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When Alexander von Humboldt returned to Paris in 1804 from his five year South American expedition he was lionized by society and academia alike. Two important serendipitous factors contributed to the success of Humboldt's voyage and the publications that followed. A visit to the Spanish court resulted in the explorer's having been granted permission to travel to all of the Spanish colonies in the Americas, especially significant as no French expeditions had taken place in the interior of South America since La Condamine in 1735. With this consent, Humboldt was able to realize his belief that in order to "discover the direction of the chains of mountains, and their geological constitution, the climate of each zone, and its influence on the forms and the habits of organized beings" (PN I, p. vii), he could expand his voyage from previous maritime voyages along coastlines and could travel to the interior of the regions, thus greatly enlarging the known information about the Americas.

The alluringly exotic illustrated volume of his journey, *Vues des Cordillères*, was published as a folio edition in France in 1810; subsequently it was published in other languages and in more affordable formats (fig. 26-1). This, and the publication between 1814 and 1829 of *Personal Narrative of a Journey to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent*, further enhanced Humboldt's reputation as a scientist/explorer. These publications helped fuel the quest for knowledge and exploration of the New World that was still largely undocumented, especially in terms of scientific data. As Mary Louise Pratt has commented, "Humboldt experimented with nonspecialized forms of writing in which he sought to mitigate the dullness of scientific detail by meshing it with the aesthetic, while still seeking to preserve the authority of science over the 'merely personal'" (Pratt, 590) (fig. 26-2).

FIGURE 26-1. Frontispiece, *Vues des Cordillères*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810

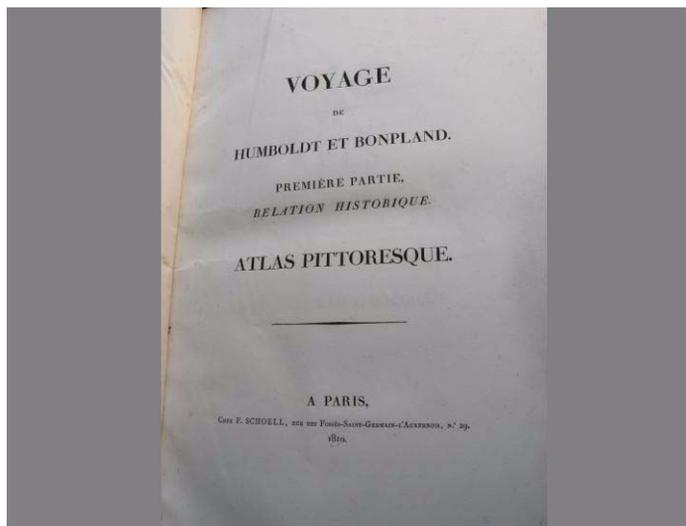
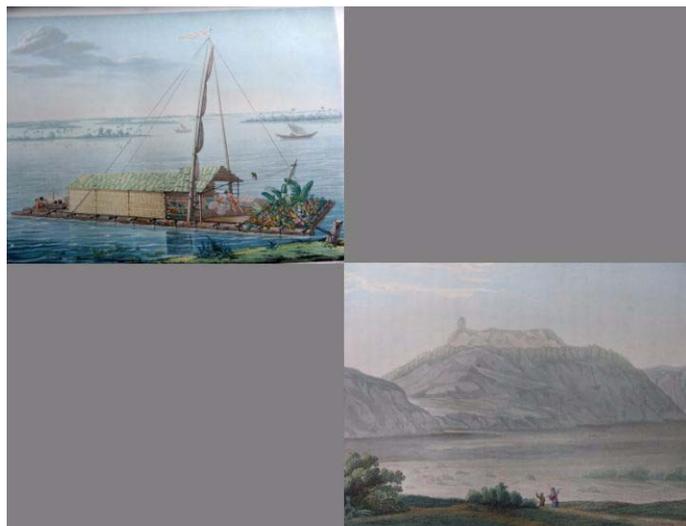


FIGURE 26-2. Two illustrations from *Vues des Cordillères*, Hill in the Puebla Valley, Mexico, Plate 34 and Boat on the Guayaquil River, Plate 63



