

RATTRAY, EVELYN CHILDS. *Teotihuacan: ceramics, chronology and cultural trends*. 660 pp., maps, figs., tables, illus., bibliogr. Pittsburgh: Univ. Press, 2001

As one of the largest and most influential cities in ancient Mesoamerica, Teotihuacan deserves a solid and well-described ceramic chronology, and this bilingual volume provides that sequence. Evelyn Rattray was instrumental in refining the Teotihuacan chronology in her work with René Millon's Teotihuacan mapping project in the 1960s, and the present book can now replace tattered copies of her 1973 dissertation on the shelves of Mesoamericanists. Rattray has been busy since 1973, directing many excavations and ceramic analyses. These all contribute to the present report, which far surpasses her dissertation in every way.

Chapter 1 introduces the chronology and methods. Chapter 2, 'Stratigraphy and burials', describes stratigraphic excavations, and summarizes the author's study of whole vessels from burials (published in 1992). Her treatment of the level of empirical support for various aspects of the chronology is frank and straightforward, allowing readers to assess the strength of the various chronological and social interpretations.

Chapter 3, a massive chapter organized by ceramic complex, contains the bulk of the ceramic descriptions. Rattray's analytical framework and the presentation of data both have some problems. Ceramic descriptions within each complex are organized by 'ware', a unit that combines paste and surface finish in an inconsistent fashion. The methods section in chapter 1 tells us that wares are divided into types, but there is no list of types and it is not always clear just what the types are. Descriptions of wares typically are subdivided by form, and sometimes by decoration, but these units are not called types. The confusion is compounded by inconsistencies and errors in the formats of subheadings, making it difficult for the reader to determine just what level is being described. For example, a section headed 'Polished monochrome ware' is followed by a section entitled 'Floreros' with a subheading of the same kind (pp. 189-93). Although the format of the subheading suggests that *floreros* are a separate ware, a figure

caption (at the end of the book) indicates that they are in fact a type of monochrome ware. Such inconsistencies aside, most of the individual descriptions are clear and the numerous illustrations are first-rate – high-quality line drawings and excellent photographs.

Chapter 4, 'The foreign ceramics', discusses the two predominant imported ceramic types – thin orange and granular. Rattray is responsible for locating and documenting the place of origin of thin orange ware in southern Puebla, and her description of these ceramics and their importance at Teotihuacan is excellent. Other imported types – from the Maya region, the Gulf coast, Monte Alban, and other areas – will be the subject of another monograph. The final chapter, 'Summary of ceramic and cultural trends', is a succinct and informative review of the ceramic sequence and the way in which it relates to the growth and social dynamics of Teotihuacan. The bibliography – weak on recent works – is followed by nearly 200 pages of illustrations, as well as 28 large tables of the occurrence of wares, forms, and decoration in key stratigraphic contexts.

For users interested in the composition of one of Teotihuacan's ceramic complexes, the descriptions and illustrations do a good job of providing that information. Other users, however, may find the book difficult to navigate. For example, I tried to check the occurrence of 'Tlaloc jars', a rare but long-lived form at Teotihuacan. I had to go through almost the entire text to find the relevant information. There is no table showing the occurrence of types or forms by phase, nor is there an index pointing the reader to the pages (or figures) for individual types or forms. For two ceramic complexes, Tlaloc jars are singled out as types with their own subheadings, whereas in three others descriptions of Tlaloc jars are buried in sections headed 'polished wares'. These forms are called variously 'Tlaloc jars', 'Tlaloc effigy vessels', 'Tlaloc vases', and 'Tlaocs'. Another difficulty is that the English text is sometimes choppy and disjointed; in some passages words and whole blocks of text seem to be missing. The corresponding Spanish sections are well written, but omit erroneous figure references (not uncommon) and undecipherable passages.

