

**New World Angst and the Historical  
Archaeology of Modernity**

*An Archaeology of Southwest Ireland 1570–1670*,  
by Colin Breen, 2007. Dublin: Four Courts Press;  
ISBN 978-1-84682-040-3 hardback £42 & \$63; 239 pp., 75 ills.

*The Archaeology of Improvement in Britain, 1750–1850*,  
by Sarah Tarlow, 2007. Cambridge: Cambridge University  
Press; ISBN 978-0-521-86419-0 hardback £47 & \$92;  
xi+222 pp., 30 ills.

*Historical Archaeology: Why the Past Matters*, by Barbara  
Little, 2007. Walnut Creek (CA): Left Coast Press; ISBN  
978-1-59874-022-6 hardback £39.99 & \$59; ISBN-13 978-1-  
59874-023-3 paperback £15.50 & \$22.95; 207 pp., 11 ills.

*The Archaeology of Race and Racialization in North America*,  
by Charles E. Orser Jr, 2007. Gainesville (FL): University  
Press of Florida; ISBN 978-0-8130-3143-9 paperback  
£16.95 & \$25; xiii+232 pp., 33 ills.

*The Archaeology of Collective Action*, by Dean Saitta, 2007.  
Gainesville (FL): University Press of Florida; ISBN 978-0-  
8130-3070-8 paperback £16.95 & \$24.95; xx+160 pp., 18 ills.

*A Fearsome Heritage: Diverse Legacies of the Cold War*, edited  
by John Schofield & Wayne Cocroft, 2007. Walnut Creek  
(CA): Left Coast Press; ISBN 978-1-59874-258-9 hardback  
£67 & \$99; 333 pp., 147 ills., 4 tables

*The Cambridge Companion to Historical Archaeology*,  
edited by Dan Hicks & Mary Beaudry, 2006. Cambridge:  
Cambridge University Press; ISBN 978-0-5218-5375-0  
paperback £23.99 & US\$43; xvi+420 pp., 31 ills.

Tadhg O'Keeffe

More than a decade ago Chuck Orser (1996) identified colonialism, Eurocentrism, capitalism and modernity as the four 'haunts' of the global, post-1500 AD, Historical Archaeology that he was incubating through his monograph series, *Contributions to Global Historical Archaeology*. There is a good case for thinking that colonialism is the key one of the four, since the subject of Archaeology is rooted in the intellectual traditions of 'the West', and the Historical Archaeology branch of the subject is concerned with a geographical

CAJ 20:1, 148–54 © 2010 McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research  
doi:10.1017/S0959774310000193

entity — the world — that was not known to exist before those very trans-global colonizations of the 1400s and 1500s that redefined the European sphere as ‘the West’ in the first instance. However, I prefer to think that modernity trumps colonialism in this particular game of scholarly poker (not that it matters too much), and that Orser would have done his vision of a globally-cognizant discipline no disservice at all by simply enfolded the three other haunts into the category of modernity. This term, modernity, is of course a notoriously difficult one to explain accurately or succinctly, not least because of the multifarious contexts in which it has been deployed (see Friedman 2001), but I think that many of us would agree on some key points: first, modernity as a temporal concept is entirely a Western construct; second, its genesis dates to the creation of ‘the West’ as an imaginary place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (when colonialism became ideological, when capitalism replaced feudalism, and when the discovery of a ‘New World’ across the Atlantic turned ‘old’ Europe into a New World itself); third, it connotes *broadly* that which is historically familiar and relevant in Western culture, including but not exclusive to that which is current or contemporary.

