

BOOK REVIEWS



The Archaeology of Ancient Indian Cities. Dilip K. Chakrabarti. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995. 296 pp.; maps, figures. \$35.00.

Reviewed by CARLA M. SINOPOLI, *Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan*

In this book, the prolific Dilip K. Chakrabarti seeks to present an overview and theoretical framework for the history of "Indian" (including modern Pakistan and India) urbanism from the third millennium B.C. to A.D. 300. This is one of two 1995 publications on this theme, although it is significantly broader in temporal scope than F.R. Allchin's *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia* (Cambridge University Press). Taken together, these books present an exciting acknowledgment of the potential of the Early Historic period for South Asian archaeologists. Both also highlight how far we have to go to be able to successfully address questions of urbanism, sociopolitical processes, and regional and interregional economic structures in late prehistoric and early historic South Asia.

Chakrabarti argues that urbanism is important to study because cities, whatever their size or composition, serve as vehicles for civilization. A formal definition for urbanism is explicitly eschewed. Instead, boundaries between non-urban and urban are defined as lying not with settlement form or complexity, but with the presence of writing and literacy. A city is a "literate oasis" (p. 14) in a cultural landscape (which may prove a surprise to scholars of Cuzco or Teotihuacan). For many North American archaeologists, this is an idiosyncratic view and Chakrabarti is clearly most con-

cerned with the idea of "civilization," with urbanism as its byproduct. It is not clear why writing is selected as the benchmark of this elusive phenomenon, versus other defining traits proposed by Childe and others.

Chapter 1 presents a brief list of previous works on South Asian urbanism and a summary of theoretical writings from Childe to Flannery. While this ten-page introduction provides a useful bibliographic overview, its brevity precludes detailed consideration of these works or their relevance to later chapters.

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the Indus Civilization. Chapter 2 examines Indus origins through critiques of most existing explanations, particularly those that have emphasized long-distance trade. Chakrabarti stresses internal factors, including the development of irrigation systems that tamed the flood-prone Indus Valley and the expansion of craft specialization and internal trade networks (although the reasons underlying these transitions are unspecified). The discussion of the impact of environmental factors and riverine environments on human settlement is important, and Chakrabarti suggests that it is in the more manageable channels of the Ghaggar-Hakra and Sarasvati systems that we should seek the origins of Harappan cultural traits and ideology. However, given the paucity of systematic surveys in the vast region where Harappan sites are found, and problems of site preservation and visibility, it remains to be demonstrated that we have sufficient under-

standings of site densities, distributions, or chronology to draw such conclusions.

Chapter 3 contains descriptions of major Harappan sites and discussions of distribution patterns, chronology, and urban planning. Chakrabarti usefully incorporates some of the abundant excavation and survey data collected over the last two decades (e.g., Jansen's work at Mohenjodaro; the American-Pakistani Harappa project; Bisht's excavations at Dholavira). His attempts to synthesize information on site size, often not easily accessible from site reports, are useful. Only one paragraph is devoted to the Harappan "social framework" (pp. 122–123), interpreted as a network comprised of multiple interacting state-level polities, in which kings were minor figures and merchants played a major role.

Chapter 4 addresses the "Prelude to Early Historic Urban Growth," from the end of the Harappan to India's widely dispersed and varied Neolithic and Chalcolithic traditions. Chakrabarti argues that both environmental and social factors contributed to the end of Harappan urbanism. Among the latter was the diverse sociological (ethnic?) composition of Harappan states beyond the civilization's heartland. In peripheral areas, the "Harappans" were of foreign origin who only weakly integrated indigenous populations. As political centralization weakened, these disparate peoples reasserted their autonomy and "swallowed up" the "thinly stretched" (p. 140) Harappans.

The remainder of Chapter 4 summarizes data on third and second millennia B.C. cultural traditions and sites in Kashmir, Rajasthan, Malwa, Maharashtra, the Upper Gangetic Valley, and South and East India. Chakrabarti proposes that in each region we see the beginnings of patterns of long-term cultural continuity that will persist until modern times. Yet, he claims, the origins of agricultural economies and village life in these areas can be explained as a result of direct contact of regional hunter-gatherers with the now mobile descendants of the Harappan civilization.

In Chapter 5, attention turns to cities of the Early Historic period (c. 700 B.C. to A.D. 300). Summary information is presented on a large number of sites prior to a discussion of broader patterns. Foreign contact is again used to explain cultural transformations (e.g., Achaeminid, Indo-Greek), although the importance of local factors is also acknowledged. For example, Chakrabarti argues that, at least in the Ganges Valley, regional political units or "some kind of state structure must have existed from the late Harappan period" (p. 276), long before foreign intervention. The rise and expansion of Early Historic urbanism is therefore linked both to the (unexplained) development of politically centralized kingdoms (as seen in ancient literary sources) and to international contact and commerce. Interestingly, linguistic issues such as the arrival of Indo-European languages, which has so dominated the literature on this period, are not addressed.

