



Vol. 11, No. 1, Fall 2013, 416-423

Review/Reseña

Mumford, Jeremy Ravi. *Vertical Empire: The General Resettlement of Indians in the Colonial Andes*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012.

Making the Colonial Empire

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Jeremy Mumford asks a complicated question of an event that many historians have taken for granted: How and why did the massive resettlement of native Andeans happen during the first century of Spanish colonial rule? Many of us are familiar with the story of the Spanish military conquest of the Andes in the sixteenth century, subsequent Spanish infighting, Inca resistance, and first attempts at Catholic conversion. But the story usually ends with the beginning of what many have called the “mature” colonial period, marked by the arrival of Viceroy don Francisco de Toledo in 1569. Toledo founded Lima’s Tribunal of the Inquisition,

established the *corregimiento* (a key provincial administrative unit), formalized the *mita*, or the labor quota owed by indigenous communities, that would be critical to the mining economy, and, most importantly for Mumford, engaged in a General Inspection of the Peruvian Viceroyalty that would result in mandating resettlement of dispersed Andean communities into centralized *reducciones* or colonial villages. Toledo's task and assumed legacy was to transform Andeans into a disciplined labor force headed by their *caciques*, or local lords (96) for the profit of the Crown. Rather than assuming this outcome, Mumford, however, interrogates the process of these fundamental aspects of Spanish colonization in the Andes.

Mumford organizes his book to highlight three chronological themes: ethnography, resettlement, and after. While this organization delivers on the author's innovative promise to highlight how particular Spanish colonial officials attempted to create the mechanisms of their colonial holdings from pieces of the Inca empire. Here I am pointing to additional methodological and theoretical contributions in colonial Latin American history. Mumford suggests a radical thesis: while Viceroy Toledo certainly ordered Andeans to leave their ancestral homes (that were in close proximity to their fields, pastures, and sacred spaces) and build new colonial towns with central plazas, streets laid out on a grid pattern, and homes for nuclear families—Andeans did not categorically relocate. In Chapter Eight, Mumford creatively marshals a number of case studies to demonstrate that while Toledo certainly began to create *reducciones*, he did not uniformly complete this imposition on the Andean landscape.

In a useful synthesis combined with selective archival investigation, Mumford argues that historians and other scholars have over-relied on the evidence of the Crown's instructions to Toledo as well as the viceroy's orders. Toledan mandates, instead, should be read as his (or others') intentions, and not interpreted as the final results. By examining locations such as Condes (southwest of Cuzco), Yanquecollaguas (in the Colca valley), and Millerea (on the shore of Lake Titicaca), Mumford demonstrates that Toledan inspectors who fanned out across the viceroyalty were more focused on reporting their successful censuses rather than overseeing the construction of new houses and the movement of people into new towns.

Furthermore, input from indigenous leaders and the Crown's concern for continual Andean prosperity (and subsequent colonial profit) meant that *reducciones* were located on or near old villages and fields, widely varied in population size, and conformed more to local needs than Crown or Toledan desires. In other words, Mumford suggests that the *reducciones* may not have happened in ways that either the Spanish, or we, have imagined.

Mumford makes a critical methodological contribution to Andean history in this book. In his painstaking analysis of the Crown's expectations regarding Toledo's administration as well as the viceroy's own vision, Mumford demonstrates how historians can read documents as much "along the archival grain" as against it.¹ In addition to excavating archival and published texts for evidence of past events, Mumford reads for the intentionality of Spanish bureaucratic order within documents. Mandates proved not the only occurrence of policy, but suggest how Spanish colonial officials considered a range of possibilities.

As he did in an initial thought piece questioning the veracity of Taki Onqoy, Mumford challenges scholars to examine the purposes of claims within our sources.² In other words, just as priests may have claimed that defiant practitioners of a "Dancing Sickness" raged throughout the Andes in the later sixteenth century in order to boost support for their evangelical projects, so too did colonial expectations of Andeans re-settling into urban settlements weight the official reports. As a result, Mumford examines how the hyperbole of the documentation combined with the context (such as private Spanish colonizers seizing land) reveals how the General Resettlement created a new colonial order that included corruption, variation, and yet a continuation of Andean practices.

