



THE PARACHUTE ARTIST

A Self-Reflexive Investigation of Power Relations in Peruvian Archaeology

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Minor Field Study Report 2009
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this minor field study is to investigate power relations in the construction of knowledge; focusing on the archaeological field in Peru. It attempted to solve the problem of representation and thus break out of the hierarchy of knowledge construction. The main tools of this study are self-reflexivity and subjectivity. It departed from the notion that it difficult if not impossible to conduct a "reliable" interpretation of the Other, because of geographical, chronological, social, cultural, economic, political etc. differences. The methods used are observation of the archaeological field in Peru, and informative talks with two Peruvian, one North American and one European scholar. The result of the study indicates that it was inevitable to end up in the representational net.

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INTRODUCTION

We largely fail to understand that creation of the past is a political process and that these illusions are political tools.¹ /---/ Time, whatever its physical manifestations and measurements, is circumstantially perceived and its passage helps to create a past. But, the past is likewise circumstantially perceived and recorded. In other words, the past is an entity we create or construct, not something we reconstruct.²

Zimmerman, *The Past is a Foreign Country*

BACKGROUND

This minor field study (MFS) was conducted in Peru between the 13th of January and 31st of March in 2009. It was a part of my Bachelor Degree project which I had been developing since my first year at Konstfack's Fine Art department (2006). The project started off as a fictional story of a girl who braids her hair to form topographic text that might, or might not, bear meaning. My idea to use braided hair as text comes from many different sources, but the heaviest influence was the khipu. "Khipu are knotted-string devices that were used for bureaucratic recording and communication in the Inka Empire."³ Khipu has an important place in Andean anthropology as, in opposition to other great civilizations, there seems to have been no writing in the Andean region. Therefore, scholars focus their attention on cracking the khipu code to prove that khipu was the Incas writing system. If they succeed, they might obtain first-hand information from the Incas themselves.

During the early stages of the project I had many discussions with teachers – especially with Andrea Creutz who became my advisor for this MFS – that further interwove the fictional story with what would later become the field study. The discussions revolved around a critique implied in the fictional narrative where the braiding girl is subject to an ethnographic-esque investigation. I could then formulate a pervading issue that underlies both the field study and art work – namely "the problem of representation." This specific problem reveals oppressive power structures in all acts of representation of the other. The concept applies to anthropological work but is also realised in many art projects where artists take on roles similar to that of the ethnographer. Two art critics that address this issue are Miwon Kwon in the essay "Experience vs. Interpretation: Traces of

¹ Zimmerman 1992 p. 2

² Zimmerman 1992 p. 6

³ Urton et.al. 2005, p. 1065

Ethnography in the Works of Lan Tuazon and Nikki S. Lee”⁴ and Hal Foster in the essay “The Artist as Ethnographer.”⁵

Calling on the problem of representation it was a short step to further reading of post-colonial studies. Also, seeing as I might end up in a dead lock situation, if I would out rule any possibility of an investigation due to my opinion that any act of interpretation/representation of the other is an act of oppression, I sought methodological solutions to this dilemma. I found a possible solution in an article by Margaret W. Conkey in *Archaeologies the journal of the World Archaeological Congress*. Conkey writes about the importance of self-reflexivity in archaeological work. Since I have no academic background this scientific method was new to me and became a possible solution to the conduction of the field study. In the article “Dwelling at the Margins, Action at the Intersection? Feminist and Indigenous Archaeologies, 2005”, Conkey begins with a thorough self-presentation in which she accounts for her marital status, religious background, ethnic identity, socio-economic status, political sympathies etc. The point in this identity building listing is to undermine a passive understanding of a scientific result so that we are forced to see the truth once again; objectivity does not exist. Because of this I decided to take a self-reflexive approach in the field study which required me to constantly look at my own part in the representational chain.

SELF-PRESENTATION

In order to describe my position I will henceforth make a similar presentation as Conkey’s with additional information that might have affected the turn of direction in the field study. I was brought up in a middle-class family of four in a small town in southern Sweden. My mother is a web designer and my father is an IT technician. I have a “stereotypical” Scandinavian appearance; blonde, quite tall, blue eyes. Like most Swedes, I’m not religious; at a stretch I could be called an agnostic. My political sympathies tend to go to feminist, environmentalist and social causes, but I am not involved in any organization that works with these issues. The general orientation, in my experience, of the bachelor education at the Art Department on Konstfack is self-reflexive and the students are encouraged to see their art in a wider social context; often with the result of social critical or institutional critical works. Konstfack is financed with governmental means and offers a free education for anyone with a Swedish citizenship. When I entered Konstfack my art had some feministic tendencies that I was able to develop and investigate with the help of other students, tutors, workshops and courses. As an artist I am creating introspective worlds with undertones of the surreal and frightening, in which I invite the viewer. The creation of other/parallel worlds comes from a childhood interest in fairy tales, fantasy and science-fiction.

⁴ Kwon 2001

⁵ Foster 1996

EXOTIFICATION & EXPLOITATION

One of the basics of the fantastic is the depiction of something unknown or unbelievable. On April 3rd 2009, two days after my return to Sweden, I attended “A Bite of Dracula: The Vampire like a Red Snowball”⁶ – an open conversation about Dracula and the myth of Transylvania, hosted by the Rumanian Cultural Institute. The conversation, which was a part of the film festival “RÅSKINN, VAMPYRER OCH QVINNS” at cinema Zita in Stockholm, dealt with the western European’s need to produce Transylvania, and how the imaginary eventually became more important after it had imposed itself over Rumania. The Rumanians are faced with a difficult dilemma as the myth still endures; “Do you refuse it or do you play with it?” either or, you can never win. My thoughts about the mythic Peru went along these lines during the preparation for the field study, and I was not surprised to experience how “reality changed to suit the myth” when I visited some of the major tourist attractions in Peru. Exotification happens to cultures that are largely disconnected and unknown to our own; it also creates a barrier that is hard to look through. Rumania, Peru and many other countries are considered to be blank spaces on the map onto which imaginary lands can be projected.

In order to find the origin for my own naive exotification of Peru, I did an internet search for pop-cultural depictions of Peruvian culture and history. I focused on myths that are hybrids of Peruvian legends and constructions of ‘Western’ fantasy and found the animated children’s TV-series “The Mysterious Cities of Gold” [1982-83], the latest Indiana Jones movie “Kingdom of the Crystal Skull” [2008], “Prisoners of the Sun” – a comic about the adventures of Tintin in Peru [1946-49] and the film “Aguirre, the wrath of God” by Werner Herzog [1972]. These are adventure and exploration stories that revolve around the pursuit for a vanished site with promises of wealth, knowledge and power. El Dorado – the legendary golden city – the dream of the insatiable conquistador. The dream to make the profitable discovery of the New World again, and again.

Of course, this looping exploitation did not settle at being just a dream. Peru is no longer colonized by the Hispanic peninsula, but there are other parties that want their piece of the cake. North American mining companies make deals with the government so they can exploit remote mountain or jungle regions. Child labour⁷, human rights violations⁸ and poisoned water are just some of the results.⁹ Archaeological sites are looted for textile mummy bundles that disappear out of Peru to appear in private collections and museums in Europe. New Age tourists gather in pack and claim that Inkan monuments were made by aliens. Scholars from Japan set up camps in northern Peru to make research on connections between early Japanese and pre-Columbian Peruvian pottery. Youth from the United Kingdom “take a year off” to volunteer and learn Spanish in

⁶ Goldsworthy et.al. April 3, 2009

⁷ Sheikholeslamzadeh et.al. 2008

⁸ Perlez et.al. October 25, 2005

⁹ No Dirty Gold

community projects in Cusco. “Parachute Archaeologists” drop down on sites, gather material for their doctorate theses and leave just as quickly. I go to Peru with government money to make a minor field study that is supposed to nurture the “democratization process.” If all this doesn’t reek with cultural imperialism and paternalism, I don’t know what does.

