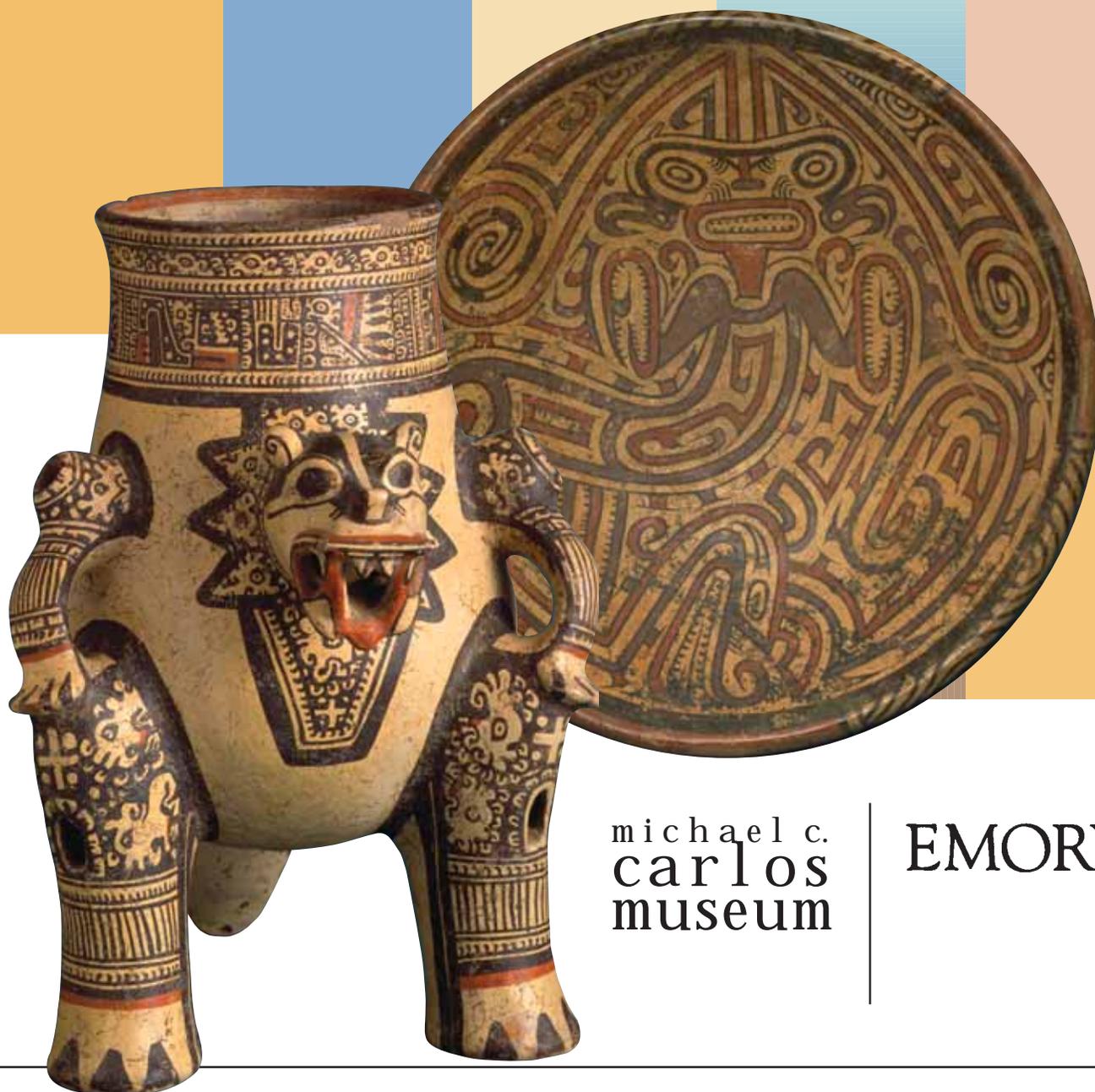


Nature *and* Artistry *in the* Ancient Americas



A Teacher's Guide



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Nature *and* Artistry *in the* Ancient Americas



A Teacher's Guide

by Julie Taylor Green

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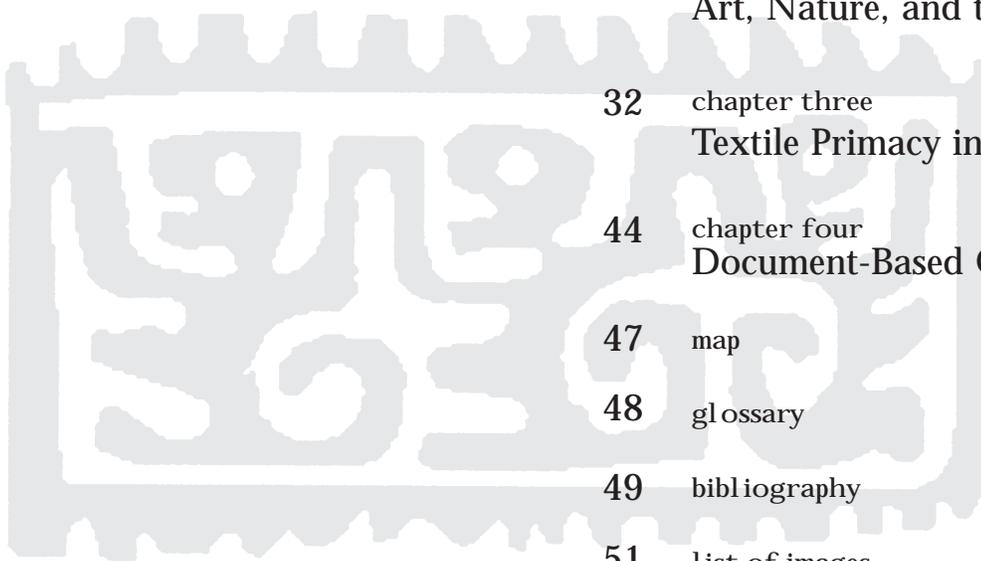
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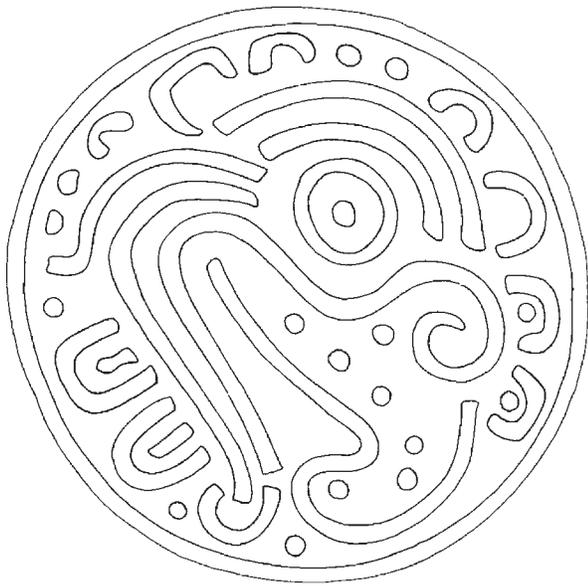
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It was not long ago that ancient American cultures were relegated to a footnote in the social studies curriculum. Even that footnote traced the European conquest of indigenous cultures rather than the Amerindian accomplishments during the many millennia before the European invasions. Students learned that Cortez conquered Mexico in 1519 and defeated Montezuma, the last Aztec king (whose name was actually Motecuhzoma the Second). Montezuma was the only indigenous person who was consistently referenced in the history books. Of course, there was mention of great hordes of gold, sought after by the Europeans (Spain was nearly bankrupt at the time) and readily available in the Americas where it was valued more when worked into art than as a standard of value itself. The usual tale is that a few hundred Spaniards defeated millions of “Indians.” This myth of a quick overthrow of superstitious “natives” is quite misleading, distorting the complexity of the encounters of these radically opposing worldviews.

The days of presumed Western supremacy, however, are falling away, at least in the *National Standards for World History* (1996), which stresses a more global approach to the past. *World Explorers*, published by Prentiss Hall (1998), and used in 6th and 7th grade classrooms around the nation, discusses the contributions of the Maya architects and astronomers, shows a map of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan, and covers the Inka road system and use of the quipu to archive information. Current scholarship is revealing rich cultures, complex political and social organizations, and religious beliefs and practices that shape the use and appearance of the beautifully crafted objects by these cultures.

Nature and Artistry in the Ancient Americas was designed to introduce teachers and students to a few key objects and themes represented in the Carlos Museum's collection of ancient American art, curated by Rebecca Stone-Miller, Faculty Curator of the Art of the Ancient Americas. Dr. Stone-Miller's scholarship, publications, and generous guidance formed the framework for this material. *Nature and Artistry* is divided into three sections that discuss the objects as they illustrate and support concepts important to the ancient Americans:

- ☞ Shamanism and Transformation
- ☞ Nature and the Human Connection
- ☞ Textile Primacy in the Ancient Andes

A key to understanding the social structure, spirituality, and values of any community is to look at the objects that it created, used, and buried with its dead. These are primary sources of information, ranging from pots used to prepare or store food, which tell us of everyday concerns, to the most expertly sculpted jade celts worn by high-ranking noblemen, which reveal more about the ritual and political realms. When art is included in graves, as it was throughout the indigenous Americas, it gives us a strong sense of the makers' beliefs about the supernatural. Objects give us a different sense of past cultures than reading written documents. Museums provide students with a direct experience of the people who created and used the artwork; a shared sensory experience with people from far away and long ago. The preservation and study of these objects also strengthens the bridge between the ancients and traditions that are alive today in Mexico and Central and South America.

Museum studies have found that the average visitor spends less than seven seconds with any one object. By contrast, a symphonic work requires at least a 40-minute encounter to begin to experience its complexities. Therefore, one main concern of museums is to assist teachers in training their students how to appreciate and approach

the important job of "looking." This resource includes questions after each entry on artistry, i.e., how the piece was made, its materials, composition, and style. Indeed, the skill of the ancient American artists and range of materials is astonishing, especially considering that the tools they used were quite simple. The discussion of creative process, style, abstraction, and the artistic reduction to the essential qualities of a subject is a unifying theme throughout this guide. The final sections include several document-based questions (DBQs) that encourage students to write about what they see, to make comparisons, and to draw conclusions to support a thesis. In this case, the "document" is, of course, the work of art.

