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Political Economy and Marxism: Theories in the Interpretation of Inka State Maintenance

Melissa Litschi

Southern Illinois University Carbondale, mlitschi@siu.edu

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POLITICAL ECONOMY AND MARXISM: THEORIES IN THE INTERPRETATION OF
INKA STATE MAINTENANCE

by

Melissa Litschi

B.A., University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, 2011

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

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Approved by:

Dr. Izumi Shimada, Ph.D., Chair

Dr. Anthony Webster, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Studies

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INTRODUCTION

The current political climate, dominated by large governments with pressing economic concerns, inspires the preoccupation with political centralization in academic disciplines. Archaeology is no different; many scholars (e.g. D'Altroy 1985 and Patterson 1991) hope that an examination of past political systems can help to provide cross-cultural comparisons and insights into the modern system. The theoretical bases of these attempts are largely derived from other disciplines and tailored to fit the needs of archaeological research. Two popular theories regarding economy and political structure are political economy and Marxism. Both approaches are built upon ideas from classical Marxian economic models, and address the manner in which states acquire and manipulate surplus. However, the direction each takes is very different. This paper will examine the developments in political economy and Marxist theory in respect to their foundations and applications in Latin American archaeology. Furthermore, it will discuss the influence these theories have had on research and scholarship on the Inka state.

Research on state maintenance in the Inka Empire provides an interesting look at the application of political economy and Marxist theory. While the two approaches deal with the same issues of governance, they take completely different perspectives. Political economy explores the ability of the Inka state to maintain itself by managing labor and the production of state goods throughout its territory. This perspective highlights the state point of view and often overlooks the agency of the populations that provide the economic base. Marxist approaches examine the exploitation and negative social effects that arise from the same techniques political

economists see as surplus management. While this approach highlights the plight of the laborers it tends to ignore the economic benefits provided by an integrated state. These divergent theories produce two distinct understandings of the Inka Empire, one as a beneficent provider of infrastructure, the other as a systematic means of exploitation. Political economy and Marxism provide two options for the interpretation of state maintenance; each approach affords a voice to very different perspectives, by melding these approaches it may be possible to gain a holistic understanding of the mechanisms and effects of state operation.

In recent years there has been a visible effort to understand the impact the Inka State had on its subjected communities. While many approaches are used, scholars are placing a higher priority on examining social concerns, especially the relationships between the Inka state and its provincial regions. This shift reflects a greater concern with understanding the position of the non-Inka ethnicities subsumed under the Inka Empire.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Any discussion of the theory of political economy is complicated by the absence of a widely applicable definition due to the diversity in interpretations and usages. The understanding of political economy has changed through time and varies both across and within disciplines (Feinman 2004; Brumfiel and Earle 1987; Underhill and Fang 2004; Earle and D'Altroy 1985). In the literature, political economy is discussed in two primary ways. As a descriptive term, political economy refers to the sectors of an economy that are controlled by political institutions and used to maintain that entity (Feinman 2004). As a theoretical approach, political economy provides a model that can be used to analyze the functionality and integration of an economy within a political entity (Earle and D'Altroy 1985; Stanish 1992).

The roots of this theoretical position lie in seventeenth century economic theory and the formalist/substantivist developments during the mid-twentieth century. While many political economists favor the rationalist thinking of the formal approach, this economic model is not necessarily appropriate for Andean economies. Thus political economy in Inka studies has had to incorporate aspects from both sides of the formalist/substantivist debate. Additionally, classical Marxism has heavily influenced the approach of political economy, especially through its focus on productive capacities. However, these two theories have diverged significantly in terms of their methodologies and applications. Political economy has been an influential theory in the study of Inka statecraft (D'Altroy and Earle 1985; D'Altroy 2002, 2012) illuminating many of

the economic mechanisms employed to stabilize and expand the empire. However, its application has been limited in the past by its state centered perspective.

Foundations in Economic Theory

Stanish (1992:10) cites the *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith (1904 [1776]) as the foundation for modern economic capitalist theory, where elements such as labor, capital, profit, exchange, and production were the central focus of analysis. As this vision of economic systems developed, it became known as formal economics. The central tenant of this theory is that people make economic choices based on the insufficiency of means to an end. These choices are seen as rational because people will always choose what they see as the most effective means toward their given goal, often attempting to minimize loss while maximizing gain.

