

Book Reviews

Wernke, Steven A. (2013) *Negotiated Settlements. Andean Communities and Landscapes under Inka and Spanish Colonialism*, University Press of Florida (Gainesville, FL), xix + 371 pp. \$79.95 hbk.

In this book, Steven A. Wernke undertakes an ambitious investigation of the palimpsest-like succession of uses of the same space (different locations in the Colca Valley, Southern highland Perú) by different societies in different historical moments – a time span of about 500 years, including the pre-Inca, Inca and Colonial periods. To do so, he has chosen to navigate the waters of at least two disciplines – ethnohistory and archaeology – as well as using the technological tool of GIS maps. The project aims to reconstruct a series of human practices on the land that resulted in landscapes which are the consequence of struggles and negotiations between the invaders, whether Inca or Spanish, and the locals to impose their respective settlement-pattern models. It puts special emphasis on the notion of improvisation, allowing Wernke to read both the ethnographic and the archaeological records as reflections of a series of daily life struggles between invaders and locals over social order models.

In Chapter 2, Wernke elaborates on the concepts of community and landscape and their interface. In Chapter 3 he analyses the lands and peoples of the area; in Chapter 4

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he studies the Inca and pre-Inca occupations of the valley. The organisation of the societies from the Late Intermediate Period (LIP) shows no traces of a centralised political organisation (pp. 81, 85, 155). The documentary sources talk about the imposition of a more centralised form of administration (p. 154) during Inca times, but the archaeological evidence shows, instead, few cases of Inca architecture, no administration centres and very few storehouses. Instead, it shows: (a) a form of presence that was not direct but locally coordinated (p. 103), (b) that very few LIP sites were abandoned during Inca occupation, with the majority growing during that period (p. 118) and (c) that there was no radical break with previous settlement patterns (p. 119).

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with the Spanish model of colonisation, the *reducciones*, which dismantled the Andean model, replacing it with the concentration of indigenous peoples in villages. In contrast to the Inca social order (centrifugal and adaptable to the local forms of community and landscape), the Spanish order was reductive and centripetal (p. 298), believing in the importance of the built environment for modification of both the beliefs and the behavioural patterns of the colonised (pp. 159, 161, 210, 214–215). It is a pity that Wernke does not mention Rama's *The Lettered City* here, for his analysis of how the Spaniards tried to impose their social order and worldview would have benefited enormously from its discussion.

In Chapter 5 he offers one of his most interesting contributions to the understanding of how changes in the built environment could have transformed not only the perception of, but also the practices and circulation in and through, space. The spatial network approach is a method that seeks to go beyond impressionistic, phenomenological interpretations (Christopher Tilley-style?) of, and movement through, space by quantitatively modelling the movement and circulation of people, based on the movement of subjects from the domestic structures to the plazas of the Malata *reducción* (p. 200). The interesting results of this kind of study show that the networks and paths predominating in the Inca and Spanish periods were in tension or opposition to one another (p. 203).

In Chapter 7, the author offers one of the most important contributions of his book: the reconstruction of the Ayllu land-use and residential patterns through what he calls a 'reverse site-catchment' approach, which 'retrodicts prehistoric residence patterns from historically documented land-use data by comparing the land-tenure patterns of local Ayllus with the settlement locations registered in the archaeological survey' (p. 252).

In sum, this is a serious innovative attempt to offer a nuanced and thorough picture of the succession of diverse land-uses in the history of the region. Throughout it, Wernke discusses the importance of several notions to understand what could be called colonial situations. However, the way that he uses the notion of 'colonisation' is not felicitous. Firstly, he does not address any of the major theoretical works on colonial matters: he considers no authors from Postcolonial theory, nor from De-colonial theory – two camps that are an important part of the debate. Secondly, the use of the term 'colonised' to refer to the Spaniards (p. 15) and their institutions (p. 294) is, quite frankly, unacceptable and rather naïf. It is not necessary to grotesquely distort historical reality if what one wants is to attribute more agency to the colonised. To achieve that goal, it suffices to produce solid research like that presented throughout the chapters that comprise this excellent piece of scholarship.

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