In Chapter Ten, Mumford expands on his thesis to demonstrate how in subsequent centuries, Andean *reducciones* were abandoned, discarded, and illegally included non-indigenous people. At the same time, *reducciones*—like other signatures of colonial rule—became equated with Andean identity. Andeans made the grid structure sacred and today

¹ Ann Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 47, 53.

² Jeremy Mumford. "The Taki Onqoy and the Andean Nation: Sources and Interpretations," *Latin American Research Review* 33:1 (1998): 150-165.

transnational families treat *reducciones* as ceremonial centers for annual fiestas and renewal of kinship ties—just as they had with pre-Hispanic sites and Inca urban centers. Mumford suggests that Andean community structures “survived while changing” (165) and Andeans realized the political potency of the colonial *reducciones* through their own cultural and social practices. In doing so, Mumford deepens the ongoing interrogation of how the colonial state operated in the Andes.

Usefully, the book moves away from the focus on Lima but still engages with the question of whether mandates from the Spanish Junta Magna, a committee of officials from distinct branches of government who advised the restructuring of colonial organization in the Peruvian viceroyalty, were modern (76).³ Toledo, however, had his own plans regardless of the Crown’s stratagems. Mumford reminds us that the imposition of state control articulated within the policies of the General Resettlement may have been high modernity well ahead of its time, but it also was a look to ancient means of control rooted in Inca organization and Aristotelian “tyranny” (179-180).

In order to further destabilize the idea that the Toledan Great Resettlement was solely inspired by European paradigms, Mumford examines how Spanish colonialism was modeled on Inca policies and Andean practices. In Chapter One, Mumford employs a narrative of the Spanish first encounters with the Inca cities to describe the colonizers’ awe of the order, splendor, and wealth of Andean urbanity. He argues that the Spanish admired the Inca’s imperial infrastructure, including the ceremonial center’s large plaza, the stone palaces, and the well-stocked storehouses, but they remained frustrated by the lack of permanent residents in Inca cities and other marked differences from European cities. The ceremonial centers had “no place for *vecinos* and *policía*” (26) or the municipal citizens and orderly urban life that constituted Iberian civilization. Additionally, Inca cities did not and could not operate as tribute collection centers in a new colonial regime.

³ Alejandra B. Osorio, “The King in Lima: Simulacra, Ritual, and Rule in Seventeenth-Century Peru,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84:3 (2004): 447-474; Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

Mumford emphasizes an “ethnographic inquiry into Andean society” (3) that allows him to analyze the perspectives of both the colonizer and the colonized, and understand how “ethnography was part of Spanish imperialism” (34). In Chapter Two, Mumford relies on *licenciado* Polo Ondegardo’s reports as well as appeals cases housed in the *Archivo General de las Indias* to argue that the Spanish gradually learned how Andean networking between ecological zones—or what John Murra named the vertical archipelago—combined with the strategic placement of *mitimas* (forcibly re-settled colonists under the Inca) was the backbone of the highland economy.⁴ Through close observation of Andean social geography, some Spanish colonizers were able to describe and therefore understand how tampering with the economy of the vertical landscape would ruin its productivity and colonial prosperity.

In a deft reading of Spanish intentions and reactions to Andean realities, Mumford explains that colonizers simultaneously deprecated and admired Inca rule. As the first century of colonial rule wore on, Spanish colonizers also feared a decline in laborers and resources to supply the ever-critical highland silver mines. In Chapter Three, Mumford posits that by the 1560s, some Spanish colonial officials came to realize that the Inca management of dispersed Andean settlements was much more successful than their initial attempts at reducing the population. In a vivid illustration of the constant tension between emulation and destruction that characterized Spanish colonialism of the Andes, Mumford argues in Chapter Seven that while Toledo condemned Andean idolatry and Inca tyranny, he modeled the *reducción* on Inca state policies. Along with other members of the inspection campaign, Toledo admired the Inca ability to reduce, move around, and engage local *caciques* as the empire’s agents. As a result, Toledo’s mandates included Inca practices and, in some cases, preserved Andean political organization. By identifying how Toledo incorporated Andean rule into colonial rule, Mumford successfully locates the viceroy in a fascinating paradoxical light as both a destroyer and a preserver of Andean society.

