

Encountering Novelty

Object, Assemblage, and Mixed Material Culture

Robin A. Beck

Few concepts in the anthropology of colonialism stir as much debate as hybridity, a term borrowed from postcolonial theory in literary studies that—initially at least—was used to refer to the actions of marginalized and subaltern groups to subvert prevailing relations of power. While archaeologists have emphasized group ideologies and personal motivations that promote cultural mixing, the absence of analytical frameworks for modeling how such mixing unfolds in practice makes it difficult to reconcile philosophical debates about hybridity and related approaches. This article lays out such a framework, starting with an assumption that the problem of mixed material culture is structural at its core and thus requires a structural solution. Building on the conception of social structure promoted by sociologist William Sewell Jr., the proposed model considers the incorporation of novel forms at two different loci of agency—the object and the assemblage—and through their respective practices of production and consumption. The object-assemblage model is used, in turn, to explore a colonial encounter between the Native town of Joara and the Spanish garrison, Fort San Juan, from 1566 to 1568, uniquely allowing us to envision how native and settler participants engaged new ideas and resources to transform their material cultures.

Surely one measure of a theory's success is the degree to which it becomes a challenge to write—oftentimes even to think—in related fields of inquiry without invoking its logic, terms, and rhetoric. Just as surely, though, success becomes saturation, then critique and repudiation. So it is today, especially in the archaeology of colonialism, with hybridity and its cognates: the hybrid, hybridization, and hybrid material culture. Hybridity exploded across anthropology's theoretical landscape in the 1990s as part of the postcolonial discourse, most strongly advocated in the work of literary and cultural theorists (e.g., Bhaba 1994, 1996; García Canclini 1995; Joseph and Fink 1999; Said 1993; Thomas 1994). These and other scholars positioned hybridity as a postcolonial counterpoint to earlier conceptions of intercultural mixing such as acculturation, syncretism, and creolization. Shortly afterward, archaeologists turned to hybridity for their interpretations of blending in the material culture of colonial encounters and entanglements (e.g., Dawdy 2000; Loren 2000, 2001; Moussette 2003; van Dommelen 1997, 2005). Inevitably, in the freshet of archaeological journal articles, book chapters, and edited volumes that followed, much of the concept's original force and emphasis were lost, and most of the critiques that emerged in its home fields of literary and cultural studies were either neglected or ignored. Calls are sounding now for restraint—if not an outright moratorium—on its continued use (Pappa 2013; Silliman 2013, 2015).

This article is not strictly speaking about hybridity, not in the postcolonial sense of those tactics used by the disempowered to subvert dominant ideologies through mockery, mimicry, and caricature. My aim, then, is neither to bury hybridity nor to praise it. The concern I wish to raise is rather more pedestrian and derives from an observation made by several

commenters on recent debates over the nature of hybridity in archaeological discourse. To a person, these writers agree that—regardless of whether we think that hybridity and its various iterations remain useful for the study of material culture—we must guard against treating it merely as a form of cultural fusion or mixing (Liebmann 2015:19–20; Pappa 2013:33; Silliman 2015:281). This is well and good, for if the concept has value to archaeology and to broader studies of material culture, we must insist on the specificity of its use. But the tone of this routine contrast between hybridity and *mere* fusion or mixture seems to suggest that the latter is comparatively straightforward and simple, requiring little further comment. It implies that we can shift with confidence to the interpretive pastures of power and subversion because the middle-range fields of practice, where cultural mixing actually occurs, are sufficiently well understood.

On the contrary, I suggest that an absence of analytical approaches for understanding how such mixing occurs in practice makes it difficult to reconcile or push beyond the abstract debates about hybridity and related ideas. This paper offers such an approach, drawing on conceptions of social structure and structural transformation (or events) developed by sociologist and cultural historian William Sewell Jr. (1992, 1996, 2005). Here I consider cultural mixing (which we can define as the incorporation of new material culture) at two distinct but interrelated loci of agency, the *object* and the *assemblage*, and through their respective but likewise interrelated practices of production and consumption. Finally, I use this approach to explicate the material consequences of an intercultural colonial encounter that took place at the Berry site (31BK22), located in what is now western North Carolina,

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between the Native community of Joara and the Spanish garrison of Fort San Juan during the middle of the sixteenth century.

One of the more salient critiques of hybridity and similar concepts is that their theoretical gazes fall disproportionately on the adjustments of Native or Indigenous peoples to the challenges of colonialism. Rarely, that is, are settler materialities considered hybrid, and settler populations are less often recognized as having practiced hybridity. The encounter that unfolded between the people of Joara and the garrison of Fort San Juan offers a particularly compelling case to view from the perspective of this object-assemblage model. For 18 months, these communities developed a shared and extended encounter that provided a wide array of contexts for cultural mixing in daily practice. Since the model makes no distinction between the practices of native peoples and those of settlers, it allows us to specify how both native and settler participants engaged with new ideas and resources to transform their material cultures. What the model provides is less a replacement for hybridity than a means for unpacking material engagements with structural novelty. In doing so, we can better contextualize relations of power and domination, resistance, and subversion—the fundamental matters of hybridity—in specific material practices.

Encountering Novelty

To claim that all material culture is mixed material culture is to claim simultaneously that (1) there is no special category of pure (unmixed) material culture and that (2) no special category of material culture is the specific product of mixing or fusing. Instead, all material culture extant at any particular point in time is the product of amalgamation, of the combining and recombining of earlier forms. There is little controversial or inherently original in this observation (Liebmann 2013:31; Pappa 2013:39; Silliman 2015:283). As the anonymous Preacher writes in Ecclesiastes 1:9: “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun” (The Holy Bible, KJV online 2000). Yet if the observation is valid—if true novelty and its flip side, true purity, are both chimeras—then we must also acknowledge that we routinely encounter forms of material culture that seem entirely *new to us*, and that such seeming novelties may likewise obtain a semblance of purity. That is, it is only in knowing the history of the form that we can disentangle its mixed condition, the amalgamation of amalgamations. The less historical knowledge of form, the purer it seems.

Intercultural encounters create a context for the perception of *new to us*, wherein histories of form are less likely to be understood across cultural differences. Here I consider an encounter that unfolded from 1566 to 1568 between the Native American town of Joara, located in modern-day western North Carolina, and the Spanish outpost of Fort San Juan. Only in recent years have historical archaeologists begun to turn attention from the adjustments of indigenous people under

colonial regimes to the simultaneous adjustments made by settler communities and their material cultures embroiled in colonial realities. The sustained encounter that entangled the peoples of Joara and Fort San Juan provides an especially interesting context for such a reassessment. For at least 18 months, these two communities were linked in shared and sustained interactions that provided participants with a broad array of opportunities for cultural mixing in daily practice. Likewise, it provides us an opportunity to specify how both indigenous and settler participants engaged novel ideas and resources to transform their material cultures.

During the first half of the sixteenth century, Spanish explorers failed in several efforts to colonize what is now the southeastern United States. Finally, in 1565 and 1566, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés finally established two settlements on the southern Atlantic Coast: St. Augustine, founded in September 1565 in Florida, and Santa Elena, founded in April 1566 on the present-day Parris Island, South Carolina. The latter settlement, Santa Elena, was to be the principal town of Menéndez’s colonial strategies (e.g., Hoffman 1990; Hudson 1990; Lyon 1976, 1984). When Philip II learned of this success, he ordered reinforcements for the new colony. In July 1566, Captain Juan Pardo arrived at Santa Elena with a company of 250 soldiers and began to fortify the new settlement. Since the Santa Elena colony was not prepared to feed this large contingent of men for very long, however, Menéndez ordered Pardo to prepare half of his army for an expedition into the interior lands that lay behind the Atlantic coast. Pardo’s task was to explore this poorly understood region, to claim the land for Spain while pacifying and making alliances with Indigenous peoples, and to forge an overland path that would join Santa Elena with the silver mines in Zacatecas, Mexico. Pardo left Santa Elena with 125 men on December 1, 1566.

Later that month, after traversing the Carolina Piedmont along the Wateree and Catawba Rivers, Pardo and his soldiers arrived at Joara, a large Native American town situated in the upper Catawba Valley near the eastern edge of the Appalachian Mountains (e.g., DePratter, Hudson, and Smith 1983; Hudson 1990). The leader of Joara, referred to in the accounts as Joara Mico [*Mico* was a Native term for regional or multi-community chief (Anderson 1994; Hudson 1990)], held some authority over nearby villages on the upper Catawba and its tributaries (Beck and Moore 2002:201). Pardo renamed this town Cuenca, after his own birthplace in Spain. At Joara, he built a fort, christened San Juan, which he garrisoned with 30 men. Although previous expeditions into the interior had either founded seasonal encampments or had temporarily occupied Native towns, Pardo explicitly established Fort San Juan to expand Santa Elena’s reach into the northern frontiers of *La Florida*. In so doing, he founded the earliest European settlement in the interior of what is now the United States (Beck, Moore, and Rodning 2006). Over the course of a second expedition in 1567, Pardo would go on to build five more forts between the Atlantic Coast and what is now eastern Tennessee, yet Fort San Juan was to be the center of his imperial designs (fig. 1).

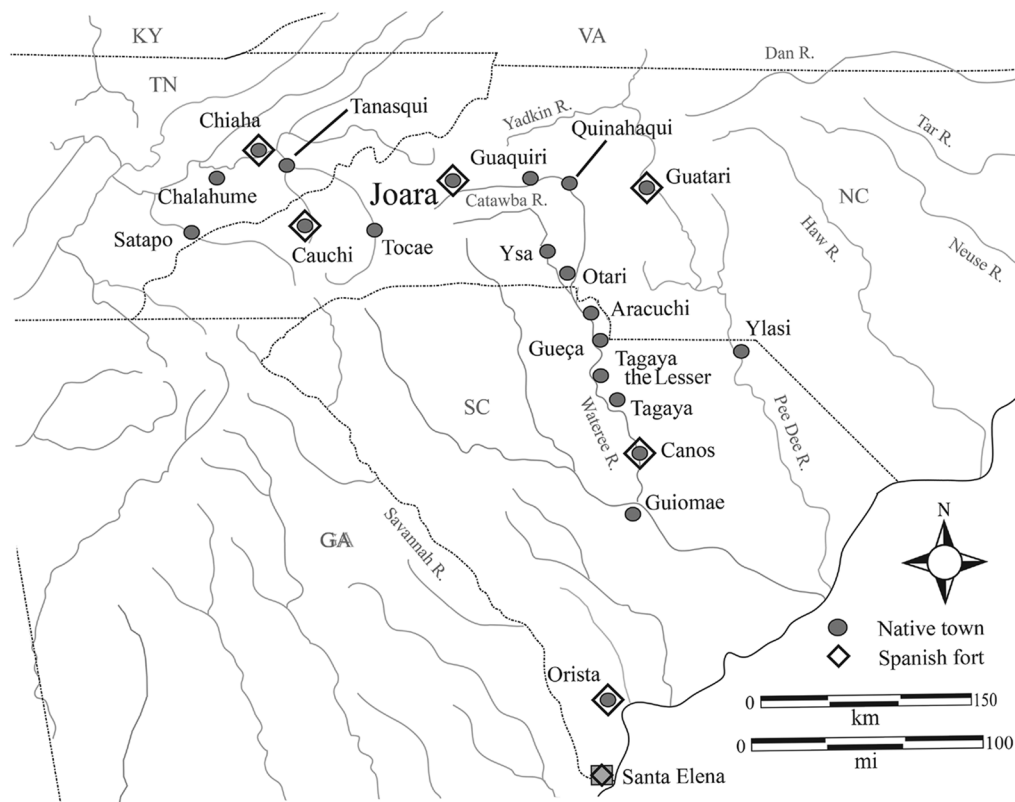


Figure 1. Towns visited by the Juan Pardo expedition, 1566–1567.

Throughout most of the 18 months that Spanish soldiers lived at Joara, amicable relations existed between the people of this town and their European guests—on at least two occasions, for example, the soldiers accompanied Joaran warriors in assaults on hostile Chisca towns across the Appalachians in Tennessee and Virginia (Beck 1997). Also, when Pardo was preparing to depart from Joara during his second expedition, he ordered the ensign, Alberto Escudero de Villamar, to “judge and have a care of the conservation of the friendship of the caciques and Indians of all the land” (Bandera 1990:278). Yet in the months that followed, relations between Fort San Juan and the town of Joara took a calamitous turn for the worse. By May 1568, news reached Santa Elena that Native forces had attacked all of Pardo’s garrisons and that all had fallen. It is unclear whether all of these were surprised at the same time, but what is clear is that none remained by June 1568 (Hudson 1990:176). In the end, 130 soldiers and all of Pardo’s forts were lost, and with them Spain’s final attempt to colonize the northern frontiers of La Florida. Indeed, more than a century would pass before other Europeans penetrated this far into the southern Appalachians.

Archaeological and ethnohistorical evidence (Beck 1997, 2013; Beck, Moore, and Rodning 2006; Worth 2016) indicate that both Joara and Fort San Juan were situated at the Berry site (31BK22). Berry is located on Upper Creek, a tributary of the Catawba River, in what is now Burke County, North Carolina (fig. 2). Today the site measures about 4.5 ha and sits at the

easternmost margin of a 75-ha alluvial floodplain. My colleagues and I have directed excavations at Berry for 18 seasons, focusing our efforts on a 0.5-ha area of the site where we have recovered a significant assortment of sixteenth-century Spanish-made ceramics and hardware, together with personal and military artifacts (e.g., Beck, Moore, and Rodning 2006; Rodning et al. 2016). This location, limited to the northeastern corner of the site, is associated with five burned structures, dozens of large features, and many hundreds of postholes—all of which we refer to collectively as the Spanish compound (fig. 3); these are the material remains of Pardo’s Cuenca. In 2013, we discovered the dry ditch of Fort San Juan some 20 m south of the compound, so that the fort occupied a position between this domestic zone and the town of Joara. None of Pardo’s other forts has yet been discovered.