The later substantivist developments, namely those of Karl Polanyi (1944, 1957), have helped to illuminate the different challenges faced when applying these theories to pre-industrial economies. Polanyi (1944) introduced his substantivist model in his work *Great Transformation*. At the center of this model is the individual who depends on nature and his peers for his survival, or in other words, it examines the utilization of land and labor. Goods can either change places (through the manipulation of natural resources) or they can change hands (through social relations) (Polanyi 1957:248). Polanyi suggests that a pre-industrial economy is integrated into all other cultural systems, including social, religious and political ones. This integration, or embeddedness, rests on three reoccurring patterns, reciprocity, redistribution, and exchange; these in turn are responses to pre-existing social institutions. Reciprocity is the practice of exchanging goods between symmetrical units while redistribution suggests that a central entity

acquires the products and then re-disperses them as needed. Exchange, on the other hand, requires a system of profit-based markets, an element that is missing from pre-industrial economies of the New World (Polanyi 1957:250).

The “transformation” described by Polanyi (1944) is essentially the industrial shift towards these markets. He states that during this shift land and labor become commodities which force motivations such as hunger, fear, and personal gain into the driver’s seat of economic decisions. Prior to this Polanyi argues that there is little desire to manipulate social relations and profits (Polanyi 1957:267).

Polanyi’s substantivist theory gained many followers but also drew many criticisms. Many economic critics claim that Polanyi’s model is outdated and not useful in the modern world because the types of economies it examines are rapidly becoming extinct (Cook 1968:210). This may be true for modern economics but as an economic historian, Polanyi was not limited to the discussion of currently functioning economic systems. His model remains a valuable tool for examining the economic systems of collapsed, non-western societies. If nothing else, he reminds scholars that not all economic systems can be evaluated according to Western values.

Cook (1968:213) accuses Polanyi of idealizing the so-called primitive economy by minimizing the potential for conflict in his models and by disregarding the potential for personal motivations to be reflected in a pre-industrial economy, namely through manipulation of social relations to benefit a select group. This criticism is far more relevant to archaeologists using Polanyi’s substantivist model. Historically, political economists examining the Inka economy have tended to focus their analysis on the functional and material elements of an economy while glossing over the motivations and social repercussions of such policies.

Despite these criticisms, Polanyi's models have heavily influenced Andean studies and have been integrated into political economy models. One of the earliest models for Andean economy, developed by Murra (1964), is the idea of zonal complementarity, which postulates that throughout human history in the Andes groups have maintained access to a variety of resources by controlling production simultaneously in numerous environmental zones. This model emphasizes Polanyi's concepts of reciprocity and redistribution as resources and labor were shared within the *allyu* or kin-group (Stanish 1992:2). The Inka expanded upon this tradition by effectively establishing control over territory throughout much of the Andes. These resulting provinces then became new producers of surplus, which was used to support the royal family, church, and army (Murra 1980:130), and provided access to resources such as mines or coastal products (Murra 1980:108). Adherents to the political economy approach have used Murra's emphasis on resource management as a starting point for their models even though they do not agree with his Marxian theoretical base.

Rostworoski developed another model for economic systems in the Andes, emphasizing specialized craft production and exchange (Stanish 1992:3). This model uses Polanyi's pattern of exchange which was not specifically tailored to pre-industrial economies. Rostworowski highlights state exploitation of wealth finance through trade with other independent polities. Many political economists (Feinman 2004; Underhill and Fang 2004) center their studies around the relationships between wealth finance and other prestige goods and the organization of political power. However, those studying the Inka Empire (D'Altroy and Earle 1985; D'Altroy 2012) have taken a broader view by incorporating both the idea of wealth finance with staple finance and the regional traditions of reciprocity and redistribution.

Political Economy in the Inka Empire

Models of political control based on the political economy have formed an integral part of the studies on the Inka Empire. One of the most classic examples is the synthesis of wealth and staple finance provided by D'Altroy and Earle (1985). This publication demonstrates how the Inka state gained control of staple finance as a way to manage the larger population and surplus production while stabilizing resources. Staple finance was amassed through a labor tax requiring each household to contribute labor to state projects. State projects could include anything from the care of state agricultural holdings and llama herds to work on building projects and road maintenance. The state then stored the resulting produce in local territories to be used to support laborers and warriors. The surplus could also be distributed when crop yields were low. D'Altroy and Earle suggest that this ability to support local populations in times of need fostered a sense of loyalty; local storage can thus be equated with political power (1985:192). However, this type of welfare by the Inka state is not well documented (Murra 1980:131), weakening the argument that this type of economic relationship influenced the power dynamic between the Inka and the subjugated groups.