The ancient American collections of the Carlos Museum serve as a good representation of the many cultures that inhabited this continent before the influx of European and African peoples. The collection spans the areas that are now Mexico, Central America, especially concentrating on Costa Rica, and western South America, with emphasis on ancient Peru. In 1988, the Museum began purchasing works of art and receiving donations from William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau. These passionate collectors brought together the vast majority of the Museum's current holdings that now number more than 2,000 pieces. Since that time the museum has continued to expand the collection, most notably with works collected by Cora W. and Laurence C. Witten ii, and Andean textiles from C. Clay and Virginia Aldridge, and an anonymous donor. In 2002 the collection was reinstalled in a handsome, spacious new setting and reorganized beginning with the South American cultures and ending with Mexico. A wide-ranging catalogue was also published, *Seeing with New Eyes: Highlights of the Michael C. Carlos Museum Collection of Art of the Ancient Americas*. More than 550 pieces are illustrated and discussed in this award-winning publication and nearly every one is on display in the galleries. In addition, a rotating selection of the Andean textiles, collected since the catalogue's publication, is on view.

We hope that you will use this resource in the classroom and bring your students to the Carlos Museum to explore works of art from the first American cultures.

Julie Taylor Green
Manager of School Programs

How to Read a Label at the Carlos Museum

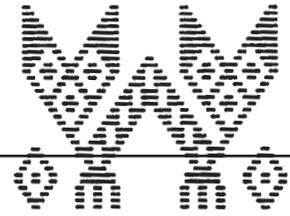
Many of the illustrations include the label text for the object. It is important for students to learn how to interpret this information. Here is a sample label and the types of information the students may discover.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. b. c. d. e. f. g. 	<p><i>Flute in the Form of an Armadillo</i></p> <p>Central Americas, Costa Rica,</p> <p>Greater Nicoya, marbella incised.</p> <p>Period iv, 300 bc–ad 500.</p> <p>Ceramic.</p> <p>1991.4.323.</p> <p>Ex Coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. b. c. d. e. f. g. 	<p>Title or description of the piece (sometimes given by the artist, but often by the museum curator).</p> <p>Nationality or geographical location</p> <p>Stylistic group and type</p> <p>Historical period or date the piece was made.</p> <p>Material from which the piece is made.</p> <p>Accession number that indicates the year and sequence it came into the collection. 1991 denotes the year. 4 indicates the fourth group of objects to come into the collection that year. 323 indicates that this is number 323 of that group.</p> <p>Credit line that tells how the Museum received the artwork or who donated it. For example, <i>Ex Coll.</i> means it was formerly part of a privately owned collection.</p>
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Shamanism *and* Transformation *in the* Ancient Americas



Shamanic cultures have existed for thousands of years, and are found from Central Asia to Siberia, across to the Arctic regions of North America, and down to the tip of South America. The ancient American shamanic worldview is undeniably reflected in the objects masterfully created in many indigenous cultures of the Americas. To understand this unfamiliar imagery, it is necessary for us to learn to see art through the lens of shamanic thought, with its emphasis on fluctuating and interconnected realms of the cosmos and states of being. Images of transformation are the most basic aesthetic expression of this spiritual orientation, just as changing states of consciousness were central to the religious experience of its leaders, known to us today as shamans. We use this Asian word as a generalized label, but it is a rather appropriate one, since the Americas were peopled from central and northern Asia many millennia ago.

Shamans were (and are) men and women whose role in the community was interpreted as a calling from the other world, not as an elected office or appointment from a secular or religious community. Thus, even in male-dominated societies, like almost all the ancient American ones (with the exception of ancient Costa Rica), women could attain high status as ritual specialists and curers. Shamans were singled out as special or different, perhaps physically, but always as naturally able to achieve trance states, interpret visions and dreams, and thereby help others solve problems. In the ancient Americas one of the main shamanic beliefs was in the ability of a trained and experienced shaman to change him or herself into other beings, especially animals. Hence a great number of artistic images depict shamans transforming into animals so as to interact with spirits and gain wisdom. The shaman leaves the human body, travels to celestial and underworld locales, and even to the future, then returns to the terrestrial world with answers or solutions to problems that may have to do with medical illness, community strife, the location of game for the coming hunt, or questions of infertility. Rituals to visit and plumb what are seen as other, co-existing cosmic realms take place at night, the most conducive time to leave daily perceptual existence behind and gain supernatural curative information. The altering of consciousness as a means to insight was the central ancient American spiritual act just as corporate worship or prayer is fundamental to Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions and meditation to many Eastern religions.

To begin this life-changing work, the shaman utilized a variety of techniques that we would understand as altering the brainwaves, including drumming, singing, sleep deprivation, blood loss, and the ingestion of any of dozens of readily available indigenous psychotropic plants. Deep-seated belief in the authenticity of these visions forms the core of Amerindian experience and is recorded in artwork that tends toward fantastical



1 Female Shaman Seated on a Double-Headed Crocodile Bench
Atlanta Watershed, El Ri'o Appliqué.
Period V, AD 500–800.
Ceramic.
1991.4.319.
Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

imagery, understood not as imagination but as the revelation of concurrent, inward truth. Visions feature novel and esoteric insights understood as hidden beneath the recognizable surfaces of this world rather than in the details of outward appearances. For instance, a shaman may see his or her sick patient as a plant, animal, or color, or may see the stars coalesce into a pattern that points out the answer to the problem. This interest in symbolic equivalents, similarities between objects normally seen as distinct such as illnesses and stars, may make artworks hard for us to interpret if we assume that our intellectual-rational rules apply. Artists may join animals and humans together, cut out superfluous information such as the age or sex of a figure, or position an animal in the shamanic meditative pose with hands placed on bent knees. All of these approaches are used to signify the status and power of the shaman in animal form.

A wonderful example of shamanic aesthetics, this 1500-year-old figure from Costa Rica (1) portrays a female shaman becoming a crocodile and attended by snakes, the quintessential symbol of transformation. The composition includes naturalistic and supernatural aspects of animals and people. A woman is seated on a bench that has crocodile heads on either end. She sits with her hands on her knees in the characteristic pose of a meditating shaman. The figure wears ear spools to indicate her high status in the community. In one hand she holds a bowl, probably a container for the mind-altering drink she takes to effect her transformation into her animal self. On closer examination, however, it is clear that she is not simply a woman seated on a bench. She is in fact, no longer wholly human but is in the process of transforming into an animal with crocodilian and serpentine aspects. The round eyes bulge like a reptile's and are therefore suggestive of the shaman seeing with animal perception. Her mouth and lips are naturalistic, however the pattern spilling out from the corners suggests her mouth is transforming into a crocodile's tooth-filled smile. She holds the bowl with ten fingers, an intimation that anything can multiply to a fantastical degree during visions. The bumps on top of her head are characteristic shorthand for the bumps (bony ridges) or scutes of a crocodile's skin. Equally significant are the snakes that begin at her back and encircle her torso so that their heads become her knees. A snake pattern covers the heads of the crocodiles and the four rounded legs of the bench as well. The repetition of the snake pattern ties the composition together and serves as a reminder of the transformative power of this animal that renews itself by shedding its skin. Thus the piece synthesizes several

aggressive animals and a human into a dynamic, multiple being. By taking on many aspects of animal power, she is shown on a cosmic journey shamans undertook to fully understand natural, supernatural, animal, human, and cosmic perspectives.

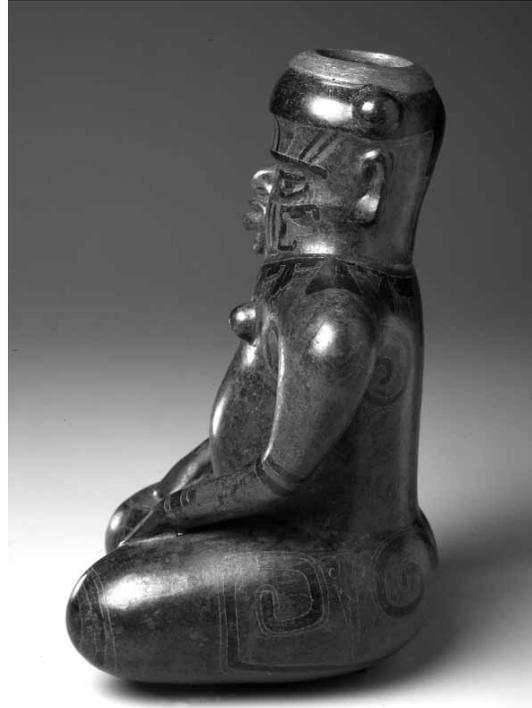
This and other images may seem at first to be a confusion of composites: crocodile and human, toad and feline, or owl and human. In all sorts of creative versions, the artist has captured the provocative moment of fluctuating realities when the shaman changes into another self. The transformation allows the shaman to visit other worlds not easily occupied by gravity bound, bipedal humans. As a deadly caiman, a molting toad, or a nocturnally dominant owl, shamans can access parallel realms. Such multi-leveled works of art exemplify the widespread Native American understandings that “shape-shifting” exists and that animal spirits can teach people about physical and spiritual survival. Imagery created by the shamanic societies reveals creative and culturally sophisticated understanding of the paradoxes of the visionary experience and the complex interlocking of parallel realities. The following entries illustrate the shaman as guide in life and death, in their otherworldly animal forms, or as composite beings in the moment of transformation.

The Moskito style of ancient Colombia in northern South America features large containers for the bones and jewelry of the deceased. These burial urns have lids often topped with effigies (2); here the image is of a woman sitting on a bench, her hands on her knees, head tilted upward. All these elements mark her as a shaman in trance. Seats elevate meditators, the hand position is analogous to the lotus position in Eastern meditation, and the head seems turned toward the celestial. In addition, her eyes are narrow slits (visions are reported to be more intense with eyes closed) and her pale face is distinctively painted with dynamic lines. Geometric designs can indicate special body painting for a ritual occasion, and also may refer to the very common perception of rapidly moving, colorful shapes at the onset of a trance. Thus her facial decoration may not only refer to her outward appearance, but to the inward experience as well.