In the concluding Chapter 6, Chakrabarti first assesses data limitations, including problems of chronology, site size estimates, and the absence of environmental data on site settings and resource potential, and then reviews his arguments concerning causes and continuities in South Asian urban development.

I found this a frustrating book. Useful data are presented and the temporal scope is broader than in most texts. Given the large number of sites discussed, descriptions are highly abbreviated and the theoretical issues raised in the introduction (for example, the importance of literacy) do not reappear in later chapters. Further, many interpretations are controversial and could use greater support and debate. The book is poorly illustrated, with less than two dozen site plans, from original site reports, and no photos or artifact illustrations. This would thus be a difficult book to use in a class that introduces these materials to students; whereas for the specialist, most of the site descriptions and data summaries are old hat, and the theoretical model might have been better expressed in an extended essay.

A synthetic study of South Asian urbanism is an admirable goal and this book is a step in that direction. However, before a more satisfying book can be written, particularly for the later part of the sequence, focus must shift from compiling summaries of previously published data to systematically organized fieldwork (and analyses of extant collections) at those sites that still remain. There is a desperate need for systematic surveys, large-scale carefully controlled excavations, diverse quantitative ap-

proaches to artifact analysis, and the study of floral, faunal, and geological materials. To develop theoretically informed interpretations of South Asian urbanism, we need data collected according to modern evidentiary standards. For many important sites, this is no longer possible. I hope that this challenging book provides the impetus for archaeologists to undertake this formidable mission for post-Harappan periods, as Indus specialists are currently doing for that period of South Asian history.

Fields of Victory: Vijayanagara and the Course of Intensification. Kathleen D. Morrison. Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility No. 53. Berkeley: University of California, 1995. vii + 201 pp.; 67 illustrations, bibliography. Softcover.

Reviewed by LUANN WANDSNIDER, *University of Nebraska*

In a classic 1965 study, Ester Boserup questioned our generally Malthusian thinking about the relationship between land, labor, productivity, and population growth. She suggested that populations need not necessarily be limited by agricultural productivity. Rather, she argued that increasing populations could be accommodated by increasing productivity through intensification, that is, through increasing the amount of labor applied to land, expanding the impact of labor through technology, or increasing through capital investment in land. During the last several decades, these ideas have continued to be elaborated upon and, in *Fields of Victory*, Kathleen Morrison uses archaeological and other data to support other important innovations on Boserup's ideas. Specifically, she argues that the intensification process is, at least for the South Indian study area examined here, neither unilinear nor as simple as depicted in Boserup's analysis of historic European agricultural systems (or as assumed by many anthropologists).

Morrison explores the dimensions of agricultural intensification in the vicinity of Vijayanagara ("City of Victory"), which served as the capital of a vast South Indian empire of the same name during the fourteenth through seventeenth centuries. The city of Vijayanagara is located in the northern portion of interior, peninsular India, a semi-arid area where dryland agricultural productivity is heavily influenced by the timing and amounts of monsoonal rains. Prior to the advent of the Vijayanagara empire, this area was sparsely and seasonally settled. During the Vijayanagara time period, major investments in irrigation agricultural facilities were made under the auspices of the temples, which were heavily sponsored by the rulers of Vijayanagara. Over a period of 50 years, population in and around the capital city expanded to between 100,000 and 500,000, on par with the current population in the area today (which is supported by a massive state-sponsored reservoir and canal system on the Tungabhadra River).

The course of agricultural intensification during the Vijayanagara time period is the

focus of Morrison's study and this she examines using three independent but complementary lines of evidence. The first comes from archaeological survey of the fortified area outside the walled city of Vijayanagara. Approximately 80 sq km were sample surveyed. Dryland agriculture facilities (i.e., terraces) as well as wet agricultural facilities (canals, aqueducts, and reservoirs) were discovered, mapped, and dated through association. The survey results were especially important for documenting the extent of dryland and also wet/dry farming, about which historical documents are mute.

In addition, the historical record, including both traveler's accounts and stone inscriptions on boulders, reservoir sluices, and other public places, was examined for temporal and spatial trends. The inscriptions indicate that the construction of agricultural facilities peaked during the early portion of the Vijayanagara time period and, in the immediate Vijayanagara area, peaked again in the middle Vijayanagara period. The inscriptions relate primarily to the activities of the elite and especially highlight the construction of massive water control features. Travelers to the area described the rich and extensive field systems and also noted the large urban markets.

