

South American Archaeology Seminar

Written by Bill Sillar

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South American Archaeology Seminar Institute of Archaeology, University College London Saturday 19th May 2012

Everyone is welcome, program details and abstracts below.
Contact Bill Sillar (b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk) to reserve a place and attend the meeting.

PROGRAM:

10.00 am - Coffee / Registration

10.30: Virginia Mcrostitie (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)
Formative with or without agriculture? A revaluation based on isotopic and microfossil evidences from the highlands of the Atacama Desert, Northern Chile.

11.05: Lauren Cadwallader (University of Cambridge)
Corn, camelids or coastal resources? An isotopic analysis of dietary patterns from the lower Ica Valley

11.40: Lidio M. Valdez (MacEwan University, Canada)
Fortified Settlements and the Origins of Conflict in the Acari Valley, Peru

Lunch 12.30-1.30 pm

1.30: Jose Oliver (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)
Ethno-Cartography in the Orinoco, Venezuela: Lessons for Archaeology

2.05: Andrés Troncoso (Universidad de Chile) & Felipe Armstrong (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)

Rock Art in Inca Times: Interpreting the Production and Consumption of Petroglyphs in two regions of Chile.

Tea 2.45-3.15 pm

3.15: Reginaldo Barcelos (Universidade do Porto, Portugal)

Evidence of Gold working at the old foundry, Casa de Fundação e Intendência, Sabara, Minas Gerais, Brazil 1751-1833

3.50: Paul Heggarty (Max Planck Institute, Leipzig) & David Beresford-Jones (University of Cambridge) with Adrian Pearce (Kings College London)

A Cross-Disciplinary Prehistory for the Andes: An Update on the State of the Art

Please email Bill Sillar (b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk) to reserve a place at the seminar. You will be asked to make a contribution of £7.50 towards the cost of coffee, tea, lunch & administration on the day.

Our next meeting will be on: Saturday 1st December 2012

If you would like to give a talk at a future seminar or for further information please contact Bill Sillar: b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk

ABSTRACTS:

Virginia Mcrostitie (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)

Formative with or without agriculture? A revaluation based on isotopic and microfossil

evidences from the highlands of the Atacama Desert, Northern Chile.

The Formative concept as originally defined by Willey and Phillips (1958) prioritised food production through agriculture as the main platform for developing economic and social complexity. Within this framework the explanations of the rise of sedentary villages, intensification of networks, social stratification and economic surplus in the Atacama have been linked to the onset of herding and maize agriculture. Although herding has been properly tracked with empirical data, the role of agricultural production has hardly been addressed, although its significance is assumed on the basis of very limited evidence. In this paper I will present new empirical data (isotopes and microfossils) regarding the manipulation, processing and consumption of plants in the Atacama. This will be related to a re-evaluation of hypothesis and theoretical models about the onset of farming and the technological changes seen during the Formative period. Preliminary results identify a heterogeneous diet within and between sites, with a reliance on the gathering and processing of wild resources continuing until the end of the Formative. Changes in settlement pattern are associated with previous domestication of camelids rather than maize agriculture and new technologies would allow risk minimization in this new setting. The taxonomical identification of starch grains and the fractionation models for C13ap will be discussed.

Lauren Cadwallader (University of Cambridge)

Corn, camelids or coastal resources? An isotopic analysis of dietary patterns from the lower Ica Valley

Whilst much is known about the wider south coast region it is still unclear how life varied within the individual valleys for the populations of the past. This research aims to understand the subsistence strategies of populations from the lower Ica Valley and how these were impacted by both the environment and social factors during the Early Horizon to the Late Intermediate Period. Isotopic dietary information obtained from mummified human remains has been used to investigate the strategies at multiple levels. Bone collagen data represents the average diet of the populations from each period and facilitates hypotheses of the typical subsistence pattern(s) used by each group. In turn this is used to explore how the strategies correlate with the existing lines of socio-economic evidence. The specifics of the subsistence patterns are investigated further by using hair data to inform on seasonal dietary trends, and skin and teeth data to investigate dietary life histories. By investigating dietary information at a higher resolution, greater inferences can be made about movement of the people from the valley as well as potential movement of food down from higher altitudes. Exploitation of both wild and domestic food resources is suggested for the Early Horizon. Some discrepancies with the current archaeobotanical record from the valley exist and offer evidence for interactions between the lower valley and higher altitudes, especially in the Middle Horizon and Late Intermediate Period. Interesting, little isotopic evidence exists in any population for significant marine consumption

yet the archaeological evidence attest otherwise.