⁴ John Murra, “El Control vertical de un máximo de pisos ecológicos en la economía de las sociedades andinas,” in *Formaciones económicas y políticas del mundo andino* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1975): 59-115.

Mumford includes a wide range of actors. In Chapter Four (“Lords”) Mumford discusses how Andean *caciques* participated in and resisted Spanish colonial policies and politics. Combining a close examination of the debates regarding the perpetuity of the *encomienda* (a Spanish privilege of receiving native tribute) and the *caciques*’ subsequent contestation, Mumford illustrates Andean political agency. By calling on the Spanish Crown’s invitation to participate as subjects and outbidding the Spanish *encomenderos*’ attempts to purchase positions, Andean *caciques* demanded a legitimatization of their authority. In a welcomed interpretation, Mumford posits that the 1560s Jauja conspiracy (while probably not true) pushed Spanish officials to establish the office of the *corregidor de indios*, a local magistrate, to oversee Andean communities. In this rapid overview of Andean responses to colonial and Crown policies, Mumford suggests that *caciques* had the language and cultural skills plus the resources to oppose resettlement.

However, Mumford’s scope—the empire—has a cost. In order to examine imperial policy, in some cases the focus returns to an emphasis on a few men and elites, thereby de-emphasizing the actions and perspectives of subalterns. In Chapter Five, Mumford details Crown and Church politics—with a nervous king and an overreaching pope—that led to Toledo’s dominance in the making of viceregal policy. While Toledo pushed questions of governance, the Crown was mainly concerned with establishing a method of forced labor under the radar of an ever-vigilant Church. The chapter certainly sets up an exploration of how the *reducciones* came to be established, but removes Andeans and Andean geography from the picture. In Chapter Nine, Mumford relies heavily on don Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala’s extensive letter to the king to argue that the *reducciones* failed when utilizing evidence of local events would have been more convincing. Certainly, Guaman Poma must have described corruption, but his definition of “false caciques” (151) was most certainly rooted in his own definition of purity that bolstered his position as an Andean elite. To much success, the reliance on colonial state documentation from the metropolitan archive in Seville allows Mumford to deepen the rationale of the Spanish, but begs additional questions around

how Andeans helped to make this state apparatus so modern. What was the level of indigenous participation in integrating the traditional with the modern? Mumford's work encourages further work into the actions of Andeans and the consequences within local communities.

While the theoretical contributions would have resonated more deeply had they been integrated throughout the book, in his epilogue, in an exciting and bold move, Mumford discusses how James Scott's ideas from *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* combined with Michel Foucault's concepts of governmentality, and theories regarding the colonial state of John Comaroff, Nicholas Dirks, and Frederick Cooper inform his analysis of the sixteenth-century Andes.⁵ As Alejandro Cañeque has suggested, Toledo was the "king's living image," a vibrant, physical manifestation the Crown and, more, as Mumford suggests, a maker of the colonial state in the Andes.⁶ Rather than measuring modernity, Mumford suggests how traditional institutions coexisted and intertwined with modern ones that could be ascertained by colonial forms of ethnography (182). In this way, colonizers observed, absorbed, and adapted native practices in their impositions of state structures. The rich discussion in the epilogue urges scholars to continue the interrogation of how the colonial state operated. For example, if we see the sixteenth-century Andes as a location where the modern state attempted to assert its will, what do we learn? That modernity comes from the colonial sphere? That modernity is multiple? What are we to make of a colonial project that admired and destroyed, mimicked and changed Inca structures and Andean life ways? In effect, Mumford has opened new

⁵ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Princeton University Press, 1998); Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, editors (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf [1978] 1991), 87-104; John Comaroff, "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions," *Social Identities* 4:3 (1998), 321-62; Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

⁶ Alejandro Cañeque, *The King's Living Image: The Culture and Politics of Viceregal Power in Colonial Mexico* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

avenues for discussion and located the Andes and colonial Latin America within larger frameworks of a global history of state and colony making.

Overall, Mumford's crisscrossing through critical political events in the sixteenth-century Andes is much appreciated as he draws together innovative conclusions regarding the process of colonial policy that included ecclesiastical and Crown officials, local colonizers, and Andean elites.