The encounter that unfolded between Joara and Fort San Juan was of a sufficient duration to offer many opportunities for the experience of new forms. For some older Joarans, this might have been their second engagement with Europeans and European material culture, since in 1540 Hernando de Soto and his expedition had crossed through the upper Catawba Valley (Beck 1997; DePratter, Hudson, and Smith 1983). Although de Soto and the men of his entrada had almost certainly presented European-made goods as gifts to Native peoples at Joara, none that can be positively identified as such have been recovered from the Berry site (Rodning et al. 2016:313). Also, it is unlikely that any of these would have remained in circulation at the time of Pardo’s arrival. Across the Native South, there is

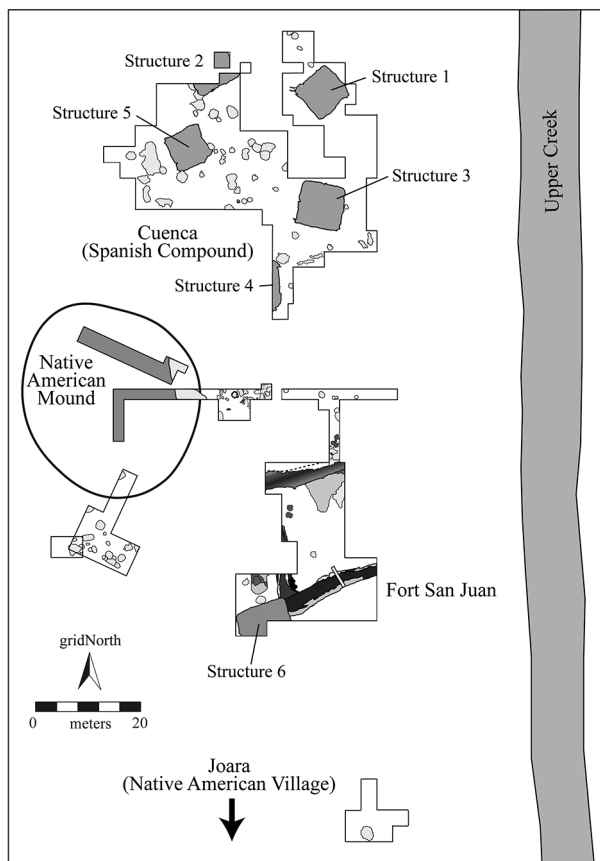


Figure 2. Excavations at the Berry site (31BK22), 1986–2017.

clear evidence from the early colonial period that European-made items circulated for relatively short periods in elite exchange networks before being interred as mortuary goods in high-status burials (Hally 2008; Smith 1987; Waselkov 1989). From the perspective of Joara, we can therefore view the material culture of Fort San Juan as essentially *new to us*.

What about Pardo's men stationed at Fort San Juan? How did their experiences with novelty of form differ from those of their local Joaran hosts? One of the more telling facts of daily life in the Spanish compound was the paucity of European-made material culture. As noted, everything that Pardo's men carried with them into the interior was hauled on their own backs and shoulders (there is no written evidence to suggest that they had either Native porters or horses), and most of these goods were supplies for the planned forts. There was little room for personal items other than their own garments, and even these were subject to severe wear under the conditions of daily life. We know, for example, that when Pardo returned to the interior in late 1567, he gave new leather shoes and fiber sandals to many of the men he had left behind at Joara the previous winter (Hoffman 1990:338). Moreover, none of Pardo's men had ever spent time in the interior South, and most indeed had never seen the Americas at all before stepping ashore at Santa Elena. Given their meager supplies of European goods, we can view practically everything that they encountered at Joara as

new to us. Here, however, indigenous and settler participants experienced the inevitable dislocations of encounter in quite different and perhaps even unexpected ways. What we need to understand these differences is a framework and a robust vocabulary for situating cultural mixing in social action—for unpacking the practices that mix material cultures.

Novelty and Structure

As noted, I am interested in a particular theory of structure advocated by William Sewell Jr. (see Sewell 2005 for the most fully developed articulation of his long-term project). Sewell's ideas build on Anthony Giddens's (1979, 1984) theory of structuration, most notably in his focus on the duality of structure and his treatment of structure as process. In Sewell's conception, as in that of Giddens, structures are dual because they consist of both schemas ("rules" in Giddens's writings) and resources, each of which recursively validates the other. Schemas, or rules, are "generalizable procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social life" (Sewell 2005:131). Schemas are not context dependent—they are generalizable—and can be transposed to cultural contexts beyond those for which they were first learned. The transposability of schemas makes them virtual since they can be instantiated in a "potentially broad and unpredetermined range of situations" (Sewell 2005:131). Resources, in contrast, are actual (i.e., material), in that any opportunities to mobilize them through social action are inextricably bound to place, time, and quantity (Sewell 2005:133). Most significant for studies of material culture is that Sewell, unlike Giddens, gives resources the same theoretical footing as schemas for understanding structures, a fact that is not lost on archaeologists (e.g., Beck et al. 2007; Bolender 2010; Gilmore and O'Donoghue 2015).

We can therefore think of the structural fabric as an interwoven net. At every intersection of resources and schemas—of things and the rules we invoke to use them—is a metaphorical knot. Each of these knots is a structure. In place of conceptions of structure as a singularity, we should conceive of vast networks of interconnected and overlapping structures. We continuously weave new strands into our structural nets while pulling old ones out—adding novel schemas to mobilize an existing array of resources or binding new resource arrays to existing schemas. These nets we make are thus untidy affairs, always in motion, always changing. Usually, our structural nets can absorb such changes, and it is rare for any change or sequence of changes to undo the integrity of the net. Those that do initiate what Sewell refers to as "events."

Building on the writings of Marshall Sahlins (1981, 1985, 1991), Sewell (2005) defines events as "cascades of occurrences that result in transformations of structures" (227). This definition clearly owes an intellectual debt to Sahlins, but Sewell's broader view of social structure yields a more satisfying and analytically useful conception of events. Recall that Sewell views structures as multiple and intersecting. This is a significant departure from the thinking both of Sahlins and Giddens,

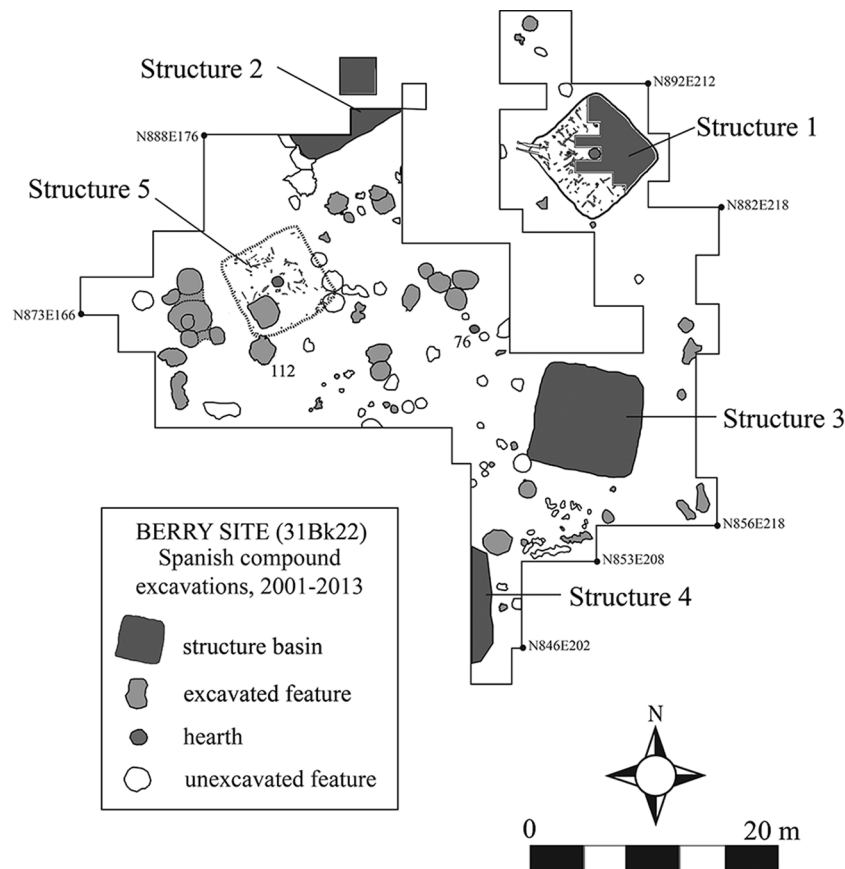


Figure 3. Plan map of the Spanish compound.

each of whom has tended to view social structure as a singular totality (e.g., *the English structure*). In such a framework, events can only refer to large-scale transformations that produce a massive historical footprint, since only a single, overarching structure is subject to change. The approach that Sewell advocates introduces a fractal quality to the study of events that such earlier theories lack. If structures and structural networks are multiple and intersecting, then we can use eventful analysis for understanding structural transformation at any scale, from that of household meals to the trajectories of nation-states. Left unaddressed, however, is the issue of how we might extend eventful temporality from the unique, disruptive event to the macrosocial scale. Or to put it another way: How do we link events through time?

Ruptures occur when schemas fail to mobilize or make sense of their respective resources and the metaphorical knots that bind them together begin to unravel. These points of uncoupling introduce contradictions in the structural network. People experience novel resources or come to view the same everyday resources differently through novel schemas. Resource accumulation is unpredictable and historically contingent: trade routes may be opened by treaty or closed by war; ships laden with bounty arrive safely at port or are lost at sea; summer crops yield surplus or else wither in drought. Even the act of reproducing structures, since it is usually imperfect, can create con-

traditions. Most of these, as Sewell observes, are absorbed by our nets without precipitating events. Yet what he fails to specify is that absorbed contradictions do not just disappear. Instead, I suggest that they accrue in networks, increasing the likelihood that any later rupture will trigger an event. Path dependency is essential to this perspective, since the potential eventfulness of any contradiction depends on the historical context of its occurrence. It may be impossible to predict whether a new contradiction will be eventful, but we can say that as a network grows more ragged, there is a greater chance that any additional rupture will undo the entire fabric.

The time between events, far from static, is therefore a temporality of incremental change as the net absorbs contradictions (see, e.g., Beck 2014; Moore 2011; Streeck and Thelen 2005). I have referred to this noneventful temporality of everyday ruptures and contradictions as “process” (Beck 2014:210). At first, such ruptures are relatively isolated and pose little threat to the overall integrity of the structural fabric. Yet as they accrue, these ruptures have the cumulative effect of weakening the network, especially if they tend through time to accumulate more quickly in some positions than in others. When an event happens, there is an exponential increase in contradictions. The uncoupling of structural knots is no longer isolated, but instead, as one knot unravels in a part of the net already weakened by accumulated, incremental change, it effectively loosens the

knots around it, and as each of these come undone they loosen their own neighbors, creating a spiral of unraveling structures that Sewell likens to a cascade. History, or at least the history of structures, is constituted by such sequences of process and event.

Compelling Objects, Unruly Assemblages

By granting equal weight to the resources and schemas that constitute structures, Sewell's approach provides an essential first step in modeling how people encounter and incorporate new forms of material culture. And regardless of how, or even whether, we prioritize the significance of power and subversive practices in hybridization, this concept, too—often understood as a more narrowly defined kind of cultural mixing—is fundamentally about how people experience novelty of form. Using the logic of Sewell's theory, we experience novelty of form as novel resource, as novel schema, or as both simultaneously (fig. 4). Any of these experiences may result in our incorporation of new structural forms, a development with consequences at two loci of agency: the object and the assemblage.

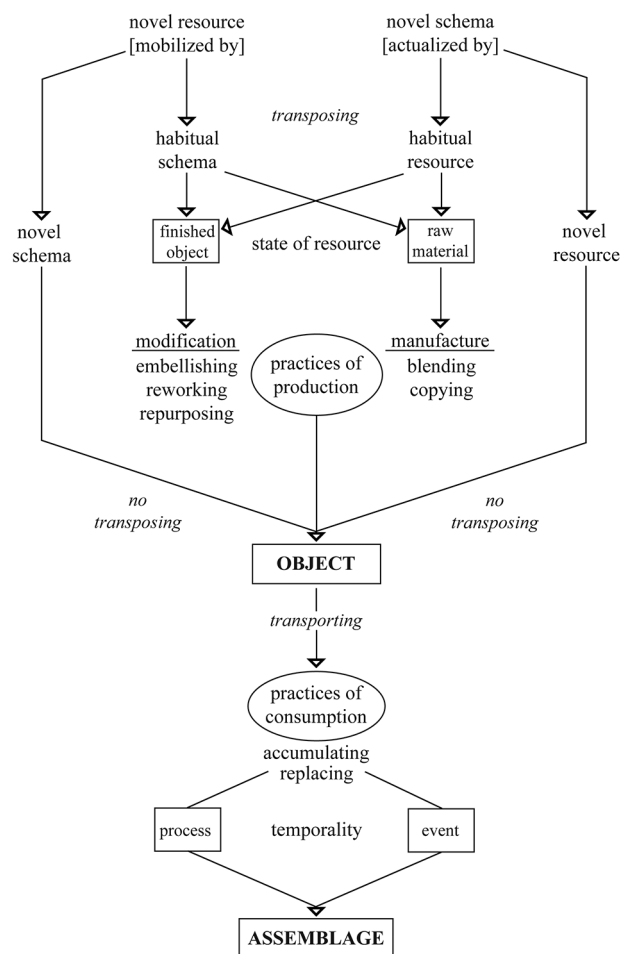


Figure 4. Object-assemblage model.

An object in the sense that I intend is more than a physical thing, since as the product and shaper of structure it is constituted of both the material and the virtual; it is at once the mobilized resource and the actualized schema. The structural vitality of objects brings us to the problem of object agency. This literature, even in the discipline of archaeology, is far too deep to scrutinize effectively here (e.g., Gosden 2005; Joyce and Gillespie 2015; Knappet and Malafouris 2008; Latour 2005; Olsen 2010). My perspective is based on the writings of Alfred Gell (1992, 1998), who considered the apotropaic effects of objects in his broader theory of visual art. Gell (1992) suggests that apotropaic elements of art—those elements believed to ward away evil or maleficence—constitute a “technology of enchantment” (44). Gell’s (1998) approach makes an important contrast between the primary or intentional agency of conscious actors and the secondary agency of objects, which do not cause happenings through their own acts of will, but rather are “objective embodiments of the power or capacity to will their use” (21). Art obtains such enchanting powers, a kind of secondary agency, from the mastery of technique that is “explicable only in magical terms” (Gell 1992:46). Gell’s (1992) technology of enchantment is based on the “enchantment of technology,” or the “power that technical processes have of casting a spell over us so that we see the real world in an enchanted form” (44). Here I extend his conception beyond works of art to any other kinds of object that exert such compelling *power over* if not an independent *power to*.

