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Between the South Sea and the mountainous ridges: biopolitical assemblages in the Spanish colonial Americas

By NOA CORCORAN-TADD and GUIDO PEZZAROSI

SUMMARY: Although the historical archaeology of the Spanish colonial world is currently witnessing an explosion of research in the Americas, the accompanying political economic framework has tended to remain little interrogated. This paper argues that Spanish colonial contexts bring into particular relief the entanglements between ‘core’ capitalist processes like ‘antimarkets’, dispossession and the disciplining of labour with the specific biopolitical ecologies assembled through co-option, coercion and accumulation. This perspective is explored through two archaeological case studies from Peru and Guatemala, where competing concerns about altitude, climate, disease, violence and populations of differentiated labouring bodies (both human and non-human) came to the fore in unexpected ways. The resulting discussion challenges the reliance on abstract analytical totalities like ‘capitalism’ and ‘colonialism’, and shifts attention towards the diverse assemblages of actors that shaped and continue to shape the processes central to political economic analyses.

INTRODUCTION

Working through Charles Orser’s four haunts (colonialism, capitalism, Eurocentricism and modernity) has refocused the scope of historical archaeologies towards global processes and their articulation with local practices and experiences.¹ This global horizon has been exceedingly productive both in drawing together colonial and capitalist contexts into a common analytical frame and in underlining the political saliency of an archaeology that explores the emergence of the contemporary world and the unequal power relations and violence that have underwritten and sustained it.

At the same time, Spanish colonial archaeology continues to be marginalized within conversations about the emergence of the modern world and the development and operation of the capitalist world

economic ‘system’ in particular.² This is in part the result of differing regional research traditions, and in part due to the fact that our analytical taxonomies have tended to marginalize and even exclude certain contexts and questions.³ While acknowledged as colonial, the violence and coercion of extraction and monopolization have often pushed historians to exclude Spanish colonial contexts as ‘feudal’,⁴ ‘premodern’ or ‘precapitalist’,⁵ with English, Dutch and French colonial contexts given more central roles in histories of capitalism.⁶ That historical archaeologists have tended to follow this historiographical trend is troubling for several reasons, including: a) the problematic decoupling of capitalism, violence and coerced labour, b) the implication, resonating with the Black Legend, that non-Spanish colonialism was less coercive by contrast, and c) the continued framing of Latin America

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as a passive, raw material-generating periphery, rather than an active and engaged participant in the emergent global economy.

FROM CLASSIFICATIONS TO EFFECTS

In what follows, we attempt to make two points. First, we would like to counter the lack of discussion to date by arguing for *the continued relevance of political economic approaches* that tackle the processes of global capitalism in the Spanish colony, while simultaneously recognizing some of the persistent problems in these approaches. We take inspiration from recent work that has sought to highlight the entanglements between capitalism and colonialism.⁷ This work has had the dual effect of counteracting ‘free market’ conceptions of capitalism, while expanding the analytical scope of analysis of capitalism to contexts traditionally excluded from these analyses on the basis of the ‘unfree’ exchanges that are central to them.⁸ At the same time, we remain wary of some of the resulting historical narratives that have tended to perpetuate a ‘capitalocentrism’ wherein *all* of modern history becomes framed and explained in relation to capitalism and/or colonialism and the dominant totalizing narratives of their developments, impacts, characteristics and outcomes.⁹ This wariness is paralleled by unease with a ‘historical archaeology which persists in explicating the existence of capitalism through imprinting domination and resistance on every artefact’.¹⁰

Second, we seek to make a broader intervention into the analysis of political economy in historical archaeology by taking steps to develop *an archaeology of the biopolitical*. Our goal is to draw in a more forceful consideration of how the capacities and affordances of living bodies and their biologies were drawn into colonial and imperial projects, past and present. In many cases, the unfree exchanges that characterized colonial contexts depended on the volatile biology of human and non-human labourers, while drawing upon the vulnerabilities of these bodies to foster relationships of dependency (e.g. through aid, supplies and labour opportunities extended to those in need). In attending to the burdens borne by individual bodies, and the interventions meant to manipulate their economic potentials and access to life in the early modern colonial world, we avoid losing sight of the particular needs and limits of lived lives, otherwise reified as faceless populations of organic matter critical only to projects of accumulation and the calculus of empire.

This approach, we argue, provides a flexible framework for moving across contexts past and present and analysing the ‘actual details of economic history’,¹¹ regardless of the contexts’ classification (as capitalist, feudal, colonial, etc.), highlighting the embeddedness of economic practices in a dynamic assemblage

of culture, matter, power and violence. Following Fernando Coronil’s notion of ‘imperial effects’, a focus on the effects, rather than on the ‘institutional forms or self-definitions’, of capitalism would highlight their ‘significance for subjected populations’.¹² Rather than continuing to debate the ways that sets of historical practices and processes might be retroactively *classified* by scholars, the focus shifts towards the *effects* of these assemblages. The resulting approach avoids the tendency to see all social life as part of a totality labelled ‘capitalism’ and opens the possibility of a slower, more careful analysis that considers specific, messy assemblages in action.

WHAT KINDS OF EFFECTS?

Biopower and the biopolitical are important components for a comparative political economic framework that accounts for the influence of vibrant, volatile matter (biological, climatological and geological) and its entanglements with politics, violence and labour regimes. While Michel Foucault situated the transition to biopolitics as an emergent regime of governmentality in the 18th and 19th centuries, he also suggested a longer, uneven emergence for biopolitical interventions, although an in-depth genealogy was never developed and the colonial experience remained implicit at best in much of his work.¹³

Following Foucault’s initial sketch, the notions of biopower and the biopolitical have been taken up in the analysis of a much wider range of cases wherein specific strategic interventions in human vitality and morbidity were both given legitimacy and contested.¹⁴ In particular, several scholars have stressed the intersection of the biopolitical and the political economic, addressing an important blind spot that appeared in initial analyses.¹⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have outlined an approach that links capitalist accumulation and biopolitics, via a consideration of biopower as power over life and the productive capacities of human vitality.¹⁶ Their controversial perspective follows the ways in which biopolitics and accumulation underpinned the violence of colonialism in the New World, with the Atlantic slave trade and the plantation system providing particularly damning examples of how concerns over health, reproduction and life intersected with economic interests.

