

Chapter Three

TRADITION AND CHANGE IN THE CENTRAL ANDES

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Introduction

No matter how well prepared the traveler might be, no amount of reading, video viewing, or web surfing can come close to the experiences of standing in the ruins of an adobe city that stretches for kilometers or viewing ancient irrigation systems flowing with water and cut-stone terraces still under cultivation in the Central Andes. The ubiquity of the material remains of prehistoric cultures and the pervasiveness and tenacity of old life-ways make a deep impression on both laypeople and scholars alike.

In studying the Andean past, one approach may be termed “civilizational,” in which studies are carried out in the emic mode, attempting to understand ancient cultures on their own terms. At the other extreme, some archeologists have engaged with the remains of the past as in a New World “laboratory” to examine large anthropological issues on the origins of plant and animal domestication, the evolution of political economies, and similar issues from an etic perspective. Many scholars fall somewhere between these two extremes. In this essay, I will present information drawn from both kinds of approaches. I will begin by discussing the spatial, temporal, and formal dimensions of the domain of study and then follow with a broad narrative of the culture history of the region as commonly and currently accepted (Richardson 1994; Moseley 2001; Stone-Miller 2002; Quilter 2006).

Space, Time, and Form

The Central Andes is commonly conceived as coterminous with the extent of the Inca Empire. The territory included stretches from the Ecuador–Colombian border to Santiago, Chile, and from the Pacific Ocean to the fringes of the tropical forest in the east, across the Bolivian altiplano, southwards to incorporate northwestern Argentina and northeastern Chile. In practice, however, the region is more narrowly defined. The peripheral areas of the Inca Empire are or are not considered part of the Central Andes depending on the time period in question and the topics under investigation. For example, Ecuador was only under Inca dominion relatively late in prehistory.

In general, the Central Andes is comprised of three major environmental zones: the desert coast, the highlands, and the tropical forest. The altiplano of Bolivia might be considered another zone, as may the *ceja de la selva*, the high tropical forest on the eastern slopes of the Andes. In all but the altiplano, river valleys play important roles. On the coast they served as oases in the harsh desert. In the highlands they were essential routes of communication and offered valuable bottom lands in the vertical world of the Andes. In the tropical forest, again, rivers served as principal communication routes, mostly by canoes.

While the Central Andes might be broadly divided into three major zones, lesser environmental features made critical differences in the lives of ancient inhabitants. Thus, while the coast in one area or another may seem equally barren to the casual visitor, apparently minor variations in geomorphology and ecology can make critical differences. These include the depth of the water table, making "sunken garden" agriculture more or less feasible; the presence of sandy or rocky shorelines offering different mollusks for exploitation; the presence or absence of estuarine resources near the coast; and the location of fog-fed *lomas* vegetation on coastal hills in relation to other resources.

The Humboldt Current runs from south to north, close to the shore. The cold waters up-well nutrients which, in turn, feed a rich and diverse group of fish, pinnipeds, sea birds, and other exploitable resources. Water vapors blown eastwards across the desert are borne upwards by heat radiating off the desert coast to fall as rain in the highland, leaving the coast a parched desert. The water then returns to the Pacific in river valleys roughly parallel to one another.

On the central coast, the foothills of the Andes run into the sea. The hills thus block some of the mists, known locally as *garua*, and support unique forms of xerophytic vegetation in the *lomas*. These verdant fields offered oases in the barren coastal deserts for pre-agricultural populations and, later, pasturage for highland herds of camelids. The central coast also is distinctive in that the lower floodplains of three of its major rivers – the Chillón, the Rimac, and the Lurín – nearly merge into one another. This large agricultural zone was highly productive in late prehistory, supporting one of the densest populations and most powerful polities of pre-Columbian Peru.

