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BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Andean Place Makings and the Arts

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This essay reviews the following works:

The Archaeology of Andean Pastoralism. Edited by José M. Capriles and Nicholas Tripcevich. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016. Pp. 280. $85.00 hardcover, ebook. ISBN: 9780826357021.

Where the Land Meets the Sea: Fourteen Millennia of Human History at Huaca Prieta, Peru. Edited by Tom D. Dillehay. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017. Pp. xxi + 810. $75.00 ebook. ISBN: 9781477311493.

Visual Culture of the Ancient Americas: Contemporary Perspectives. Edited by Andrew Feingold and Ellen Hoobler. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2017. Pp. xiii + 295. $39.95 hardcover, $34.95 ebook. ISBN: 9780806155708.

Ceramics of the Indigenous Cultures of South America: Studies of Production and Exchange Through Compositional Analysis. Edited by Michael Glascock, Hector Neff, and Kevin J. Vaughn. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2019. Pp. xv + 296. $95.00 hardcover, ebook. ISBN: 978082636028.

Rethinking the Inka: Community, Landscape, and Empire in the Southern Andes. Edited by Frances M. Hayashida, Andrés Troncoso, and Diego Salazar. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2022. Pp. vi + 282. $65.00 hardcover, ebook. ISBN: 9781477323854.

Powerful Places in the Ancient Andes. Edited by Justin Jennings and Edward Swenson. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018. Pp. x + 446. $85.00 hardcover, ebook. ISBN: 9780826359940.

Los Incas: Más allá de un imperio. Edited by Ricardo Kusunoki, Cecilia Pardo, and Julio Rucabado. Lima: Impresso Gráfica, 2023. Pp. 357. hardcover. ISBN: 9786124450518.

Landscape and Politics in the Ancient Andes: Biographies of Place at Khonkho Wankane. By Scott Cameron Smith. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016. Pp. xv + 277. $75.00 hardcover, ebook. hardcover. ISBN: 9780826357090.

The Archaeology of Mural Painting at Pañamarca, Peru. By Lisa Trever, Jorge Gamboa, Ricardo Toribio, and Ricardo Morales. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2017. Pp. xvi + 315. $69.95 paperback. ISBN: 9780884024248.

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Recent archaeological and art historical books address the characteristics and evolution of Andean placemakings and the arts through Andean deep space and time. The books under discussion ask, How have Andean people created meaningful places? For which purposes did they do so? And what do these placemakings mean for our comparative understanding of the place of Andean cultures in world history? Several under-the-radar books also seek to tease out characteristic features of various kinds of Andean visual arts, particularly objects in stone, metal, textiles, and ceramics. These art historians primarily focus on the Moche and the Inka.

No matter whether archaeologists or art historians have authored or contributed to these books (only one author, Lisa Trever, rigorously combines archaeological and art historical methodologies), the authors share some basic parameters that were once developed by non-Andeanists: foremost, an interest in the role of human engagement with materiality or matter and its impact on the evolution of Andean premodern societies. This interest is usually accompanied by the concept of relationality as a socio-cosmopolitical tool and the assumption that nonhuman agents in Andean premodern societies possessed personhood, animacy, and agency. Such interests in matter, relationality, and agency of nonhuman subjects guide almost all authors on this list. Several authors also employ the concepts of lines, nodes, and networks to explain Andean placemakings and the arts. How the authors implement these foci, however, differs vastly in scope and value for readers outside the field. Tom Dillehay's highly inspiring discussion of the complex reverberations of human engagement with materiality on the north coast of Peru, for example, will (and should) speak to a large audience outside the Andes. Michael D. Glascock, Hector Neff, and Kevin J. Vaughn—who contributed to *Ceramics of the Indigenous Cultures of South* America—present a rather one-dimensional concentration on chemical compositions of Andean ceramics to recover local and regional distribution patterns of matter and expertise through Andean deep space and time, which is primarily tailored to a highly specialized audience.