Finally, Morrison also sampled reservoir deposits for pollen and charcoal to learn of the vegetational history of the region during the Vijayanagara period. Because she was unable to obtain dates for any of the charcoal samples, the pollen results are temporally untethered. Nevertheless, the pollen profile reveals a decrease in tree and shrub pollen relative to grass pollen that appears to coincide with the construction and expansion of the irrigation system. Trees and shrubs appear to rebound after the close of the Vijayanagara period.

The three lines of evidence show that the tempo and nature of intensification as well as the presence and organization of the population varied dramatically throughout the Vijayanagara period. Her analysis indicates "an initial spurt of growth in the fourteenth century, followed by a relative lull in the fifteenth century and a dramatic

period of expansion and intensification in the sixteenth. Then, the intensity of agricultural land use and of settlement appears to have dropped off until some time in the Colonial period" (p. 166).

Beyond telling us about the course of intensification in one part of India, Morrison's study provides a historical case study that in conjunction with other such studies, such as Boserup's, will help us understand the role of historical context in these and related large-scale processes. For example, in settings that are semi-arid and agriculturally risky, or without large nonhuman, domesticable animals (such as in the New World), or that can be readily colonized from the outside, or with endemic warfare, the course of intensification may play out very differently. Only with several other studies of this sort will we be able to identify those many factors that situationally influence these processes and the decisions of individuals, from which these processes are derived. For example, Morrison tantalizingly suggests that the early emphasis on irrigation agriculture at Vijayanagara may be owed to the joint optimization of both security and intensified production in a semi-arid area where warfare was almost constant (p. 166).

This study, part of which she presented as her dissertation, is a model archaeological study in many ways. Morrison has focused on an important anthropological topic, that of the process of intensification, and used the unique time-depth of the archaeological record, which documents historically unexhalted landscape modifications, as well as detailed (but biased) historical accounts to examine this otherwise difficult-to-see process. *Fields of Victory* also offers a sophisticated discussion of the evolving conceptualization of intensification and the significance of this evolution for anthropological inquiries into labor and productivity. As Morrison admits, her study of intensification at Vijayanagara is not complete and she identifies several areas that require attention before we have a fuller understanding of the course of intensification at Vijayanagara.

Those who look to archaeology to inform on long-term historical processes anywhere in the world will be delighted with and

inspired by this undertaking. As well, this volume is a must for the libraries of students of South Asian history and prehistory.

Southeast Asia: A Past Regained. By the editors of Time-Life Books. Alexandria, Virginia, 1995. 168 pp.; color illustrations, bibliography. Hardcover.

Reviewed by CHARLES HIGHAM, *University of Otago*

This book is part of the series *Lost Civilizations*, which aims to “bring ancient peoples and their cultures vividly to life.” In publications of this nature, the commercial requirement to stimulate the public imagination should be balanced by editorial responsibility to avoid exaggeration and errors. Contributing consultants have a duty to their colleagues and the general public in this regard, to ensure accuracy and balance. The reviewer is confronted in this case by a book in two parts: the sections on prehistory, for which the consultant is Joyce C. White, and those on the historic period, where John N. Miksik and Robert L. Brown have acted in this capacity.

The past decade has seen intensifying research into the prehistory of greater Southeast Asia, defined by the authors as the area south of the Yangzi River. Key results cover a wide spectrum of cultural innovations and changes. The identification of the Pengtoushan culture, with evidence for sedentary rice cultivators in the middle Yangzi Valley within the period 7500–6500 B.C., for example, provides crucial evidence for the advent of the Neolithic (HAI 1990; He Jiejun 1986; Yan Weming 1991). The confirmation of the Austric Phylum (Blust 1993; Reid 1994), by linking Austronesian and Austroasiatic languages, has re-oriented our understanding of the expansion of rice cultivators. The identification of third millennium B.C.

walled settlements such as Chengtoushan in the Qujialing Culture has provided evidence for a transition to urban communities matching in date those in the *zhong-yuan* (He Jiejun 1995). The recovery of Shang and Zhou bronzes and jades in late Neolithic cemeteries in Vietnam and Lingnan has opened the whole issue of the influence to the south of the powerful states of the Huanghe Valley. The establishment of an internally consistent series of ¹⁴C dates for Bronze Age sites and the documentation of rich sedentary hunter-forager sites along coastal tracts from Lingnan to the Gulf of Siam have allowed an integration of the southern Chinese sequences with those of Thailand and Vietnam (Higham 1996a, 1996b). These discoveries provide the editors of Time-Life, with all their resources, the opportunity to set Southeast Asia properly on the world stage.