An exercise of agency is needed to incorporate any new structural form at the locus of the assemblage, an action that I refer to as transposing. Yet transposing, the corresponding action at the locus of the object, need not occur during incorporation. No transposing happens at the locus of the object when a novel schema mobilizes/is actualized by a simultaneously novel resource, or, to put it differently, when we incorporate a novel object *as is*. This is a significant point, because Sewell (2005) has described agency in structural terms as “the capacity to transpose and extend schemas to new contexts” (141). Therefore, if the schema and its mobilized/actualizing resource are simultaneously novel (i.e., *new to us*), then we will not exercise agency at the locus of the object. Transposing ensues anytime we use a habitual schema (i.e., *familiar to us*) to mobilize the novel resource or when we use a habitual resource to actualize the novel schema. But we need to recall that habitual resources and schemas are always enmeshed in habitual structures, and as such they can operate in tandem whenever we incorporate new forms.

Transposing occurs through practices of production (my focus here is on novelty of form; many kinds of production, of course, do not involve transposing). These practices can be divided into two groups on the basis of the state of the relevant resource. When the resource, whether novel or habitual, is a finished object, the relevant practice will result in modification to the object. When the resource—again, whether it is novel or habitual—is a raw material, the relevant practice results in the manufacture of an object. Here I specify five practices of

production, three that I associate with modification and two with manufacture. I do not presume, however, that these five constitute the full range of relevant practices. Rather, a full accounting of all relevant practices, if possible, would include but not be limited to those considered here. In this the model is open-ended, and I believe that its versatility is one of its advantages. Yet if the model is a work in progress, then I also suggest that it is important to describe additional practices similarly in structural terms. And as with the five production practices that I identify and define, we should describe any others such that they are clearly differentiated from alternatives.

Modification results in change to a finished object. By finished object, I mean a resource and its mobilizing/actualized schema that have been incorporated into an assemblage collectively (as an object). Transposing, though, always transforms the finished object in ways that influence its subsequent incorporation into new and different assemblages. Among the practices that effect such modifications are embellishing, reworking, and repurposing. Embellishing is an intentional act that modifies the physical form of an object while leaving its fundamental structural integrity intact. Embellishing an object, that is, does not prevent us from actualizing its prior schema. We may still use it—and it may still act, if in the secondary sense that Gell proposes—in ways that are structurally compatible with its prior state. Reworking, however, refers to a purposeful, physical alteration to an object that fundamentally and irrevocably transforms its structural integrity. Any act of reworking an object unravels those bonds that bind resources to schemas and thus prevents us from using or mobilizing the object in structurally similar ways. Finally, repurposing refers to any intentional act that alters the virtual form of the object with little or no corresponding change to its actual physical form. We repurpose a finished object when we mobilize it in practices that bear no relation to its previous schema—thus changing its virtual form—but that leave its material form unchanged. This implies that we can only recognize the act of repurposing as such after we have understood an object's contexts of consumption. Otherwise, since repurposing produces no significant modifications to the object itself, it would be difficult to distinguish this practice from incorporation *as is* (i.e., with no transposing).

Manufacture transforms a raw material into an object that may afterward be incorporated into an assemblage. By raw material, I mean any physical resource that we gather or obtain in an unprocessed state for the explicit purpose of production. Among those practices during the act of transposing that result in the manufacture of an object are blending and copying. Blending is the deliberate mixing of cultural forms—whether virtual or material—to produce a finished object that is simultaneously novel and habitual. Because of this ambivalence, blending can introduce novel forms in at least two different ways and with quite different outcomes. It can create familiar and recognizable objects by transposing cultural schemas to contexts of manufacture that are distinct but analogous, new but not dissimilar. The resulting object, however innovative,

accommodates expectations. Yet the practice of blending may also create objects that confound and upend such norms, transposing schemas to contexts of manufacture bearing little resemblance to any that had previously enabled their cultural activation. Finally, I define the practice of copying as a faithful interpretation of a material form, either by transposing a novel schema to a habitual resource (the source form is novel) or by transposing a habitual schema to a novel resource (the source form is habitual). Copying does not require that we understand the schema comprising any given source form, nor does it even require us to use the subject form as finished object in similar ways. Thus, we copy not the object in toto, but its material form alone.

Like object, assemblage is no longer taken for granted in archaeological thought. Usually conceived as a finite group of artifacts as constituted at a specific moment or during an arbitrarily defined period (e.g., a cultural phase), there is a rapidly developing consensus in archaeology and beyond—across the humanities and social sciences—that assemblages are temporally and spatially emergent phenomena, “always moving together and coming apart” (Wise 2005:79). Much of the effort rethinking assemblages (e.g., Bennett 2010; Conneller 2011; DeLanda 2006; Fowler 2013; Ingold 2013; Jones 2012) derives from the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987). As with objects, the body of literature on assemblages is both rich and diverse, and I will not attempt to fully engage it here. The use that I prefer is a modified form of that advocated by Deleuze and Guattari, but with a decidedly structural slant. Assemblage is to object as structural network is to structure; it is more than a sum of artifacts but comprises both its constituent objects (themselves comprised of resources and schemas) and the webs of connection among these. Assemblages are never easily bounded in practice, but rather continually ebb and flow as myriad objects, relations, and connections messily enter and exit their networks (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:4). This is not to say, however, that all parts of an assemblage are equally susceptible to change. Many of those metaphorical knots that link the different parts of an assemblage are loosely tied; many others are knotted too tightly to come undone easily. Assemblages, as such, are busy, complex, and unruly, subject to continuous change and elaboration.

As production is to object, so consumption is to assemblage. Here I define two practices of consumption—accumulating and replacing—that each contribute differently to how new objects are incorporated into assemblages. While archaeologists have given more scrutiny to production of mixed material culture than to its consumption (e.g., Silliman 2015:284), recent analyses have begun to widen our interpretive and analytical lenses to consider how people consume, as well as create, novelty of form (Cipolla 2015; Dietler 2010a; Loren 2001; Mullins 2011; Pezzarossi 2014; Silliman and Witt 2010; Vives-Ferrándiz 2008). These studies show that cultural mixing unfolds through production *and* consumption practices. Consumption shapes and reshapes assemblages. As such, it is inherently relational, bringing some objects into the network of material

and virtual associations that make up an assemblage while extracting others from the same. Yet practices of consumption are also risky, posing potential threats to the fabric of an assemblage by introducing novel forms that hold little in common with habitual resources and schemas, forms that may even undermine existing associations by unleashing an eventful cascade of ruptures.

Like production, consumption unfolds through a wide range of practices, and there can be no single approach for understanding such a complex phenomenon; again, though, my focus here is limited to the narrow band of consumption practice that transports novelty of form—manifested as objects—to an assemblage. Accumulating augments and elaborates an assemblage through the addition of new forms. This is distinct from adding new objects in habitual form. Accumulating is less of a quantitative increase in the size of an assemblage than a qualitative enlargement of its scope. I define replacing, on the other hand, as the extraction or removal of a habitual form from an assemblage in favor of a novel form that actualizes structurally similar schemas. The practice of accumulating new forms does not demand replacing old ones, however, because we can expand an assemblage by adding forms that lack habitual analogues. That is, accumulating often occurs without competition between old and new forms. Replacing, furthermore, is not the same as removing, since we can remove a form without replacing it. Both accumulating and replacing shape and reshape an assemblage through everyday routine practice, planting contradictions that the assemblage absorbs even as they accrue there. In most circumstances, these practices happen as process, the noneventful temporality of incremental change.

If accumulating and replacing typically occur in processual time, gradually increasing the structural contradictions in an assemblage, then how are we to understand consumption practices in eventful time, when the bonds of association between incorporated objects start to unravel and disjoin? In an assemblage, eventful change is triggered through a rapid burst in the accumulating of new forms and the replacing of old ones. Such bursts produce an onrush of contradictions that the assemblage is unable to absorb. Rather, to enable a reordering of those associative bonds that sustain and perpetuate it, the assemblage must adjust to the cascade. Assemblages of objects and the arrays of connection among them situate us in social and cultural worlds, both in reference to one another as embodied individuals and to the vast assortment of things that surround us and fill our lives (e.g., Hodder 2012). This fundamental work of assemblages cannot tolerate disjunction for significant periods. An acceptable solution to the crisis, some means of restoring resources to schemas, may find sanction quickly—even if deemed unthinkable beforehand.

As social actors, what we ultimately demand of our assemblages is not that they exist and persist as consummate wholes, but rather that even through change they maintain a semblance of complementarity among their many parts. During periods of processual time, the bonds that join objects in assemblages promote such a sentiment of orderedness, a complementarity

of parts, that simultaneously masks the gradual accrual of contradictions in the network. But when processual time yields to a burst of disjunctions, the orderedness among parts starts to unravel, and the crisis continues until a new equilibrium, a new complementarity of parts, is realized. Until that occurs, however, the eventful undoing of an assemblage creates profound unrest and uncertainty. Sewell (2005:248–257) insists that events are marked by a heightening of emotions and an improvisation of ritual. Heightened emotions often increase structural volatility during events and contribute to their unpredictability. Such emotions can also incite us—and inspire us—to embrace unfamiliar or even radically new ideas when restoring complementarity to an assemblage.

Summarizing this object-assemblage approach, it is not enough to view cultural mixing in both production and consumption. We should also recognize that it unfolds in two temporalities, as process and event, and in the persistent tension between contradiction and complementarity of parts. But articulating this temporal dimension introduces a question asked by Stephen Silliman (2015) in his proposed moratorium on hybridity: “What can be a hybrid, and for how long?” (283). This question succinctly reframes Silliman’s (2009) earlier criticism of how archaeologists have tended to think about European-made items recovered in Native American contexts. Regardless of whether Indigenous peoples bought, used, and discarded such goods—sometimes decades after incorporating similar materials in daily practice—we persist in classifying the artifacts themselves as European (Silliman 2009:224–226). This is much more than merely an abstract preference for production over consumption; intentional or not, these labels of European and Native pervasively deny people those things that constitute their histories and cultures. As Silliman (2009) writes, this false “dichotomous thinking erases cultural creativity and effaces post-colonial hybridity” (214). What his critique demands, instead, is an equal consideration for the practices of consumption. It calls on archaeologists of colonialism to reorient our approaches to the historically contingent ways that people actually incorporated new forms of material culture.

The framework that I propose avoids the either/or ontological trap of European/Native by setting its analytical beginning point not as ethnic identity but rather as novelty of form (i.e., *new to us*). Likewise, it avoids the related binaries of donor/recipient and active/passive that typically—if not inevitably—followed European/Native in most acculturation research (Quimby and Spoehr 1951). Just as important, this object-assemblage model is the first that joins production and consumption together in the same framework, deriving logical consistency from its foothold in a robust theory of structure and practice. If Silliman demands of us a corrective turn, then the object-assemblage model provides an analytical road map for making that turn in such a way that gives equal weight both to practices of production and practices of consumption. In sum, understanding how people incorporate new forms of material culture in any given historical context is only possible through both lenses. Let me return to Silliman’s question I

quoted earlier: “What can be a hybrid, and for how long?” What if, instead, I pose a different but not unrelated question that considers his point in object-assemblage logic: When does the novel become the habitual? This, I suggest, is a matter of scale. At the scale of the object and practices of production, novel forms can become habitual quickly. After our first engagement with a new resource or schema, it can no longer be *new to us* when we experience it next. Yet at the scale of the assemblage, the incorporation of novelty may unfold more gradually, as new forms replace the old on the way to becoming habitual themselves (Deagan 2013:274). Incorporation, then, is the sum of all habituating practices.

Back to Joara and Fort San Juan

The object-assemblage approach that I have outlined here provides a compelling lens for exploring how the peoples of Joara and Fort San Juan incorporated new forms, particularly since they experienced incorporation quite differently. When Pardo and his men left Santa Elena, they carried an assemblage consisting of trade goods for exchange with Native leaders, hardware and military equipment for the forts, and personal items of the soldiers. The collection of European-made artifacts from Berry contains items from each of these classes, and while most of the items are unaltered, several do exhibit clear evidence of modification. Reworking is the most common modification practice in the Berry site assemblage and is particularly evident among copper alloy artifacts. Much of this material is unidentifiable because of its fragmentary state, but one piece seems to have been reworked into a triangular projectile point (fig. 5a). Eight alloy fragments were rolled into bangles (fig. 5b–5f), four were made into small beads, and five were cut or drilled (Rodning et al. 2016:330–333). All of these copper materials originally arrived with Pardo’s expedition in the form of sheets, pots and kettles, or disks of jack plate armor. Although any or all of these objects might have been reworked

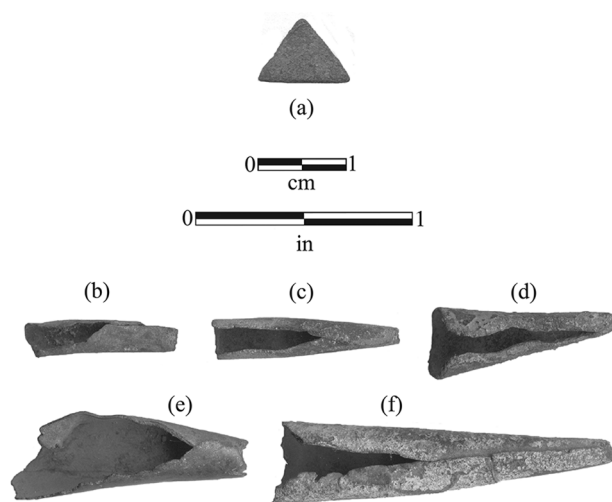


Figure 5. Reworked artifacts from the Spanish compound: copper alloy projectile point (a) and copper alloy bangles (b–f).

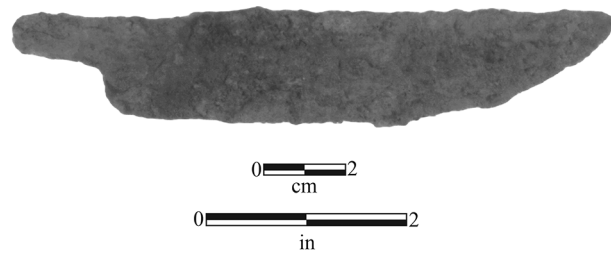


Figure 6. Repurposed iron knife from Burial 1.

by Joarans (habitual schemas mobilizing novel resources), they might also have been reworked by the garrison’s men for exchange, producing objects desired by their Joaran hosts (novel schemas mobilizing habitual resources).

