southeast Asia and, ultimately, in Europe (e.g., Finlay 2010). Pottery constitutes therefore a key archaeological marker in the entire region that also applies to the San Salvador colony, where Chinese pottery—and more specifically porcelain—has been found in abundance since times prior to the seventeenth century. The use of porcelain in domestic contexts reflects the above-mentioned change in the consumption of ‘small luxuries’ all over the world (McCants 2007). The archaeological detection of porcelain is interesting outside domestic contexts, too, as a case study in a location north of Acapulco shows that the discovery of sixteenth-century Chinese porcelain at the site supports the interpretation that this was a smuggling point on the Manila Galleon trade (Junco 2011). And as mentioned, smuggling is probably a hot topic to really understand the articulation of global and local trade in the region.

Porcelain from China (especially from Zhangzhou kilns) is not the only type of pottery wares being investigated in recent times; Japanese Hizen pottery has been identified so far both in Manila and Tainan (Nogami 2006). As Nogami observes, ‘it is not certain that Chinese ships went directly from Nagasaki to Manila. I suppose that some cities in Taiwan and southern China, around the South China Sea, were relay ports for the trade network of Hizen porcelain in Chinese junks (...) As for the Hizen porcelain imported to Manila, it is highly possible that many pieces of it were imported to Manila by Chinese junks via Taiwan. I think Taiwan played an important role in the trade in Hizen porcelain between the 1660s and 1680s’ (2006, pp. 127–128). Thorough archaeological confirmation of this hypothesis would support the idea of Taiwan as a significant part of the regional trade network.

Potential finding of European wares, still unknown in Hopping Dao, could, among other things, signal the replacement of Asian manufactures by lower quality European products, such as delftware (McCants 2007, p. 436), and pinpoint the strength of particular production centers in Europe. From the point of view of Chinese historiography, implications can of course differ.

### 12.4.4 *Environmental Impacts*

Generally speaking, what we might call the ecology of early colonialism is a topic still awaiting attention. In addition to the potential environmental impacts generated by the introduction of new and hugely successful plant species in the region (e.g., Bañas 1991)—for example, the introduction of new species by the Europeans appears to be attested in Kiwulan with the guava—other processes must be taken into account. A large episode of sedimentation—to the point of obliteration of the former bay—was observed in the Dutch colony of Tayouan. Our preliminary inquiries at Hopping Dao point to two possible large episodes of soil deposition (Juana Pérez and Santiago Ormeño, personal communication). In Hopping Dao, apparently, later

**Fig. 12.5** Stratigraphic sequence where the deposition episodes can be observed. Eastern profile of Pit 1, Trench 1 (T1P1), Parking Lot excavation site, Hoping Dao B, Kelang. (Photographed by Susana Consuegra)



Dutch sources pointed to an increase in sediment deposition in the bay, which made more difficult for big ships to anchor (Borao 2009, p. 106). Deforestation, perhaps caused by the (as yet hypothetical) need for wood for ship-building, could be one reason, wood being a strategic resource in a ship-based economy. This issue clearly needs further attention, as it reflects (like the focal points of research mentioned above) the intersection between intangible global dynamics and life-affecting local impacts.

Another way of explaining at least one large episode of soil deposition apparently related to the European period in Hoping Dao is a human-driven contribution of rich organic soil that can be interpreted as the intentional formation of a garden (Fig. 12.5), which would be consistent with the written sources in that the convent of Todos los Santos, in San Salvador de Quelang colony, had an associated garden. The remains of the European building found in 2012 and 2014, together with the four burials recorded, may point to the potential discovery of this convent/church and a related cemetery. In this case, the study of the introduction of European species, a fact based on the written sources, would be brought to the fore. More research is currently being developed in this direction.

## 12.5 Conclusions

Every colonial setting needs to be deciphered in its own terms, but the investigation of particular events does not rule out comparisons, analysis of similar patterns, or the detection of variations in the programs carried out by different colonizing polities (Stein 2005, p. 29). Colonial contexts are particular combinations of homeland ideologies and *Realpolitik*, which tend to generate utterly complex social formations, and Hoping Dao is no exception. Our case study is particularly rich, with a large variety of heterogeneous agents interacting in a setting that, although an



island, does not seem to have been in isolation at any time in history. The Taiwan case study is also relevant insofar as it highlights certain failures in our discipline, such as the lack of attention to early colonial endeavors on the part of neglected historical agents that, interestingly enough, seem to converge here in the seventeenth century. Europeans draw on preexisting commercial relations between Taiwan and continental China and Japan, creating state institutions where previously there were only individual enterprises run on a private basis.

Taiwan, with its links to the Philippines, is important for any investigation of the beginnings of global trade in the area. Although hitherto rather neglected, its strategic importance in the region's maritime trade networks is being increasingly acknowledged (e.g., Ollé 2005; Chia 2006). It has been noted that there was a much larger traffic between Manila and Taiwan between 1664 and 1684 than had been traditionally acknowledged (see Fang 2006). Especially between 1624 and 1685 (when the Qing reestablish commercial relations), Taiwan was a point of passage in sea routes in the area. Its role in the region's economy between 1662 and 1683, as the seat of Ming loyalists, was crucial (Chen Chen Fang, personal communication).

Historians' views have already evolved into a recognition of Asia's significance in the early modern period (e.g., Frank 1998, Hamashita et al. 2008), and increasingly richer and wider visions need to be taken into account. This entails including within the picture certain previously neglected areas of the world, and certain colonial agents that have been systematically ignored; and it also means resorting to other disciplines, such as archaeology.

In discussions on the beginnings of globalization, a new paradigm is emerging—one which sees globalization triggered by a revolution in consumption rather than by industrial production processes (McCants 2007). McCants (2007, p. 434) suggests that historians must not simply relocate 'the epicenter of globalization outside of Europe or in an earlier time period,' but also change the 'very questions that are asked, and the kinds of data thought suitable for or worthy of comparative historical analysis.' For her, the 'growing body of documentation provided by early modern household inventory studies' (McCants 2007, p. 435) is crucial. It is clear, however, that archaeology has much to say in this debate, given its focus on material remains and material culture, which enables it to analyze actual consumption patterns at the local, microscale. In fact, the new questions that McCants believes need to be asked by historians are core concerns in our discipline.

McCants' (2007, p. 435) program for historians includes '(1) develop new chronologies of globalization; (2) recognize that there were multiple geographic centers of economic achievement at different times (...); and (3) develop and use alternative yardsticks of economic success in place of, or at least in addition to, the theoretically unsatisfactory, albeit ubiquitous, measure of gross domestic product (GDP).' An archaeological program on the same wavelength must focus, in my view, on (1) demographic pulses in colonial situations, (2) economic exploitation brought about by colonialism, (3) the growth of social inequality within local societies as a result of foreign irruption, (4) consumption of commodities circulating through global trade networks, (5) maritime networks (through a better development of maritime and underwater archaeology; e.g., Flatman and Staniforth 2006), and (6) changes in the environment at the local scale. All of these processes are of great relevance in our present world.

Although comprehensive archaeological research on historical subjects—even on historical institutions as significant as the Manila Galleon—is unfortunately not very abundant yet (e.g., Junco 2011), this chapter argues for the relevance of historical archaeology for global history, especially as regards a set of specific issues such as the study of consumption. Cracks and fissures in the edifice of our discipline—including flaws as yet undetected—may be revised from the perspective of academic traditions hitherto regarded as ‘marginal’ (Spanish and Taiwanese ones, being, why not, good examples of them), taking advantage of their different backgrounds, sources, and perceptions of the role of archaeology.

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