They have let the opportunity slip. The first chapter, entitled “Surprises hidden in the jungle,” describes prehistory principally through claims based on excavations at Spirit Cave, Non Nok Tha, and Ban Chiang. None has been sufficiently published, and all have led to claims that include the world’s earliest agriculture, bronze, and then iron working, claims which have not been fully documented with the evidence. Controversial in the 1970s, these pronouncements are now largely consigned to the history of the discipline by virtually all professionals with any field experience in Southeast Asia. But with an unerring taste

for the sensational, unsubstantiated, and on occasion absurd, the editors revisit this era in this book.

We are first treated to the hoary myth that Spirit Cave, in some mysterious and as yet undefined way, contributes to an understanding of early agriculture. This is a small and insignificant rockshelter falling clearly within the Hoabinhian tradition, and I know of no evidence for any form of plant cultivation or animal domestication there.

The editors then exhale a miasma of misinformation: Non Nok Tha has provided evidence for bronze casting which rivals that for the Huanghe Valley. No mention is made of the series of AMS dates that place bronze contexts there in the later second millennium B.C. Ban Chiang is then given center stage despite the limited area of the excavations and the still unconfirmed chronology. Fourteen years after White assumed responsibility for the analysis, we have available little definitive information on the 1974–1975 excavation, not even a cemetery plan. Yet this of all sites is used as a vehicle to confirm early contexts for metallurgy. Apparently this settlement has “profound implications for an understanding of how civilizations develop.” In Southeast Asia south of the modern border of China, the transition to statehood is documented not at the smaller villages like Ban Chiang, but at sites like Angkor Borei, where Miriam Stark is currently actively pursuing this issue. We are informed that Ban Chiang allows us to understand the origins of the Austronesian expansion into the Pacific, despite the absence of evidence from the Ban Chiang area that any Austronesian language was ever spoken there.

The text is riddled with errors. Apparently “archaeologists are accustomed to seeing pottery develop in conjunction with agriculture.” Have the editors not been informed of the Jomon Culture or, closer to home, of the presence of ceramics in a myriad of coastal settlements in Southeast Asia which have no evidence for agriculture? The writers assert that iron implements were found in graves at Non Nok

Tha during the latest period of occupation, during the first millennium A.D. This is untrue. The Hoabinhian, we are told, flourished “after the extinction of the megafauna, huge creatures such as mammoths.” Mammoths in tropical Southeast Asia?

The second chapter is entitled “The haunting legacy of buried drums.” These drums were cast from the second half of the first millennium B.C. from Yunnan, across Lingnan into Bac Bo. For reasons hard to fathom, we begin with a lengthy description of Ben Finney’s voyage on a replica Polynesian canoe from Hawai’i to Tahiti. Returning at last to the topic under discussion, we find a description of the wealth of the Dong Son and Dian court societies, which saw outstanding expertise in bronze casting, the establishment at Shizhaishan of a royal necropolis, and at Co Loa the foundation of a walled and moated center covering about 600 ha. The discerning reader might be forgiven for having difficulty in reconciling this information with the exaggerated hyperbole used to describe Ban Chiang at the same period.

After traversing this prehistoric landscape, the historic section beckons like an oasis. The editors have provided a vibrant image of the historic kingdoms and, with the benefit of authoritative consultant advice, have written a readable and informative description of Angkor, Borobudur, and Pagan with some excellent pictures and descriptions of Champa. The most interesting chapter, which induces a mixture of despair and hope, is the description of the current plunder of the great monuments, which progresses in tandem with efforts to reconstruct and maintain them. On the one hand, there is the destruction of Mison and the hemorrhage of anything salable in Cambodia and, on the other, the reconstruction of Borobudur.

But the book remains unbalanced. Those who conceived it were presented with a golden opportunity to produce a valuable and well-integrated summary of a fascinating region. The second half is authoritative, well balanced, and illustrated and in it, the editors have fulfilled their brief. The first half is a travesty.

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Plunder and Preservation: Cultural Property Law and Practice in the People's Republic of China. J. David Murphy. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. 205 pp. Hardcover.

Reviewed by WILLIAM CHAPMAN, University of Hawai'i

The preservation of cultural property is one of the most compelling issues facing developing countries today. And no country better illustrates the complexity of the problems than the People's Republic of China. In this short, but densely packed book, David Murphy has provided a detailed look at the existing corpus of laws and regulations governing cultural property in China and also underscores many of the pitfalls of past policy. He also discusses some recent trends in Chinese official practice that may auger a significant change within the cultural property "regime" in this undoubtedly richest source country for antiquities in the world.