Achille Mbembe has been critical in bringing plantation and colonial contexts to the fore of biopolitical analyses through his consideration of how race intersects with biopolitical regimes of othering that come to dictate who is able to live and who is killed or allowed to die along racialized lines.¹⁷ Moreover, Mbembe argues that slavery (and by extension colonization), served as contexts for ‘biopolitical experimentation’ wherein those subjected were reduced to

bare life, a state of exception created by a loss of rights and political standing (drawing on Agamben's influential reformulation of Foucault).¹⁸ In this case, the colonized or enslaved other is valued as long as they are a viable 'instrument of labour' and not because of their socio-political status as human. This valorization of the enslaved/colonized solely based on their biological vitality and the labour potential it affords creates what Mbembe calls a permanent 'state of injury ... a phantom-like world of horrors and intense cruelty and profanity ... a form of death-in-life'.¹⁹

This state of being emerges at the callous intersection of violence-backed discipline and life promoting/sustaining practices, with a cruel cost-benefit analysis weighing the benefits of a body's labour potential against the costs of capital invested in the capture, purchase and sustenance necessary to maintain them as viable labourers. Beatings and executions, while apparently counterproductive to increasing labour potential, served to instil the terror through violence that made exploitative labour regimes possible. Following Jason Moore's formulation, such violence enabled the production of the 'Cheap Labour', one of the new resources crucial to expanding the scale and intensity of accumulation.²⁰

It is here that the linkages of our approaches — colonialism, the political economy of capital and biopolitics — become clear. Warren Montag has made the connection between violence, biopolitics and market economics particularly explicit through his concept of necro-economics.²¹ By critically engaging Adam Smith's classical arguments for the self-regulation and providence of 'free' markets, the relevance of the biopolitical as an analytical frame for market economics is underscored. Montag reads Smith's formulation of the self-regulation of the market as reliant on the power to let some die (the labourers), so that others (labourers and 'masters') may live. However, this Malthusian 'self-regulation' is put into question when the extra-economic manipulations that enforce such 'self-regulation' are laid bare. Montag argues for the role of unequal resources as a force compelling labourers to comply with the labour terms imposed on them (strikes, for instance, can only last as long as workers are able to subsist without the wages necessary to fulfil basic bodily needs).²² The power to set wages as low as desired is limited only by 'the bare life of the workman', wherein basic biological needs must be met, including for limited reproduction, 'otherwise [in Smith's words] it would be impossible for him to bring up a family and the race of such workmen could not last beyond the first generation'.²³ For Smith, wages should be set in such a way as to allow for the subsistence of labourers and *some* of their offspring — enough to replenish the workforce, yet not high enough that all offspring survive — as a means of population

regulation; an invisible 'market death' through scarcity and malnutrition.²⁴

The relationship of the market with force — be it outright violence or more subtle forms of economic violence and coercion through the restriction of options — parallels the violence meted out against the enslaved and the colonized as a means of disciplining and ensuring acquiescence. These parallel processes serve to entangle the colonial and the capitalist via their shared reliance on violence, unequal power and coercion for unequal accumulation.

Working from the above, we argue the biopolitical is particularly useful in tackling earlier Spanish colonial contexts, both as a description of certain state projects that presaged a new 'massifying' power concerned with 'the population as a political problem', and as a broader political economic analytic that highlights the intersecting effects of race, labour and the new colonial ecologies of Cheap Nature.²⁵ But we also see this analytic as useful in drawing out some of the continuities and parallels with differently coerced political economic regimes — the *mita*, the *mitmaqkuna* and tribute demands — that pre-dated the Spanish invasions of the 16th and 17th centuries. The following two case studies — located in highland Guatemala and the south-central Andes (Fig. 1) — explore some of the ways that previous biopolitical assemblages shaped the emergence of the bodies, their vitalities and broader ecologies that would form the substrate for accumulation in the Spanish colonial Americas.

BIOPOLITICS IN COLONIAL GUATEMALA

During their initial incursions into highland Guatemala, Spanish colonists encountered Maya populations of greater than two million individuals living in dispersed settlements across mountain slopes and valley bottoms.²⁶ These residents immediately factored into Spanish colonial economic activities, first as slaves²⁷ and soon after as a coerced labouring population providing tribute in kind and in labour.²⁸ Of note, capture, enslavement, corvée labour and tribute demands were not introductions of Spanish colonists — Sherman provides a discussion of slavery in pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica that dovetails with recent evidence in Mexico and the Maya region for the role of merchants and markets in the sale of slaves.²⁹ Tribute in luxuries and subsistence staples extracted by conquest or other subordinate political relationships has a similarly long history in highland Mexico and the Maya region, from at least the Classic period onwards.³⁰ Rather than imposing themselves on a blank slate, Spanish colonists encountered and built upon the intact relationships, skills, knowledge and infrastructure of tribute production, collection and transport to establish themselves as

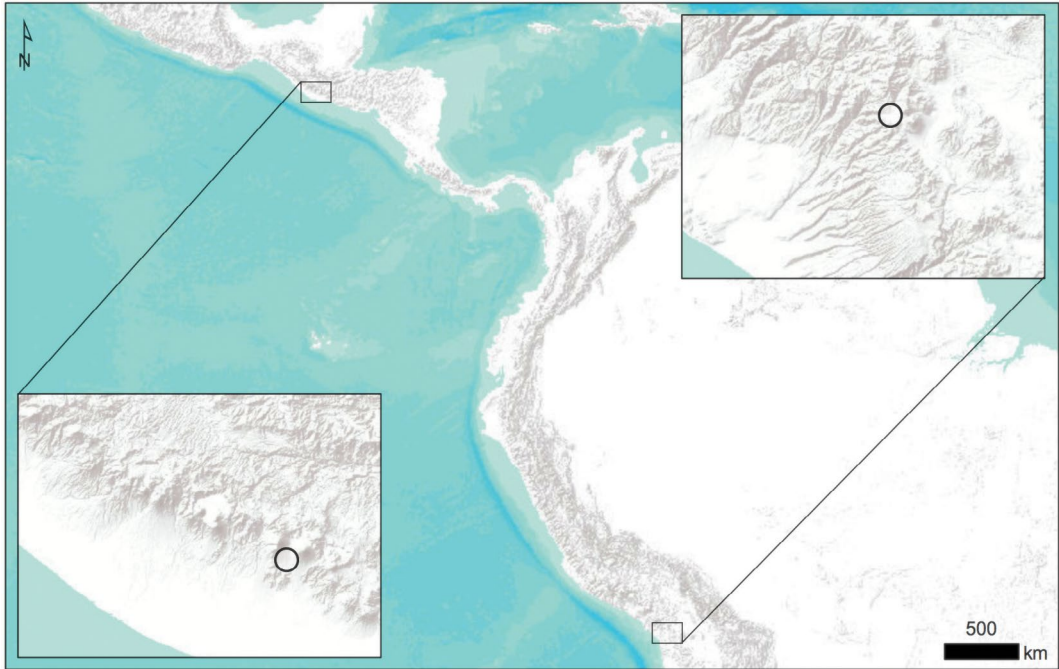


FIG. 1

Map showing location of sites mentioned in text: the colonial K'aqchikel Maya community of San Pedro Aguacatepeque in Guatemala and the Palca *tambos* in southern Peru. The insets highlight the rugged and diverse topographies of each region (map by Guido Pezzarossi).

recipients of said tribute items and labour obligations. As Anna Tsing notes, such extant cultural, political and economic structures are never just swept aside in capitalist-colonial encounters, but instead provide the productive 'friction' from which emerge new, hybrid and contextually specific political economic relations. According to Farriss, the Spanish 'merely made use of the [extant] native economy' albeit through a variety of coercive and violent practices that largely left the means of production (i.e. land and bodies of water) in native hands, while placing themselves as the beneficiaries of intensified labour, land and commercial exchange.³¹