Wealth finance, on the other hand, involves the production and distribution of prestige items (D'Altroy and Earle 1985:188). In the Inka case these items, like fine cloth known as *cumbi* and gold, were typically produced by craft specialists and were used to reward the local elite and other state officials (D'Altroy and Earle 1985:195). The use of wealth finance does seem to have more direct bearing on the social relationships between the Inkas and those subjects who were members of the local elite. Accordingly, these socioeconomic relationships, which were well integrated into the political economy, would have served to increase political control.

It also allowed the state to assert its dominance over a wider area by fostering trade connections with the coast and parts of Ecuador which were never fully incorporated into the Empire (D'Altroy and Earle 1985:196).

This interpretation of the Inka political economy is logically sound but lacks sufficient supporting evidence to be used as the paradigm of Inka state maintenance. The argument is primarily based on the assumption that the pre-existing Inka state would be able to successfully assert its right to local land and resources and thus gain control of the local economy. Such a scenario is implausible without some other means of coercion or manipulation such as military conquest, ideological control, or an exploitation of political alliances. D'Altroy and Earle (1985) also fall into the criticism presented by Cook (1968). They do not discuss the potential for conflict between the two ethnic groups but rather present an image of a local population who is grateful for the added security of state storage. There is no attempt to demonstrate that a necessity existed for expanded storage or that the local populations were content under the new regime. Finally, the discussion of wealth finance does remain firmly grounded in the economic relationships. The social relationships fostered between the local elites and the state are not evaluated in any detail. The first issue is addressed by later adherents to the political economy approach while the second and third are left to Marxist interpretation.

Earle incorporates a broader perspective of control in his examination of chiefdom formation. While he maintains that economic power is the easiest to obtain, he also identifies its need to be bolstered by military strength and ideological validity (Earle 1997:7). His diagram of this phenomenon still places the inroad to state formation in the economic sphere. Chiefs come to power when they capitalize on the opportunities provided by natural resources and historical circumstances. The increased economic resources can then be invested in military and

ideological power bases which in return provide greater control and legitimization (Earle 1997:204). This model provides excellent insight into the processes of state formation and maintenance through the direct control of resources. True to its theoretical underpinnings, this interpretation highlights the importance of economic control in power relationships.

Earle's model for the formation and maintenance of a complex political system is tailored to fit a capitalist polity. A small accumulation of wealth can be invested into alternate power bases, which then strengthen the economic foundation. However, his model ignores other economic systems and all alternative explanations. For example, in the Andes, where material concerns are often less important than religious or social ones, it is equally likely that control over ideology could be the primary foundation of greater political power. The model also rests on the supposition that political economy is growth oriented and that surplus is invested in order to acquire additional surplus (Earle 1997:203). This necessarily assumes that all political entities are materially driven to acquire products for the products' sake. While it is quite possibly true, it unfairly de-emphasizes goals related to maintaining religious institutions and internal security without sufficient exploration of related hypotheses.

Political economy also fails to address the social consequences of state financial control. While Earle recognizes that increased economic control produces a heightened level of social authority (Earle 1997:70); he does not elaborate on the idea as it lies outside the purview of his economic theory. He also touches on the inherent weaknesses built into each of the three foundations of power, a strong indication of political economy's Marxian origins. After a critical threshold none of these systems can support continued expansion, eventually the system will collapse upon itself (Earle 1992:204-205). These comments connect political economist interpretations to broader Marxian theory but they still fail to address the agency of the

subjugated people. Political economy's inability to address social consequences of political actions is a major weakness in the theory; it cannot be used as the sole basis for interpreting the maintenance of state societies until social aspects are incorporated.

More recent publications seem to be taking a more holistic approach to political economy. D'Altroy (2002) includes an in depth discussion of Inka socio-historical context, ideology, and military power, in addition to the traditional economic concerns. This publication is meant as an overall introduction to Inka studies and correspondingly describes all aspects of Inka governance, infrastructure, and mechanisms of control such as *mitmaqkuna* and *mit'a* labor and deals with both economic and social issues arising from state policies. D'Altroy concedes that one of the primary impacts of *mitmaqkuna* was social in nature. This practice involved uprooting entire communities and relocating them in other areas of the empire. The goal of such an action was to reduce the potential for rebellion in newly incorporated groups and to create enclaves of craft specialists to produce prestige goods and desired agricultural produce for the state (D'Altroy 2002:248-249). This brief discussion highlights the changes to the social organization of the provinces but does not directly discuss the potential social consequences such as loss of group affiliation or the spread of Inka customs, language, and agro-pastoral traditions.