Plunder and Preservation is not an easy book to read. The author is a lawyer and

faculty member of the Law School at the University of Hong Kong and the book reflects his calling. Originally conceived as an article for a law journal, the book consists of five tightly argued chapters on various aspects of cultural property regulation and management in China. A foreword is provided by John Henry Merryman, generally recognized as the world's leading authority on cultural property laws.

Murphy discusses the historical and social contexts of cultural property preservation efforts, both in China and elsewhere in the world; outlines some of the principal threats—past, present, and future—to both antiquities and immovable historic properties in China; and provides a careful description of the key laws and regulations governing various types of Chinese cultural properties. Most importantly, he analyzes

China's 1982 Cultural Relics Law, which is the most complete piece of legislation focusing on the treatment, ownership, and sale of cultural artifacts and also sheds light of several criminal statutes that pertain directly and indirectly to the protection of China's patrimony. Finally, he highlights some of the more significant new developments in Chinese policy, all of which, he suggests, point to the beginning of a more enlightened approach to cultural property issues generally.

China, like many other developing countries, has long recognized—and understandably resented—its inability to control the export of its material cultural heritage. Reckless Western adventurers, unscrupulous collectors and dealers, and political disruptions within the country have all over the past nearly two centuries done much to deplete China's significant resources. Efforts beginning in the 1920s and 1930s to assert state control over the flow of relics out of the country were reaffirmed following the Communist Revolution of the 1940s in an ambitious set of laws and regulatory controls. These were reasserted in the 1982 legislation, which serves as the basic blueprint for subsequent regulatory and legal controls.

Chinese cultural property laws are essentially “retentive” and “restrictive.” In keeping with the policies of many other developing countries and in accordance with the tenor of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the People's Republic of China basically has attempted to take full state control of its entire cultural patrimony. All cultural artifacts—whether in private hands, recently or less recently excavated, or in institutions—are in some sense the domain of the state, either through a claim of outright ownership or through restrictions on their transfer or export.

China's was in many ways a laudatory effort, one that emphasized the great national significance of cultural and historical objects and places. It was also an

attempt to redress the imbalance between “art rich” poorer countries such as China and “art poor” but wealthy countries of Europe and North America in particular. But in the long run, as an increasing number of authorities in the area of cultural property law and economics recognize, such policies often have the opposite effect. China, like many other developing countries, is ill-equipped to guard all of its cultural property. It has also never taken the time and effort to decide what really is significant to the country and what else may simply have commodity value. As a result, as Murphy and a newer group of scholars known as the “cultural internationalists” argue, cultural materials become, paradoxically, *more* subject to illicit traffic, more apt to be excavated illegally, and far more likely to be destroyed or lost than they might be were they governed at least in part by market forces. By opening up many categories of objects for sale, Murphy and others point out, both through state-sanctioned entities and private dealers, officials would be less likely to be corrupted, looters would have fewer incentives to plunder sites, and there would be far less smuggling than occurs today.

Despite often draconian protective laws—smugglers can in fact face a death sentence—China indeed has failed in its policy of retention. Murphy has outlined an alternative approach, one that promises to curtail at least some of the worst abuses. It is evident too that the Chinese government has begun to recognize the shortcomings of its ambitious, but essentially unmanageable, set of prescriptions and has begun to reassess its approach. Murphy's book has done much to set this all in context and provide much-needed background and analysis. *Plunder and Preservation* is an important contribution to the ongoing international debate on the status of cultural patrimony and its regulation and is essential reading for anyone interested in cultural property law and in the future of China's incomparable legacy. David Murphy should be congratulated in bringing much of this debate into focus.

The Arts of China to A.D. 900. William Watson. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, Pelican History of Art, 1995. 278 pp.; 300 black-and-white illustrations, 96 color plates. Hardcover.

Reviewed by ANNE P. UNDERHILL, *Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, CT*

This book is a summary of the history of art in China, from the Neolithic period to the Tang Dynasty. The author states that his goal is to provide comprehensive coverage of each major artistic tradition over time, including ceramics, jade, bronze, lacquer, architecture, painting, and sculpture. He points out that few scholars have attempted to synthesize each major tradition in one volume. This broad coverage makes the book a useful reference tool for students of ancient China. There are abundant drawings and photos, many in color, and often with major dimensions of objects. Another commendable feature is the inclusion of illustrations that students can trace to specific publications or museum collections by the references provided. The scope of museums and publications consulted throughout the world is impressive, including the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Britain, Sweden, France, and the United States.

There are 23 chapters, a useful glossary of terms with Chinese characters such as names of sites or specific kinds of objects, and a list of references for each chapter. In addition, there are additional references, a map of China with major sites, and a chronological table. The author uses pinyin, the romanization system for Chinese terms used in most recent publications. With such comprehensive coverage, perhaps a few typos are unavoidable (for example, on page 5, the pottery vessel in Figure 6 should be referred to as a *gui* rather than a *kui*; and the jade tube on page 54, Figure 100, is a *cong* rather than a *zong*).

