

South American Archaeology Seminar (London)

Written by Bill Sillar

Wednesday, 12 November 2014 13:50 -

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Dear All,

The next South American Archaeology Seminar (London) will be held at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL, on Saturday 6th December 2014 - see program and abstracts below.

Anyone wishing to attend is welcome, but please email Bill Sillar (b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk) to reserve a place. You are asked to pay £7.50 towards the cost of coffee, tea, lunch & administration (this can be paid on the day, as long as you have made a reservation)

Best wishes,
Bill

6th December 2014
6th Floor Seminar Room
The Institute of Archaeology, UCL
34 Gordon Square,
London WC1H 0PY

Co. Sponsored by: UCL, Institute of Archaeology

10.00 am Coffee/ Registration

10.30: Bill Sillar (Institute of Archaeology, UCL), Melissa Chatfield, Rob Ixer, Sara Lunt, Gordon McEwan and Dennis Ogburn **Becoming Empire: Social, Economic and Material changes at the start of Inka Imperial Expansion.**

11.10: Patrice Lecoq (Université Paris 1-CNRS) **Choqek'iraw, ten years on. A new look at the Inca site of the Cordillera Vilcabamba (Peru).**

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11.50: Isabel Yaya (Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, EHESS, CdF) **A topography of memory: looking at Inca divine kingship and ancestor cult in Cuzco.**

Lunch

1.30 pm Michael Fradley (University of Exeter) **One Mound, Many Rites: exploring diversity among the Je groups of the southern Brazilian highlands.**

2.10: Jonas Gregorio De Souza (University of Exeter) **Pathways to Power in the Southern Brazilian Highlands: Taquara/Itarare settlement systems in Campo Belo do Sul, Santa Catarina state**

2.50: Tatiana Vlémincq Mendieta (Université Libre de Bruxelles) **Moche frogs, toads and fertility: It's Raining Frogs?**

Tea

3.50: María Teresa Plaza and Marcos Martín-Torres (Institute of Archaeology, UCL) **Metallurgical Traditions Under Inka Rule: A Technological Study Of Metals And Technical Ceramics From The Aconcagua Valley In Central Chile.**

4.20: William Brooks (Geologist, Reston) Luisa Vetter Parodi, Armando V. Farfán, and David Dykstra Lopez **Industrial Lead in Ancient Perú: the Curamba Smelter and Lead Sling Bullets.**

We usually go for a drink at the bar of The Tavistock Hotel, after the seminar.

To give a talk at a future seminar please contact Bill Sillar: b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk

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ABSTRACTS

Becoming Empire: Social, Economic and Material changes at the start of Inka Imperial Expansion

Bill Sillar (Institute of Archaeology, UCL), Melissa Chatfield (Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation), Rob Ixer (UCL), Sara Lunt (UCL), Gordon McEwan (Anthropology Department, Wagner College), and Dennis Ogburn (Dept. of Anthropology, University of North Carolina (UNC), Charlotte)

This paper presents an analysis of changes in settlement organization, ceramics, stone-working and architecture before and after the Inka conquest of the region associated with the Pinagua ethnic group around lake Muina and Lucre.~ Through Petrography and X-ray Fluorescence we show how the materials, technical know-how and labour for some of the most iconic Inka pottery and stonework only became available after the Inka expanded into this region. Analysis of the origin and development of specific design elements, materials and technical skills shows how the production of hybrid objects combined Cuzco and Lucre regional elements.~ We argue that the experience of conquering the Lucre area influenced subsequent Inka imperial policy as similar methods of annexing conquered resources, extracting labour from subjugated ethnic groups and creating objects with hybrid local+Inka styles was to become a characteristic feature of the Inka Imperial economy of supply on command.

Choqek'iraw, ten years on: A new look at the Inca site of the Cordillera Vilcabamba (Peru)

Patrice Lecoq (Université Paris 1-CNRS UMR 8096 Archéologie des Amériques)

Situated in the heart of the Vilcabamba cordillera in Peru, some 150 km northwest of Cuzco, Choqek'iraw or Choquequirao ("the golden cradle" in Quechua), is one of the most beautiful achievements of Inca architecture, and one of the very few pre-Hispanic sites displaying large wall mosaics, the only one known from Inca times.

Some ethnohistoric sources suggest that Choqek'iraw was one of the palaces of Tupac Inca Yupanqui, but the excavations we realised in peripheral area, show a much older occupation than previously thought. Apparently, mount up to the Early Intermediate Period (200-500 AD) and continue until the Late Intermediate Period, between 1200 and 1400 AD and the Late Horizon.