Despite all the manifest distinctions among the Andean cultures that are subjects of these books, shared scholarly foci lead to similar results. Four features of Andean placemakings and the arts stand out. Definitions of personhood extended in almost all cultures to water, mountains, stones, camelids, ancestors, metals, planets, the stars, or a selective combination of all the above. Andean placemakings, disregarding their actualizations, never happened without attributing subjective agency and sacred nature to these entities. By newly interweaving the multiple dimensions of "the" Andean sacred with Andean economic engagements, social organizations, political rule, and cosmologies, the authors leave former functionalist treatments of religion behind. Because the Andes are also one of the few places in the world where commonly known marketplaces did not develop in premodern times, Andean *ayllus* (loosely translated as "kin group") and, more recently, Andean llama caravan drovers gain special importance to explain Andean economic networkings and cultural exchanges. In all these reconstructions, John Murra's model of the "vertical archipelago" continues to linger, despite having been widely critiqued as not valid across Andean cultures in recent years. Related to the historical vigor of the Andean *ayllu* is the find of Tom Dillehay and his team at Huaca Prieta on the north coast of Peru: In the Andean past, a highly complex premodern society could have developed without the emergence of a traceable social elite. Other authors add examples of horizontally organized societies in later times and different spaces. These societies often functioned under the lead of so-called ritual specialists. The last, but certainly not the least, of the shared results of these books is that several Andean civilizations preferred linearity, abstractions, or geometric designs over figurative representations. While important exceptions to this general rule existed in the artworks of the Paracas and the Moche, Andean abstract or geometric art, especially in the case of the Inkas, continues to riddle scholars.

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Huaca Prieta stands at the beginning of any discussion of Andean placemakings and the arts for its early dates, its importance for other Andean cultures, and its exemplary scholarly treatment. Huaca Prieta, a man-made monumental mound on the north coast of Peru, flourished primarily from 7800 BP (before the present) to 3500 BP. It is the focus of Tom Dillehay's investigations, which resulted in the edited volume *Where the Land Meets the Sea*. The authors argue that the site is one of the earliest places in the Andes, where humans—through their engagement with different materialities—developed some fundamental social principles and ontological foundations that would go on to shape many later Andean cultures. Ritual activities at Huaca Prieta testify to the intentional juxtapositions of the elements of fire and water and to the use of various types of products from the sea, the land, the littoral, and the mountains. Its mixed agricultural, maritime, and pastoral economies debunk Michael Moseley's 1970s-era hypothesis of the "maritime origins of Andean civilizations."[1] One of the outstanding chapters in this book is Jeffrey Splitstoser's meticulous analysis of Huaca Prieta's textile record (one of the first of its kind in the Andes), which was shaped by gestures of fragmentation and complementarity. Other traces of fragmentation, intentional destruction, and an ontology rooted in complementarity also suggest a horizontally organized society that attributed various meanings to the mount-building process and the mount itself. Given the scholars' overall comprehensive, careful, and thorough investigations and presentations of "facts" and Tom Dillehay's challenging interpretations, this book will serve as a landmark publication in Andean studies for many years to come.

While Huaca Prieta stands at the very beginning of historical Andean developments of monumental placemakings, Scott C. Smith's monograph *Landscape and Politics in the Ancient Andes: Biographies of Place at Khonkho Wankane* and *Powerful Places in the Andes*, edited by Justin Jennings and Edward R. Swenson, both address Andean placemakings in later times and in different locations.

Smith chooses a multifocused methodology including architectural, ceramic, iconographic, lithic, and settlement data to show how agropastoralists and caravan drovers converted Khonko Wankane, south of Lake Titicaca, during the Middle to Late Formative (ca. 800 BC–AD 500) into an economic, sociopolitical, and ideological "axis settlement." As such, it gained a central place in "a wide set of social, ritual, political and economic landscapes" that anchored "the movement of llama caravans moving between Eastern slopes of the Cordillera Oriental and higher elevation altiplano centers." It also, per Smith, set a precedent for the development of the ritual center of Tiwanaku, with its manifold negotiations of power relations among various local ethnic groups. Ultimately, however, Tiwanaku replaced Khonko Wankane in its local and regional importance, but it has retained its meaningfulness for locals to this day. As in the case of Huaca Prieta, a meaningful place emerged here first as a campground or waystation (e.g., of fishermen or caravan drovers) and later as a mortuary and ritual event site, where the people of Khonko Wankane negotiated power relations. In both instances, Andean people strove to put humans into harmony with nature writ large.

José Capriles and Nicholas Tripcevich's excellently edited *The Archaeology of Andean Pastoralism* adds to Smith's study about the significance of caravan drovers in the development of Andean civilizations. *The Archaeology of Andean Pastoralism* highlights the centrality of camelids for all sorts of Andean placemakings. It is currently the most comprehensive book on all aspects of Andean pastoralism, agropastoralism, camelid domestication, and the animals' significance for rituals among different Andean peoples. In case studies, the book proceeds through Andean deep space and time and includes examples of contemporary practices of caravan drovers. Unlike Glascock, Neff, and Vaughn's narrow focus on the composition of ceramics, however, *The Archaeology of Andean Pastoralism* unfolds the entire panorama of contexts in which camelids gained importance

[1] Michael Edward Moseley, *The Maritime Foundations of Andean Civilization* (Cummings Publishing, 1974).