Repurposing is apparent in the context of an iron knife that David Moore (2002:237–239) recovered from Burial 1, located just southwest of the Spanish compound, in 1986 (see fig. 2). Burial 1 contained a fully extended adult male, placed into a pit nearly 2 m deep. Along with the iron knife, the man was accompanied by a bundle that included copper disks, a turtle shell, a clay elbow pipe, a corner-notched blade of a type that dates to the Archaic period, and a flintknapping kit. This assemblage is comparable to those recovered in burials of high-status adult males at the King site in northwest Georgia, which included European-made items that may derive from visits by the Hernando de Soto or Tristan de Luna expeditions to the Coosa chiefdom (Hally 2008). At Joara, Pardo presented Joara Mico with eight knives as gifts for his subjects (Bandera 1990:265), and the knife from Burial 1 may have been one of those gifts. There is nothing in the form of the knife to suggest that it was physically modified prior to its deposition in Burial 1 (fig. 6). Yet it lay on the sternum of the individual in this burial, suggesting that it was worn about the neck as a pendant—a modification to its virtual form that left its physical form unchanged.

Turning from modification to manufacture, there is little compelling evidence of copying among the artifacts from the Spanish compound. There is, however, a probable case of blending among ceramics from this context, although it does not involve the blending of Native and Spanish forms. Feature 112 was a large circular pit, nearly 2 m in diameter and 80 cm deep, situated just outside the corner of Structure 5 (fig. 3) and unusual for its unique assemblage of Pisgah-style pottery. The core of the Pisgah phase is in the Appalachian Summit north and west of Berry, and its ceramics are different from those of the local Burke phase (Moore 2002). Sherds from at least eight Pisgah-style ceramic vessels were recovered from Feature 112 (fig. 7). Hudson suggests that the people described by Spaniards as Chisca were the bearers of Pisgah culture, meaning that Pisgah towns were among those destroyed during the Spaniards’ raids in the Appalachians (Beck 2013:75–78; Hudson 1990:91). After these attacks, Pardo’s men brought an unknown number of Chisca women back to Joara, and it seems that the remains recovered from the fill of Feature 112 represent the



Figure 7. Pisgah-style vessels from Feature 112.

labor of these captives (Moore et al. 2016). What makes this a possible example of blending is that while all eight vessels have distinctive Pisgah rim treatments, their pastes contain soapstone as a tempering agent. Soapstone tempering is a distinctive feature of local Burke-style ceramics, such that the vessels from Feature 112 exhibit nonlocal rim modes on local pastes—the combining of novel and habitual forms to produce familiar objects.

Yet identifying these pottery vessels as *familiar* objects does not also mean that they were *normative* objects. Normativity is a power-laden evaluation of difference within a community; it assesses our accommodation to, or deviancy from, culturally proscribed practices. By decorating these vessels according to their own cultural norms, while simultaneously rejecting those of their Native foes from Joara, the Chisca women held captive at Fort San Juan were practicing a kind of creative deviancy. Moreover, we should pay closer attention to the fact that they undertook these acts on local Burke-phase ceramic pastes. Here is a set of practices that we might compellingly view through the lens of hybridity in its restricted postcolonial sense: the tactics used by marginalized people to subvert the prevailing relations of power through mockery, mimicry, and caricature. If so, then the subversions of these Chisca captives appear not to have been directed at Pardo's men but at the community of Joara, and perhaps even more specifically at Joaran women—the crafters of locally normative Burke-phase ceramics. Evidence from the Spanish compound suggests that local women had worked to prepare meals for the garrison's soldiers throughout the early months of the occupation (e.g., Fritz 2016; Lapham 2016). Thus, even in captivity, their own bodies and labor exploited by the soldiers at Fort San Juan, these Chisca women may have focused their acts of mockery, if not disdain, on the local women they had replaced.

At the scale of consumption, accumulating seems to account for the incorporation of most novel forms that Joara's inhabitants experienced in their encounter with Pardo and Fort San

Juan, from unaltered goods such as glass beads incorporated *as is* to modified goods such as the copper alloy bangles. Moreover, this accumulating unfolded as process, the noneventful temporality of incremental change. These and other goods entered existing, Indigenous exchange and patronage networks along the path of Pardo's route and in close proximity to his garrisons, accumulating in local assemblages of other rare and exotic objects of high social value. While the introduction of such new forms qualitatively enlarged the scope of local assemblages, there is nothing to suggest that these assemblages were themselves fundamentally compromised by the encounter. Practices of modification, whether performed by local Joarans or by Spaniards accommodating local tastes, enabled vulnerable assemblages to maintain complementarity of parts while incorporating new forms. That is, *modification is a means of making novel forms familiar*, so that the resulting objects are more likely to complement objects and webs of association that already constitute the assemblage. Even the glass beads that Pardo distributed at Joara, although incorporated *as is*, were sufficiently low in number and sufficiently similar in form to most shell beads—exotic goods that were already established in existing patronage networks—that they were incorporated without the eventful unraveling of local assemblages.

The experience of Pardo's soldiers left to garrison Fort San Juan was quite different from that of their Native hosts. The army arrived at Joara with a dramatically scaled-down assemblage of European-made goods, an observation corroborated by analysis of artifacts recovered from the Spanish compound. The vast majority of European-made artifacts may be classified as hardware (especially wrought nails), arms and armaments (mainly lead shot and chain mail links), clothing items (aglets, buttons, and fasteners), ceramics (primarily the olive jars that held the expedition's wine), and glass beads for exchange (Rodning et al. 2016:316–319, table 8.5). As such, it is not surprising that most of the items used in daily life at Fort San Juan were Native made. Moreover, the soldiers appear to

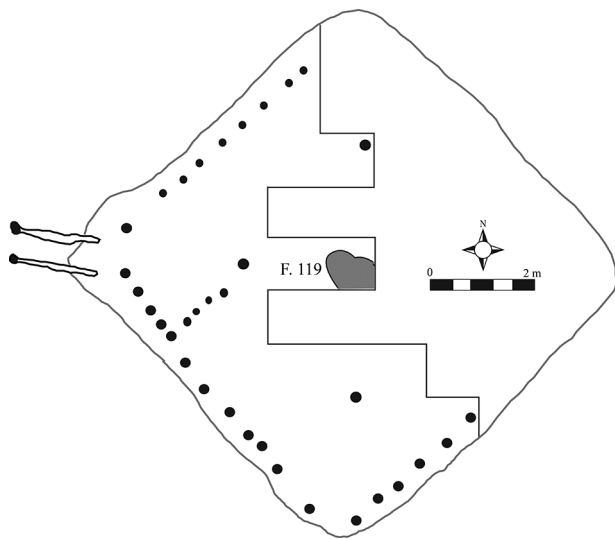


Figure 8. Plan map of Structure 5 at top of subsoil, showing posthole distribution.

have incorporated most local objects *as is*; of the thousands of Native-made artifacts recovered from feature and architectural contexts inside the Spanish compound, only the clay gaming disks—all of which were reworked from Native potsherds—exhibit any clear evidence of modification. And since such disks are ubiquitous on Native American sites across the region, there is nothing to suggest that Europeans actually modified any of these. From ceramic cooking and serving vessels, to stone and bone tools, to tobacco smoking pipes, the European assemblage at Fort San Juan consisted chiefly of new forms with little evidence of transposing.

As noted, the only artifact-scale objects from the Spanish compound that seem to indicate blending—the Native-made ceramics from Feature 112—mix distinctive local and nonlocal Native forms rather than those from Native and European assemblages. Yet if we extend our conception of object to a larger scale, then the compound's architecture provides important insights into how Pardo's men experienced new forms at the Berry site (here the fractal quality of the model comes into view: at the scale of its various parts, a building is an assemblage, but at the broader scale of the built environment, that building is one object in an assemblage). The Spanish compound had five buildings, four of which were built in semisubterranean basins and all of which were burned. As yet, we have investigated two of these, Structures 1 and 5 (Beck et al. 2016). Structure 1 was the larger of the two, covering ~56 square meters, and it was among the four structures built in semisubterranean basins. Such basins were typical of Late Mississippian architecture throughout the South Appalachians (Hally 2008; Lacquemont 2007), and indeed most of Structure 1 appeared typical of Indigenous-style architecture in the region. It contained a central hearth, four large and deep interior supports, and a well-defined corner entry with trenches (fig. 8).

When Structure 1 burned, many of its wood elements were preserved after collapsing into its basin. These remains provide

clear evidence that—despite its outward appearance—Structure 1 was very different from all known Native buildings. Analyses of its carbonized posts and timbers show that many were harvested and prepared with European carpentry techniques and with metal tools including adzes, axes, and saws—tools that were included among those carried by the Pardo expedition (fig. 9; Newsom 2016). Given that its form so closely resembles local styles and practices, Joarans probably planned Structure 1 and offered much of the labor for its construction (including the excavation of its basin pit). Yet Pardo's men may have cut and processed much of the raw material that went into its framework. While it is possible that workers from Joara used metal implements with familiar analogues, such as the axes and adzes carried by Pardo's men, it seems more likely that the Europeans would have kept these essential and irreplaceable tools in their own possession. It is unlikely, moreover, that Joaran builders could have quickly learned to use unfamiliar tools such as the cross-cut saws that processed some of the larger wood specimens recovered from this building. Thus, Joarans and Spaniards must have labored together on Structure 1, an act of blending that produced a familiar object.

This is where the object-assemblage model that I have proposed provides a key analytical intervention in current thinking about hybridity and material culture. It suggests a framework for recognizing specific material outcomes as alike in

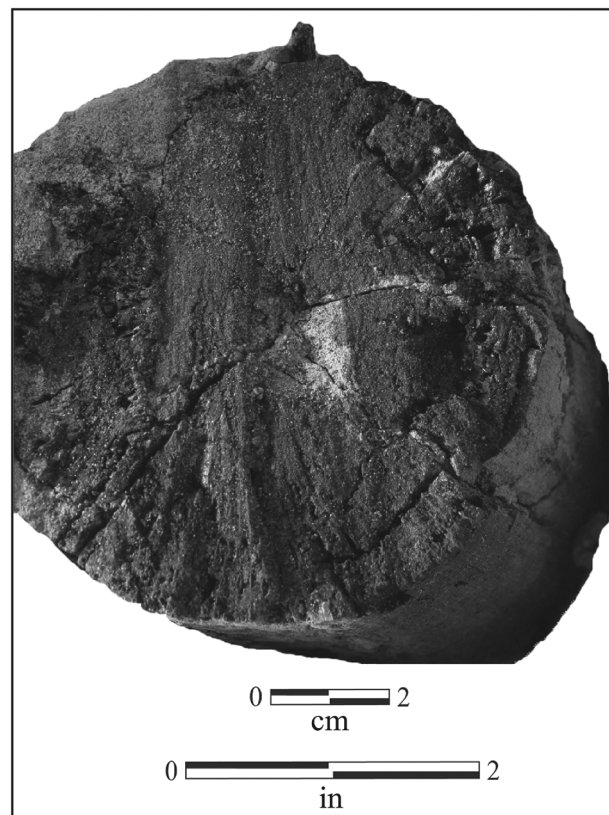


Figure 9. Large timber from Structure 1, shown in cross section with parallel marks from cross-cut saw spanning its full diameter.

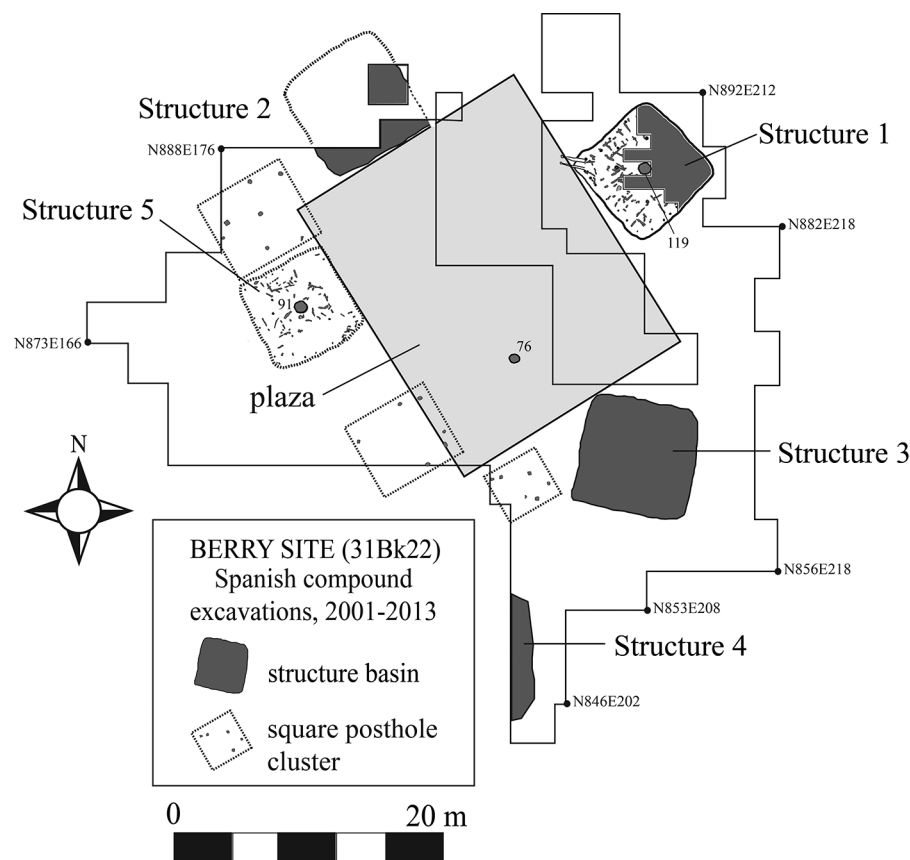


Figure 10. Plan map of second-phase Spanish compound with rectangular plaza indicated.

practice (e.g., evidence of blending in both the architecture of Structure 1 and the production of pottery vessels from Feature 112), yet distinct in their cultural implications. Structure 1 was, by all appearances, a normative object; it conformed to the expectations of the local community that helped to build it, maintaining a complementarity of parts with other structures at Joara. It is not, as such, an example of hybridity (in the restricted sense of that concept). But it was no “mere” mixing, either, not if its Native and Spanish builders sought to extend its complementarity of parts to the soldiers who lived in it. And if this blending was intended to achieve a coexistence through complementarity, then the blending that produced those pots in Feature 112 achieved precisely the opposite, exposing the raw power, violence, and contradiction at the heart of this and all such colonial enterprises.