On the north coast, from the modern city of Trujillo northwards, there are fewer Andean foothills close to shore and the Humboldt Current gradually turns westwards. *Lomas* are not as common but the local climatic regime is wetter, so that more luxuriant and permanent vegetation increases northwards. In addition, river valleys tend to be parallel to one another rather than merging, as on the central coast, and desert regions between adjacent valleys are distinct. The *Pampa de Paiján* separating the Chicama and Jequetepeque Valleys is the largest stretch of desert north of Lima and south of the Sechura Desert. Although cultural patterns sometimes ignored this boundary, there were notable subregional cultural variations and different languages were spoken on either side of the Paiján desert in late antiquity.

Similar regional variations were present throughout the Andes. The Santa is the only major river on the Pacific watershed in the highlands that flows northwards for a considerable distance before turning towards the ocean. This long valley corridor, known as the *Callejón de Huaylas* in its upper reaches, served as a communication route through the highlands and down to the coast and affected cultural patterns for

centuries. The high table land (*puna*) around Lake Junín is another example, among many others, of an environmental zone that supported distinct regional cultural patterns.

Although environmental conditions constrained and influenced cultural patterns throughout the Central Andes, regionally, larger geocultural conformities are in evidence. To the north, separate Peruvian and Ecuadorian co-traditions are in evidence as early as the third millennium BCE (Burger & Raymond 2003: 469–71), yet this frontier region was highly porous so that, in later prehistory, the cultural practices on the north coast of Peru share as much, if not more, with Ecuadorian cultures to the north as they do with southern neighbors. In addition, in the north the relative distances between the coast, *sierra*, and tropical forest are among the shortest in the Central Andes and the height of the passes are among the lowest, perhaps fostering more continuous communication between residents of these zones than in other areas where each zone is larger.

South of Lima the coastline and mountains trend more eastwards and river valleys tend to be less deeply entrenched. Movement between the coast and highlands was fairly easy and there were long-standing patterns of interaction between South Coast peoples and those of the southern highlands of Peru and the Bolivian altiplano.

Chronology building for the Andean past uses both relative and chronometric dating systems. When the Spanish arrived the Incas told them that nothing but barbarism had preceded them. But Inca stories were inconsistent and even to many Spaniards it was clear that past events had been complex. In the last third of the eighteenth century, the archbishop of Trujillo, Martínez de Compañón recorded the vast adobe ruins of Chan Chan, capital of Chimor, the great rival of the Inca. By 1851, the first director of the National Museum, Marfiano Rivero y Ustáriz, and his Swiss colleague, Jakob von Tschudi (1851), published the first book devoted to Andean prehistory, *Antigüedades Peruanas*.

A German, Max Uhle (1902), pioneered archeology in Peru at the end of the nineteenth century. Through excavations at the great and long-used pilgrimage center of Pachacamac, in the Lurín Valley, as well as work in the Moche Valley on the north coast, he established the basic chronological system used today (Uhle 1913). Uhle noted that Inca hegemony had been preceded by an era of regional ceramic styles corresponding to regional polities. This was already known (now called the Late Intermediate Period) but Uhle identified a widespread style in existence immediately before the era of regionalism, adding a new era (now called the Middle Horizon) of considerable time depth to prehistory. He also conducted research at the Huaca de la Luna on Moche burials (Early Intermediate Period) and even earlier remains in Supe and Ancon.

In the 1920s and 1930s, a highland Indian who became an internationally respected figure, Julio C. Tello, further refined the chronology of the Andes. Whereas scholars before him saw the birth of Andean civilization on the coast, Tello sought its origins in the highlands, at the magnificent stone-built temple complex of Chavín de Huantar, located in the upper reaches of the Marañón River, on the eastern side of the continental divide (Tello 1943, 1960). Chavín's dazzling baroque art style was distinct, powerful, and combined imagery of plants and animals from the Pacific Ocean, the highlands, and the tropical forest. In addition, many images, such as the "Staff God"

on the Raimondi Stela, appeared to be the first representations of symbols that were repeated, with variations, throughout the rest of Andean prehistory, although their meaning may have varied in later cultures (Isbell & Knobloch 2006). Thus, to Tello, it was the tropical lowlands and highlands that were the sources of Andean civilization and Chavín had been the mother culture that had given it birth.