POWER RELATIONS

To pick up on the initial trigger that set this investigation going, let’s return to the khipu. When I read up on khipu research I found that almost all articles were written by North Americans and Europeans. Their research was presented to be the vanguard of Andean anthropology. Why was North American and European research over-represented in this context? Where were all the Peruvian research reports? After a brief correspondence with anthropologist Robert Benfer (USA) I found out that there certainly is a vast amount of scientific literature written by Peruvian scholars, in Spanish. English and Spanish are both considered to be lingua francas in different parts of the world, but since a large amount of the worlds scientific funding is concentrated to the USA – which also hosts the major scientific journals – English written reports has an advantage over those written in Spanish. Foreign projects in Peru get more funding than domestic projects and this inevitably creates an unequal relationship. Is this inequality actively opposed? Surely, there must be differences between individual projects, but is it not right to say that there are fundamental conflicts in a broader sense that hinders an equal cooperation and coexistence of projects? What role is north American- and Eurocentric research playing in the construction of Peru’s national identity?

This minor field study was an attempt to investigate the power relations in the field of Andean anthropology in Peru. I identified four different layers of power relations where the first layer is the relationship between the archaeologists and the native community that lives close or on the archaeological site. The second layer is the relationship between Peruvian scholars and foreign scholars. The third layer is the relationship between anthropologists and governmental and economical forces as well as the influence by the media and popular culture. The fourth layer is a sort of meta layer where I scrutinize my own part in the anthropological process as a Swedish artist. This last layer has also been the easiest to put emphasis on.

PERU

BASIC FACTS¹⁰

Population: 29,546,963 (July 2009 est.)

Ethnic groups: Amerindian 45% (Quechua, Aymara and Amazonian), Mestizo (mixed European and Indian descent) 37%, European descendants 15%, African, Asian and other 3%

Languages: Spanish (official), Quechua (official), Aymara, and a large number of minor Amazonian languages

Capital: Lima

Government type: constitutional republic

Independence: 18 July 1821 (from Spain)

This introduction is supposed to serve as a backdrop to the rest of the field study. Considering the subject of my study I have focused on the situation of the indigenous peoples of Peru, the “generalized corruption” and the relationship between Peru and foreign enterprises. History gives a condensed summary to Peru’s history up until its independence. People sketch the current situation for the indigenous peoples. Politics 1980-2006 gives an account of a riotous era of corruption and internal war. Peru Today brings up a victory for justice, but shows that there is still a long way to go in the fight for indigenous rights and against corruption.

HISTORY

Peru, a land of vast natural resources, proved to be the perfect birthplace for many of the Americas oldest and greatest civilizations. For many thousands of years prominent cultures came and went; conquered, built empires and perished. When the Spaniards reached the region in the 16th Century they encountered an epitaph of accumulated knowledge in the organizational genius of the Incan Empire. An internal strife scarred the once disciplined civilization, but it was still astounding how a handful of conquistadores led by Francisco Pizarro managed to down throw this giant of an empire – the size to match Rome’s. It took them only three years from 1532 to successfully settle in and establish Lima as the principal town of the Viceroyalty of Peru. The defeat was devastating for the native population, 10 million¹¹ people died within the first 50 years after the conquest. During the colonial rule many Spaniards migrated to Peru and settled primarily in Lima and the coastal area. They brought African slaves and used natives as forced labour. Peru received its independence in 1821, with the help of General José de San Martín from Argentina.

¹⁰ CIA the World Fact Book, retrieved on September 6, 2009.

¹¹ Landguiden January 1, 2002.

PEOPLE

The steep mountains of the Andes divide Peru into three geographical regions, and that division can be seen as a reflection of where the Peruvians have been allocated ever since colonial rule. The Spanish, Mestizos, Asian Peruvians¹² and other immigrants live in the coastal region and bigger highland cities like Cusco and Arequipa. The Aymara and Quechua in the Andes. The minor Amerindian peoples in the Amazon basin. There is a huge gap between rural and urban citizens as economic, political, social, and cultural power is concentrated to the urban areas. Settlements in the highlands and jungle (often with a majority of Amerindians) stand little to no chance against the coastal elite, and there are few instances when they are supported by the government. When I travelled in southern Peru the main road between Cusco and Puno was blocked by people who wanted water pipes drawn to their village. I was later informed that the road blocks happened quite frequently, perhaps the only effective way for these villagers to attract national focus on the government's neglect.

There are many similar occurrences that show how heavily marginalized the indigenous peoples of Peru still are. For once, their opinions sadly weigh little against a big international enterprise that wants to build a gold mine in their mountain and use their children as force labour¹³. With a 45% majority of Amerindians, Peru joins Bolivia (55%) and Ecuador (25%) as one of the three South American countries with the largest ethnic group consisting of Amerindians. According to a study by Hofmann and Valenzuela of the mobilisation of Amerindian movements; both Bolivia and Ecuador have strong movements with influential politics, while Peru hasn't got a large Amerindian movement yet.¹⁴ The indigenous groups of Peru "have generally sought political expression through nationalism or class-based ideologies rather than ethnic solidarity."¹⁵

Moving to a city gave many people the opportunity to improve their social status and acquire a modern lifestyle, but many migrants ended up in slums or informal settlements at the edges of Lima and other Peruvian cities.¹⁶ In the second half of the 20th Century the population was increasing heavily, and a drop in the standard of living led to a massive urbanization from the highland villages to coastal cities, many people moved to Lima and the city grew rapidly. In the 1940's 0.6 million people lived in Lima, by the 1980's that number had reached 4.8 million.¹⁷ In 2007 Lima ranked as the 27th most populous city in the world¹⁸ with 7.8 million inhabitants.¹⁹

¹² Chinese and Japanese

¹³ Freedom House

¹⁴ Hofmann et.al. 2009

¹⁵ Freedomhouse

¹⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica

¹⁷ Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática

¹⁸ United Nations 2007

¹⁹ Landguiden

POLITICS 1980-2006

In 1980 Peru held its first democratic election after a twelve-year period of military rule marked by a costly agrarian reform that resulted in a large foreign debt and heavy inflation.²⁰ The reform also contributed to a widening gulf between the cooperative members and the poorest people in the countryside. With Belaúnde Terry re-elected (he held the presidency before the military junta 1968 – 1980) the new legislature took a neo-liberal approach to handle the economic crisis by issuing "a package of decrees designed to reorganize the economy with a view toward reducing government involvement and encouraging private enterprise, but these were insufficient to ameliorate the growing economic and political crisis."²¹ The difficult economic and political crisis along with a social crisis of increased child mortality, shortened life span and malnutrition proved an effective brooding ground for MRTA (a revolutionary pro-Cuban leftist guerrilla named after the last Incan leader Tupac Amaru) and the Maoist guerrilla Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path a.k.a. Partido Comunista del Perú).²²

Sendero Luminoso loudly claimed to be a proletarian movement with a motto like "Long live the People's War" and naming the party's armed branch Ejército Guerrillero Popular (The People's Guerrilla Army)²³ while Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in August 2003 reported that three-fourths of the 69,000 killed were residents of poor highland villages.²⁴ The government was surprised by the tactics and terrorist actions of Sendero Luminoso and answered with rough anti-terrorist resistance that put further strain on the economy and afflicted many civilians, while spurring others to join the guerrilla.²⁵

The 1985 election turned out in favour of current president Alan García (2006-). In order to reactivate the economy García "shocked the international community when he announced that Peru would pay no more than 10 percent of its export earnings toward a nearly \$14 billion foreign debt."²⁶ He also took measures to "end human rights abuses in the war against the guerrilla, gain control of the drug traffickers,"²⁷ (drug trafficking was a major income for Sendero Luminoso)²⁸ and rally the population. While "facing a deteriorating economic situation, the president moved to nationalize the banks in 1987, an act that eroded his personal popularity. The end of García's term was marked by runaway inflation, a series of crippling general strikes, and even rejection by his own party."²⁹

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Encyclopedia Britannica

²² Landguiden

²³ Wikipedia

²⁴ Freedom House

²⁵ Landguiden

²⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica

²⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica

²⁸ Landguiden

²⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica

After defeating novelist Mario Vargas Llosa of Frente Democrático, Alberto Fujimori of Cambio 90 won the 1990 election. He won partly by decrying the drastic anti-inflation program advocated by Vargas Llosa. A program that alarmed many of Peru's poor. However, within two weeks after taking office he acted against his election campaign by implementing an even rasher tightening of the economy than the political right and International Monetary Fund had recommended. "The program wiped out inflation but caused immediate hardships, notably among the poor."³⁰ In April 1992, Fujimori staged a coup with army support in which the constitution was suspended and the Congress dissolved. After been given free hands in the fight against terrorism, the army succeeded in capturing the leader of Sendero Luminoso (Abimael Guzman) in 1993. After winning the second term in 1995, Fujimori further liberated the army by changing a law that would give them amnesty for every crime against human rights since 1980.³¹

Fujimori gained the 51% needed majority in the second round of the tumultuous election in 2000 bordered by voting irregularities and deemed unjust by the Organization of American States (OAS).³² Beginning in September of the same year, a series of videotapes emerged showing intelligence chief Vladimiro Montesinos bribing opposition congressmen and other figures.³³ This proved to be the fall of the Fujimori government, and opposition forces assumed control of Congress as Fujimori resigned and fled to Japan.

