

on their own terms in chapters on the 'national security state' and late twentieth-century Central America. Another thread that reappears in different chapters on the nineteenth century is the issue of liberalism and the creation of viable, unified nation-states, while the chapters dealing with the modern era recognise the increasing importance of the United States in the various aspects of national development.

With so broad a coverage, the book is bound to attract some criticisms about points of detail, analyses or missing subjects. A few factual errors seem to have slipped the authors and editor. The Asturian, José Tomás Boves, was not black – even if his enemies were convinced his soul was the colour of pitch – while Chinese coolies on Peruvian estates tended to be the target of attack during the War of the Pacific, not the attackers. Beyond the picayune, one chapter that might attract somewhat greater comment is Luis Martínez-Fernández's study of the Cuban revolution. It presents an almost entirely negative picture of the post-1958 developments on the island. He may be correct, but since one of the themes that runs through many of the surrounding chapters is the willingness of the peoples of Latin America to resist oppression in its various and sundry forms, this reader was left wondering why, in the circumstances, the Cuban people did not react more aggressively. Furthermore, if the Cuban situation has been as bleak and negative as Martínez-Fernández presents, why is it now necessary to spend time on this fifty-year-old and apparently moribund revolution? Indeed, many of the chapters might have benefitted with a short explanation about why the information presented is important for an understanding of the broader issues of Latin American history.

One final issue is the intended audience of this book. While its coverage makes it a possible text in itself, it is probably more useful as a 'companion', as it describes itself. The problem is that the eye-catching price will put the book out of the range of most, if not all, undergraduate students. North American graduate students preparing for comprehensive examinations will find the book invaluable for its interpretations, details and bibliographies, but they, too, are likely to hesitate at purchasing it. As a result, it most likely will find itself restricted to the shelves of a handful of Latin American specialists and the stacks of university libraries where it may, but probably will not, receive the attention that it certainly deserves.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 41 (2009). doi:10.1017/S0022216X08005154

Denise Y. Arnold and Christine A. Hastorf, *Heads of State: Icons, Power, and Politics in the Ancient and Modern Andes* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press), pp. 296, \$65.00, \$34.95 pb; £35.00, £18.99 pb.

Heads are ubiquitous in Andean archaeology. On textiles, for example, vines grow out of the open mouths of disembodied heads, and caches of crania are sometime found buried at archaeological sites. For the most part, archaeologists have offered explanations that fit each of these individual contexts – the heads on the textiles might be linked to concerns with fertility on the arid coast and the crania seen as evidence for aggressive expansion by a state. While these answers often offer some insights, they fail to provide a compelling explanation for why the use of heads and head imagery was widespread over thousands of years in the Andes. In this pioneering volume, Arnold and Hastorf attempt to answer this ambitious question.

The authors' rich understanding of the role of heads comes largely from the work of Denise Arnold among the Qaqachaka, an ayllu located in Bolivia. Combining her

ethnographic insights with a variety of social theory and historical data, they suggest that human heads likely played a pivotal role in ancient communities. Arnold and Hastorf argue that heads were conceived of as seeds that disseminated productive energies outward if taken care of properly. They suggest that the decomposition of a head placed in a chest released mist that created rain in a region, the victorious warrior gained intelligence and strength by sucking the brain out of the skull of his vanquished enemy, and a captured head that was wrapped up and given offerings would increase a woman's fertility. Since the energy found within heads was so potent, communities were deeply concerned about capturing (and controlling) this power.

Arnold and Hastorf suggest that heads were integral to the political process in two ways. On the one hand, the power of a community was maintained by the vertical relations between the living and the dead. Through rituals, the skulls of ancestors (along with other bones) were feted so that their energies worked for and not against the community. On the other hand, a community could gain power through the capturing of heads from outside groups. A captured head, either severed in battle or seized from a cache, increased the productive power of the community at the expense of its rival. For Arnold and Hastorf, heads were one of the key driving forces in the expansion of ancient Andean polities. They suggest that the rapid expansion of some polities, like the Incas and Wari, was propelled by an ongoing desire to capture the power of outside groups.

