

ARCH/BIOANTH LUNCH TALK

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2019, 12:00PM
SOC SCI 1, 261

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SPIRITS IN PRODUCTION: AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF AFRO-PERU AND THE JESUIT VINEYARDS OF NASCA

In Peru, the legacies of the colonial experience have rendered the Afro-descendant reality invisible and marginal to national identity and social equity. Research by Haciendas of Nasca Archaeological Project (PAHN), the first archaeological project focused on Afro-Peruvian material culture, aims to understand the lived experience of enslaved people on Jesuit haciendas (estates) during the 17th and 18th centuries. While the quotidian experience of time, family, and work was mediated by spiritual discipline, enslaved subjects also engaged in their own strategies of individual and cultural expression.

During their tenure in the valley, from 1619 until the Jesuit expulsion by the Crown in 1767, Jesuit administrators annexed new lands and properties, in the process acquiring new resources, fields, and importantly water rights. While PAHN's previous excavations were focused on the domestic and productive nuclei of the two main Jesuit haciendas of the valley, recent excavations (July 2018) at the Hacienda La Ventilla, an 18th-century annex of San Joseph, focused on its distillery complex, shedding light on slave-produced alcohol. Investigations at this site build on historical documentation and earlier drone and walkover surveys by specifically exploring enslaved daily life and production away from the administrative center of the hacienda's cores.

Dr. Brendan Weaver is a postdoctoral scholar at the Stanford Archaeology Center. He specializes in the archaeology and historical anthropology of labor, slavery, and the African diaspora of Latin America, and he directs the Haciendas of Nasca Archaeological Project.

