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Introduction

Anthropological, Theoretical, and Historical Contexts of Removal

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This edited volume brings together people who seek to understand what happens when human beings are forced out of their homes and away from their usual places of work, play, worship, and well-being. It illustrates how archaeologists are situated among the anthropologists and other scholars who are investigating the catalysts, dynamics, and meanings of removal. Historical and anthropological research suggests that humans have been forced to move in response to a diverse range of factors such as wars, overpopulation, tenant evictions, factory closings, state expansions, diseases, natural disasters, eminent domain policies, nuclear bomb testing, censorship, and economic hardship (Campbell et al. 2007; Colson 2003; Kirsch 2001; Orser 2005). Early Americanist anthropology was greatly influenced by studies of Native Americans, who faced not only the coerced relocations of what chroniclers' called "Indian Removal" but also various other forms of subjugation such as colonial ideologies, racist government policies, Eurocentric legislation, trauma, and genocide. In more recent years, anthropologists have discussed "anthropologies of removal" that are concerned with other groups, such as Somalis and Muslims deported from Canada and the United States (Peutz 2006). Oddly, Native American or First Nation experiences and studies were not part of this conversation. Nonetheless, the explicit attention to the dispossessed contrasts with the earlier neglect that anthropologists exhibited toward systematic, violent

nineteenth- and twentieth-century displacements of indigenous people to reservations in the United States and to other locations in Africa and around the world (Colson 2003, 4). Many parallel contexts (e.g., children forced out of their homes into assimilative school programs) and theoretical concerns beg for a broader perspective that brings American Indian, First Nation, or Native American removal experiences into wider discourses on displacement and dispossession around the world (see Glenn 2015, 54–74; Merlan 2005).

In order to explore the idea of removal and related discourses about dispossession, *The Archaeology of Removal in North America* examines colonial and postcolonial human dislocation, emphasizing seventeenth- to twenty-first-century places and material culture. Although most of the contributors to this book focus on North America, a concern for global connections can be found in various chapters. A primary goal of this edited volume is to advance anthropological discourses by providing case studies and conceptual essays that help scholars, students, and popular audiences understand archaeologists' contributions to knowledge of the materialities, causes, and consequences of human removal. Much of the current archaeological writings on displacement have focused on landscapes "on the move" (notions of place people carry) or of "clearance" (Bender 2001; Branigan and Bumsted 2005; Howard 2012; Smith and Gazin-Schwartz 2008). Lively discussions on topics such as the relocation of cemeteries continue to emerge on media such as the Historical Archaeology listserv (HISTARCH@asu.edu). *The Archaeology of Removal in North America* will build on landscape concerns while exploring other interpretive and explanatory directions.

Removal and Kindred Concepts of Dispossession

Removal is part of a growing metadiscourse that implicates a number of cognate concepts or research categories that all point to the nexus of power, violence, and place: involuntary migration, clearance, dislocation, forced resettlement, displacement, exile, uprooting, deportation, and expulsion (Cernea and Guggenheim 1993; Lieber 1977; Loizos 1999; Malkki 1995b; Oliver-Smith 2010; Peutz 2006). It is difficult to completely separate or untangle the ideas from different schools of thought and disciplines that investigate dispossession from the scholarship on removal. Anthropologists and archaeologists have contributed to various tributaries that

feed the metadiscourse on human displacement and removal (Colson 2003; Malkki 1995b).

Ethnographers who have examined forced migrants and refugees over the twentieth century have created one primary intellectual stream feeding this metadiscourse (Colson 2003). This field of refugee and coerced migrant studies has emerged from earlier studies of immigrant communities, migrant labor, and transnational economics. These studies employed theories on networks, international law, functionalist social systems, conflict mechanisms, reciprocity, rites of passage, community boundary maintenance, and validation myths. Much academic and institutional attention in the West has been given to the millions of people who were relocated in Europe just after World War II and to the influential role of military administration in those relocations. Since the mid-twentieth century, the field has expanded to include a greater diversity of interests such as refugee camp relations, critiques of humanitarianism, remedies for the dehistoricization of uprooted people, globalized flows, power dynamics, diasporan politics, identity labeling, activist scholarship, host societies, and emotional responses to resettlement.