In outlining Spanish colonial engagement of exploitative labour practices, we do not imply that such coerced labour was a product of distinctly 'pre-modern' Maya societies only taken up by opportunistic 'modern' colonists. Rather, we wish to stress the unsustainability of such artificial divides that identify coerced and outright violent forms of labour extraction as pre-modern (e.g. slavery, *corvée* labour), and 'free' labour relations, such as wage labour, as distinctly modern. Our goal is to highlight how coercion, of various forms, remains an element of labour

relations across such illusory pre-modern/modern or feudal/capitalist divides. In this light, the analysis of various intersecting political economies is made robust by the ability to track how, to what extent and to what effect power and politics came to shape economic practice and labour relations, in pre-colonial, colonial and capitalist contexts. Elsewhere, Pezzarossi has argued against classifying Spanish colonial contexts in Guatemala as pre-capitalist based on their violently coerced labour practices. Rather, coercion and violence is — per Braudel and DeLanda — a defining aspect of the relations that generate the effects that we attribute to capitalism (e.g. inequality and dispossession), as politics and power were and continue to shape and impose capitalist labour and exchange relations in unfree ways, similarly and differently than in both pre-colonial and colonial Guatemala.³²

In contrast to Mexico and the central Andes, little mineral wealth was found within Guatemala. However, the rich agricultural potential and diversity of the region — cool highlands, warm piedmont and hot, humid coastal areas — afforded agricultural cash cropping and bioprospection as economic activities.³³ As a result, the labour potential of native bodies — rather

than land or minerals — became perhaps the most important economic force in colonial Guatemala.³⁴ The labour of specific communities and/or the products of native labour as tribute (rather than native land) were allotted to colonists and the Crown early in the colonial period via the institution of the *encomienda*. Later, the emergence of *repartimiento* wage labour drafts (alongside continuing tribute obligations) from native communities organized by officials and private estate owners served to isolate and allocate Cheap Labour, wage payments providing a means for native labourers to meet tribute increasingly demanded in currency.

While the *repartimiento* abstracted native labour as undifferentiated manual labour potential, the value of a given *encomienda* was determined by more than just its native inhabitants' ability to work. Instead, the *encomienda* is best understood as an assemblage of labourers, knowledges, pre-existing political relations and infrastructures and the ecological and geologic affordances of the region they inhabited. The labour potential and economic value of an *encomienda* was entangled with the types of tribute its constitutive labourers could produce and the respective values that followed regional and global desires. Communities able to produce valuable goods, such as cacao, were protected from more onerous and dangerous labour duties, such as serving as *tamemes* (porters). Those that could not produce desired crops or craft products due to the unsuitability of the regions they lived in were reclassified as suitable for portering work, and frequently rented out as literal beasts of burden.³⁵

Again, the *tameme* was not a colonial innovation — human-borne transport of goods was deeply rooted in Mesoamerica given the lack of pack animals in the region prior to colonization.³⁶ Given the need to transport goods, human porters solely bore the burden, leading Feldman to characterize the region as part of a 'tumpline economy'.³⁷ The danger associated with this work emerged from the confluence of coarse topography, unstable soils and the abundant precipitation of the rainy season that served to flood, muddy and wash away the trails and paths connecting communities. In addition, the passage from cold to hot climates brought additional difficulties for porters unaccustomed to one or the other climate.

Spanish colonists seized upon the existing portering regime for their economic goals and the prosperity of the colony. As a result, an intensification of portering ensued that consisted of increased distances, load weights and scheduling, coupled with a reduction in provisions and rest. In this way, the expense of porters was reduced by force and through the acceptance of a marked degree of violence and injury to native bodies. In turn, the desperate necessity of porters in the emerging economy — due to the lack of other sources of transport — and its potential profitability for *encomenderos*, created a task of exclusion that

positioned porters as 'killable' by the elements, terrain and work schedules.

These dangers were not lost on Spanish colonists and officials, and indeed numerous steps were taken to mitigate the loss of life catalysed by portering work, as well as the spread of introduced diseases. Due to the importance of the labouring native body to colonial projects in Guatemala, population decline among native labourers became an important concern for Spanish colonists.³⁸ Spanish colonists, haunted by the memory of native depopulation in Hispaniola, authored numerous petitions expressing concern over declining native populations. However, a common refrain in these petitions is the concern over the economic repercussions via the decline of revenue and Cheap Labour that native death and depopulation would cause.³⁹

In the Spanish colonies, a variety of interventions into native health emerged quickly in the early 16th century and carried on well into the 18th and 19th centuries. The 1512–14 Laws of Burgos, emerging prior to Spanish incursions into Mesoamerica, indicated the rapid onset of anxiety around the treatment and health of their newly encountered labouring populations. The laws explicitly require that births and deaths be recorded, analysed and communicated regularly to identify changes in native populations. In the process, such practices reclassified the diverse native inhabitants of the region as part of a new, mass 'population' of *indio* labourers. In addition, pregnant women were offered a measure of protection from heavy and dangerous labour after four months of pregnancy, as well as being given three years to nurse newborn children (both to ensure or at least improve chances of successful and abundant reproduction and survival of offspring, respectively).⁴⁰

The New Laws of 1542 addressed the abuses against native people that intensified population decline, rather than directly targeting disease-related depopulation. However, the effect of these abuses, as well as the food shortages caused by the disease-induced reduction of labourers, are important to consider, as they help check simplistic models that posit disease as the sole cause of demographic collapse, and in turn, 'neutralize' responsibility for it.⁴¹

Porter work was an early target of these health-related interventions, in part due to the graphic description of roads littered with the bones of Indian porters and the general bodily misery that accompanied this labour that only exacerbated population decline.⁴² Use of native porters was prohibited by the 1542 New Laws, yet continued little abated except in cases of absolute necessity, and then they should be made to carry loads 'in such a manner that no risk of life, health and preservation of the said Indians may ensue from an immoderate burthen'.⁴³ Prior to this, similar attempts at limiting the total weight a porter could carry (no more

than 50lb) as well as the distance they could travel (no more than a day) highlight the concern over the deleterious effects of portering on native people. However, both restrictions were poorly enforced.⁴⁴ In addition, a lack of way stations and supplies, and the ever-present danger of washed out roads, all contributed to porter deaths.

