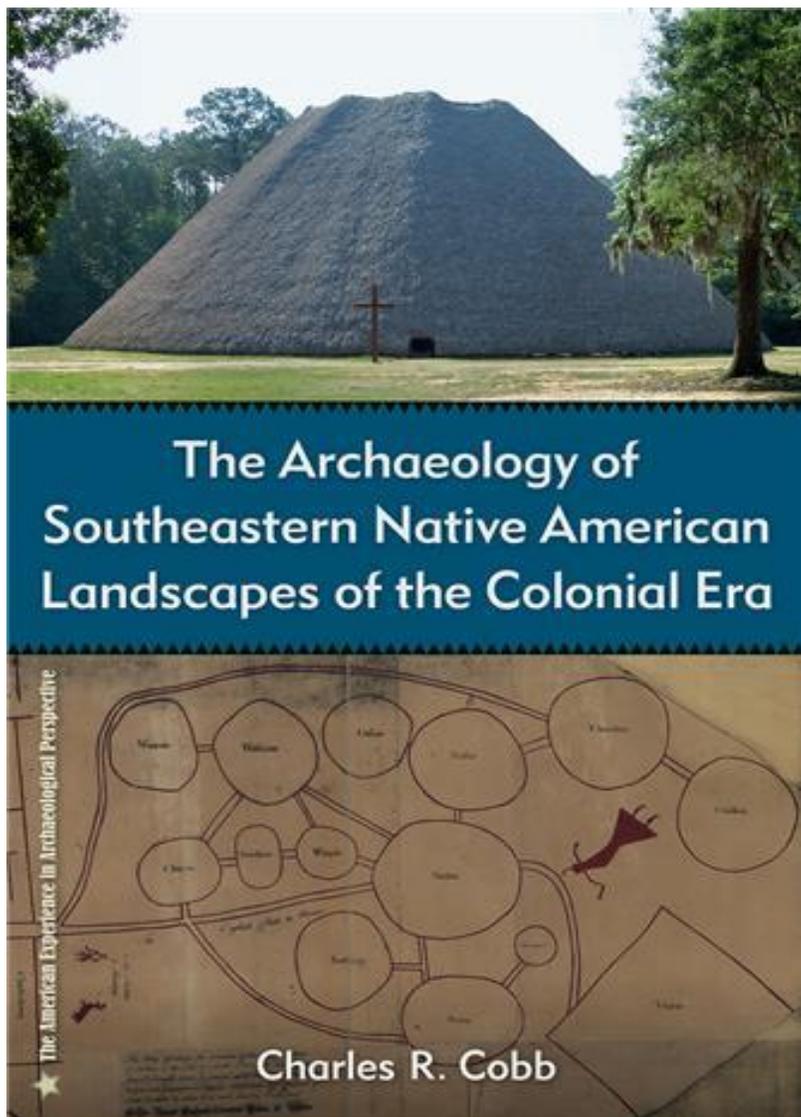


## Book Review: *The Archaeology of Southeastern Native American Landscapes of the Colonial Era*

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In *The Archaeology of Southeastern Native American Landscapes of the Colonial Era*, Dr. Cobb takes broad-scale chronological, geographical, and anthropological theoretical approaches towards understanding Indigenous lifeways in the post-Contact era American Southeast. This work deviates from common research into archaeological landscape studies through its expansion of what constitutes a landscape. Landscapes in this volume are not simply confined to the physical landscape that Indigenous peoples rooted their world in (although the ethnohistoric values of the built landscape are discussed and incorporated). Cobb incorporates the intangible social, political, and economic landscapes that exploded after European incursion into North America. Just as imposing as mountains, rivers, and plains, Cobb details how Native peoples were influenced by, navigated, and restructured these metaphorical landscapes as active players in post-Contact North America.

Cobb reframes the history of Indigenous peoples in the United States by reshaping their role in Colonial historical thought. Rather than framing populations as victims forced to react to the causes and effects of destructive European invasions and their ramifications, Cobb takes a postmodernist stance that Native individuals and populations were active players in a rapid-changing geopolitical environment. Processes of coalescence, diaspora, communities of practice, integration, and migration are all explored through the lens of self-agency in a Colonial landscape. In an effort to “decolonialize” historical perspectives of Native peoples during the Colonial and Federal eras, Cobb focuses on how Indigenous histories were self-formed. Ethnohistoric and archaeological data are woven together to detail how Indigenous peoples developed their own sociopolitical landscapes in response to European trade, aggression, and disease. The levers of these processes are rooted in the pre-Contact Mississippian period, where

archaeological data and thought is utilized to scope the foundations of adaptive change. Examples span from individual to community engagements with the larger world through more than four centuries of colonialization. By eschewing a historic viewpoint in favor of the anthropological, this book highlights how any history of colonialization in America is incomplete without incorporating the histories of those most impacted by it.

The scope of the book ranges from regional to individual throughout its extent, often beginning with a regional overview before zooming in towards more specific sub-regional, localized, or personal scales. An underlying current throughout the work is how pre-Contact traditions shaped Indigenous adaptations to the colonial and American world. A history of navigating the shifting sands of Mississippian period political dynamics laid the groundwork of practices to adapt to the mercurial European French, Spanish, and English colonial policies. Where pre-Contact archaeology is bereft of primary sources, this book explores many of those overarching social and political trends and their equivalents in the post-Contact world. In this sense, Cobb's macroscopic approach to human landscapes as a top-down systemic process couched in theoretical thought is further clarified through microscopic individual examples evidenced in historical documents in sort of a "middle-out" research approach. This argument structure reinforces the idea that landscape creation, whether tangible or intangible, is a bottom-up praxis in how individuals and communities relied on tradition to navigate their futures. The middle-out concept can serve as a springboard for future pre-Contact research. The complex interweaving of economic and social structures that Native societies developed to confront the Colonial period can be utilized to reassess how people traversed the similarly dynamic Mississippian world.

Though rooted in archaeological and ethnohistoric data paired with anthropological theoretical reasoning, the audience potential extends beyond the academic community. Rather than miring in the minutiae of material culture, dense theoretical arguments, or esoteric modeling data, Cobb writes in a narrative manner that incorporates salient research without assuming that the reader is another invested academic. Deeper theoretical concepts like coalescence, built environment, persistent place, and Marxist sociopolitical thought are approachably described and incorporated without necessitating a second trip to a library. These concepts are then melded into coherent facets of Native adaptations to the Colonial and Federal world of North America, often under the aegis of historic textual descriptions. Although perhaps not intentional, this book takes a stride forward in an effort popularized in graduate and professional programs today – the dissemination of academic archaeology data for public consumption. A non-anthropologist with an interest in North American history gains just as much from this book as the academic looking to incorporate new perspectives into their latest research. In essence, *The Archaeology of Southeastern Native American Landscapes of the Colonial Era* opens a window into the academic world of archaeology, anthropology, ethnohistory, and history to a cross-sectional demographic of historians, archaeologists, sociologists, and the broader public via a fusion of narrative form, historical and archaeological data, and current trends in anthropological theory.