Lidio M. Valdez (MacEwan University, Canada)

Fortified Settlements and the Origins of Conflict in the Acari Valley, Peru

Archaeological research carried out in the Acari Valley of the Peruvian south coast region reveals that the first half of the Early Intermediate Period (ca. 50 BCE 350 CE) marked the emergence of the first fortified settlements. Archaeological excavations carried out at one such site resulted in the unprecedented finding of several dozens of human remains that exhibited multiple signs of trauma. Such evidence, in conjunction with data on settlement patterns and site configuration, indicate that the first half of the Early Intermediate Period was a time of widespread conflict in the Acari Valley. The magnitude of the violence in which the inhabitants of the various fortified settlements of Acari were involved is manifested not only in the effort invested in building defensive barriers to protect the settlements, but also in the capture of prisoners who eventually were decapitated.

Jose Oliver (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)

Ethno-Cartography in the Orinoco, Venezuela: Lessons for Archaeology

The 1999 Constitution of the 5th Republic of Venezuela, instigated by Presidente Hugo Chávez, guarantees the aborigines collective land property and its traditional habitats. The Commission (inter-ministerial body) is required to take on board the deliberations of indigenous communities in regard to their traditional lands. In my recent (April 2011) travel to the Middle Orinoco (around Puerto Ayacucho-Parguaza areas), I witnessed the nuances and complexities of aboriginal notions of territory and landscape, of how they articulate the parallel domains of the visible and invisible in imaging and then transposing into cartography (paper) their notions of geography. While several are skilled in modern western cartographic techniques, including trigonometry and GPS-generated mapping), what emerges is a distinct kind of cartography, what Venezuelan anthropologists refer to as "ethno-cartography". With particular reference to the Piaroa (Sáliva speakers) and Mapoyo (Carib speakers), I will be sharing what I learned from them about their notions of ethno-cartography with an eye to re-examining the relatively standard archaeological "maps" showing groups, traditions, and so on, frequently found in books and reports. Clearly, the Venezuelan government's ambition to legally define an indigenous territory still largely operates under the tattered assumptions that a "picket-fence" can be laid-down on the ground and thus be administered and safe-guarded efficiently. This is, of course, a legacy of the culture historic and normative approaches. The Piaroa/Mapoyo landscape/geography will emphasize some of the most spectacular rock art sites also used as burial sites in lowland South America; that is, a landscape studded with "huacas" (akin to Andean notions of potency, sacredness

imbued in the landscape). One of these rock art sites, El Gavilan (Parguaza area) has been recently dated as early as 10,000 - 9,500 B.P.

Andrés Troncoso (Universidad de Chile) & Felipe Armstrong (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)
Rock Art in Inca Times: Interpreting the Production and Consumption of Petroglyphs in two regions of Chile.

The dynamics of occupation of the different territories employed by the Inca State (Tawantinsuyu) implied a series of transformations of local material sets and the incorporation of new materialities by the state. These dynamics of continuity, transformation and incorporation of material culture are the basis on which the material aspects of socio-political life were built. Although there are many studies on this topic, basically concentrated in lithic evidence, metal works and pottery, there has been no discussion about this transformation from rock art. This is a major gap in the research, as in different zones of Collasuyu rock art forms some of the most abundant prehistoric evidence with a deep historical tradition. In this study, we discuss the transformations and continuities in the dynamics of production and consumption of rock art during the Inca period in two different regions of Chile: the Central Valley and the Semiárid North. While these regions show differential intensities and dynamics of occupation, the presence of rock art of Late Intermediate period (1000-1450a.C.) and Late or Inca period (1450-1540a.C.) is recognized in both. Our study shows continuity in the technological and space dynamics of production/consumption of rock art. However, underlying such similarity, important differences are observed in terms of the management of iconographic resources, such as the incorporation of visual references characteristic of the Cuzco region as well as elements from other areas of Tawantinsuyu, with more complex engraving techniques, and some intensification of rock art production. The space dynamics and functionality of rock art in the different regions will also be compared to show how the local populations reacted in different ways to the incorporation of their territory in Tawantinsuyu. While the incorporation of certain images marks the approval of new visual languages, the two regions differ in terms of the elements being incorporated, as well as the social context in which rock art is employed: in one of these areas the new motifs are included in Inca sites, while in the other, they are excluded from these spaces.