His discussion of *mit'a* labor also focuses on the economic benefits to the state. Surprisingly, he does mention that this practice may have upset local populations, but again he doesn't elaborate on this idea. Instead D'Altroy focuses his discussion on the changes the Inka made to the economic system over time in order to increase its efficiency (D'Altroy 2002:265-268). D'Altroy attempts to introduce a more holistic approach to the study of the Inka but his interpretations remain firmly grounded in political economy. While this approach provides

excellent insight into the economic system under Inka dominion it ignores the human aspect of culture.

In his 2012 publication, D'Altroy specifically addresses the contrasting views produced by political economy and Marxist theory. He acknowledges that there was a strong link between the social status of Andean groups and their economic relations within the Inka Empire and identifies that moral customs were used to legitimize these relationships (2012:1). Despite his greater consideration for the local impacts of Inka economic policies, D'Altroy remains firmly ensconced in the state perspective. He criticizes Marxist interpretations for overemphasizing the coercive nature of Inka policies, specifically their intentional exploitation of local communities and resources (D'Altroy 2012:30). Instead, following the formalist economic line, D'Altroy argues that the economic decisions of the Inka state were based on logical reactions to ecological constraints, even if researchers are unable to identify them.

Overall, political economic theory stresses the importance of economic concerns and elite control above all other cultural considerations. This logical approach provides an idealized understanding of economic systems and ignores all other motivating factors. Scholars must find a way to incorporate a discussion of social conditions into this theoretical base in order to create a realistic model of an economic system.

MARXISM

Classical Marxism is interpreted and adapted in a variety of different ways. In Latin America; and in Peru specifically, it has been almost impossible to separate the academic applications of Marxian theories from national politics. The introduction of Marxism to Andean studies began in the 1940s and continues to inform the practice of Peruvian archaeologist today. Its popularity is tied to the political tides that have swept the country since independence and to the rejection of Western, colonialist ideas. Marxism provides Peruvian scholars with the theoretical foundations to create socially meaningful interpretations of the past, as opposed to the scientifically neutral but comparatively sterile interpretations being developed by foreign researchers. Such interpretations help make the history of Peru relevant to the present social and political realities and have helped influence many foreign archaeologists working in the Andes. This theoretical base has been particularly influential to archaeologists studying Inka state maintenance. In this application Marxist theory typically focuses on social relationships that emerge as a consequence of the labor required to materially support the state. Resulting research is often used to recreate social identities and to inform national policies. Whether intentional or not, Marxist archaeology in Peru has always been a politically engaged theory.

Since its introduction in the mid-1800s the economically based Marxist theory (Marx and Engels 1848) has been applied to many disciplines. Throughout this process, various aspects and ideas have been isolated from the body of Marxist theory and transformed to fit in with other theoretical perspectives. However, at its core, Marxist theory was an attempt to conceptualize the

capitalist economic model and to critique the power imbalance inherent in resulting social systems. Equally important to the theoretical aspects were the social ones, as from the beginning Marxism sought to transform the social world that it studied (McGuire 2002:10). One of the central ideas to Marxism is Hegel's dialectic and the way it produces change in a society. This dialectic emphasizes the internal relationships that structure and organize the rest of the world. These relationships are theorized as contradictory in nature and thus conflicts will arise and produce changes in group structure and relationships (McGuire 2002:12).

Marxist Archaeology

While the central theoretical tenets of Marxism can be identified in most of its interpretations, the theory must be tailored to fit all of its academic applications. Trigger (2006:495) summarizes the application of Marxism to archaeology as a general concern exploring "how human groups interact with material factors to reshape social life." But even within archaeology Marxist theory has been applied in several ways. In Latin America there is typically a more traditional application, classical Marxism, while other areas of the world utilize the neo-Marxian approach. Classical Marxism adheres to the founding ideas produced by Marx and Engels (1848), while the neo-Marxian approach attempts to move beyond this model by developing a new, Marxist based theory that is capable of dealing with precapitalist societies (Trigger 2006:445).