Humboldt did not travel to Bolivia, but in *Vues des Cordillères* he wrote of the pre-Columbian site of Tiwanaku on the altiplano near the shores of Lake Titicaca (fig. 26-3). Although Humboldt only briefly mentioned Tiwan-

aku, he invested the site with a mysterious conception as the cradle of an ancient civilization, referring to its characterization established in the 16th century by Cieza de Leon (fig. 26-4). Modern scholarship has substantiated that Tiwanaku, which flourished between 500-1000, was one of the seminal pre-Columbian cultures. It is virtually unique in the Andes for having examples of freestanding sculpture. Tiwanaku, like much of the architecture of the Americas, is not at first glance spectacular (fig. 26-5). Humboldt recognized this phenomena, but also the importance of New World monuments when he explained in the *Vues* (fig. 26-6), and I quote: “American architecture, we cannot too often repeat, can cause no astonishment, either by the magnitude of its works, or the elegance of their form, but it is highly interesting, as it throws light on the history of the primitive civilization of the inhabitants of the mountains of the new continent” (Humboldt, 1810-[1813], 199).

FIGURE 26-3. Peruvian Monument at Canar, Plate 17, *Vues des Cordillères*



FIGURE 26-4. Inca-Chungana, Plate 19, *Vues des Cordillères*

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FIGURE 26-5. Ponce Monolith and Gateway of the Sun, Tiwanaku

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FIGURE 26-6. Kalassaya wall, Tiwanaku

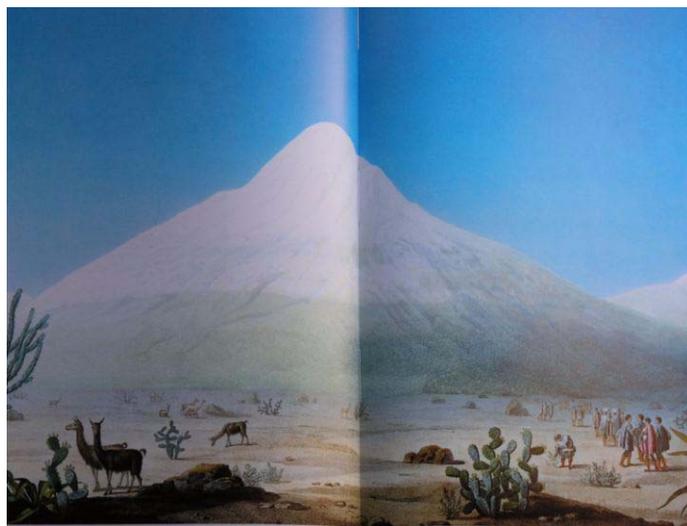


Since *Vues des Cordillères* was first published in France and Humboldt lived in Paris from 1804-1827, it was not surprising that his voyage was a catalyst for subsequent French exploration and cataloging of the New World (fig. 26-7). This paper will explore the Humboldtian legacy as it relates to three Frenchmen who visited Tiwanaku over the next century: Alcide d'Orbigny who was in Bolivia from 1826-1834, Léonce Angrand who was there in 1848, and Georges Courty, who was there in 1903. One of Humboldt's priorities was "the great problem of the physical description of the globe." In the early 19th century, the way in which cultures of the New World were approached changed from Humboldt's general paradigm of travel oriented, scientific literature to paradigms reflecting the more specialized disciplines of ethnology, anthropology and archaeology. Each of these traveler's approaches to the site of Tiwanaku will be analyzed in terms of their changing perspectives, the development of new specialized disciplines, and the evolution of more pronounced nationalist, colonial responses.

A new era of exploration became possible for the French through an alliance with Spain via the Bourbon connection of Carlos IV who reigned from 1788-1808. In tandem with a scientific priority to order the diversity of the populations of the world, the new freedom of access made travel to the Americas desirable. In 1825, the administration of the French Museum of Natural History deemed Peru and Chile the top priorities on their list of places warranting investigation (Rivale, 363). In 1826, Le Baron de Ferussac announced the formation of the French Musée du Trocadero that was

“intended to give shelter to the various monuments of the skills of the savage (savages) or the semi-civilized, monuments that become more rare every day...” (Hamy, 145). A core collection was hastily assembled at the Trocadero, including New World material from the explorations of d’Orbigny and Angrand. Whereas the motives for Humboldt’s journey were primarily scientific, the rush to create an encyclopedic museum that took place in the following decades was, in part, the result of the prevailing desire to preserve Old World dominance by amassing an accurate inventory of the world from which to garner knowledge of all the disparate, unindustrialized races (Condominas 187; Riviale, 6 & 7). Amassing this inventory was an important motive for all three expeditions.

