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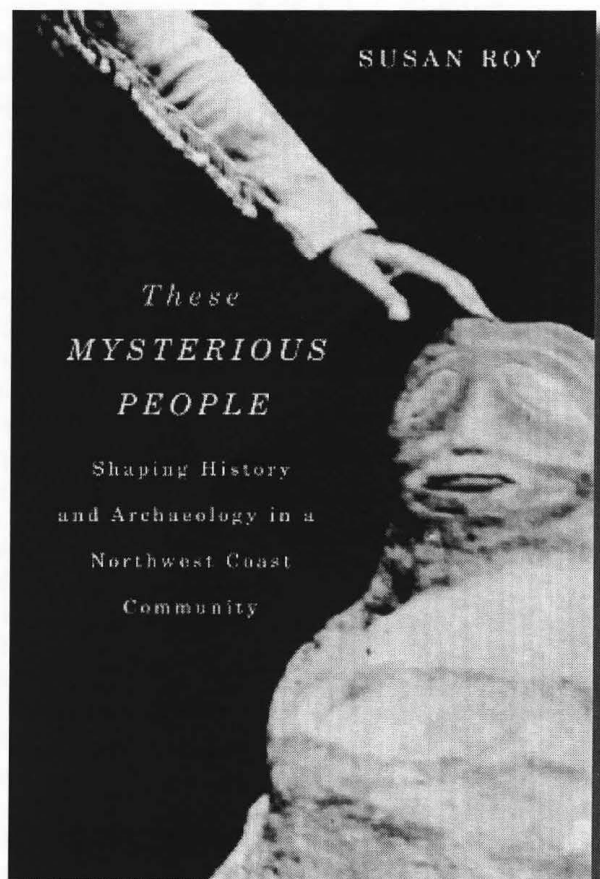
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REVIEW: *These Mysterious People: Shaping History and Archaeology in a Northwest Coast Community*

Susan Roy. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, QC. xviii+222 pp., 39 illus., ISBN: 9780773537224 (paperback), 9780773537217 (hardcover). \$29.95 p/b, \$95.00 h/c. 2010.

Has archaeological practice among indigenous communities on the Northwest Coast of North America contributed to racist colonial objectives and processes to disassociate First Nations from their territories, resources, material culture, and even their own history? When cultural objects become "archaeological artifacts," often collected under the banner of scientific merit, what are the negative social, political, and economic consequences placed on the indigenous communities from which they were produced? Does science extinguish or reduce their cultural value? The search for these answers and related issues are explored within the pages of Susan Roy's highly entertaining, informative, and provocative book, *These Mysterious People: Shaping History and Archaeology in a Northwest Coast Community*.

This book began as a Ph.D. dissertation project at the University of British Columbia. The ironic title alludes to previous perceptions from both popular and scholarly discourses alike, which often centered on attempting to find out who these mysterious people were; however, this is not the goal of this text. The text pays attention to the processes by which identity is conceptualized and how power (social, political, and economic) may be drawn from these processes. Who assigns meaning to cultural objects and what are the particular historical/political circumstances within which these assertions of meaning are made? Susan Roy is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of History at York University and has extensive experience



working with Canadian First Nations groups with their struggles to assert title and rights to their traditional territories.

The chapters of Roy's new book, *These Mysterious People*, examine "how meaning and value are produced through exchange" (11) by emphasizing hindrances placed on the development of Musqueam title, rights, and history by Western-based narratives. The author seeks not to present a comprehensive understanding of

Northwest Coast peoples (or the Musqueam First Nation); rather Roy seeks to examine the particular sociocultural, historical, and political circumstances that have facilitated the transformation of material culture into scientific "artifacts." For example in chapter one, "Who Were These Mysterious People?" the purchase of the Fraser Arms Hotel (which significantly included *ćesna:m* [a.k.a. the Marpole Midden, a.k.a. The Great Fraser Midden]) by the Musqueam First Nation in 1991 is presented by Roy as a recent victory for the Musqueam in a long series of sociopolitical struggles. Her discussions suggest a link between the discipline of archaeology and colonial exploitation of indigenous communities during the early 1900's: "Theories about identity and migration have influenced broad ideas about the legitimacy of Aboriginal territorial claims and European settlement in numerous colonial contexts" (23).