In terms of archaeology, McGuire categorizes Marxism as a fluid approach that is constantly influenced by the research it produces; consequently it is very difficult to pin down any static definitions or explanations of the subject. McGuire (2002:15) does, however, identify

four main features that primarily focus on opposition and change. First, he stresses that all oppositions must be recognized but not necessarily solved. The second and third points deal with the study of change, Marxist archaeology is not only a source of theories for this pursuit, it also provides a methodology by directing archaeologists to identify and examine the social conflicts that produce change. The fourth feature identified by McGuire is that Marxist archaeology is a self-reflexive praxis. Archaeologists must consider how the past they are creating is influenced by their own realities and social contexts. Many other approaches to archaeology also seek to identify sources of bias on the part of the archaeologist. Processual archaeology in particular seeks to eradicate such bias to produce a truly objective and scientific interpretation of the archaeological record (Johnson 1999:24). The Marxist approach, on the other hand, uses this perceived bias to make its results applicable to current social concerns.

As a socially and politically engaged theory, Marxism in Peruvian archaeology cannot be understood without considering the wider context. True to its nature, the development of Marxism in Peruvian archaeology was due to opposition and social relevancy. Peruvian scholars utilized Marxist theory in direct opposition to the theoretical frameworks of foreign archaeologists working in the country. Essentially, Peruvian scholars are attempting to combat the western, capitalist perspectives that are hidden in “scientifically neutral” theories.

Additionally, Marxist archaeology was intended to be a very socially conscious pursuit. This aspect has been realized in several ways. Some scholars limit themselves to a focus on social relationships in the societies they study while maintaining a responsibility towards the descendants of those groups. Others have taken the theory into the political realm where the results of Marxian research are used to instigate social and political change.

History of Marxism in Peru

In Latin America, the Marxist approach has gained and lost influence multiple times over the past century due to changing academic trends and shifting political climates. One of the first appearances of Marxist ideas in the academic world of Peru was in the early 1900s, as a part of Luis Valcárcel's B.A. thesis (Patterson 1994:531). However, his contributions did not become a significant part of mainstream archaeological theory, despite his continued subtle references to the framework. During the 1930s and 1940s Marxism appeared in a slightly different, more political form. This was a period when anthropological theory was very stagnant but the indigenous movement was gaining ground in the political arena. The *Indigenismo* movement glorified the Inka past as a way to empower themselves in relation to the politically secure *mestizo* class.

The work of Julio C. Tello became very influential to the academic, social, and political worlds of this time period. While his theoretical orientation was not explicitly Marxian, he dogmatically adhered to his theory that civilization in Peru developed in the Andes, the home of the contemporary indigenous population (Burger 2009:73-74). This argument directly contrasted the work of foreign archaeologist Max Uhle and served to validate the achievements of the native people. Tello's work, more than any other archaeologist of his time, accomplished the heightened social consciousness advocated for by Marxist theory, although it was done without any concrete theory or methodology.

Even more influential to the development of Marxist theory in Peru is journalist and social theorist José Mariátegui. As an individual from an underprivileged background, Mariátegui advocated for social and political change that benefited the local indigenous populations. His

self-taught development of Marxian socialist theory formed the basis of his politically active writings (Angotti 1986). Notably, his *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* (1928) inspired generations of academics and social revolutionaries in Peru and other Latin American countries. He incorporated the pre-Columbian history of Peru by presenting arguments that the Inka political structure was in fact a primitive socialist state. He further proclaimed that the Inka should be used as a model for the transformation of Peru (McGuire 2002:64).

After this surge in socially conscious archaeology, the Marxist approach quickly lost ground. It became overshadowed by perspectives emphasizing chronological developments and cultural evolution prominent during the 1950s and 1960s. This was largely due to the formalization of anthropological theory in the United States and the changing nature of archaeology in Peru. After Tello's death, Larco Hoyle became the prominent Peruvian archaeologist. Unlike Tello, Larco argued for a coastal origin of civilization in Peru and propagated the cultural evolutionary theories popular in the U.S. (McGuire 2002:65). Patterson contends that Marxist theory was still visible in Larco's work, through his interpretations of Childe's dialectic thought (Patterson 1994:532). However, while his work may have focused on the influence of productive forces, it lacked consideration of class conflict and overlooked the potential social relevancy of his work. Larco's theoretical approach is an example of the way Marxist theory is often reduced into a single idea that is applied in ways that contrast the original theoretical body. Socially conscious Marxism was all but invisible during this academic tenure and there was correspondingly very little political activism on behalf of the indigenous groups. This theoretical orientation maintained popularity for only a brief period because while they achieved the illusion of scientific neutrality, they were not socially relevant enough to satisfy Peruvian scholars.