It is significant that an entranced shaman tops the burial container for the bones of the deceased. This unites the fundamental remains of a human (the skeleton) with the regenerative power of the shaman. It seems a universal human desire to hope that death is not final; in shamanic societies, the shaman is present to assist the deceased in the journey through the Underworld to the next cycle of life.



2 Seated Female Shaman-Effigy
Secondary Burial Urn
South America, Northern Andes,
Colombia, Moskito,
AD 1000–1500.
Ceramic.
1990.11.1.
Gift of William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau



3 Rosales Engraved Female Effigy Figure
Central America, Costa Rica,
Greater Nicoya, Rosales Zoned
Engraved, Rosales Variety.
Period IV, 500 BC–AD 300.
Ceramic.
1991.4.344.
Ex coll. William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau

Female shamans are not uncommon, especially among northern South American and lower Central American peoples. This one is shown performing the role of a master who easily travels as guardian between the living and dead. This urn illustrates the fact that shamans work at dangerous transitions, one being birth. Female shamans have midwifery as one of their specialties. Fertility in general is also among the shaman's responsibilities. In the case of this urn, the guided rituals of death and burial (leading to the next cycle of life) place the shaman as midwife to the bones during the precarious act of rebirth.

The urns were the final resting place of the bones after the body had been allowed to decompose in a shallow grave for a period of months. When the urn is finally laid to rest, it is a second burial; hence these urns are called "secondary burial urns." What remained to be buried were the permanent parts of the body, the bones, along with permanent gold jewelry, valued because it does not tarnish or erode over time. The urn was then planted in the earth like a seed or an egg inside the womb of Mother Earth. These urns were intentionally egg shaped as a symbol of regeneration. With a long-standing conviction that the life cycle has phases but no real end, Andean peoples have always kept all or some of the deceased body. (In fact, the first artificial mummification in world history was developed in northern Chile centuries before Egyptian mummification became standard.) Here the burial urn cradles the bones of the deceased and is guarded by a female shaman, a birthing practitioner and mediator of all transitions.

Another female shaman effigy in the Carlos Museum is an artistic highlight of the ancient American collection (3). This two thousand year old Costa Rican ceramic image was made with thin walls, shiny surfaces accomplished by burnishing with a smooth stone, and graphic black painted designs outlined by incisions; it could only have been created by the hand of a master ceramic artist. In the burial, she was not a container for bones like the Moskito urn, being a much smaller vessel. However, she still accompanied the deceased's body and perhaps the dead person's soul.

She also assumes the calm, timeless meditation position. In fact, the artist of this effigy came up with an especially creative way to show her cross-legged sitting position. Her calves are not formed from clay but are painted up her inner thigh, with her feet crossed. This elaborate artistic device ingeniously draws attention to fertility, but at the same time preserves modesty. This shaman is not only symbolically fertile, but a side view reveals the swell of her pregnant belly. Not just literally filled with new

life, when placed in the tomb she also metaphorically embodied the deceased's hope for rebirth.

It does not suffice, however, to see her as a quintessential female whose power is only maternal. The artist has gone to great lengths to project her very broad shoulders out into space, an admirable feat when working with thin walls of wet clay. The flaring head, with horizontal and vertical slashes of black painted designs, creates a rather fierce countenance. The designs all over her body make her seem to take up more room visually than she does physically. Through this series of artistic decisions this master artist has made the effigy seem both monumental and masterful. We understand through her formidable presence and intense look of concentration that she has the spiritual capacity to communicate with the ancestors and to assure fertility in the ethereal as well as the corporeal realm.

Q&A About Shamanism

☞ How would you describe the shape of the body of the Secondary Burial Urn? Are eggs the beginning or end of life? To the ancient Americans, the egg-state was not a pre-form of life, but part of an unending dynamic cycle of change, growth, and renewal.

☞ Have students sit like a shaman with hands on knees and see if it is restful. Could you sit like that for long periods of time? Compare with other meditative positions.

Q&A About Artistry

☞ Have students draw the faces of the Colombian and Costa Rican effigies (2, 3) and consider the following questions. How do the black lines work to enhance their power, mystery, and detachment? What is the same about them? What is different? Where does the artist want you to look first, second, etc? How do you feel when you look up or down? Why is "up" spiritual? Why emphasize a shaman's head, eyes, and face painting?

☞ Considering both the effigy and the secondary burial urn, how does the artist unite the head and body visually, balance the composition, make the figures seem grounded? Why should a shaman in meditation seem one with the earth and the sky at the same time?



4 Flute in the Form of an Armadillo
Central America, Costa Rica,
Greater Nicoya, Marbella incised.
Period IV, 300 BC–AD 500. Ceramic.
1991.4.323.
Ex coll. William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau

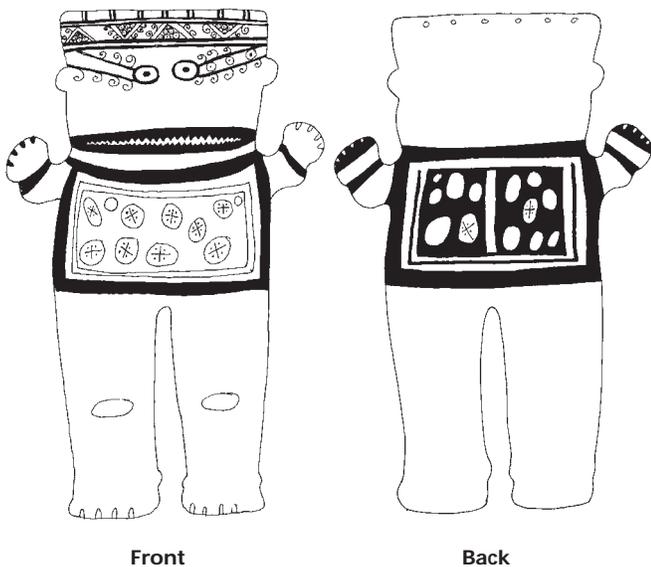


5 Flute in the Form of a Bat
Central America, Costa Rica,
Greater Nicoya, Marbella Incised.
Period IV, 300 BC–AD 500.
Ceramic.
1991.4.21.
Ex coll. William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau

Things to Do

☞ Have students make a three-dimensional effigy figure. For this project they will need craft paper, markers, newspaper, scissors, and a stapler.

Using large sheets of craft paper (18 x 24 inches) draw an outline of an effigy in pencil. Decorate it and go over the lines with marker. Cut out the effigy and trace it onto another piece of paper (the back side). Cut out the back, and staple to the front leaving several openings to stuff with newspaper. Stuff the arms and legs first, and staple as you go. Have an exhibition of your classroom effigies.



7 Female Effigy
South America, Central Andes, Late Chancay.
AD 1200–1450.
Ceramic.
1988.12.12.
Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

The importance of music in ancient American art cannot be overestimated. The ethereal quality of sound wafts up into space like smoke from burning incense (see **(8) Incense Burner with Sun God–Jaguar God of the Underworld Lid**, p. 15). Both sound and smoke are suited to reaching the distant yet influential world of the spirits on their own, invisible terms. Music is central to shamanistic religion, not only because the sounds of both instruments and the human voice were believed to communicate with unseen realms but also because rhythmic sound itself can induce trance. Modern shamans chant and sing for hours on end during curing rituals.

The diminutive flutes on the opposite page were made over fifteen hundred years ago in northern Costa Rica. One shows a tiny armadillo, the other a bat. Both could be worn as pendants when not being played. These ceramic flutes are undeniably charming as works of art, combining acute observation of natural animal characteristics, skillful artistic interpretation, and symbolic representation.

The three-banded armadillo **(4)** is decorated with incised lines and a pattern of dots to evoke its striated and pitted texture. Punched dots are formed by rocking the edge of a shell onto the clay surface, then rubbing white kaolin clay into the depressions to make them more visible. The three armor-like plates of this type of armadillo move just enough so that the animal can roll up into a completely tight sphere as a defensive strategy. The artist has accentuated this shape and drawn attention to its pointed nose by placing its paws daintily on either side. The armadillo is an animal with many properties considered almost magical by the ancient Americans; foremost being an ability to go to the underneath regions of the cosmos. Armadillos burrow into the earth and actually can walk underwater. The heavy shell keeps the animal weighted down as it crosses the creek bottom. Within a shamanic religious context, an analogy might well be drawn between armadillos and shamans that likewise traverse various worlds, including the Underworld, universally imagined as a watery place in ancient American cosmologies.

Another dark and mysterious type of animal, the bat, occurs in great numbers in Central America **(5)**. The bat is revered in shamanic cultures from Mesoamerica southward, its prodigious ability to hunt at night another apt metaphor for the special sight a shaman uses during a nocturnal trance to hunt spirits, truth, or curative information. The artist who created this bat shows us both the extended wings in flight in the overall triangular

shape, and the drawn-in, accorded wings at rest (the dark, shiny sideways “V” areas). The reason for this double reading becomes obvious when the bat image is activated by playing. When worn as a necklace (the holes for the suspension string run through the neck), the bat is in full flight, facing outward from the wearer’s chest. Yet, when the musician puts the bat’s tail-mouthpiece to the lips, the bat must be turned backwards and upside down, assuming its roosting position. Blowing into the mouthpiece and alternately stopping up the other four holes on the bat’s back with the fingers, five notes can be produced. (This flute has been played in modern times. To hear the beautiful airy sound, listen to #37 on the cd.) In nature, the bat only makes noise that can be heard by humans when in this same inverted position! This remarkable composition combines a necklace and a flute, plus a flying and a resting bat all in one. These double readings are quite wonderful but not unusual in the art of the ancient Americas. Even more ingeniously, the bat flute was designed, like the Pataky Jaguar discussed on the next page, to reproduce the animal’s distinctive vocalization, and to do so only when the effigy moves exactly like its natural model.

Q&A About Artistry

☞ Clay can be worked in many different ways, as in these two flutes. Spirals of smoothed clay coils build up irregular, hollow shapes such as the bodies of the animals. Holes can be punched through (for the suspension holes and the musical holes), lines incised, areas burnished or stamped with shell edges, and additions called *appliqués* added to project details such as the eyes out from the surface. Have the students analyze all the methods used to make these flutes. Try making one.

☞ Listen to some traditional musical groups from Latin America for inspiration. Putumayo World Music Company and World Music Network are good sources for indigenous music.