Yet even the case of Structure 1 is more complex. It was only familiar or complementary in relation to any preexisting Native-made houses at Joara and affiliated communities. From the perspective of the soldiers, as with so much else that filled and surrounded their everyday lives, it was novel. For these men, I suggest that the exchange between Joara and Fort San Juan unfolded as an event. What they experienced in their encounter with Joara was a burst in the accumulating of new forms, as well as in the replacing of many habitual forms that the demands of their march would have required them to re-

move from their assemblages before leaving from Santa Elena for the interior, and perhaps even before departing Spain for Santa Elena. This burst, in turn, created an onrush of contradictions that their assemblages were unable to absorb. To make matters more disruptive, they hardly modified any of these new forms to ease incorporation, to produce a sense of complementarity with objects and associations that still remained in their vastly stripped-down assemblages. Yet I have argued that we cannot tolerate the structural disorderliness of the event for any significant period of time. How, then, did Pardo’s soldiers contend with such a structural crisis? What actions did they take to restore a complementarity of parts?

There was little that the fort’s soldiers could have done to increase their access to habitual or familiar (i.e., European) material culture. Access to such supplies was likely to remain limited due to the exigencies of overland travel, and although Pardo did outfit the garrison before leaving for the last time in November 1567, these goods were all military equipment or hardware. What the men garrisoned at Joara could do was to change their built environment and its assemblage of architectural objects. The Spanish compound had two episodes of construction activity (Beck et al. 2016:133–149). Structures 1, 3, and 4 all likely date to the first episode, built between Pardo’s arrival at Joara in December 1566 and his return in September 1567. These three structures form an arc around a possible

outdoor kitchen, Feature 76 (see fig. 3). Following Pardo's departure in November, two large buildings—Structures 2 and 5—along with three less substantial structures or sheds, were added to the compound. Significantly, the layout of these second-phase structures seems to have been highly planned on a grid (fig. 10). One, Structure 5, may have served as a *cocina* or kitchen for the compound, replacing Feature 76. Unlike Structure 1, however, it was not built in a basin pit and included European elements such as wooden shakes or shingles (Newsom 2016:230). These changes, from the formal *cocina* to the gridded organization, are all consistent with the planning of other Spanish outposts and colonies, as codified by the Laws of the Indies in 1573 (Mundigo and Crouch 1977). Pardo's soldiers, in effect, sought to transform the compound in ways that proclaimed its—and their own—essential Spanishness.

The irony of Fort San Juan is that this reshaping of its architectural assemblage, labor that we can generalize as a rearticulating of resources and schemas ruptured during the early phase of the encounter, may well have had the unintentional consequence of alienating the men of the fort from their Joaran hosts. Along with ordinances for how and where to construct a proper Spanish community, the Laws of the Indies also specified that local peoples be excluded from the actual work and not be allowed "to enter within the confines of the town until it is built and its defenses ready and houses built so that when the Indians see them they will be struck with admiration and will understand that the Spaniards are there to settle permanently and not temporarily" (Mundigo and Crouch 1977:258). And indeed, there is little to suggest that Native peoples played an active role in building Structure 5. Moreover, faunal data recovered from contemporary midden and pit features indicate that local provisioning of the compound changed dramatically between the two phases of its occupation, with Native men spending much less time in the reorganized community (Lapham 2016). We have similarly seen that the labor of nonlocal captives replaced the labor of local women from Joara. Since labor was so essential to exchange practices that had conditioned relations between host and guest from the beginning of the encounter, any such break—especially if unilaterally enforced—would likely have produced a crisis of its own. If their reorganization of the compound achieved a complementarity of parts by expressing the soldiers' European cultural identities, then it may also have planted the seeds of their subsequent ruin.

Conclusions

Colonial encounters offer invaluable contexts for studying how practices of incorporation unfold, largely because participants are more likely to experience forms that are *new to us*. As with the encounter between Joara and Fort San Juan, though, most generate only a limited set of those production and consumption practices that I have identified collectively as cultural mixing. This is a key point. Every colonial encounter—as a particular engagement with novelty of form—is the product of its own unique and historically contingent circumstances. We

should therefore expect that different encounters, in different times and places, will exhibit distinct patterns of production and consumption practices. For example, Matthew Liebmann (e.g., 2013, 2015) has documented numerous cases of cultural mixing among Spanish and Pueblo communities in seventeenth-century New Mexico. At first glance, we might expect these cases to exhibit similarities to those that I have identified at Joara and Fort San Juan, since both involved Spaniards and Native Americans in the early colonial period. Rather, Liebmann's compelling analysis identifies many more instances of blending and copying than have been recorded at the Berry site. The recognition of this variation poses questions about its cause. If intercultural encounters persist and later develop into colonial regimes, then do practices of modification become less significant? Do practices of manufacture and incorporation *as is* present less risk to assemblages in such regimes? While it is well beyond the scope of this article to address such problems here, it does suggest that the model itself offers rich ground for future comparative studies of incorporation.

Despite how important the concepts of "object" and "assemblage"—as well as their respective associated practices of production and consumption—have become to archaeological perspectives on materiality, this is the first attempt to draw them together in a single analytical framework that gives equal weight to both. Doing so, I have argued, requires a structural approach that likewise gives equal importance to material resources and virtual schemas. The resulting framework offers us a robust lens through which to examine the different ways that people incorporate novel forms of material culture. And because it privileges neither settler nor indigenous actions and practices, it offers a particularly useful approach to exploring intercultural encounters, and one that may (as in the case of Joara and Fort San Juan) reveal unexpected patterns of incorporation.

Near the beginning of this article I claimed that it was not about hybridity, not in the postcolonial sense of tactics such as mockery and mimicry that subaltern or marginalized peoples use to subvert prevailing relations of power. Indeed, in the case of Joara and Fort San Juan, it would be difficult to identify either cultural group as subaltern or marginalized with respect to the other. Where we do see tactics of hybridity put into practice during this colonial encounter, they appear not to have been aimed by Joarans at Spaniards, but rather by captive Chisca women at their foes from Joara. Unexpectedly, perhaps, such material expressions of mockery or mimicry played out in the relations among Indigenous actors as much as between Natives and Europeans. Moreover, there are many examples like this one, cases that unfolded before colonial regimes became stable and entrenched, during which significant cultural mixing occurred in the relative absence of well-defined hegemonies. What we need to better understand such cases, then, is neither to refute nor replace hybridity but to return to the problem of mixing itself. I have suggested that we shift our attention to relations of production and consumption, exploring the broader range of practices by which people incorporate novel forms through objects and assemblages. Any of those

practices I have identified can be put to either subversive or accommodative ends, yet by thus expanding the frames of analysis, we can better situate hybridity and related tactics of subversion within a fuller range of variation alongside tactics that enable compromise and accommodation.

Comments

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Archaeology of the Berry site continues to shed new and valuable light on our understanding of early colonial history in southeastern North America. Robin Beck emphasizes fascinating patterns of admixture that resulted from cultural plurality at the site—once home to individuals from at least two different Indigenous groups and, of course, Spanish colonists.

The mainly Indigenous-inhabited areas show evidence for the selective adoption and reworking of foreign materials. Several brass objects carried to the site by Spanish soldiers were reshaped, possibly by local Indigenous peoples. An iron knife, though bearing no material signs of modification, was found in an elite-style Indigenous burial, suggesting that it had been recontextualized and functionally transposed. Finally, certain ceramics from the site show evidence of mixing between two different Indigenous pottery traditions—likely fused together as a result of Spanish soldiers bringing Indigenous captives from a neighboring region.

A slightly different story emerges from areas occupied by the soldiers. Most items found there were Indigenous made and, save for gaming disks modified from pottery, lacked traces of material admixture. That is, unless one looks to the architecture. Careful chronological sequencing reveals two phases of building. The earlier phase shows a mixture of Indigenous and Spanish architectural traditions. The later phase involved a return to more traditionally Spanish building styles and spatial organization; for Beck, this second phase demonstrates intentional cultural purification on the part of colonists—they sought a means to mark difference from local Indigenous ways of doing.

The main focus of the paper is a theoretical intervention inspired mostly by the work of sociologist William Sewell Jr. but tempered by anthropological theories of object agency (i.e., Gell). Beck seeks a structural solution to the problem of interpreting material admixture on colonial archaeological sites. The paper begins with a contrast that Beck found in recent archaeological discussions of *hybridity*—that between a specific iteration of hybridity inspired by the writings of postcolonial theorists and a generic notion of the “mere fusion” of once-foreign materials on colonial sites. It is on the latter blanket classification that Beck seeks to expand; he takes the

notion of “mere fusion” and shows its different permutations across the Berry site. He classifies different forms of material admixture and places them into the context of Sewell’s recursive model of social structure. The most innovative part of his approach is its consideration of multiple scales—a much-needed contribution to historical archaeology and, in my opinion, contemporary archaeological theory in general.

Yet does the classification of reworked brass, for example, as either “habitual schemas mobilizing novel resources” or “novel schemas mobilizing habitual resources” represent a fundamentally new way of understanding cultural admixture in colonial contexts? Moreover, is it fair and accurate to typify archaeologies of colonialism as lacking theories and interpretive models that recognize the nuance of a reworked brass object on an Indigenous-colonial site in North America? In the end, I was not completely convinced on either front. Many archaeologists studying colonial North America already work with nuanced models and theories that do much more than classify cultural admixture as “mere fusion” (take, e.g., the work of Barbara Voss [2008]), so it seems that Beck has overstated the novelty and utility of the specific theoretical approach described in this paper.

Beck did, however, leave me with two main questions concerning archaeological approaches to Indigenous-colonial histories and to theory in general. The first question concerns materials and their place in human histories. Beck turned to Sewell Jr. because, in contrast to theorists such as Giddens, his work set out to place materiality or “resources” on even footing with practices and ideas when it comes to the production of history. Other theorists tangentially cited in the paper are perhaps even more committed to the material turn (e.g., Bennett; Conneller) than Sewell and Gell were. This made me wonder whether there was even more opportunity with this project to delve deeper into the materials, including closer considerations of their qualities, potential “vibrancies,” and affordances. For instance, Beck’s discussion of brass objects at the site places most emphasis on their *forms*. I would like to read more on how the actual substances participated in this process. Reworked brass objects are one of the most frequently occurring types of mixed materials recovered from colonial sites in North America. Why? This might be partially linked to brass’s malleability, to its iconic connection with Indigenous copper, and to its general luster and color. I would also like to know more about the long-term effects of such adoptions. In other words, what differences did the addition of new materials make for everyday life at the site? How did these transformations reshape futures? For example, how did the use of brass projectiles relate to (or compete with) flintknapping and its social transmission?

The second question concerns a much bigger issue—the role of typology in archaeology. Beck’s paper harkened back to some aspects of Quimby and Spoehr’s acculturation work in its discussion of *types of admixture*: reworking, repurposing, copying, blending, and so forth. Do such typologies really help us to engage with the complexities of colonialism? Is it possible that they limit our capacity for understanding the emergence

of new cultural forms (i.e., new to *all at the site*) that perhaps had no precolonial history? Thinkers cited in the paper, such as Deleuze, Guattari, and DeLanda, argued against rigid typological approaches for related reasons.

In summary, I very much enjoyed thinking through Beck's paper. Certain parts of the argument are overstated, and there is additional room for critical considerations of materials themselves and the limiting aspects of typological thinking in such work. In spite of these issues, Beck still provides a well-written, creatively theorized, and multiscalar paper that concerns a central issue in the archaeology of colonialism.

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With "Encountering Novelty," Rob Beck strides boldly into the quagmire of anthropological hybridity and "mixed" material culture. Many before him have waded into the same morass, only to find themselves bogged down by a seemingly unending variety of terms and types (myself included). Rather than getting mired in this muck, however, Beck deftly highlights the constituents of its matrix, identifying many of the unexamined and taken-for-granted aspects of archaeological research into the materiality of intercultural mixing. Like Beck, I am a splitter rather than a lump, so I found his careful explication of embellishing, reworking, repurposing, blending, copying, accumulating, and replacing to be astute and compelling. The result is the most theoretically robust and nuanced discussion of mixed material culture produced to date. Building on theoretical foundations laid down by Sewell, Beck provides us with a lucid examination of the variety of objects and assemblages commonly produced and consumed through colonial encounters.

One of the major issues plaguing recent scholarship on mixed material culture has been the persistent search for hybridity and purity as qualities that inhere in objects. The structural approach advocated here recognizes the folly of this search. Rather than attempting to classify objects (and assemblages) as those that are mixed versus those that are unamalgamated, Beck prudently encourages archaeologists to instead focus our attention on things that are "*new to us*." This emphasizes the critical yet often overlooked fact that what is mixed and what is pure is always a taxonomic choice made by the observer. Shifting the focus to novelty provides anthropologists with an elegantly minimalist solution, dispensing with the intellectual hand-wringing and racialized baggage that accompany notions of purity and hybridity. Yet this solution is at the same time *deceptively* simple, as it also raises the crucial question of perspective. In other words, who is "*us*?" Are we talking about an emic "*us*," attempting to identify what was

new from the perspective of the people encountering it in the past? Or are we talking about an etic "*us*," referring to archaeologists encountering material culture that they perceive to be different, Other, and novel? All too often, archaeologists have confused the two. Beck's study offers a template for future investigations, although one of the challenges that archaeologists face in applying this structural approach will be to explicitly differentiate between emic and etic notions of novelty.