Mark Leone recently asserted in this very journal that ‘Historical archaeology in the United States and, to a lesser degree in Britain, has boxed itself in by defining itself as exploring the origins of the early modern and modern worlds’ (2005, 205). I am not sure if I agree with him. I think that the discipline has indeed set as its implicit core task the unveiling of what constitutes modernity, both in its original configurations and in its various reinventions or recastings between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, and I think also that its aim is not to sharpen the definition of ‘modern’ but rather to comprehend those phenomena to which ‘modern’ is regarded as the appropriate temporal adjective. However, on the question of *ultimate* origins to which Leone seems to be making specific reference, Historical Archaeology in the States and Britain has probably concerned itself less than it could or should with modernity’s formative phases in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Relatively few American historical archaeologists, for example, seem to feel a need to scrutinize the antecedent or contemporary archaeologies of Europe — I cannot comment with respect to Africa — in order to enhance their comprehension of the American archaeological record in its New World context. Even in Deetz’s *In Small Things Forgotten* (1977) much of the critical action actually happens off the American stage (in later medieval and early modern England) and is revealed to the reader in a generalized way; this is one reason why Deetz was better able to explain *how* the model of the Georgian Order worked than *why* it worked. Whether one is interested in grave-markers, ceramic traditions or house-designs, it should surely be axiomatic that one cannot fully understand the cultures of translocated populations, even second- or third-generation, without knowledge of their places of origin.

Now, these assorted comments on the birth of modernity are germane to a consideration of Colin Breen’s *An Archaeology of Southwest Ireland 1570–1670*, a book that not only brings us back into the period of New World origins

but brings us to a country — Ireland — that was absolutely central to its construction. The book is concerned specifically with a large part of Munster, the southwestern Irish province into which English settlers were first planted in the late 1500s. Some of the major figures of the era resided in Cork, the largest county of the region: Walter Raleigh, who owned a vast Munster estate, was briefly resident in Youghal, an important port-town; Edmund Spenser wrote much of *The Faerie Queene* from his modest home in rural north Cork; Roanoke cartographer John White, whose daughter and granddaughter perished with the rest of that ill-fated colony, retired to a house (exact site unknown) in another corner of rural north Cork. These characters alone show how the story of Plantation-era Munster, like the story of Plantation-era Ireland in general, is part of the larger narrative history of the early modern Atlantic.

Breen’s book usefully draws together a range of data from the province. A lot of the excavation material that he presents to us is new, or at least not widely known. The sections on ports and ships — the author is a maritime specialist — also contain data which will be unfamiliar to many. Much of the rest is, in truth, already in the public domain and familiar from the work of historical geographers, social and economic historians, and architectural historians, although it is very useful to have it presented here in one setting. The interpretations of the material are not unfamiliar either, untouched as they are by some of the theoretical frameworks erected by Historical Archaeologists in other contexts. On this very point, though, Breen’s introductory comment about his book — ‘[this] study does not overly engage in theoretical readings of the data as the archaeological community in Ireland is currently under served by published material dealing with the recent past’ (p. 9) — raises two issues with which I disagree. First, I think that we do have a lot of data already; most of it, like the cartographic, is in the custody of other disciplines, but it is easily appropriated for archaeological discourse, as this book itself shows. Second, I hold it as an article of faith that it is never too early anyway to engage in theoretical reflection, just as it is never too early to engage in works of synthesis. Leaving these matters aside, Breen’s introduction prepares us for a book that delivers readings of the familiar and unfamiliar within the normative context established by other disciplines, especially History, and the upshot of this is a book that is a good addition to the literature, as welcome to seasoned campaigners as it is to newcomers to the field. It is, then, a successful book, even if it springs relatively few surprises for readers already *au fait* with the period and the place.

Breen is not too concerned with the Atlantic province, and he says little about the significance of Munster within that large trans-oceanic space (or, indeed, within the larger space of Ireland). Nor is he concerned with exploring the origins of modernity, and is happy to deal with the matter rather perfunctorily at the end of the book: ‘many of the events and processes that occur in Munster at this time’, he states, ‘mark the beginnings of modernity across the region’ (p. 193). It is not clear if he sees this as an exclusively Munster version of modernity or if he sees modernity, like capitalism, as something that develops somewhere else

