

[rp[Sacrifice and ritual violence often are assumed to be important facets of social life in the pre-Hispanic Americas; popularly seen as gruesome testament to the Otherness of Indigenous American societies. The archaeological literature on these practices, however, has remained remarkably thin until recently. Coastal north Peru is a new exception to this, and this book is a turning-point for our understanding of human sacrifice and its archaeologically revealed ritual practices. Aided by an expanding set of bioarchaeological tools, Haagen D. Klaus and J. Marla Toyne set out to diachronically and synchronically contextualize sacrificial practices on the north coast of Peru, as well as to interrogate some of the interpretative orthodoxy associated with them.

[rp1[As stated in their introduction, the challenge is to separate semiotic representations of ‘ritual violence’ from archaeological observations – to be mindful of the possible incongruity between art and practice. To support this aim, the editors expand the concept of ritual violence to include not just different forms of human sacrifice, but also animal offerings and the ritual termination of objects. Rather than dwelling on the Inka period, the book instead lays out a developmental framework of ritual violence that ranges from its earliest traces in pre-ceramic times (7000 BC-AD 100), running through the heavy emphasis placed on sacrifice in the Moche periods (AD 100-800), and through to the subsequent Sicán (AD 750-1375) and Chimú societies (AD 900-1470).

[rp1[Each of the volume’s four parts details one aspect of ritual violence. The first six chapters provide a diachronic overview of sacrifice. Most of the chapters present the findings of osteoarchaeological research on ‘deviant’ burials, ranging from the statistical testing of the direction of cuts on human bones, to comparisons of both burial settings and iconographic representations of human sacrifice. The analysis also widens in order to destabilize the assumption that ritual violence and killing were either leadership-instigated practices or strictly localized phenomena. Several of the contributors make the valuable observation that localized human and animal sacrificial practices, sometimes unique in form and execution, coexisted with more formal rituals, regular in procedure and form, concluding that contextual understandings are key in envisaging the lived realities surrounding ritual violence in different archaeological periods.

]rp1[The volume is remarkable, perhaps unique, in highlighting distinctions in the archaeological record of ritual violence, achieving the editors' goal of problematizing more simplistic renderings of sacrificial killing as a way to 'satisfy the gods'. Instead it succeeds in archaeologically teasing out the political negotiations that influenced the form, intensity, and prevalence of sacrifice in different ethnographic settings (see M. Bloch, *Prey into hunter*, 1992). The morphology of ritual violence is necessarily broad, and this volume follows the recent categorization established by Glenn Schwartz ('Archaeology and sacrifice', in A. Porter & G.M. Schwartz, eds, *Sacred killing*, 2012), who distinguishes amongst offering, foundational, or retainer forms of sacrifice. This classification allows the contributing authors to include most of their archaeological and supplementary iconographic data.

]rp1[The second part's four chapters narrow the interpretative lens, thus further mobilizing the meticulously gathered osteological data in order to, for example, discuss matters of victims' communal identities, or to challenge the idea that there was only one category of sacrificed 'captive'. Moreover, chapter 9 by Verano and Phillips convincingly shows that the idea of a complete opposition between captives and other sacrificial victims is unwarranted by the archaeological findings from both Moche and Chimú settings.

]rp1[The shorter third and fourth parts present more cross-contextual materials over four chapters. This helps the book include more on the subject of sacrificial practices and to engage in regional comparison. Chapter 12 focuses on animal sacrifice (predominantly camelids), providing insights into the provenance and sacrificial practices at the Huancaco site. Chapter 13 analyses the practices of ritually terminating vessels and other objects. This is a subject often studied in isolation from other forms of sacrifice, and while the editors' decision to include it here is understandable, these chapters on animals and pots perhaps do not make for a completely balanced comparison. The final two regional comparisons present Wari human sacrifice in southern Peru, and a set of comparative observations by Tiesler (chap. 15), building on her extensive experience with Maya mortuary archaeology and wider Mesoamerican ways of studying ritual violence.

]rp1[The book is clearly organized and almost all the contributions fit well within its aims. It is richly illustrated and the list of authors shows a balance between US-based and Peruvian scholarship. Klaus and Toyne have succeeded in editing a volume that will speak to those interested in mortuary

patterning and broader questions of ritual funerary and sacrificial behavior worldwide. There is also a significant amount of data included that directly addresses the results of recent archaeological excavations on the north coast of Peru and thus this will be required reading for archaeologists working on the pre-Hispanic societies of the central Andes and beyond. Most importantly perhaps, it succeeds in its goal of contextualizing and particularizing cases of ritual violence and connecting them to anthropological notions of negotiation and practice.

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