Fujimori's electoral opponent, Alejandro Toledo – a fairly unknown economist, bested former president (1985-1990) Alan García in a runoff presidential election held in June 2001. Toledo is Peru's first president of Quechuan ethnicity and his presidency was considered a "watershed given the prevalent racism among the country's middle and upper classes."³⁴ Despite of early popularity and steady macroeconomic growth, a poll in mid-2004 showed Toledo to be the least popular president in Latin America at the time.

Alan García won the 2006 election against Ollanta Humala of the Peruvian Nationalist Party, "whose platform appealed to poor, rural, and indigenous groups. [---] Once in office, Garcia focused on macroeconomic growth and stability, while also undertaking populist measures such as salary cuts for public officials."³⁵

PERU TODAY

When I was in Peru a 15-month-trial against Fujimori was coming to an end. Signs of the ongoing trial could be seen on plenty of white painted walls with "Fujimori Inocente"

³⁰ Encyclopedia Britannica

³¹ Landguiden

³² Landguiden

³³ Freedom House

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

and similar messages painted in bold black letters along the bigger roads. I left Peru on the 1st of April 2009, and shortly thereafter Fujimori was convicted to 25 years in prison. He was found guilty on all three charges against him; two sets of death-squad killings, a 1991 raid on a barbecue where 15 people (men, women and children) were slain and the enforced disappearance of nine students and a professor at La Cantuta University in the following year.³⁶ The verdict is considered a milestone in the fight for justice by Amnesty International.

However, recent events in the Peruvian Amazon show that there is still a long way to go in the struggle for human rights. 50 days of protesting against a series of decree laws over the use of land and natural resources in the Amazon led to a violent clash on June 5 2009 between demonstrators and police that resulted in the death and injury of many people.³⁷ The decree was a part of a free trade agreement between Peru and the United States and would make it possible for U.S.-businesses to establish enterprises on equal footing with local investors, i.e. "indigenous groups have now been deprived of the legal right to challenge the exploitation of their land by US-based oil and mineral corporations."³⁸

³⁶ Amnesty International April 7, 2009.

³⁷ Amnesty International June 9, 2009.

³⁸ Rowlands February 1, 2008.

FIELD STUDY

I am writing this report more than eight months after my return from Peru based on notes I wrote and material I gathered during the field study. The whole experience was very emotional for me and I took many photographs to remember what you cannot explain with words. In the course of these eight months I have had plenty of time to process and digest what happened. Due to the long time span I have most likely also forgotten much and can now only present an ordered recollection that is more filtered and self-censored than what it would have been if I had begun writing right after my return. In some ways, I cannot help thinking that this is appropriate, and that it suits the context of a field study about the problem of representation.

The chapters below are presented in a chronological order to some extent; events that occurred before or after the chapter may be included if the content touches upon the same topic. I have chosen to write about the key events of the field study, and the work in preparation for the field study. In *Ethical Discussions in Swedish Universities* I asked the archaeological department of two major Swedish universities if ethical discussions were included in the schedule for the undergraduates. *Correspondence with Robert Benfer* is a commentary on, and a return visit to my field study proposal. *Lic. Mercedes Delgado* presents one of my Peruvian advisors. *Arrival to Lima* treats a misunderstanding of identity, and my reflections about the MFS scholarship. "A to D" includes two conversations I had with Mercedes about the structure of society and our reasons for choosing archaeology and art respectively. *Quipu and Tocado Conference* recounts the observations I made at this international conference in Lima. *Library (revision)* is about my problems to find a focus and also a short introduction to the Japanese archaeological mission in Peru. The last three chapters are informative talks. *A European Professor on Peruvian Archaeology* in which an archaeology professor explains some structures underlying archaeology in Peru among other things. *Visiting Huacho* in which a U.S. American Professor with a project in Huacho told me about the difficulties to publish in Spanish, COARPE – a 'union' for Peruvian archaeologists, the problem with good storage facilities in Peru, and the complexities of "how to be a good gringo". And finally the chapter *Informative talk with Lic. Chocano Mena* in which my primary Peruvian advisor tells me about Peruvian identity and patrimony, female archaeologists and three important archaeological discoveries by Peruvian archaeologists. I end the field study section with some words by Lourdes Chocano and a condensed summary of my final time in Peru.

ETHICAL DISCUSSIONS IN SWEDISH UNIVERSITIES

A part of the preparation process was presenting the project to different teachers. Håkan Nilsson – art critic and theory teacher at Konstfack – suggested that I should contact the archaeological departments on Swedish universities. The purpose was to make inquiries

how ethical problems that might occur in archaeological field work are discussed in the undergraduate level. I made phone interviews with staff from the universities of Stockholm and Uppsala, and I found out that neither of the universities provided scheduled discussions or literature on ethical problems, although it was discussed if a student brought it up. Uppsala University has a policy built on respect which is transferred from teacher to student. Since Stockholm University doesn't operate abroad they do not discuss the ethical problems that might occur in encounters with locals, at excavation of holy ground or sensational findings. Stockholm University also has few own excavations within Sweden, and they say that this concern other Swedish universities as well.

Since I only got hold on staff from two of Sweden's universities I cannot reliably make the assumption that the lack of ethical discussion applies to Swedish archaeological education. But the notion that two of Sweden's largest archaeological university departments do not schedule for discussions of ethical problems show that it isn't prioritized. This may be an effect, as the people I spoke to said, of their focus on domestic archaeology.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH ROBERT BENFER

In order to provide you with some background information to the coming events I will sketch out the email correspondence I had with an anthropologist in fall 2008. Konstfack is not affiliated with any university in Peru so I had to find a Peruvian advisor on my own. With the help of my Swedish advisor I got in touch with Robert Benfer – professor emeritus of anthropology at University of Missouri-Columbia in USA. He asked me to send him my field study proposal so he could direct me to a suitable advisor in Peru. After reading my proposal he told me to contact Peruvian archaeologist lic. Mercedes Delgado. He also replied to what I had written in the proposal and what caught his urgent attention was a segment in the passage in which I had described my background reasons for the field study:

While reading up on the most recent research I only came across reports by scholars from the U.S.A., so I began to question why the leading scholars were U.S. Americans and not Latin American, and what this could imply. By asking this question I started to look for more information about anthropological research in Peru to see if this was the case in other fields as well, I found information about a current dispute between Yale University and Peru considering lent artefacts that isn't returned, and the more remarkable find of a very well-preserved mummy discovered by National Geographic explorer-in-residence, Johan Reinhard in the Argentinean Andes in 1999. The mummy was recently put on display in a museum in Salta, Argentina. [---] As La Doncella had been a sacrifice to the gods 500 years ago, Johan Reinhard's act to remove her from the holy Mount Llullaillaco was a sacrilege to the local natives.³⁹

³⁹ Field Study Proposal by Gabriella Jonsson 2008.