and then washes into Ireland. On the whole, then, his view of southwest Ireland is local. He offers Munster as a stage on which the English plantocracy and Gaelic chiefs spent their lives in opposition to each other, almost regardless of what happened elsewhere. In fairness, many of the scholars (especially archaeologists) who have written about the archaeology of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Munster, myself included, could be tarred with the same brush of parochialism. We know that this is a critical period in *global* history, with networks of contact having a vast geographical reach, sometimes arching over Ireland and sometimes bouncing in and out of Ireland. Yet, we struggle to think that the Gaelic-Irish of the late 1500s and early 1600s might have learned new cultural tricks from sources *other* than their English neighbours on the island. And we tend to assume, Hanneke Ronnes's work notwithstanding (2007), that the Gaelic-Irish decision to adopt certain new cultural forms, like Renaissance-style architectural features, was driven by a desire to speak the same cultural language as the English, and to assume that differences of cultural expression between the Gaelic-Irish and the English are to be understood in terms of the former resisting the latter.

The potential for surprise in *An Archaeology of Southwest Ireland* resides in Breen's brief treatment of the issue of ethnicity, where he rightfully questions the supposed fixedness of the familiar and opposing categories of New English (planters, in other words) and Gaelic-Irish. The idea that such categories are easily circumscribed and enduring has been challenged all too rarely, and yet challenges are utterly convincing when properly articulated. David Baker captured perfectly the complexity of identity for the relocated English of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ireland by training his thoughts on no less a protagonist in the Plantation story than Edmund Spenser: 'whatever Spenser was at the end of his life, he was no longer (if he ever had been) purely "English". Spenser, rather, was the product of a life lived on — and "between" — two islands, and the inheritor of the complexly imbricated histories of both' (1997, 78). I would suggest that the same is true for the Gaelic-Irish protagonists who shared Spenser's landscape: they might not have lived between the two islands in the physical sense that Spenser did, but the introduction of Plantation culture rendered them inhabitants of that very same in-between space.

Colin Breen's brief critique of the received ethnic model is presented as a conclusion, but it is interesting to speculate on what would transpire were he, or indeed somebody else, to privilege instead the alternative model of instrumental ethnicity and to interrogate the archaeology through that. Primordial ethnicity is a trap into which we have been lured by reading too uncritically the views of traditional historians of early modern Ireland. Breen is not the only writer about this archaeology to have taken as read the model of ethnic binarism, and it is no surprise at all that he ends up finding fault with it as a model. Perhaps we can draw a lesson from his experience. Binarisms are embedded in early modernity's construction — New World *versus* Old World; reason *versus* unreason, even arable *versus* pastoral — but, accepted by us at face value, they offer little more

than dangerous reductions of complex pasts; we end up essentializing the inhabitants of the past, not least those whom we would rather liberate from historical caricature and from contemporary prejudices based on historical caricature. There is certainly merit in pursuing an archaeology that seeks to document how people of the early modern period in Munster and elsewhere consciously negotiated the spaces between the binary opposites, but an even better approach might be to explore the archaeological record with a view to exposing how people unconsciously denied the validity of the binarisms in the first instance. Not an easy task to be sure (and many historians will see no merit in it, not that we care!), but *An Archaeology of Southwest Ireland* makes the project immeasurably easier in an Irish context by laying out for us a range of appropriate evidence.

This issue of reductive explanatory models brings me to Sarah Tarlow's important book, the first-ever full-length study of Improvement from an archaeological perspective. It specifically brings me to a comment that she makes early on in the book about the Marxist (I prefer to say Marxian) approach which is characteristic of much of the archaeological engagement with the Georgian and Victorian eras in which Improvement was an active concept. 'The problem [with] neo-Marxist historical archaeologies', she asserts, '[is that they] risk becoming simply another kind of reductionism, this time reducing the complexities of human actions, practices and thoughts to the strategic negotiation of power relationships, through the assertion of identity' (p. 9). She could well have been writing of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Ireland. Improvement was such a powerful lubricant in the engine room of British society of the 1700s and 1800s that it requires huge self-discipline for us *not* to slip into the power-resistance interpretative mode. As she says, in *Historical Archaeology* the particularities of individual contexts are easily side-lined as archaeologists try to identify the strategies by which power was exercised or resisted. Of course, many Marxian historical archaeologists would insist that power-resistance is the only game in town, and some would charge that Tarlow cannot problematize the trope in this way and still proclaim herself 'sympathetic' to 'a broadly Marxist position'. But I'm with her.