The major chronological divisions covered are the pre-Han period, up to 206 B.C. (Chapters 1–7); the Han Dynasty, up to A.D. 220 (Chapters 8–10); the Six Dynasties, A.D. 220–581 (Chapters 12–18); and the Tang Dynasty, A.D. 618–906 (Chapters 20–23). Chapters tend to cover one or more major artistic traditions during a given time period. For example, there are chapters for the Neolithic (Chapter 1), Shang (2), Western Zhou (3, referred to as *Xizhou*), Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (4, referred to by the Chinese terms *Chunqiu* and *Zhanguo*), and later periods (Chapters 11–23). The chapters on the Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn/Warring States periods focus on bronzes. Other chapters are devoted to a survey of one form of art over time. For example, Chapter 5 covers jade objects during the pre-Han period, beginning with the Neolithic. Similarly, Chapter 6 focuses on lacquer objects up to the Han Dynasty. Chapter 11 includes architecture during the Neolithic, Shang, Zhou, and Han periods, and Chapter 19, architecture from the Han to Tang periods. Watson devotes more than one chapter to the rich artistic traditions of the Han and Tang dynasties. A useful addition to the book is Chapter 7 on the influence of Inner Asia and border areas on forms and motifs of objects made in the Yellow River valley.

Watson states in the preface that his goal is to focus on the objects themselves rather than on topics such as techniques or history. He emphasizes description of forms and motifs, allowing the reader to see continuity in artistic traditions over long periods of time, as in the forms of ceramic vessels. He also shows how certain motifs are found on objects made from more than one

kind of material. Despite this approach, Watson does provide some useful background information on techniques of production and the sociopolitical context of art objects from each period. Nonetheless, more discussion or references regarding the production, distribution, and use of objects during each period would be helpful. Some major surveys of Chinese art, archaeology, and history should be mentioned, such as Chang (1983), Rawson (1992), Allan (1991), Shaughnessy (1991), Hsu and Linduff (1988), Li (1980), Vainker (1991), and the most recent edition of *The Archaeology of Ancient China* by K. C. Chang (1986). For the Neolithic period, there are relatively few references, and the focus is on three cultures often discussed in western publications: Yangshao, Liangzhu, and Shandong Longshan.

Watson makes some thought-provoking observations in the text about the impact of sociopolitical context on craft production. For instance, he contrasts the Han Dynasty, a period of relative political stability and standardization of art styles, with the stylistic variability after the dissolution of the empire. He makes the same point for bronze production during the Shang and Western Zhou periods in contrast to the Spring and Autumn/Warring States periods. Furthermore, Watson makes several comments about bronze production during the Shang and Zhou periods that need to be systematically investigated. He mentions the production of royal styles ("hieratic"), the imitation of royal styles in outlying areas, the possible exchange of bronze vessels between elites, and the diffusion of styles (referred to as "migration" of styles). Art historians and anthropo-

logical archaeologists should systematically investigate change over time in the regional organization of bronze production during the Shang and Zhou periods. Scholars need to address issues such as social demand for particular forms of vessels and weapons as well as iconographic styles, scale of production, organization of labor for different steps in production, and possible competition between production centers.

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New Light on Chinese Yue and Longquan Wares: Archaeological Ceramics Found in Eastern and Southern Asia, A.D. 800–1400. Ed. Chuimei Ho. Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1994. 408 pp.; numerous illustrations. Softcover.

Reviewed by ANNE P. UNDERHILL, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, CT

This book is a landmark in the study of East Asian ceramics. It synthesizes data on production, distribution, and consumption of two of the most important export wares from the historic period of China: Yue and Longquan. It covers the period from A.D. 800 to 1400, focusing on the Tang, Five Dynasties, Song, and Yuan periods. These two wares and other green-glazed wares were exported on a large scale to different provinces in China, Japan, Southeast Asia, western Asia, and other areas. Ho explains that the book results from an international conference in 1992 at the Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, called "Ceramic Ecology in the Far East—The Manufacture and Export of Zhejiang Green Wares from the Ninth through the Fourteenth Century." It is unique in investigating ceramic production and distribution from a broad perspective, including technical, art historical, and anthropological approaches. This kind of study is feasible because Yue and Longquan wares are well preserved in archaeological sites and have been described in many publications. The extent of international collaboration in sharing information and debating the issues is an important factor behind the success of the volume. The authors are scholars from the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines, and the United States.