In demonstrating the relationship between heads and political structure, Arnold and Hastorf range widely in *Heads of State*. For example, they discuss how *quipus*, the recording devices made out of knotted strings, may derive from the braiding and knotting of the hair of trophy heads and they link the use of *yupanas*, or counting boards, with the assessment of the productive power captured from an enemy. They also show how weaving was the women's parallel to men's headhunting and how the *vara*, a staff of office, could have derived from lances used to impale a trophy head. In each case, the authors demonstrate how seemingly disparate aspects of Andean life were tied together through a desire to capture the power found in a head.

Heads of State takes us on an incredible journey from the rites of a modern Bolivian ayllu to the practices of some of the most famous ancient cultures of Peru and Bolivia. Of course, one should be cautious when making such a journey. In studies of the prehistoric Andes, we have sometimes been guilty of assuming a timeless Andean way of doing things. Sometimes called 'Lo Andino', this assumption can lead to the uncritical projection into the past of an array of political, economic and social arrangements from Inca, early Colonial, and modern examples. Arnold and Hastorf are cognisant of the dangers of peopling the past with the present, and build a strong case for the importance of the head through archaeological correlates to the modern practices witnessed by Arnold. While many of their assertions about the details of how these heads functioned in past cultures remain speculative, their book convinced me that a belief in the generative power of the head has been a long-term structure of meaning in the Andes since at least the Early Horizon period.

The demonstration of a long-term structure of meaning does not, however, mean that ideas remained unchanged. The authors note that changes occurred in the treatment of heads (both crania and in depictions on artwork), but more consideration of the implications of these changes is needed in future work. There have been shifts over time between the numbers of people buried in tombs, the accessibility of those remains, and the kinds of bones that were curated. These shifts, along with

many other changes from how a textile were woven to how a human head was depicted on pots, speak to significant alterations in how the power of heads was mobilised through time. The practices of the Qaqachaka can only hint at some of the ways that heads were used in Chiripa, Tiwanaku, Chavín and other ancient cultures, and much more work needs to be done to test the ideas presented in this volume.

Heads of State is provocative. I suspect that anyone who reads this book will find something in it that they vehemently disagree with it. The authors push their ethnographic analogy to its breaking point and present such a wide array of new ideas that their argument can be difficult at times for the reader to follow. Yet this book is well worth reading because it provides a new perspective on the foundations of Andean political economy. Arnold and Hastorf have rescued the head from its banishment into the ritual realm by archaeologists and show that its associated powers were central to the political process. We should all be grateful.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 41 (2009). doi:10.1017/S0022216X08005166

Laura E. Matthew and Michel R. Oudijk (eds.), *Indian Conquistadors: Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), pp. xiv + 349, \$45.00, hb.

This book represents the best single exposition currently available of the recent revisionist trend in Mesoamerican conquest history which recognises that indigenous allies played a far more important and extensive role than scholars have generally acknowledged. The editors and the press are to be commended for producing an edited volume that avoids the usual problem inherent in such endeavours, namely lack of integration among the chapters. Following an introduction by Susan Schroeder and an opening analytical chapter by Michel R. Oudijk and Matthew Restall, the book features eight empirical chapters covering various aspects of indigenous participation in the Conquest and ranging geographically from all over Mesoamerica.

For non-specialists, the introduction by Schroeder will be most useful. She delineates four successive trends in the historiography of the Conquest: the epic Spanish conquest, the spiritual conquest, loser history or the conquest of Mexico as nonevent, and Indians as conquistadores. The latter is slowly but surely becoming the dominant trend, and Schroeder expectably gives it extensive treatment which also includes a brief overview of the other chapters. Schroeder offers thoughtful insights on the motivations of indigenous conquistadors, an issue that always arises when one comes to an awareness of the extent of participation of native Mesoamericans in the Conquest.

Oudijk and Restall provide an overview of Mesoamerican conquistadors in the sixteenth century, providing exquisite detail in four broad categories: the large numbers of native auxiliaries, the ubiquity of native conquistadors, the diverse capacities in which native allies served, and the Spanish conquest as a continuation of pre-conquest patterns of conquest and imperial domination. Oudijk and Restall themselves admit that this last idea is somewhat problematic, but it certainly merits examination. Obviously, the Spanish conquistadors followed Iberian traditions and patterns that had developed since Medieval times, most of them rooted in the Reconquista, but once they arrived in Mexico the implementation of these