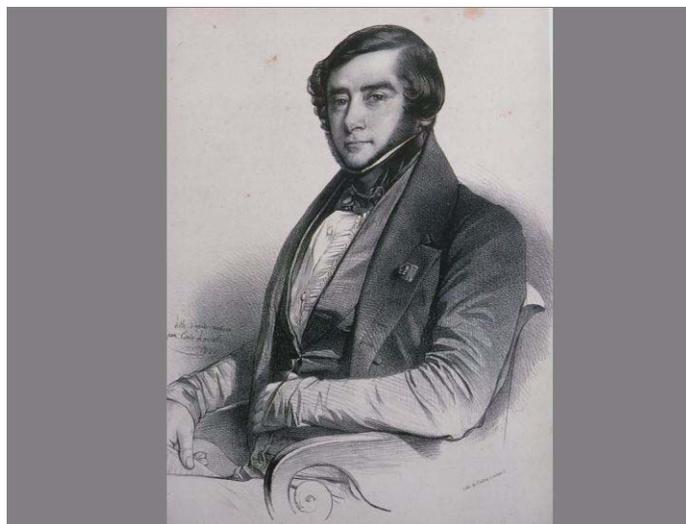
FIGURE 26-7. Mt. Chimborazo, Plate 25, *Vues des Cordillères*



Based on a study he had made of mollusks, Alcide d’Orbigny (fig. 26-8) was chosen in 1825 at the age of 24 by the administration of the Natural History Museum to lead a scientific expedition to the New World. During the ensuing year which d’Orbigny used to prepare for the voyage, he visited Humboldt who sent him off with introductions and one of his coveted barometers. In the year of d’Orbigny’s departure, the Natural History Museum of Paris published the first edition of a handbook for travelers. This publication mandated the collection of craniums, in order to classify all the human types of the world. At that time, the only cranial examples from the New World in France were those donated by Alexander von Humboldt after his voyage. D’Orbigny’s initial objective was to collect cranial types, but he found it dif-

difficult to locate pristine examples because most of the graves he visited had already been robbed of their contents.

FIGURE 26-8. Portrait of Alcide d'Orbigny

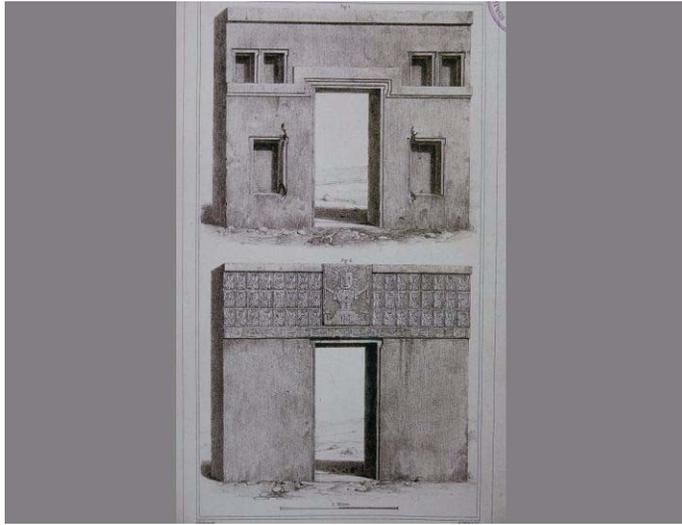


In 1833, towards the end of his extensive South American voyage (fig. 26-9), d'Orbigny went to Tiwanaku and produced drawings of the monuments and the iconography carved on them that became, for many years, the most important references to the site. D'Orbigny was the first to speculate on the symbolism of the Gateway of the Sun, the major monument at Tiwanaku, relating the central figure to a religious or political genesis of power. After his return to France, d'Orbigny worked from 1835 to 1847 on publishing *Voyage dans l'Amérique meridionale*, an 11 volume record of his trip. He deemed Tiwanaku the cradle of Andean civilization, recognizing as Humboldt had before him, the antiquity of the site (fig. 26-10)(d'Orbigny, [2000], 335).