☞ Have students research the armadillo and the bat in nature books and compare the details with the artistic interpretation. Notice the rendering of texture on the underside of the bat. Look at the feet and claws of the bat. What species do you think this is? The vampire bat, which inhabits Costa Rica, is known for walking on its hind feet to sneak up on prey. How does this fit in with the ideas of life and death, aggression and meditation, dominance and aesthetics that are considered throughout this guide?

The relationship of jaguars and shamans deserves particular attention. The jaguar, Americas' largest feline, was the most important animal, both actually and symbolically, in Amerindian cultures from Mexico southward. No predators other than human beings could compete with this powerful animal, and people who lived in its world rightfully viewed it with fear and respect. Master shamans experienced themselves in its form, rulers named themselves after it, and it played divine roles in almost every ancient American culture.

By far the most massive cat on the continent (and third in the world after tigers and lions), male jaguars can weigh up to three hundred pounds and stretch up to eight feet in length from nose to tail. They hunt primarily at twilight or at night and feed on almost any other animal, from deer, rodents, and reptiles, to monkeys and fish. They occasionally kill, but do not eat people. With their powerful haunches, jaguars are known to leap over twenty feet to pounce on prey. In comparison with the other cats, such as the puma, the jaguar's round head and short snout give it particularly powerful jaw muscles. Its deadly canine teeth reach two inches in length, and it often kills its prey by piercing the skull with one swift bite. Even the protective plates of the armadillo offer little defense against the jaguars' powerful bite. Jaguar teeth can find the vulnerable spaces between plates or vertebrae, making its vice-like grip fatal in most cases. Jaguars not only dominate the ground, but also can swim in order to catch fish, turtles, water snakes such as the huge anaconda, and even caiman. They are also adept climbers and hunt monkeys in the lower branches of rain forest trees, using the sharp extra "dew" claws on the front legs and their keen eyesight and fast movements to close in on their victims.

It is no wonder that ancient American shamans would seek to ally themselves with this formidable and beautiful creature. In many Amerindian languages the words for "jaguar" and for "shaman" are one and the same. It is equally understandable that artists depicted so many jaguars and that most of them are transformational, that is both animal and shaman together. One of the Carlos collection's most striking shaman/jaguar effigies (7) was made around a thousand years ago in the southern area of present-day Nicaragua. The artist has abstracted many of the animal's features and exaggerated the most dangerous parts of the jaguar to enhance the frightening and powerful aspects of the image. He is a mighty animal, symmetrical, and carefully detailed, emerging from a simple pear-shaped vessel form. The piece boldly conveys



7 Pear-Shaped Tripod Vessel with Modeled Jaguar Features
*Central America, Costa Rica/
 Nicaragua, Greater Nicoya,
 Pataky Polychrome,
 Pataky Variety.
 Period VI, AD 1000–1350.
 Ceramic.
 1991.4.337.
 Ex coll. William C. and
 Carol W. Thibadeau*

the animal's power with only three colors, which stand in sharp contrast to one another. The body balances plain buff and black-patterned areas, while blood-red paint drips from the upper to lower canines. The claws are graphically spread, with dark triangles of negative space forming a dynamic zigzag effect. The overall pose works to emphasize the aggressive nature of the animal. Its head juts out fairly far down the vessel reflecting the fact that jaguars characteristically lower their heads when stalking their prey. The intense concentration of the predator is also captured in the black eyes.

Yet this is not a portrait of the king of the American jungle. The artist rejects the telltale all-over patterning of dark rosettes. Instead, the ceramic painter introduced two subtle, abstract innovations. First, spots are arrayed only on the legs and around the neck; jaguars do not have a mane or neck ruff, so this is completely made up. Second, the spots are drawn not as dark on light but vice versa and they actually appear as small abstracted jaguars. (The clearest one is on the effigy's own right back leg, viewer's left, just below its front paw. The head of the jaguar-spot faces down and its legs to our right.) This doubling of the jaguar's essence—a jaguar made up of jaguars—is a creative feature that other versions of this subject tend to lack and signals the imagination of a talented artist at work. In addition, this piece has rattling clay balls in the mouth and legs, recreating the deep, and rumbling growl of the actual jaguar when the vessel is moved back and forth. It may be a stroke of artistic genius that this sound is most obvious when the effigy is tilted forward, moving like a jaguar lunging at its unfortunate prey. The addition of sound in this piece took careful planning on the part of the artist, since the head and legs had to be built around pre-fired ceramic rattle balls. The sound produced by this effigy as it is tilted can be heard on the enclosed cd.

Like many great works of art, this Pataky [pah tah kee] style jaguar/shaman combines accuracy with imagination, lifelike bloody canines with abstract jaguars-as-spots, in a dynamic composition. The main feature that removes the image from natural, everyday, terrestrial appearances is, of course, the hands-on-the-knees pose, one that a feline cannot naturally assume in the wild. We have seen this position in the three female effigies, representing the quintessential symbol of shamanic meditation. Here, however, rather than the calm inward looking pose of a meditating person, the aggressiveness that characterizes jaguars and shamans alike is explored visually. It is well known that shamans experience themselves as jaguars and/or battle them during their visions. Shamans wrestle

with malevolent spirits and other shamans in their work for the community. In creating a figure that is both animal and human, both real and surreal, the artist has masterfully balanced surface naturalism with the internal spiritual dimension.

Q&A About Shamanism

☞ The abilities of bats, armadillos, and jaguars as shaman animal spirits have been discussed. Have the students explore other animals. What North American animals are key to the traditional shamanic cultures of the South-west, Northwest, Arctic, and Mississippian peoples?

☞ The ancient Americans represented animals that may be unfamiliar. What is a caiman? Coatimundi? Anaconda? Iguana? Harpy eagle? Turkey vulture? Look them up and categorize them as living on land, in trees, or water. Which ones occupy several “realms?”

Things to Do

☞ Jaguars swim, climb trees, and cover vast amounts of territory. They hunt at night. Have students write a story as seen through the eyes of a jaguar. Have them write from the perspective of their prey.

☞ Imagine a confrontation between a jaguar and a puma, or between a jaguar and a huge snake like the anaconda or the boa constrictor.

☞ Compare pumas and jaguars in size, temperament, ferocity, and territory. What similar ideas did Old World cultures have about lions and tigers? Why do cultures revere the big cats?

Like the other Amerindian cultures, the ancient Maya believed that humans had animal selves into which they could change. The animal self was called the *way* [why]. This incense burner (8) consists of a bowl base and figurative lid, inside of which copal, an aromatic resin, was burned. The fragrant smoke escaped from between the two parts. Decorating the exterior of the bowl is the shaman in human form, abstractly reduced to a bulging-eyed face. The lid figure is a double one: on one side is a deity in the form of an old man, on the other his jaguar alter ego.

In terms of design, the artist presents one of many solutions to the challenging problem of how to show two things as one—the central idea behind the animal self—in a three-dimensional format. The human and animal are joined back to back and are portrayed as equivalents, one and the same. They take the same pose as each other, hands resting on knees. Each sits with the left knee bent up, towards the shoulder, while the right leg falls open with the knee bent. This is very close to the typical meditation pose discussed above, but here there is a twist. One leg of each figure dangles down, a position known in Maya art as the “position of royal ease,” signifying this figure’s high status. Furthermore, when incense was burned inside this vessel, the escaping smoke would wreath the lid figures, projecting them into the spiritual world and further emphasizing their high status.



**8 Incense Burner with Sun God-
Jaguar God of the Underworld Lid**
Mesoamerica, Highland Guatemala, Maya.
Early Classic, AD 200–550.
Ceramic.
1992.15.176.
Gift of Cora W. and Laurence C. Witten II

Things to Do

☞ Have students create a composite portrait of themselves and their animal spirit. Draw it, make a sculpture out of clay, or create a mask of the composition.

☞ Write a description of what smoke looks like as it curls up into the sky or drifts on air currents. Have students move their bodies like smoke. See how it feels to float and curl. Now move like a jaguar and compare the difference.

☞ Scholars have called a specific, high status pose “the position of royal ease.” Ask students to strike the pose, sitting with one leg dangling, the other open and resting on a bench or chair. The pose is meant to convey a powerful yet relaxed demeanor. Compare with other powerful poses: the Paramount Chief of the Asante of West Africa, whose feet always rest on a bench, or any formal portrait of royal or state officials.

Barely over four inches in height yet displaying great artistic presence, the tiny vessel (9) (top and bottom) integrates realistic representation and indigenous spiritual beliefs in equal measure. Images of two intertwined rattlesnakes make up the spherical vessel body, their tails beginning as independent but parallel spirals on the base. A third tiny snake coils around the rim, its head poking up naturalistically, as if peering over its tail. This carefully planned attention to all surfaces, even the bottom, is typically ancient American. Often, in western art a painting or sculpture is meant to be viewed from one perspective. The Amerindian aesthetic, on the other hand, requires that the object must be complete whether perceptible or not. In this artistic tradition, conveying the subject’s essence takes precedence over describing its actual appearance in detail. Such an artistic attitude reflects the widespread belief that the human audience is less important than the ritually correct state of the piece. It also acknowledges that in nature a snake obviously has a tail whether it is visible at the moment or not.

Since most ancient American works in the Carlos collection were ritual or burial objects, they were intended, at least in part, for use in a supernatural context in parts of the cosmos not accessible to the uninitiated. Therefore, artists had (at least) two tasks to perform. They were to create interpretations that remained true in key ways to the natural state of an animal subject, for instance, capturing just how rattlers entwine and display characteristic diamond markings, stripes, and rattles. At the same time, artists were members of shamanic cultures, so they were charged with making images appropriate to this profound spiritual orientation, one that placed a major emphasis on experiencing other realities. Animals such as snakes, which fascinate us in nature and recur in visionary experiences, became vitally important avenues for artistic expression. In trance states, anything sinuous, such as hair, fingers, smoke, or tree branches, typically appear in the form of snakes. Carnivorous snakes, like the up to forty-foot-long anaconda of the Amazonian region, also figure prominently in terrifying visionary struggles.