Thanks to Tello, the Andean past gained greater time depth than ever before. The completion of the chronological framework occurred in several subsequent stages to Tello's work. In 1934–7 a young US archeologist, Junius Bird (1938), supervised excavations at several sites in Patagonia including Fell's Cave, which yielded the remains of extinct Pleistocene animals and spear points similar to finds made slightly earlier near the towns of Folsom and Clovis, New Mexico. This and other discoveries at the tip of South America confirmed that humans had been there in remote antiquity. Lacking any means to precisely date these remains, however, made it difficult to determine how they related to later phases of prehistory.

Bird (1948; Bird & Skinner 1985) again made history in 1946–7 when he and his wife and children spent 11 months at Huaca Prieta, at the mouth of the Chicama River, on the north coast of Peru. The site was a large mound, built up from the accumulated refuse of daily life by people who had made their living by fishing and simple farming in a time before the adoption of pottery. Although the concept of a period of "primitive fisherfolk" had long been entertained by archeologists, Bird's work helped to clarify who these people were and to define the Preceramic Period. The sophistication of their twined textiles, some with elaborate designs, and other aspects of their material culture, made it clear that these people had already adapted themselves well to the local environment at a time period later than the Fell's Cave occupation but well before Chavín.

Work by a number of scholars, aided by the use of radiocarbon dating, which became available in the late 1950s, helped to complete the framework of Andean chronology in the 1960s. In a chronological system developed by John Rowe (1962) and Dorothy Menzel, the vast period of time from the entry of humans into South America to the first use of pottery was named the Preceramic Period (Figure 3.1). The first use of ceramics, some time between 1700 and 1500 BCE was designated as the Initial Period. There followed three periods, known as horizons, in which a distinctive artistic style was widespread, suggesting some kind of religious or political unity: the Early Horizon, the time of Chavín; the Middle Horizon when Tiwanku and Wari styles were widespread; and the Late Horizon, the time of the Incas. Sandwiched between these horizons were two periods, the Early Intermediate Period and the Late Intermediate Period, when numerous regional art styles and sociopolitical systems prevailed.

The Rowe–Menzel chronology is used by most North American and European Andeanists and many Peruvians. In Peru, however, a chronology proposed by Luis Lumbreras (1974), based on an avowedly evolutionary framework, is equally popular. It progresses from the Lithic to the Archaic to the Formative Period, followed by more descriptive terms: Regional Developmental, Wari Empire, Regional States, and the Inca Empire. The major temporal blocks, especially in the later periods, are similar to those in the Rowe–Menzel system. Other schemes are employed in the other Andean countries based on different perspectives on the past and national traditions of research in them.

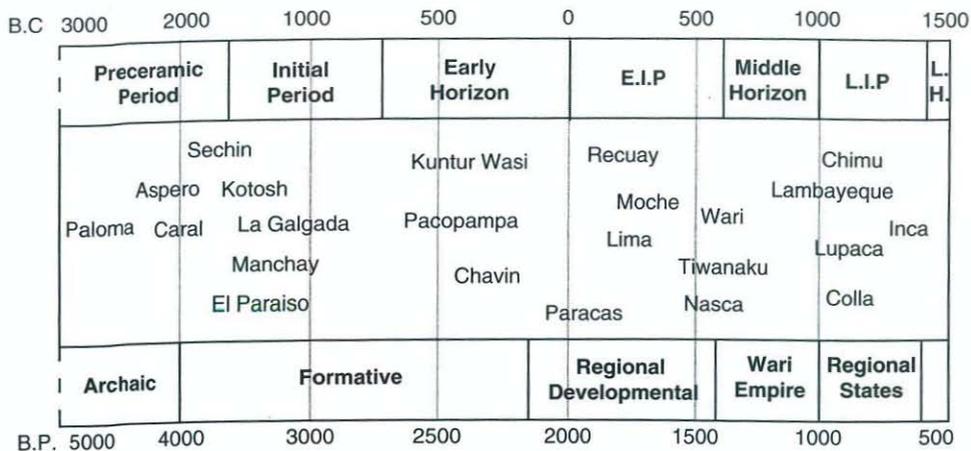


Figure 3.1 Chronogram of Central Andean cultures and sites with Rowe–Menzel (top) and Lumbreras (bottom) chronological systems. Divisions within the Preceramic Period and earlier eras prior to Archaic not shown. Blank box on far right of Lumbreras system is Inca