Recent radiocarbon dates and suggestions that the Teotihuacan sequence be pushed back in time are not considered in this publication, whose focus is on the definition and composition of the ceramic complexes from the Patlachique through Metepec phases. Regardless of the possible redating of some phases, however, their relative positions and ceramic content are strongly and explicitly established in this work. In spite of some flaws, this is an important ceramic report. The basic relative chronology is solid and the descriptions of

each ceramic complex are thorough and very well illustrated.

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General

ADAMS, RICHARD E.W. & MURDO J. MACLEOD (eds). *The Cambridge history of the native peoples of the Americas*, vol. 2 pts 1, 2: *Mesoamerica*. xv, 571; xv 455 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2000. £120.00 (cloth)

SALOMON, FRANK & STUART SCHWARTZ (eds). *The Cambridge history of the native peoples of the Americas*, vol. 3 pts 1, 2: *South America*. xiv, 1054; xiv, 976 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2000. £120.00 (cloth)

The books reviewed here represent the work of fifty scholars, all leading experts in the field, and comprise more than 3,000 pages of text, richly illustrated with maps and other reference material, accompanied by bibliographical essays. It is profoundly reassuring that this kind of scholarly publishing continues to flourish at the start of a new millennium, and it is even more profoundly to be hoped that these books acquire the wide readership that they deserve.

One fundamental editorial decision makes this a likely outcome. This is not an encyclopaedic compendium of 'facts' defined by the scholarly consensus of a particular moment in time, but a collection of searching analytical essays that make arguments in the full consciousness that they are likely to be modified or superseded by the results of future scholarship. Authors were given sufficient editorial leeway to go their own way in terms of focus, which has resulted in areas of overlap and in interpretative and theoretical tension between contributions. This enables the reader to grasp key debates and, in particular, to identify areas where scholarship is likely to move in new directions in the coming years. The obvious pitfall of a project of this kind is that the work may rapidly become outdated, given its inevitably long gestation period in advance of publication, but everything possible has been done to maximize its long-term value.

That said, however, it is interesting to note some differences in approach between the Mesoamerican and South American volumes. As a Mesoamerican specialist, I found these differences thought-provoking. One of the

most obvious contrasts is the strong division in the Mesoamerican volume between archaeology, on the one hand, and history, ethnohistory, and ethnographically based research, on the other – a division that establishes the European conquest and colonization of the area as a watershed in its history in a rather different way from that of the South American volume. The essays on South America offered more scope for scrutinizing the kinds of categories archaeologists have traditionally used for thinking about pre-Columbian societies in terms of general models of social and political evolution.

Richard E.W. Adams's introduction to the first Mesoamerican volume offers a strong defence of positivistic North American scholarly traditions, dismissing archaeologists critical of this framework for practising armchair 'philosophical nihilism' (p. 6). There is, however, some sense in his insistence that 'new methods for gathering information and of analyzing it are the intellectual drivers in the field of Mesoamerican studies and not secondary theories' (p. 13). Just as ethnography and historical research 'surprise us' as empirical activities by producing data that unsettle past generalizations and understandings, so archaeologists have unsettled past assumptions about the 'normal' trajectories of social and political development on a global scale – nowhere better illustrated than by the exciting recent research on Amazonia and the Andes reported in the South American volume. Nevertheless, what the articles on pre-colonial South American history show is that there are considerable advantages in putting together what we know (or can reconstruct) about early colonial societies with the evidence of the archaeological record. They also demonstrate that 'secondary theorizing' informed by a broad range of evidence is essential for lateral thinking about what we might mean by 'states' in the New World and the ways in which we might formulate concrete models of alternative ways of connecting 'local' populations to larger regional configurations of economic, religious, and 'political' relations that were apparently stable over extended periods of time. Though it is somewhat invidious to single out specific chapters, I found the contributions of Roosevelt, Lumbreras, and Juan and Judith Villamarín particularly suggestive in this respect.

The South American essays highlight not merely the complex transformative effects of a wide variety of 'native' responses to the processes set in train by the presence of Europeans, but also the originality and creativity of many of the post-colonial social formations that emerged on the margins of that process. A striking example is Jones's history of the Araucanians (Mapuches) at the southern margins of the Spanish