To which he replied that I "had falsely assumed that there does not exist a rich literature in Spanish."⁴⁰ Re-reading my proposal I cannot find a sentence that straight-out implies this, but I do confess that there is a pervasive attitude in the proposal which could suggest that foreign, primarily U.S. American, scholars ignores or take credit for the work of their Peruvian peers. I did not provide what reference had led me to my open question; why leading quipu scholars were U.S. Americans and not Peruvian. But it was based on a quick over-view on quipu-related topics and articles on the internet; among them articles in *Science*⁴¹ - considered "to rank as the world's most prestigious scientific journal."⁴²

The criticism towards Johan Reinhard's removal of the mummy La Doncella from holy Mount Llullaillaco and putting her on display in a glass cage even though several indigenous groups campaigned to stop the exhibition, is partly based on a BBC News article⁴³ but also connects to a general attitude prevalent among North American Indians and the Sámi people of Northern Europe to name a few native minorities. North American Indians has the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) that helps them repatriate ancestral human and cultural remains removed from their burial grounds while the Sámi people in Sweden struggle to recover the skeletons of their forefathers from esteemed institutions like the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm. According to Benfer I "may have been misled by the North American political movement that made removing burials seem to be sacrilegious"⁴⁴ and that "Later political problems with Reinhard's projects arose for different reasons than you assume. They were the more typical reasons of envy and jealousy. At a minimum you should find out Reinhard's side of the story."⁴⁵ I never mailed Reinhard, as Benfer suggested, but I read his book "The Ice Mummies" (about his discovery of Juanita in 1995) and an interview in National Geographic. Perhaps I had been unintentionally selective in my search; an effect of a Euro-centric, routine-like, demonization of USA? Or even worse; subject to force-fed paranoid suspicion towards scientists.

Surely, Benfer's critique left me quite flushed, but he was very helpful and encouraging throughout the whole correspondence, and I found hope for my project when he wrote that "There is much to learn about the relations we foreign archaeologists have with Peruvian archaeologists. We bring money and students and projects and analysis not affordable by Peruvian scholars. We often have special skills but never the depth of knowledge of the area. We help their students in a relation that varies from warm to

⁴⁰ Robert A. Benfer in e-mail to Gabriella Jonsson November 19, 2008.

⁴¹ *Science* (AAAS) is the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

⁴² *Science/AAAS*

⁴³ Grady September 7, 2007.

⁴⁴ Robert A. Benfer in e-mail to Gabriella Jonsson November 19, 2008.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

tense.”⁴⁶ He also wrote that I “may just bring an outsider’s view that we insiders would never have appreciated.”⁴⁷ A promise of something to bite into appeared.

LIC. MERCEDES DELGADO

Mercedes Delgado holds a licenciado degree in archaeology and is the archaeologist of QALLTA, an organization that works to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Peru, and which is also responsible for the development of community museums.⁴⁸ She is an alumnus of the Natural History Collections Management Training Program for Latin American and Caribbean Professionals at the Smithsonian, National Museum for Natural History, in Washington D.C., USA.⁴⁹ In 2002, she was the field work supervisor of the excavation on the Paracas culture religious centre Cerillos – discovered and overseen by Dr. Dwight Wallace since 1958, when the team found an elaborate mummy bundle containing a female skeleton. Until this find, the field team had been turning up mainly pottery shards and textile fragments.⁵⁰ Benfer described her as being “on the hard side of archaeology” but he recommended me to contact her because “she knows everyone” and “has contacts with an interest in art, archaeology, and politics that command English.” It will be quite evident in this report that I received much help from Mercedes and Lourdes Chocano (who Mercedes eventually assigned to be my advisor), and that I couldn’t have made it without them.

ARRIVAL TO LIMA

After a 24 hour flight I arrived in Lima at midnight. Mercedes Delgado greeted me at the airport and then we went outside to a waiting taxi that would take us to my accommodation. The trunk of the taxi was too tiny for my suitcase and the driver had to put it on the front passenger seat. On our way through nightly illuminated Lima, Mercedes asked me about my flight. She was surprised when I told her that I had flown from Sweden since she had supposed that I was one of Benfer’s anthropology students. I had mentioned that I was a Swedish student of Fine Art in my mail to her, but I could have put more emphasis on that to avoid the uncertainty of this situation.

One very important reason that made me doubt whether I should even conduct the field study in Peru was the fact that I am going there with governmental money to help their “development” while Peruvians likely aren’t going to Sweden for the same reasons. This reflection was appropriate due to the theme of my investigation among the Andean an-

⁴⁶ Robert A. Benfer in e-mail to Andrea Creutz November 16, 2008.

⁴⁷ Robert A. Benfer in e-mail to Gabriella Jonsson November 21, 2008.

⁴⁸ The Smithsonian

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Lange September 2003.

thropological community as both our practices are products of imperialism, but it made me shy away from being frank about my type of scholarship. I was concerned about how they could react, based on an imagined discomfort if someone came to Sweden in order to give aid to the institutional art scene here. So I refrained from mentioning it in most cases, and I am ashamed to admit that I brought it up quite late with my Peruvian contacts as well. I initially found my uneasiness toward the problematic of 'aid' as something positive as it offered a foundation to critically view the reason for my field study, and would situate me in a similar position to what I was here to study; the hierarchies of knowledge. The negative part was how it sometimes froze my will to act.

"A to D"

When Mercedes and I visited Larco Mar; a fancy seaside galleria in the Miraflores district, she told me about a system of categorizing people from A to D according to their financial power. A is the small elite at the top of the pyramid. D is the masses; the poor living on the edge of starvation. This conversation was brought up by my question about the position of indigenous peoples in Peru. She replied that there have been many different ethnic people living in Peru and that they all intermingled with each other with exception for the relatively newly immigrated Japanese colony. There are therefore mestises and natives in all layers of society.

The same day I asked Mercedes why she wanted to become an archaeologist. She told me that she was fascinated by how such a grand empire could be defeated by a small group of Spaniards. Then she asked me why I wanted to become an artist. I answered that I had been encouraged as a child and that I thought that art was interesting because you can be involved with many subjects, without being an expert within a certain field. My answer was less articulate than expressed here.

QUIPU AND TOCAPU CONFERENCE

Los sistemas de información inca: Quipu y Tocado symposium took place at Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Peru (MNAAHP) during 15 – 17th of January. MNAAHP is the largest and oldest state museum in Peru and is located on Plaza Bolivar in the Pueblo Libre district of Lima. The conference was organized by Instituto Nacional de Cultura (INC) and invited Quipu and Tocado scholars from around the world to share, exchange and deepen their research. The entire program was held in Spanish, without translators, by both Peruvian and foreign scholars, with the exception of one presentation that was translated from English and French. The opening ceremony featured the National Director of INC; Dr. Cecilia Bákula, director of MNAAHP; Dr. Carmen

Arellano and anthropologist Dr. Gary Urton; professor at Harvard University and a specialist in Andean culture.

As my Spanish was insufficient to understand scientific jargon I tried making observations about group dynamics, who where lecturing, reactions to the lectures, and also where I fit in the academic hierarchy. There were 26 presentations of projects. 13 projects were Peruvian, 10 projects were foreign, and 3 were collaborations between Peruvian and foreign scholars. A total of 38 scholars had worked on the presented projects of which 12 were female. I was glad to see that a majority, if small, of the projects were lead by Peruvian scholars, while I was not surprised that there was more than the double of male scholars compared to female.⁵¹ From appearance I would say that the ages of the scholars varied from 30 to 80.

In the April 2009 number of *Gaceta Cultural*, published by INC, you can read about the highlights from the conference.

El evento realizado /---/ congregó a especialistas de todo el mundo; entre quienes destacaron los catedráticos de la Universidad de Harvard y el estudioso de la civilización Inca, Gary Urton y Tom Cummins; el investigador Galen Brokaw; el estudioso de los quipus republicanos y etnográficos Frank Salomon; las especialistas peruanas en literatura y lingüística, Rocío Quispe y Lydia Fossa; así como el antropólogo peruano Juan Ossio Acuña.⁵²

Gary Urton, Tom Cummins, Galen Brokaw and Frank Salomon are mentioned before Peruvian scholars Rocío Quispe, Lydia Fossa and Juan Ossio Acuña, which is probably a sign of hospitality.

