chapter, which starts with an Andean narrative about the origins of the Inka recorded in the early 1970s. While some scholars would prefer to deconstruct such an account and explain it in the light of recent events in indigenous history, Dean claims they are continuations of Inka ways of thinking, and as such should be taken seriously. She thus proceeds to an analysis of the relationship of the Inka with the natural and built environments departing from elements in that account.

The second half of the book is certainly the most stimulating. The third chapter focuses on how the Inka culture of stone was deeply associated with Inka imperialism – or how their culture of stone symbolically ‘transformed Andean space into Inka territory’ (105). By placing outcrops and walls of nibbled stone in strategic points of the landscape, the Inka empire signaled its presence and its power over that particular area. The analysis of how and where integrated outcrops and nibbled walls were constructed is particularly interesting, for the author sensibly focuses on the subtleties of strategic choices such as leaving protuberances in nibbled walls as ‘reminders of the labor inscribed in them’ (117).

The attention drawn to Inka labor is one of the most important features of this book, and it is presented in full force in the last chapter, which deals with two different historical settings: the immediate post-conquest destruction of Inka temples and modern-day reconstruction of the pre-Hispanic Inka world. As for the first moment, Dean shows that while the destruction of the temple of Saqsaywaman became a symbol of conquest for the Spanish Crown, for the Andeans this same event materially represented their own choice of converting to Christianity. When dealing with modern-day Peru, the author makes a very strong point by denouncing contemporary Andean tourist scene, its quest for authenticity, and the mystification that surrounds Andean achievements. Instead of valorizing Inka culture and history, these two phenomena actually result in ‘a separation of the Inka from the products of their labor’ (159).

Although the last chapter is surely the most engaging one, the strength of this book lies in the combination of the four chapters. Their finely detailed explanations and descriptions fit each other to form a coherent whole – much like Inka masonry itself. This book will appeal to archaeologists, anthropologists and art historians, as well as to those interested in South American indigenous cultures.

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In The Allure of Labor, Paulo Drinot argues that labor became fundamental to both the formation and functioning of the state in early
twentieth-century Peru. The nation’s progressive elite perceived two severe challenges to its plan to industrialize, which it believed was the path to modernity. First, in order to industrialize, factories would need workers, many of whom, the elite feared, followed subversive ideologies or sought to create social unrest. The second challenge came from the workers as well: the vast majority of those seeking work were indigenous migrants from the highlands. The white Peruvian elite imagined modernity to be many things (i.e., hygienic, coastal, and literate), but definitely it would not be indigenous. Drinot argues that by incorporating and controlling labor, the state eliminated racial barriers by effectively “de-Indianizing” workers, thereby making them modern, urban “agents of progress.” Labor became the answer to both the Indian and modernity questions, and as such became a central feature of state formation. The ability of labor to resolve the elite’s concerns is what Drinot calls “the allure of labor.”

Given the importance of labor to the state’s modernizing project, Drinot proposes that Peru became a “labor state,” mutually constituted by the state and the working class. The first three chapters look at the establishment of the labor state, focusing on the development of a bureaucratic and legislative system for labor. The actions of the state towards labor, like the repression of the labor movement, and the workers’ acceptance or rejection of these actions contributed to the strengthening of the labor state by reiterating the importance of labor as an agent of progress and as a tool to deracinate. Chapter one looks at racial and gendered aspects of labor relations, focusing on how elite policymakers used industrial work and enacted legislation aimed at redeeming the ‘Indians’ by transforming them into mestizo coastal dwellers, in an approximation of the elite’s idealized image of a modern Peruvian. The second chapter surveys the growth of the Sección de Trabajo within the Development (Fomento) Ministry. Created by initiative of the state and with the participation of labor, the Sección mediated labor disputes and collectively bargained, effectively institutionalizing the labor state by excluding the claims of the indigenous from labor disputes. The newly created Sección de Asuntos Indígenas, also a part of the Development Ministry, considered indigenous claims. The Ministry’s actions emphasized the idea of “labor as an agent of progress whose contribution to progress would result from its protection and improvement” (81). In chapter three, Drinot examines labor relations, especially during the dictatorship of Augusto B. Leguía (1919–1930), when the state used (violent) repression to strengthen the labor state by debilitating unions only to later incorporate them into the labor state. The final three chapters study a broad spectrum of state-provided workers’ benefits, including the creation of worker housing projects (barrios obreros), popular restaurants, and hospitals. By providing workers with access to low-cost housing, food, and health care, the state was able to incorporate workers, while domest icating and controlling the labor movement and its emerging challenge to party politics. Drinot argues that, while ostensibly populist initiatives, these policies also operated as social laboratories for providing the values
and material conditions to create the model workers (i.e., not indigenous) that would help usher in modern Peru (192).

Drinot’s history is impressively detailed and complex, based on a close reading of archival sources, government publications, and Peru’s labor history, a nearly dormant field this book boldly reinvigorates. He pays close attention to how issues of gender and class influenced the nation’s racially biased history. This focus does not come without some hiccups: it is not made clear whom precisely the elite or the state considered an Indian, undeniably a contentious issue throughout Peruvian history. Likewise, Drinot focuses almost exclusively on Peru’s indigenous population, with the exception of a fascinating discussion of the omnipresent chifas (inexpensive Chinese food restaurants that competed with the state’s popular restaurants) in Chapter 5. Peru’s significant populations of people from Asian (primarily Chinese and Japanese immigrants) and African (primarily the descendants of former slaves) ancestry do not receive significant coverage. Greater consideration of these other minority groups might have provided a more complete vision of the state’s attempts to deracinate the working class in order to create a modern Peru. Aside from these minor critiques, The Allure of Labor is an extremely important book that should be read by anyone interested in labor history and the history of populism in the Americas, as well as the social and cultural history of Peru.

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The Dragon in the Room provides an expansive analysis of the impact that China’s economic ascent is having on Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and its implications for the future. The authors investigate the problem from several angles, focusing attention on three particular areas: (1) China’s bilateral economic relations with LAC, (2) the effects of China’s economic rise for LAC export markets, and (3) differing approaches to development adopted by China and LAC countries. Gallagher and Porzecanski conclude that China’s rise has both positive and negative implications for LAC countries. On the positive side, Chinese demand for LAC-produced goods is providing a boost for LAC export markets, as are the recent increases in commodity prices, which may be partly attributable to the increase in Chinese demand. On the negative side, Chinese exports are outcompeting LAC export markets across sectors and as such constitute a serious threat to LAC exporters now and in the future; moreover, Latin America and the Caribbean is becoming gradually more dependent