Returning to France with 400 previously unknown species, d'Orbigny was awarded numerous medals and was appointed to the first chair of paleontology at the Museum of Natural History; however, seven attempts to become a member of the revered Scientific Academy were unsuccessful (Boone, 391). Of the three voyages to be discussed in this paper, Alcide d'Orbigny's was the most similar to Humboldt's in terms of its multi-faceted elements combining science, nature, and commentary (figs. 26-11, 26-12, 26-13). Unfortunately, d'Orbigny never attained the renown of his predecessor, most likely because of less rigorous scholarship, a less entrepreneurial nature, and

the changing mores of the scientific community. The younger scientist had been so inspired by his German mentor that in 1839 he dedicated his book, “l’Homme Americain” to Humboldt, citing him as “the genius that Europe has proclaimed the example and model of a ‘philosopher/voyager’” (d’Orbigny, 1836, dedication page).

FIGURE 26-9. Drawing of the Gateway of the Sun, Alcide d’Orbigny



Léonce Angrand was sent to Peru in 1848 for slightly more than one year as the vice-consul in charge of commercial relations between France and Peru (fig. 26-14). The internal discord in Bolivia at that time negatively impacted commerce and gave Angrand an opportunity to satisfy his interest in recording ancient monuments. Although his upbringing was similar to Humboldt’s, having come from a well to do family and traveled at a young age, he lacked Humboldt’s extensive education in the sciences. The most likely post chronicle references about Tiwanaku he would have read before embarking were those by Humboldt and d’Orbigny (fig. 26-15).

Angrand’s reputation rests largely upon the many objects he transported to France that become the basis of the new Musée Trocadero, later the Musée de l’Homme and now to be the Musée du Quai Branly (fig. 26-16). As Elizabeth Williams has suggested, from the 19th century on the French saw themselves as “cultural arbiters of universal history” (Williams, 127), justifying their relentless acquisition of objects.

FIGURE 26-10. Head of a Colossal Statue and Details from the Gateway of the Sun, Alcide d'Orbigny

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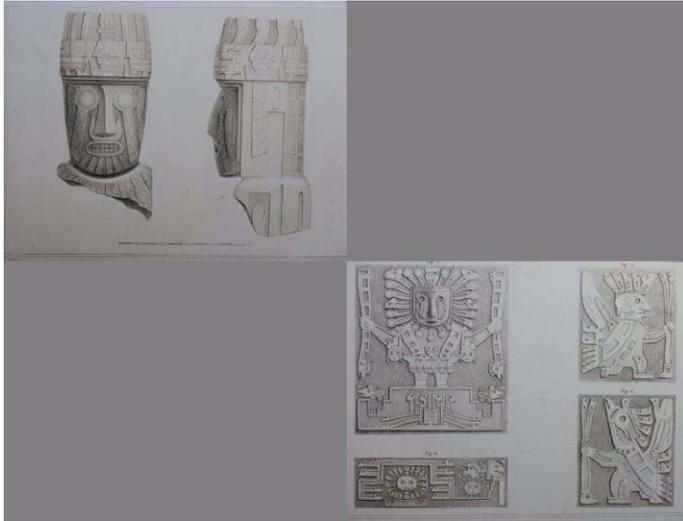


FIGURE 26-11. Men in a reed boat, Alcide d'Orbigny

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FIGURE 26-12. Aymara Indians, La Paz, Alcide d'Orbigny

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FIGURE 26-13. left: Michoacan dolls, from *Vues des Cordillères* (detail); right: Indians from the Province of Chiquitos, Alcide d'Orbigny (detail)

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FIGURE 26-14. Gateway of the Sun, Tiwanaku by Léonce Angrand