Reginaldo Barcelos (Universidade do Porto, Portugal)

Evidence of Gold working at the old foundry, Casa de Fundação e Intendência, Sabara, Minas Gerais, Brazil 1751-1833

Today the Casa de Fundação e Intendência forms the Gold Museum of Sabara, Minas Gerais, Brazil, but from 1751 to 1833 the foundry and inspectorate house were the facilities used by the

Portuguese Crown agencies responsible for collecting taxes from gold mining in the region. In 2004 archaeological excavations were carried out on the land attached to the Casa de Fundição e Intendência. These back yard excavations revealed evidence of metallurgical workshops in the form of several stone and adobe structures, and slag from gold purification. This paper will discuss the spatial organization of this evidence, with an attempt to reconstruct the techniques used in the period when the Foundry and Inspectorate house was working. The circular structures found will be compared with contemporary Portuguese and African furnaces used to melt and purify gold.

Paul Heggarty (Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig) & David Beresford-Jones (Max Planck, Leipzig and University of Cambridge) with Adrian Pearce (Kings College London)

A Cross-Disciplinary Prehistory for the Andes: An Update on the State of the Art

At the dawn of scientific inquiry into the prehistory of the Andes, its founding figures such as Max Uhle and Julio C. Tello never felt bound by the glass confines that only since their times have emerged to isolate the various (sub)disciplines of a broader anthropology. To return to their more holistic view, over the last few years we have convened a series of interdisciplinary meetings on the Andean past. These aim to foster a meeting of minds between archaeologists, historians and linguists of the Andes, and more recently also geneticists and biological anthropologists.

Thus far our programme has included three symposia, first in Cambridge and in London in 2008, and then last winter in Max Uhle's own alma mater, Leipzig. Thanks to Peter Kaulicke and Rodolfo Cerrón-Palomino, in 2009 the annual archaeology conference at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú was also given over to our theme.

Our events have brought together many leading scholars of the Andean past from across the disciplines, amongst them Willem Adelaar, Richard Burger, Terry D'Altroy, Tom Dillehay, John Hemming, Bill Isbell, Gary Urton, and indeed Colin Renfrew, a pioneer of the interdisciplinary approach worldwide. As might be expected, their new contributions have helped bring the debate forward in great bounds. A range of novel hypotheses now compete to offer us the most coherent cross-disciplinary vision of the Andean past. This talk presents a summary of each, its respective strengths and weaknesses, and its place in the wider interdisciplinary debate.

Separately, we propose to give five-minute presentations of each of the three edited volumes

that have emerged from our research theme so far:

Heggarty, Paul, and David G. Beresford-Jones, eds. 2012. *Archaeology and Language in the Andes. Proceedings of the British Academy 173*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Presented by David Beresford-Jones]

Heggarty, Paul, and Adrian Pearce, eds. 2011. *History and Language in the Andes*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?PID=397842

. [Presented by Adrian Pearce, Dept of History, Kings College London]

Kaulicke, Peter, Rodolfo Cerrón-Palomino, Paul Heggarty, and David G. Beresford-Jones, eds. 2011. *Lenguas y Sociedades en el Antiguo Perú: Hacia un Enfoque Interdisciplinario. Boletín de Arqueología PUCP 14*

. Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.

<http://revistas.pucp.edu.pe/boletindearqueologia/es/numero-14>

. [Presented by Paul Heggarty]