Several other data such as location and orientation of some buildings, the presence of a truncated hill as defined ushnu and regional toponymy also suggest that Choqek'iraw could play the role of oracular shrine dedicated to the deity Inca Triple Lightning .

This talk will present a summary of ex-Peruvian-French archaeological project that took place from 2003 to 2008 as part of a cooperation agreement between the two governments. The results of this project will be publish in the BAR series before the end of the year.

A topography of memory: looking at Inca divine kingship and ancestor cult in Cuzco

Isabel Yaya (Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, EHESS, CdF)

Right from their earliest contact with Tawantinsuyu, the Spaniards wrote of their outraged fascination for the Incas' worship of dead kings, providing us with valuable, albeit imperfect, ethnographic materials. The post-mortem practices they observed aimed to ensure the preservation of dead bodies from decomposition and to assemble the deceased's past deeds into memorable epic narratives. Mummified kings were exhibited periodically at numerous festivals thereafter and continued to play an active role in current affairs by means of oracular consultations. Their daily maintenance involved a great number of attendants who fed, entertained and escorted them to various leisure resorts. Each corpse had also a personal "double" composed of small corporeal relics, which was the king's stand-in on the battlefield and on diplomatic missions. Some chroniclers even claim that rulers had several embodiments of their person dispersed throughout the realm.

The material presence among the living of these ancestralised kings as well as their mobility and bodily dispersion through "doubles" demonstrate that their agency was necessarily conveyed through corporeal substance. Only exceptional individuals received this post-mortem treatment and what set them apart from ordinary people lay vested in their body. To understand how and why royal corpses were unique, this paper discusses the protocol that surrounded the king's person and his incarnations in his lifetime as well as after his death. This material reveals the successive techniques of sacralisation to which his body was subjected, starting at his investiture and ending with his second funeral. But the ruling title alone did not guarantee his integration into the community of ancestors. The king's posterity also depended on the

perceived effectiveness of his life-sustaining force. If this attribute was established, the king's life story was elaborated and his corpse turned into a perennial agent. The crux of this transformational apparatus lay in the ritual objectification of his memory within the loci of history (wakas) that shaped Cuzco's landscape. From then on, he became an integral part of the existing ancestral network that fashioned the Inca heartland.

One Mound, Many Rites: Exploring diversity among the Je groups of the southern Brazilian highlands

Michael Fradley (Department of Archaeology, University of Exeter)

This paper will present the preliminary results of the 2014 excavations of the Southern Je burial complex at the Abreu & Garcia site in Santa Catarina state, Brazil, funded by the AHRC-FAPESP scheme. These investigations have revealed an unexpectedly high concentration of cremation burials which exhibit a high level of diversity in terms of burial rites. This unique data-set is complimented by the complexity of the wider layout of monumental architecture recorded across the site, which in turn has enabled the development of a range of innovative new interpretations and future research avenues.

Pathways to Power in the Southern Brazilian Highlands: Taquara/Itarare settlement systems in Campo Belo do Sul, Santa Catarina state

Jonas Gregorio De Souza (Department of Archaeology, ~University of Exeter)

The Taquara/Itarare Tradition of the Southern Brazilian Highlands, with its well-planned pit house villages and ceremonial mound and enclosure complexes, has received increasing attention as an original case of emergence of complex societies in South America. This research presents new data for regional settlement systems in the Canoas-Pelotas Basin, Santa Catarina state, Brazil, a core area of the Taquara/Itarare tradition. A preliminary survey was conducted at the municipality of Campo Belo do Sul, filling up a gap in the archaeology of the region. These new data, integrated with published data from the surrounding regions, have the potential to~unveil~the trajectories towards the chiefdoms that were recorded in the area during the historical period. Possible central places represented by dense, complex pit house settlements~will receive special attention. This research is part of the "Southern Je Landscapes" international project funded by AHRC-FAPESP.

Moche frogs, toads and fertility: It's Raining Frogs?