The delicate brown snakes making up this diminutive vessel warrant a closer look. At first it is difficult to separate out the two spiraling bodies and it may appear as if it is one two-headed animal. (Interestingly, double-headed snakes do occur in nature, a mutation far more common in this animal than in others.) Although this vessel is from ancient Colombia, near the top of South America, other shamanic Amerindian cultures often depicted two-headed creatures, especially reptiles.

For example, Maya art features many images of what is called the “Vision Serpent,” a snake apparition with a head at each end that materializes to shamans after bloodletting rituals. Therefore, the composition of two snakes may not be accidental on the part of the artist.

In nature, snakes also molt (as many as six times a year), one of the very few animals that constantly grow and transform themselves. On a basic level this miraculous self-renewal could have suggested to artists the doubling of snakes such as that seen here. It is interesting to realize that when the old skin is peeling away, the molting snake does have two heads, at least temporarily, and when the process is complete, it leaves behind its other body as a ghostlike self. Snakes also writhe and coil together during mating. Thus, spiraling snakes perfectly encapsulate change and continuity. Among Westerners the image of a snake eating its tail (known as the uroboros) likewise symbolized a universe that is always transforming and renewing. This tiny, consummate image of spiraling snakes exemplifies the profound conviction of its ancient Colombian makers in the never ending cycles of the cosmos.

Q&A About Shamanism

☞ Discuss the attributes of snakes. Where do they live? How do they move? Why and how do they shed their skin? Find images of molting snakes? Consider other animals that go through transformative life cycles? Discuss how metamorphosis, hibernation, and the idea of new life or rebirth relates to shamanism.

Q&A About Artistry

☞ In Western culture, art is created for a human audience. Discuss point of view. For example, three-dimensional sculpture may or may not be finished on all sides. In either case, there is generally an obvious front. What about the bottom of a sculpture—the statue of Liberty for example? Would it be finished on the bottom? How does this compare to the ancient American attitude towards the creation of a crafted piece? Ancient American artists finished it on all sides so that even the living earth could appreciate the underside of the piece.



9 Brownware Vessel with Intertwined Rattlesnakes
South America, Northern Andes, Colombia, Tairona.
AD 1000–1500.
Ceramic.
1992.15.51.
Gift of Cora and Laurence C. Witten II

Things to Do

🗺️ Using a map, locate the present-day countries of Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Research the snakes that are common in these areas. What is the largest recorded snake? How many are venomous? Where do rattlesnakes occur?

🖼️ Find a picture of a two-headed snake (check the November 2003 *Scholastic News*, “A Pair of Heads” and images of them on the internet) What other animals sometimes have two heads? Do they survive? How do we react to such things? How might a Native American?

🗺️ Look up “uroboros” and see how the image is used in Western culture.

Art, Nature, *and the* Human Connection

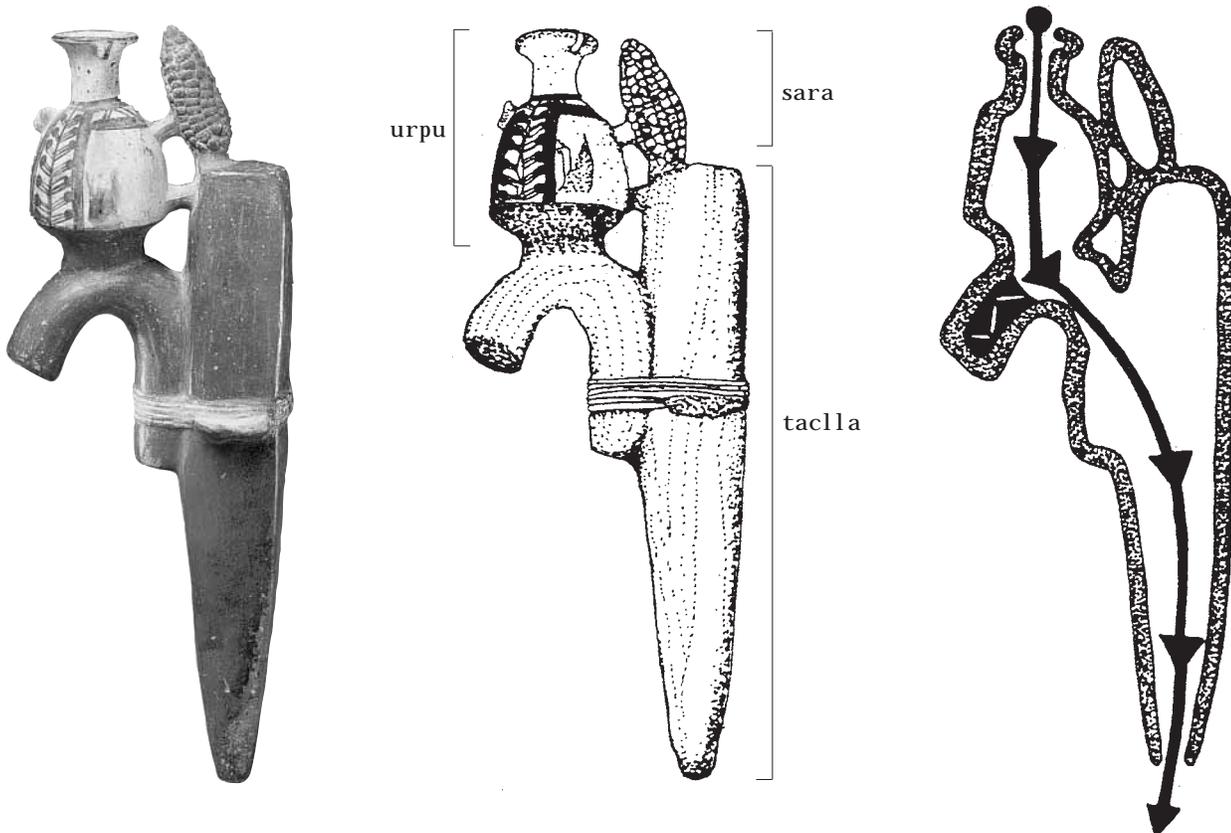


Ancient American artists, using only stone tools and their hands, articulated a complex world-view in an astonishingly broad range of materials. They coiled clay, painted slip, spun and wove thread, hammered metal, and abraded stone to produce objects of great beauty imbued with their distinct vision of power, and the interconnection of the terrestrial and spiritual worlds.

Their worldview, how Amerindians viewed the workings of the universe and humans' place in it, featured two important elements reflected in the art they produced: the belief that the community was ultimately more important than the individual, and that people were not superior to the plants and animals with whom they shared space and time.

In most Amerindian cultures, decisions were made to promote the common good, although this certainly did not mean that all were egalitarian. Many of the ancient American societies were highly structured, with elaborate social and political hierarchies. For instance, the Inka and Chimú [chee moo] created empires, the Maya a confederacy of city-states, and the peoples of ancient Panamá organized chiefdoms. Yet the Inka redistributed food so that all could survive in their marginal environment and placed little emphasis on art that glorified their rulers. The elevation of the collective over the individual helps explain the lack of emphasis on portraiture and historical specificity in most Amerindian art. However, high-status artworks tend to be more widely preserved and collected, so we know more about the powerful elites of these societies: what they wore, took with them to the afterlife, and used in rituals.

The sense of integration of humans in the natural world is reflected in the predominance of images of plants, animals, and humans (see *Shamanism and Transformation*). Procuring shells, depicting insects and raptorial birds, or planting maize are a few of the natural subjects which preoccupied all social classes of society. On a deeper level, Amerindians shared a type of cyclical thinking and valued the concept of reciprocity as connecting humankind and the natural world in a dependent cycle of give and take. This rhythmic and recurring balance between nature, humans, and the spiritual realms manifests in many ways. The cycling of the seasons, turning of the planets and stars, the births and migrations of animals all reinforce the sense that recurrent phenomena were the basis of life. In its simplest form, the earth feeds the people with abundant plants and animals, the people feed the earth through ritual offerings and agricultural ceremonies. This concept is explored with the burial urns in the Shamanism section and will be further elaborated by the rare Inka *paccha*, a ritual watering device which encapsulates the entire cycle of growing maize.



Known in the *Kechwa* language spoken by the Inka and their descendants as a *paccha* [pah chah] (10), this piece represents a complex combination of objects used in Inka daily life and ritual. Though made up of forms that held rich symbolic value for the Inka, to the modern viewer it may appear an enigmatic mix that requires careful decoding. One of the most important pieces in the Carlos Museum collections, this five-hundred-year-old ritual watering device encapsulates the entire cycle of growing maize (corn).

Maize was very important to the Inka, who redistributed this high-protein, easily stored, and widely cultivated grain to their vast empire. The Spanish agreed that maize was a desirable commodity and rapidly introduced it and potatoes (another major Andean crop) to the Old World. The *paccha* illustrates three maize-related objects modeled together: a foot plow (*taclla* [tah clee ah]), a miniature maize beer vessel (*urpu* [oor poo]), and a small ear of maize (*sara* [sah rah]).

10/11 *Paccha* (Ritual Watering Vessel) and diagrams
South America, Central Andes, Inka.
Late Horizon, AD 1440–1540.
Ceramic, residue of maize beer and sand.
1989.8.161.
Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau



12 *Urpu* (Long-Necked Jar) with Maize Motif
South American, Central Andes,
Central Coast, Chancay/Inka.
Late Horizon, AD 1440–1540.
Ceramic.
1989.8.162.
Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

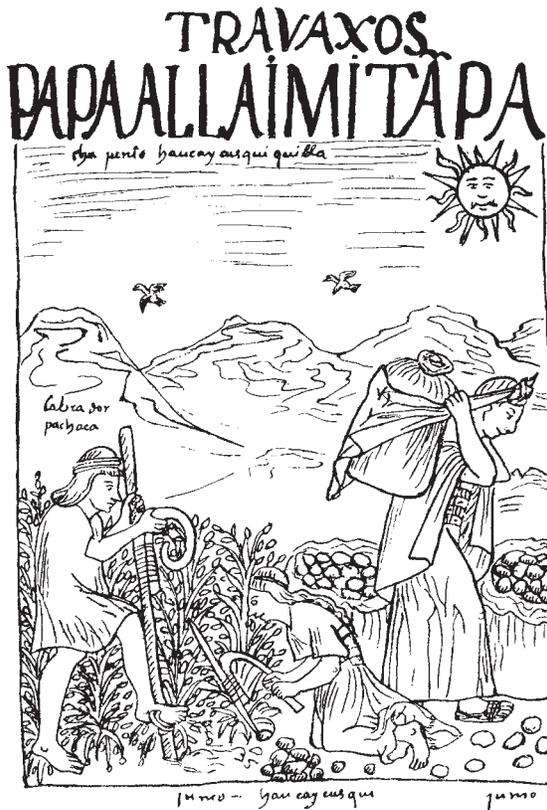


Figure 1
Guaman Poma drawing shows June: time of digging potatoes.