Roy's second chapter, "Burial Grounds as Sites of Archaeology," summarizes her theoretical framework, based on Cole's (1995) concept of "orbits of value." Painfully oversimplified, the contention is that when cultural objects and landscapes become objects of monetary value and/or academic interest, their previous indigenous value "transforms" into scientific value (and simultaneously loses its established indigenous value). The concept is unpacked in a recounting of the shady circumstances fashioned by Harlan I. Smith to obtain ethnological objects from local Northwest indigenous communities and people. Smith serves as a potent and effective example to illustrate how early archaeology had sometimes facilitated a situation by which Musqueam (and other First Nations on the Northwest Coast) were separated from their history and territory due to the advance of his "replacement theory," which claimed that the ethnographically known Coast Salish represented a more recent migratory wave of humans (via the Bering Strait) replacing an early race of "long-skulled Indians."

In Chapter three, "Musqueam House Posts and the Construction of the 'Ethnographic' Object," Roy returns to the trials and tribulations of H. I. Smith. This account includes interesting details concerning an arrangement to purchase large wooden figures and posts on behalf of Franz Boas (currently on display at Museum of Anthropology [MOA]). In this chapter, Roy (55) challenges the reader to "consider the ramifications," of the distinction made during the early years of American anthropology between an archaeological object (thus associated with the study of prehistory) and an ethnographic object (associated with the study of tradition). The author asserts this intellectual framework supported a narrative of aboriginal culture which served to further distance the Musqueam peoples from their past.

In Chapter four, "The National Colonial Culture and the Politics of Removal and Reburial," Roy strikes a sensitive chord in the currently tense sociopolitical climate surrounding the destruction of ancient burial sites. The chapter begins with an excerpt from a letter written by Harlan I. Smith in 1927 concerning the details for obtaining ownership of a cedar burial box (also currently on display at MOA). In addition to the motives behind relic collectors such as Smith, Roy espouses the absolutely shameless exploitation of loopholes in past legislation in order to acquire cultural objects (particularly precontact human remains).

In the following chapter, "The Great Fraser Midden and the Civic Colonial Culture," the author explores the sociocultural milieu surrounding the placement of a monument to commemo-

rate the archaeological significance of the Great Fraser Midden. Recalling Charles Hill-Tout's comparison of the historical importance of the *ćesna:m* to King Tutankhamen's tomb, Roy (103) convincingly argues that "[m]edia discourses emphasized the midden's archaeological, geographical, and scientific significance as well as its tourist potential, [and] failed to recognize the site as an ancient Aboriginal village."

Chapter six, "From Colonial Culture to Reclamation Culture: The Musqueam, Charles C. Borden, and Salvage Archaeology in British Columbia," is significant as Roy describes the collaborative relationship between Borden and the Musqueam Nation that would refocus archaeological discourse throughout British Columbia and eventually the entire nation. In the concluding chapter, Roy summarizes her argument and reminds us that the issues discussed are not a relic of the past; similar transactions and transgressions, with similar sociocultural issues, occur in many parts of indigenous North America.

These Mysterious People presents the audience with a story that is as interesting, entertaining, captivating, and provocative as any good crime novel, yet reflects an academic dedicated to a meticulous review of archival material. I found the tone of the text enjoyably aggressive, and many readers will find stories about the Musqueam Nation's long-standing (sometimes dubious) relationship with "archaeology," as well as the life-histories/trajectories taken by now internationally recognized artifacts (many on display at MOA), thoroughly entertaining. The unconventional presentation of the discipline of archaeology was refreshing, but not unproblematic. While the stories recounted by Roy reveal disturbing behaviour by amateur and professional anthropologists alike, I do not agree with the overarching theme of the text, which is that the discipline of archaeology has generally inflicted negative consequences on local indigenous communities.

Roy claims that the archaeological practice "of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" on the Northwest Coast of Canada (with particular emphasis within Musqueam territories) has had an adverse affect on the development of First Nations history and "contributed to distancing aboriginal peoples from their territories" (29). However, a similar archive-based reconstruction of early "archaeology" in nearly any region of the world would undoubtedly uncover similar immoral methods of recovery and unethical theoretical frameworks. This issue is compounded by the fact the transition from "amateur" to "professional" archaeology does not have an agreed-upon date and there remains vast overlap between the emergence of the professional discipline of archaeology and the termination of unequivocally "amateur" relic hunters/collectors of indigenous material culture on the Northwest Coast. The transition occurred at various rates, with a range of precision and with varying degrees of success, across North America. The uncertainty surrounding the exact time and place the science of archaeology emerged into a full-fledged "discipline" is perhaps responsible for Roy's categorical confusion. Roy has categorized relic hunters (such as C. Hill-Tout and H. Liesk) as archaeologists, as working within the confines of the *discipline* of archaeology. Consequently, a significant chunk of the history of the development of archaeology is presented through the lens of, at best, rogue anthropologists, working on the fringes of what was considered the "professional" or "scientific" archaeology of the day and this confusion fosters an unneces-

sarily antagonistic conclusion concerning the development of the discipline of archaeology on the Northwest Coast. That being said, I would recommend *These Mysterious People* to anyone interested in Northwest Coast archaeology, anthropology, history, and/or sociopolitical struggle in this colonially dominated environment(s). The chapters and the stories within them, particularly those stories which emphasized the ways through which the Musqueam have used their cultural materials as powerful statements of their own presence and history, culminate into a profoundly significant, and sometimes deeply emotional, "story of dispossession" (29).

