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Introduction

The present volume builds upon the core of Adam T. Smith's work, *The Political Landscape: Constellations of Authority in Early Complex Polities*, which was based on Henri Lefebvre's original thesis that the production of space is a social construct.¹ This collection of essays articulates the ways political terrains were created, manipulated, and contested for a variety of capitals across time, including Amarna, Ayutthaya, Bangkok, Belgrade, Constantinople, Cusco, Kiev, Matera, Mexico-Tenochtitlan, Moscow, Novgorod, Pliska, Preslav, Ras, Rome, Smederevo, Thonburi, Tiwanaku, Tehran, Veliko Tŕrnovo, and Vladimir. Smith gives politics and their manifestation in space greater theoretical traction by focusing on ancient polities with occasional insights into modern and global societies. The pluralism of capitals discussed here—some remain well-known capital cities, others are reduced to archaeological vestiges, and a few exist only in textual references—was chosen to allow a broader empirical discussion of the topic. The authors examine selected capitals as wide-ranging political terrain or, to adopt Smith's terminology, *political landscape*, which encompasses urban settings as well as human-modified natural environments. Smith emphasizes that political landscapes promote individual mental perceptions through people's physical experience. This terrain can be further rendered in public performances or modern media to channel imagination of an intended audience.

The Spatial Turn and Political Landscapes of Capital Cities

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Specifically, Smith focuses on selected examples from Mesopotamia and Mesoamerica to demonstrate how political landscapes can be socially constructed: they can be both memorialized and reinvented resulting in a network of relations layered in time, which he identifies by the term *geopolitics*. The broad geographical and chronological perspectives presented here aim to develop a more comprehensive view of the different and similar ways people use space in capitals and related territories to articulate the disparate and in some cases overlapping political aspirations and values of not only its citizens but occasionally outsiders as well.

THEORIES OF SPACE: ADDRESSING POLITICAL TERRITORIES, THE SPATIAL TURN

In his *Political Landscape*, Smith points out that very few studies in anthropology and archaeology explore the spatial arena of politics for early complex societies.² More traditional studies in his field, he states, center on defining social evolutionary models for early societies. Examinations of the political depths of space do exist in the field of anthropology, yet the focus of much of this work centers on modern and contemporary periods, making Smith's examination of political landscapes for early societies innovative. Smith's work follows several threads of the so-called spatial turn that developed between the 1970s and the 1990s as a paradigm shift in the humanities, which reintroduced the studies of space and spatiality as cultural dimensions.³ The respective disciplines of art and architectural history represented in these essays were certainly influenced by this academic trend, for Western but especially among studies of non-Western cultures.⁴ The spatial turn was instigated by a number of scholars who examine space beyond its strictly positivistic framework by combining various approaches within a number of disciplines.

Academic examinations that took into account the sociopolitical factors in spatial theories took off when the French Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre introduced the concept of "the right to the city" in 1968 and crystallized it with his book *The Production of Space*, first published in 1974.⁵ In this seminal work that studied space as created, codified, and used through social, political, and everyday processes, Lefebvre succeeded in defining space as a social product; in this and later work he downplayed the importance given to the visual in favor of a more social, holistic approach that incorporated a complete sensory experience. Simultaneously, geographer and philosopher Yi-Fu Tuan pioneered the field of humanist geography, which focused on human interactions and exchanges with and within space, including its physical and social

dimensions, by merging geography with philosophy, art, psychology, and religion.⁶ Tuan's contributions marked the beginning of substantial involvement by geographers in defining the social and phenomenological territory in spatial terms. Social theorist David Harvey further developed Lefebvre's right to the city by reintroducing discussions about space within his Marxist critique of global capitalism, which, according to him, annihilates space.⁷

Lefebvre approached Tuan's understanding of space as real (physical) and perceived, but he also introduced the third concept of the lived (experienced) space that coexists with real and perceived areas and can be understood through the actions of those who use and inhabit such locales. Cultural theorist and political geographer Edward Soja picked up these threads to reassert space within scholarly discourse and developed the notion of the "third space,"⁸ which is simultaneously both real and imagined. Soja further enriched the discussions about physical, perceptual, and experienced dimensions of space by combining his ideas of third space with Michel Foucault's poststructuralist thoughts about "other places" (heterotopias)⁹ and with spatial metaphors deriving from postcolonial scholarship advanced by intellectuals such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Edward Said, and Homi K. Bhabha.¹⁰ Smith embraces this postmodernist conceptual legacy; his methods are innovative because they also consider the subjective experience as well as the transcendental qualities of space. In his work, Smith unifies actual with imagined space, taking into account both real and imagined areas as the concrete and virtual locus of structured individual and collective experience.

Smith's major contribution is the reintroduction of a critical analysis of space in anthropological studies of early complex societies.¹¹ To that end, he carefully chooses the spatial terms that are critical for such analysis. Smith adopts Yi-Fu Tuan's familiar but entangled terms *place*, *space*, and *landscape*.¹² Landscape emerges as a synthesis of spatiality and temporality in the "production of ties that bind together spaces (as forms delimiting physical experience), places (as geographic or built aesthetics that attach meaning to locations), and representations (as imagined cartographies of possible worlds)."¹³ Smith's terminology for landscape is related to its use for contemporary capital societies, where studies more commonly emphasize that space is political.¹⁴ For Smith, space materializes "in relations between objects, an ontological revision that demands an account of landscapes as social artifacts that are produced and reproduced through varying dimensions of spatial practice."¹⁵