There are three sections to the book: (1) Production: Kilns in Zhejiang (five chapters by Ruan, Lai, Ren, Kamei, and Li), (2) Production: Kilns Outside Zhejiang (three

chapters by Ho, Ye, and Hu), and (3) Distribution: Markets Outside of China (12 chapters by Lin, Yamamoto, Ho, Srisuchat, Miksic, Ronquillo and Tan, Ridho, Harkantiningasih, McKinnon, Prickett-Fernando, Sasaki, and Yamasaki et al.). In addition, there are ten maps after the last chapter showing the regional distribution of each ware—an important contribution in itself. Checklists 1 and 2 contain useful summary lists of datable Yue and Longquan vessels with photos and relevant publications. The abundance of photos and illustrations of vessels throughout the text is also commendable, but information on dimensions is needed. The glossary of Chinese and Japanese terms for particular wares and place names is also helpful. The bibliography is a comprehensive summary of work on Yue and Longquan wares by scholars from several countries.

Two chapters in the first section of the book (Ruan, Lai) describe evidence for production of Yue wares. Important issues they discuss include the distribution of kiln sites and copying of motifs from imported, high-status metal wares. There is much more archaeological evidence for the production of Longquan wares. Two chapters (Ren, Kamei) debate chronology while Li describes rare evidence for production techniques at workshops. In the second section of the book, Ho discusses green wares made outside of Zhejiang province. Ye discusses wares made in Fujian province imitating those from Zhejiang, and Hu focuses on green wares from Anhui. Issues discussed in the fourth section of the book include evidence for export of vessels at Ningbo in Zhejiang (Lin), Yue and Longquan wares in Japan (Yamamoto), green-

glazed wares in Thailand (chapters by Ho, Srisuchat), Zhejiang wares discovered in Singapore and the Riau Islands (Miksic), Yue and other wares in the Philippines (Ronquillo and Tan), green-glazed wares in Indonesia (chapters by Ridho, Harkantingsih, McKinnon), Yue and Longquan wares in Sri Lanka (Prickett-Fernando), wares from Zhejiang in West Asia and North Africa (Sasaki), and chemical analysis of sherds from archaeological sites (Yamasaki et al.).

The preface by Ho is especially effective in introducing the themes covered in the book and highlighting the contributions of each paper. Ho outlines important debates such as definitions for different wares and chronology. She also points out that future studies should examine ceramic production, distribution, and consumption on a finer regional scale. One issue that should be addressed is regional variability in social demand for particular kinds of vessels. For instance, more than one paper suggests that elites sought to obtain import wares for religious purposes (use in temples and bur-

ials). Research also should focus on the process of emulation in different areas, investigating motivation and whether technology or style is being copied. Ho points out that some methodological issues need to be addressed as well, such as the representativeness of vessels from museum collections and the need for more properly excavated samples.

This book will make it possible for the rich data from the historic period of East Asia to contribute to comparative anthropological studies on the organization of ceramic production. The East Asian data can also contribute to the development of theory about sociopolitical factors causing ceramic change as well as the effects of ceramic change on other components of culture. Studies building on this fine volume will learn more about change in the nature of control by elites over production and exchange of vessels, change over time in the scale of production, the nature of interactions between elites from different areas who traded with each other, and other topics.

Rapanui: Tradition and Survival on Easter Island. Grant McCall. University of Hawai'i Press, 1994. Second Edition. 200 pp. plus notes; 2 maps, black-and-white illustrations. Softcover.

Reviewed by Georgia Lee, Institute of Archaeology, UCLA

The first edition of Grant McCall's *Rapanui: Tradition and Survival on Easter Island* came out in 1981, the year I began my research on Easter Island. Of course I read that book, and found it extremely interesting and most helpful. Today, some 15 years later and from an insider's perspective, I find it even more germane.

Rapanui: Tradition and Survival on Easter Island is written in an informal manner. The book has neither index nor bibliogra-

phy (but suggested readings are listed in the end notes). The text is divided into ten chapters and closely follows the first edition, but with updated material including a rethinking by McCall on various aspects of Rapanui culture, his opinion of the recent filming of a movie on the island, and comments on the continuing impact on island life from continental Chile.

The first three chapters give a brief overview of Polynesian (and Rapanui) prehistory and history. McCall describes the slave raids of the past century and their destructive aftermath, and how the island came to

be part of Chile. He covers the difficult times when the island was run by insensitive sheep ranchers and then an even more insensitive Chilean Navy. These chapters establish a basis for McCall's thesis that the Rapanui are survivors who have survived by adapting to those who have come across their beaches. There are few changes in these early chapters from the first edition; one is to bring in a recent theory by George Gill that some Polynesians made it to South America and then returned, landing on Rapanui in the process (p. 26).