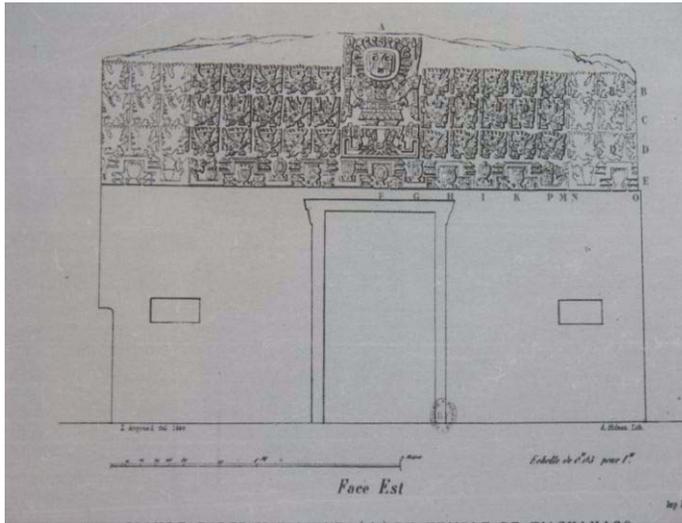


FIGURE 26-15. Tiwanaku, December 26, 1848 by Léonce Angrand

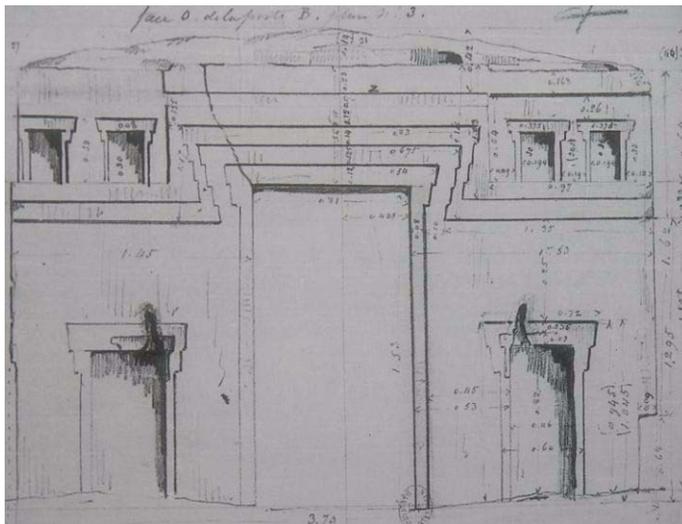
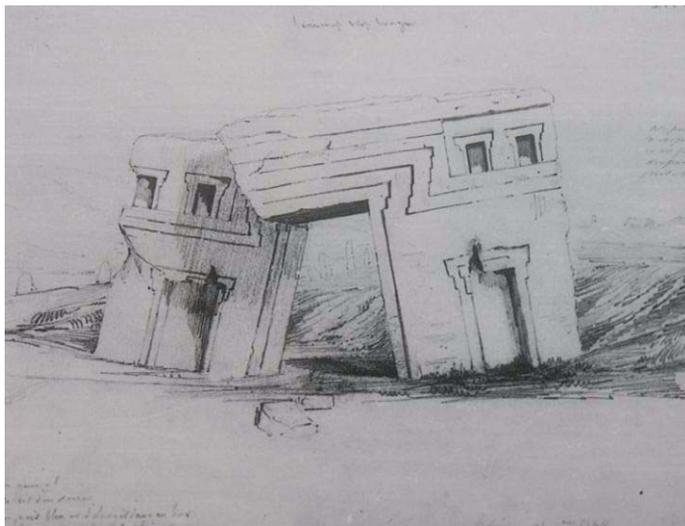


FIGURE 26-16. Rear view of the Gateway of the Sun, Léonce Angrand

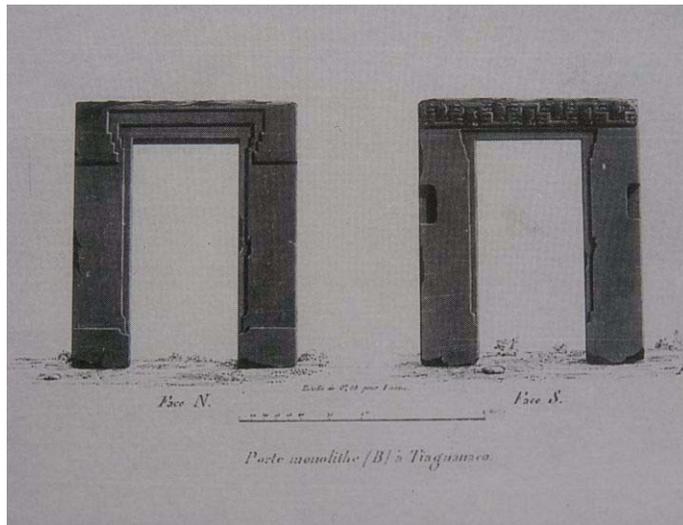


Rendered in a style of photographic precision far superior to d'Orbigny's rather inaccurate examples, Angrand's drawings were unfortunately not widely published. Today these drawings and Angrand's papers reside in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris and are valuable records of the site. Angrand viewed the New World from a perspective that was more anthropological than that of his two predecessors. One might even say Angrand was captivated by anthropology as many of his drawings are of indigenous people performing every day chores or engaged in activities such as dancing (figs. 26-18, 26-19). A romantic subjectivity pervades Angrand's anthropological work, his was an aesthetic intertwined with the human subject, an approach that differed from the way Humboldt represented native peoples (fig. 26-20).

