

The essays in *Obsidian Reflections* demonstrate the type of methodological innovation required to expand our understanding of the cultural production of the early modern world. The studies in this volume work to square the archaeological record with ethno-historical evidence and in the process reveal how obsidian as a material object became imbued with complex sociopolitical meanings across space and time. The shiny, reflective surfaces of obsidian artifacts may have first captured the historical imagination of early modern observers; however, this ancient bling continues to open a window into another world, in this case, the history of Mesoamerican material culture.

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Voices from Vilcabamba: Accounts Chronicling the Fall of the Inca Empire.

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The clerics, officials, and soldiers of the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spanish empire in the Americas left many accounts of their experiences and the Native Americans that they encountered. Although these documents were written in Spanish or Latin, some of the most substantial have been translated into English, though many remain untranslated. Various scholars have been busily translating new texts, and in *Voices from Vilcabamba* Brian S. Bauer and his students have produced a very useful collection of texts.

The Spanish conquest of the Inca Empire of Peru is an epic filled with extraordinary violence and savagery on both sides. The central authority of the highly hierarchical Inca government collapsed abruptly due to Spanish treachery in 1532 aggravated by disunity among the native elite. Still, native resistance to the Spanish was widespread and members of the Incan royal family sought to harness its power. A native uprising besieged the Spanish in Cuzco but was repulsed in 1536. As a result, the rebellion's leader, Manco Inca, withdrew to the inaccessible Vilcabamba region where a remnant of the once great Inca state survived until 1572. Vilcabamba was a region of steep mountains, turbulent rivers, and dense jungles that had not been a part of the Inca Empire for very long. The lost city of Machu Picchu was one of the Inca strongholds in the Vilcabamba region. The events of and the people involved in the fall of Vilcabamba reveal much about the nature of the Spanish conquest of Peru.

Voices from Vilcabamba begins with two chapters by the authors/editors. The first chapter relates the events from 1536 to 1572 that ended with the expedition of Hurtado de Arbieta that resulted in the fall of Vilcabamba and the execution of Tupac Amaru. The second chapter deals with Hurtado de Arbieta's work as governor of the Vilcabamba region and his efforts to establish a Spanish colony at San Francisco de la Victoria de Vilcabamba. During his administration, he organized two expeditions (in 1582 and 1583) against the Amazonian tribe of the Pilcosuni along the Urubamba River. Both ended in miserable failure due to the unfavorable conditions of weather and landscape. The second chapter is especially useful since it deals with events that historians have generally ignored.

The book includes translations of five documents dealing with the fall of Vilcabamba and the Spanish colony. Each document has an introduction and is edited and annotated.

blades and ornamental objects were instrumental in legitimizing the reigning Tarascan dynasty in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Alejandro Pastrana and Ivonne Athie argue in chapter 3 that obsidian in postclassic Central Mexico was a complex material object that was valued for its medicinal properties, practical functionality, and cosmological significance. An account from the 1570s by the Spanish naturalist Francisco Hernández describes obsidian, or *itztli* in Nahuatl, saying, "The stones are ... so smooth and shiny ... when they have been carved and polished." Pastrana and Athie trace the sequence of events that led to the production and consumption of obsidian bling in the Aztec Triple Alliance, expanding on earlier studies that focused on the obsidian's economic significance. The stone was what they term "a strategic resource" with a diverse cultural role that vacillated between economic resource, raw material, military weapon, and ideological tool. The findings presented by Pastrana and Athie parallel Darras's findings in the Tarascan context, in that both studies conclude that obsidian, although a valuable material resource, functioned cosmologically for the Mesoamerican cultures that mined it. In chapter 4, John Monaghan also uses ethnographic techniques to study the use of obsidian cutting tools in the contemporary Mixtec community of Santiago Nuyoo (Oaxaca, Mexico). Monaghan contrasts contemporary obsidian shaping practices with ethnohistorical evidence drawn from the sixteenth-century Mixtec codices to distinguish further the symbolic significance of obsidian in the ancient Mesoamerican world.