The formal characteristics of Andean cultures vary through time. There are a number of constants, however. Andean peoples domesticated the potato and a number of tubers, such as oca (*Oxalis tuberosa*) and ullucu (*Ullucus tuberosus*). They also grew a variety of different beans and fruits such as lucuma (*Lucuma obovata*), paca (*Lutzomyia (migonei) paca*), and avocados. The llama and alpaca are domesticated versions of wild guanacos and vicuñas. The guinea pig, or *cuy*, also was domesticated for food and was, and remains, an important and reliable source of meat. Camelids were not only used for meat but the llama was used also as a pack animal, driven in herds. Alpaca wool, and to a lesser extent llama wool, also was woven in textiles, as was domesticated cotton.

Western South America is famed for its high mountains but also hosted one of the world's great maritime cultures. Seafaring was carried out by the use of reed boats and rafts on Lake Titicaca as well as the Pacific. Long-distance exchange was carried out by means of these watercraft and a wide variety of fishing techniques were employed in subsistence practices.

Although there were specialized merchants who traveled long distances for exotic goods in late prehistory, market systems were not common in Andean culture. Instead, as John Murra (1972) pointed out, kin groups distributed their members throughout the "vertical archipelago" of different, stacked resource zones up and down the slopes of the Andes. The core unit of those kin groups is the *ayllu*, a term which has received extensive discussion but which can be defined as a clan-like group relying on kinship for membership but not exclusively so (Bastien 1985). Such communities tended to be scattered across the landscape with urban-like complexes the exception, rather than the rule, in prehistory.

A common, widespread Andean world view was based on asymmetrical dualism: two almost equal entities dependent on each other and dynamically related (Burger & Salazar-Burger 1993). At the same time, however, boundaries between the living

and the dead or human and natural were fluid (Salomon 1995). Important deceased ayllu elders as well as the Inca sovereign were preserved as mummies and treated as continuing members of the community. So too, mountains, rock formations, ancient ruins, and other places were considered as sacred, living entities with mana-like power. They as well as smaller objects were termed *huacas* in Inca Quechua.

A host of specific items of material culture has long been in use in Andean culture. These include the foot plow (Quechua: *chaki taklla*), metallurgical techniques such as depletion gilding, engineering feats (canals and terraces, rope bridges), a rich tradition of weaving both technically complex and symbolically rich (Boone 1996), and the valuation of the *Spondylus* shells of warm equatorial waters. Patterns of feasting including the drinking of *chicha* (fermented beverage) were long-lived in the Andes, as well as chewing coca. When and how these things and behaviors were invented or adopted in the Andes are questions that remain to be investigated, in many cases.

A Summary of Andean Culture History

First peoples

Homo sapiens sapiens evolved in the Old World and entered the Western hemisphere some time later. When, exactly, the first entry was made is the subject of considerable debate. The model held from the 1950s to the 1980s was that people migrated from Beringia, the large land mass connecting Asia and Alaska, when the large continental ice sheets in the late Pleistocene lowered sea levels worldwide. It was thought that during a warm period an ice-free corridor opened, allowing human entry. Humans then rapidly filled the continent in perhaps only a thousand years or so, reaching the tip of Patagonia by 10,000 BCE.

