

plinary readership. The editors' mildly argumentative tone, however, is hardly a matter of substance. If writing is defined as the redaction of speech, then most of what is treated in these essays is not writing. But if writing is defined as the recording of information, then ideographs, mixed logosyllabic systems, or even knots in *quipus* present no problem.

The editors oppose an "evolutionary" notion of types of writing systems. They question the assumptions that such systems should represent speech in a language-specific way; that systems representing the pronunciation of words provide more information than those composed of ideographs; and that alphabets provide such information more economically than syllabaries. Taking the position that no writing system conveys total information about what it represents (facial expression, body position, intonation), the editors argue that information is lost in exchange for phonetic detail, and that the "alternative" recording systems of Mesoamerica and the Andes should be considered legitimate forms of writing that may have been superior for their purposes.

Criticism is directed at linguists, who may not recognize themselves in the editors' characterization of what they do and believe. Again, it is a matter of definition: what are current linguistic concerns? Who exactly is a linguist, and who is not? The term *linguistic* is used very differently by Derrida and Foucault (invoked by contributors) on the one hand, and people employed in departments of linguistics (who also figure in this book's references) on the other. Unfortunately, the appropriation of defined technical terminology from linguistics and the metaphorical use of it by nonlinguists (Mark King, for example, on p. 127) leads to bafflement among linguist-readers and resentment among writers when linguists refuse to understand them.

This volume would have benefited from more editorial attention. A cumulative bibliography not only would have served readers more conveniently and avoided redundancy but would have promoted greater consistency in reference form and spelling. Also, Walter Mignolo provides English translations of Spanish quotations while Cummins does not; and although Leibsohn's name is in the running footers of "Primers for Memory," it is missing from above the title.

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Provincial Power in the Inka Empire. By TERENCE N. D'ALTROY. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992. Photographs. Illustrations. Maps. Graphs. Tables. Figures. Appendix. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. xii, 272 pp. Cloth. \$42.50.

This is an important book about the sociopolitical transformation of the central Peruvian highlands (the Upper Mantaro valley) after the Inca conquest in the fifteenth century A.D. Moreover, Terence D'Altroy has compared the Incas' imperial strategy with other premodern examples of imperialism. The author has used

the “hegemonic-territorial” model of analysis, which emphasizes decision-making strategies, disposition of imperial assets, and their relevance to the extraction of vassal resources. The virtue of this work is primarily archaeological, but the text includes historical and interdisciplinary references in its discussion of field research results. Unfortunately, the historical evaluations are not elaborated with the benefit of archival material. That laborious task remains for scholars to undertake.

Inca governance over the largest pre-Columbian empire affected competitor states, highly sophisticated cultures, and simple tribes. Imperial rule was pragmatically flexible in the integration of diverse societies. Inca conquests involved coercive persuasion or overwhelming military attack. After submission, the Incas resettled indigenous people, deported entire communities, imported colonists and military garrisons, and assimilated the local elites into the administrative system.

Supplying the Inca armies constituted one of the most astounding wonders of pre-Columbian America. The Inca relations with the Xauxa and Wanka populations that inhabited the Upper Mantaro valley had an ideological, material, and spatial rationale. The Inca expansionist strategy facilitated an especially generous treatment of those two conquered peoples. The Incas constructed some of their largest storage facilities in the Upper Mantaro valley; the region served as a natural conduit and breadbasket for the realm. Much of the valley was conquered relatively peacefully, and it became one of the most integrated parts of the empire. Although life and economic activity at the community level (*ayllu*) may not have changed radically, the imperial state controlled the production and distribution of certain status and strategic goods. The local elites adopted a centralized internal administration because their power increased through imperial governance.

Andean specialists would be well advised to read D’Altroy’s work for its insights into the impact of Inca administration at the state level as well as on the household. This book is also a significant contribution for comparing the so-called archaic empires.

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Colonial Period

Primeros memoriales. By BERNARDINO DE SAHAGÚN. Photographed by FERDINAND ANDERS. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993. Photographs. 190 pp. Cloth. \$160.00.

The Drawings of Sahagún’s “Primeros Memoriales.” By ELLEN T. BAIRD. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993. Tables. Figures. Bibliography. Index. xiv, 177 pp. Cloth. \$30.00.

It is well known that Fr. Bernardino de Sahagún was one of the most gifted students of Nahua culture in sixteenth-century Mexico. The most famous of his works is the 12-volume encyclopedic of Nahua history and culture known as the Floren-