Within such significantly expanded horizons of spatial categories and sociocultural transformations of natural land, landscape becomes political as it includes notions of authority, power, perception, symbolism, and social

imagination of historically, economically, and geographically created spaces. As Smith recognizes in his work, in the field of art history the topic of the political landscape has likewise been explored.¹⁶ In 1995, Martin Warnke published a brief study with the same title followed by the subtitle, *The Art History of Nature*.¹⁷ Warnke's research informs that the phrase *political landscape* was first recorded in a report about an exhibition of the *Kunstverein* used to describe a painting by Bernhard Stange.¹⁸ This straightforward and under-theorized study of numerous examples focuses on physical features that make a landscape political, such as boundary markers, monuments, roads, bridges, canals, castles, parks, and gardens. Warnke does not rigorously separate nature and landscape. Although embracing modernist thought that nature in a pure and unspoiled form does not exist, he also adheres to the Western European romantic notion of nature as a universal entity occupying absolute space, which has only been poisoned and devastated by mankind.¹⁹ The layered dynamics of life experiences contradict the static image of Warnke's political landscape as it reduces understandings of cultural forces and processes, which are entrapped into universalist notions. Therefore, Smith's model of political landscapes is crucially different, as it aims to illuminate the temporal layers and spatial relations of the complex dynamics of human actions.

Smith's work on *Political Landscape* shows that he embraces the spatial turn instigated by spatial theorists. By highlighting that politics as social action always happens in space in order to exist, he argues for the spatiality of politics and civil authority through critical examination of political landscapes in their plural spatial-temporal meanings: from the natural environment "transformed by human activities or perceptions" to the "totality of the external world as mediated through subjective human experience."²⁰ He examines political landscapes both theoretically and empirically by focusing on early complex polities by drawing multiple references from the Classic Maya, Urartian, and Mesopotamian cultures. Throughout his work Smith examines the constellations of political landscapes on various scales, balancing between wider theory and details from material evidence, by employing consistently three major analytical categories: experience, perception, and imagination. Smith defines the experiential category of the political landscape as "an experience of form that shapes how we move through created environments"; perception as "a sensibility evoking responses in subjects through perceptual dimensions of physical space"; and imagination as "an imaginative aesthetic guiding representation of the world at hand."²¹

Smith's work is of special interest for both theoretical and empirical studies of space. His work is a reminder of how empirical studies that engage space,

both in the landscape and human-made environments, can provide a critical understanding of diachronic issues of significance in historical and contemporary worlds. Spatial categories are always important and always idiosyncratic.²² Thus, Smith opposes approaches commonly used in archaeological, historical, and regional studies that are based on universal, evolutionary, deterministic notions that aim to generalize over studies of particular cultures and privilege time over space. Smith's prospatial approach is significant, for it allows for an examination of specific coherent spatial units.

Because positivistic empirical examination of multifaceted evidence often yields contradictory and inconclusive results, Smith encourages the use of hybrid methodological approaches that go beyond stark conflicts between positivism and interpretivism, essentially based on historicism and subjective studies that include various communicative and phenomenological threads of thought.²³ However, Smith also provides a strong critique of all these approaches when individually applied and is particularly critical of evolutionary and historicist theories that minimize the importance of space.

Smith is primarily concerned with the rise of authority in early complex and primary polities and thus his spatial discourse begins with noting prevailing philosophies of social evolutionism and their avoidance of space as a category of critical discourse.²⁴ Smith's work is foremost a solid critique of teleological social evolutionism and its treatment of space as an absolute and universal element. In general terms, social evolutionism is understood as the study of human cultural development in terms of categories of increasing complexity. Although social evolutionary theorists have argued that in different parts of the world social evolution may proceed slower or faster, they claim its direction and mechanisms can be universally applied.²⁵ Some social evolutionists further stipulate that the material dimensions of life primarily condition social transformation, which include economies that can shape belief structures and other cultural expressions.²⁶ Smith's overriding critique argues that social evolutionism focuses on projected temporal stages in human history and thus undertheorizes the factor of space because, for social evolutionism, space is kept as a constant or an absolute. Moreover, evolutionist theories, much like structuralist positions commonly advocated by some social anthropologists, have trouble accounting for individual contributions. Smith debates various mechanical and organic accounts of absolute space and then summarizes his critique in three major points.²⁷

First, space does not exist as an independent object of research. Second, if space were held absolute, then it becomes inaccessible to empirical research. Absolute spaces may be described and inventoried, but no rigorous

understanding of their social lives can be obtained. Third, the absolutist position only examines physical spatial form, leaving out vital dimensions of imagination, place, and memory and how they condition space. Smith critiques location theories, advanced in the 1950s by geographers such as August Lösch and Walter Isard, that generalized spatial, geometric patterns into a geometry of human behavior in space factored with market rationality and efficiency not only as tools for understanding human settlements but also as methods for urban and regional planning.²⁸ By extension, the physical size of locales was used to measure their hierarchical level, based on a preconceived assumption that primary sites are the largest in area and demographics.²⁹

Smith is particularly critical of romantic subjectivism and neo-subjectivism. Romantic subjectivism blossomed in the nineteenth century when early explorers set out to investigate ancient cultures in Egypt and the Near East in order to prove historical accuracy of accounts in the Bible. Smith's primary objections are that romantic subjectivism draws an uncritical and asocial link between people and places, establishing a direct and naïve relationship between a locale and a normative set of beliefs and values, and that it overly aestheticizes form.³⁰

