



Vol. 8, No. 3, Spring 2011, 304-310
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Review/Reseña

Heidi V. Scott, *Contested Territory: Mapping Peru in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.

Landscape, Space, and Colonization: Re-examining Spanish Portrayals of Place in the Andes

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The landscape looms large in western South America. As the longest mountain range in the world, the Andes present a breathtaking yet challenging landscape to its inhabitants. Thus, it should come as no surprise that this rugged terrain was central to the development of societies in the Andes, which in turn, dramatically altered the landscapes they occupied. It is this exchange between people and place that is the core of Heidi Scott's new monograph, *Contested Territories: Mapping Peru in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Examining several key areas in the

central Andes, Scott explores the different ways in which the Spanish understood and altered the landscapes they encountered, and how these Spaniards—along with African and indigenous peoples—were in turn transformed by the environments they came across.

Incorporating ocean-side deserts, wind swept glaciers, and lush tropical wetlands, the diverse environment of the Andean region has always made travel and habitation challenging. For the Spanish, accustomed to the flat plains and gently rolling hills of southern Iberia, the Andes were particularly difficult. It is this relationship between the Andes and Spaniards that is the core of Scott's book. Making use of the small but high quality scholarship on Andean landscapes and spatial practices (pre-Columbian and colonial) Scott explores the impact this expansive and sometimes perplexing landscape had upon both occupants and visitors to the Andes in the early modern period.

Scott's work focuses primarily on the Spanish. However, Scott is able to use what we have learned about indigenous practices, both before and after the arrival of Europeans in the Americas, to challenge the ways in ways we have considered Spanish actions during the colonial period. The result is a lucid, well-organized, and insightful monograph that examines the diverse people and factors that went into defining and redefining the Andes during the early modern period. By focusing on Spaniards, she is able to show how fractured they were as a group, how diverse were their perceptions of place, and yet how they were all deeply dependent on indigenous actions and spaces.

Scott examines three 'types' of Andean landscape: the high mountain, the subtropical frontier, and the tropics. In doing so, Scott is able to reveal the ways in which Spaniards confronted and were often confounded by very different and unfamiliar terrains. By examining documents, not only for what is stated, but also for what is absent, Scott uncovers unexpected clues into how Spaniards experienced and came to define those landscapes. This nuanced approach reveals the multifaceted, and sometimes contradictory actions by a diverse group of Spaniards in the Americas and their complex interactions and dependencies on Andean people. In doing so, she challenges the paradigm of a unified Spanish

imperial power and reveals the multiple ways in which individuals acted that sometime cut across ethnic, class, and religious lines.

In the first chapter, Scott sets the groundwork for her study by discussing trends in Andean scholarship, the importance of spatial practices, and political concerns of early modern Spain. She also lays out the problems of sources, such as the fact that although the texts are written by a variety of players, in terms of positions in society and ethnicity (indigenous as well as Spanish authors), the written sources are authored exclusively by men. Hence, when reconsidering the spatial practices of the early modern Andes, Scott notes that it is important to remember that our view is shaped entirely through the lens of a single gender. As Scott points out, gender can be a very important fact in determining how space and place were understood and constructed. By highlighting the absence of a female gaze, Scott frames the limits of what is possible to read in a given text, an elucidating strategy more scholars could benefit from following. Scott concludes the chapter by highlighting the major issues of the forthcoming chapters, and how they each tie together.

The rest of the book is organized spatially and temporally, i.e. moving from the coast, to the highlands, then down to the tropics while following more or less a chronological framework. It seems that even as this structure provides a chronological framework, it also allows Scott to effectively highlight the three types of Andean landscapes she outlines, while at the same time showing how Spaniards traversed/moved across these landscapes thus linking them at the same time. For example, in chapter two, Scott examines the Spaniards as they moved from Panama down the Pacific coast, and finally up into Jauja. This chapter examines the earliest time period of the Spanish presence in the Andes, namely the first decades of the sixteenth century. In retracing their travels, Scott looks at how the Spaniards initially conceived of the western rim of South America in their petitions and accounts. Scott provides a vivid view of how drastically different the landscape was written about. She reveals how it was used by the Spaniards to excuse their failures or to celebrate their victories. In addition, Scott shows how indigenous groups played a critical role in determining Spanish interactions with the landscape, and thus their

successes or failures. In doing so, she shows how Spanish writers were eager to blame indigenous people (and nature) for their failures in the landscape, even as they neglected to acknowledge indigenous assistance when it enabled Spanish success.

In the first reconnaissance trips and then later official voyage leaving from Panama, the landscape is front and center in the Spanish writings, in that it is the source of Spanish agony and suffering. But what Scott shows in her analysis is that equally important in the Spanish experiences of these landscapes is what is absent, namely indigenous and African people. Previously it is this diverse group of non-Europeans who had shielded the Spaniards from the harshness of the landscape, and thus it is their eventual absence that brings the Spaniards in direct and unmediated contact with the landscape and results in their sufferings. Without the mediatory role of indigenous and African people, the Spanish are confronted with a landscape they do not know or understand, and suffer from death, disease and multiple discomforts. It is in this narrative, which Scott refers to as the 'discourse of failure,' that the writings reveal how the Spaniards had to devote all their energies to staying alive, such that nature and suffering were seen as intricately linked.

