alignments that were also of likely importance. In this presentation solstice alignments are identified for Angkor Wat, Bakong, Phnom Bakheng, Phnom Bok, Phnom Krom, East Mebon, Pre Rup, Banteay Srei, Ta Keo, Baphuon, Preah Khan, and Bayon. Subsequent to ground and aerial reconnaissance, archaeoastronomic assessments were made of Angkor Wat and nearby temples using Google Earth satellite imagery. More than 70 solstice alignments were identified including 21 solstice alignments at Angkor Wat, alone. Among the lines of evidence suggesting that these alignments were intentional are their continued incorporation into temple designs even as architectural styles changed over the centuries, as well as iconographic details found in bas reliefs at Angkor Wat. Together, these and other lines of evidence suggest that it was important for Angkor temples to be connected to the sun. As I will demonstrate, solstice alignments defined the physical parameters of the Angkor cosmos. Moreover, if, as endorsed here, Angkor temples were microcosmic models of the cosmos, then arguably, solstice alignments connected the temples to the cyclic movement of the cosmos. The findings reported here contribute to our understanding Angkor Wat. In this, we are reminded that when assessing ancient sites, we need to consider relationships to earth, water, and sky. In particular, archaeoastronomic assessments help us understand how people relate to the cosmos through their built structures. Anything less and we risk presenting a skewed picture of the sites we study and the people who once lived there.

THE MAKING OF AN IMPERIAL AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN THE VALLEY OF BELÉN

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Presentation Format: Oral

Agricultural planning is not limited to works of terracing, land allotment and hydraulic engineering. As a collective social practice, agriculture also requires the formalization of a corporate coordination system, based on devices such as calendars and ceremonies, which relate the collective of farmers with the space-time of agricultural practice in a given socio-economic and political context.

We present an unusual architectural structure located in the Altos de Arica (south-central Andes), whose circular shape and combination of windows and niches echo the characteristics of a special Inca building of Cuzco’s main square: the sun-huasi. By means of a 3D multiscale modelling-based simulation, we demonstrate the landscape and astronomical potential of this architecture.

The results are consistent with ethno-historical information about the Inca agricultural calendar and related astronomical observation practices. Taking into account the local archaeological context, we suggest that this special architecture constituted a central stage of an imperial built environment related to the political economy of maize production.

CULTURAL ASTRONOMY, SKYSCAPE AND ONTOLOGY IN NEOLITHIC IRELAND

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Presentation Format: Oral

The Neolithic passage tomb tradition in Ireland exhibits distinctive typological characteristics - notably in terms of landscape siting, a developed architecture, megalithic art and a characteristic material culture. Culturally, this sets them apart from the other tomb traditions on the island. Although the central role of individual passage tombs was for the placement of mortuary deposits, and grave goods in some cases, archaeologists now advise that the term ‘complex’ rather than ‘cemetery’ be used to describe tombs aggregated in dense or dispersed clusters. This approach recognises the likely ceremonial role and extended meaning for all such monuments in the lives and belief systems of the societies who erected them. In that context, this paper further considers the pronounced and striking preference for siting most Irish passage tombs on locally elevated ground, and on the summits of prominent hills and mountains. Data analysis suggests an intent to achieve visibility, dominance and power by exploiting topographic height in an elevation and symbolic sense. Such site selection enforces collective community ascent and descent through tiered cosmic levels as part of the religious ritual of death, burial and the journey of the spirit into the otherworld. If height was an important element of tomb ontology, the methodologies and perspectives of cultural astronomy are a potentially powerful contributory tool to explore a range of relevant research questions. For example, is there linkage between the liminality of the horizon visible from tombs and observable solar rising or setting phenomena occurring at seasonally important times? Does the elevated siting of tombs indicate a preference for visibility of the distant horizon sector delimited by the northern solstitial limits of the rising and setting sun? Was the northern dark sky and skyscale perceived as a portal to an otherworld in the journey of the dead?

THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE CALENDAR POT OF THE LATE COPPER AGE VUČEDOL CULTURE

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Presentation Format: Oral

The most characteristic and famous artefact of the Vučedol culture is the calendar pot found at the Croatian town Vinkovci. Although the vessel is incomplete, the structure of its ornamentation can be well observed. The surface is divided into four parallel horizontal zones which are also broken down into panels by vertical double lines. Every other panel contains a motif/symbol pe-