Within neo-subjectivism of the twentieth century, communicative and phenomenological strands prevailed. Communicative traditions view space as an active agent that not only passively expresses certain aesthetics but also communicates information about the social world that produced it. From this perspective, people construct spaces that, in turn, shape human behavior. Phenomenological traditions approach built forms as representations of total lived sensory experience.³¹ In broad terms, spatial forms stimulate perception resonating with cultural values that project into imagination. Smith's critique of subjective space is twofold. First, neo-subjectivism inadequately considers how spaces accrue meaning and thus conveys a static sense of social process. Second, subjectivist approaches turn space into a reflective personalized category and do not weigh in social practices, making such studies increasingly apolitical.³²

Instead, as an alternative to the absolute and subjective treatment of space, Smith argues for a relational ontology of human landscape.³³ In his model, the focus of spatial analysis shifts from an attempt to define the essential nature of space to an investigation of the human practices that shape and alter particular social formations. Smith advocates Lefebvre's thesis that space is inherently a social product and that it has to be analyzed through social production. He proposes to investigate landscapes according to three linked dimensions: (i) spatial experience dealing with transport, communication,

land use, administrative and economic divisions in physical space, and other social practices that leave marks on the natural settings; (2) spatial perception addressing the sensual interaction between actors and physical spaces through various sign categories; and (3) spatial imagination, which analyzes pictorial representations, spatial theory, and philosophy.³⁴

Smith's relational approach to the study of landscapes is not entirely new in itself. In Maya studies, for example, the complex interactions of Maya polities have widely been explored as geopolitical relations.³⁵ Yet, Smith cogently leads from a relational account of space to a relational account of politics as the two bases of his model for political landscapes.

LOCALES OF POLITICAL AUTHORITY: CAPITAL (CITY)

In his relational analysis of political landscapes, Smith highlights the role of urban environments, and specifically the role of the city, as a locale of political authority. He recognizes cities as places where elites are located and where their use of physical form instigates the creation and reproduction of constellations of authority, making them primary sites of sovereignty associated with the ruling elite and governmental systems.³⁶ Indeed, anthropological studies of social evolution are mostly interested in primary states (the first states to develop in the region) in contrast to secondary states (that are considered to reflect influences from primary states rather than active processes of exchanges between primary and secondary states). Smith favors a definition of the complex polity as a political form based on preindustrial modes of production. Such political forms are characterized by pronounced social stratification that is maintained through centralized government institutions that control economic resources by constant threats of legitimate force. He understands the historical formation of the modern state concept in Europe and the United States as a series of shifts and renegotiations in the theoretical construction of government as a personalized or active agentive entity versus a general and universal institution.³⁷

The challenges in archaeology and various disciplines that deal with architecture and planning are how to apply contemporary state definitions to materials and physical remains documented in ancient societies. Smith argues that the concept of the state is a useless tool for political analyses of early complex polities for four debatable reasons: (1) its vague definition; (2) archaeologists project current politics and practices of the state back in history by attempting to explain the "archaic" or "primary" state; (3) the concept of the contemporary state is no longer a helpful, critical reflection of contemporary political praxis,

nor can the study of early complex polities as archaic states be geared toward understanding the present; and (4) concepts of the state dissociate it from specific places.³⁸

In this volume, the capital city *is* the critical place where we demonstrate how physical spaces and political power structures dynamically negotiate authority in a relational network; the setting where these competitive relationships are constructed or intersected is the political terrain that centers in the capital city. Smith criticizes the conceptual singularity of the city founded on spatial absolutism and on strict Marxist political-economic accounts that “exhaust the analysis of civil authority and governance.”³⁹ He objects to the study of the city as an object and locale but does suggest a pluralization of Lewis Mumford’s definition of the city as “a geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theater of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of collective unity.”⁴⁰ Although there is no simple, singular definition of the city or capital, the authors in this volume use the English word *city*, which condenses multiple physical and sociocultural aspects of polity located in a settlement while at the same time pushing the boundaries of any single term, including the term *city* itself.⁴¹ We start with the understanding that *capital* is a city serving as the seat of government for a country, province, state, county, or other administrative area.⁴² In a more general sense, a capital city is the principal locale of its kind (in a region, group, etc.), of the highest importance because it is where political authority is constantly renegotiated and reestablished; hence our focus on the spatial definition and existence of capital cities.⁴³

Although we can see how the state as an ideological tool can be used in social evolution to mask modern political and economic practices, there is no compelling need for analysis of ancient governments to have direct links with present political practices besides the inert bias of any researcher for her/his own culture. Therefore, adopting a broad scope of investigations, we invest both terms, *state* and *polity*, with the same meaning, as an organized and socially stratified political community with specific forms of government, and we link them with the capital as the primary place where political authority is concentrated. For this reason, our definition of the state-polity as a political entity remains flexible. We come together by the need to articulate the complexities of politics in space across cultures, not by the need to uphold any single terminology.

More importantly we are interested in reconnecting authority with place and space, and fully embrace the relational approach, which Smith stipulates for an understanding of politics. Smith outlines geopolitical relationships,

dealings between regimes and subjects, ties among power elites and grassroots social groups, and associations among governmental institutions, all of which shape the political apparatus holding the legitimate power to intercede in asymmetrical relationships as the ultimate authority. Quite appropriately, Smith differentiates power from authority on the basis that the latter includes a publicly recognized legitimacy to dispense power.⁴⁴ Thus, *authority* is the more productive term for examining the gamut of political relations. Authority has a spatial dimension as well; it links the various actors in its geopolitical network as well as a temporal one in the sense that it has to be reproduced and revalidated, and it most often is located to a specific place.⁴⁵ Some regimes attach a geographic or cosmologic universality to their authority that can never be realized in practical material terms, making it possible for their political territory to be constantly filled-in and sometimes remapped. As the built environment of any political landscape ages, it can become irreconcilable with the ideology of many past policies; in such cases, authority has to be periodically renewed. Environmental catastrophes as much as social transformations can likewise alter political landscapes, requiring the redefinition and renewal of authority. Agents of authority dispersed over space and natural landscapes can likewise express a plurality of sovereign relations that can themselves be socially unstable and shifting, reacting in essence to changing political climate.⁴⁶ Ultimately, Smith's model successfully dissects the intertwined relationships generated by the production and reproduction of authority both in space and over time; this was the inspiration and jumping off point for our project.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS VOLUME: WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING THE SPATIAL DEPTHS OF CAPITALS