Another advantage of Beck's proposed framework is its ability to account for both sides of a host of pairs traditionally opposed as binaries. Most prominently this includes colonizer versus colonized, production versus consumption, and process versus event. To this list we might add, as Beck does in the introduction, "hybridity and *mere* fusion." This opposition appears to approximate the dichotomy proposed by linguist Mikhail Bakhtin (1981:358–362) in his foundational writings on hybridity. Bakhtin differentiates between "organic hybrids," by which he means unintentional, unconscious mixing (glossed by Beck as "*mere* fusion") and intentional, conscious mixing (glossed here by Beck as "hybridity"). The former, Beck notes, has been taken all too often as "comparatively straightforward and simple, requiring little further comment." The structural framework advocated here belies this falsehood, demonstrating just how much we can indeed learn about the past by focusing on the everyday practices of cultural mixing. As Bakhtin (1981) notes, in these organic hybrids "the mixture remains mute and opaque, never making use of conscious contrasts and oppositions" (360). Nonetheless, "such unconscious hybrids have been at the same time profoundly productive historically: they are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new 'internal forms' of perceiving the world" (Bakhtin 1981:360).

Beck questions the need to "prioritize the significance of power" when "modeling how people encounter and incorporate new forms of material culture," and I suspect that this is the major difference between his approach to novelty and mine. For Bakhtin and myself, there can be no question about the necessity to attend to power in these contexts, regardless of whether the mixing in question is intentional or unintentional in origin. Both organic hybridity/"*mere* fusion" and intentional hybridization throw power differentials into stark relief, particularly in colonial contexts. To me, the whole purpose of investigating mixed material culture is to understand the ways that power infuses, enables, and affects social interactions, especially in colonial encounters.

Beck identifies the Pisgah-style ceramics manufactured by Chisca women at Fort San Juan to be examples of "creative deviancy," and "mockery," which he equates with "hybridity in its restricted, postcolonial sense." While I would not restrict the use of hybridity exclusively to situations of resistance, I did find Beck's interpretation of these ceramics provocative. The pottery found in Feature 112 combines novel resources (Burke-phase ceramic pastes) with habitual schemas (Pisgah rim treatments). To me, this blending invites comparison with Claude Lévi-Strauss's (1966) notion of bricolage: a creative recombination of elements by individuals acting within a limited range

of options, which Jean Comaroff (1985) so brilliantly adapted to colonial contexts.

As noted in the conclusion, I have identified many instances of blending and copying in seventeenth-century New Mexican contexts. But keep in mind that I have drawn these examples from multiple sites spanning nearly a century of colonization and anticolonial resistance—a significant contrast to the 18 months of colonial occupation under investigation at Joara/Fort San Juan/the Berry site. I look forward to applying this innovative structural framework in southwestern contexts, and I eagerly anticipate the comparative investigations of mixed material culture that this study is sure to inspire around the world. Here Beck has provided us with crucial insights on novelty, hybridity, transposing, and transporting in colonial contexts. His framework is, above all else, good to think (as Levi-Strauss would say).

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Has hybridity had its moment in contemporary archaeology? The premise (and perhaps misplaced hope) of hybridity was that as a now broadly defined theoretical approach, it offered an avenue to explore the differences seen in the material and archaeological record resulting from settler colonialism. It is a concept, often known by other names, that the discipline has been grappling with—somewhat poorly—for decades. When different people were drawn together in colonial contexts, how did new and familiar cultural processes, beliefs, and material culture come together to form new ones—and how to we interpret these changes? In his article, Robin Beck puts forth the “object-assemblage model” drawn from the work of William Sewall Jr. as a new approach to this long-standing challenge of interpreting mixed material culture resulting from settler colonialism. In his structural approach, cultural mixing occurs at two distinct but interrelated loci of agency: the object itself and the assemblage, which he describes as “more than a sum of artifacts,” and rather as the objects and the webs of connection among them.

Thinking beyond singular hybrid objects to larger networks of interactions is a strategy that numerous archaeologists have forwarded in recent years to grapple with aspects of hybridity (see as just two examples: Cobb and Sapp 2015; Liebmann 2015). Beck argues for additional dimensions to consider in the object-assemblage model: production *and* consumption as well as process *and* event. At these different dimensions, novelty, defined as something “new to us,” is created in form, through process, which continually changed over time. As Beck notes, novelty in consumption and production are rarely considered together, even though others have acknowledged that consumption was an active process of creative appropriation and

manipulation played out by individuals and social groups with a variety of competing interests and strategies of action (see, e.g., Cipolla 2015).

Overall, I agree with Beck that we need to look closer and more carefully and need strategies to look at other aspects of settler colonialisms that are bound up in these engagements. Beck provides a useful methodology for doing so that considers the layered, nuanced aspects of people and their changing material culture. What we see in the archaeological record is often just one vignette into distinct, changing, and dynamic communities in which there were likely multiple social processes at work and multiple motivations in the creation and use of material culture that came from local and distant places. So in these considerations I would like to suggest another aspect to consider: ambivalence. In Beck’s example, new forms that emerge from colonial contexts are often marked by their deliberate nature, to produce a “finished object that is simultaneously novel and habitual.” Ambivalence as a concept, however, suggests conflicted opinions that may have been present in relationships among different peoples, objects, and material (Loren 2019).

Ambivalence emerges from Homi Bhabha’s well-cited work on hybridity and mimicry. Building on Jacques Lacan’s discussion of mimicry as camouflage (referring to the natural world), Bhabha (1994) describes mimicry in colonial contexts as a discourse that is generated out of ambivalence. When colonial discourse encourages the colonial subject to mimic the colonizer, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits but a blurred copy (Bhabha 1994:123). Mimicry is at once resemblance and menace, as it can erode and mock colonial authority or other communities. Beck suggests that this may have been a motivating factor with regard to pottery made by Chisca women held captive at Fort San Juan, who decorated ceramics with their own designs to mock Joara women rather than the Spanish. In this case, the concept of ambivalence can also be mobilized to explore nuanced relationships between people and their things beyond the colonized/colonizer dichotomy. Ambivalence marks different strategies employed in lived experience, decisions made in practical action, unintended consequences, and the ways that colonial peoples structured their world and made things in the context of settler colonialism (Loren 2019; see also Cobb and Sapp 2015).

Embracing ambivalence disavows conciliatory colonial engagements to instead mark material culture created in the context with settler colonialism with the difficult and complicated emotions of loss, violence, and grieving, especially when revisiting them today with descendant communities. How do we account for what we see while also attending to issues of subjugation, coercion, anxiety, intimacy, and longing? Perhaps our inability to capture this in our discussions of a dynamic and difficult-to-define material record is what accounts for our own shortcomings in creating authentic narratives about the colonial past.

Ultimately, I think we are all still looking for more thoughtful ways to understand the dynamism of material culture that

emerged from settler colonialisms. Beck is correct in noting that we need to be attendant to various issues at once: the object and the assemblage as well as consumption and production in time and space. In doing so, we can explore material culture in a way that removes the privilege of the European perspective, which has left a legacy in archive and contemporary interpretation, to think about the residues of daily life found in the material record of settler colonialisms, which were marked with agency and ambivalence.

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The article offers a new model for understanding intercultural contacts through material remains. While it takes as a point of departure recent debates on hybridity in archaeology and anthropology, it is concerned with providing a new approach to studying cultural fusion in colonial contexts. Robin Beck terms his approach structural and builds it on previous sociological work, using as case study a sixteenth-century Spanish settlement in North Carolina. The validity of this new model and its value for the analysis of culture contact situations are worth reflecting on further.

Beck explicitly treats culture contact situations from a perspective that is broader than the postcolonial concept of hybridity, in the sense of subversive cultural forms born in colonial situations. This caveat is offered because the concept of hybridity did not arrive in anthropology and archaeology straight from the biological sciences, where it used to describe mixing, but was rather adopted from literary theory and linguistics. Hybridity as a notion has a complex genealogy. As a word, it appeared in English in the early seventeenth century, from the Latin *hybrida*, itself a loan from Greek *ὕβρις* (insolence, defiance of the gods). Its original use in the biological sciences denoted mixing, as in the horticultural practices of cross-pollination or grafting. In postcolonial critique, however, through the work of the critical theorist Homi Bhabha (1994), hybridity has been defined as an ambivalent cultural form that subverts colonial authority. In contrast, Beck's interest is in the modeling of instances of cultural interaction, the complexity of which, in his opinion, has been overshadowed by the recent interest in hybridity, which he sees as disadvantaging the effects of cultural interactions on colonists. This erroneous claim masks that hybridity in postcolonial theory places emphasis on the subversion of authority, and recent anthropological and archaeological theory on colonialism and colonization is concerned with the whole spectrum of cross-cultural interactions.

Intending to push beyond the "abstract debates about hybridity," Beck calls for a new approach that is structural, deriving from the work of William Sewell Jr., a sociologist not

widely known or used in archaeology and prehistory. Building the methodology on social structure developed therein, complete with its terminology, Beck intends to offer a new model that counters the "absence of analytical frameworks for modeling how such mixing unfolds," using the "object" and the "assemblage" as "two loci of agency." The particular choice of this epistemological path for the study of social structure is deemed to offer a "more satisfying and analytically useful conception of events." Events are initiated when "changes or sequences of changes," in rare occasions, "undo the integrity of the net." Events, resources, schemas, transposability, ruptures, and knots introduce a long, and not always straightforward, semantically charged vocabulary that has to be absorbed in order to follow the model.

Models in general are meant to simplify complex phenomena in order to explain processes. In the social sciences, they are extensively used as a critical tool for developing better-document theories and expanding our interpretational possibilities. For Mershon and Shvetsova (2019), "a formal model in the social sciences builds explanations when it structures the reasoning underlying a theoretical argument, opens venues for controlled experimentation, and can lead to hypotheses"(1). Clearly for archaeology or anthropology "controlled experimentation" does not apply, so the value of using models lies in obtaining explanations on the basis of analytical reasoning and on extending the range of hypotheses.

So what is the value of this particular new model? Beck aims to cut the proverbial knot of hybridity versus hybridization by thrusting the question: "When does the novel become the habitual?" The types of culture contact fusion resulting from a sixteenth-century Spanish settlement effort at the Fort San Juan garrison (western North Carolina) are documented and classified according to the "typology" developed within this model. The author looks at a range of practices, taking into account context, available resources, and adaptation strategies. For example, the use of labor and building traditions by both Spanish and Joarans and the later efforts to enhance familiar architectural styles through Spanish identity branding are noted. This fallback on Spanish architectural traditions in a second stage of building at the compound of Fort San Juan was a conscious strategy to differentiate from indigenous traditions and not the result of a lack of available Joaran workmen that time around. Is this something we gather through the application of the model? No, it is postulated on the basis of the Laws of the Indies. That the pottery styles produced by captive Chisca women potentially embody subversive strategies requires leaps of faith. Could these women not have produced these wares in a manner traditional to them, out of habituation, or attachment to familiar forms? Why would it necessarily be a form of mockery or challenging of Joarans? In the end, this interpretation is neither verifiable nor particularly convincing.

In the end, we are offered a new model for understanding culturally mixed material culture, handsomely built, which can encompass a variety of culture contact situations in a

structured and tidy way—none of which, however, is a novelty in itself. What new insight do we gain about culture contact situations at Fort San Juan that would not have been available with previous theoretical frameworks used in the archaeology and anthropology of colonization? The model encompasses a range of interpretational possibilities that previous theoretical models on colonial culture situations also allow for. Repurposing, recontextualization, effects on both colonist and indigenous peoples, strategies of differentiation between various groups of the former and the latter, and changes in both production and consumption strategies are nothing novel. Here lies my ambivalence about the usefulness of this new model, insofar as it is meant to open new interpretational avenues while requiring the absorption of a new, cumbersome terminology that is not found in comparative literature on culture contact situations of the past. The value of the model remains to be seen in more challenging cases that test our presuppositions of knowledge acquisition.

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Robin Beck offers a thoughtful, engaging intervention in some of the outstanding problems in the archaeologies of colonialism and indigeneity, not only in eastern North America where his project is situated but also worldwide. I appreciate several aspects of his approach to steer us on the “corrective turn.” I like his careful attention to what “mixing” is in an intercultural encounter, as this takes us to some root processes upon which archaeologists often apply notions of hybridity, which he noted as one of his points of entry, and entanglement, which he did not mention as a concept that often inhabits the literature on intercultural or colonial relationships. I agree with his point that “an absence of analytical approaches for understanding how such mixing occurs in practice makes it difficult to reconcile or push beyond the abstract debates about hybridity and related ideas.”

This reframing permits a way to view intercultural encounters from a variety of angles rather than in the standard dualities (e.g., Native/European, colonized/colonizer) that tend to structure archaeological conversations about these issues. As he noted, “[t]he framework that I propose avoids the either/or ontological trap of European/Native by setting its analytical beginning point not as ethnic identity but as novelty of form (i.e., *new to us*).” This is a simple but elegant way to contextualize practice and history and to restore the discussion to a kind of middle range. For instance, his insights on ceramic production and symbolic leverage by Chisca women in the Joara community were provocative.

He attended to the problem of newness by considering the necessary question: How long does something remain novel

before becoming familiar? Without an answer (or attempted answer), we remain mired in models that thrive on mixing but that do not have a firm grasp of what mixing is, why (or whether) it matters, and how long we need to keep talking about it. Beck also offered the reader a clear set of definitions in his model, ones that can be mobilized with nuance to categorize and understand the objects and assemblages we examine as archaeologists. Furthermore, I applaud him for taking up a model that incorporates both production/consumption and object/assemblage, because we need this kind of integration to work through some of our interpretive gaps.

Despite enjoying Beck’s argument and finding his writing elegant and cogent, I am less satisfied with two aspects. The larger concern pertains to the sense of “equilibrium,” “orderedness,” and “complementarity” that he applied to assemblages. His use of Sewell’s networks offered some purchase at the outset, but Beck ended with a model of material integration and change that felt too functional, too structural, and too reminiscent of systems thinking. His clearest statement on this was as follows: “During periods of processual time, the bonds that join objects in assemblages promote such a sentiment of orderedness, a complementarity of parts, that simultaneously masks the gradual accrual of contradictions in the network. But when processual time yields to a burst of disjunctions, the orderedness among parts starts to unravel, and the crisis continues until a new equilibrium, a new complementarity of parts, is realized.”

