FOREWORD

We know the Northeastern part of Turtle Island (North America) as the land of the Waponahkik, the People of the First Light. The Northeast was one of the first areas to be impacted by the movement of the European colonizers, but it is the least understood when it comes to Indigenous life. The complexities of early life in the Northeast are directly related to the changes in the climate and peoples' reactions to those changes. In order to survive in the land of changes, the technology had to change along with the change in the species of animals and their sizes. One of the biggest impacts on the land and to Native people was the retreat of the glacier – for us Native people this was called the time that Nipon (Summer) battled Puniw (Winter). Many of the major events that marked Wabanaki history can be heard in many of the old stories of the Wabanaki.

The intricacies of these stories show that the people had a spiritual connection to the land and the Universe. These connections can be heard in many stories, such as the battle with the mega-animals like the *Castoroides*, the giant beaver. With archaeology, some of these stories come to light, such as the finding of one of the largest incisors of the giant beaver in North America along Passamaquoddy Bay, or finding evidence of the short-faced bear in the homeland of the Peskotomuhkati in New Brunswick, Canada.

Today, the land of the Wabanaki is separated by the international border of Canada and the United States, and in the past the archaeological story stopped at the border of both these countries. In the past, Indigenous people's input was not considered but *The Archaeology of the Atlantic Northeast* contains sections on Indigenous communities and Indigenous archaeology and removes the artificial border.

Donald Soctomah
Peskotomuhkati
October 2020

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FOREWORD

It is my fervent hope that the passion that Matt Betts and Gabe Hryn timer feel for the archaeological history of the Atlantic Northeast – expressed so ably in this volume – infects the next generations of archaeologists (whether professional, student, or avocational) and interested members of the public (of all ethnic groups), in this region and beyond. (It feels odd to endorse contagion in the midst of a pandemic, but such are the times in which I write these words.) I was caught up in Matt’s and Gabe’s enthusiasms more than a decade ago, at a time when my career was in the doldrums. I am thankful for the kindness and generosity with which they included me in their research, Matt in his E’s’e’get Archaeology Project in Nova Scotia and Gabe in his Maine Quoddy Project. And I appreciate the gentleness with which they have treated my attempts to understand something of the Indigenous past of this place.

This is the first text to attempt a synthesis of the archaeology of Indigenous cultures in the entire Atlantic Northeast over 13,000 years of human occupation. Thus, this volume marks and crosses a threshold in the maturity of archaeological research in the region. It is a testament to what can be accomplished by scholars who take seriously their ethical responsibilities to create and disseminate knowledge and who are willing to collaborate broadly within and beyond academia. This is crucial in an area where so many groups have interests in the past, and where the material evidence of the past is so rapidly being destroyed.

The aspect of their synthesis that most appeals to me is that Matt and Gabe have made *continuity* the default position in their interpretations. This is an important and courageous stance in a domain where, too frequently, the Indigenous past has been interpreted in terms of marginality (“the *far* Northeast”), difference (Ceramic period vs. Woodland period; prehistoric vs. historic), geographic and political discontinuities (the Gulf of St. Lawrence; the international boundary), and temporal discontinuities (the Great Hiatus; the Little Gap). Matt and Gabe have employed a historical lens through which to view their material, developing a series of cultural histories that are partly sequential, partly concurrent, sometimes intersecting, and sometimes divergent. In so doing, they address some of the larger questions of anthropological inquiry: What happens when hunter-gatherers occupy a place not previously inhabited by

humans? How do ethnically different hunting-gathering societies relate to one another when they occupy the same territory? How does the adoption of horticulture relate to the development of permanent villages? How do local social groups participate in larger-scale exchange and interaction systems?

The Canadian journalist and author of the *Revisionist History* podcast, Malcolm Gladwell, recently stated that “in history everything is constantly being unsettled.” In this, archaeological history is no different from other forms of history. I both expect and hope that some readers will be unsettled by the cultural histories that Matt and Gabe present here, that some will dispute the interpretations they present, and that others will find, in *The Archaeology of the Atlantic Northeast*, histories that resonate with their identities, their aspirations, and their efforts.

David Black
October 2020