Because “no one locale presents useful cogent evidence for all dimensions of the political landscape,”⁴⁷ and given that there is no single way to exert authority, the selected capitals analyzed here reflect the scholarly interests of the authors in exploring the ways capitals defined political terrain without succumbing to reductionist tendencies based on tightly defined chronological, geographical, or restrictive research agendas. The aim of this project, therefore, is twofold: (1) to present case studies from a variety of divergent cultures that explore the ways politics took spatial form across time and space; and (2) to probe empirically how the production of space is a common tactical process in politics employed by those wishing to govern more effectively, which tests the foundational components of Smith's theoretical approach toward political

landscapes. Smith closely delineates his framework of research by focusing on early complex polities with relatively abundant archaeological and textual references. Here, we have chosen to delineate the framework of this volume by studying capitals as primary locales of authority in relation to set reference points (social constellations) in space where intersecting political practices within their polity (the largest politically organized social unit) take place. Our volume presents a challenge to Smith's framework because, in contrast to Smith, who examines early societies with writing systems and whose approach relies heavily on both textual and archaeological evidence, here we pursue a broader scope, discussing diachronic capitals in different parts of the world. Simply put, this book directly addresses what the subscribed authors trained in different methodologies deem is a need in their respective disciplines: to advance an understanding about the various ways political authority and legitimacy can be established, maintained, and challenged through the use of space within capitals and in their wider political territories.

In chapter 1, Jessica Joyce Christie reconstructs how the Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaten (ruled ca. 1353–1339 BCE) in the New Kingdom envisioned and materialized a new capital city, el-Amarna, on ground that had not been occupied before. Akhenaten began his reign in the Egyptian city of Thebes, where he demoted the traditional Theban triad of gods and replaced them with the Sun God, Aten. Christie highlights the bond between Aten, who became the single primary god of Egypt, and Akhenaten, who acted as his sole human steward and conduit. This bond between the sole ruler and unique god was materialized in el-Amarna, the city that Akhenaten founded. Primary data about Akhenaten and his capital come from archaeological surveys and excavations, the iconography of documented sculptures and tomb paintings, as well as deciphered hieroglyphic texts on the boundary stelae and writing on the Amarna letters. Christie pieces these information sources together to reflect upon relations between the pharaoh and his god and between the pharaoh and his subjects as those relations were ritually performed in the city of el-Amarna and its surrounded natural landscape; the spatial experience of such performances was designed to accentuate a divine relation.

Akhenaten defined his capital's territorial boundaries by formalized acts of visitation to specific places in the surrounding cliffs, marked by stelae. Christie traces the mapping of the political landscape of Amarna by analyzing the performance context of the boundary stelae, some of which contain long inscriptions that explain Akhenaten's visions of el-Amarna. These boundary carvings also commemorate ceremonial offerings to the Aten. The partial build-out of el-Amarna proceeded close to the Nile River bed along the Royal

Road running north to south and linking multiple palaces, two Aten temples, numerous administrative buildings, and residential sectors. These critical sections of the new capital were further interconnected by official ritual acts linking the ruler Akhenaten to the city and the state patron, Aten. Therefore, the official rituals recorded at the boundary stelae were replicated in multiple urban settings to construct a network of empowered relations between Akhenaten and the Aten, his subjects, foreigners, as well as with the natural landscape of el-Amarna.

Chapter 2 by Gregor Kalas takes the discussion to ancient Rome of the Tetrarchy established in the late third century, whereby the vast territory of the Roman Empire was divided in two sections—eastern and western—under the joint rulership of two senior and two junior emperors to mirror the partition of the Roman world. By using archaeological sources, surviving monuments, Roman texts, and historical documents, Kalas reconstructs the historical slice of Rome set at approximately 300 CE and demonstrates how authorities used spatial renewal to control perceptions of time as a result of territorial control and urban interventions. The types of political relations he investigates are both temporal and spatial, linking the center, Rome, with its past, its future, and its imperial growth. Rituals, monuments, and iconography were very important in cementing the authority and permanence of the Tetrarchy. Kalas also highlights how generic spatial claims to the four world divisions were inserted into the ritual and public space of the capital. Even though the territory and government of the empire were *de facto* divided, the Tetrarchs' public message was that domains of political authority of the empire operated as one. This vital view drove the performance of rituals and guided the styles of visual culture. The starting point of imperial strategy was to establish a parallel between earthly governance and heavenly order, which was most directly expressed by divine bonds between the two senior emperors and the Roman gods.

Kalas mines additional layers of political authority and its institutions by analyzing imperial panegyric texts and architecture of the two rostra on the Roman Forum. A panegyric oration delivered in 297 CE linked the four emperors with the four sectors of the world, the four seasons, and the four essential elements, which added a new emphasis on the natural order of time cycles and earthly governance with the seasons, suggesting renewal in perpetuity. Such ideological claims were publicly performed in the central area of the Roman Forum, where Diocletian and Maximian remodeled the Augustan rostrum at the west end and added a second rostrum in the east. Even though the two rostra survive in fragmentary form, Kalas offers well-grounded interpretations

of how the four emperors mapped out the geopolitical landscape based upon iconography and spatial context of Rome constructed as a universal cosmogram. Moreover, he shows how around 300 CE urban repairs in Rome, despite its rich preexisting strata, radically transformed political experiences.