I do not take issue with this clarification: “As social actors, what we ultimately demand of our assemblages is not that they exist and persist as consummate wholes, but rather that even through change they maintain a semblance of complementarity among their many parts.” What concerns me, however, is the overplaying of equilibrium. Who defines this complementarity—archaeologists now or social actors in the past? And is it not likely that one’s subject position in the past context affected whether they saw something as complementary or not? One might think about how technological introductions into our society (e.g., computers, cellphones) over the past 50 years have felt out of place and “wrong” to some but remarkably continuous and comfortable to others. In addition, how much change can an assemblage absorb before it is a different assemblage? Again, who judges? Unless Beck is referring to a higher-level analytical sense of “object” networks (i.e., Hodder 2012), these kinds of questions should attend to issues of practice, perception, and affordance. In Beck’s specific case, I had a clear sense of how some of these object and assemblage vectors materialized in cultural, spatial, and material negotiations, but not whether they represented a fundamental kind of change defined by his out-of-equilibrium assemblage model.

The second, and related, concern is the way he mobilized notions of “assemblage.” One of the strengths of talking about assemblages is that they may be quite variegated across different social actors and may actually resist definitions of coherency and balance. That is, they represent practices of

assembling, sometimes using the same materials in different ways by different social actors and sometimes seeking or disrupting patterns or equilibrium. Beck's use of them felt a little more rigid. In addition, Beck focused strongly (and intentionally) on object form, but focusing on assemblages should permit us to look beyond questions of form to parse out the practices that pick them up. To me, we should consider what the object *affords*, not just what form it takes (even though form does relate to affordance). I am also not comfortable with colonial encounters being considered mainly "engagement with a novelty of form." Similarly, his definition of "cultural mixing" centered on a definition as "the incorporation of new material culture," but I was struck by how this might be, in the end, a little too archaeological and a little too material. What about modified or new practices that incorporate *not* "new to me" material objects? As I have argued elsewhere (Silliman 2009), practice is more of the link here—the act of assembling—more so than object form. I thank Beck for his thoughtful and useful contribution, and I hope that his article will inspire others to think more deeply about these issues, as it did for me.

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Robin Beck sets out an intriguing and ambitious approach for examining the material consequences of interaction between different groups of people within a colonial setting. He draws together theoretical approaches from a variety of epistemological stables: duality of structure, object agency and enchantment of technology, and Deleuzian assemblage theory. His aim is to develop a methodology by which archaeologists can explore how two distinct material culture traditions merge and in doing so can transform social structures. His focus is on how and "when does the novel become habitual?"

Beck engages with Deleuzian assemblages, an approach that has gained significant traction within archaeology (e.g., Hamilakis and Jones 2017; Harris 2014). As DeLanda (2016:21) comments "assemblages emerge from the interactions between their parts" and as such have great potential for archaeologists to unpack relationality between people, materials, things, and social structures. In this respect, Beck's elision of Deleuzian assemblages and Sewell's weblike social structures merit special attention. While archaeologists have engaged with Giddens's duality of structure (most notably Barrett [1993]), in this paper Beck demonstrates the archaeological usefulness of Sewell's social structures. These focus on materials/things (the very bedrock of archaeological data) and the social rules and practices that archaeologists endeavor to uncover from the material remains. Conceptually this approach melds seam-

lessly with the Deleuzian assemblage, something that Beck could draw out in more detail. Both are multiscalar and allow inquiry from the micro level to the macro level, from the individual to the household to overriding political systems (see DeLanda 2016). Moreover, the relationality and interlinking nature of assemblages, as materials ebb, flow, and merge, reflects the interwoven, overlapping net of social structures described by Beck as "untidy affairs, always in motion, always changing." Beck presents the intersections of materials and rules as a network comprising knots (matter) and messy interwoven threads (social practices), which recall the matter flows of the Deleuzian assemblage: both are continually changing and "becoming" (Harris 2014:90). Rather than a network, however, this messy labyrinth of overlapping and intersecting lines recalls Ingold's (2008) knotted, messy meshwork.

The structural duality implicit in Beck's analytical approach to the material world, with a binary separation of object-production and assemblage-consumption, however, is a potential weakness. His rigid application of production/consumption to different states of an object, as well as the counterpoint of object versus assemblage, both detract from the potential of exploring the material world through the lens of matter flows inherent to assemblage theory (Bennett 2010; Harris 2014). Indeed, in many ways, his use of assemblage appears to have more in common with the more static archaeological concept of assemblage as a collection or "a sum of artifacts" rather than as a heterogeneous group of entities that might include social and cultural structures as much as physical bodies, both human and nonhuman. For example, he describes the process of manufacture, by which raw material is physically transformed "into an object that may afterward be incorporated into an assemblage." Deleuzian assemblages, however, emphasize the continual flow of matter; this approach would recognize the agency of the craftsman and transformation of materials integral to the production of an object as part of the ongoing, open-ended assemblage as much as the object's eventual consumption. Likewise, although Sewell recognizes the movement of objects into and out of assemblages as part of the consumption of things, his presentation of these processes does not have the flow implicit in the Deleuzian assemblage.

The distinction that Beck makes between the five different modes of incorporating new types of objects within a new cultural context provides a helpful framework for archaeologists to consider how the exotic might be integrated within new social contexts. Here the focus is primarily on production: namely, modifying the imported exotic (embellishing or reworking it), but also on its consumption (repurposing it). There are certainly practical ways of applying this to the entangled material cultures of the Bronze Age East Mediterranean—the area within which I work. Beck also proposes two modes for understanding the consumption of the novel or exotic: accumulating (using alongside existing materials) or otherwise replacing the local and habitual with the new. There is a tension however, between Beck's emphasis on hybridity as the mixing of material culture rather than mixed cultural practice and his

proposed methodology. I argue that recognizing the repurposing of an object and embedding it within a new social context inevitably refers to the concept of mixed cultural practice; this represents new ways of doing things and mediating the novel: “cultural mix . . . is the effect of the practice of mixed origins” (Friedman 1997:88).

Beck’s engagement with multiple theoretical strands opens up exciting ways through which archaeologists can explore the material world of contact zones, be they colonial or mercantile. Sewell’s structural approach provides a meaningful way for exploring relationality between people, materials, things, and social rules and likewise for exploring how the impact of the new on these structures can effect change. A more nuanced understanding of the application of assemblage theory to the (im)material world would further elucidate our understanding of the inevitable fluidity of people, ideas, practices, things, and social structures.

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Hybridity is rightly described by Robin Beck as a major topic borrowed by archaeologists from postcolonial thinking, as their engagement with related concepts has been much more limited; it is also one that is now generally regarded as *passé*, not least in the wake of Stephen Silliman’s (2015) frequently cited requiem. Beck’s intervention in this debate, which I might perhaps characterize as an attempt of resuscitation, is therefore most welcome in that it is as important as it is timely, as there is indeed rather more to be said about this topic.

Beck has written a theoretically well-targeted and carefully elaborated argument why, in his view, archaeological disillusionment with hybridity should not be reason to move on from and to ignore the archaeological finds and contexts that the concept was invoked to address what he calls “cultural mixing,” and which he takes to apply specifically to material culture. He argues that insufficient attention has been paid to these colonial and cultural encounters, during some of which hybrid objects were created, while in others “novel items” were adopted rather than transformed. The archaeological evidence of the Berry site in western North Carolina, where a small garrison of Spanish soldiers lived side by side with an indigenous community for about a year in the mid-sixteenth century, illustrates his points really well.

At the heart of this debate lies material culture, and it is surely Beck’s merit to have shone the spotlight on this with theoretical sophistication. It is my contention, however, that he may not have gone far enough by not placing material culture at the center of his theoretical arguments. By foregrounding Sewell’s theory of structure, I suggest, material culture is ultimately sidelined once again, rather than examined in its

own right and appreciated as integral to people’s actions. As a result, the modification of objects, or rather the lack thereof, follows in Beck’s view from the structures or assemblages, which he sees at Fort San Juan as “unable to absorb” the multitude of “new forms” that the Spanish soldiers encountered. He accordingly terms this approach the “object-assemblage model.” As a result, the absence of modified or hybrid objects is taken to characterize, if not reflect, the relationships between the cultural groups, that is, between the military garrison and the Joara community.

While Beck shows that assemblage may be a useful notion to describe the complex contexts of ongoing and multiple encounters such as at the Berry site, the rich details of his discussion suggest to me, however, that both the embodiment and materiality of people’s practice have slid into the structural background. This seems particularly evident in the two instances of production that show evidence of “blending”: both the different rims of a specific set of evidently locally produced ceramic vessels, and the Spanish woodworking tools used to construct three architecturally indigenous houses may be more straightforwardly interpreted as evidence of people drawing on their well-honed embodied “motor skills” to engage with new circumstances and to produce familiar shapes as best as they could (Loney 2007; Wendrich 2012:7–12). The result, I would argue, is not so much “blended objects” or “mixed cultures” as it is “hybrid” *and* “material practices” (Knapp and van Dommelen 2008; van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012; for an archaeological case study, see Roppa 2014).

Foregrounding practice implies that a failure to (re)produce (almost) new objects does not necessarily denote a lack of interaction or avoidance, as the appropriation and consumption of imported, or “novel,” objects in familiar practices are still evidence of cultural engagement—it is just less intensive and intrusive and may well point to less intensive interaction between communities (van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012). The second building phase at Fort San Juan, which Beck and his colleagues convincingly suggest may represent an attempt to underscore the Spanish nature of the fort, and thus distinguish it implicitly from the indigenous village, offers in my view an excellent example of people actively managing and deploying material culture to match their outlook and practices. It could indeed be argued that such a clear shift away from indigenous material culture might denote a concern about hybrid practices undermining the duality of the colonial situation.

The latter point is significant, because it takes us back to postcolonial theory more broadly. Since notions such as indigenous agency, colonial dualism, and resistance have barely figured in most archaeological discussions (e.g., Card 2013; cf. van Dommelen 2006), it does not seem far-fetched to claim that the rich interpretive potential of hybridity, or rather hybrid practices, and material culture in archaeology largely remains to be explored and appreciated—and Beck’s paper creates an excellent basis to kick-start once again just that debate.

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Beck's paper presents a model for an incorporation of all things *new to us*. I welcome the way that Beck has framed a general theorizing for the adoption of (foreign) things, resources, and schemas into local processes of production and consumption. And he does so by locating the so-called cultural mixing in social action, and by placing equal attention to the array of "simultaneous adjustments" of each of the groups involved. This is an endeavor to see objects as playing a key role in contact and colonial situations and how meanings are constructed in such contexts. The effort follows a substantial body of previous scholarship about the role of things, their circulation and exchange, values, processes of appropriation, and degrees of entanglement in the anthropology of colonialism. As an archaeologist studying these phenomena in the ancient Mediterranean, I deal with long-term engagements, ones that spanned decades or even centuries, that are one defining feature of a history of the Mediterranean Sea (Broodbank 2013; Horden and Purcell 2000; van Dommelen and Knapp 2010). Having these viewpoints in mind, I shall address two issues: the scale of the interaction in processes of social change and the role of artifacts in the contact.

My first observation is about linking historical change and human agency and the applicability of the object-assemblage model to structuring processes. I have been struck by the scale of this specific case study: only 30 people of Spanish origin moved into Fort San Juan; they interacted with indigenous Joaran people for no more than 18 months before being attacked and forced to abandon the fort. This situation is certainly a small world indeed, but it does not mean it was an insignificant one. While this context offers a privileged position to look at decisions at the micro scale of social action—both in space and time—I am left wondering about long-term material consequences of this encounter. Localized studies have to acknowledge relationships with wider global conditions without being caught up in outdated diffusionist agendas or core-periphery relations that delve on dualisms. Therefore, to understand relations between the local and the global, one certainly has to consider the processes of different scales affecting each other and regional historical trajectories. Although Beck has not addressed the aftermath of this short episode of contact, I deem appropriate to ask whether it was inconsequential in historical terms: to what extent were the material cultures of Joarans transformed *after* the destruction of Fort San Juan? In which ways did it impinge on or became integral to peoples' lives, if it did at all? Did these changes affect other areas or groups, either Natives or Europeans? And last, how can these issues relate to Beck's reference to a history of structures, constituted by "sequences of process and event?" Answers to these questions would contribute to a nuanced understanding of different engagements and entanglements (see Dietler 2010*b*) in the global-local interplays.

It is one thing to say that the objects play a role in cultural encounters, and quite another to fully understand their historical complexities, as agents and coparticipants in structures of desire and dependency, but also indifference. A very positive move from essentialist binary approaches to culture contact is Beck's willingness to avoid ethnic labels as applied to things and practices, but ethnic distinctions do abound throughout his account (trade goods are "European-made artifacts"; "burials of high-status adult males [. . .] included European-made items"; "blending of Native and Spanish forms"). And they do because our classification systems are part and parcel of the tools for an understanding of the stuff that made the encounters for a critique on taxonomies in museum collections (for a critique on taxonomies in museum collections, see Loren 2015). I contend that the array of perceptions of novelties that were experienced during the "inevitable dislocations of encounter" may not have been driven by the centrality of ethnicity. However, we risk overlooking instances in which objects might have been deemed desirable *only* because they were loaded with ethnic connotations, or because their provenance mattered (see Bevan 2014, addressing commodities in the Mediterranean). We do not have to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

To speak about people's desires and demand opens up the question of the reasons and circumstances for the adoption and rejection of schemas and resources. Although Beck's concern in this paper is first and foremost with describing "how people encounter and incorporate new forms of material culture"—that is, in what ways or in what conditions—the issue as to *why* people were incorporating them is left unaddressed. Is the adoption of novelties an inevitable, natural, and self-evident outcome of any process of contact? Is it a question of pure availability, or did their material qualities matter? In this vein, what logics did the incorporation of stuff, resources, or schemas follow? Are the practices of production and consumption equally informative of the reasons to transform one's material world? Because things are not immutable, one would expect to detect contradictions at the level of notions of value—not inherent properties of objects but judgments made by people in processes of comparison and the construction of histories (see Graeber 2001)—that entailed the incorporation of novelties. For instance, what was it about iron knives that initially made them well-suited to be media of relations?

To what extent the model is useful for a comparative approach of the material conditions of colonial relations is an open question, hinted at in the conclusions, and a very important one indeed. The object-assemblage model can be a solid framework from which to acknowledge reasons, as long as a wider approach is taken into account: one that rejects static groups in favor of social diversity and highlights the desires and demands of each group both before and after the contact itself. I welcome Beck's approach because it opens up new avenues for cross-cultural comparison in the anthropology of contact and offers common ground for discussion between archaeologists and anthropologists dealing with ancient and historical contexts, with their unique views on both short- and long-term relations.