During the pauses Mercedes took the opportunity to introduce me to some lecturers and colleagues that were attending the conference. A friend of Mercedes and also one of the lecturers, and I talked briefly at the symposium. She asked me why I was in Peru and I told her “to investigate the relationship between foreign and Peruvian archaeologists, and maybe their relationship to the indigenous peoples,” which is the fast, kind of adapted version (for all those quick introductions). She told me that she would like to read it once it was done as she had thought a lot about it. And I think she said that she had not read anything about it before. So, this discussion about relationship on different levels in archaeology was either deemed unimportant or not often ventilated. When I was introduced to Mary Frame, a senior scholar, Mary asked Mercedes if she was working for Jeffrey on her new project. Since it was Mercedes’s project, Jeffrey was actually working for her. Mercedes excused Mary by saying that she is old, a scholar of the old traditions. When I asked her further about it she told me that because of a “new” law Peruvian archaeologists have to be the ones in charge; making and forming the decisions. Previously, as you often had to seek funding abroad, you had to collaborate with

⁵¹ Numbers based on *Quipu y Tocado* program leaflet and observations on place.

⁵² INC April 2003 p.3.

the assigned foreign archaeologist, and because of who pays, you would eventually become subordinate to the views and agendas of the foreign archaeologist.

Paracas textiles in Göteborg

The first day, Mercedes, Lourdes and I had lunch together. We talked about my field study and things concerning the symposium. They told me about the collection of Paracas textiles in the Museum of World Culture in Göteborg, because they wanted me to find out how the textiles had got there from Peru. When I later emailed the museum, they referred me to a webpage that contained information about the Paracas exhibition. The exhibition has a focus on how Paracas textiles were illegally exported to museums and private collections all over the world between 1931 and 1933, the problems of associated with looted and smuggled artefacts, and questions how we should relate to this part of history,⁵³ in addition to showing the remarkable textiles, of course.

One thing that I noticed about my own behaviour, during the symposium, was how easily I fell into a kind of academic hierarchy system where I as a student was expected to listen and not say anything before asked and if I was offered anything I would have to say yes, because it was the custom. It made me a bit ill at ease because I had not experienced such strictness in my school, but I also know that I often adjust to customs like these in new situations, even if it's not openly expected of me. When the symposium was over I was full with expressions and had met many important scholars in Andean anthropology. With the help of Mercedes I managed to book my first interview with Professor Krzysztof Makowski at Pontifical Catholic University of Peru the following week.

LIBRARY (REVISION)

“THE CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY IN PERU
An Artistic Field Study by Gabriella Jonsson

Objective

The aim of this field study is to make a chart of how the history of Peru is, and has been constructed by different social, political and/or economical processes. It will focus on foreign intervention in the field of anthropology and examine what it means to conduct a field study as an act of representation.”

From field study application, October 2008

The extract above is from my field study proposal, and as you can see it was quite over ambitious in its intent. Tutors, teachers, almost anyone I asked for advice during the preparations, told me that it was too wide a subject; I had to narrow it down to make it manageable. Even if the problem of representation was my greatest concern, I was interested in many things (which are probably reflected in this report). Since I didn't quite

⁵³ Museum of World Culture in Göteborg

succeed with that before the departure to Peru; I hoped that a more focused subject would manifest in the course of the field study. Just some days after I had landed, Mercedes and Lourdes, with my agreement, prompted me to make a revision of the initial field study proposal. The purpose of this, apart from making the study more focused, was to have something to present to libraries and institutions of interest. I was also expected to make a presentation to the director of MNAAHP. At this point I thought that my field study was going in a direction that, I at the time, almost felt was forced upon me. Instead of experiencing the here and now; observing power relations between anthropologists and descendant communities, I was expected to learn all about past power relations from books and documents in a language I could not read well enough. If I had had a year or more, this would be the adequate and thorough way of conducting the field study, but I only had two months and no experience of this kind of academic research.

The Japanese Mission

I visited the library of MNAAHP one time where I tried to read about the Japanese archaeological mission in northern Peru. The Japanese Andean expedition was initiated soon after the Iraq-Iran expedition of 1956. They were occupied with doing a comparative study of the origins of civilization in the Old and New World, because they had a common environment; arid tropics. They were also greatly interested in the historical contact, if any, between the civilizations of Asia and those of the pre-Columbian Americas. Professor Seiichi Izumi visited Peru in 1957 and received a permit from the Peruvian government, and with the cooperation of Peruvian students at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos,⁵⁴ he conducted an excavation in Chancay Valley. Dr. Seiichi had studied under Professor Gordon Willey at Harvard University.

A EUROPEAN PROFESSOR ON PERUVIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

The professor met me at the entrance for visitors. The University is situated close to a big modern commercial centre with huge gallerias and supermarkets. On our way to his office at the Letras y Ciencias Humanidades institution, we passed through the university campus while commenting the greenery and landscape. The campus is very tidy and spacious with large gardens and green fields where students are sitting in the grass. The buildings were neat and modern. This is a private University and there were security guards everywhere, they seemed relaxed. The area is enclosed by a wall and has two entrances, one for students and staff, and one for visitors. The entrance I went through has an extensive information desk and reception. In order to get into the campus you have to pass through the reception where you state your business. When we got to the office of the professor I presented my edited field study proposal and before I could start asking him my questions he began talking, almost lecturing, for quite some time. It was very interesting. For this reason I have chosen to call this an “informative talk” rather

⁵⁴The National University of San Marcos is a public university located in Lima, Peru. San Marcos was founded in 1551, which makes it the oldest officially established university in the Americas and, as such, one of the oldest universities in the world.

than an interview. The following text is an audio record transcription. I have modified it lightly so it would become easier to read, but other than that it's unhampered.

"The aim of this field study is to investigate the hierarchies of knowledge construction in Peru in a neo-colonial context, focusing on the relationship between European/North American and Peruvian archaeologists and their interactions with native communities that live on or have a relationship to the sites that are being excavated and investigated. It will acknowledge that I am also a part of this hierarchy as I am making an investigation. I will carefully present my point of departure with every conclusion I make, and analyze it from every possible angle. The methods I will be using are feminist theory and postcolonial studies as well as archaeological methods like indigenist archaeology, postcolonial archaeology and feminist archaeology (as presented in *Archaeologies* the journal of the World Archaeological Congress). I will gather information by observation, interviews, media coverage and historic documentation."

From revision of field study objective, January 19th 2009

THE PROFESSOR: With the case of Andean archaeology we must know that a majority of the scholars are in the U.S.A. There is around twenty or thirty Peruvian scholars in the field. The total number of scholars is maybe two or three thousand. The first observation is that the American medium is really closed. An American scholar can only enter into this circle if he systematically publishes in English, publish in American journals and participate in the academic life of American scholars like the meetings of the society for American archaeology and regional meetings. It can be a very difficult and long way. The second observation is that more and more their relationship in the archaeological science is not an academic one, but probably it is the relationship in the area of power. Power of decision. Power of possibility to get post grad scholarships for students. So the competition is not necessarily a competition between ideas and level, but rather the competition of power. It's like two different academic worlds, ours and theirs, in some ways they are the same. Another case is Mesoamerican archaeology; one circle of Mexican scientists and researchers. And another one for American scholars. With few persons that can transit from one circle to the other, mostly scholars whose residence is in the United States. We are now in a period of great changes in methodology; the philosophy of science, and in a great simplification maybe you can say that we have a confrontation between two streams of ideas and positions. One tradition with an origin in the neo-evolutionist position, this stream is related to the philosophy and anthropology of the 19th Century. So it's neo-positivism like Kempel; the theory of historical knowledge. A false knowledge applied to history and the theory of law. So if Kempel is the foundation, he's the climax before Taylor Morgan. From this point of view, reality is directly accessible for the researcher and we only need to be critical about the authenticity of the source. No internal critique. In some manner this archaeology doesn't need the *Other*. It's an archaeology who compares on the same terms the Other according to universal principles. It's a post-imperial archaeology. Now, the recent state of evolution of this kind of archaeology can be named P.A.M. Practice-Agency-Materiality. On the other hand we have a new manner to see the problems of archaeology, it's not necessarily postmod-