In chapter 3, Jelena Bogdanović outlines the transformation of Constantinople consecrated in 330 CE by Emperor Constantine I as capital of the eastern section of the Roman Empire into the geo-religious landscape of the Christian, Byzantine capital. By examining archaeological evidence, historical documents in written and figurative forms, and surviving built structures, Bogdanović reconstructs Constantinopolitan spatial syntax enriched by its performative aspects. In her chapter, she examines the ways authority is linked to architecture and urban and regional planning.

The Constantinopolitan palace (also known as the “Sacred Palace,” thus underscoring its inseparable political and religious notions) was both the primary residence of Byzantine emperors and the political and administrative center of the Empire par excellence. Moreover, during its millennium-long history, Constantinople housed several imperial palaces, all today known from fragmentary textual and archaeological evidence, that merit special studies on their diachronic lives within changing locations in the city and on their spatial relations to the cathedral of Hagia Sophia and other foundations. Instead, Bogdanović focuses on places of intersections of public performance and display of political authority. She examines geopolitical relationships between the initial model of Rome, which was renewed and renegotiated in Constantinople as a new spiritual and political center of the Roman-Byzantine Empire.

By framing the geopolitics of Constantinople via imagination, perception, and experience, Bogdanović investigates spatial imagery that expands the city to the image of a Byzantine Empire beyond its historical boundaries and transforms an explicitly political landscape of the impregnable fortified capital into a transcendent spiritual one, protected by the Mother of God and promoted by the regime.⁴⁸ A subsequent thread of investigation is on the temporal and spatial depths of such a transformed geopolitical landscape of Constantinople when emulated and ceremonially “authenticated” at alternative sites of authority; that is, in capitals of the emerging states in the Balkans and eastern Europe that embraced the Byzantine version of Christianity. The created constellations of political and divine authorities of Constantinople and of capitals of the neighboring states were closely interlinked with the political-religious ideology of a Christian state embodied in a ruler, generated in *The City*, and constantly renegotiated in the imagination of the educated by means of the performative aspects of the human-made and natural landscapes.

The stage setting of chapter 4 is the Chaopraya River in modern-day Thailand, which engendered three consecutive and competing capital cities between 1351 CE and the present. By examining archaeology and historical documents, Melody Rod-ari analyzes two sets of relations crucial for the production of political landscapes of capitals in ancient Siam. The first deals with the processes of copying early models charged with authority in social memory, and the second with the universal spatial claims of an empowered sacred icon. The first set of relationships focuses on specific places and the architectural landscapes of their institutions, whereas the second invokes absolute space linked to Buddhism. In particular, Rod-ari revives the histories of Ayutthaya (r. 1351–1767 CE) and Thonburi (r. 1768–1782 CE) and then zooms in on how King Rama I (r. 1782–1809 CE) constructed the spatial political milieu of his new capital, Bangkok, by emulating and erasing specific landscape planning and architectural features of the prior two capitals. Her analysis of the spatial syntax of Bangkok includes the canals that were dug around the preexisting settlement, turning it into a moat-encircled island in order to model it after Ayutthaya.

The construction of the Grand Palace complex of King Rama I as the major setting of political authority in new capital was done as a micro- and macroscopic ideogram. The acreage of land that was set aside for the Bangkok palace was approximately the same as that occupied by the Grand Palace in Ayutthaya. Structurally Rama I's palace was divided into four cosmograms, used for different functions, following its Ayutthaya archetype. During the construction processes in Bangkok, symbolic and physical links between the two capitals came in the form of reused building materials, which revealed dynamics between the urban planning and the regime. Rod-ari's essay shows that King Rama I's claim of political authority over Bangkok was capitalized through the possession of a powerful sacred icon and palladium, the Emerald Buddha. Rama I had captured and reinstalled the Emerald Buddha in the northeastern sector of the palace complex as the physical and political capstone of the legitimacy of Bangkok, intimately linking the icon with political stability. Political authority was underwritten by active performance of the Buddhist faith and, when this weakened, the icon was transferred to a politically more successful and more loyal Buddhist ruler. Moreover, the Emerald Buddha was perceived as one of the jewels of the *Chakravartin*, or Universal World Ruler; its possession and installation within King Rama I's palace allowed him to claim himself Universal World Ruler, extending the geopolitical construction of his empire far beyond the boundaries of Bangkok, Thonburi, and Ayutthaya.

The next three chapters shift the scene to the ancient Americas. Alexei Vranich maps the sacred landscape of the Andean state capital of Tiwanaku, which prospered during the Middle Horizon Period from approximately 600 to 950 CE. Here, Vranich deals with the society that existed since 1600 BCE, as evident in the architectural record. His methodology is deeply grounded in phenomenology, as he addresses how architecture and the planning at Tiwanaku are related to the vision and perception of the polity as a holy entity. The monumental form of Tiwanaku can be understood as a sacred representation of the immutable world that was modified as the polity grew and reached its peak, during the Middle Horizon Period. Vranich examines this apparent paradox as Tiwanaku builders over time aligned their monumental constructions with astronomical bodies and salient mountain peaks, creating potent visual and spatial relations between landscape and architecture, which would be later adopted by the Inka.

