

interested in archaeology and ethnohistory in this area for a very long time.

Ancient Households on the North Coast of Peru. ILANA JOHNSON, DAVID PACIFICO, and ROBYN E. CUTRIGHT, editors. 2021. University Press of Colorado, Louisville. 317 pp. \$76.00 USD (hardback), ISBN 978-1-64642-090-2. \$0.00 USD (ebook), ISBN 978-1-64642-091-9.

Reviewed by Aleksa K. Alaica, University of Alberta and University of British Columbia

This volume emerged out of a timely session “Daily Practice and Encultured Experience: Exploring Domestic Life among the Moche of Northern Peru” held at the 2014 meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Austin, Texas. This edited volume expands beyond the Moche to include a set of key chapters about household archaeology through two millennia on the North Coast of Peru. The volume has 10 contributions, with each author carefully crafting their chapter to address the wider state of household studies in the region.

In their opening chapter, David Pacifico and Ilana Johnson effectively establish the central themes that are explored throughout the volume; their consideration and definition of a household lay the foundation for later discussion and debates. I found it interesting that “household” rather than “house” was the central word used to consider daily life, domestic practices, and local activities. Nuances in these terms could introduce slight differences in the types of interpretations of how communities persist or change over time. Furthermore, it begs the question: Is “house” just the physical architecture of a “household,” or does it have its own set of constraints and affordances in maintaining domestic lifeways?

Each chapter focuses on individual case studies from the Early Horizon to the Late Intermediate period between the Nepeña and Lambayeque Valleys. Although Brian Billman alludes to his own extensive work in the Moche Valley, his broader take on the state of household archaeology is direct and critical of the overt favoring of large urban and mortuary contexts by research projects since the 1990s. These critiques are striking, alerting readers to the fact that household archaeology has not been a key part of research design and objectives since the 1970s and 1980s. This early chapter therefore frames the innovative work of the rest of the authors and showcases the importance of studying households to better understand the lives of people in the past.

David Chicoine and colleagues discuss some of the earliest contexts considered in this volume at the Early Horizon site of Caylán in the Nepeña Valley. By focusing on the layout of *cercaduras*, Chicoine meticulously reveals common planning and coordination across household contexts. This evidence supports his innovative interpretation that controlling access patterns within *cercaduras* led to the social engineering of privacy and thus hierarchy in residential spaces. This research attests to the ways that prehispanic Andes communities coordinated across neighborhoods and that intergroup consensus manifested in cohesive domestic spaces for daily activities and self-sufficient practice.

Moving from the Early Horizon to Middle Horizon, Guy Duke considers mobile domestic communities in the Moche cultural phase of the Jequetepeque Valley. He situates his important work within the framework of the household as a process rather than a discrete entity. Examining variation across the valley, his work at the sites of Wasi Huachuma and Huaca Colorada links choices made about culinary practices. Rejecting the household as exclusively a process of the physical house, Duke effectively links the domestic context with seasonal changes in residence according to economic, social, and ritual schedules. This stance restores agency to past communities that were in control of their own lives as they responded to environmental and political situations. Giles Spence Morrow also considers the site of Huaca Colorada and makes a thought-provoking argument for elite monumental spaces as sacred houses, à la Levi-Strauss’s *société a maison*. Although he examines the same site as Duke, Spence Morrow constructively describes how collective renovations can foster a profound sense of place and belonging. Beyond the (re)construction of Huaca Colorada’s monumental sector, the religious practices involving elites and commoner participants formed powerful bonds through the model of the sacred house, a replicated set of features in the built environment.

Farther north in the Lambayeque Valley, Johnson expands the discussion on Moche household practice by examining gender dynamics through previously identified “Priestess” and “Labretted Lady” figurine styles and the recently identified “Feline Headdress Female” style. Pivoting between the subject and object dichotomy, she explores how figurines were involved in individualized activities along with shamanistic practices that were particularly related to phases of menarche and maternity. I found that the discussion of Fabiola Chavez Hualpa’s work on *curanderas* in the Piura region enriched Johnson’s interpretations on figurines as proxies for feminine identity. Furthermore,

she convincingly demonstrates how figurines were useful objects to subvert state control over women's bodies, a notably relevant contribution to discussions on bodily autonomy in the current political climate.