Another major part of the dispossession metadiscourse involves displacement. The terms “displaced person” and “displacement” have been used problematically. Historically, studies of displacement have largely been undertaken by commentators on international law to describe refugees and stateless persons. However, the term displacement remains undertheorized in many studies (Malkki 1995b). Similarly, the use of the term refugee as a label is not just a subject of academic discussion, as it has important manifestations elsewhere. For instance, in the context of Hurricane Katrina, poor African Americans were stigmatized by media and public commentary that ascribed racial stereotypes of criminality and individual irresponsibility to refugees, thus naturalizing inequalities they faced (Masquelier 2006, 737).

Another theoretical stream that more directly informed removal studies of the mid-twentieth-century involved “salvage anthropologies”; an example is the “urgent anthropology” projects that the Smithsonian Institution has sponsored. These programs were largely institutional responses to government or military relocation programs. Salvage archaeologies and anthropologies involved rapid data collection, they accepted development as an inevitable paradigm, and they involved extinctionist notions of social groups (especially Native Americans), structuralist principles

of society, and trait-based, bounded notions of community (e.g., Hester 1968).

The concept of exile constitutes another major discursive flow that has informed thinking on dispossession. Historically, exile was largely the conceptual legacy of theology, poetry, novels, and art (Malkki 1995b). The tropes of exile as heroic isolation or valorized estrangement emerged within these traditions of thought and aesthetics. This contrasts with more ancient ideas such as banishment that involved socially sanctioned ostracism and stigma. Academics have appropriated the idea of exile as a laudable representation of their daily work and the occupational demands of social remoteness that help them find the exotic and develop objective insights. Said, who explores the tension between idealized exiles and actual refugees, notes how the idealized exiles of literature and theology can obscure and objectify our understandings of modern refugee experiences (Said 1994). Said also notes the contributions that poets and scholars in exile have made to illuminating the multidimensionality of sorrow caused by refugees' uncertainty about the future (e.g., finding a new home or returning home), their anguish at the human and material losses along their path of flight, and the weight of the shame they bear from having an unsettled status.

Material culture studies are making their own unique contributions to the study of human displacement. For example, Parkin articulates the role of material culture in human displacement in a richly layered statement:

Dramatic and less metaphysical expressions of human-object movement occur in the increasingly documented cases of human displacement, including those of refugees, in which peoples carry not only what they need for subsistence and exchange purposes but also, if they can, articles of sentimental value which both inscribe and are inscribed by their own memories of self and personhood. While art, artefacts and ritual objects are conventionally located in predictable contexts of use, items taken under pressure and in crisis set up contexts less of use and more of selective remembering, forgetting and envisioning. (Parkin 1999, 304)

Parkin shows the shared interests and insights of archaeologists and ethnographers on various dimensions of human removal. The implications of this point are important for understanding the discussion that follows and the perspectives of contributors to *The Archaeology of Removal in*

North America. Because of the shared concerns of anthropological sub-fields and dispossession discourses, it is unproductive to suggest that “removal” studies need be confined to a limited set of contexts, analytical focal points, or theoretical principles. It is more productive for archaeologists to draw on insights from various fields interested in human displacement, as they converge and resonate with removal scholarship in ways that transcend specializations concentrated on particular social identities, regions, time periods, programmatic objectives, data collection methods, or intellectual cohorts.

Defining Removal and Other Terms of Dispossession

Removal often involves the suffering of communities grappling with the disintegration of social ties, the transformation and imposition of identities (e.g. group labels), disorientations of personhood, uncertainties about resettlement, doubts about the intentions of agencies or host societies, ambiguities of repatriation, and grief over losses (e.g., homes) (Colson 2003, 10; King and Eoin 2014, 206). While unique factors affect any given case, there are also fruitful comparisons such as the state of liminality refugees describe who have languished in camps in places such as Hungary or Palestine. A holistic vantage point for understanding the consequences of Native American removal in the nineteenth century is evident in the experiences of the Choctaw:

Furthermore, the land onto which they were forced was present-day Oklahoma, which the Choctaws considered a dangerous place where spirits of the dead traveled low to the ground or lived permanently. As a result of their forced relocation, the Choctaws suffered disease, starvation, suicides, murder, and a general anomie that dislocated them for generations. (Akers 1999, 63)

The Chickasaws, the Choctaws’ neighbors, experienced trauma and corruption at the hands of their U.S. government stewards, but they also had more control over the timing, direction, and resources in their removal (Paige, Bumpers, and Littlefield 2010). Similarly, members of any given society experience removal differently, as in cases where it shifts gender dynamics and balances of power (Indra 1999).

Conquests, nation building, imperial expansion, and colonialism are primary causes of removal. Settlers and states have forcibly dislocated