Having made this valuable point at the outset, *The Archaeology of Improvement in Britain* proceeds to review a staggering range of evidence while avoiding interpretations which carry potential for philosophical flare-ups in our discipline. This is not a criticism but an observation. It is not that Tarlow presents a victimless tale but simply that she keeps emotive judgments on the rights and wrongs of Improving society in check while presenting facts and offering readings. I may have missed more obvious examples, but the only place where I detected some authorial indignation is in the treatment of the Scottish Highland clearances (pp. 80–81). I cannot argue that the highlanders, evicted and forced into emigration, were anything other than the victims of capitalism at its most brutal, but mention of Highland Scotland and its changing demographics did make me think about the ordinary, lowly, Lowland Scots who crossed to Ulster in the 1600s and about the danger of assuming (not that Tarlow makes any such assumption) that those who

are not landowners can be buffeted around: a good many of those who emigrated to the Americas from Ulster did so in a spirit of opportunism rather than repression, and a good many of those who stayed ended up struggling to survive in the later 1700s and early 1800s, not because their landlords would neither feed them nor allow them feed themselves, but because they made a strategic choice to participate for profit in the (pre-industrialized) linen industry rather than plant oats.

The complexities of meaning of Improvement are laid out early in Tarlow's book. The demonstration of the enactment of an Improving ideology flows clearly through her consideration of the agricultural sector and the rural landscape, especially of the later 1700s. The certainty that we are dealing with *Improvement* rather than *improvement* loosens somewhat thereafter, I think, as she brings us into the towns and into the sphere of personal lives, especially in the 1800s. The further one moves away from the peak of Enlightenment the more difficult it seems to be to distinguish between improvements that are driven by an explicitly articulated worldview and those that reflect a naturalization of Improvement's core ideas (that land should be well cultivated, that civic spaces should 'breathe' a little more than they did in the middle ages, that people should be healthy of body, that deviants should be reformed of mind, and so on).

Although not a large volume, I felt exhausted by the task of keeping an open and independent mind on the appropriateness at any one moment of *Improvement* and *improvement*. I also felt exhausted by the mental effort of trying to find evidence of consolidation: when did the project of Improvement exit its ideologically active, proselytizing, phase and bed down as the passive foundation of a notionally improved world? By the end of the book, which finishes (peters out?) in a question-and-answer format, I wondered if Sarah Tarlow felt the same fatigue. This is a job well done, though, and an important, thought-provoking, work, written with elegance. Teachers of Historical Archaeology will find its introductory matter a very useful introduction to the field for undergraduates, while the core of the book will nourish many a postgraduate mind in search of an untapped thesis topic.

Both books considered so far allude to Historical Archaeology's political mission. Tarlow notes Mark Leone's vision of an Historical Archaeology that delineates the historical evolution of inequality and that seeks to effect change through 'consciousness-raising'. She herself, as noted, does not adopt an activist position, although such a strategy would presumably have enticed her to consider the relationship between Britain's class structure as it exists/survives today and the Improving ideologies of the imperial days. It might also have led her to address the place of Britain's slave communities both in the physical making of improvements and in the articulation of being 'improved'. Breen speaks more directly though equally briefly of Historical Archaeology's capacity to help us understand the historical development of the contemporary globalised world, and 'to highlight and contextualize past injustices and suggest ways in which society can better cope with

change in a more egalitarian and equitable manner' (p. 14). He offers no elaboration on how this might be achieved, but the point is well made. A politically-aware Historical Archaeology of Ireland should also, though, have a more local goal, given the island's recent history of conflict. We should record and make available for public consumption the evidence (from the 1500s to the present) of the unequal means and possessions of Ireland's inhabitants, regardless of their ethnicities, as well as of the violence that led to this and that occurred because of this. We also have an obligation to offer up material evidence of meaningful, positive, cultural exchanges that took place under the radars of political and religious hostility (see Horning 2006).

