

Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to announce the publication of

Their Way of Writing: Scripts, Signs, and Pictographies in Pre-Columbian America

Elizabeth Hill Boone and Gary Urton, editors

Writing and recording are key cultural activities that allow humans to communicate across time and space. Whereas Old World writing evolved into the alphabetic system that is now employed around the world, the indigenous peoples in the Americas autonomously developed alternative systems that conveyed knowledge in a tangible medium. New World systems range from the hieroglyphic script of the Maya, to the figural and iconic pictographies of the Aztecs, Mixtecs, and Zapotecs in Mexico and of the Moche in Peru, and to the abstract knotted khipus of the Andes. Like Old World writing, these systems represented a cultural category that was fundamental to the workings of their societies, one that was heavily impregnated with cultural value. The fifteen contributors to *Their Way of Writing: Scripts, Signs, and Pictographies in Pre-Columbian America* consider substantive and theoretical issues concerning writing and signing systems in the ancient Americas. They present the latest thinking about these graphic and tactile systems of communication; their variety of perspectives and their advances in decipherment and understanding constitute a major contribution not only to our understanding of Pre-Columbian and indigenous American cultures but also to our comparative and global understanding of writing and literacy.

Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Symposia and Colloquia
September 2011, hardcover, \$65.00
ISBN 978-0-88402-368-5

Collecting the Pre-Columbian Past

Elizabeth Hill Boone, editor

The history of Pre-Columbian collecting is a social and aesthetic history, a history of ideas, a history of people and organizations, and a history of objects. This richly illustrated volume examines these histories by considering the collection and display of Pre-Columbian objects in Europe, Latin America, and the United States. Some of the thirteen essays locate the collecting process within its broader cultural setting in order to explain how and why such collections were formed, while others consider how collections have served as documents of culture (within the

disciplines of archaeology and anthropology) and as objects of fine art or aesthetic statements (within the art and art historical worlds). Nearly all contemplate how such collections have been used as active signifiers of political, economic, and cultural power. The thirteen essays were originally presented at a symposium commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Pre-Columbian Collection at Dumbarton Oaks; they continue to be groundbreaking contributions to the histories of collecting and Pre-Columbian art.

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Tombs for the Living: Andean Mortuary Practices

Tom D. Dillehay, editor

In the Andes, a long history of research on burial records and burial context exists for the purpose of reconstructing cultural affiliation, chronology, socioeconomic status, grave content, and human body treatment. Less attention is paid to the larger question of how mortuary practices functioned in different cultures. *Tombs for the Living: Andean Mortuary Practices* (which was originally released in 1995) examines this broader issue by looking at the mortuary practices that created a connection between the living and the dead, the role of wealth and ancestors in cosmological schemes, the location, construction, and sociopolitical implications of tombs and cemeteries, and the art and iconography of death. By examining rich sets of archaeological, ethnographic, and ethnohistoric data, the thirteen essays continue to enrich our understanding of the context and meaning of the mortuary traditions in the Andes.

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