Several investigations during and since the 1980s have challenged this view (Dillehay et al. 2004). Evidence now suggests that some kind of simple seafaring capabilities existed as early as possibly 40,000 to 30,000 years ago when Australia, already isolated from mainland Asia, was first populated by humans (Brown 1997). Few serious scholars suggest that the New World was inhabited this early, but the dates open the possibility of very early human entry along the coast – “island hopping” in remote antiquity, perhaps much earlier than the c.10,000 BCE date commonly considered. Research at Monte Verde, in southern Chile, suggested site occupation at about 12,500 years ago, a millennium earlier than secure dates for New World occupancy (Dillehay 1997 and this volume).

The earliest humans are commonly conceived of as “Big Game Hunters” who may even have helped in the extermination of the large megafauna, such as mammoths and mastodons, at the end of the Ice Age. Also known as Paleoindians, these mobile hunters are best known for the large spear-points they chipped from flint and similar materials (Lynch 1983; MacNeish et al. 1983). By 10,000 BCE different tool traditions were already in existence with “fluted” (Clovis and Folsom) points common in North America into northwestern South America and “fishtail” in western South America. Differences in the forms of these points are presumed to be related to function, but archeologists have assumed that they may also represent some kind of

ethnic identity. In Peru, the earliest known distinctive point is Paján, associated with an early hunting–gathering–fishing culture on the North Coast (Chauchat and Pelegrin 2004).

There is a general pattern of research consistently pushing dates for “firsts” further back in time. Recently, isotopic analyses have produced evidence suggesting that the bottle gourd (*Lageneria sicereria*) entered the New World already domesticated, *c.*10,000 BP and were widely used by 8,000 BP (Erickson et al. 2005). Similarly, research on the south coast of Peru, at Quebrada Jaguay (Sandweiss et al. 1998) and the Ring Site (Sandweiss et al. 1989) indicates a very early maritime adaptation, beginning *c.*13,000 BP. Thus, an older picture of relatively late entry of humans and a specialization of hunting large Pleistocene mammals is gradually yielding to a more complex view than previously thought of an earlier entry, possibly via a number of different means and routes, and an earlier diversification in resource exploitation. Plant and animal management began early as well. In the highlands, some groups began to specialize in hunting wild camelids while others diversified their subsistence strategies. A number of cave sites such as Guiterrero Cave (Lynch 1983), Pikimachay (Rick 1980), and others have been excavated exploring these patterns. Seasonal transhumance between highlands and coast was practiced by some groups (Lynch 1967). Elsewhere, seasonal movement was restricted to environmental zones within larger settings, such as movement between *lomas* fields, river valleys, and the shore (Richardson 1992). Semi- or full sedentism occurred in locations where various resource zones could be exploited over the course of a year from a single locale, such as the Paloma site in the Chilca Valley (Benfer 1984; Quilter 1989).

The construction of large-scale architecture occurred much earlier in Peru than in Mesoamerica with huge complexes being built by 2000 BCE. Recent work by Ruth Shady (2001, 2004, 2006; Shady & Leyva 2003) and her colleagues at sites in the Supe Valley have made claims for the “earliest city” and the “earliest civilization,” at the site of Caral. While these dates are quite early, they are a reasonable extension into the past of a tradition of large-scale constructions already known (Quilter 1991).

The monumental constructions of the Late Preceramic and early Initial Periods were impressive, requiring great amounts of labor. The Sechín Alto Complex in the Casma Valley, for example, consists of 10 square kilometers of sites with overlapping occupations from the Late Preceramic (*c.*1850 BCE calibrated) into the Initial Period (*c.*1300 BCE calibrated) (Pozorski & Pozorski 2002). The latest site complex, Sechín Alto, consisted of a main mound 250 by 350 meters in plan and 30 meters in height fronted by a plaza more than a kilometer long and almost a half-kilometer wide. These sites grew by the layering of new construction over old but nevertheless required great amounts of labor.

What is fascinating about continuing research on the Late Preceramic and early Initial Period is the growing evidence that between 2000 and 1500 BCE there were several different regional styles of monument construction. One of the best known of these is the Manchay Culture, consisting of large U-shaped complexes on the central coast of Peru and including the type site of Manchay Bajo in the Lurín Valley and others in Central Coast Valleys between it and Chancay (Burger & Salazar-Burger 1990, 1991).