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for different Andean cultures. David Browman's final comment on each chapter presents a model for a constructive, frank, and critical commentary practice that seeks to direct current and future animal researchers in new directions.

Different types of animals have always been central to Andean placemakings. Yet investigations of Andean human-animal relationships and of animals' agencies continue to be the exception rather than the rule in reconstructing Andean complex engagements with their environments.[2] More common is the scholarly focus on the personhood and agency of all sorts of animate and potent entities, something that is often subsumed under the concept of *wak'a* (a wide variety of sacred entities; also called *huaca* or *guaca*) in other scholarly publications. Justin Jennings and Edward R. Swenson's *Powerful Places in the Ancient Andes* has assembled well-known Andean scholars to analyze the perceived personhood and agency of powerful places, such as mountains, water bodies, volcanoes, and other Andean landscape features and creations, within different histories of political interactions within or among different Andean societies. Through its case studies, the book gives a panoramic overview of current attempts at approaching the political dimensions of this subject. The editors also helpfully introduce various kinds of indigenous Andean concepts, such as *pacha*, *llaqta*, *camay*, *yanantin*, *tinku*, and *chawpi*, which are often conjured when framing Andean placemakings, much like the concept of *wak'a*.

While the concept of *wak'a* is largely left aside in the previous volume, its validity for framing the potency of powerful Andean places is more central in Frances Hayashida, Andrés Troncoso, and Diego Salazar's *Rethinking the Inka: Community, Landscape, and Empire in the Southern Andes*. This edited volume assembles exciting new research by South American archaeologists on how the Inkas constructed meaningful spaces for multiple ends in the southern parts of the empire. Through its focus on the often-marginalized southern part of the Inka Empire, the so-called Qullasuyu quarter, *Rethinking the Inka* adds substance to Inka studies that still tend to focus on the Inka heartland around Cusco. Pablo Cruz's "Metals for the Inka: Mining, Power, and Religion in Qullasuyu," for example, discusses the significance of metals for the southward Inka expansions. Like other contemporary studies on the Inkas, the volume under review also addresses the plurality of Inka adaptations to local realities. Thus, whereas earlier scholars such as John Rowe focused on Inka standardizations, contemporary scholars now emphasize plurality, variety, and flexibility in Inka governance. In the south, Inkas proved largely tolerant to local *wak'a* and artistic craftsmanship, even though they brought Cusco symbolisms and cosmologies into the southern ends of the continent.

Plurality, variety, and flexibility in Inka governance are also central themes in Ricardo Kusunoki, Cecilia Pardo, and Julio Rucabado's carefully curated exhibition on the Inkas in Lima in 2023 and the accompanying exhibition catalog, *Los Incas: Más allá de un imperio*. While the Lima exhibition presented exciting lesser-known objects of Inka arts from local museums—such as the Museo Inka of the Universidad Nacional San Antonio Abad del Cusco—the exhibition catalog also assembles specialists in the field to synthesize recent research about Inka expansions, sociopolitical organization, ritual negotiations, landscape management, cosmovision, invasions and resistance, and Inka identities in the colonial and republican eras. While *Rethinking the Inkas* will mainly serve specialists in the field by advancing knowledge about the Inkas, the texts, maps, and photos of select Inka sites in *Los Incas* will prove highly valuable for a general audience and for understanding Inka placemakings across the entire Empire. Andeanists who study the Inka arts, of course, will very much appreciate the reproduction of objects that are rarely on display.

All the mentioned books have mainly used archaeological methods to analyze Andean arts in their contributions to Andean placemakings. They have also subjected those to

[2] For an exception, see Claudia Brosseder, *Inka Bird Idiom: Amazonian Feathers in the Andes* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2023).