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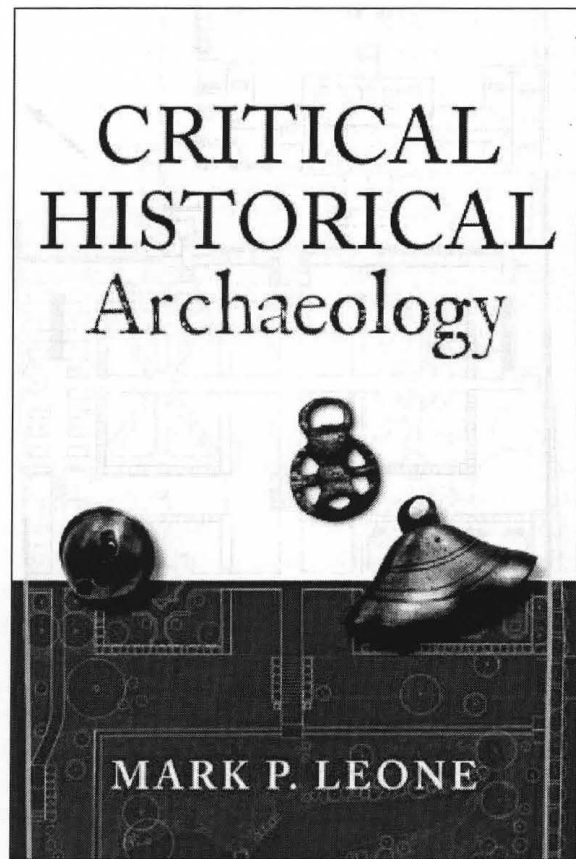
REVIEW: "Let's Try it Again, This Time with Feelings" – *Critical Historical Archaeology*

Mark P. Leone. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, California. 250pp., illus., index, ISBN: 978-1-59874-396-8 (paperback), 978-1-59874-397-5 (hardcover). \$29.95 p/b, \$89.00 h/c. 2010.

Mark Leone is a leading figure in critical theory and historical archaeology. Over the course of his career, he has been involved in a series of influential archaeological projects. The latest offering by Mark Leone is somewhere between an autobiography and a sampler of his life's work. This is a collection of fourteen selected publications spanning almost forty years of his career. Each of these publications has been edited into much smaller pieces in order to focus on the key arguments. These snippets are then framed by fresh comments from Leone remarking on the emotions and feelings that drove him to each project and how these affected the conclusions he ultimately reached.

The book is divided into three larger parts. The first, "Why Excavate?" was aptly named as all but one of the five chapters include studies of outdoor history exhibits of archaeological sites. To analyze the written or spoken content of interpretive displays, Leone uses a combination of Levi-Strauss-influenced structuralist analysis and Freudian psychoanalysis to deconstruct the messages and examine the ideologies contained within them. Leone begins this section by outlining his reasons for delving into his past emotional motivations for working on certain projects. The three primary emotions guiding Leone's research are anger, annoyance, and awe at beauty. His work at Colonial Williamsburg, discussed in Chapter 1, was based on anger at exclusion from the interpretive process, as well as the government projection of historic knowledge as fact as opposed to something resulting from the interpretive process. His analysis of a period baker and assistant making gingerbread cookies at the Bakery of Raleigh's Tavern at Colonial Williamsburg in 1978 found that the scripted actions reflected and justified modern race relations in Virginia.

His work in Shakertown at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, is the basis for Chapter 2 and was driven by his annoyance at the disjointed portrayal of the Shaker people and the removal of religion from depictions of their lives. The study of religion in



historical archaeology is something he notes is often avoided, but religion is something Leone sees as potentially crucial to humanity. Religious art, objects, and ritual items are objects of beauty to Leone, and this awe at their beauty is what drove him to study various religions through time. The third chapter discusses Leone's work on Catholic and Protestant relations as depicted by a historical trial re-enactment at Historic Saint Mary's City in Maryland. In the fourth chapter, Leone discusses the criteria established by the U.S. National Register of Historic Places by which sites are deemed historically significant, and how this process can ultimately shift history to reflect and serve the interests of certain groups. Leone describes in the fifth chapter the importance of choosing one theoretical base in archaeology and following it; in his case it is Marxist theory. He also provides personal tales