Figure 2
X ray of the
paccha

Planting is symbolized by the foot plow, the long pointed red-brown shaft with a hook “tied” on its side. Its tip shows scratches and discoloration, suggesting that the *paccha* was actually pushed into the earth, just like actual wooden digging implements were to make a hole for the seed.

A drawing by Guaman Poma (Figure 1), shows the use of the footplow and handtool. Guaman Poma was a sixteenth-century chronicler of Inka life. In the *paccha*, the small, yet full-grown ear perched on the top of the foot plow symbolizes the successful result of the planting. The third element is a storage container for maize beer called an *urpu*. Full-size *urpus* (12) were made to carry and store the harvested ears or the processed beer and can be up to four feet tall. In this case, the miniature vessel is decorated with the abstracted maize design, imitating the branching of the plant itself.

An X-ray, below, taken during the course of researching the *paccha* was extremely revealing. It showed a solid area in the tip of the hook, a mass of material not quite attached to the walls. When the cracked portion of the hook was taken off for conservation purposes, about a cubic inch of dried, sandy-looking material, an ancient residue, became visible. The rest of the *urpu* and *tacla* was completely hollow. With the piece standing vertically like a real foot plow, liquid poured into the little vessel part would backwash into the tip of the hook as it progressed down the shaft and out the hole at the bottom. This backwash built up to form a substantial plug, suggesting that this *paccha* was used on numerous occasions for ritually watering the ground before planting. But water alone would not result in such a build-up of material. The prospect of finding out the make-up of the mysterious material led the Museum to study and test the contents.

Chemical tests of the dried material were run that confirmed the footprint of maize; evidence that *asua* (maize beer) was definitely the watering agent, not water. It also identified sand, and comparison of sands from several valleys on the coast of Peru matched it to the Chancay Valley in particular (sands are quite varied in shape and do not change much over a few hundred years). This constitutes the first proof of the repetitive use of a special sandy maize beer in a specific locale, presumably for field-watering ceremonies. Since the piece is made in clay and not gold, it is also assumed that local dignitaries used the *paccha* rather than the king or *Sapa Inka*. First, planting and watering took place in the

month we call August, when the ruler ceremoniously initiated the agricultural season. Watering with *asua*, the product that farmers sought when growing the maize in the first place, was a ritual rather than a practical gesture. The maize residue can now be understood as an integral part of this visual depiction of the growing cycle of harvesting, partaking, and returning maize to feed the earth. This unique piece confirms the watering of a maize crop with its own end product, a fitting three-dimensional symbol of the Inka concept of reciprocity.

Rituals to request an abundant and healthy harvest are universal. Although in reality alcohol would kill seeds, the Inka offered a gift to the earth in the belief that its living force would return the plant and produce more grain and beer. To the Inka, maize was symbolically tied into their creation story and their identity. The Inka took credit for introducing maize and referred to it as “the seed of the cave” from which they believed they first emerged. According to oral tradition, the wife of the first king taught the people how to plant and harvest the maize. In real terms, the Inka spread maize agriculture far and wide: along the arid coast, maize could be grown with irrigation canals to water it, and into the high mountains the Inkas built stone terraces to grow maize at high altitudes. Thus, the Inka brought food and drink to all areas, demanding maize and beer as tribute, then sharing it as payment for labor throughout their empire.

The little black ear of maize on this *paccha*, provides another fascinating piece of the puzzle: it was formed out of clay from a two-part mold taken from a real cob of miniature maize. As an artifact, it records a type of maize from Inka times. Black maize is characteristically grown in area around Cuzco, the Inka capital, and this particular species (identified as “Proto-Chancayano”) was a type of black maize exported to the same Chancay Valley as pinpointed by the residual sand. In-depth research and scientific testing can reveal an astonishing amount about ancient works of art and the thoughts and actions of their maker-users. The Museum’s scientific reconstruction of an otherwise unknown local ritual of sharing a sandy (earthy) beer with the living earth, *Pachamama*, shows how deeply the Inka felt a connection with their natural world.

Q&A On Nature:

☞ Explore how the *paccha* represents the cycle of maize growth and the ancient Andean peoples’ cyclical view of nature. How did the artist arrange the parts to reinforce this kind of thinking?

☞ What other objects used by the ancient Americans reflect a similar approach to designing art in a repeating, interconnected universe?

☞ The term “reciprocal” is defined as “given or felt by each toward the other.” How does the *paccha* embody the ancient Andean societies reciprocal relationship with nature?

☞ As a class project, explore chemical and organic fertilizing and how we “feed” the earth to assure successful harvests?

☞ Find out about any other modern experiments in agriculture that reconstruct ancient techniques with success. Research the work of Alan Kolata, Chairman of the Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, who is working in the Lake Titicaca basin of Bolivia and the north coast of Peru to rehabilitate pre-colonial Andean agricultural methods to the benefit of contemporary populations.

☞ History shows us that the ancient Andeans held a ceremony at planting time. In many cultures, festivities are held at planting and/or after harvest. Why? What holiday do Americans hold that descends from earlier harvest festivals? Discuss the reasons for planting and harvest rituals. What role did Native Americans play in our Thanksgiving?

☞ Maize played a role in life cycle rituals that were an integral part of ancient Andean customs. At the initiation ceremony of an Inka male youth into manhood, his hair was cut for the first time and his name changed. He was given gifts by relatives, including maize, llamas, and cloth. How would an Amerindian use these three important items? At marriage, the two families exchanged maize seed. After death, cornmeal was sprinkled around the body of the person. Discuss maize as central to rites of passage and ceremonies in the ancient Americas.

☞ What role does food play in our important rituals such as marriage and death? What kinds of rituals do we celebrate at adolescence? What gifts are involved? Are names changed or added?

Q&A On Artistry

☞ What materials are represented in this piece? Each part of the *paccha* is made with clay, even though the artist uses color and texture to mimic other materials.

☞ The tiny black cob on top of the *paccha* was formed by making a mold from an actual ear of maize. Explore how molds are made. (Here the artist would press each side of the cob into a lump of clay and carefully remove it. The two molds were allowed to dry in the sun, then used to create another clay cobb by pressing wet slabs of clay into the two halves. If you look closely, you can see the seam where the two halves then were joined together.

☞ Find the painting on the *urpu* vessel. It is an abstracted maize plant pattern. Discuss the meaning of abstraction (simplified or reduced to basic elements). In this case it represents maize growing out of the stalk at the typical, forty-five degree angle. Find the parallel lines ending in a dot. That is the corncob coming off of the plant shoot.

Things to Do

☞ Make a mold from a natural product and create a clay version of it. Bring both in to show the class and teach them the method.

☞ Have the students collect examples of the life cycle of corn for a display: kernel, plant, corncob, and back to kernel. Try to find colorful Native American types of maize.

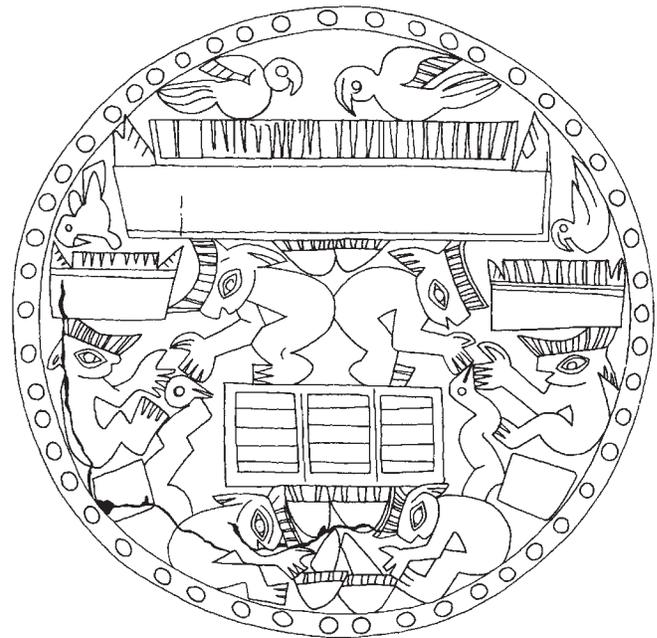
☞ Explore different ways corn is eaten and try some recipes: creamed, corn casserole, tortillas, cornbread. Try to find some original Native American dishes and have a feast.

☞ Inkas represented corn by three parallel lines ending in a dot, the Maya by a cross-hatched pattern. Have the class explore their own abstracted but recognizable versions of fruits and vegetables.

☞ What other products originated in the Americas? Read *Indian Givers*, by Jack Weatherford, to learn about Native American contributions to Western civilization.

In Western tradition, artists often render people, landscapes, and still lives in a realistic manner, valuing a painted surface that imitates a variety of textures, from tapestry threads, to sparkling crystal, leaves on trees, to the vibrant glow of human flesh. In the ancient American traditions, however, carefully observed natural details, such as the spots on a jaguar, are included as part of images that are, on the whole, more abstract. Abstraction is a universal artistic practice that includes simplification of forms reduced to their essential features, for example, corn represented by three lines and a dot. The Amerindian artists were masters of abstracted forms that are as pervasive in textile design as they are in painted patterns on ceramic vessels, or scenes etched and hammered into metal ornaments. Many of the reduced patterns and repeated forms originate in nature. The ancient American aesthetic requires us to disconnect our realistic expectations and become familiar with the symbolic language as it relates to ancient crops, local insects and animals, and bounty from the sea. A case in point is a scene on a pair of magnificent gold earspools (13) from the Chimu Empire discussed on the following page.