The relationship between monuments and the mountainous landscape evaluated by Vranich reveals an impressive spatial dialogue where politics and religion become one; he points out that monumental markers were set to adapt the sacred narrative of creation and cycles of life to their central place in the sociopolitical landscape. A detailed case study of the early sunken court in the *Templete* can be understood as a central locus of authority through the claim to antiquity. Vranich focuses his discussion on how these structures lined up with the mountainous landscape and channeled the vision of people who lived in the city or visited it. Such experiences would have implanted the perception of a Tiwanaku version of the surrounding landscape orchestrated, channeled, and manipulated by the elite.

Chapter 6 stays in South America and leads to the Inka capital of Cusco, situated in the central Andean highlands and remodeled in the fifteenth century by the ninth ruler, Pachakuti. Jessica Joyce Christie highlights the relationships that oscillated between the capital center and the peripheral administrative settlements of a growing empire, which aimed to absorb the world. She lays out the challenges in reconstructing Inka Cusco because the primary source materials from archaeology and ethnography are often contradictory. This chapter presents the state-formation processes in the Cusco Basin and then reconstructs the Inka capital as it was described by Spanish writers and corroborated in part by archaeologists. The mythohistories about the emergence of the Inka dynastic ancestors from sacred rock outcrops, their migrations, and finally the founding of Cusco were shared by Quechua consultants in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and then filtered through colonial Spanish texts. Christie argues that indicative features of Inka

monumental architecture and urban design were replicated in many settlements throughout the Empire, including Chinchero, Huanuco, Machu Picchu, Pampa, Vilcabamba the Old, and Vilcashuaman. Cusco was linked to these outlying centers through a system of roads as well as through ritual and conceptual sight lines (*zeq'ës*). Christie suggests that Inka geopolitical landscape was constructed by copying diagnostic features of architecture and urban design authored by Inka rulers in Cusco as the center and micro-model, and by diffusing this model on a growing macro-scale throughout the expanding empire by means of physical roads and conceptual lines. The ultimate ambitious and ever-expanded goal was to mark the world as “Inka.” The physical features analyzed here are argued to have acted as the active vehicles of a layered network of center–periphery relations.

Chapter 7 focuses on the Mexica/Aztecs and the establishment of their capital city Mexico-Tenochtitlan in Central Mexico in the fourteenth century. Eulogio Guzmán particularly examines the visual tactics the Mexica employed in the densely occupied area of Lake Texcoco to gain control over contentious inhabitants by constructing their capital on an island in the middle of this lake. He discusses the founding event of Mexico-Tenochtitlan as depicted in imagery, which does not portray historical fact but the ideal view of an ordered world under Mexica rule. Guzmán argues that while construction of the capital was underway, Mexica leaders strategically kept busy networking and consolidating social relations with the numerous groups already established along the shores of Lake Texcoco. The end result was the creation of a shared governing structure, which reflected the political union of social groups in the terrain of the surrounding lakeshore.

The symbolic visual trappings adopted by the alliance members synchronized local natural features, supernatural forces, and government to the Mexica capital as manifested in the most potent structure in the land, the Templo Mayor, designed as a dual temple dedicated to two potent gods, Huitzilopochtli and Tlaloc. Guzmán argues that the numerous building phases of this structure expressed the agency of Mexica emperors; its physical growth paralleled social, geographic, and economic expansion. Through the constant re-creation of this edifice, the Mexica created an important visual that perpetually commemorated the incorporation of the social landscape in its construction. Mexica political territory was consecrated in all of the architecture and spatial components found at the capital (the Templo Mayor, the Ceremonial Center, and the numerous palaces of Mexico-Tenochtitlan), making it a place where alliances were socially negotiated and from which ideological claims were diachronically projected.

In chapter 8, Anne Toxey incorporates archival documents with her architectural analysis to consider the notion of a local capital and its larger independence within a modern nation. She explores the very unique case of the Capital of the Province of Matera in Southern Italy. Toxey shows that Matera's new status as a provincial capital allowed it to exert considerable political and cultural authority over its immediate surroundings and generate greater allegiance from provincial residents than did the actual capital of the modern-day country, Rome (and previous regional power Naples). Toxey examines how topography dictated urban planning and asserted social standing: an elevated and extended hilltop settlement known as the *Piano* housed the *Civita* or core of the historic city dug into the soft local stone of the hillsides. Immediately below it existed two continuously inhabited cave zones filled with constructed houses known as the *Sassi*, where mostly working peasants and some middle-class workers lived. This geographic model immediately suggests clear-cut hierarchies between a *Piano* elite lording above and looking down upon *Sassi* subalterns. A particular question Toxey raises is how the powerless perceive the space of the city and their lack of political authority. Toxey is able to investigate the specific sets of relationships (in large part due to testimonials collected in the last century), which oscillate within two levels: in the spatial realm, between the up, or *Piano*, and the area below, or the *Sassi*; and on the political level, between economic classes that function like power structures as opposed to institutionally defined authority. Toxey probes how the capital designation of Matera altered such relational networks.

Matera's continuous occupation dates to the Paleolithic and though little is known about its early social organization, Matera's social status grew in the seventeenth century as it was designated the area's capital. This new local designation drove the wealthy families who had been living in the cave sectors in luxurious houses to quickly relocate above. The result was a concentration of poorer people in the *Sassi*, which cemented the social stratification and segregation that constitute a major focus of Toxey's approach. In 1926, the Fascist regime once again changed the status of Matera, now to a provincial capital, and modernization efforts in the *Sassi* were now driven by the conviction that a capital city had to showcase a civilized lifestyle to the outside world. Toxey examines the improvements in infrastructure and public attention brought to the conditions in the *Sassi* during the twentieth century, leading to the eventual abandonment of these dwellings altogether by their impoverished residents. She completes her analysis by discussing the contemporary view of the *Sassi* as an engine for global tourism in the Matera region, where living in the "caves" has now become expensive, denoting a newly inverted status.