Thus the 1960s saw a resurgence of Marxian ideas in Latin American archaeology, as well as the development of the more politically charged, and somewhat contested, social archaeology. During this period the traditional Marxist framework continued to inspire Peruvian archaeologists, however, social archaeology emerged as the formalized Marxian theory. Patterson characterizes social archaeology as a rejection of materialist and evolutionary mindsets, and seeks to create a historical connection between past and present through Marxian analytical frameworks like socioeconomic formation and mode of production (Patterson 1994: 533-534). This approach aims to contribute to the discussion of social problems (such as uneven development) and to create a theoretical discourse with those outside social archaeology and archaeology in general.

Patterson's relation of social archaeology as an important aspect in the Latin American academic world has been severely criticized. Oyuela-Caycedo et al. (1997:365) suggest that this approach to archaeology was a product of the political climate of the 1970s and 1980s in Latin America and that the theory lacked the methodological contributions to continue its influence. They claim that social archaeology gained momentum in Latin America when academics with Marxist sympathies, such as Lumbreras in Peru, found an attentive audience for their ideas. This audience was created by the rise in political activism and the negative attitude towards the United States (1997:366). After a brief period of growth in universities, the practice of social archaeology was wiped out due to the negative press Marxism received during the Shining Path rebellion (1997:368). This critique seems more like an attempt to disassociate Latin American archaeological theory with the negative perception of Marxism as communist radicalism than a debate over the state of social archaeology and its degree of impact.

Benavides (2001:357) contends that social archaeology is still a significant factor in Latin American archaeology, particularly its focus on social consequences of archaeology. He points

out that all archaeology contributes to a political agenda, even those whose practice attempts to be as scientifically neutral as possible. Social archaeology actively engages in this discourse rather than trying to maintain a pretense of neutrality by distancing the academic output from the social consequences. Benavides further accuses the past practice of archaeology of contributing to domination of the people of Latin America by failing to address the connection between prevailing social conditions to those found in archaeological contexts (2001:357). According to Benavides, social archaeology relegates methodology to a secondary role and instead focuses on why archaeology is conducted in the first place. The primary reason driving social archaeology is that a reconstruction of the past is imperative to the political future (2001:359).

In 1983 *El Grupo Oaxtepec* attempted to formalize the classical Marxist theories being implemented in Mexico and Peru (McGuire 2002:66). The conference started with the writings of Marx and Engels and worked from the ground up to build an archaeological application. They began with the base-superstructure opposition which embodied oppositions between modes of production, social formations and ideology. Society started with an economic base (the masses that formed the bulk of society) which were directly involved in the modes of production and reproduction. The base allowed for the creation of various forms of social relations which were preserved in the lifeways studied by archaeologists. Finally, this produced an ideological superstructure that was applied to all of the groups that helped build it. Today the influence of Marxian theory and social archaeology can be identified in the interpretation of past Andean societies and in the way archaeology is practiced, often involving the local community. These influences are apparent in both the works of foreign and Peruvian archaeologists (Benavides 2001; McEwan et. al 1994; Vogel and Pacifico 2004).

Marxist Interpretations of the Inka Empire

Marxist theory has provided a framework for the interpretation of Inka statecraft from its onset. Economic and social aspects of the theory have been isolated and used as a source of inspiration for other theories, as seen in the underpinnings of political economy; however, the theory has also been applied as a whole. Over the years this has produced different interpretations of the state. Early interpretations, such as that of Mariátegui (1928) and Baudin (1961), interpret the Inka Empire as an early socialist state and provider of welfare to its subjects. Political economy interpretations often present this argument as well. However, more recent Marxian analyses have presented a different image of the Inka State, primarily by examining the political entity through the lives of its subjects.

J.V. Murra was a life-long Marxist who has worked throughout the Andes, and contributed greatly to the field of ethnohistory and archaeology through his regionally applicable theories and emphasis on provincial studies. One of his most renowned contributions to Andean studies was his theory of verticality (Murra 1964). This theory focuses on the way social relations are used to capitalize on economic resources found at different elevations. The foundation of this model is the economic practice of reciprocity, an idea outlined by Polanyi. This aspect of Murra's work is often condensed down to its economic relevancy, as is done when applied to studies in political economy, and the social aspects are relegated to secondary importance.

In terms of the Inka State, Murra (1980) produced a comprehensive Marxist analysis on the economic organization for his dissertation. This interpretation relied heavily on a critical analysis of the information left by various chroniclers. As with scholars of the political economy mindset, Murra examined the way the Inkas dealt with surplus, however, his discussion focused on the

economic relationship between the Inka state and the local communities. Specifically, he examined the manner in which the Inkas utilized the pre-existing custom of reciprocity to create economic, social, and political ties throughout the empire (Murra 1980:95). This perspective provides insight into the social consequences of the Inka's economic policies and provides a basis for studying conflict within the system. This is not possible with the political economy interpretation which is limited by its focus on how economic relations benefited the state.