Precious materials were restricted to the nobility in the Chimú Empire, which controlled the north coast of what is now Peru from ca. ad 900 to 1470. To justify this elitism, Chimú mythology, claimed that noble men were descended from a gold egg, noble women from a silver one, and commoners from a copper egg. Thus, the most prestigious garments, if not feather-covered, were appliquéd in gold. Spectacular tunics were covered in 7,000 tiny gold squares. Worn with such remarkable, colorful or sparkling garments were large pieces of beaten gold and silver jewelry, including necklaces, arm cuffs, nose ornaments, labrets (lip plugs), and earspools. Earspools are earrings with a disk attached to a spool pushed through a hole in the lobe, often so large that they had to be held in place by bands of cloth tied behind the neck. In the ancient Americas, the larger the earspool, the greater the status and the age of the wearer. Children began wearing small posts and gradually stretched their earlobes until as adults they wore one- to two-inch diameter posts. Later the Spanish invaders called all indigenous noblemen *orejones*, “big ears,” because of the large and impressive ear ornaments. These gold earrings (13), over four-inches in diameter, obviously belonged to a powerful man. We can say “man” unhesitatingly because it was males who wore such finery throughout the ancient Americas. In fact, the abstracted imagery provides some evidence as to the role played by the man who wore these particular



13, 14 Pair of Earspools with *Spondylus* Shell Diving Scene
 South America, Central Andes,
 North Coast, Chimú.
 Late Intermediate Period,
 AD 1000–1450.
 Gold-copper alloy (fronts) and
 silver alloy (posts), textiles.
 1992.15.261a,b.
 Gifts of Cora W. and
 Laurence C. Witten II

earspools as much as a thousand years ago.

The clue to his identity centers on another very prestigious material for the Chimú, a rare, bright red-orange lined shell found far to the north.

Off the shore of what is now Ecuador lie deep beds of the spiny oyster (*Spondylus princeps*) clinging tightly to rocks as much as 120 feet under water. Ancient specialists, much like pearl divers today, were proficient at the dangerous and dramatic harvesting of these precious gems from the sea. This exotic shell's bright lining was carved into jewelry for the elite and ground into powder to make a path only for the feet of the Chimú ruler. One imperial official, who was known as the *Fonga Sigde*, was responsible for overseeing the spiny oyster trade and for "rolling out the red carpet" for the Chimú ruler on state occasions, according to Spanish chronicles. The spiny oyster ornament (left, (15)) in the Carlos collection comes from Mesoamerica. The shell is also found in the warm waters of the Caribbean.

Although narrative detail is rare in ancient American art, apparently the importance of *Spondylus* [spon di luss] shell gathering merited careful delineation on the gold earspools, quite possible worn by the *Fonga Sigde* himself. The scene (14) features a slatted, rectangular raft from which two men lean over to receive the jagged-topped shells from divers in the water below. The illustrator of this scene is telling the whole story within a beautifully designed circular composition. We see the divers at the bottom of the sea reaching for the rounded shells with spiny tops. Two more shells rest below the boat in between the heads of the divers, implying great abundance in the sea. To the sides of the raft, two more divers deliver shells to the boatmen, suggested by the gestures of all four (whose hands evoke the shapes of the shells). Two more shells are prominently placed in the center of the composition, above the backs of the ones receiving the bounty.

The artist has given us the story in pairs: two birds, a common companion to fishermen, two boatmen on the boat, two swimming divers, two harvesting divers, (they may be the same, but illustrating a different time in their work) and several pairs of shells. Since artistic decisions echo the cultural worldview, these repeated compositional pairs come out of the Andean fundamental belief in duality and exchange with nature. They understood humans to be partnered and countered by their connections, whether social (one man hands a shell to another, one man paves the way for the king) or natural (the sea and rocks yield colorful materials for human use). It is also significant that the furled-up sails at the top and on



15 *Spondylus* Shell Earspool
Mesoamerica, Maya.
Spondylus shell.
1994.18.2.
Gift of Cora and
Laurence C. Witten II

either side of the boatmen and their hats also repeat the jagged design of the spiny oyster shells. This zigzag design not only defines the boat, boatmen, and shells, but also unites them into a larger cycle with the ear-spools' noble owner.

Q&A On Body Ornament

☞ Many cultures use oversize accoutrements to represent great power or wealth. For example, in our culture the larger the diamond in an engagement ring, the better. Princess Diana of England wore a twenty-five foot train on her wedding dress when she was married in 1981. Why and how is exaggerated size used to display power or for propagandistic purposes? Think of other examples.

☞ We know from the artifacts that have been found that the people of the Andes and Mesoamerica wore earrings, nose ornaments, and labrets (lip plugs). Many of these same body adornments are popular today. Discuss the reasons for their popularity. Are these reasons different from the Andean reasons?

☞ What rare materials (from "far away" or that are hard to obtain) do we value highly? Why is this?

Things to Do

☞ Artists may use shorthand shapes that are recognizable symbols in their culture. In the Chimú earspools, the rectangles with ruffled edges at the top stand for *Spondylus* shells themselves, as well as the triangular sails that have been rolled up so as not to catch the wind. The fancy edges of the sails, shorthand for "boat," are repeated on the boatmen's ruffled hats or head treatments. As a class project, design a symbol for motorcycle, motorcycle driver, and corresponding helmet, or for in-line skates/skater/ head ornament, or for soccer/soccer player/headband.

☞ The story of the *Spondylus* divers is told as a narrative with the action taking place in one circle. Have each student write a story describing a job they are required to do. Next, illustrate it from beginning to end in one scene. Consider all the various parts of the task and decide how to balance the scene while filling the space.



16 Pedestal Plate with Cocodile-Bird Motif
Central America, Panamá, Macaracas.
Period VII, AD 800–1000.
Ceramic.
1990.11.292.
Gift of William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau

The Praying Mantis plate (18), from Panamá, exemplifies a more abstract artistic vision often found in the art of the ancient Americas. Each culture and period generated their own distinctive essentialized interpretations of subjects illustrating the animal/human connection, even insects such as the praying mantis. The characteristically complex artistry of the Panamanian ceramic designers incorporates distinctive choices: darkly outlined yet visually ambiguous forms, bold overall patterning in which the main image is embedded in a sometimes overpoweringly dynamic background, and the use of bright, high-contrast colors of red, black, buff, and even a unique light purple slip. The indigenous Panamanians also seem to have had an unusual preference for lifting the plate itself high up on a pedestal (16). No other ancient American style favors this ceramic vessel form.

These pedestal plates were typically found in graves, and interestingly, they were often quite intentionally smashed or carefully broken like the one you see illustrated here (19). Many factors may play into this custom that scholars call ritual killing of works of art, including the release of the plate's own life force so that it can properly occupy the 'other world,' or the need for its state to be transformed in harmony with that of the

17 Praying Manits



18 Pedestal Plate with
Praying Mantis Motif
Central America, Panamá, Macaracas.
Period VIB, AD 800–1000.
Ceramic.
1990.11.298.
Gift of William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau



19 Fragmented Pedestal Plate with
Crocodile-headed Figure Motif
Central America, Panama. Macaracas.
Period VIB, AD 800–1000.
Ceramic.
1991.2.2.
Gift of William C. and
Carol W. Thibadeau

deceased, both ripe for rebirth. In the case of the Praying Mantis plate (18), we are fortunate that it was left intact, making it easier to interpret the typically dense and complex images.

As has been seen again and again in the artistry of the ancient Americans, realism is not the most important goal because essence and encoded power are paramount. To understand the subject in (18), it is important to learn the distinctive attributes of insects and their natural context in the Panamanian area. Key features of the tiny but menacing praying mantis have been set into this complex composition. The praying mantis spends ninety percent of its time completely still and camouflaged by its green color to match its verdant environment. Thus, the artist has hidden this insect within the many jutting blades of the background pattern, making it hard for us to see, just as it was camouflaged to its prey. Perhaps the most unmistakable features are the large round eyes set in the triangular head, which mantids will occasionally cock as if about to ask a question. In this pose they could be seen as the possessors of quiet wisdom, perhaps like the shamans responsible for asking supernatural beings for their help. On the other hand, praying mantids display aggression that counters this calm pose, known for their quick attack that is more in keeping with the snarling mouth and spiked, agitated pose of this composition. These insects are fierce carnivores with powerful jaws capable of eating living hummingbirds, mice, and frogs. Their elevated, spiny front legs are used to grasp their prey while they paralyze it with a bite to the neck. They are also cannibals: the female decapitates her mate after he is no longer needed and males will eat babies by the dozen.

The emphasis on this dual nature, the deceptively calm yet dangerous insect, leads to an interesting interpretation. Panama is an area where shamans could often be women, suggesting that this might be the image of a powerful female shaman in her animal spirit state. It is an insect seen as somewhat human with its expressive head positions, yet possessing formidable powers, capable of ruling over its tiny corner of nature.

Q&A On Nature

☞ Mantis is a Greek word that means “prophet” or “soothsayer.” Look at pictures of mantids with triangular heads and attitudes of stillness. Why would they be thought of as prophets? Why do we see them as “praying”?

☞ Discuss the attributes that make the mantis a good animal to have as an alter ego spirit? What other insects could be models for both sublime and violent behavior?

Q&A On Artistry

☞ The images on Panamanian ceramics are so abstract that interpretation may change as more research becomes available. The praying mantis plate is a case in point. When first published in the Museum’s *Handbook* from 1996, it was described as a monkey. Now it seems more like a mantis. What features do those two animals have in common that would have caused the confusion? Compare pictures of monkeys and mantids.

☞ Have the class identify the parts of the mantis in photographs. Find the unusual shaped head, the spines on its arms, the thorax. Compare a photograph with the Panamanian plate. List differences and similarities?

☞ Look up the definition of camouflage. Camouflage was very important to this insect’s survival. Look at the mantis image on the plate. Explore with the class how the artist camouflaged this image within the all-over pattern of the plate. How does this approach reflect shamanic cultures’ emphasis on mystery and the hidden aspects of the cosmos?

Things To Do

☞ Have the students create a Panamanian-style plate. Choose an animal and draw its outline. Now add its mouth, eyes, and ears. Notice repeated patterns and curves that are in the animal drawing and use them to create a background. Place the animal within the background of curves and repeated lines so that it is “camouflaged” within the pattern.