Colonists, drawing on humoral conceptions of the body,⁴⁵ grew pointedly concerned with the effects of native peoples' movement across different climates, an unavoidable part of portering due to the diverse topography of the region.⁴⁶ A concerted effort was made by Crown officials to restrict the movement of labouring native people across these different climate zones. A series of repeated official mandates prohibiting the practice were issued by the *audiencia* (colonial appellate court) of Guatemala into the 17th century.⁴⁷ However, the necessity of cheap, mobile native labour meant that attempts at instituting health-preserving policies were always less than effective in the face of economic need and concern. The movement between the colder, drier and densely populated highlands and the hot, humid, mosquito-ridden lowlands continued as a consequence of Spanish demands for labourers in an economically important area suitable for cacao cultivation, which had been quickly depopulated by disease, abuse and subsequent native flight.⁴⁸ By 1560–70, MacLeod argues that the bulk of native labourers in Soconusco (Mexico) and Izalcos (El Salvador) (two large cacao-producing regions north and south of the Guatemalan Pacific Coast) were recent migrants from the highland regions, brought in to replace dwindling local populations of labourers and porters.⁴⁹

The cacao was used to pay tribute for both the grove owners and the wage labourers. The labourers came from regions in the highlands unsuitable for cacao, and were likely asked to pay tribute in cacao, a crop they could not grow, as a tactic of ensuring a flow of labour to the coastal regions and thus the continuation of this commerce in one of the first global cash crops. However, populations continued to dwindle in these cacao-producing regions, and eventually replacement labourers from the highlands stopped flowing to the lowlands, in part due to the efforts of *encomenderos* and church officials who needed labourers in the highland regions.⁵⁰ In Guatemala and Izalcos, *encomenderos* responded by overworking labourers in order to continue to make production goals, leading to greater numbers of dead and escaped labourers, and exacerbating the unsustainable human labour regimes of early colonial Guatemala. While population estimates are always fraught, Lovell *et al.* estimates that by c. 1520 upwards of 100,000 individuals resided in Guatemala's cacao-rich Pacific coastal regions. However, by 1550, only 10,230 individuals remained, with further losses expected, as in other regions, in later years.⁵¹

The introduction of mule trains and horses as replacement for human porters was a slow process in Guatemala, first plagued by lack of supply and later by the high cost of pack animals in comparison to native porters.⁵² At the same time, the instability of Guatemala's soils during the wet season made the building and fixing of roads an unending task, as they were prone to washing away (a problem that plagues Guatemala to this day). At times, porters were the only means of getting goods from place to place, due to the coarseness of the terrain. Moreover, even in cases where roads and animals were available, it remained less expensive to use (unpaid or poorly paid) porters, instead of animal trains. The building of roads and use of pack animals — a novel introduction — was nevertheless discussed as a means of ending the need for native porters and thus the contribution of this practice to native depopulation. In a sense, the use of pack animals would displace the burden and danger of portering onto animals who were fully excepted, meaning they presented 'only' biological, and thus killable, life — what Agamben refers to as *zoe*. Pack animals bore no vestige of the injured *bios*-turned-*zoe*, of human socio-political life (i.e. *bios*) incompletely (and thus contestably) rendered animal and killable, that characterizes human states of exception.⁵³

The economic concerns for mitigating population decline became discursively powerful in other arenas of more explicit commercial and economic interest, as well as among native petitions and appeals. Concerns for native health were frequently drawn on by colonists in commercial appeals and disputes, particularly around cacao, sugar and alcohol production, distribution and (native) consumption.⁵⁴ Native communities also expertly drew on colonial discourse around the effect of climates as well as the concerns for economic health of the colonial subject to resist labour and tribute obligation.

Komisaruk provides such an example from highland Jocotenango, Guatemala, wherein labourers coerced into working at a sugar-cane hacienda on the coast complained to royal officials about the effects of labouring in the hot coastal climate. They claimed that many died there, and those that did return died shortly thereafter from the combined effects of climate and exploitative labour. Moreover, they further padded their case by arguing that this loss of life was 'disadvantageous to the [Crown's income] because of the lesser resulting amount of tribute'.⁵⁵ Such appeals to the economic health of the Crown and colony touched upon the dominant concerns around native health; namely, the economic potential of native bodies and measures taken to ensure their continued vitality.⁵⁶

The inhabitants of San Pedro Aguacatepeque, a colonial Kaqchikel Maya community on the Pacific piedmont of Guatemala, experienced a similar situation.⁵⁷ In one 1593 petition,⁵⁸ the residents petitioned

to be excluded from labouring in the capital, Santiago, due to their community's location in a hot climate and the capital's location in a 'cold' highland climate. They also noted that the communities produced cacao, of importance to the colonial economy, and thus their agricultural labours should not be interrupted. However, their petition was denied as colonial officials noted a lack of workers as an extenuating circumstance that justified their inclusion in labour gangs, as well as mentioning that they did not believe the communities were producing cacao any longer. As a result, the *audiencia* justified their imperilment of native health, according to the colonial administration's own knowledge and policies related to bodies and health, for explicitly economic motives.

These cases highlight the manipulability of colonial public health policies when labour needs and tribute revenue were affected, in a sense exposing the biopolitical undergirding of these policies. For San Pedro and Malacateque, the lack of cacao cultivation saw the inhabitants reduced to a state of bare life, where the meagre protections afforded to otherwise economically valuable individuals were stripped away as they entered 'a zone of indistinction and continuous transition between man and beast'.⁵⁹

The archaeological work completed at San Pedro provides further insight into the development and effects of Spanish colonial biopolitical health discourse and labour policies. Explaining the diverse forms of economic practices at San Pedro, particularly the cash cropping and bootlegging that resided both within and outside the broader colonial economy and its connections to the emerging global economy, cannot be explained by simple recourse to the influence or effect of capitalism. Rather, San Pedro's colonial economic practices may have been influenced, if not catalysed, by the awareness of the overriding economic concerns of Spanish colonists. The colonial archaeological assemblage indicates a community very much engaged with the colonial economy, and particularly dependent on markets as an outlet for cash crops and as the source for subsistence goods.⁶⁰

While San Pedro's appeals to public health policies failed, the economic value of sugar production at San Pedro may have insulated the community from some colonial tribute and labour demands. By the mid to late 17th century, San Pedro was growing sugar cane and producing sugar products,⁶¹ a lucrative craft used to pay tributes and taxes that was made even more financially rewarding when fermented into *chicha* or distilled into *aguardiente* and distributed illicitly, a common practice among native communities growing sugar cane in colonial Guatemala.⁶²

Archaeological evidence of alcohol and sugar production at San Pedro is difficult to identify, as the wooden mills and sugar moulds used do not preserve.⁶³ However, two ceramic vessel types unique to the

colonial contexts at San Pedro, dating to the mid-16th to early 19th centuries, are suggestive of sugar and/or alcohol production. Large (44cm mean diameter), thick-bodied (12–34cm thick), mica-tempered vessels with extensive sooting on the exterior point to possible use as ceramic boiling vats for sugar production, as boiling vessels for *chicha* production or even as boiling vessels for distillation.⁶⁴ In addition, large lead-glazed mass-produced ceramic vessels proliferate in the colonial contexts at the site, a vessel type that is of ideal size and composition for use either as a cooling vessel for post-boil *chicha* or as a fermentation vessel (Fig. 2).⁶⁵

In addition, the faunal assemblage highlights the use of beasts of burden or labour at San Pedro, possibly used in the production of sugar and alcohol. Excavations recovered predominantly cattle and pig remains at the site; however, one cow tooth showed high levels of wear indicative of an older individual, likely kept around the community as a draft animal. Moreover, a recovered equid (donkey or horse) tooth similarly speaks to the presence of other types of labouring animals at the site.⁶⁶ While the mills used in sugar-cane processing would likely have been operated by hand,⁶⁷ 19th-century archival sources also indicate the use of beasts of labour (e.g. horses, donkeys, cattle) to operate sugar mills. Perhaps in dealing with the increased demands of time, labour and resources that tribute obligations entailed, San Pedro's residents turned to another form of non-human, 'cheap', expendable and purchasable labour to supplement their market- and tribute-oriented productive practices (see discussion in next section).

