Arie Boomert, *The Indigenous Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago from the First Settlers until Today*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Sidestone Press, 2016. xv + 197 pp. (Paper US\$ 45.00)

Trinidad and Tobago are the oldest settled islands of the Caribbean archipelago. As Arie Boomert demonstrates, Trinidad's geography is still marked by hundreds of Amerindian toponyms (unlike other Caribbean islands), and the indigenous peoples' cultural heritage, implanted in the rural and domestic traditions of a peasantry that fused Amerindians, Africans, and Spaniards, lives on to this day. Boomert's synthesis of archaeological, ethnohistorical, and ethnographic research on this population is more than just a capstone to his many years of research in this field. It is also more than a book written for the general public (students, history teachers, and adult citizens of the twin-island republic). It is the only existing, up-to-date text on this long-neglected subject that is both comprehensive and highly informative on specific points. It provides great value for specialists in the subject as well as anyone with a general interest in Caribbean cultural history or the history of the Spanish Caribbean, and should belong in every serious library collection on the Caribbean.

The book's structure is chronological, evenly divided into eight time periods covering roughly ten thousand years. As an archaeologist, Boomert is well equipped to provide the layperson with a good overview of archaeological research conducted in Trinidad, beginning in the 1800s, with roughly 300 sites studied. The volume's strength lies in its archaeological and ethnohistoric dimensions, with roughly the past century and the present confined to the final chapter. In that sense, it reinforces the established tendency to speak of Trinidad indigeneity in the past tense. Yet it also shows how indigeneity in Trinidad is constantly returning from the margins, partly due to the island's close proximity to neighboring indigenous populations on the mainland, whose presence figures prominently throughout the book.

Many will appreciate the volume's thick detail and systematic organization. Boomert draws from a wide variety of sources, including his own archaeological work, the offerings of diverse museum collections across Europe, and insights from very rare texts. There is a minimum of speculation, and a maximum emphasis on information. It is also well illustrated throughout, with attractive photographs, diagrams, and maps. Tobago is represented by a significant amount of information, including a dense chapter devoted to its indigenous people.

Boomert focuses here on trade, subsistence, material culture (especially pottery and weaponry), ritual (including burial rites), warfare, social structure, the

division of labor, house construction, political organization, chiefs (many of whom are named), and shamans, producing an expertly synthesized, engaging presentation of colonial ethnohistory. The description of the emergence of a rural peasantry, with syncretic religious, ecological, and domestic agricultural traditions founded on indigenous knowledge and practices, is impressive. The book also covers issues pertaining to ecology, folklore, health and healing, and food production. Politically, Boomert devotes considerable attention to slavery (which first emerged in the Caribbean with the Spanish enslavement of indigenous peoples); resistance, in the form of revolts; and collaboration between indigenous communities and foreign invaders. His overview of the Catholic missions among Trinidad's Amerindians is comprehensive, including (but not confined to) Arima, one of the longest standing missions and currently home of the revitalized Santa Rosa First Peoples' Community.

Among the very few shortcomings of the book is the insufficient effort made to transform archaeologists' writing into material genuinely intended for a broad public (not many people would call a bowl a "serving vessel"), and some of the names of vegetables and ground provisions do not appear to be Trinidadian (such as "coontie [zamia]"). There is very little on the figure of the Nepuyo warrior, Hyarima, a treasured part of Arima's history; a subsection of a chapter is ostensibly devoted to him, but there are only a few lines about him and it offers no new information. The lack of citations in the text means that readers cannot track down the original sources of information. Instead, Boomert opts for a select bibliography, organized in less-than-helpful sections. One could quibble about other specific historical and interpretive points, but none of this is meant to detract from the book's value as a highly detailed, comprehensive synthesis, one that will likely stand unrivaled for many years as a central, go-to resource on the indigenous peoples of Trinidad and Tobago.

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