Articulations by historical archaeologists of global inequality and of the pain endured by some within the unequal world will always have a touch of 'Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells' about them, unless of course the historical creation of those inequalities is revealed in a sophisticated way, and unless the revelation then has some demonstrably helpful redress capacity. Historical Archaeology in North America has a good record of trying to do these very things, which brings me to the books by Barbara Little, Chuck Orser and Dean Saitta, distinguished scholars on the left wing (is there a right wing?) of American Historical Archaeology.

Barbara Little's *Historical Archaeology: Why the Past Matters*, briefly, is a student-friendly introduction to the field. There are thirty-one chapters (all of them short and some of them too short to have been permitted such a description) arranged in four sections. The first two sections (of six chapters each) attempt to answer very basic questions about the discipline: What are our ambitions? What do we care about? The second two sections comprise a 'windshield survey' (ten chapters containing case-studies of Historical Archaeology in action) and a survey of Historical Archaeology as 'public scholarship' (seven chapters). This book is quintessentially American in its concerns: colonialism, capitalism and slavery (power and resistance, in others words) are identified as the key disciplinary tropes, and the importance of Public Archaeology as the contemporary rapprochement with an often unsavoury past is emphasized. The latter is done successfully, as one would expect of somebody with Little's impressive track record in that area, but the former less so, I thought, giving the impression (to me, at least) that Little is less engaged by the need to understand those processes in their original contexts than by the need to curate their heritages ethically and for the common good. A well-organized and engagingly-written book, *Historical Archaeology: Why the Past Matters* will appeal most to teachers and students in American universities, as most of the case-studies are American (the exceptions being chapters on English enclosure and Australia's 'convict past').

Chuck Orser's latest book — how *does* he do it? — tackles one of the historical ideas that has helped generate not just inequality but actual violence in America (and elsewhere, of course). He opens with a chapter revealingly entitled 'Race, racialization, and why archaeologists should care'. Orser has become, as Paul Mullins (no slouch himself in these matters) puts it in a blurb on the cover, 'the preeminent voice on issues of race and racism' in our

subject. Although there are three prefacing chapters dealing with issues like *habitus* and class, the real meat of the book is its two case-studies: the Irish in New York, representing America's Atlantic province, and the Chinese in northern California, representing its Pacific province. Both case-studies touch on issues of contemporary interest, especially in the relatively open-bordered, post-Cold War, Europe: in-migration, its affect on local economics, especially wage economics, and the challenge of cultural diversity in hitherto mono-cultural (or allegedly so) contexts.

Orser's account of the Chinese in North America centres on a laundry site in Stockton for which there is very good excavation data. The laundry itself was one of twenty-two operated by Chinese migrants in the city in the late 1800s. Interestingly, the street directories did not mention these and other Chinese businesses until 1926. The directory compilers might have deliberately excluded them on discriminatory grounds, as he notes. This phenomenon of exclusion from the official gazetteers of urban spaces is a fascinating indicator of 'othering' but is little explored in the wider literature. It would be useful to establish if other businesses in Stockton — brothels, for example — were similarly excluded; I know from my own work on the archaeology of prostitution in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dublin that brothels were not listed in street directories, despite the best (and playfully mischievous) efforts of at least one 'madam' of the 1700s to have her well-known businesses listed.

Laundries are identified by Orser as sites of special interest to his project. He offers two reasons: first, they were 'symbolic physical places upon which nativist, white Americans could focus their attention and hatred', and second, often being located in many cases outside conventionally-defined Chinatowns, they allow a reconceptualization of Chinatown as a type of 'cognitive racial site' (p. 163).