At El Purgatorio, Pacifico realizes the scale of variation among households under the control of Casma State. In his thorough analysis, he identifies three scales of habitation, from the low-status and middle-status commoners in irregularly constructed buildings to elites who lived in monumental districts. Clearly embedded within both qualitative and quantitative patterns, household configuration and social access to valued products and food resources are directly related. By examining both ceramic and organic remains within distinct architectural spaces, Pacifico sheds important light on the transition between the Middle Horizon and Late Intermediate periods and the adjustments that communities made to daily practice during immigration.

Chapters 8 and 9 were contributed by Robyn Cutright and Kari Zobler, respectively, and center on the Jequetepeque Valley. Their respective research focuses complement each other nicely in that both are debating the continuity of household practices. Cutright's work at Ventanillas and Pedregal effectively highlights the great variability at the household level, even within the same region. Most importantly, by focusing on food preparation, she convincingly argues how continuity in Pedregal households strongly suggests their autonomy even when under Chimú occupation, whereas elite households at Ventanillas strategically allied their activities to gain advantage through Chimú social and economic networks. Zobler's work at Talambo notably rejects the assumption of household change between the Late Moche and Transitional occupational phases. Instead, she draws on ceramic and food refuse evidence to assert that there was little alteration to practice, even with the waning influence of San José de Moro and the notable presence of highland Cajamarca influence elsewhere in the valley. The conversation between these chapters is notable for any reader who is unconvinced by the monolithic trope of the unchanging household.

In the final chapter, Edward Swenson offers essential insights on the way that each contribution expands on the method and theory of household archaeology. In particular, he reaffirms the active role of households as spaces and processes integral to the realization of high-level political institutions. It is clear by the end of this volume that more work needs to be conducted on the concept of the house and household across the Andes and globally. This volume is a key text to have on any bookshelf, and emerging research will

surely draw from this significant work for years to come.

A Maya Universe in Stone. STEPHEN HOUSTON, editor. 2021. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. ix + 182 pp., 88 illus. \$50.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-60606-744-4.

Reviewed by Jean Tremblay, Université de Montréal, Montreal, Canada

A Maya Universe in Stone examines and explores a series of lintels celebrated in art history scholarship and attributed to Mayuy, a creative Maya sculptor from the Classic period. Carved in Laxtunich, Guatemala, they exhibit scenes of rituals performed by local magnates overseen by their lord, Cheleew Chan K'inich from Yaxchilan. The lintels were taken out of Guatemala in the 1960s. From the outset, Stephen Houston highlights that the objective of this book is to build the case that they were looted and to highlight the impact of that loss, as well as to "contextualize [Mayuy's] masterworks to point the way to the lintels reprovenancing and, as an ultimate aim, repatriation to their country of origin" (p. 9).

In 1950, Dana Lamb stumbled onto two of Mayuy's lintels while visiting a remote region of northern Guatemala. The documentation of the explorer being incomplete, Andrew Scherer, Charles Golden, and Houston lay out in Chapter 2 a series of direct and indirect clues to pinpoint the exact location of Laxtunich. They piece together personal letters, hand-drawn maps, notes, and sketches from Lamb himself to conclude that the city is likely to be in the general vicinity of El Túnel and La Pasadita, about 30 km southeast of Piedras Negras. The authors go on to reconstruct how the lintels could have been acquired by collectors and serve as "a moral example of Maya art ripped from their source" (p. 35).

Chapter 3 will surely appeal to art historian readers as Houston, Scherer, and Karl Taube embark on a journey to describe Mayuy's oeuvre. His carving provides a unique opportunity for the reader to track a single artist's trajectory over four commissions. Mayuy's known work, which spans from AD 769 to 783, shows a novel understanding of human sight. The lintels exhibit an extraordinary density of interlocking information and address the challenge of displaying Maya hierarchies within multifigural compositions while producing a comprehensive and cohesive narrative. The authors discuss the artist's innovative visual effects in Maya text and imagery and his three-dimensional virtuosity. They go on to describe the