Farther north, the Supe Valley sites reflect a contemporary North Coast architectural and ceremonial tradition of sunken circular courts in front of stepped pyramids. Other patterns can be seen in the north highlands, with terraced platforms such as at Pacopampa (Morales, in press). A “Little Tradition” of small kiva-like subrectangular to circular rooms with benches and central fire pits is known as the Kotosh Religious Tradition, named after the highland type site on a river system draining to the Amazon (Burger & Salazar-Burger 1986). This likely very early ceremonial tradition appears to have been incorporated and reworked at some of the larger complexes, such as at La Galgada (Grieder et al. 1988), located between the coast and highlands.

Great temple complexes were built for 500 years or more during the Preceramic Period and continued into the Initial Period when ceramics, metallurgy, and loom weaving were added into the inventory of material culture. Ceramics were first used much earlier in Ecuador and Colombia and the reasons for the late appearance of pottery in Peru remain to be explained. The adoption of ceramics may have had more to do with the elaboration of a prestige economy and feasting (see DeBoer 2001) as a means of achieving or maintaining social rank, since irrigation, agriculture, and many of the other “hallmarks” of civilization were already practiced in the Preceramic.

The origins of civilization

The great cult emanating from the highland site of Chavín de Huantar was dubbed by Julio C. Tello (1943, 1960) as the “Mother Culture” of Peruvian civilization (Burger 1988, 1992; Lumbreras 1989, 1993; Rodríguez Kembel & Rick 2004). With its powerful art style, it still is seen as the first great unifier of much of Peru as its art and, inferentially, its religious cult, were adopted over much of the Central Andes. Richard Burger (1981) demonstrated that Chavín was actually a relatively late phenomenon, spreading its influence around 400 BCE. It was the synthesizer of the cults and art of the great temple complexes of the Initial Period, combining tropical forest, coastal, and highland iconography and concepts in a unique way, as has been pointed out by various scholars, particularly Donald Lathrap (1971, 1985).

The Chavín phenomenon may have been an institutionalized revitalization cult, taking old ideas and reinterpreting and repackaging them in a pan-Andean movement. Influences were particularly strong on the South Coast. A series of massive El Niño events may have shaken the foundations of Initial Period of society, providing the opportunity for a synthetic cult to arise (Burger 1988; Sandweiss & Quilter, in press). More El Niños, with massive rains and floods on the coast and droughts in the highlands, may have contributed to the subsequent fall of Chavín. The archeological record is murky between 200 BCE and AD 200, which appears to have been a kind of “Dark Ages.” Near the Chavín heartland, the Recuay culture (Lau 2002–4) eventually emerged with a distinctively simplistic, apparently “rustic” stone sculpture style which seems to have been a rejection of the elaborately produced, baroque “high art” style of Chavín (see Quilter 2001). On the South Coast, Chavín influences fade and local styles emerge. This change marks the end of the Early Horizon, in which Chavín rose and fell, and the beginning of the Early Intermediate Period.

The Early Intermediate Period

Regional cultures such as Recuay, Nasca, Lima, and Moche emerged in the Early Intermediate Period. “Regional” is a relative term since some of the art styles of these archeological cultures spread over broad areas and through long periods of time. The Moche style, for example, stretched 500 miles from the hills behind the Sechura desert through the north coast to the Nepeña Valley and lasted from circa AD 100 to 700 (Larco Hoyle 2001; Quilter 2002).

Recently, scholars have begun to reexamine earlier assumptions of a one-to-one correlation of Moche art (mostly ceramic) style and polity. While some still adhere to the idea of a conquest state based in the Moche Valley, near Trujillo, others are exploring the idea of a more complicated past which included valley-centered polities. Given that the art style, temples, and other material culture which denote “Moche” were extant for seven centuries, it is likely that political history in the region was complex and probably included phases of political unification of two or more valleys as well as times of more locally based power.