I would suggest a third reason. Laundries serve the very specific function of cleansing. Assuming that some of the custom of the Chinese laundries came from those 'nativist, white Americans' who would never be seen crossing the boundary into an actual Chinatown, it is intrinsically interesting that a racialized group like the Chinese would offer wider society so intimate a service as handling and washing its personal attire and bed clothing, *and* that it would be able to sustain such a business in the face of racial hostility. I think there would be great merit in exploring the parallel with the contemporary Magdalen laundries — was there one in Stockton, or indeed in any city with a large number of Chinese laundries? — in which another 'othered' population worked: women who were sexually-active as prostitutes, or whose known sexual activity outside of marriage attracted moral opprobrium. In these Magdalen laundries the cleaning of clothes, bed linen and so on was powerfully symbolic of the cleansing (improving?) of their own souls, and one assumes that fabric thus cleaned had special appeal for the church-going, white-skinned, middle-classes. And, lest we forget the capitalist context, the Magdalen laundries also generated money for the religious institutions which ran them.

The archaeological evidence pertaining to the Irish in Orser's other case-study is drawn largely from the Five

Points area of Manhattan, specifically the backyard of an Irish tenement at 472 Pearl Street; other material of less conventional archaeological nature — depictions of simian Irishness, for example — is also drawn in. Orser is one of the New World archaeologists of whom no accusation could be made of a lack of familiarity with relevant Old World contexts, and the analysis offered of the material from the Pearl Street site (some of it reported from the work of Stephen Brighton) benefits from his knowledge of material life in the homeland. But he is rightfully wary of the temptation to describe the material in question as simply 'Irish', as he reiterates his unease about archaeological efforts to find simple ethnic markers in archaeological materials.

Prominent in his discussion of the racialization of the Irish in New York is Theodore Allen's argument that the process began for them before they even left Ireland (1994–97). Now, Allen's understanding of racialization as a process fits Orser's left-wing worldview very well: race, Allen asserted, is not just a social construct that creates new identities but is a construct of social control that is generated within capitalism and that allows privilege be maintained by those high up the social ladder. But, if Allen's model explains satisfactorily the racialization of white-skinned immigrants within America, as Orser shows with respect to the Five Points, the thesis that the Irish were already racialized by English/British colonial authorities in Ireland is more problematic (and Orser does not actually need it for his New York discussion anyway). The main problem is that it interprets the pre-diaspora Irish evidence according to the very principle — essentialized ethnic identity — that it finds so problematic in the Americas. The lower, emigrating, classes in Ireland were indeed 'native' for the most part, but the élite or Ascendancy was not exclusively Protestant or of English descent but rather was part-constituted of old 'native' Catholic families as well of 'crypto-Catholics' (those who converted to Protestantism merely for political convenience). It may be significant that most of those who charged that the 'Irish' were a slovenly 'race', such as Edmund Spenser in the late 1500s and Arthur Young in the late 1700s, were not born on the island at all. Racialization, as Orser portrays it, seems to me to be one of the 'moon germs' of translocation, and an enduringly toxic one at that. The key to understanding the racialization of the Irish in New York is surely the racialization of the English or British themselves in New York: it seems to me that what Orser describes as racialization only became necessary once the stage moved from the British Isles to the Americas, a place where none of the parties were native, where differences of culture could easily be assigned a pathology, and where power was at stake. Orser's arguments about the Irish in New York are not negated by this; if anything, they are strengthened.

Dean Saitta's *The Archaeology of Collective Action* is a study of the agency of collectivity using the Ludlow massacre as a case-study, and is ultimately a plea for greater archaeological focus on the issue of class. The book draws on work carried out under the umbrella of The Colorado Coalfield War Project. The event in question was the violent repression in 1914 of a miners' strike in the Colorado coalfield by the state militia. The striking miners, who had

previously lived in accommodation provided by the company (and therefore lived with the range of restrictions on their individual freedoms that suited the company's drive toward profit), occupied tented settlements close to the mine sites, and these settlements came under machine gun fire from the militia, working in the interest of the mining company. An attack on the tents at Ludlow in April 1914 left many dead, among them two women and eleven children who were killed by the burning of the tent above the cellar in which they were hiding. The background to the Colorado Coalfield strike is a text-book example of the violation of workers' rights. Although court proceedings against militia members ended in acquittals, the brutal denouement of the strike, coupled with the knowledge of the conditions in which the miners had been expected to work, convulsed the nation and contributed to significant improvements in working conditions within the industry in particular and for the working class in general.