Murra's work challenges models of the Inka Empire as a welfare state. Political economists postulate that one of the reasons Inka rule was accepted by local communities was because the amassed surplus was used to provision them during lean times. However, Murra suggests that all welfare was undertaken at a local level and predated the arrival of the Inka (Murra 1980:132). He criticizes the beneficent, paternal image of the Inka created by historical sources, claiming that there is not concrete evidence for such a relationship (Murra 1980:133). In fact, Murra points out that rebellions did happen, a fact glossed over by other scholars and historical sources who present the dynamics of the empire as a harmonious, functioning system.

Furthermore, Murra's work with Craig Morris at Huánuco Pampa helped to rectify the image of the Inka as a welfare state. Their findings called into question the idea of redistribution by proving the surplus was actually intended to provision those individuals on state business (Morris and Thompson 1985:107). These findings alter the understanding of socioeconomic relationships between the Inka state and its provinces as well as altering the model of Inka political economy. Murra's consideration of social relationships provides a more realistic image of life during the Inka Empire than any neutral, idealized model is capable of creating. Additionally, his work at Huánuco Pampa marked the beginning of provincial studies in Inka

archaeology, helping to give a voice to the people who lived under the Inka Empire (Murra 1962).

Thomas Patterson (1991, 1994) is another foreign archaeologist who has greatly contributed to the tailoring of Marxist theory to the study of Inka state formation and maintenance. Patterson (1991) provides a more explicit discussion of Marxian theory within his work by beginning with a theoretical discussion of state formation. According to Patterson, states emerge in response to increasing class structure. Class structure is created when private interests of a few are put above those of the group. The classes are ranked based the degree of control each class exerts over the means of production. A state is eventually needed to maintain control over the new system of exploitation (Patterson 1991:4-5). Patterson uses this interpretation of state formation to study changes in social relationships. In the Inka system he specifically looks at the way the state distorts traditional relationships by incorporating tribute in order to maintain social control and the inherent class struggles that ensue (Patterson 1991:5).

Patterson (1991:4) describes a variety of ways in which the Inka manipulated class relations, and thus economic production, in order to maintain their authority. Unlike the political economist position, Patterson does not identify any benefits to local populations. Rather, the methods employed by the Inka state created oppressive conditions with the intent of building a socioeconomic power base to support the empire. These exploitative conditions ultimately led to rebellions against the Empire. Favored methods of social control included encapsulation, *mitmaqkuna*, labor tax and subtle threats to the local elite.

The discussion of Inka social manipulation includes too many factors to be addressed here. All of the factors are means to the same end, to isolate groups and ensure that their strongest ties were to the state. This included seizing control of sacred huacas, taking children of local elites

into the service of the state, and redistributing ethnic populations. Overall, Patterson argues that the Inka completely altered the social, ideological, and economic landscape of their empire (Patterson 1991:79-83). The methods Patterson (1991) discusses are primarily aimed at state maintenance. His summary of state formation in the introduction makes it clear that state formation occurs within a community, an idea shared with the political economy approach.

As the Inka frontier expanded the state gradually increased its ties with communities while limiting inter-community contact. This effectively isolated communities and made them entirely dependent on the Inka state. Usually the state co-opted existing power relationships by maintaining the basic structure but increasing the hierarchy between the local elite and labor. The state was of course at the top of the hierarchy and demanded increasing amounts of tribute over time. This process slowly brought new groups into the Inka structure by gradually increasing local dependence on the state (Patterson 1991:80).

Of course there was always potential for these newly encapsulated groups to revolt. Patterson sees the Inka system of *mitmaqkuna* as a way to manipulate social relationships rather than to increase economic efficiency as the political economy approach would. By resettling portions recently incorporated groups in the heartland and moving loyal subjects into new territories, the Inka state completely changed the inner social workings of their empire. This rearrangement not only lessened the chance of revolt on the frontier but also provided spies in those regions (Patterson 1991:78). Patterson (1991:77) notes that these redistributed groups maintained their original ethnic and taxable affiliations. He could have gone further and said that this restructuring attempted to isolate individuals by destroying old ethnic ties and preventing the formation of new ones. This action was intended not only changed the social relationships, it

eradicated them on the horizontal plain. Colonists were left only with their vertical relationships to the state.