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theories that are currently in vogue in much archaeological literature. Andean art historians, in contrast, who are fewer in number than the archaeologists, likewise claim the validity of art historical methodologies and historiographies to articulate what Andeans did when attributing meaning(s) to various places and objects and why they did so. Lisa Trever, Jorge Gamboa, Ricardo Toribio, and Ricardo Morales's *The Archaeology of Mural Painting at Pañamarca* is the only book in this review that comprehensively combines archaeological and art historical analyses. Through a combination of distinct methodological approaches, the book aims to rediscover, document, and analyze the "long known" but "thought to be lost" mural paintings of the Late Moche site at Pañamarca on the central coast of Peru. The team's exciting archaeological and art historical documentation of the murals testifies to the pictorial and stylistic diversity of Moche art on walls, which, farther north and in other Moche locations, have attracted much attention in recent decades. The mural's depictions of mythological acts, ritual acts, and processions and offerings date to post-600 CE and represent "canonical forms of Moche narrative iconography" (302), as they are known from Moche fine-line ceramics. Trever attributes a didactic function to these murals. They served to pictorialize Moche mythological and ceremonial narratives to the people at Pañamarca and its environs. This book is, in fact, the first of two in which Lisa Trever interprets the murals of Pañamarca.[3]

Less focused than this documentation on Moche arts and less rigorous in its methodological approaches to Andean arts is Andrew Feingold and Ellen Hoobler's edited volume, *Visual Culture of the Ancient Americas: Contemporary Perspectives*. Despite what the title implies, the book is not a comprehensive discussion of visual culture of the ancient Americas but a conglomeration of chapters that all engage in one way or another with Esther Pasztory's groundbreaking interventions, analyses, and approaches to the prehistoric arts of Mesoamerica and South America throughout her long career at Columbia University. Pasztory's gained prestige over many years for the ways she challenged Eurocentric art historical convictions about realism, abstraction, and the nature of art in general. She also brought non-Western contemporary art into academics. The present book is meant as a Festschrift to celebrate Pasztory's contribution to the field of Latin American studies, and in it, most of her former students and colleagues engage with her work on Teotihuacan, the Mayas, Aztecs, Andean aesthetics, and nineteenth- and twentieth-century representations of the arts of the ancient Americas. Two chapters in this volume deal with the Andes in particular: Joan Pillsbury's analysis of nineteenth-century archaeological illustrations of the Andes and Gary Urton's engagement with Pasztory's hypothesis about lines, nodes, and networks as paradigms of Andean aesthetics. The latter draws on miscellaneous examples such as prehistoric bodily engagements with U-shaped temples, the Nazca Lines, the Inka road system, and the fabrication of Inka quipus to explain the unquestioned preoccupation with Andean "linearity." In the previously mentioned Inka exhibition catalog, the art historian Andrew Hamilton referred, in contrast, to the general interest of the Inkas in materiality over iconography to explain the Inka preference for linearity and geometric designs. With both these contributions, the list of scholars who try to explain Andean linear or even geometric or stylized arts has just grown longer.

Given materiality as their point of departure, art historians can also use the evidence of craft organization provided by archaeologists in *Ceramics of the Indigenous Cultures of South America.* In this collection of essays, archaeologists tested hundreds of ceramic samples in the laboratory to get a deep understanding of the chemical compositions of the ceramics that various South American cultures produced from 2500 BP to the Andean Late Horizon. Using mainly INAA (Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis) for their compositional analyses, the authors question hypotheses about regional distribution patterns, local

[3] See also Lisa Trever, *Image Encounters: Moche Murals and Archaeo Art History* (University of Texas Press, 2022).

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productions, and imperial oversight. The results of their analyses differ from culture to culture, from local to local, and sometimes even from investigated material to material. Given the pastes of their imperial ceramics, for example, the Wari seem to have favored a centralized ceramics production, whereas the Inkas, in the case of the ceramic pastes found in Machu Picchu and the Cusco region, relied on a decentralized one. While the Machu Picchu ceramic pastes tell the story of a finite number of Cusco workshops whose vessels were distributed on a regional scale, pigment compositions analyzed on Inka ceramics at Pachacamac tell a story of imperial oversight. It is now time for art historians to take up the results of archaeologists in the field and in the laboratory and insert them into larger questions about the value of ceramic art among various prehistoric South American cultures.

Personhood, animacy, and the sacrality of Andean places and the different types of human engagements with camelids, clay, and other sorts of matter all underline the complexities of how Andean peoples at different times and in different areas tried to make sense of the world for their respective sociopolitical ends. To do justice to these complexities of Andean placemakings and their relationship to the arts, the complex methodologies, comparative interpretations, and scholarly collaborations as modeled in some but not all the books in this review will help put Andean debates into conversation with specialists outside Andean studies.

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