Bearing the brunt of flexible public health policies may have provided the motivation for San Pedro to take on sugar and alcohol production (and associated non-human labourers) as a form of opposition or response to colonial labour policies that sought to maximize the labour power and profit potential of native individuals.⁶⁸ Moreover, beyond the use of informal means to meet formal tribute impositions, the production of alcohol was also a turn to a substance lucrative precisely for its forbidden effects on the indigenous working body and the ability of those bodies to produce value for colonists and colonial officials. Elsewhere, Pezzarossi has discussed Spanish colonial prohibitions on alcohol and sugar, wherein their effect on indigenous labourers is conceptualized in terms of their impediment to morality, and — perhaps more explicitly — to productivity and tribute production.⁶⁹ Beyond the biological impact of sugar, and alcohol, colonists expressed concern at the use of alcohol in fomenting organized resistance, or generally catalysing discord among labouring populations.⁷⁰ Such alcohol-aided commiseration and resistance represented another potential blow to the desired abundant, disciplined and productive labour force, albeit with broader systemic



FIG. 2

Lead-glazed fermentation vessels and coarse large-bodied boil vessels from San Pedro Aguacatepeque (photo by Guido Pezzarossi).

consequences for the exploitative labour relations that characterized colonial Guatemala.

TRANSPORT REGIMES IN THE SOUTH-CENTRAL ANDES

The Guatemalan case proposes an analysis that pays particular attention to the effects of new Spanish biopolitical regimes on human labouring bodies. As the next case demonstrates, other kinds of labouring bodies are also potentially relevant to the analysis of colonial effects. The Proyecto Arqueológico Tambos de Palca is an ongoing archaeological investigation of a group of Inca and colonial way stations (or *tambos*) located on the route between the South Sea (Pacific Ocean) and the altiplano cities of La Paz, Oruro and Potosi. The *tambo* was an Inca imperial roadside installation and was subsequently adopted by the Spanish regime. The system of roads and *tambos* formed an important point of articulation between local corvée labour obligations (*mita*) and wider networks of circulation during both periods.⁷¹ Excavating at the *tambos* today, one is confronted by assemblages of bones, dung and built spaces providing for the movement and shelter of animals. Rather than simply telling a story of capitalist penetration, the colonial *tambos* clearly also connect to a more complex history of human and non-human relations and labour regimes.

As in other parts of the Andes, the study area has a deep history of humans living with camelids. House forms, taskscapes, bofedal ecologies and, indeed, the form of the *tambo*, all emerged in relation to this deep history. New ways of living with camelids had begun to appear across the central and south-central Andes from at least the 3rd millennium BC onwards.⁷² Aldenderfer has noted early evidence for penning at the highland sites like Asana, while later geoglyphs of the camelid trains that connected the altiplano and the Pacific coast and large corral spaces in LIP hill forts attest to the increasing dominance of the human-camelid relationship.⁷³

In the context of a fractured topography and the absence of wheeled transport, the bodies of porters and camelids would go on to form a vital substrate for Inka expansion. The Inka state accumulated vast herds of camelids through violent dispossession, particularly from the Titicaca basin adjacent to the study area,⁷⁴ and reshaped labour regimes across the region through *mita* mobilization and the forced resettlement of entire communities (the *mitmaquna*). The original Inka *tambo* can be understood as a scaling-up of the traditional house-corral form as well as a scaling-up of previous institutions of hospitality and labour organization. And without flattening out the important differences between the regimes, it is worth considering the ways that earlier pastoralist modes of living were colonized by *both* the Inca and Spanish in quick succession. In both cases, the communities of humans and animals



FIG. 3

Colonial/Republican *tambo* of San Manuel Alto (4250m), looking east towards the sulphur-producing volcanoes of Tacora and Chupiquiña located across the border in Chile (photo by Noa Corcoran-Tadd).

were remade into assemblages that incorporated their labour and embodied knowledge with wider infrastructures of roads, *tambos*, managed pastures and fodder agriculture.

Characterized by initially high densities of human populations,⁷⁵ an abundance of mineral resources and camelid herds (unlike the Guatemalan case) and the presence of large-scale exchange networks (formed by social ties, way-finding knowledge, caravan paths, etc.), there was an abundance of potentially exploitable ‘Cheap Nature’ and ‘Cheap Infrastructure’ in the south-central Andean highlands at the time of the Spanish conquest. Rather than simply seeking to remake the Andean landscape through the imposition of a new abstract logic of capital, Spanish officials also paid particular attention to its past institutional forms, including the available labour regime of the *mita* and the *tambo* and caravan systems.⁷⁶ Indeed, Jeremy Mumford has characterized the interest in the tactics and assemblages of the previous political order as a kind of ‘colonial ethnography’ that informed the great reforms of the viceroy Francisco de Toledo (1569–81). Much emphasis has been placed on the Potosí mining *mita* that Toledo’s reforms systematized,⁷⁷ and it has frequently formed a paradigmatic focus for wider

discussions of colonial labour.⁷⁸ This focus, however, has often been at the expense of other sectors of labour — including transport — equally vital to the mining booms of the colonial period.

If we take the uneasy step to include animals in the history of regional labour organization, an important shift during the 16th and 17th centuries (away from a mixed system including a substantial degree of human portage to a system dominated by animal trains)⁷⁹ comes into clearer focus. Indeed, by the 18th century, 80,000–100,000 mules were being imported annually from central Chile and Tucumán into Peru.⁸⁰ The project in Palca provides striking evidence for the subsequent scaling-up of older routes, with an explosion in the 18th and 19th centuries in the number and scale of *tambos* and caravan camps serving the new mix of mule and camelid caravans (Fig. 3). Eight of the corrals measure over 500m² in area, dominating the architectural footprints of the rapidly constructed 19th-century *tambos*. Trails of horse and mule shoes stretch across the survey area along the established roads and the network of informal paths that both reach up and over the passes of Huaylillas Norte (4460m) and Huaylillas Sur (4333m) towards the altiplano. An array of *jaranas* (caravanning campsites),⁸¹ extending far beyond the



FIG. 4

Living and dead mules at the pass of Huayllilas Norte, Palca (engraving from Squier 1877, 248).

tambos themselves, points to the parallel persistence of much older, camelid-based traditions of mobility.