Reply

If every published paper exists in dialogue with the works that came before it, then what the *Current Anthropology* comment and reply format offers is an opportunity to extend that dialogue into the near-term, something closer to a conversation. The generous and thoughtful comments on my paper promote just such a discussion, focusing on the problem of how we as archaeologists can better understand what happens when people encounter new forms of material culture, particularly in the context of colonialism. Collectively, they provide a welcome opportunity to address several important topics that may help to clarify and strengthen the framework I have proposed. Given spatial constraints, I focus my reply on a series of broad theoretical issues raised in one or more comments rather than engaging with each comment separately. These include questions of power and agency, classification, scale, assemblage, materiality, and ambivalence.

Matthew Liebmann reminds us that relations of power inevitably pervade and shape all of our encounters with new material culture. Who has access to a novel resource or schema? Who wants access? Who gives it? And what is requested or demanded in return? I have devoted less attention to power than perhaps was warranted, but I agree altogether with his point, so I am less inclined to view this as a major difference between our approaches. Yet if I question the need, or even the advantage, of prioritizing power when modeling how people encounter and incorporate new things, it is because I believe that we should prioritize practice instead, the kinds of actions that people undertake when something new (whether resource or schema) crosses into their fields of experience. Power is intrinsic to any such actions, but identifying and tracing its labyrinthine strands in any particular case—especially an archaeological case—requires a different interpretive step, one that we are all too often unable to take without slipping into speculation or, even worse, finding our interpretations branded with the dreaded sobriquet of just-so-story.

Here it is worth bringing up the fact that Eleftheria Pappa found my interpretation of the ceramics produced by Chisca captives—what I think is among the most compelling examples of power and resistance, if not hybridity, in the Berry site assemblage—to be “neither verifiable nor particularly convincing.” Although I was relieved that several of the other commentators at least found the interpretation provocative, her point stands: it is not verifiable (she may agree, though, that “convincing” is more a matter of opinion). Personally, I believe that informed speculation is acceptable, as long as we acknowledge it as such, and that even just-so-stories have a time and place. But when we make interpretations of power and resistance, much less of such actions as mockery and acquiescence, we are claiming to understand motive. This is difficult enough when assisted by documentary evidence—and all the more so when faced with material things alone. We should, of course, continue to make our interpretations and to

make them as convincing, as compelling, and as verifiable as we can. In suggesting that we prioritize practice over power, I simply intend that we take our first steps upon the firmer ground of production and consumption before moving on to the potential quagmires of intent and motivation.

On the topic of agency, I would also like to address Liebmann’s reference to Bakhtin and his distinction between intentional and organic (or unconscious) hybridity. These terms refer not to hybridity in the restricted, postcolonial sense, but rather to cultural mixing more broadly. Liebmann equates my use of hybridity with Bakhtin’s intentional mixing and my use of “mere fusion” with organic mixing. I agree that postcolonial hybridity, as I understand it, can be considered a form of Bakhtin’s intentional mixing. Yet I disagree that the converse necessarily follows, that “mere fusion,” which encompasses forms of cultural mixing not specifically used by the disempowered to subvert or mock a dominant ideology, is unconscious and therefore unintentional. It seems to me that recognizing a thing as *new to us*, even in the proverbial split-second, is a conscious mode of action. Whether we then mobilize the new resource with habitual schemas, actualize the new schema with habitual resources, incorporate as is, or reject altogether, I suspect that we make our decisions consciously, even if we cannot always articulate our rationales. Granted, we are often unable to recognize the mixed histories embodied in all of our objects and assemblages or to see the consequences of mixing as we practice it. This need not mean, however, that “mere fusion” is less a product of motivated intent than hybridity’s flashy subversions.

Both Craig Cipolla and Jaime Vives-Ferrándiz bring our attention to the issue of typology and how it shapes our analysis of mixed material culture. Cipolla suggests—a bit disingenuously, perhaps—that my parsing of terms like reworking, repurposing, and embellishing harkens back to the research of Quimby and Spoehr, who used material culture typologies to measure Indigenous acculturation to European tastes and market forces. As I state at the beginning of my paper, and as recognized in several of the comments, one of the benefits of the framework I am proposing is that it makes no distinction between such outdated concepts as “donor” and “recipient” culture; on the contrary, all of the parties in a colonial encounter engage with resources and schemas that are *new to us*, and indeed we can only understand such encounters by analytically acknowledging all parties as both donors and recipients in the exchange. I believe that our terminology matters, and this is reflected in my approach to several distinct “practices of production.” Cipolla has referred to these instead as “types of admixture.” This is more than just a semantic difference, as I argue that we can better identify and explain the incorporation of new forms by carefully distinguishing among the practices that produce those forms and shape their consumption. Reworking an object is simply not the same thing as repurposing or embellishing it. How, then, are we to compare the contexts of production—the varied circumstances under which people choose to perform one such practice or another—if we are not specifying the

practices themselves? One might insist that such specification results in a typology of practices (if one thinks that all typologies are bad), but even this is a far cry from the link to acculturation that Cipolla reads into my model.

Vives-Ferrándiz offers what I believe is a more interesting and nuanced comment that also considers issues of typology or classification: my reference to objects as Spanish-made, Native-made, and European-made things or as blendings of Native and Spanish forms. As he observes, how we classify artifacts inherently shapes our understanding of the roles that these materials play in the process of encounter. Identifying an object as a “Spanish artifact” without due consideration of its context can be ahistorical and profoundly misleading; as Silliman (2010) points out, “rigid artifact categories also truncate the object biographies that . . . are crucial to understand diverse meanings at different points in material, commodity, and cultural trajectories” (33). Such is the case, for example, with the iron knife from Burial 1 at the Berry site. Classifying it as “Spanish” clips its object biography, as well as its potential object agency, at the point of production, leaving its longer history of consumption untold. Moreover, and whether purposeful or not, doing so neatly excises Native participation from that longer history. Still, the object’s point of production does matter, both to us as archaeologists and to the people of Joara, whose estimation of its value was based at least in part on its particular properties of difference and its ethnically distant source of origin. Classifying the knife as “Spanish” is misleading at best; describing it as “Spanish-made” identifies an essential aspect of its “provenance,” to use Vives-Ferrándiz’s term, and one we need to situate the object in the broader context of its consumption history.

Vives-Ferrándiz also considers the matter of scale—both in temporal duration and number of participants—which Liebmann likewise introduces near the end of his comment. By just about any standard, the colonial encounter at Joara was a small-scale entanglement, involving no more than a few hundred people and unfolding over about 18 months. Yet this is not a statement on its significance, as Vives-Ferrándiz recognizes. Although small in scale, this case study provides a rare opportunity to identify micro-encounters with resources and schemas *new to us*, both among the Native hosts and their European guests. It is thus ideal for modeling practices that shape the incorporation of new forms *at the scale of the individual participant*. In itself, however, it offers fewer insights into the cumulative consequences of such practices over much longer periods of time and across large populations or geographic regions.

What, then, Vives-Ferrándiz inquires, were the longer-term material consequences of this encounter? I hope it is not overly self-referential to reply that I have considered this macroscale problem in the form of a book, exploring the consequences of Fort San Juan and later encounters across the Carolina Piedmont over more than three centuries (Beck 2013). There is not sufficient space to retell that story here, but I can suggest that different kinds of social structure operate and pertain at dif-

ferent spatial-temporal scales. What distinguishes my modified eventful approach is analytical flexibility. By tracing historical sequences of process and event, we can shift from the microscale of the deliberately repurposed iron knife to the cumulative consequences of such acts that unconsciously remake landscapes and regions.

Both Louise Steel and Stephen Silliman generally agree with my focus on assemblages, yet each has concern with perceived rigidity in my approach. Steel wonders whether my application of the assemblage concept has more in common with traditional, static treatments (i.e., “a sum of artifacts”) than with Deleuzian perspectives. Silliman likewise suggests that assemblages “may be quite variegated across different social actors and may actually resist definitions of coherency and balance.” My discussion, he notes, “felt a little more rigid.” Despite the vaguely pejorative connotations of “static” and “rigid,” I concede that the object-assemblage model is indeed more structured than advocates of a stricter Deleuzian framework might prefer. This happens, though, to be one of my key aims in linking Deleuzian ideas about assemblages with Sewell’s conception of structure and event. I agree with Steel that *meshworks* (sensu Ingold) might offer a better way of describing messy, entangled assemblages than my own metaphor of *networks*. Even so, for all of the profound insights gained by rethinking assemblages as dynamic, heterogeneous, and fluid, most Deleuzian approaches only incidentally consider their structure as well. As Steel observes, “Deleuzian assemblages emphasize the continuous flow of matter.” Yet objects, which I think of as a particular form of matter, do not flow unimpeded into and out of assemblages. Instead, their possible pathways and associations are governed in part by social norms and rules; some of these are explicit (e.g., laws), while others are implicit (e.g., manners). Norms and rules, though, are essential to how assemblages unfold in actual practice, acting as a counterweight to the fluid exchangeability theorized by Deleuze, DeLanda, and others.

Norms and rules thus promote what I refer to as a complementarity of parts. Here I could have been more articulate in my original paper. Silliman rightly comments that my discussion of complementarity appears to consider equilibrium as an *actual* state of assemblages. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify that although equilibrium might be the *ideal* state of any assemblage (at least according object-assemblage logic), it is never the state of any assemblage in practice, since contradictions always pervade and accrue. I would also like to clarify two additional points from Silliman’s comment. Quoting from my paper, he cautions that he is uncomfortable with colonial encounters being treated mainly as “engagement with a novelty of form.” We agree entirely, but my paper never suggests otherwise. I do conclude that each colonial encounter is an engagement with novelty of form, but nowhere do I suggest that it is “mainly” so. This is not, I think, a small point. Colonial encounters can be many things: appropriations of culture and resources, displays of authoritarian power and violence, acts of resistance or quiet acquiescence, and of course

much more. Yet all such encounters also seem to involve the experience of *new to us*, among both colonizer and host. Recognizing this is not the same as prioritizing it. It is but one feature of the colonial experience that merits consideration. Finally, as Silliman notes, I define cultural mixing here—in a paper specifically about materiality—as the incorporation of new material culture; I did not intend, however, to imply that such mixing was limited to material domains.

Peter van Dommelen, in contrast, thinks that my concern with materiality does not go far enough. In foregrounding Sewell's theory of structure, he suggests that I sideline material culture "rather than examining it in its own light." I believe van Dommelen implies here that the analysis of material culture (whether mixed or otherwise) is distinct or separate from the analysis of structures. Yet structures as I define them (*sensu* Sewell) do not exist in opposition to or apart from material resources. Instead, they are constituted by them. Every incorporated object is thus a structure, simultaneously the material resource and its untidy web of meanings and associations with other objects. Likewise, every assemblage of objects is a structural network, or a meshwork if we prefer. In van Dommelen's reading of my argument, "the modification of objects, or rather the lack thereof . . . follows from the structures or assemblages." I am unsure how to interpret this, as structures and assemblages are not of a kind. What I have proposed is that the modification of an object is an act of transposing. It makes an object more familiar and improves its goodness of fit (i.e., its complementarity) with the other parts of an assemblage. In the case of Joara and Fort San Juan, van Dommelen seems to think that I attribute the lack of modification by Pardo's men to a lack of interaction between the garrison and the town of Joara. This is certainly not the case. But since there is so little evidence that these men modified any of the Native-made objects that they incorporated for daily use, I do contend that their experience of the colonial encounter was more disorienting than that of their Native hosts. This, in turn, may help to explain why the men of the garrison took such clear measures to reassert their essential Spanishness during the later phase of the occupation, including reduced interaction with the people of Joara.

Finally, I would like to thank Diana DiPaolo Loren for contributing such a thoughtful and compelling discussion of ambivalence. Bhaba describes ambivalence as a kind of structural pose assumed by colonizer and colonized vis-à-vis the other. For colonizers, such ambivalence springs from the coupling of a desire to remake the colonized in its own image by promoting mimicry of colonial tastes and values with a knowledge that the products of mimicry are never precisely like the original—thus threatening its priority—and can easily slip into mockery. For the colonized, in contrast, ambivalence springs from a dichotomy between mimicry and mockery: a desire to be like, and a simultaneous revulsion of, the colonizer. Does ambivalence offer a productive way of rethinking the web of relationships between captive Chisca women and their captors, both Joaran and Spanish? It might, and the possibili-

ties are exciting, but I think we would need to establish a firmer theoretical basis for extending it, as Loren suggests, beyond Bhaba's original emphasis on colonizer and colonized. Drawing on Catherine Cameron's (2008, 2011, 2016) pioneering work, for example, we might find the lens of ambivalence useful for exploring relations between captor and captive. Yet as with identifying practices of power and resistance in archaeological remains, recognizing the line between mimicry and mockery involves complex interpretive leaps that may be quite difficult to land on the basis of such evidence alone. This is not, I hope, to undermine or discount the possibilities, only to acknowledge the challenges.

I also wonder whether ambivalence played a role at the broader scale of relations between Joara and Fort San Juan. It is unlikely that any of the Joarans imagined themselves in the pose of the colonized. For the duration of the encounter, power was far too unsettled and situational—too ambivalent—for Native communities to have accepted this duality (in Bhaba's approach it seems essential that each party in the dyad recognize their respective role). Yet there is no question that Pardo and his soldiers identified with the colonizer's pose. From Pardo's mandate to claim all of the lands he crossed for the Spanish Crown, to the "Yaa" he received from local headmen (*orata*) and interpreted as an act of obedience, to the priest who accompanied the expedition and founded a mission to convert Native souls, the entire expedition was one of colonialist aspiration. Where, then, is there ambivalence? Perhaps, in the context of Fort San Juan, we find it bubbling up from a well that Bhaba may not have recognized. Not from mimicry, fear of the colonized becoming a blurred and imperfect copy of the colonizer, but from its opposite: fear of the colonizer becoming an imperfect copy of the colonized. Rebecca Earle (2012) has shown with remarkable detail how colonizers in New Spain worried whether maize could substitute for wheat flour in making bread for the sacrament: it could sustain the body, but could it also sustain the soul? Such ambivalence as this would add a new dimension to the structural displacement of those would-be colonizers at Fort San Juan, helping to explain their withdrawal from a confusing—if not dangerous—mixing of material cultures, a withdrawal that may have inadvertently sealed their fates.

—Robin A. Beck

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