Chapter 9 focuses on the Italian capital, Rome, during the Fascist regime. Examining critical analyses of news coverage and photographs in major newspapers and journals in the 1920s and 1930s, Stephanie Pilat explores relations that are temporal and focused on urban interventions in the Imperial Fora and on increasingly violent acts of demolition, in order to highlight Mussolini's political ideology embodied in and through the political landscape of "new" Rome. She demonstrates how, in the process of reframing ideological statements, Mussolini's projects negotiated between "liberating" the ancient ruins of the glorified Roman Empire, on the one hand, and showcasing Fascist revolutionary will and power to modernize, on the other. Pilat's methodology is distinct in that she traces how the representations of these urban projects documented shifting emphasis on the processes of planning, demolishing, and rebuilding. When Mussolini took office, the site of the ancient Imperial Fora had been covered by a working-class neighborhood and an open cow pasture but the Fascist regime demolished this neighborhood and constructed the wide path of the Via dell'Impero diagonally across the orthogonally arranged *fora* and coopted news coverage and visual imagery to highlight the processes of demolition and work in progress to reflect Fascist ideology.

Pilat shows the Fascist regime did not only focus on the *fora*; she points out that the Piazzale Augusto Imperatore was envisioned as a stage set for the Mausoleum of Augustus, as restored to a ruin. Her comparison of the photographs made during the 1920s and 1930s, some dramatically illustrating Mussolini swinging a pickaxe, shows that the later imagery reflects an increase in violence of action as well as an expanded stage threatening to engulf the physical landscape of the entire capital. Pilat argues that the demolition and construction projects and their manipulated visual representations perform and showcase Fascist ideology of work, violence, and action underlined by claims to perpetuity.

In the final chapter (10), Talinn Grigor employs historical documents as well as the urban fabric and public architecture in order to outline the changing political landscape of Tehran, capital of Iran, through the processes of its three major transformations from the 1860s to the 1960s. Grigor traces temporal, social, and spatial relations to showcase how urban transformation mirrored sociopolitical revolutions to argue against subjective generalizations of the relationships between political organization and landscape aesthetics. In Tehran, as in other capitals analyzed in this volume, urban modification within and through the existing landscape were used as vehicles through which authority could be translated into official history to advance political ideals. In the 1860s, Naser al-Din Shah Qajar ordered the widening of city

boundaries and construction of a new set of city walls. A new form of social and economic segregation began to crystallize as the population composed of merchants, clerics, and the lower class held on to the old urban pockets in the south while the aristocracy and new public and foreign constructions moved to the north.

In the 1920s, Reza Shah Pahlavi declared himself king and initiated strategies on multiple fronts to transform Tehran into the secular capital of a modern nation state. This drive toward modernization began with the demolition of the Qajar fortification walls and continued with the leveling to the ground of approximately two-thirds of the royal core area of Tehran. Some demolition zones were left vacant and others were transformed into public squares, wide avenues, municipal parks, and new government buildings. The political landscape engineered by Reza Shah had ideological as well as pragmatic underpinnings: above all it showcased modern architecture and European urban design as markers of progress and provided easy military access to the remaining urban pockets of the city, which had been gradually decentralized. In the 1960s, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi changed this perception by improving the socioeconomic infrastructure and by channeling public imagination about relations between the physical appearance of the capital and the reputation of the monarchy on a global scale with a new master-plan for the city that shifted future expansion toward the east and west. During the revolution of 1978–1979, Shahyad Monument, the wide-open square on which it was built, and Shahreza Avenue, which materialized the new east-west axis, turned into the battleground between the state and two million protesters, an event that reshaped Tehran's political landscape once again and disclosed the direct relationship between sociopolitical tensions and urban topography.

The detailed empirical case studies in this volume are intended to contribute to ongoing efforts among researchers to find a balance between highly abstract philosophical models of the political landscapes of capitals and critical details of material culture that encompass archaeology, urban planning, history, art, and architecture. These essays likewise highlight the relational processes of politics and space that gave voice to various participants in this social construct as spatially performed in the capitals discussed herein.

NOTES

1. Adam T. Smith, *The Political Landscape: Constellations of Authority in Early Complex Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

2. Smith, *Political Landscapes*, 17–24.
3. Doris Bachmann-Medick, “Spatial Turn” in *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften* [*Cultural Turns: New Directions in Cultural Studies*], ed. Doris Bachmann Medick (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), 284–328.
4. The following presents a few examples of works in the field of art history. For the Americas see George Kubler, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient America* (New York: Pelican History of Art, 1962); Arnold Rubin, *Art as Technology* (Los Angeles: Hillcrest Press, 1989); Emily Umberger and Cecelia Klein, “Aztec Art and Imperial Expansion,” in *Latin American Horizons*, ed. D. S. Rice (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1993); Esther Pasztory, *Aztec Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), and *Teotihuacan, An Experiment in Living* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). For the Andes see the works by Tom Cummins, “A Tale of two Cities,” in *Converging Cultures* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum and Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 157–170; Susan Niles, *The Shape of Inka History* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999); and Carolyn Dean, “The Inka Married the Earth,” *The Art Bulletin* 8/3 (2007): 502–518. W.J.T. Mitchell’s analysis of painted scenery in *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) is but one of many examples of spatial analysis pursued in art history for the modern period and there are of course many other examples in western art. See, for instance, for the Aegean and Muslim cultures, respectively; Donald Preziosi, *Architecture, Language and Meaning* (The Hague: De Gruyter, 1979); and Irene Bierman, *Writing Signs* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989).
5. See also Stuart Elden, “The Production of Space,” in *Dictionary of Human Geography*, eds. Gregory D. Johnston, et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 590–592.
6. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001 [1977]).
7. David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).
8. Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, 1989), chapters 1, 2, 5, and 6; and Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996) *passim*, esp. 29–60.
9. Michel Foucault, “Andere Räume,” in *Stadt-Räume*, ed. Martin Wentz (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1991 [1967]), 65–72.
10. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 66–111; Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993); and Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004 [1994]).

11. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 33–34.
12. *Place* is defined as a specific locale and a segment of space that can be occupied or unoccupied, that can be real or perceived. *Space* is related to that which is occupied by an object's volume or form. Thus, place is a specific location with meanings derived from local sociocultural practices, which is encompassed by space. *Landscape* then becomes assembled places and the links between them, which may be physical or representational. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 32. See also Tuan, *Space and Place*.
13. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 11.
14. See the discussion on the topic presented in Adam Smith and Nicholas David by Sharon Zukin in *Current Anthropology* 36/3 (June 1995): 441–471, esp. 466.
15. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 25.
16. *Ibid.*, 9.
17. Martin Warnke, *Political Landscape. The Art History of Nature* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). Raymond Williams explores these terms in a more literary fashion in *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).
18. Warnke, *Political Landscape*, 7.
19. Remarks, such as “she [nature] remained a true and genuine authority” (Warnke, *Political Landscape*, 145) and “Man’s devastating exploitation of nature has put an end to her argumentative force and autonomous authority” (Warnke, *Political Landscape*, 146) make Warnke a modernist who fits elements of analysis into neat categories with little or controlled overlap.
20. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 10. See also, Jeffrey Seibert, “Review of Adam T. Smith’s *The Political Landscape*” *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 28 (2004): 400–403.
21. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 10.
22. See also the balanced critique of Smith’s work and its relation to the works by several social theorists by John M. Steinberg, “The Political Landscape: Constellations of Authority in Early Complex Polities,” *American Anthropologist* 107/4 (2005): 745–746.
23. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 30–77.
24. For example, Robert M. Adams, “The Origin of Cities,” *Scientific American* 203/3 (1960), 153–168, citation on 153–154: “the urban revolution was a decisive cultural and social change that was less directly linked to changes in the exploitation of the environment.”
25. For similar critique of social evolutionism see also Spiro Kostof, *The City Shaped, Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History* (Boston: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 37–41 and the lucidly, rational discussion of the evolving neo-evolutionary thought in the social sciences presented in Norman Yoffee, *Myths of the Archaic State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 8–15.
26. See, for example, Jane Jacobs, *The Economy of Cities* (New York: Random House, 1969).

27. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 53–54.
28. Ibid., 40, with references to August Lösch, *The Economics of Location* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954) and Walter Isard, *Location and Space Economy: A General Theory Relating to Industrial Location, Market Areas, Land Use, Trade, and Urban Structure* (Cambridge, MA: Technology Press of M.I.T., 1956). By the 1980s various spatial syntaxes and pattern languages were used in numerous disciplines from architecture to urban planning and transportation, and by the 2000s also in information technologies, anthropology, and human geographies. See, for example, Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, and Murray Silverstein, *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Bin Jiang and Christophe Claramunt, “Integration of Space Syntax into GIS: New Perspectives for Urban Morphology,” *Transactions in GIS* 6/3 (2002): 295–309.
29. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 41.
30. Ibid., 59–60.
31. Phenomenology as a study in spatial theory was majorly developed by the work of French philosopher Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), blossomed with the work of German philosopher Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), and was further articulated in LeFebvre, *Production of Space* and Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genus Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1980).
32. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 67–69.
33. Ibid., 31.
34. Ibid., 73–75.
35. Maya scholars already have mapped political ritual staged in a human-made, architectural landscape onto natural landscape features and spatial divisions soaked in mythology. See Wendy Ashmore, “Construction and Cosmology: Politics and Ideology in Lowland Maya Settlement Patterns” in *Word and Image in Maya Culture: Explorations in Language, Writing, and Representation*, ed. W. F. Hanks and D. S. Rice (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989), 272–286; Linda Schele and David Freidel, *A Forest of Kings* (New York: Quill William Morrow, 1990); Nikolai Grube and Simon Martin, *The Chronicle of Maya Kings and Queens* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000).
36. See also, Steinberg, Review of *The Political Landscape*, 745–746.
37. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 80–94.
38. Ibid., 94–102.
39. Ibid., 188.

40. Ibid., 189.

41. For expanded and multiple definitions of the city from those that focus exclusively on its physical aspects as a settlement to those that focus on its sociopolitical aspects as a locus of community, see also Kostof, *The City Shaped*, 37–41.

42. A “capital” is a derivative of the Latin *caput*, meaning “head,” quite literally a “head city.” It absorbs all aspects of the city, including its citizenship and communities; it ranks first because it houses the leadership institutions of a political territorial unit. See Hammond, *Ancient Cities*, 4. On multiple definitions for capital cities see also Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 13–16.

43. www.oxforddictionaries.com. We approach the broader definition of *capital* offered by Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity*, 3–43, esp. 13–15, that a capital is a locus of power, but we prefer to use *authority* rather than *power*, because authority dispenses power, and because authority includes notions of agency and can be also associated with “social power.” See also Kostof, *The City Shaped*, 33.

44. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 108.

45. Discussions on sovereignty and land are often characterized by the term *territoriality* common to political theorists. See, for example, Dan Philpott, “Sovereignty,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2010 edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/sovereignty/>.

46. Smith, *Political Landscape*, 109–110.

47. Ibid., 28.

48. On this concept see also, Smith, *Political Landscape*, 202–210.