ern. This archaeology is more closely related to the European manner to make archaeology because it is an archaeology influenced by the philosophical discussion in science in the 20th Century. So this part is called phenomenology to the reservoir of Bourdier, Foucault... French philosophy. This is not my stream as it's a minority. Normally the majority of scholars continue with P.A.M. archaeology. So the discussion most scholars partake in is about new perspectives of Darwinism and Darwinist evolutionary ideas and a new discussion about classifications and evolutionary validity of type. This first archaeology (P.A.M.) normally does not work with historical archaeological theses and never with art history. For the P.A.M. archaeologists iconography is not a valid source and in general, art is surpassed to become a secondary source. Technology is a good source for archaeology as it substitutes strategies. More or less there are three problems: there are archaeological projects in Peru that are completely isolated from Peruvian academies, a majority of projects in the south of Peru like that of Michael Moseley. His project works like an industry for PhD-theses, all written in English and never published in Peru. It's an extreme case. Younger American archaeologists work differently for example the project of Steve Wenke in the same part of Peru. Steve Wenke married with a Chinese-American archaeologist within the community he was working with. His work is completely integrated with the community. His methodology might be historical archaeology. He's interested in the late horizon colonial archaeology and his tutor is Frank Solomon. And another case is Christopher Donnan, a medium position. Relatively good integration with the people from the community, speaks good Spanish, but his publications are as well with the exception of one, in English. He also tutored some Peruvian students like Luis Jaime Castillo et al. Another completely different relationship with the local communities is characterized by Canadian projects that are more similar to European projects than to American projects. We can speak about Claude Chapdelaine, the director of Santa project and before of Huaca del Sol y de la Luna. Like the majority of European projects, particularly French, Polish and German, the Canadian projects have their own doctorate students. Peruvian scholars and Canadian scholars publish together.

GABRIELLA (me): Do you sometimes feel that you are being treated differently than your Peruvian colleagues?

P: But I am different. I am an important archaeologist. I have a different formation, a different role. In my University I am not treated different as we have formed a good staff. There are some problems in the Humana group but I think that we have created a way to do archaeology together. And we understand each other very well. This University is - as you know - a private one with a good formation and we have a big number of PhDs, probably the most in South America. And now we also have a master and doctorate level in the program of Andean studies. Our faculty was ranked 74 in the Educational Times, a very good position. Our University is normally ranked at 200 or 220. We had a difficult period in the history of Peruvian archaeology because of the ecologic impact professional archaeology had in the 1980s. Enterprises increasingly need archaeological course or archaeological survey before they can begin to work. This means big money for the students from the National Universities who we are competing with.

G: Do you think that the outcome from these archaeological surveys might be affected by the wishes of the enterprises, mining companies...?

P: Yes, also mining companies, but not only, also construction of highways. Do you want to know how this works? It's free, but each archaeologist needs the permission from the INC and if you want to get a permit you must present a big compilation of data, maybe 1000 pages. This takes more or less four months to compile. You present this and wait for four months, or more, and then you might receive the permission for the next project. And this is some kind of war within the INC, it's very complicated. It's very interesting, but a great problem, because we want new permissions, we work, work, work, and put material in the report and finally... nothing. And an archaeologist from another institution doesn't want to work with the excavation report of other archaeologists. Everyone needs a permission to work, Peruvian or foreign. You also need a supervision of your report that you must pay for to get your permission. The state isn't helping and Peru may be a unique country in this aspect as there is no foundation to support archaeological investigations. No governmental science foundation exists here. The great problem of identification with the past, the manner to think about this knowledge in your social life. Archaeology is not considered as an investment by the state administration in opposition to culture; like opera.

G: This is weird as it seems like Peru is marketing itself through the archaeological findings.

P: Yes, of course! It's not like Mexico, maybe because many reasons, one of them being that the coastal society during many, many years did not want to identify themselves with the pre-Hispanic past. They only identified with their Spanish past. Thirty years ago the people who live in Miraflores and San Isidro (the wealthiest districts in Lima) didn't have any interest to speak of or to study pre-Hispanic history. There are many people that today work with this problem of comparison between Mexico and Peru. There are two different manners to incorporate pre-Hispanic past to present identity. Finally, the great archaeological problem of the 1950s – a problem of Harvard, and the Smithsonian – was a comparative archaeology with the central goal to understand the origin and social complexity of the New World from an evolutionary point of view. In order to understand this problem you need to know the political relationship between Peru and Mexico, also South America in general with the changing circumstances of the second half of the 20th Century.

G: Are you working on sites, or are you more of a historian?

P: No, I work all days of the year, because here the climatic conditions are good.

G: Have you worked on sites that are close to descendant communities?

P: I have worked in Lurin Valley, and I also had another project with my students from a University in Europe, as I also was a doctorate student there. Six years ago we had a pro-

ject on the southern frontier of Huaraz and Culebras Valley. Culebras Valley is located between Huarmey and Catac Valley.

G: Did you make the research available to the community?

P: We have a program in most cases, but in this one we were working with a local organisation and we prepared teachers of local schools. We made a Museum. So we made many things for the local community. Children and teachers normally participate, because Lurin Valley is a difficult valley. The neighbourhood of Tablada de Lurin had an ancient invasion of people from Cajamarca. The barrios of Lima are like little parts of Peru as the people that live there often moved there from the same part of Peru and normally only transit to the centre in Lima on special occasions.

G: Do you think that self-reflexivity is a part of your working method?

P: Self-reflexivity? Ah, self-reflexivity. But what is the subject of self-reflexivity?

G: That your conclusions may be affected by how you were educated, brought up, your social status, political status, etc. That your findings or conclusions might not be objective, that they might be part of your subjective agenda.

P: Subjectivity is a great philosophical problem. I think that it's too difficult for my English level to explain this. I work with archaeological methodology. I am the professor of archaeological methodology. So it's always a problem for me. If you want objectivity – it doesn't exist. But we can do good archaeology, my archaeology is the "total" archaeology, or "global," but "total" is maybe a better word than "global" like world archaeology. Total, or, my archaeology work with all possible sources and all possible methods, with many scenarios of interpretation, like parallel possibilities. It's the method of descriptive analysis and also technological methods, but with different levels. For example the problem of production and distribution of ceramics separated from the problem of style, for me style is the phenomenon of communication and not necessarily a problem of identity. So in general, objectivity may be not the word. It would be too difficult to explain.

G: Do you think that your interpretations may be affected by a Western point of view opposed to the world view of the descendant communities with links to the site?

P: I try to understand the resources in its own context. And my methods in studies of architecture, the iconography, the studies of technology.

We were interrupted on several occasions during the interview, by phone calls and people that came to speak to the professor. The conversation was sometimes staggering because we couldn't understand each other's dialects, and both of us often had to repeat ourselves. The professor later showed me projects on the computer and gave me some texts that he had written. All-in-all I was quite satisfied with the interview. I wish that he

had answered some questions more directly, but it could also have been that my questions weren't clear enough or that he didn't understand my pronunciation.

VISITING HUACHO

A two hours and forty-five minutes bus ride north from Lima through arid desert terrain with the sea on your left side takes you to the coastal city of Huacho, capital city of the Huarua Province. There Mercedes had set me up with an appointment with a U.S. American scholar who wishes to remain anonymous in this paper. N.N. was researching an archaeological collection from excavation projects in the Huaura Valley. I tried to use the audio recorder during our lunch but the air conditioner in the restaurant was really loud and there came a piercing sound from one of the machines in the kitchen. The text written below are thus constructed from my notes and filled out with personal reflections about the subjects being discussed. I therefore take full responsibility for any misinterpretations and skewed depictions of what was discussed during my visit in Huacho.

About Publishing in Spanish

To begin with N.N. offered their thoughts on the sometimes unequal circumstances between North American and Peruvian archaeologists. What N.N. told me about the difficulties with publishing in Spanish and bilingual publication provided a compliment to what Makowski had said about the U.S. American medium and the need for North American scholars to systematically publish in English if they want to get into the 'circle'. N.N. told me that few universities in the United States give you credits when you are publishing in Spanish. If you work as an archaeologist for a university you are required to write two or three articles a year, in addition to this you also have to teach; and few scholars have the extra time it takes, or money, to have an article translated into Spanish. To get your work translated is very expensive so the ones that can afford this are mostly well-established senior scholars. When you are employed by a university you start out with a six year "test" period; tenure, when you practically have to do anything the university says. You are often discouraged to publish in Spanish since it is considered to be one "unnecessary" and extraneous thing. N.N. told me about an U.S. American anthropologist who was married to a Peruvian anthropologist, and thus had published a lot in Spanish. When the anthropologist applied for a job at the university the anthropologist was warned to have had too many Spanish publications. This was during the 1980s and since then the anthropologist has switched to publish in English. Among the South American anthropology journals it is only one that is internationally well-known with a broad readership; the Chilean journal "Chungará." There have been some Peruvian journals but they have either fallen out of publication or are just published sporadically like the University of San Marcos *Arqueología y Sociedad*. U.S. scholars have mostly no professional interest to publish in venues that aren't known internationally.