On the South Coast, the Nasca style was shared by communities, probably organized in small political units, which were engaged in raiding-style warfare in which trophy head taking was practiced (Silverman & Proulx 2002). The famous geoglyphs known as the “Nasca Lines” may have been a place of pilgrimage, as may have been the large architectural complex of Cahuachi (Silverman 1993). The Recuay culture of the central highlands also may have been divided into small polities, while on the central coast large sites, such as Maranga, may have had direct control of irrigation systems, perhaps with strong managerial and political control.

The arts and crafts of the Early Intermediate Period are famous for their technical virtuosity and diversity of styles. The Moche are famed for their modeled and painted bichrome ceramics of white and red-brown depicting animals, people, and mythological creatures and scenes. The Nasca are known for the rich color palette used to decorate finely made ceramics. The Nasca also are famed for their rich textile tradition, first begun in the Early Horizon by the Paracas culture in which mummies were wrapped with multiple layers of magnificently embroidered fabrics. Recuay is among the first art styles to emphasize the affairs of ordinary humans, depicting high-ranking lords with their llamas or groups of men and women in council or ritual. Recuay was in contact with the Moche who also depicted people in their art. The Nasca of the South Coast shared similar styles and ideas with the peoples of the southern highlands and the area around Lake Titicaca, Bolivia (Plourde & Stanish 2006). It is from these highland realms that the next great wave of consolidation came in the Middle Horizon.

The Middle Horizon

There has been a tremendous amount of new research on the great powers of the Middle Horizon, Wari (Cook 2004) and Tiwanaku (Kolata 1993, 1996a,b, 2003; Young-Sánchez 2004; Stanish 2005). Thirty years ago it was difficult to distinguish between the two traditions outside of their heartlands as their art styles have superficial similarities. It was clear, however, that there was a frontier between the two cultures, with Tiwanaku extending its influence from present-day Bolivia southwards

into northern Chile and Wari influencing central Peru. Research in the last three decades has advanced our abilities to distinguish between Tiwanaku and Wari remains but their political, social, and economic relations are still unclear. For example, we now know that the Moquegua Valley in southern Peru was occupied by both Wari and Tiwanaku populations, who retained their identities (Williams & Nash 2002; Goldstein 2005). Like the Moche, we are probably looking at very complex political processes, perhaps similar to the kinds of relations between France and Germany in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – two polities with different languages (Quechua and Aymara?), quite similar material cultures, and complex cultural-political relations that included borrowing, emulation, and antagonism, at times.

Both Tiwanaku and Wari were based in large urban-like complexes. The site of Huari has not received extensive study as it is located in what was the heartland of the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) guerrilla movement in the 1980s and 1990s. From earlier work, the sprawling site is known for the use of huge stone blocks in the creation of large, multi-story building complexes that included the tombs of high-ranking individuals. Tiwanaku, however, has been studied extensively and has revealed a more formal plan with orientations to nearby mountains and large plazas and pyramids for state rituals (Isbell & Vranich 2004).

The exact nature of the political organizations associated with Wari and Tiwanaku are not known with certainty. The size and nature of the urban-like complexes suggest state-like organizations although these sites could have been centers for pilgrims rather than imperial capitals. Inca origin myths traced ancestry to the Tiwanaku realm while scholars have argued that Wari first employed many aspects of Inca state administration, such as roads, administrative centers, and perhaps even *kipus* (knotted string records used by the Incas).

Wari dominated the great pilgrimage center of Pachacamac, in the Lurín Valley, and the Central Coast, in general, and it may have been from there that it extended its power along the coast, northwards, to the Moche realm. The degree to which Wari and Tiwanaku spread their influences through the use of religious proselytization, economic machinations, or, for Wari, through militarism, is uncertain. Eventually, however, their power waned. As in the case of earlier eras, archeologists have tended to rely on environmental factors as explanations for these collapses. Although the issues are still vague, it is possible that demographic pressure on carrying capacity and, possibly, a series of severe droughts in the highlands, may have contributed to political instability.