One can read this either as a simple technological transformation or as something more. If we take the question ‘how do economies organize bodies with the capacity to do work’ as the basic principle of investigation,⁸² then perhaps the notion of animal labour has some important purchase. In his classic work on the degradation of labour in the era of mechanization, Harry Braverman drew on the value placed on the imagination of the worker in the first volume of Marx’s *Capital* to provide an orthodox rejection of non-human labour: ‘we pre-suppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human ... at the end of every labour-process we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement’.⁸³ More recently, however, other scholars like Ted Benton have looked back to Marx’s earlier *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* to argue the heterodox position that sees a more ambiguous position for the human-animal relationship and opens the possibility for including animals in labour analysis. As he points out,

a good deal of Marx’s contrast between a fulfilled or emancipated human life, and a dehumanized,

estranged existence can also be applied in an analysis of the conditions imposed by intensive rearing regimes in the case of non-human animals. But the ‘humanist’ philosophical framing of Marx’s concept of estrangement renders extension of that analysis beyond the human case literally unthinkable.⁸⁴

In a region where local human-camelid relationships of care⁸⁵ may confound orthodox categories of ‘the social’, an attention to the possibilities of non-human labour analysis (and the ways this might destabilize previous readings of the *zoe/bios* binary) seems especially appropriate.

Like the Potosí *mita* that delimited and accumulated human labourers from across the south-central Andes, cheap animal labour was pulled into the massive caravans that traversed the precarious routes between the altiplano and the ports of the Pacific. The repeated image in the archive is one of expendable life — losses on these journeys could rise to over 30%⁸⁶ and the high-altitude passes on the Palca road were described by 19th-century travellers as being marked by painful movement and piles of animal carcasses (Fig. 4).⁸⁷ Although Rivera emphasizes the continued traditional Aymara organization of caravans, this would



FIG. 5

Drawings from Guaman Poma's *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (c. 1615): 1. The author before the figure of the sovereign (Philip III of Spain); 2. The itinerant Spaniard orders the indigenous porter: 'Puri, perro yndio' ('Walk, Indian dog!') (Royal Library, Copenhagen. GKS 2232 4o, 961 [f. 975v] and 531 [f. 545v]).

have existed in conjunction with new pressures of market schedules and the temptation to push the limits of possible cargo weights.⁸⁸ In her analysis of zooarchaeological assemblages from the region, DeFrance has pointed to a significant rise in pathologies in camelids related to new levels of load-bearing stress during the colonial period.⁸⁹

While this mobilization of human and non-human vitalities by both the Inka and Spanish empires could be characterized as biopolitical in a loose sense of the term, to what extent might the Spanish colonial case also fit within the more restricted sense as originally developed in the 1975–76 Collège de France lectures?⁹⁰ What was the colonial administration's view of population, disease and techniques of calculation during the 16th through 18th centuries? Are there important precursors to the later supposed biopolitical shift in the Europe metropole?

At stake is an accounting for the multiple ways in which labour and labourers were both conceived and organized. As noted in the Guatemalan case, specific

discourses about the vital qualities of Old and New World populations and specific strategies for intervention upon the collective existence of these populations⁹¹ appear to emerge as early as the late 16th century. Despite the dominance of older representational regimes of sovereign power (as seen, for instance, in the continued centrality of the body of the king and the body of the Indian in the drawings of Guaman Poma [Fig. 5.1 and 5.2]), indigenous and African populations were also being delimited and incorporated into new modes of 'making life' that mobilized racialized censuses, new Indian hospitals and legal ordinances regulating movement and work.⁹² In the urban centres of Quito and Lima, quarantines, the burning of infected clothes, garbage collection and new sanitation practices were all tried as ways of stopping the arrival of epidemics and thus sparing native populations.⁹³

Frequently dehumanized and rendered as 'bestias', 'perros' and 'asnos',⁹⁴ porters were simultaneously being incorporated into discourses of concern about the indigenous body moving through vertical geographies

(suggestively paralleling the Guatemalan case). Despite the influx of African labouring bodies to supplement a declining indigenous workforce on the coast, highland labour remained largely indigenous and African labour rarely emerged as a viable substitute at high altitudes (above 3000m). At stake were the differing vitalities of bodies whose ‘more than discursive’ differences were rendered visible and meaningful *through* the intensive work regimes of mining and portage⁹⁵ — while numerous adaptations to low-oxygen environments had emerged over the long-term,⁹⁶ these capacities were given new significance in the post-conquest era.

Crucially, these questions about human labour were accompanied by new concerns about the need to produce more labouring animals, a project similarly rendered difficult by the challenges of ‘making life’ at high altitudes.⁹⁷ As the colonial period progressed, animal labour would become ever more central to the economy and had the important effect of deferring some of the most visible forms of economic violence away from the contested indigenous body and towards the bodies of even cheaper, non-human labourers. Indeed, animals would increasingly shoulder the ‘negative externalities’⁹⁸ of colonial and post-colonial transport through to the 20th-century rise of the fossil-fuelled machine. As spaces explicitly delimited for the provision and management of the mules and camelids that would ‘save’ the body of the indigenous labourer from the worst excesses of the montane transport regime,⁹⁹ the adobe corrals and lodgings of the *tambo* emerge as important sites through which to investigate these hierarchies of concern, care and exploitation.

CONCLUSIONS

In bringing these two cases together, we echo questions about the current emphasis on colonial identities at the expense of other analytical frameworks in Spanish colonial archaeology and highlight the potential to engage with ongoing historiographical debates about labour, markets and coercion.¹⁰⁰ If we leave to one side the important yet abstract discussions of modes of production and commodified labour, and consider, instead, the embodied tasks and effects of life on the road and in the fields, how might we rethink colonial political economies? How did discourses about labour capacity and substitutability, as based on populational qualities of race, species, altitude tolerance and load-bearing, inform quotidian political economies? And, rather than seeing these as simple questions of discourse confined to the archive, how might historical archaeologists trace the traumas and remaking of human and non-human bodies under conditions of altitude, disease and stress?

While we question appeals to an all-pervading capitalist totality, by foregrounding the biopolitical regime that was emerging within the Spanish colonial project, both case studies tie classic political economic concerns into an investigation of the diverse, embodied effects of human and animal labour regimes and the unanticipated dynamics of the new colonial ecologies. By grounding the cases in the material assemblages of conjoined bodies and landscapes, we can move beyond some of the appealing, yet simplistic, framing narratives, while simultaneously recognizing the important ‘family resemblances’ among the circulations of capital, discourses and bodies shaping the New World.

While archival sources can provide an important means for the analysis of the biopolitical, the archaeological approaches presented here provide a complementary, *material witnessing of the effects* of the structures, practices and knowledges outlined by scholars like Foucault, Mbembe and Montag. At an intimate scale, human and animal skeletal analyses provide evidence of the effects of Cheap Labour on the bodies of labourers (e.g. camelid and human pathologies related to portage). At larger scales, patterns of built space and forced resettlement provide insight into the spatial practices used to regulate, track and surveil labourers, while artefacts point to shifts in material practices catalysed by biopolitical regimes (whether as mechanisms of control or as a means of mitigating or even undermining them (e.g. alcohol production and consumption)).

Moreover, archaeology holds great promise in extending the applicability of biopolitical analyses to earlier histories of potentially similar regimes and effects. While the two case studies presented already pre-date the 18th- and 19th-century contexts emphasized by Foucault, even earlier contexts may benefit from a consideration of how life was managed, protected, profited from and made vulnerable by state and imperial actors. The Inka *mita*, Mesoamerican tribute relationships and ritualized human sacrifice provide cases where a biopolitical framework could illuminate the ways in which human vitalities were regulated, managed, deployed and destroyed within projects of state making and surplus accumulation.

