

FIRE WITH FIRE: ETHNOSEXUAL CONFLICTS AND RESISTANCES AT THE EARLY COLONISATION OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS

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In 1668, a group of Jesuits landed in the Mariana Islands (Western Pacific) with the aim of evangelising their native inhabitants (the Chamorros). However, this contact soon became an armed clash, since some Chamorros were reluctant to adopt certain practices preached by the fathers.

The aim of this communication is two-fold: First, I will argue that sexuality (and the practices and discourses associated with it) was one of the most controversial points in that conflict. Second, I will analyse, from an archaeological, transfeminist and intersectional perspective, the role played by different materialities in the “ethnosexual conflict” between Spaniards and Chamorros. I will claim that that confrontation was articulated around two buildings, two heterotopias produced from very different sexual epistemologies: the *guma' uritao*, where young Chamorro males were initiated into adulthood, and the Jesuit school, space where Chamorro boys and girls learnt the Christian doctrine and, therefore, the European sexual standards. The recurrent burning of both buildings by members of the two sides shows both the ferocity with which the Spanish colonial agents tried to implement their evangelising and colonial project and the resistance of Chamorros themselves against such project. Following Barbara Voss, I will conclude that sexuality, far from being a “consensual” and “domestic” element of colonial encounters, in many cases received a public and even violent treatment

Keywords

Mariana Islands, Colonialism, Ethnosexual Conflict Sexuality

Abstract book ISBN

978-80-907270-3-8 (European Association of Archaeologists); 978-84-9168-140-3 (Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, vol. 1); 978-84-9168-143-4 (Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, vol. 2)