The Late Intermediate Period

As in earlier times, the vacuum created by the collapse of highland powers led to the emergence of regional art styles and associated polities. On the North Coast, the Moche style ended, possibly aided by a series of devastating El Niño events (Moseley 1983) followed by some kind of intrusion by Wari. After a period of instability, two kingdoms emerged: Lambayeque, in the north, and Chimú, farther south (Moseley & Cordy-Collins 1990). The Chimú apparently conquered their northern neighbors and expanded southwards along the coast to create an imperial domain that eventually rivaled and was defeated by the Incas.

On the Central Coast, a local polity called Ichma (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1977), was in control of Pachacamac and the old Lima Culture territory. Around Lake Titicaca and the southern highlands the kingdoms of the Lupacas and the Chancas arose (Arkush, in press). On the South Coast, near the mouth of the Chincha Valley, a large settlement of specialized long-distance seafaring merchants was established.

There is a distinct international flavor in Late Intermediate Period archeology, including long-distance *spondylus* trade by the Chimu and, possibly, the Chincha of the South Coast. The growth of international styles suggests the movement of peoples and goods across great ranges of space, including pilgrimage centers, and widely shared artistic conventions such as geometric designs, which seem less highly charged with distinctive symbolism than earlier imagery. It was in this interconnected world that the Inca arose.

The Late Horizon

The study of the Incas (D'Altroy 2002) and their times is not dominated by archeology; even archeologists have to know the extensive colonial documents in order to excavate Inca sites knowledgeably. Interpreting colonial period documents is a field unto itself. Recent studies of documents have tended to avoid accepting chronicles at face value but understanding them as the products of writers with specific backgrounds and agendas. The availability of many documents also allows for the investigation of issues that would be extremely difficult to pursue without them, such as the nature and role of knotted string records, *kipu*, used by Inca administrators (Quilter & Urton 2002; Urton 2003).

The Inca conquest of western South America was rapid, with estimates of the initial expansion shortly before 1450 and ending with the arrival of the Spanish in 1532. Rebellions against Inca hegemony were common despite the ruthlessness with which they were suppressed. The Incas manipulated ancient ideas of unequal reciprocity in order to create patron–client relations between themselves and subject peoples. If a group willingly entered the empire, the local political system was left in place with only an Inca governor, an Inca sun temple, and taxation in labor and produce demanded. Nevertheless, the arrival of the Spanish was seen by some as an opportunity to throw off the yoke of Inca dominion to aid the Europeans in the conquest of the Incas (Seed, this volume).

Pizarro and his band of men landed in Peru late in 1532. Following strategies and tactics developed by Cortés in Mexico, the capture of the Inca Emperor, Atahualpa, engaged at the time in a civil war, was a key to Spanish victory; it was aided by a plague ravaging the populace. In many ways, however, the Spanish Conquest was not secure until the 1570s when the last Inca resistance was ended by Viceroy Toledo, who imposed order on a chaotic situation which had included not only Inca revolts but also civil wars between the conquistadors.

There has been little archeology of the conquest and early colonial period of the last two-thirds of the sixteenth century. Most of our understanding of these events has been developed through reading early Spanish chronicles and the work of later mestizos, who used writing to justify their statuses or to make claims within the Spanish judicial system. One such chronicler was Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala

(1980 [1615–16]), who wrote a thousand-page letter to the King of Spain, including illustrations of Inca Emperors and ways of life as well as the injustices of the Spanish against native peoples.

The Incas commonly claimed that before them no civilized societies had existed in Peru and that only through their conquest and consolidation of the empire were people raised from the most primitive of states. It is perhaps common for great empires to make such claims. However, the extensive archeological record of millennia of prehistory is testament that western South America was the locale of a unique and rich set of cultural traditions with deep roots in the past, and of creative people who created unique and vibrant forms of civilization many times over since remote antiquity.

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