Indigenous Archaeologies: a Reader on Decolonization, edited by Margaret M. Bruchac, Siobhan M. Hart & H. Martin Wobst, 2010. Walnut Creek (CA): Left Coast Press; ISBN 978-1-59874-373-9 paperback £29.50 & US$34.95; 435 pp.

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In recent years scholars have struggled to name and define the growing range of practices that emphasize the discipline's engagement with the politics, ethics and social dynamics of archaeology. Among the salmagundi of terms and concepts — public, social, community, collaborative and ethnographic archaeologies — Indigenous Archaeologies has been gaining much traction.

This new edited volume presents 51 chapters in 10 sections that seek to advocate for the burgeoning approach of Indigenous Archaeologies. Nearly all of these chapters are short excerpts borrowed from previously published articles and books. New material is limited to an introduction and conclusion, and short summary remarks before each section. Four sections examine global decolonization, the question of Indigeneity, and this method's philosophical, theoretical, historical underpinnings and uncertain future; the remaining sections present chapters organized by global regions (Oceania, North America, Mesoamerica and South America, Africa, Asia and Europe), a geographic orientation that speaks to Indigenous Archaeologies' transnational aspirations.

By placing papers that cover such a broad range of histories and approaches together, the editors have usefully zeroed in on the definition of Indigenous Archaeologies, which, to date, has been regrettably nebulous. Although the book's contributors are hardly in absolute agreement, it is clear that the authors agree to some first principles and share some basic commitments. The editors begin by characterizing Indigenous Archaeologies as lying 'at the intersection of points of conflict and cooperation' in which 'practitioners are working to devise less colonial, more culturally sensitive methods to redress historical wrongs and reorient with Indigenous values' (p. 11). Most of the authors acknowledge the loaded and contested meanings of what it means to be 'indigenous', but do not use this word to reify racial identities; rather, they hope it serves as inspiration to decolonize the discipline's core practices. The volume's editors are driven by an unabashedly political agenda, and would no doubt concur with Randall H. McGuire's call to reinvent archaeology as an 'emancipatory praxis' that acts to undermine unequal social and colonial relations.

Sonya Atalay offers one of the book's most explicit definitions of Indigenous Archaeologies: for her, it 'includes research that critiques and deconstructs Western archaeological practice as well as research that works toward recovering and investigating Indigenous experiences, practices, and traditional knowledge systems' (p. 80). This expansive definition illustrates why defining Indigenous Archaeologies can be difficult to categorize, as it includes studies arrayed from ethnographic projects that critique archaeology's effects in the world (such as nationalism) to more 'traditional' digging in the dirt while using Indigenous knowledge to inform it (such as oral tradition). Despite such diversity, most of the scholars writing in this mode would likely agree that a 'core value' of Indigenous Archaeologies is collaboration (p. 111), and depends on the theoretical principles of reflexivity, multivocality and situated knowledge (p. 290).

Indigenous Archaeologies adhere to the notion, as Martin Hall reflects based on his experiences in Africa, that 'ethical research requires an explicit consciousness of the role of power' (p. 247). As such, this approach recognizes that a dialogue of ethics is needed to negotiate how archaeology is structured around power relationships. This foundational idea can be seen in many of the book's case studies, from Claire Smith and Gary Jackson's work in Australia to Uzma Z. Rizvi's work in India. Indigenous Archaeologies, the book's contributors suggest, most basically change the kinds of questions archaeologists asks (p. 170) and compels researchers to see the world anew

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through different eyes (p. 257). Perhaps the volume's most radical formulation of Indigenous Archaeologies is Tara Million's effort to completely remake archaeology using Cree Indian philosophy.

Ultimately, what is the purpose of this reader with its abbreviated, previously published essays? A teacher could easily assemble this collection for a class (by my count only four chapters are from hard-to-access sources). Anyone following this literature has likely read most, if not all, of these pieces. It seems to me that the reader's main purpose is to advance a new way of thinking about archaeology by bringing together what has until now been a varied school of thought. This definitional purpose is indeed useful, and served well by the editors' selections.

The acutely amputated contributions (many papers are reduced to just several pages) might serve as an effective teaching tool. With such short pieces, none can be accused of tediousness. These chapters may not offer every answer, but they certainly inspire many questions. And of course for those pieces that do require more answers, the whole, original pieces are somewhere in a library or computer near you. Still, in spite of these advantages, I did find that some chapters were just too truncated to be of much service (e.g. chapter 29).

Furthermore, the book is aimed at college students (p. 30), but many articles are written in a language so thick with jargon that the uninitiated reader will need a lexical machete to navigate them. It would have been helpful, too, if the editors had included footnotes with updates (e.g. a chapter originally published in 2003 observes that the Kennewick Man controversy has yet to be resolved). Also, the majority of pieces are mainly programmatic statements — papers that delineate Indigenous Archaeologies' aspirations, rather than demonstrate how this new method can positively contribute to our scientific understanding of past worlds. The few chapters that directly engage with archaeological data and interpretation are welcomed additions that illustrate what this method can do for the discipline on the ground (e.g. chapters 20 and 21). Finally, for fairness and dialogue, the editors could have selected a few of the articles that fiercely criticize Indigenous Archaeologies, such as the publications by Robert McGhee and Roger Echo-Hawk.

Despite these shortcomings, the volume does show — by dint of its international coverage and diversity of authors and subjects — that Indigenous Archaeologies is more than a passing vogue. Indigenous Archaeologies might currently lie at the discipline's edge, but it is inching towards its centre. The volume confirms that many archaeologists around the globe envision a different kind of archaeology. Yet, even with the editors' attempts to frame Indigenous Archaeologies as a relatively unified approach to the study of the past in the political present, they emphasize how this method embraces its variety, its mandate to draw attention to the ways in which archaeology impacts each local community differently. This method is developing into an increasingly coherent paradigm, in other words, but requires no particular outcome. As Margaret M. Bruchac writes in the volume's conclusion, 'There is no single "Indigenous" approach, since all archaeology, and all Indigeneity, is locally situated and shaped. There is no single future to predict' (p. 367).

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