There is an error in both editions: the easily worked volcanic tuff of Rano Raraku, the statue quarry, is described as "dense basalt." One questionable comment is made by McCall when he suggests that the ancient islanders had "little else to do with their time than to occupy themselves with their extremely elaborate ahu and . . . huge figures they came to mount upon them" (p. 34). This comment relegates the mammoth building and carving episodes (which were a vital part of early Rapanui religion) to some sort of busy work to occupy idle hands.

The next four chapters are titled "Family and household" (66–82), "How people make families" (83–99), "What Rapanui believe" (100–118), and "Making an islander living" (119–139). Here we have McCall's insights on Rapanui family life, beliefs, and survival techniques. I can assure readers of this book that McCall is telling it "like it is." After having lived on the island for long stretches at a time, I can state with confidence that these chapters are thoughtful descriptions of life on this island. The importance of kin is brought out—one of the key factors to understanding the culture. As McCall points out, "Family for the Rapanui is like religion, a comfort" (p. 99). Survival depends upon family support, reciprocal duties, kinship ties—and old enmities are never forgotten.

Chapters 8 and 9 discuss those islanders living elsewhere in the world, how some of them got there, and problems of islanders living in continental Chile and Tahiti. Chile's political influence on the island is discussed in detail.

A continuing island problem for young people is described: nearly everyone on the island is related to everyone else; consequently, there is a lack of suitable marriage partners. Mates are chosen from elsewhere, and usually these are Chilean. Families encourage outsider marriages because they see the importance of contacts that might provide opportunities to increase commerce and obtain foreign goods. Thus the native culture continues to be diluted; the Rapanui language is spoken less and less.

McCall points out that islanders have learned that they must adapt their behavior to what outsiders expect, for they are dependent upon those foreigners for survival. A cogent statement sums up Chapter 9: "How the Rapanui can continue to keep themselves a distinctive yet viable minority within the changing Chilean state is the greatest problem facing the Island and its inhabitants today. The Rapanui are part of a world order, but their most immediate concern is how to get along with the orders they receive from Chile" (p. 177).

The final chapter includes a description of how McCall conducted his research, plus his personal observations of the upheavals surrounding the political coup of 1973. This chapter contains the majority of changes from the first edition. The author brings us up to date on local island politics and problems of today, including the formation of the *Consejo de Ancianos*, which has since become bitterly divided into a *Consejo* #1 and #2. McCall voices concern over government-subsidized houses constructed with asbestos, and he suggests that these domiciles represent a greater danger than the few cases of AIDS on the island. I am not sure I agree.

Conversely the author downplays the impact of the Hollywood movie made on the island, apparently a correct assessment of the situation as few remnants of that debacle remain (except in the overstressed landfill where tons of nonbiodegradable junk were dumped). One fallout from the movie is not mentioned: most islanders who made money by working on the film bought vehicles (the new status symbol) and now the island has traffic jams and stop

signs. There is one car for every two persons on the island, not counting motorcycles and mopeds!

McCall states that the "Chileanization" of Easter Island is the goal of the Chilean government, and he predicts that islanders will only become more Chilean as time goes on. How does he see the future of Rapanui? A suburb of Chile! He may be correct. Today less than half of the island population is Rapanui. McCall predicts the demise of the Rapanui language and continued and intensified Chilean influence. Just this year, direct TV from Chile has become available and this surely will accelerate continental influence. McCall predicts that the "public culture" will become more Rapanui: that is, public monuments and decorative motifs will be added to the local scene for the delight of the tourists. And he sees Chileanization as positive: one cannot go backward, and islanders are eager to "embrace the global culture" (p. 200).

Rapanui: Tradition and Survival on Easter Island is highly recommended reading for those either going to the island or simply interested in how this Polynesian culture

has survived its traumatic past, and is changing to meet today's challenges. I think that many "Rapanuiphiles" who have come to know and love this tiny island may be depressed by the changes brought about by increased outside influence. There is little alternative. The island's future is tied to tourism, but it lacks sufficient resources to make it alone in the modern world.

McCall points out that "A major element of Rapanui belief is a sense of the value of their island" and "A cornerstone of Rapanui belief . . . is that only on Easter Island can the Rapanui be truly safe. It is the foundation of their belief in the importance of their Island and of themselves" (p. 118). All Rapanui who live in foreign countries dream of returning to their homeland.

On my own yearly trips to Easter Island, I see the changes pointed out by McCall as well as others—some of which I find distressing. But certain things remain the same: the warmth of friendships, the closeness of families, the beauty of the island. To the Rapanui, Easter Island truly is the center of the world. I don't think that will change.