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REVIEWS

Nick Merriman (ed.) 2004. *Public Archaeology*. Routledge, London. xiv + 306 pp, tables, figs., bib., index. Paper. \$85.95.

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There is a growing trend for public archaeology to be seen as a branch of the discipline in its own right. Indeed, the journal *Public Archaeology*, published in England, testifies to the growth in popularity of this subject matter. This book originated in a session from the World Archaeological Congress in Cape Town in 1999. Some of the papers delivered at the session were rewritten and updated, others were specially commissioned to provide wider coverage of specific issues. It employs an international perspective to focus on the relationship between three key factors: archaeology, heritage and the public, with a distinct and appropriate emphasis on the last.

Of course, public archaeology has had a name and a press since McGimsey's book of the same name appeared in 1972, however, this publication offers an original and alternative approach. It suggests that it is timely for the discipline of archaeology to become part of wider public culture. Debate and dissonance is acknowledged. Public archaeology encompasses both the official provision and presentation of archaeology on behalf of the public and the differing publics with a stake in archaeology. The book focuses on two key themes: communication and interpretation; and public stakeholders. It is presented as a series of (mainly) case studies. Just one quibble—illustrations are few and in black and white.

Part 1, 'Spreading the word – communication and interpretation', discusses issues relating to the community in its broadest sense. It considers the different audiences for archaeology; why people are interested in archaeology (and why they're not) and how people interpret the material archaeologists present them with. Chapters echo the findings of the 2000 MORI survey by English Heritage on attitudes to the historic environment, noting the intensely personal qualities of heritage and the need to make it relevant to everyone today. Heritage is polysensual; it strikes a chord with peoples feelings and emotions beyond the purely rational. Different spokes for different folks indeed. This section focuses on understanding, shaping and guiding public engagement to validate the diversity of public interpretations in what is termed a multivalent model. Thus, public archaeology and public education

in the United States are explored; public involvement in museums; on-site presentations to the public; archaeology and the British media; and the ‘democratisation’ of archaeology via the internet.

Part 2 focuses on stakeholders and the question of who has the right to own and interpret the material remains of the past. The emphasis on England in Part 1 broadens to encompass a world view as chapters explore public interest in Brazil, East Africa, Madagascar, Australia, and the UK. Two final chapters discuss England’s 1996 Treasure Act and the Portable Antiquities Scheme, contrasting with the influence of the antiquities market on the development of archaeology in China.

Books originating from conferences are inevitably the sum of their parts, in this case, a valuable addition to an emergent topic. The World Archaeological Congress series extends the boundaries within which archaeological theory and practice are debated. Contrasting case studies allow this book to be ‘dipped into’ or read as a whole. Amusing insights are offered. Mike Parker Pearson observes the effect of their expedition’s presence on the villagers of Androy, Madagascar: an ever-reliable supply of gifts, medicines and free rides to market; their bizarre behaviour a guaranteed source of hilarious amusement for adults and children alike.

Neil Ascherson reflects with wry amusement on the relationship between archaeology, the British media, and the inevitable stereotypes, ‘mad professor’ and ‘digging for treasure’, that prevail. Hopefully, the TV series on archaeology *What Lies Beneath* will modify such images. This reviewer can vouch for media awareness when viewing her first excavation on a public guided tour of the remains of Nonesuch Palace in England in the early 1960s. Ten years later, the discovery of a mosaic at the excavation of a Roman villa at York, the dig financed by a chocolate company, underlined the imperative of informing the news media—sweet success!

Perhaps this volume may serve as the forerunner to a more popular approach to archaeology by archaeologists; moreover, one with which the public can find a true engagement. Certainly, it opens up the debate and moves away from a narrow definition of archaeology for so long confined and thus defined by the term ‘cultural resource management.’ The papers hint at unexplored topics, in particular, the perceptions of and use of archaeology by the public. It is time for archaeologists to engage with their public and treat this relationship with the academic rigour it deserves. The adoption of a more open approach, to paraphrase one of the contributors, is a theme throughout the book. For if we concentrate on enriching the experience of others, then we are likely to find that we have enriched ourselves in the process, and for archaeology, that can’t be a bad thing.