Tatiana Vlémincq Mendieta (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

Did the Moche consider anura (amphibians) to be cosmologically associated with rain and agricultural fertility? This research project developed an epigraphic classification system that was applied to a large sample (n=303) of anura representations from Peruvian and international collections to assess recent theories. There was considerable variability in the representations of anura, with specific links between anura and representations of plant growth, water, rain and agricultural fertility. This connection was especially clearly seen in a very specialised form of anura - the sapo botánico (botanical toad) - that is represented with edible plants all over its body. The animal is therefore a representation of a water-reliant species that is directly associated with plant growth, and evidently elevated to the status of a mythical being. The scale and manner of representation of botanical toads argues against a deified status for the animal. However, the ecological characteristics of the Moche heartland - as well as the large population that was reliant upon its prosperity - would inevitably result in a strong social emphasis on rain and agricultural fertility. I would therefore argue that anura assumed the role of intermediaries between the gods and the Moche population, and that other depictions of anura comprise further evidence of their connection to ritualised appeals to the sacred world.

Metallurgical Traditions Under Inka Rule: A Technological Study Of Metals And Technical Ceramics From The Aconcagua Valley In Central Chile.

María Teresa Plaza and Marcos Martín-Torres (Institute of Archaeology, University College London)

The Aconcagua Valley (Central Chile) is located in the southernmost limit of the Inka territory of Tawantinsuyu. In this area, some indicators of Inka influence such as architecture, the Inka road, rock art and pottery have been studied, suggesting that the Inka developed a symbolic strategy to incorporate this area into the state. However, there has been less focus on the metallic and metallurgical evidence, which is both key in the Inka ideology, politics and expansion, and very distinctive of the Inka or Late Period in Central Chile.

Considering that technology is culturally determined, this research uses an approach based on the analysis of the technical aspects of the metals and metallurgical ceramics to reveal important insights about the cultural choices and social dynamics of the groups using and/or producing metals in the area, and the influence of the Inka in those technologies.

For this purpose, metallic artefacts and technical ceramics from two sites in the valley, Cerro La Cruz and Los Nogales, were subjected to analyses using SEM-EDS, optical microscopy, petrography, XDR and FTIR. These analytical techniques were used to identify manufacturing

techniques, raw materials, recipes and the extent of use of the metallic artefacts and technical ceramics.

The results suggest that both sites represent different technological traditions. At Cerro La Cruz, the predominance of typologies and techniques rooted in the indigenous Diaguita Culture and the scarcity of bronze, indicate a conservatism that may reflect a cultural resistance to the Inka domain. Conversely, at Los Nogales, the presence of typical Inka perforated crucibles lined with bone ash, together with the use of bronze, point to a tradition closely related to the Inka expansion, also documented in north-western Argentina, which would reflect a cultural receptivity from some local groups towards new technologies and their associated values.

These differences support the proposition that the Inka domination in the valley was heterogeneous and culturally contingent, and suggest a closer relationship between the state and some local groups, not previously identified.

Industrial Lead in Ancient Perú: the Curamba Smelter and Lead Sling Bullets

William E. Brooks (Geologist, Reston, VA 20191, webgeology@aim.com), Luisa Vetter Parodi, (Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Perú, Lima, 21212), Armando V. Farfán (George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 22030), and David Dykstra Lopez (Museo Larco, Lima, 21212, Perú).

Since the 16th century, the Inca site of Curamba, Dept. Apurímac, in southern Perú, has been interpreted as a metallurgical center for processing argentiferous galena, yet there was no physical evidence of the use of huayras or tocochimbos, the meter-sized structures traditionally used for silver smelting in the ancient Andes, only numerous burned and rock-lined depressions (hornos).

Inductively Coupled Plasma analyses of the scoria from the hornos indicate low Ag (0.3-0.4 ppm), Au (<2 ppm), and Cu (18-31 ppm); whereas, Pb (155-234 ppm) and Zn (125-259 ppm) were high. A lead-zinc signature is also indicated by elevated As, Ba, Fe, Mn, and V. The bedrock geology at Curamba is comprised of south-dipping, fine-grained Mesozoic limestone and lead-zinc occurrences are associated with the Mitu Formation that crops out only 1 km north of Curamba.

Ancient stone sling ammunition, known at several archaeological sites in Perú, indicates that

the sling (Spanish honda; Quechua huaraca, híwaraíka) was used in pre-contact Perú and it was the Inca weapon most feared by the Europeans. Several lead artifacts from ancient Perú have been described simply as bars or weights; however, these might be more accurately described as: 1) biconic to ovoid (30-60 mm, 30-40 g), and 2) spherical (35 mm, 80-160 g). Therefore, in composition, dimensions, form, and weight, these ancient Peruvian lead artifacts are strikingly similar to lead sling ammunition from ancient battle sites in Spain and the Mediterranean, and are herein interpreted to have served a similar function in ancient Andean warfare.