Peruvian and foreign archaeologists

Peruvian archaeology has always been tied with foreigners, until quite recently it has also been dominated by outsiders. The legal dispute between Yale University and the Peruvian government over artefacts excavated at Macchu Picchu by Yale's Hiram Bingham, between 1911 and 1915, can be considered to be 'stereotypical' for American archaeology. The dispute is based on the fact that Bingham, acclaimed discoverer of Machu Picchu, had been lent these pieces if they would eventually be returned to Peru. A hundred years later many pieces are still housed in the Peabody Museum in New Haven, even though the Peruvian government have demanded all pieces back.⁵⁵ Another stereotype is Parachute Archaeology – “the dropping-in of archaeologists from a distant base into an area of which they were previously ignorant”⁵⁶ or as N.N. put it: “you go to Peru to make research and then you just leave.” I think that the European professor's description of Michael Moseley's project would fit neatly into this category: “There are archaeological projects in Peru that are completely isolated from Peruvian academies, a majority of projects in the south of Peru like that of Michael Moseley. His project works like an industry for PhD-theses, all written in English and never published in Peru.”⁵⁷ To prevent projects like these there is the Colegio Profesional de Arqueólogos del Perú (COARPE).

Colegio Profesional de Arqueólogos del Perú

COARPE “is an organization of professional archaeologists dedicated to the scientific and technological development of Peruvian archaeology, who adhere to the strictest ethical and legal standards of professional conduct.”⁵⁸ COARPE has signed with the Society for American Archaeologists (SAA) to ensure ethical bonds and to formalize the ties between the United States and Peru, but N.N. says that “it might be a symbolic agreement because I haven't seen any changes.” COARPE is both a professional union for Peruvian archaeologists and where foreign archaeologists have to register in order to get permits for excavations. It's almost like an employment for Peruvian archaeologists and it regulates minimum salary requirements for Peruvian archaeologists. Foreign members are involved in dictating the salary, probably of Peruvians that they will later work with and provide the salary for.

The Collection

After the noisy lunch N.N. and I went to the research space where N.N. also keeps artefacts and archaeological material from N.N. and a colleague's excavations. Huacho is very hot in contrast to Lima which is covered by clouds all year round, and in midday the relatively short walk is excruciating for someone inexperienced to heat, like me. We arrived at a one-floor adobe house where we were greeted by the elderly landlady. N.N.

⁵⁵ Eakin February 1, 2006.

⁵⁶ Gromaticus

▪ ⁵⁷ Transcription of audio recording; informative talk by a European professor with Gabriella Jonsson on January 21, 2009.

⁵⁸ *Memorandum of Understanding Between the Colegio Profesional de Arqueólogos del Perú and the Register of Professional Archaeologists*

rented a small space, not more than twenty square meters big, with two rooms separated by a corridor with a toilet and shower at one end. The first room had cardboard boxes stacked by the walls, and some shelves, also filled with boxes. There was one table for investigating archaeological samples. I think an opened box stood upon it. In the corridor N.N. had fitted a shelf and a desk for the laptop. The second room was guarded by a closed wooden door. All those cardboard boxes contained archaeological material, neatly organized and labelled, and this was also what was hiding in the second room behind the door. Packed shelves on all walls, protected from humidity by blue plastic sheets, and in the middle of the room, on an unspectacular plastic table lay a white oblong box containing an unopened mummy bundle. Below the table were two additional specifically manufactured 'mummy boxes'. As a matter of fact, N.N. told me that these conditions were poor, but that it was the best they could get because there simply was no money for storage. Unfortunately this goes for many Peruvian projects. N.N. told me of rooms in the oldest and most esteemed museum in Lima; MNAHP, with items that are inaccessible because they are infested by mould and vermin. The items are deteriorating because there isn't any money to keep them in a controlled, appropriate environment. This problem of storage further complicates repatriation politics, like the dispute between Yale and Peru.

All-in-all I think this was a very successful visit, but it would have been perfect if we had been able to go to the excavation site outside of Huacho, but that was impossible due to many reasons. For once; N.N. had been attacked or hunted by stray dogs the last time, and for twice; no taxi driver would wait there for the time needed to visit the site. It might have also been that they had wrapped up the work for the season. N.N. was soon to return to the United States. The night came swiftly, and people started popping up on the streets as the temperature dropped; truly a contrast to the empty streets of midday.

INFORMATIVE TALK WITH LIC. LOURDES CHOCANO MENA

Lourdes Chocano Mena holds a licenciado degree in archaeology and is a member of Colegio Profesional de Arqueólogos del Perú (COARPE). Lourdes is also a textile specialist and conservator with expertise in cultural affairs and knowledge about communities.⁵⁹ Chocano has conserved mantles from the Paracas Necropolis,⁶⁰ which has been on several international exhibits, and has made presentations of textile conservation and textile analysis at international textile conservation conferences in Spain, USA and Argentina.⁶¹ Lourdes was assigned to be my Peruvian advisor.

⁵⁹ E-mail from Mercedes Delgado to Gabriella Jonsson on December 4, 2008.

⁶⁰ Peters 2005.

⁶¹ *Un análisis de un manto Paracas Necrópolis* presented at *Jornadas internacionales textiles precolumbinos*, Barcelona, Spain in 2007; *Puesta un valor de un Tejido Paracas (Necrópolis)* presented at the *North American Textile Conservation Conference* in Washington D.C., USA in 2007; *El manto blanco de Paracas Necrópolis* at *I^o Jornadas sobre Estudio y Conservación de Textiles* in San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina in 2006.

Lourdes and I visited three important museums with pre-Columbian artefacts; Museo Larco, Museo de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú and Huaca Pucllana. We also met on two occasions to go through a revision of the field study by consulting the history of Peruvian archaeology, cultural politics, female archaeologists and archaeological events of notion that highlights the relationship between Peruvian and foreign scholars. In the following paragraphs I will try to reconstruct the informative talk Lourdes gave me. Looking at the notes I have some trouble piecing information of certain events together, and I regret not to have used the audio recorder. I therefore excuse any irregularities in advance, which are caused by bad note taking from my side.

Patrimony and Identity

When Bolivar passed through Peru in 1821 on his quest to make South America independent, he faced an elite who was uninterested in their pre-Hispanic patrimony and rather identified with their Spanish heritage. They had no interest to identify with the Incas because of their catholic education: “has the Indian a soul or not.” This mentality changed a little bit after the war for independence because in the search for allies they looked at themselves and saw that they weren’t only white or Indian, but mixed.

In the early 20th Century Peru sought a cultural identity in inspiration of Mexico’s strong cultural image. Archaeology became very important in this context, which resulted in the first debate about a Peruvian archaeology among intellectuals in the 1930s. One of the most prominent figures of this movement was Julio C. Tello; a former student of medicine who later studied archaeology and anthropology at Harvard University. Tello is said to have been “the father of Peruvian archaeology” and he made many important finds and was very involved with Peruvian identity and culture. Lourdes told me more about this awakening among Peruvian archaeologists, but my notes are either very bad or there simply isn’t any information about it (in English at least) on the internet to back up and contextualize what she said.

Cultural identity was in the spotlight again in the 1960’s when president candidate for Frente Democrático Nacional; Fernando Belaúnde Terry travelled through Peru on a donkey, wearing a poncho and chullo; a campaign that got him elected. Belaúnde brought back the discussion about cultural identity with his clothes and Peru experienced a renaissance of culture where flight attendants wore traditional Cuscueñan uniforms and folklore groups were invited to the palace for the first time.

