

**Richard Lewis Burger (ed) 2009. *The Life and Writings of Julio C. Tello: America's First Indigenous Archaeologist*. Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press. ISBN-13:978-1-58729-783-0.**

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One might quibble with the title's hyperbole of identifying Julio Cesar Tello Rojas (1881–1947) as America's 'first' indigenous archaeologist. Certainly Iroquois specialists might nominate Arthur C. Parker (first president of the Society for American Archaeology) or even Cornelius Cusick, both of whom were conducting archaeological researches earlier than Tello; and similar candidates could be suggested from Mexico. Beyond this, however, one would not contest the claim that Tello made seminal contributions to Andean prehistory, nor that he seems to have been 'South America's' first indigenous archaeologist.

The volume was conceived as a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Tello's help in founding the Institute of Andean Research in the United States in 1936, although its actual publication is just two years shy of the 75th anniversary. Burger, as a member of the Institute, agreed to undertake the task of assembling this tribute. The volume starts with three biographical essay chapters by Richard Earl Daggett, John Victor Murra, and Burger. These three chapters comprise about one quarter of the volume, and are followed by eleven 'chapters', each consisting of a short article or an excerpt from a longer piece that Tello wrote. Because some of the selections are from difficult to find newspaper articles in *El Comercio*, *La Prensa*, and *El Peru*, or from discourses in short-lived journals like *Inka*, *Wira-Kocha*, and *Chaski*, they are rarely to be found in library collections and thus it will be the first time they will have been seen by many Andeanists. For this volume, Burger had these articles of Tello translated by the Peruvianist Freda Yancy Wolf de Romero. Dr. Wolf has translated many Andean anthropological pieces over the last three decades and edited several archaeological tracts, although in his position as editor of this volume, Burger says he tweaked some of the specialized archaeological terminology in her translations. After the set of eleven selected essays, there is a final chapter comprising an updated, annotated bibliography of Tello's work. The bibliography is the product of Daggett's long-term research on Tello, with some 'modest efforts' (p. 4) by Burger in amending it. The book has a ten page index, which includes references to the majority of sites, people, and topics covered.

Daggett's chapter, 'Julio C. Tello – an account of his rise to prominence in Peruvian archaeology' is dense with details useful to the history of archaeology researcher. Daggett has carried out archival research on Tello for more than two decades. His description of Tello's tumultuous career, and Tello's struggles, while embroiled in controversy with his detractors in Peru, who sought to thwart his seminal work, is fantastic. Daggett without a doubt is the best and most rigorous and thorough scholar writing on the history of Peruvian archaeology today. Much of Daggett's work is unknown to the wider academy, so his fifty page chapter and twenty page

annotated bibliography are particularly important additions to this volume. Many thanks are owed to Burger for having recruited Daggett.

While Tello had an encyclopedic knowledge of Peruvian archaeological materials, and is known to many Andeanists because of that virtue, political controversy also played an important part in Tello's career. In 1917, he successfully ran for the Peruvian Congress (*Camara de Diputados*) from his native Huarochiri, in the rural cis-Andean part of Lima department, and served in this chamber for the next two decades. While this elected position provided Tello with the practical base from which to help found, as well as become director, of such important Peruvian archaeological institutions as the *Museo Nacional de Antropologia y Arqueologia*, the *Museo de Arqueologia Peruana*, and the *Patronato Nacional de Arqueologia*, his political office and his need to retain his legislative post also resulted in him becoming embroiled in many contentious public disputes revolving around these institutions.

A minor quibble I have with Daggett's piece is his attempt to make this contribution 'too Peruvian', in the sense that he deliberately avoided identifying various non-Peruvian individuals important to the intellectual story. For example, we are told on page 12, that two unnamed American scholars visited Tello in Lima and were instrumental in providing him with the information on how to enrol at Harvard University, where he subsequently registered and received his A.M. in 1911. Or, for example, Daggett reports that Tello trained three unidentified American graduate students during his project in Casma in 1937 (p. 36). In these two cases, I know that the documents cited actually provide information on whose these other individuals were. Scholars of the history of archaeology would have benefited by having the people involved in interactions like these situated and identified; it is important for the understanding of the potential mutual influences between Tello and other archaeologists.

The second biographical chapter is by the late John Murra and looks primarily at the relationship of Tello to scholars outside of Peru. This contribution is a slightly revised version of the paper previously published by Murra (1982. *La dimension internacional de la obra de Julio C. Tello, Histórica* 6(1): 53–63.) Among the items that this chapter details is the reinforcement that Tello received from his foreign training in dealing with things archaeological through emphasizing their natural history dimension; the encouragement that he received in organizing Peruvian museums and research facilities from his training with Frederic Putnam, who was himself a great organizer of institutions and museums; as well as Tello's great importance in the founding of the Institute of Andean Research in the U.S.A. in 1936. Also involved is the discussion of the importance of Tello staunchly contending that Chavín was the 'cultural matrix' of Peruvian civilization, seeing it paired in this sense with the Olmec in Mesoamerica. That is, in direct and argumentative opposition to Max Uhle, who had repeatedly proposed that Peruvian civilization was merely an extension of Asian civilizations by way of diffusion of the Maya civilization in Mesoamerica, Tello posited two independent American centers of indigenous state origin, each of antiquity greater than 3,000 years – Olmec in Mesoamerica and Chavin in the Andes. While today Tello's position may seem rather mundane, when he proposed it, the bulk of European Americanists supported Uhle's position, not Tello's.

Burger, in the third biographical chapter then adds to the impact of Tello's work, particularly as to how it has influenced Peruvian studies over the last half century. Tello had extraordinary

energy and great intuitional insight; the gift of making startling finds; and the ability of weaving evidence into constructive syntheses. But although Tello was a great synthesizer, much of Tello's work was explicitly political in content, both from the perspective of using the past to shape a new sense of Peruvian nationality, and in creating policies and institutions to protect Peru's archaeological heritage and foment its investigation. Tello's preoccupation with issues of national patrimony led him to formulate and promote 'Law #6634', legislation which ruled that archaeological ruins were the property of the state, and therefore should be protected by the state. Perhaps not a novel concept today, but when he promulgated it slightly less than a century ago, it was revolutionary.

Tello reconceptualized the role of archaeology in Peru, and placed it at the core of nation building. As such he was a pioneer of the Latin American intellectual school of 'social archaeology', an archaeology seen as enabling a better understanding of modern times in order to take desirable social action, including the use of archaeology in the name of class struggle. While he was named a professor of anthropology at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in 1923, and gave his first seminar in archaeology in 1925, Tello recruited only a few students into the discipline. Most of his archaeological staff came from rural areas, and he put his effort into training them to work with him on specific technical tasks. Hence the majority of these individuals ended up in museum positions rather than at universities, greatly diminishing any long-term academic or pedagogic impact, as well as reducing the influence of his ideas on the international archaeological community. Thus, as Burger observes (p. 86) Tello was 'the most successful indigenous archaeologist to have emerged in the Americas', but today he is mainly recognized and appreciated nearly uniquely in Peru.