By contrast, once the Spanish reach the edge of the Inca empire, Scott shows how it is the Inca infrastructure, in the form of well maintained highways, finely made bridges, ways stations etc, that allowed the Europeans to move rapidly across the Andes. Yet, the Spanish never credit their success to indigenous modifications of the landscape, but instead, chalk up their victories to their own bravery and strength. For example, the Inca built environment is marveled at, but it is never credited with enabling Spanish successes. Thus the landscape, which is mediated by the Inca infrastructure, fades into the background. Indeed the source of suffering and hostilities moves from the physical terrain to the indigenous peoples themselves. This is ironic, as Scott shows how in reality specific indigenous groups enabled Spanish survival and success against the Incas by providing critical information, supplies, support, and even troops. The chapter ends with a compelling look at the intricacies of the rich fertile Jauja landscape, and the ways in which the Spanish and indigenous groups interacted.

Despite the fact that the Huanca provided key aid to the Spanish, these Europeans only wrote about indigenous people when the Spaniards successfully crushed them in battle. However, Scott shows that this manipulation of roles in written texts was not just limited to the Spaniards, but also included indigenous people. She reveals how the Huanca manipulated ideas of landscape, and their assistance to the Spanish to aggrandize their own power in the early colonial period.

In the following chapter, Scott examines how the mountainous provinces of Jauja and Huamanga changed in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Chapter three focuses on the *Relaciones Geograficas*, in terms of both the fifty-point questions and the wide-ranging answers. Although this ambitious geographical project did not reap the numerous returns that it did farther north in New Spain (166 versus 15), Scott is able to cull intriguing insights from those that were submitted. Four questionnaires were compiled from Huamanga (city and rural districts). In studying this set, Scott elucidates the problem of trying to fit colonial period actions into the binary model of domination and resistance. In particular, she demonstrates the multifaceted ways in which indigenous people defined their landscapes other than simply 'resistance'. For example, by exploring the complex issues behind place naming, Scott is able to show how subtle battles over ownership, heritage, sacredness, and meaning played out behind the scenes. She also clearly shows how diverse were Spanish portrayals of the landscapes and how these views often clashed with the official desires that framed the questions themselves.

In chapter four, Scott moves on to the region of Huarochiri, which lies to the east of the capital Lima, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In this chapter, she examines the experiences of crown and religious officials (Jesuit missionaries and several extirpators of idolatry) and how control over the landscape was still considered a critical part of Spanish colonial order. She also focuses on a new mode portraying the landscape in the Andes, i.e. travel narratives. Here she shows how these writings were greatly influenced by the natural world, local people, and circumstances. In this examination of the everyday, Scott shows how personal and professional desire could sometimes come into direct conflict,

and how indigenous practices, both cultural and landscape, affected Spanish experiences and understandings of the landscape in unexpected ways. In addition, Scott demonstrates the colonial belief that movement through space was one of the most important means of obtaining the desired spatial order, even more so than texts or mapping.

In the remaining two chapters, Scott moves from the highlands to the lowlands and shows how very different Andean landscapes were understood by Europeans. In chapter five, Scott explores a section of the Amazon in the early seventeenth century through the writings of a Spanish officer. Her analysis challenges the idea of the tropical lowlands as merely a trap for gold hungry Europeans, but instead, exposes it as a repository for multiple Spanish desires, both official and personal. In particular, Scott is able to demonstrate the important role of the Spanish court and their shifting interests and how Spaniards began to understand that the highlands and the lowlands were not separate and distinct, but intimately connected. In chapter six, Scott moves to another area of the lowlands, to the subtropical frontier of Charcas and Cuzco during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Here she expounds further on the complicated relationship between highlands and lowlands, and how the Spanish came to understand the area not in binary terms, but instead, as separated by an 'in-between space.' Scott concludes the chapter by exploring how writings and perceptions of the landscape were influenced in unexpected ways, on many levels, from the local to the regional and transatlantic.

In this book, Scott reveals how the first century and a half of European contact with the Andes was a time of significant and unexpected changes. In her eloquently written text, she demonstrates that these changes did not evolve along a clear progression, such as from the alien and strange, to the knowable and familiar. Instead, she finds a landscape that is diverse, complex, and constantly negotiated by multiple players. Scott shows the influences of Spanish policies and officials, as well as of clergymen, indigenous leaders, and indigenous commoners. In the process, she exposes the power of the everyday in determining spatial practices and thus how the landscape was experienced through the body and then represented in text. She powerfully reveals how intimately interwoven

indigenous and Spanish actions were, and thus, how they both were critical players who together defined the landscape, not in clear roles of domination and resistance, but instead equally entangled in the shaping of the colonial Andes. In her sophisticated analysis, Scott reveals the experienced, imagined, and embodied ways in which multiple players from diverse backgrounds helped to create a landscape that served not only as an important theatre for the early modern Iberian world, but also as an active force that shaped the lives of the players who acted upon it. This book, which makes a compelling case for the importance of studying space and landscape, provides an original analysis of the colonial period in the Andes, and whose engaging text and ideas should be of interest to a wide range of scholars, including cultural anthropologists, historians, archaeologists, geographers, architectural historians, and scholars of literature.