Although the Andean and Mesoamerican cases appear to be extreme scenarios in certain respects, the repeated and frequently violent production of Cheap Nature, Cheap Labour and Cheap Infrastructure form a pattern with certain resonances for the current moment. Discussions of automated labour, the impacts of cyclical commodity booms and the deferral of costs to ‘other’ bodies and landscapes all have important ‘pre-histories’ and belie any easy appeals to a transcendent present.

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NOTES

- ¹ Orser 1996.
- ² cf. Alexander 1999.
- ³ Majewski & Gaimster 2009.
- ⁴ Laclau 1971; Wallerstein 1974.
- ⁵ Gaitán-Ammann 2011.
- ⁶ cf. Cañizares-Esguerra 2006; Mignolo 2005.
- ⁷ Croucher & Weiss 2011.
- ⁸ Braudel 1979; DeLanda 1997; Pezzarossi 2014; 2015; Wallerstein 1991.
- ⁹ Gibson-Graham 2014.
- ¹⁰ Horning 2011, 67.
- ¹¹ DeLanda 1997.
- ¹² Coronil 2007.
- ¹³ Foucault 2003; Redfield 2005.
- ¹⁴ Rabinow & Rose 2006, 196.
- ¹⁵ e.g. Evered & Evered 2012; Murphy 2012.
- ¹⁶ Hardt & Negri 2001.
- ¹⁷ Mbembe 2001.
- ¹⁸ Agamben 1998.
- ¹⁹ Mbembe 2008, 170.
- ²⁰ Moore 2015.
- ²¹ Hill & Montag 2014.
- ²² This analysis resonates particularly with DeLanda’s notion of capitalism as the effect of unequal, violence-backed antimarkets (see also Pezzarossi 2014; 2015).
- ²³ Hill & Montag 2014, 205.
- ²⁴ Hill & Montag 2014, 206; Mbembe 2008, 177 provides a more contemporary example of how the ‘siege’ of Palestine distributes death invisibly through manufactured lacks, complementing the spectacular deaths of military action.
- ²⁵ Foucault 2003, 243–5; Moore 2015.
- ²⁶ See Lovell & Lutz 2013, 270 for current population estimate of Guatemala at contact; see also Robinson 1997 for survey data from the Antigua Valley.
- ²⁷ Herrera 2003; MacLeod 1973.
- ²⁸ Feldman 1985; 1992; Sherman 1979.
- ²⁹ Masson, Freidel & Hirth 2013, 220; Sherman 1979, 15–19; Smith & Berdan 2003, 124; Tokovinine & Beliaev 2013, 169.
- ³⁰ Gasco 2003; Smith & Berdan 2003; Tokovinine & Beliaev 2013, 174–7.

³¹ Farriss 1984, 44; see Pezzarossi 2015 for examples of antimarket commerce in highland Guatemala.

³² Pezzarossi 2014; 2015.

³³ Herrera 2003, 8; Schiebinger 2004; Schiebinger & Swan 2007.

³⁴ Komisaruk 2010.

³⁵ Sherman 1979, 115.

³⁶ Hassig 1985.

³⁷ Feldman 1985.

³⁸ Lovell 1992, 53–8.

³⁹ Cook 1998, 212; Lovell 1992. Of note is the distinct English response to disease-induced death — English colonists saw disease as divine intervention that provided a ‘terra nullius’ for English settlement, which legitimized their occupation of native land. As a result, attempts at spreading disease and/or celebrating its effects on native North American populations dramatically differ from Spanish concerns, marking distinct, albeit parallel, states of exceptions that native people were made to live in.

⁴⁰ Hussey 1932, 324.

⁴¹ See review in Jones 2003.

⁴² Sherman 1979, 111.

⁴³ Lucas & Stevens 1893, iii–xvii.

⁴⁴ Sherman 1979, 116.

⁴⁵ See Pezzarossi 2017.

⁴⁶ Sherman 1979.

⁴⁷ Sherman 1979, 204.

⁴⁸ Pezzarossi 2014, 111–13.

⁴⁹ MacLeod 1973, 377. Writing in 1594, Pineda 1925 (333–4) mentions that highland labourers were also recruited by native cacao grove owners on the Guatemalan coast near Escuintla and put to work as wage labourers during harvest seasons.

⁵⁰ MacLeod 1973, 378.

⁵¹ Again, see Lovell & Lutz 2013, 270 for population estimates by region.

⁵² Sherman 1979, 118.

⁵³ The increased importation of enslaved Africans was another means of securing the life of endangered native labourers, with periods of the lowest population densities in Guatemala coinciding with a greater influx of enslaved Africans (Lovell & Lutz 2013, 228–9), a process mirroring the uptick in slave imports in the Caribbean as a replacement labour force for decimated Taíno populations (Cook 1998, 212). Some of the more dangerous labour tasks (sugar and indigo production, mining) were displaced onto African bodies considered to be better suited to the work and/or within a state of exception that made their use in *any* economic activities acceptable.

⁵⁴ See Pezzarossi 2017.

⁵⁵ Komisaruk 2010, 46.

⁵⁶ Patch also discusses how native health concerns were leveraged in broader colonial administrative affairs: immediately after the 1773 destruction of Santiago in the Valle de Almolonga, plans were made to remove the

capital and all neighbouring native communities from the seismically and volcanically dangerous valley to the (presumably) safer Valle de la Hermita, where Guatemala City is currently located. While native communities resisted the move, the economic necessity of a labouring population for the new capital overrode any economic benefit of the fruit trees and the relocation program moved forward, with officials stating that native communities ‘could not be permitted to live in a dangerous location’ and ‘new trees could be planted at the new site’ (Patch 2013, 41).

⁵⁷ Sherman 1979, 203.

⁵⁸ Sherman 1979, 203.

⁵⁹ Agamben 1998, 109.

⁶⁰ Pezzarossi 2014; 2015; 2017.

⁶¹ Pezzarossi 2014.

⁶² Fuentes y Guzman 1969, 316; Gage 1677, 93; Hill 1992, 122; Schwartzkopf 2008, 352–420.

⁶³ See Eber 2000, 93 for an example of a 20th-century wooden *trapiche* used for *chicha* production from Chiapas, Mexico.

⁶⁴ Pezzarossi 2017.

⁶⁵ See Hayashida 2008 for a comparative ethnographic example from Peru.

⁶⁶ See also Pezzarossi & Kennedy forthcoming for documentary evidence of horses at San Pedro.

⁶⁷ As seen in the examples in Eber 2000.

⁶⁸ Jones Borg 1986, 54, 124; Pezzarossi 2014.

⁶⁹ Pezzarossi 2017; Schwartzkopf 2012, 9–10.

⁷⁰ Pezzarossi 2017.

⁷¹ Glave 1989.

⁷² Mengoni 2008.

⁷³ Aldenderfer 1998; Arkush 2011; Valenzuela, Calogero & Luis Briones 2011.

