

***Middle Atlantic Prehistory: Foundations and Practice.* Heather A. Wholey and Carole L. Nash, editors. Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Maryland. 2018. vi + 396 pp. \$116.00 (hardcover, 2018), ISBN 978-1-4422-2875-7. \$37.00 (e-book, 2018), ISBN 978-1-4422-2876-4. \$39.00 (paperback, 2021), ISBN 978-1-5381-5849-4.**

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The Southeast and Northeast have long been considered key culture areas and regions of study in North American archaeology, but the Middle Atlantic region (sometimes shortened to MAR)—“the greater Chesapeake Bay-Delaware Bay region carved out of the interface of the more traditional Northeast and Southeast culture areas” (p. 9)—has a more complicated history. *Middle Atlantic Prehistory: Foundations and Practice* grew out of a session at the 2013 Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference (MAAC). The chapters in this volume provide a comprehensive grounding in key conversations and professional genealogies that define Middle Atlantic scholarship, and they highlight major contributions of archaeology in the region to North American archaeology.

Although its boundaries have evolved through time to include portions of North Carolina, West Virginia, and Connecticut, the MAR is generally understood to include Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and southern New York. It encompasses six principal physiographic provinces (Coastal Plain, Piedmont, Ridge and Valley, Blue Ridge, Appalachian Plateau, and New England) and a north-south ecological transition zone between coniferous and deciduous forests of the Northeast and evergreen forests of the Southeast. At its center is the Chesapeake Bay and the nine rivers that make up its watershed (Susquehanna, Potomac, Patuxent, Choptank, Rappahannock, Mattaponi, Pamunkey, James, and Appomattox). The prehistory of the MAR spans early interactions between European colonists and Indigenous peoples of the Chesapeake Bay watershed (e.g., the Powhatan, Monacan, and others) to the earliest evidence of people in North America (e.g., the Cactus Hill site in Virginia). Although some scholars view the Chesapeake Bay as a defining feature of MAR (indeed, regional specialists sometimes referred to it as “the Chesapeake,” and some self-identify as “Chesapeake archaeologists”), as the editors of this volume note in their introductory chapter, the region otherwise escapes easy characterization as a discrete research unit or culture area (p. 1).

Following the introductory chapter by Heather A. Wholey and Carole L. Nash, the volume is divided into two parts. Part 1, “Archaeological Practice in the Middle Atlantic,” consists of seven chapters related to the development of Middle Atlantic archaeology. Chapter 2 (Dennis C. Curry) traces the history of archaeology in the region. Chapter 3 (Christopher T. Espenshade) discusses the unique character of cultural resource management (CRM) in the region, including the roles that university-based CRM firms (e.g., those at Catholic University, William & Mary, and the University of Virginia) played in forging the identity of the MAR as an archaeological region. Chapter 4 (Elizabeth A. Crowell) traces the development of public archaeology in the region and argues that public-focused archaeological research programs have shaped common themes and topics of research. Chapter 5 (Gregory D. Lattanzi and Jessie C. Cohen) discusses the untapped research potential of museum collections. Chapter 6 (Bernard K. Means) reviews the range of analytical methods used by archaeologists working in the region. Chapter 7 (Marshall J. Becker) makes the case that primary historic sources and ethnographic materials (some more reliable than others) have shaped archaeologists’ understandings of Middle Atlantic tribal groups, their territories, and their contingent ecological and economic strategies. Chapter 8 (Bill Schindler) discusses experimental archaeology in the region.

Part 2, “Topics in Middle Atlantic Archaeology,” consists of eight chapters, which spotlight popular research topics and themes, discuss how those topics and themes evolved through time, and predict future research directions. Chapter 9 (Roger Moeller) discusses regional material culture typologies

and their limitations, and it makes the case that typologies should only be used to describe the common attributes of large groups of artifacts. Chapter 10 (Daniel R. Griffith) discusses the development and current status of Middle Atlantic culture histories. Chapter 11 (Kurt W. Carr) summarizes Paleoindian research in the Middle Atlantic and compares regional models of Paleoindian mobility. Chapter 12 (Michael B. Barber) discusses trends in Middle Atlantic subsistence research, then highlights key regional subsistence studies (e.g., zooarchaeological studies of site assemblages from Virginia's Roanoke River drainage). Chapter 13 (Robert D. Wall) reviews settlement pattern studies in the region and discusses the ways in which they have evolved through time with new technologies (e.g., ArcGIS). Chapter 14 (Wholey) provides an overview of regional demography and population ecology studies. Chapter 15 (Jay F. Custer) discusses colonialist legacies of Middle Atlantic archaeology. Finally, Chapter 16 (Richard J. Dent) concludes the volume by synthesizing overarching themes. Dent maps genealogies of regional scholarship, tracing the threads of academic archaeology and CRM to explain how, together, they helped to shape the geography of the region and the topics of regional scholarship.

Most chapters in this volume follow a similar format: They discuss the history of Middle Atlantic archaeology through the lens of a particular subject or theme. Many chapters highlight sites from the southern Chesapeake Bay watershed (although there are a few exceptions—e.g., Chapter 12). As is the case with many edited volumes that begin as conference sessions, chapters range in quality. One of the stronger chapters is Curry's "A Chronicle of Prehistoric Archaeology in the Middle Atlantic Region" (Chapter 2), which offers the most comprehensive and detailed history of archaeological research in the MAR and the many debates about how best to define it (e.g., as an ecological zone, a culture area, a community of scholars, or some combination). Another strong chapter is Means's "Not Just Bells and Whistles: Changes in Technological Applications to Middle Atlantic Sites" (Chapter 6). Means deftly weaves interesting vignettes about Middle Atlantic research into a longer discussion of research methodologies and technologies. For example, Means's section on dating methods includes an excellent discussion of the controversy surrounding the dating and interpretation of Cactus Hill, a possible pre-Clovis site in Virginia. Means's chapter (perhaps paired with Curry's chapter) would integrate well into syllabi for introductory courses in archaeology. Read together, the chapters in this volume will be a particular asset to students and early career archaeologists studying and working in the Middle Atlantic, but they are a worthwhile read for anyone interested in the major debates, developments, and professional genealogies of Middle Atlantic archaeology.

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***Presidios of Spanish West Florida.* Judith A. Bense. 2022. University Press of Florida, Gainesville. \$90.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-68340-255-8.**

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Presidios (or garrisoned military installations) were a prominent feature of Spanish colonial policy and administration, from the Philippines and North Africa to Mexico and the Spanish borderlands of La Florida and New Spain. These garrisoned forts emerged in the final years of the fifteenth century as a bulwark against further Muslim attacks in and around Morocco following the end of the Reconquista in the Iberian Peninsula. Presidios were transformed significantly over the next three centuries as they were created strategically in other newly established Spanish colonial territories. This attractive and important volume by Judith A. Bense focuses on a key area of West Florida and the tumultuous period of presidio creation, destruction, reconstruction, and abandonment between 1698 and 1763.