Chapters 5 and 6 in the second section of the book hone in on the ritual use of obsidian objects in ancient Mesoamerica through archaeological field studies. The abundant archaeological research presented in chapter 5 by Kazuo Aoyama demonstrates an elite monopoly on the production, use, and exchange of obsidian in Copán, Pasión, and Petexbatun between 1400 BCE and 1100 CE. In chapter 6, coeditor Marc Levine's research on late postclassic Tututepec obsidian trade networks in Oaxaca demonstrates that the possession of obsidian objects may have symbolically represented connections to powerful settlements in the Basin of Mexico or invoked ties to the sacred landscape.

The third and final section of *Obsidian Reflections* explores how obsidian figured in ancient Mesoamerican ritual practice. Coeditor David Carballo constructs a semiotic analysis of obsidian objects excavated from Feature 173 and Structure 12L-1 at La Laguna (Tlaxcala, Mexico). Carballo concludes that the type of offering and placement within the archaeological context reveals an increased preoccupation with death, warfare, and the underworld, themes that have been associated with an increase in militarism commonly observed during Teotihuacan's rise to power. In chapter 8, W. James Stemp and Jaime Awe study obsidian excavated from Maya caves in Belize. They uncover how obsidian objects were shaped and distributed during their use in subterranean ritual practice between 700 and 950 CE. Human and animal sacrifice was more common deep within Maya caves; however, public rituals that employed obsidian objects were staged in more public zones where community involvement in fertility rites supported agricultural practices. Mari Carmen Serra Puche, Jesús Carlos Lazcano Arce, and Mónica Blanco García Méndez explore the domestic possibilities of obsidian at Xochitecatl-Cacaxtla where artifacts made with the precious material were used in bloodletting practices. Obsidian lancets and punches found in proximity to fine pottery in residential sites point to a diverse ceremonial practice that delimited a ritual calendar that was essential for maintaining social relations among elites. Following chapter 9, William Parry's conclusion provides a fitting capstone for the volume.

The first document consists of the chapters from Martín de Murúa's *Historia general del Perú* (1616). Murúa was a Mercedarian priest and a fine scholar. His *Historia general* is an important source that was used by both his contemporaries and later historians. It has not been translated into English before so this translation is very welcome. The second document is the *Descripción de la provincial de Sant Francisco de la Victoria de Villcapampa* of Baltasar de Ocampo Conejeros. Ocampo was a down-on-his-luck Spaniard who wrote the *Descripción* for the viceroy of Peru in hopes of gaining a pension or subsidy to sustain him in his old age. It is an accurate account that provides considerable material not found elsewhere. Despite being translated into English as part of Clements Markham's edition of Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa's *History of the Incas* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1907), Ocampo has been little used by scholars. This new translation will make it more accessible. The third document is Diego Rodríguez de Figueroa's report of his mission to the Inca ruler Titu Cusi Yupanqui to negotiate a treaty in 1565. It provides considerable information about this episode that can be found in no other surviving documents. Extracts from Antonio Bautista de Salazar's chronicle of the Spanish rule of Peru form the fourth document. Salazar had access to the viceregal archive in the writing of his history. Although much of it has been lost, the section dealing with the administration of the viceroy Francisco de Toledo has survived. The extracts deal with the events in Vilcabamba from 1570 to the execution of Tupac Amaru in September 1572. It has also not previously been translated into English. Finally the fifth set of documents consist of testimonies supporting the canonization of the Augustinian priest Diego Ortiz. Ortiz began his work in the Vilcabamba region in 1569 and got along quite well with the natives, unlike some of the other Spanish missionaries. The sudden death of the Inca ruler Titu Cusi Yupanqui aroused a frenzy among the natives that led to Ortiz's cruel execution. The translated documents provide crucial details about Ortiz's missionary work and death.

Voices from Vilcabamba is a fine piece of scholarship. It provides access to important documents that for the most part have never been translated into English. The introductory chapters, the introductions to the documents, and the notes are all very helpful. The text is illustrated by photos of historic buildings or reproductions of Guaman Poma de Ayala's illustrations from Inca history. The maps are hard to read and should have been larger. A map placing Vilcabamba in its geographical context in Peru would have been helpful. Despite that quibble, scholars will welcome this book and it can be used to introduce students to some unique historical documents.



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This book is a festschrift for the renowned archaeologist David Webster, and a celebration of the archaeology program at Pennsylvania State University. With the exception of a few colleagues, his wife, and Webster himself, the contributors are his former students. It is also for that matter an outgrowth of a symposium held in 2012 at the meetings of the Society for American Archaeology.