The *Mission Scientifique Française à Tiahuanaco* was organized by the French government in 1903 (fig. 26-21). It is certainly safe to assume that before embarking, the members involved would have been aware of Humboldt, especially since he transported artifacts to France that were housed in institutions in Paris. The mission is often referred to by the name of its sponsor, Le Comte Georges de Créqui-Montfort, who spent only five days in Tiwanaku. Because the principal archaeologist of the mission, Adrien de Mortillet, returned shortly thereafter to France due to ill health, George Courty volunteered to finish the mission's work. Courty stayed three months, after which his return to France was also precipitated by ill health. Mortillet's absence from the excavations was disastrous. Courty did not have any trained assistants, and he almost certainly had a surreptitious plan to amass artifacts

that would then be shipped to France to further glorify its hegemony. The Sintich brothers, local photographers working in La Paz, were engaged to formally record the results and these photographic images are in many ways the most complete records extant of the excavations (fig. 26-22). One of only two known copies, the album from which these images were taken is presently in the collection of the Art Reference Library of The Brooklyn Museum of Art and has recently become accessible on the Internet.

FIGURE 26-17. Monolithic gateway at Tiwanaku, Léonce Angrand



Créqui-Montfort refers to Courty's "researches," a hint as to how the work was perceived (Créqui-Montfort, 532) (fig. 26-23). In accordance with the developments of formalized disciplines of anthropology and archaeology, the Count de Créqui-Montfort described the Mission as a "study of men of the High-Plateaus, of their languages and their environment both past and present"; the scant published reports of the expedition deal with these themes. In a review of an exhibition of the material taken to France by the French Mission, the author Leon Lejeal refers to the grand success of the exhibition and to the brilliant debut of Courty in his new research. He mentions Courty's reaction to his geological background which mutated into an archaeological bent, "Creusez et vous trouverez!" or "Excavate and you will discover!" (Lejeal, 325), no doubt an excellent assessment of the objective of the expedition. In contrast to Lejeal's glowing assessment of the mission, modern scholars have described it with such words as "destructive", "acquis-

itive” (Kolata 1993, 149), or “deplorable” and “devastating” (Ponce Sangui-nés 1995, 112).

FIGURE 26-18. left: Alcaldes at the Fiesta of the Conception, Léonce Angrand; right: detail from the Gateway of the Sun, Léonce Angrand