Evidence for these methods comes mostly from historical documents rather than archaeological research. This provides scholars with a doubly biased representation of the empire. There is the inherent bias from Spanish writers and the information they are presented with most likely comes from the Inka elite; this combination heavily slants written evidence in favor of the ruling class. Patterson's (1991) theories are a reaction against this state centered view presented in historical documents in favor of the local population. However, additional archaeological research is required to bolster the vision of exploitation and class struggle within the empire.

Murra and Patterson assume that the Inka consciously manipulated social conditions to achieve their desired outcome. The degree of modification to control mechanisms seen in each province supports this postulate. Additionally, Patterson bases his argument on the supposition that the potential benefits of complex government were not worth the exploitation needed to support it. This assumption lacks sufficient support. First, archaeological evidence of exploitation is required. How were the lifestyles of local populations positively or negatively affected? Second, the degree of economic security pre- and post-Inka state need to be examined. The global shift toward complex societies could not have been supported if there were no inherent benefits for the subjugated populations.

The Marxist interpretation of the Inka state provided by Patterson has refocused recent research on the social interactions within the empire rather than on strictly economic mechanisms. While Patterson's interpretations were largely based on historical accounts, the

material published in the past decade examines the ethnic diversity and social interactions using archaeological data.

In 2004 a symposium at the annual SAA conference was specifically devoted to this topic. Much of the material discussed was eventually compiled into a book dedicated to the study of direct and indirect control in the frontier regions of the Inka empire (Malpass and Alconini 2010:ix-x). The contributing chapters all deal with different provinces and different manifestations of Inka control, but they all address the manipulation of social relationships. The final chapter is a synthesis of the various strategies of control examined in the book. Malpass and Alconini (2010: 284) highlight the ways the Inka state reorganized social relationships in order to gain control over new provinces. The specific nature of reorganization and degree of control employed in each province varied depending on the goals of the state and the historical situation of the area. This suggests a state that was consciously manipulating local populations through ideology and increased hierarchies in order to obtain the desired level of acculturation.

Alconini and Malpass (2010) assert that more archaeological evidence is needed to illuminate the local reactions to Inka hegemony. Preliminary data suggests different reactions in different regions. La Paya/Guitián represents a successful instance of acculturation. Local elite sought to increase their status by emulating Inka material style. This action would have greatly increased social inequality in the region while simultaneously entrenching the local government in the Inka political and economic system. The site of Cortaderas provides an example of an extremely different local reaction. This community was made up of specialized craft producers and a local population that supported them. The local population did not emulate any of the Inka stylistic features and Inka artifacts were largely separated from the local cultural use of material. Inka goods were rarely included in burials and were typically discarded without being used

(Alconini and Malpass 2010:296-297). Research at Cortaderas provides an excellent example for the material evidence of passive resistance to Inka control. The social perspective employed in Malpass and Alconini's publication highlights the role of the local populations in state formation and maintenance, a vital aspect to the understanding of political complexity.

CONCLUSION

Recent applications of political economy and Marxian theory demonstrate the recognition that a more holistic understanding of the Inka Empire is needed. Conclusions, generalizations, and comparisons cannot be drawn based on a limited perspective. In addition to the economic and social biases presented in these theories, neither theory gives enough consideration to militaristic and ideological forces. While state formation relies heavily on obtaining economic control, state maintenance is not as limited. In the Inka case the state is maintained through expansion. Territories are first seized through military power and then incorporated through a balanced use of military, ideological, and economic power. Research into state maintenance, therefore, must equally address all three of these major factors.

Political economy effectively captures the intricate manipulations and balance required to maintain a complex political entity. However, it presents a capitalist point of view. The main motivator is economic growth, an assumption that does not always apply to pre-industrial societies. This point of view also fails to address the people involved. The importance of populations is minimized and social forces are not given any consideration as forces in state maintenance. Marxist theory, on the other hand, is so preoccupied with social consequences that it ignores economic concerns. Scholars seem so intent on villainizing the state that they do not examine the dynamic interaction between infrastructure and community development.

It seems unlikely that these two theories will ever merge completely to form a holistic approach to the study of complex societies and state maintenance. Overall, it is beneficial to have

two competing viewpoints that incorporate the other on the fringes of the theory. By commenting on broader aspects, theoretically based publications allow for the incorporation of opposing theories. However, by maintaining theoretical allegiance there is a permanent forum for continued, in-depth discussion of the various aspects of complex societies.

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VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Melissa Litschi

melissa.litschi@gmail.com

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Bachelor of Arts, Archaeology with Honors and History, May 2011

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Major Professor: Izumi Shimada