

Book Reviews

**The Life and Writings of Julio C. Tello:
America's First Indigenous Archaeologist.**

Richard Burger, Iowa City: University of
Iowa Press, 2009. 334 pp.

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In 1947, Peruvians mourned the passing of Julio C. Tello, an indigenous anthropologist who was the father of Peruvian archaeology and a tireless advocate of Andean indigenous political concerns. The importance of Tello's legacy in contemporary Peru cannot be overstated. Countless streets, public spaces, and schools bear his name, bespeaking a widespread heroism and acclaim that very few academics or intellectuals achieve.

This valuable new collection provides a moving and long overdue chronicle of Julio C. Tello's life, from his birth in a small indigenous village to his career as an international anthropologist, and his subsequent role as national icon. It also presents, for the first time in English, a sample of Tello's groundbreaking essays on Andean culture and prehistory. An anthropologist with strong political convictions, Tello is known for his discovery and documentation of numerous archaeological sites, his innovative theories of autochthonous

Andean cultural practices and values, and his diligent commitment to the establishment of museums and public education programs within Peru. Tello championed what he termed "social archaeology," or a politically charged and public-oriented anthropological endeavor. Fueled by this public orientation, his research aimed to expand anthropological knowledge of ancient Andean societies and to rewrite the narrative of the Peruvian nation by emphasizing the influence and importance of autochthonous Andean cultural and social principles. Tello's remarkable commitment to indigenous politics is reflected in many of his essays, making this book not only a compendium of early anthropological theories on Andean prehistory but also a fascinating account of one anthropologist's formative role in the constitution of indigenous and national identity within postcolonial Latin America.

The text opens with a suite of biographical essays crafted by leading scholars of the Andes. These biographical sketches tell the extraordinary tale of how, at the beginning of the 20th century, an indigenous Peruvian from the highland region of Huarochirí became *the* respected international authority on Andean culture and society. Richard Daggett details Tello's often-tumultuous career, particularly the

battles that he fought against historians and politicians who favored neither Tello's anthropological and scientific approach to prehistory, nor his consistent advocacy for an indigenous view of Perú's past within both academia and the Peruvian national legislature. John Murra explains the international reputation of Tello and his influence on American anthropology, underscoring the impact of Tello's then-radical proclamation that ancient Andean civilization should be considered equivalent to the societies of the ancient Old World. Richard Burger illustrates the significance of Tello's principal argument, namely that Andean civilization was both autochthonous and exceptional, and thus must be understood on its own terms. Burger points out that for Tello this was more than an academic proposition. Indeed, Tello contended that the ruins of the ancient Andes were testaments to the "genius" once achieved, and still achievable, by Peruvians. This argument was an innovative rendering at a time when many diffusionist accounts of Peruvian prehistory defined Andean civilization as a mere offshoot of Mesoamerica. Moreover, Tello's declaration of "native genius" was an empowering trope for people from the Andean highlands.

An understanding of the origin of Andean civilization and culture was central to Tello's anthropological research. Although written in the early 20th century, Tello's essays provide fresh perspectives on enduring anthropological issues. Specifically, he proposes that Andean societies share certain cultural principles that are rooted in the distant past, particularly within the ideology and symbolism of the widespread Chavín religious cult. Tello's interpretations of ancient Chavín symbol systems

still offer lucid insights into how we understand and explain artistic representation, political esthetics, and the constitution of sacred things and places. His essays on social interconnections within the ancient Chavín or Inka spheres of influence raise issues of non state regional sociocultural interaction and political confederation—issues with which anthropologists still grapple. Tello's defense of a scientific archaeology provocatively challenges the object-oriented representation of the past that is currently contained within many museums. And his distrust of Spanish documents on the Inka Empire still provides a warning to Andeanists, many of whom too often use such sources to guide and influence their interpretations of the prehistoric Andes.

Tello sought to integrate archaeology with a truly comparative and collaborative anthropology. He was concerned with the complicated interplay of the past and present, and of the material and ideational realities through which an Andean culture has long been constituted and reconstituted. Even though Tello's reified and regionalized notions of culture and "civilization" will seem antiquated to most readers, his insistence on a generalized, integrated, and politicized anthropological practice remains inspiring and insightful.

Over and above Tello's renderings of Peruvian prehistory, this volume details an indigenous anthropologist's effort to shape the history and identity of a young nation. It is at once a history of Peruvian nationalism and indigenous politics, an intellectual history of nascent American anthropology, and a biography of an important Latin American intellectual. As such, this is a significant text that should interest anthropologists and historians

working in both the Andean region and farther afield, especially scholars concerned with the origins of American anthropology or archaeology's intersection with political platforms and indigenous movements. Tello's essays from this book will make valuable contributions to undergraduate classes or graduate seminars, whether they are used as primary sources on some of Peru's most notable archaeological sites, or presented as examples of an especially prescient and prophetic voice in the field of indigenous politics and identity.

The City at Its Limits: Taboo, Transgression, and Urban Renewal in Lima. *Daniella Gandolfo*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009. 269 pp.

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In her ethnography of the “recuperation” of Lima's historical district, Daniella Gandolfo rejects a stable object, privileging instead the power of broken taboo to map prohibitions through which humans define and transcend themselves. Grounded in the “fleeting glimpse” of Señora Roberta, an ex-street sweeper who stripped to the waist during a protest against the privatization of municipal sanitation services, Gandolfo thus expands a particular approach to taboo as a tool for analyzing social belonging today. She does so by demonstrating how the reestablishment of limits does more than separate lives into permissible and proscribed realms, suggesting instead that those horizons bind people to the necessity of their transgression. This awakens subjects to that

which lies beyond. This is “the sacred” as conceptualized by Georges Bataille, or a “dark and silent region,” imagined as a reservoir of animal traits expelled from social lives through a taboo “that mediates social intercourse, giving it human meaning” (13).

Gandolfo suggests that a structuring of relations around contact with prohibited activity is required to erect boundaries between human and animal worlds through observance of prohibitions around incest, death, human waste, and nudity. This involves a “twofold movement,” or a coding of something as simultaneously repulsive and desirable, through which the warding off of “natural” activity through prohibition serves as the hinge upon which disobedience and erotic behavior revolves (39). Simultaneously, Gandolfo asserts that this forced sorting of animal from human beings engenders people's categorization into social classes, races, and genders on the basis of their perceived proximity to animal comportment (14).

In Gandolfo's presentation the “drama” (40)—a perennial humanizing anxiety—unfolds within central Lima's urban renewal. This initiative was implemented in 1996–97 by Mayor Alberto Andrade to recapture the lost essence of *lo limeño*, or Lima's fantasized colonial Criollo identity, at a time when the peopling of Peru's capital by Andean highlanders spurred a collective preoccupation around the perceived contamination this insurgent wave posed to “tradition.” Drawn around a purge of street vendors, flea-markets and physical waste, the renewal sought to reinstate an urbanistic order installed during Lima's colonial period so as to channel the interlocutors'