Feminism and female archaeologists

When I asked Lourdes if there is anyone conducting feminist archaeology in Peru she tells me that it’s not applicable there as it is coming from the outside, from the United States or Europe. Feminist groups in Peru have an economical power but not a political. They are mostly high-class women who contribute to NGOs. There are few female archaeologists because they have to raise children and can’t go on long excavations. Some prominent female archaeologists that have worked in Peru are: Ruth Shady, with her

research in Caral; Rebecca Carrion Cachot, who worked with Tello; Rosa Fung Pineda whose work in the 1970s through 1990s made important contributions to knowledge of Peruvian prehistory; Josefina Ramos de Cox led an active professional carrier in many prominent anthropological institutions in Peru 1950-70, among them the *Club Soroptimista* which brought together professional women; and German mathematician Maria Reiche, famous for her work in Nasca from the 1970s where she also chose to live until her death in 1998. Women are often taking on projects that 'no one' else is interested in, and that is what Dr. Isabel Flores did when she began to excavate Huaca Pucllana.

Huaca Pucllana – a city dump

Huaca Pucllana is a pre-Columbian archaeological site in the Miraflores district of Lima. The first excavations were done under the leadership of Julio C. Tello in the 1940s to prevent destruction and looting. The Municipality of Miraflores took the initiative to begin archaeological studies of the pyramid in 1967, but the work lacked continuity.⁶² Lourdes told me that when Dr. Isabel Flores began her excavation of Pucllana it had been transformed into a trash dump that was a constant annoyance to the residents nearby. In 1981 Flores took on the project and began excavating through the trash. Pucllana is one of the most important archaeological sites in Lima today, and Flores is the director of the museum.

Pucllana, apart from being a very important discovery, was also circumscribed of the interesting story of the 'abandoned' excavation turned city dump that proved to hide a remarkable find. Many other archaeological sites are connected to equally, if not more, interesting stories that would enthral readers, listeners, or viewers in a fictional narrative. Lourdes gave me two very important examples of contemporary Peruvian archaeology that not only has rewritten history, but also changed the conditions between Peruvian and foreign archaeologists. These are the stories of Caral and Señor de Sipán, in a condensed manner mostly based on my notes from my talks with Lourdes.

Caral – the first known civilization in the Americas?

Great dunes in the arid desert of the Supé Valley well kept a secret for nearly two millennia. The site had been on archaeologists' radar since the 1940's, yet no one had known what to make of it since the findings showed no what was considered telltale signs of civilization. That is, until the elaborate and tedious work of Peruvian archaeologist Ruth Shady begun in 1994 uncovered huge pyramids hidden under sandy hills. The monumental architecture told the story of a city-state, undoubtedly ancient since there is no evidence that its citizens had discovered pottery and metallurgy. Just how old the abandoned settlement is became apparent when a radio carbon sample dated it as far back as 2600 B.C. The civilization in the Supé Valley, named Caral by Dr. Shady, is the oldest known civilization in the Americas and one of six sites where civilization originated in the ancient world. The discovery made the rewriting of human history a neces-

⁶²INC July 7, 2009.

sity, but the sensational find became somewhat overshadowed by an internationally covered strife of authorship.

When Ruth Shady had trouble gaining funding for the important radio carbon dating – mostly due to the fact that there is little governmental support for archaeology in Peru – the two U.S. American archaeologists Jonathan Haas and Winifred Creamer – whom had recently become interested in Shady's work – offered to take the sample to the United States. The result of the radio carbon dating was, as we know, sensational. A story in the highly esteemed scientific journal *Science* was co-authored by Shady, Haas and Creamer in 2001, placing Shady as the senior author. All was fine until a *Science* press release went out to international press extensively quoting Haas and Creamer, while Shady was treated as a mere supportive player. Shady retaliated by writing a public letter

Señor de Sipán – looters pointed the way to a whole Kingdom

Sipán is a region in northern coastal Peru that was the centre for the Moche culture; which predated the Incas with around a thousand years. Lourdes told me about the exciting circumstances that surrounded the discovery of Señor de Sipán in 1987: looters fought because they had found something close to Sipán. There was a shot. The police came and saw that there was gold and called the responsible Peruvian archaeologist; Walter Alva. The area had not yet been subject to a scientific investigation and Alva's excavation found a completely intact tomb, quite remarkable since the area was crowded with looters and illegal diggings. After further excavation a whole kingdom was revealed. Lourdes tells me that it was an amazing to find such a rich place, many, many years older than the Incas. People from the region realized that their identity was amazing and that they should honour their heritage instead of “mining” the sites for gold. The discovery produced new projects, new theories, and methods of interpretation in northern Peruvian archaeology. It boosted the value of the north, attracted tourism and awoke an understanding that Peru was much more than the former Incan empire, which was a justification for people that did not live close to Cuzco. And since Sipán was a very important Peruvian discovery the relation between North American and Peruvian archaeologists became more equal.

Change?

At the end of the final talk I insensitively pushed the subject of the inequality between Peruvian and North American scholars a bit too much. Lourdes responded with some very memorable words. She told me that people here do what they like, they aren't really thinking about their relationship with North American scholars and so on. They just want to work. They are very passionate about their work. And I wrote in my notes that “maybe it's better to make a research about how there are different ways of working instead of being critical about it. It's not like they don't care, but how can they change? It's very hard to change, it's a long process. It is what it is.” Henceforth I wrote: “The talks I have had with Lourdes these last two days have been a complete eye-opener for me. It has become so visible how ill-prepared I have been. In a more scientific setting

you would in no way base your report on loose, slightly informal historical retellings, but I am inclined to believe most of what she has told me about the situation of native people, that I have been interpreting from an American experience of their native community. Peru's situation is different, and they do not have the same relationship to their ancestors.”

I never did finish the rewriting of the proposal that I was going to present to the director of the Museum. Mercedes and Lourdes was busy with work. I sulked in my room for many days, not wanting to go outside because of all the uncomfortable attention I got as a lone 'gringa'. I met an artist from the United States that was here on a Fulbright fellowship, we discussed the irony of being exotic in an exotic country. I took Spanish lessons for two weeks to get out and meet people. I asked Mercedes if she knew an excavation I could visit, but by then it was too late, and so I went on a trip to the southern tourist sites; Nasca, Arequipa, Puno, and Cusco, before I left for Sweden.

THE CONFESSION OF A PARACHUTE ARTIST

The most interesting and unavoidable effect of this field study is that I found myself uncomfortable in the sticky net of representation. I knew nothing about the archaeological world in Peru. Yes, I had read numerous texts, but still; nothing. I cherished and loathed my hypotheses; the adrenaline burst when I found something that indicated their "rightness," I hid in my bed when reality became too complex. The thing I regret not pushing for enough was to visit an archaeological excavation where I could have encountered people from all layers of power relations. The field study lacks this very important component; I met no one from descendant communities. Their account is the missing piece in the puzzle; probably the most important piece. Without it, it was just an exercise in claustrophobia where the only people permitted to speak are us academics while non-academics remain our silent constant object. This report is incomplete and I take full responsibility, because everything written here is filtered through my prejudices, ignorance and knowledge, misconceptions, courage and cowardice, and everything else that myself carries. Take the information for what it is; subjective visions of occurrences of subjective visions. Now, you are the interpreter.

The field study was permeated with hopelessness hidden by my enthusiasm for Peruvian archaeology. There is a hopelessness in interpreting a phenomena that you don't belong to; you can try to learn its codes, spend time absorbing it, live it, and think that you understand it, but you won't. This is where the only strength in my field study lies. All I knew about anthropology and Peru was filtered through popular media. It is very easy to make judgements in the first dimension, but reality is so much more complex. If you pull a string, you find that it's attached to a giant bundle. But people do this all the time; pick a string and interpret it, maybe contextualize it with other strings. If we included all strings; parallel, knotted, deviant, new, ancient, and tangent, etc. we would become confused with all the conflicting or repetitive – if slightly different, information. It's important to conceive a concept that someone later can build upon, deconstruct or demolish. Having that said; I wish that this report may provide a starting point for investigating the power relations in Peruvian archaeology with the hope for more equality.

*Gabriella Jonsson
December 23, 2009*

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