When events are as well documented as the Ludlow massacre, and nothing substantial remains above ground, historians wonder what it is that archaeologists can offer. Well, working at Ludlow and Berwind, a coal-camp nearby, Saitta and his colleagues are exploring how the striking communities fended, given the scarcity of resources during their actions, how the different ethnic groups within the striking community formed a collective class consciousness (articulated in materiality), how conditions for miners changed *in reality* after the strikes were over, and how events such as the Ludlow massacre should be remembered within an informed, inclusive, public archaeology.

Saitta offers what he describes as an emancipatory archaeology, an archaeology that promotes 'reflection upon the present in ways that can help realize human freedom, potential, and dignity'. The collective action at Ludlow in which he is most interested is that taken by the miners. He describes this as collective action that emanates 'from below': it is the kind that 'challenges the political and economic forces that marginalize, disenfranchise, and oppress', but he immediately acknowledges that we can also do an archaeology of collective action 'from above', focusing on 'the power of elites and the strategies they use to oppress and exploit' (p. 5). If Saitta's book has a weakness it is not the lack of attention that he then pays to that collective action 'from above' but his monochromatic characterizing as oppressors and exploiters those who opposed the miners and their rights, and who must therefore bear most of the historical responsibility for the killings on both sides. This is not to say that the anti-union bosses and the militia-men do not deserve the past century of excoriation but simply to wonder aloud about class-consciousness and issues of identity among them, and among the militia-men in particular. How did this group of armed men cohere in these circumstances, given that many of them were presumably men with families themselves, and that many among them may have had their own roots in the mining communities? Part of the Ludlow story is missing from this book, and it does not dishonour the Ludlow victims or their descendants to point it out. That said, Saitta's book is archaeological writing at its best: fluent but air-tight, constructed with an

almost architectural logic, and unashamedly opinionated. Were I attempting to explain to students how and why Historical Archaeology, of all archaeologies, is a political project, and why Archaeology is only ever as good as the quality of the writing, I would direct them to this work. Praise is also in order for the publisher of the Saitta and Orser volumes, the University Press of Florida, and for Michael Nassaney, general editor of the monograph series, *The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective*, in which the two books appear.

The Ludlow massacre happened not long after Frederick Jackson Turner had famously declared the American frontier closed. The essays collected by John Schofield and Wayne Cocroft in *A Fearsome Heritage* are about a new frontier, or rather two new frontiers: that separating West from East after World War II, and that which starts 62 miles up (space). 'Frontier' has been a dangerous, polarizing, concept ever since Turner mythologized the American frontier as the birthplace of democracy. The Cold War frontiers documented in *A Fearsome Heritage* now seem so last century given that a new, classic, Turnerian frontier has opened up since 2001, its vanguard glorified as a 'war on terror'. Both the editors and Graham Fairclough record how Bush's eastern 'crusade', as the former president once recklessly described it, impacted on the World Archaeological Congress session in Washington in 2003 which led to this very volume. The papers that make up the remainder of the book are more concerned with the politics of the immediate past than the present, and the heritages that are interrogated here (through several media, in fact) are very diverse. The link with archaeology is quite tenuous in some of these papers, even for those of us with a very broad definition of what constitutes archaeology, but that is certainly no criticism: for the most part this is a thoroughly fascinating and entertaining collection about an archaeology that is truly global, and, in the case of the Apollo landing sites of the late 1960s and early 1970s, lunar as well! It would be unfair to pick out any one paper, but I did find Veronica Fiorato's study of Greenham Common, a site mentioned by Fairclough as well, singularly thought-provoking. Perhaps it was the parallel of sorts with Ludlow. Perhaps it was the observation that the camp was as much a site of gender politics as it was of opposition to the military base. Perhaps it was the memory of it as a nightly news story.