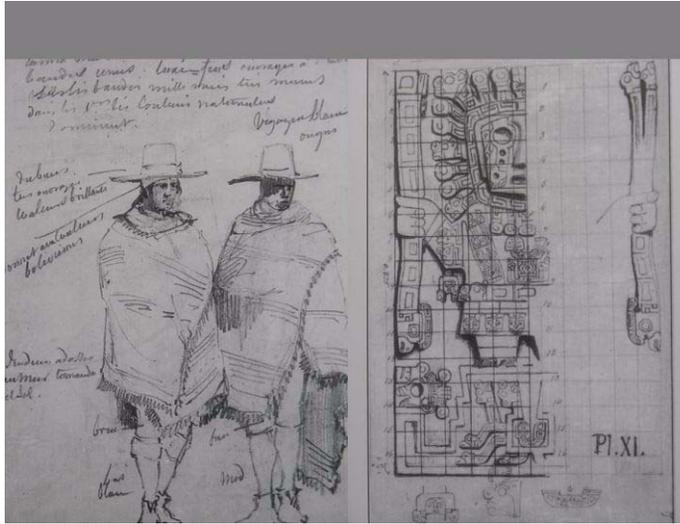


FIGURE 26-19. Scenes of local women, Léonce Angrand



FIGURE 26-20. Balsa boat, Léonce Angrand

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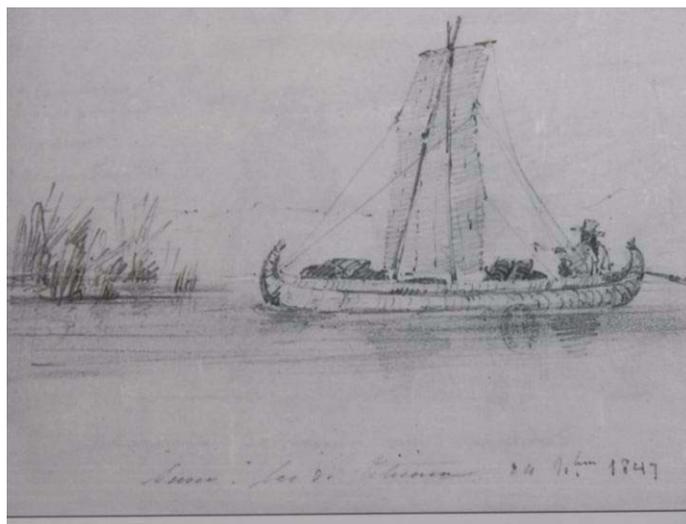


FIGURE 26-21. Members of the French Scientific Mission, 1903

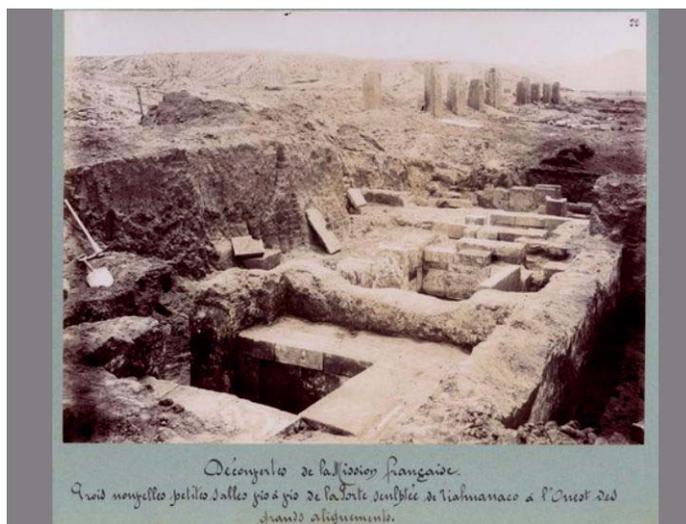
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FIGURE 26-22. left: Statue discovered by the French Mission; right: Grand staircase, Tiwanaku



FIGURE 26-23. Discoveries of the French Mission, three small rooms to the west of the “grands alignements”



Similar destruction from earlier excavations in the New World had argued compellingly for the establishment of more stringent parameters governing

archaeological access (fig. 26-24). In response, new methodologies of guardianship of patrimony were established by the host countries and are still in effect today. During the second half of the 19th century, Mexico and Peru passed legislation protecting their patrimony from export (Riviale, 95). This legislation was in clear conflict with the French Mission of 1903 that set off with a goal of recording the origins of Tiwanakan civilization in conjunction with a certain competitive expectation that the already large French collections of New World material would be augmented by carrying on the tradition of grand collecting of ethnographic specimens (Hamy, 285).

FIGURE 26-24. Rear view of the Gateway of the Sun, the French Mission



The French Scientific Mission of 1903 has to be judged a failure (fig. 26-25). Nonetheless, its impact on future expeditions and attitudes of inhabitants in countries in which expeditions were sponsored and took place was profound. When Courty attempted to leave Bolivia nefariously with excavated objects and ship them to France via Antofagasta in Chile, The Geographic Society of La Paz became aware of his plan and demanded that all the crates be returned to La Paz where the material was divided under the auspices of officials from both France and Bolivia (Ponce Sanguinés, 115). Shortly after Courty's return to Paris, the French Government handed down an official reprimand to Courty for his surreptitious actions, a reprimand that suggested a changed attitude. In reaction to the damages of this mismanaged expedition, legislation was passed in 1906 by the Bolivian senate stating that Tiwanaku was the property of the state. It prohibited removal of objects from the ruins,

unauthorized excavating, and the destruction of the monument by indigenous people (Ponce Sanguinés, 110). In terms of the French involvement in Bolivia, this was the distressing end of an era, one that consistently felt the echo of Humboldt's influence in its grand scheme of exploration, yet was seemingly not yet fully equipped, from both the French and the indigenous standpoint, to take on the responsibilities of new models of the investigative process.

FIGURE 26-25. Gateway of the Sun. French Mission