⁷⁴ D’Altroy 2015.

⁷⁵ Cook 1981, 211.

⁷⁶ Mumford 2012; Vaca de Castro 1908 [1543].

⁷⁷ e.g. Bakewell 1984.

⁷⁸ e.g. Stern 1988; Wallerstein 1988.

⁷⁹ Glave 1989; Solórzano Pereira 1736 [1647].

⁸⁰ Rivera 1995.

⁸¹ cf. Nielsen 2000.

⁸² Moore 2015.

⁸³ Marx quoted in Braverman 1974, 31.

⁸⁴ Benton 1993, 59.

⁸⁵ e.g. Dransart 2003.

⁸⁶ Cushner 1983.

⁸⁷ Squier 1877; Von Tschudi 1869.

⁸⁸ Rivera 1995. The early and persistent involvement of indigenous elites in Tacna in this sector (see Pease 1988 on the 16th-century cacique Diego Caqui; Contreras Cruces 2005 on the 18th-century cacique Toribio Ara) complicates easy narratives of colonial Andean political economy, with the new combination of markets and tributary demands providing both opportunities for profit and new (potentially destabilizing) dynamics of exploitation (Stern 1995).

⁸⁹ DeFrance 2010.

⁹⁰ Foucault 2003.

⁹¹ cf. Rabinow & Rose 2006.

⁹² Cook 1981; Ramos 2013.

⁹³ Alchon 1992, 215; Cook 1998.

⁹⁴ Literally ‘beasts’, ‘dogs’ and ‘donkeys’ — see Solórzano Pereira 1736 [1647]; Guaman Poma 2006 [c. 1615]; cf. discussion in Waytz, Epley & Cacioppo 2010 on dehumanization from a social cognitive perspective.

⁹⁵ Cook 1981, 210.

⁹⁶ See Beall 2014 for a review of current research on high-altitude adaptations in Andean and Himalayan populations.

⁹⁷ Cobo 1890 [1653] provides an early account of colonial concern.

⁹⁸ See Bakker 2009 for a recent discussion of externalities from a political ecological perspective.

⁹⁹ e.g. Vaca de Castro 1543.

¹⁰⁰ Voss 2008.

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SUMMARY IN FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN AND SPANISH

RÉSUMÉ

Entre la mer du Sud et les crêtes montagneuses: assemblages biopolitiques dans les Amériques coloniales espagnoles

Bien que l'archéologie historique du monde colonial espagnol témoigne actuellement d'une explosion de recherches dans les Amériques, le cadre économique politique qui l'accompagne est peu considéré. Cet article montre que les contextes coloniaux espagnols mettent particulièrement en évidence les intrications entre des processus capitalistes clés tels que les 'anti-marchés', la dépossession, et la discipline du travail avec les écologies biopolitiques spécifiques assemblées à travers la co-

option, la contrainte, et l'accumulation. Cette perspective est étudiée à travers deux cas d'études archéologiques du Pérou et du Guatemala, où les intérêts en compétition pour l'altitude, le climat, la maladie, la violence, et les populations des corps de travail différenciés (humains et non-humains) passent au premier plan de manière inattendue. La discussion qui en résulte défie la dépendance de totalités analytiques abstraites telles que le 'capitalisme' et le 'colonialisme' et déplace l'attention vers les assemblages divers d'acteurs qui forment et continuent à former les processus centraux des analyses économiques politiques.

*ZUSAMMENFASSUNG***Zwischen der Südsee und den bergkämmen: biopolitische ansammlungen im spanischen kolonialen Amerika**

Obwohl die historische Archäologie der spanisch-kolonialen Welt derzeit eine Explosion der Forschung in Amerika erlebt, haben die begleitenden politischen Rahmen-Bedingungen eher wenig Beachtung gefunden. Diese Studie argumentiert, dass die spanisch-koloniale Interpretation eine bestimmte Erleichterung der Verstrickungen zwischen dem "Kern" des kapitalistischen Prozess wie "Antimärkte" bringen, Enteignung und die Disziplinierung der Arbeit mit den spezifischen biopolitischen Ökologien durch montierte Kooptation, Nötigung und Akkumulation. Diese Perspektive wird durch zwei archäologische Fallbeispiele aus Peru und Guatemala, wo konkurrierende Bedenken wie Höhenlage, Klima, Krankheit, Gewalt und Populationen von verschiedenen arbeitenden Einrichtungen (menschliche und nicht-menschliche) in den Vordergrund kamen, erkundet in unerwarteter Weise. Die daraus resultierende Diskussion fordert die Abhängigkeit von abstrakten analytischen Totalitäten wie "Kapitalismus" und "Kolonialismus" und verschiebt die Aufmerksamkeit auf die vielfältige Ansammlung der Akteure, deren Form die Prozesse im Mittelpunkt politischer Wirtschaftsanalysen prägen.

*RIASSUNTO***Fra mari del sud e crinali: complessi biopolitici nelle colonie spagnole delle Americhe**

Sebbene l'archeologia storica del mondo coloniale spagnolo stia attualmente attraversando un momento di grande rilevanza scientifica nelle Americhe, il contesto politico che l'accompagna è stato indagato solo in minima parte. Questo contributo discute come i contesti coloniali spagnoli abbiano messo in luce i legami fra l'essenza dei processi capitalistici come gli anti-mercati, la spoliazione e la regolamentazione

del lavoro con specifiche ecologie biopolitiche che si originarono attraverso la co-cooptazione, la coercizione e l'accumulo di beni. Quest'idea viene analizzata attraverso due casi di studio, ossia due siti archeologici in Perù e Guatemala, dove interessi concorrenti riguardo ad altitudine, clima, malattie, violenza e presenza di corporazioni lavorative diverse (sia umane che 'non umane') emersero in modo inaspettato. Il dibattito che ne segue mette in discussione la dipendenza riguardo a totalità analitiche astratte quali 'capitalismo' e 'colonialismo', spostando l'attenzione sulla compresenza di attori che hanno dato e continuano a dare forma ai processi al centro delle analisi di economia politica.

*RESUMEN***Entre el Mar del Sur y las colinas montañosas: Asambleas biopolíticas en las Américas coloniales españolas**

Aunque la arqueología histórica del mundo colonial español es ahora popular en las Américas, el marco político y económico que lo acompaña ha recibido menor atención. Este artículo argumenta que los contextos coloniales españoles ponen particularmente de relieve los enredos entre los procesos capitalistas "centrales" como los "anti-mercados", la desposesión y la disciplina del trabajo con las ecologías biopolíticas específicas reunidas a través de la cooptación, la coacción y la acumulación. Esta perspectiva se explora a través de dos ejemplos en Perú y en Guatemala, donde surgieron preocupaciones inesperadas sobre la altitud, el clima, las enfermedades, la violencia y las poblaciones que trabajaron para órganos varios (humanos y no humanos). Nuestra discusión desafía la dependencia en totalidades analíticas abstractas como el "capitalismo" y el "colonialismo" y dirige la atención hacia los diversos conjuntos de actores que configuran y continúan dando forma a los procesos centrales en los análisis político-económicos.

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