## **Colonial Latin American Historical Review**

Volume 19 Issue 2 Second Series, Volume 2, Issue 2 (Spring 2014)

Article 10

4-1-2014

## Steven A. Wernke, Negotiated Settlements: Andean Communities and Landscapes under Inka and Spanish Colonialism

Jeremy Ravi Mumford

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/clahr

## Recommended Citation

Mumford, Jeremy Ravi. "Steven A. Wernke, Negotiated Settlements: Andean Communities and Landscapes under lnka and Spanish Colonialism." Colonial Latin American Historical Review 19, 2 (2014): 275. https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/clahr/vol19/iss2/10

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colonial Latin American Historical Review by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact <a href="mailto:amywinter@unm.edu">amywinter@unm.edu</a>.

of each other prior to 1492, but one that the Catholic Church could use for purposes of evangelization because the Nahuas could easily relate to this type of celebration, or *mitote*, since something similar had been in use among them for their spiritual and political life prior to the conquest. Studying the mural painting programs of two Augustinian monasteries in Hidalgo, Mexico, in conjunction with "The Last Judgment," Schuessler demonstrates the interrelationship between murals and missionary theatre and how they form the artistic and ideological origins of Mexican plastic arts and literature.

"The Last Judgment" is based on a Spanish translation ("El auto del juicio final") by Fernando Horcasitas of the play that is attributed to Olmos and written in Nahuatl titled "Nexcluitilmachiotl motenehua Juicio Final." The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., houses the only copy, dated 1678, that has survived. The play was written and performed between 1531-1533.

After carefully consulting every pertinent source available, Schuessler develops his own convincing and well-founded arguments and documents all with copious notes. It is a nice example of scholarship, indeed. In addition to studying books and manuscripts in archives, as well as other sources, he also spent time at the two Augustinian monasteries in Hidalgo, observing in person all the remaining visual images: murals, paintings, and documents on-site, thus cementing his considerations on the interrelationship between mural painting and missionary theatre. The book requires a slow and careful reading due to the detail (numerous figures with notes, illustrations, and copious footnotes) that can be, at times, a bit tiring. However, for the reader interested in the Mexican colonial period, this well-written and documented book is a must read. Schuessler's *Foundational Arts* is appropriate for both graduate and undergraduate students and is recommended for libraries.

Lee A. Daniel

Department of Spanish/Latin American Studies

Texas Christian University

Negotiated Settlements: Andean Communities and Landscapes under Inka and Spanish Colonialism. By Steven A. Wernke. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013. xix + 371 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, notes, appendix, bibliography, index. \$79.95 cloth.)

Negotiated Settlements is the best result, so far, of a growing body of work on the historical archaeology of Andean Indian villages. Focusing on an area of the Colca valley in southern Peru, Steven Wernke uses field surveys, excavations, colonial documentation, and toponym analysis to reconstruct how the Inkas and the Spanish each made their impact on the villages of peasant farmers. This is a demanding book to read, with dense analyses of archaeological data, ethnohistory, and social science theory. Indeed, one

chapter's title, "Colonial Political-Ecological (Dis) Articulations," conveys something of what awaits the reader. At the same time, the book uses graphical information very effectively, combining topographical maps, aerial, ground-level and close-up photographs, and schematic diagrams to clarify complex arguments. Most importantly, Wernke addresses questions of interest to historians, shows real imagination in the use of data and tools not previously available—above all, Geographic Information System (GIS)—and is persuasive.

One of the book's greatest contributions is the re-periodization of Indian resettlement. Historians have long treated the Reducción General of Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, who in 1569 commanded that Indians move to centralized Spanish-style villages, as a turning-point. Wernke shows that in the Colca valley it was just one stage in a longer process, following resettlements ordered by the Inkas and by Franciscan friars who arrived in the 1540s. Each stage saw the creation, destruction, and reorganization of existing Indian villages; each took over and rearranged previous foundations, with Franciscans building chapels across the plaza from Inka administrative buildings known as *kallankas*.

As the book's title suggests, Wernke sees colonialism as negotiated rather than simply imposed. In this book, this means that settlement placement and design, though part of a coercive state or religious agenda, took account of people's needs and traditions. The following is offered as an example of his style of argument, simplified slightly for reasons of space. In the colonial village of Coporague, early seventeenth-century visitas contained landholding declarations by ayllus. Wernke was able to identify many of these small landholdings on a map, in part by systematically gathering names used by Coporaque farmers for their fields today. While the landholdings were scattered and intermingled, he used GIS to represent each ayllu's holdings as an ellipse with a functional central point, and at many of these points he found traces of long-abandoned settlements on the land. He persuasively argues that these were the pre-resettlement homes of known colonial ayllus—something that few if any have previously tried to locate. The ayllus were divided by a ravine, with each ayllu's lands lying either on its left or its right side, as seen from the top of the slope; traditionally, the right-hand side would have been the more prestigious. Wernke shows that the colonial village of Coporaque (founded at the command of the Spaniards) was situated close to the optimal point for reaching the various avllus' fields, but designed to be slightly more convenient for the right-hand ayllus. The argument, one of several case studies using a variety of kinds of analysis-including, among others, walking simulations that estimate travel times based on the terrain—is a tour-de-force of methodological imagination, applying new tools to questions historians have asked but been unable to answer.

Negotiated Settlements also offers a contribution to the problem of theorizing space and community, but one that is harder to pin down. Its first two chapters are a remarkably rich survey of theoretical work by

anthropologists, sociologists, and geographers. Wernke argues for an "emplaced" perspective, which treats the natural and built environment as both producer and product of human society, rather than a neutral Cartesian space. But an insistence on reading the "dynamics of land use and sociopolitical change as complex, multicausal processes both constructed culturally and constricted ecologically" (p. 33) can be exhausting. And investigations of "space, place, and spatialized imaginaries" (p. 34) do not always yield precise or falsifiable claims. In any case, Wernke addresses questions that scholars who are less invested in "place" and "space" than he is will find equally important and challenging. This book will have a major impact on the field.

Jeremy Ravi Mumford Department of History Brown University