Helaine Silverman (ed) 2004. *Andean Archaeology*. Blackwell Studies in Global Archaeology, Lynn Meskell and Rosemary A. Joyce (series eds). Blackwell, Oxford. xvi + 342 pp, tables, figs., bib., index. Paper. \$AUD65.95.

Terence N. D’Altroy 2003. *The Incas*. Blackwell, Oxford. xvi + 391 pp, tables, figs., bib., index. Paper. \$AUD69.95.

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The first of these two volumes contains a series of papers, arranged roughly chronologically, on, as its name suggests, the archaeology of the Andes of South America, beginning with the first peopling of the region and running through to the Incas. It is not, unfortunately, an introduction to the region; it assumes that the reader already has a sound grasp of Andean prehistory, even though it, and the Global Studies series generally, purport to be aimed at the “upper-division undergraduate” (p. vii). It is unfortunate, then, that there is little in the way of editorial overview. Each author seems as concerned to push their own (generally post-processual) theoretical barrow as to inform the uninformed. This is evident in the editor’s introduction, which seems to touch base with every modern trend in archaeology, accompanied by a welter of bewildering jargon. Some New Zealand and Pacific archaeologists may find the discussion of chronology interesting; Andeanists seem to be having similar problems and arguments as we do, but with many less ¹⁴C dates. The stage model of Andean prehistory (Archaic, Formative, Developmental, etc.) has the same origins as our own Archaic/Classic model, and the debate here could be quite illuminating. As in the Andes, we should be careful not to reject the tried and true framework without a carefully reasoned replacement.

The problem of lack of direction in the volume is exemplified by the three papers on the Middle Horizon societies of Wari and Tiwanaku, each looking at their subject through a completely different theoretical lens: Cook is doing a feminist archaeology, looking for women and women specific roles in Wari; Isbell and Vranich outline comparative experiential landscapes of Wari and Tiwanaku, à la Julian Thomas; while Janusek looks at household archaeology in Tiwanaku—these three approaches could not seem more different. Yet each approaches their subject from the same angle; the iconography of power. It is as though Andean archaeology is really geared around the end result: Pizarro and the events of 1532. Do the Andeanists know that they are trapped by this particular grand narrative? Perhaps not—after all, we in New Zealand and the Pacific are probably also under the influence of our own similar narrative, which we can’t see though familiarity.

So, a series of unconnected essays probably of interest only to specialists. OK, to be honest, I have another major gripe. The whole damn thing is as dry as dust, though I dutifully read it to the end. And the last chapter at least had the advantage of a map that showed Wari and Tiwanaku, though confusingly spelt Huari and Tiahuanaco.

D'Altroy's book could not be more different. This a skillful, readable and above all very interesting blend of post-conquest historical tradition and archaeology. The traditions were collected by the Spanish conquistadores, and so are heavily biased by their political and religious agenda. What is more, they were collected by and large from the rump Inca aristocracy, and so are heavily biased towards particular views of Inca society and history. The marriage of tradition and archaeology is not always easy. Tradition has held sway for several centuries and only in the last half century has archaeology begun to make its own contribution. These themes are dealt with in Chapter 1, but the tensions are evident throughout. D'Altroy does a fine job of balancing the two.

Chapter 2 looks at the pre-imperial Incas. Surprisingly, archaeology plays only a small role, since the imperial Incas completely remodeled Cuzco and its environs. Other chapters look at history, socio-politics and ideology, largely from the documentary sources, with archaeology playing only a support role. It isn't until Chapter 8, Family, Community and Class, when we start to see evidence of the people without history, that archaeology begins to make a significant contribution above and beyond the information provided by the historical documents. As we move out from the Inca heartland archaeology continues to be important: following the military on their conquests; observing the strategies of imperial rule in the provinces; or change and continuity in indigenous life under imperial rule. Equally, the examination of commoner lifestyle and economy, and of craft production, are heavily reliant on archaeology and material culture studies.

A readable and enjoyable book then, and one that those unfamiliar with the Incas will have no problem picking up and enjoying. At the same time, D'Altroy is not talking down to his audience, and the reader will come away well informed. I suspect that he is pushing his own views a little in this book; there is little in the way of a balanced discussion of opposing views, but that in itself is an invitation to read further.