All the publications reviewed above show that, forty years on from the foundations of their eponymous societies and journals, the transatlantic cousins of Post-Medieval Archaeology and Historical Archaeology are blossoming on Archaeology's sub-disciplinary vine. At the same time as these books were published, three compilations of essays on Historical Archaeology appeared to add further support to the contention. Although only one of those compilations was submitted for review here — Dan Hicks and Mary Beaudry's edited collection in *The Cambridge Companion to Historical Archaeology* — the other two, edited by Gilchrist (2005) and Hall & Silliman (2006) respectively, are certainly worth noting. The points of overlap between the three are fewer than one might imagine, which testifies to the richness of the subject. All three are essential reading.

The contents of the *Cambridge Companion* volume are arranged thematically, a strategy which illuminates just how different our subject is from History, where themes are still largely secondary to narratives. The themes chosen by Hicks and Beaudry are fairly standard and familiar ones: colonialism, urbanism, heritage and the contemporary past, Marxism and capitalism, industrialization, the maritime world, material culture, landscapes, buildings and the relationship with History. The chapters, which are largely co-written, offer some theoretical contextualizations followed by case-studies. Individual reviews are way beyond my scope here. Suffice it to say that there is a vast amount of scholarship and a great richness of ideas on display here.

There are twenty-six authors in the volume, two of them based in Australia, one in South Africa, one each in Sweden, Iceland and Ireland, but ten each in the UK and the USA. I would not criticize the editors for this roster, as it is always difficult to find authors who can cover what is required for a balanced collection of essays, but a slightly larger cohort from Australia and South Africa, and somebody from South America, would have better represented the global profile of scholarship. The absence of authors from Africa north of the Kalahari, from Asia, from Central America, and from Continental Europe (my apologies to Sweden!), highlights some serious gaps in the map of scholarship, a point to which I will return in the next (and final) paragraph of this review article. Hicks and Beaudry cannot be held responsible for the gaps. But if the editors are exempt from criticism on their line-up of experts, they cannot wriggle free quite so easily of criticism deriving from the blurb on the back-cover, which is repeated in the book's advance-matter. Here is heralded a book with 'case studies from North America, Europe, Australasia, Africa and around the world', a descending-order list of no small symbolic interest in and of itself. However, the material which features in the individual essays in the book is drawn mainly from Europe and from Europeanized parts of the world, with Africans, Chinese and others represented mainly in their diasporic (and usually exploited) guises. Thus considered, the sum of the parts of *The Cambridge Companion* is, then, less than a global view and is arguably more a mirror of hegemonic western thinking about the world. I think it is a pity that the book ends with a pleasant and congratulatory signing-off by Barry Cunliffe ('Afterword: historical archaeology in the wider discipline') when something more aggressively critical is required to match the tenor of much of what is found in the essays. The field is not so youthful or uncertain that it needs the imprimatur of a prehistorian, even one as eminent, knowledgeable and generously-spirited as Professor Cunliffe. The contributors, among whom I am proud to be included, heard the Hicks and Beaudry voices at the outset of the project and rose accordingly to the challenge which they set. Having heard what their contributors had to say, it is a pity that these two distinguished editors were not tempted to speculate themselves on where they felt the essays as a collection had brought the subject.

At the start of this review I alluded to the 'western' character of our field, and it seems an appropriate point on which to end. While the study of the archaeology of the past

five centuries (or, perhaps more accurately, the archaeological study of the past five centuries) has now grown into the global concern that its subject matter always demanded, the coverage remains worryingly uneven, as I have just remarked. There is certainly a more substantial archaeological literature by now on Argentina or Brazil since c. 1800 than there is on, say, France of the same period, while far more has been written about the archaeology of the Spanish in the Gulf of Mexico in the eighteenth century than in Spain itself during the same period. For all its global awareness and ambitions, Historical Archaeology remains largely an English-language archaeology, with its centres of intellectual gravity (as marked by university departments and the homes of refereed journals) being concentrated in North America, the British Isles, South Africa and Australia. So, while the random selection of books listed above is a fair indicator of the volume and type of work being done in Historical Archaeology in these homeland areas, it is also a reminder of the widening gap between our knowledge of those areas and of the in-between spaces and places on the global stage. That gap will not be filled-in during our lifetimes, but we must endeavour to stop it widening.

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