20 Pendant with Harpy Eagle and Human Skull
*Central America, Costa Rica,
 Greater Nicoya, Maya/Costa Rica Interaction.
 Late Period IV–Early Period V, AD 300–600.
 Omphacite.
 1991.4.397.
 Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau*

The Amerindian respect for the natural world is reflected in the many types of powerful animals that they chose to depict. The animals may be physically dominant, like the jaguar, or possess special abilities to hunt at night or burrow under ground, like the bat or armadillo. By wearing the likeness of an animal, there was also the understanding that the person also took on those powers and abilities. This also reflects part of the shamanic belief in interchangeable forms. The materials you wore also signaled your rarefied character, as we saw with the gold earspools above. This Mesoamerican image of a harpy eagle at left (20) and a human skull is carved from a rare and precious greenstone very close to pure jadeite. In ancient Mexico and Central America, the hard greenstones, found in very few natural locations, were reserved for leaders who commanded a great deal of respect, and were entitled to the most exquisite of materials. Only when the greenstone sources were played out did these peoples begin to work gold, introduced from cultures to the south, though gold never replaced jade as an elite artistic material.

Harpy eagles are among the largest and most powerful birds of prey in the world, and form an apt image for elite consumption. These carnivores measure about half the length of the average human, but have a wingspan of six and a half feet. Their relatively short body length serves them well in ensuring the maneuverability necessary for hunting in the forest. Harpy eagles catch and rip into prey, such as monkeys, sloth and opossums, iguanas, large rodents, and other birds with their curved beaks and their talons, which can measure up to five inches long. This is comparable to the claws of the much larger grizzly bear. Harpy eagles, like jaguars, dominate their environment. The harpy eagle can be differentiated from other raptors by its two tufts of feathers on the side of the head resembling ears. In the case of this pendant (20), shown in profile, only one group of feathers is visible.

This harpy eagle displays the essential features—the strong, hooked beak topped by the cere, or fleshy swelling that protrudes over the top of the beak. The body of the eagle is abstracted to form an “S” shaped curve ending in two, long tail feathers. In the pendant, an eagle has been placed on top of a human skull. Such juxtaposition can be interpreted in several related ways. Animal spirits tend to be placed above humans and visions come from “above.” Powerful birds are logical

shamanic animals, given that shamans report that they experience flight and thereby attain vivid aerial perspectives on our world below. The harpy eagle could also be seen as the animal spirit emerging from the dead, as symbolized by the skull. (See (8) on p. 15, *Incense Burner with Sun God–Jaguar God of the Underworld Lid*). In addition, the combination could represent metaphorically a victorious battle in the natural realm: the harpy eagle, the consummate consumer of carrion, shown alight on a victim's skull. Shamans also are responsible for the ideal interaction of the living and the dead in the spirit world, and—like a raptor—may act aggressively to fight illness, malevolent enemies, and supernatural forces. All these elements, which are related in the coherent Amerindian worldview, may figure in the unusual artistic combination.

Whatever the subject matter, greenstone was carved throughout Mesoamerica and Central America, whether the steel-hard jadeite from its one source in what is now southern Guatemala or other softer, more readily available types such as serpentinite. All were valued for their color, reflecting thriving nature, abundant water, and plant life. Interestingly, jadeite is found below or in water sources and thus symbolically seemed to spawn and nurture the plentiful green plants above and around it. Another aspect of carved greenstones' great status was the intensive labor involved in their carving; the harder stones were reserved only for high status people who both could procure them and have others spend their lives laboriously carving elaborate ornaments. The process of carving greenstone was time consuming and tedious, yet necessitated consummate skill. The only available material capable of sculpting greenstone was powdered quartz, fine sand, which alone is harder than jadeite. Using tropical hardwood saws and chisels, lapidaries slowly scraped and rubbed (abraded) the quartz powder over the surface to block out shapes and incise indentations, lines, curves, and holes to decorate it.

The execution of holes through these objects, since most were suspended as jewelry, was even more extraordinary. Even an object as seemingly simple as a bead involved quite a challenge, since two conical shaped drills, grinding the quartz powder into each end of the stone, had to ultimately meet in the center without breaking the piece. Artists could not see the interior of the stone and had to maintain the same angles for hour after hour, day after day, or risk failure. One extraordinary Costa Rican bead is two feet long. The Carlos

pendant has a hole from the top of the harpy eagle's head, to the back of the skull's jaw and out the bottom, over two inches of hole through a piece only 5/16th of an inch thick at its widest. It seems that carvers would tackle the hole first, knowing that if they missed, it would be the end of the bead or ornament. (Since the material was so special, however, broken objects were recycled into smaller beads.) This hole allowed the harpy eagle to be suspended on a necklace vertically, so that the images were upright. The cord had to have been threaded through a bead or two at the bottom and back up through the thin hole. To make the other openings in the image, such as the long openings for the two mouths, the carver drilled a sequence of holes and carefully broke out the membrane in between. The piece would then be smoothed with abrading powder around the edges of the hole to remove the scallops. The brilliant greenstone harpy eagle-skull pendant, with its powerful and deadly imagery in painstakingly carved designs, symbolized dominance in the natural and the artistic realms alike.

Q&A On Nature

☞ Today, in Panama and Central America, the harpy eagle is declining dramatically in numbers. Visit the Harpy Eagle Conservation Project on the internet at www.peregrinefund.org to find photographs and field notes by students working in Panama to help restore the eagles' depleted population.

☞ Jadeite is a specific mineral that is extremely rare. Less than ten sources have been located throughout the world. In the ancient Americas, it is only found in the Motagua Valley of Guatemala. The Amerindians' fascination with the rarity and sparkle of the green stone led them to use that and similar green minerals, as is the case with the harpy eagle pendant (made of omphacite, a mineral with more calcium and magnesium than jadeite).

☞ Find the Motagua Valley in Guatemala.

☞ Research other areas of the world where jadeite is found. What makes jadeite so rare? How is it formed?

☞ How did other pre-industrial cultures carve hard stone?

Q&A On Artistry

☞ Carvers might have worked for days or months on a horizontal bead, perhaps more on a pendant like the harpy eagle-skull. This gives us more interesting observations on the ancient American worldview. Survival was the most important consideration and occupied most of the population. But artists were given time to create and it did not matter how much time it took them to do so. How does this compare to our culture, which is in a great hurry and prizes efficiency above many other things? The implications are that there was specialization within the community and since the artists' work was recognized and valued, they might have been fed and supported by others. Discuss other decorative or useful objects that would have come out of artists' workshops. Think about materials. Would the artists work with many different types of materials, or specialize in one area?

☞ From your studies of European exploration, what materials did the Spanish and English value? What were they looking for beyond the Western Hemisphere?

☞ Compare the Amerindian attitude towards rare materials with the European explorers' view. The ancient Americans believed that an object's value included the time and artistry involved in its creation. The Spanish explorers were driven by the need for raw gold and were primarily interested in expanding their supplies.

☞ When the Spanish melted a gold piece, the Amerindians were shocked. It seemed to them that the Spanish had destroyed the sacred value of the crafted gold object. When the Spanish traded their common green glass beads for gold they thought the Indians were misguided or worse. Why do cultures interpret each other according to their own value system? How does this harm relations between differing cultures? Who loses?

☞ Discuss other examples of works of art being destroyed for the value of the crude material. For example, most original bronze sculpture from ancient Greece does not exist (or remains in marble copies) because the material was melted down for re-use.

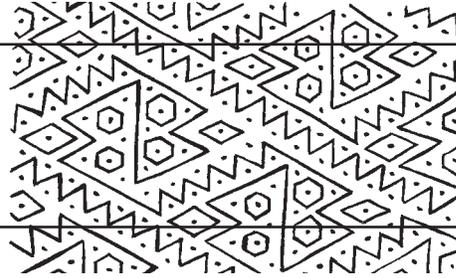
☞ Discuss the objects that take a lot of time to make in our culture? Invite a ceramic or textile artist to come to class with examples of their work. Compare these with mass produced counterparts and discuss the value and disadvantage of each. What kinds of more common, mass-produced objects imitate ones that are labor-intensive or made from rare materials? How do we know the difference?

☞ Things to Do

Using a bar of Ivory soap and wooden dowels or chopsticks, have each student try carving a hole through the block. Want a bigger challenge? Try shaping the bar into a large, horizontal bead, a geometric shape, or simple animal.

☞ Obtain some serpentine from a scientific supply house and try to make a mark in it with sand. Experiment outside of school while watching television or chatting with friends. Count up how many hours it took.

Textile Primacy *in the Ancient Andes*



Textiles in the ancient andes held a preminent place among the arts. Finely woven cloth was greatly valued in all cultures from Mesoamerica southward, but especially in South America. In fact, textiles (in the sense of worked fiber) were the first recognizable art form in the Andes, with woven basket fragments from Guitarrero Cave in Peru dating as early as 8600 bc. By comparison, the first fired clay artifacts were not commonly made until 1800 bc. To appreciate this very early textile production within world history, only the famous cave paintings from Lascaux precede it (dating from between 10,000 and 15,000 bc), while the first pyramid in Egypt was built in 2660 bc, Stonehenge dates to 1650 bc, the colossal Olmec heads to about 1000 bc, and the Great Wall of China was built in the seventh century bc.

Textiles in the ancient Americas held such high status that the Inka wove the finest tapestries expressly to be burnt as offerings to the sun, the greatest of the celestial powers. Cloth was presented as diplomatic gifts to the invading Spanish in order to demonstrate the Inkas' superior wealth and sophisticated artistic ability.

The drawing below (21), by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, a 16th century Spanish/Kechwa Indian chronicler, illustrates an Inka ruler (known as the *Sapa*, or "Unique," Inka) wearing his finely woven royal tunic. Its hundreds of brightly colored geometric patterns seem to represent the many ethnic identities of his ten million or more subjects. Interspersed are motifs consisting of miniature Inka militia tunics (the black and white checkerboards with red yokes), apparently so as to represent the Inka as the "Commander in Chief" of the world's largest empire at the time.

This imperial tunic motif (22) evokes the Inka name of their empire, *Tawantinsuyo*, "The Land of the Four Quarters." You can see this pattern in the drawing at left.

21 Drawing by Guaman Poma de Ayala, from *Nueva Cronica Y Buen Gobierno*, 1615.

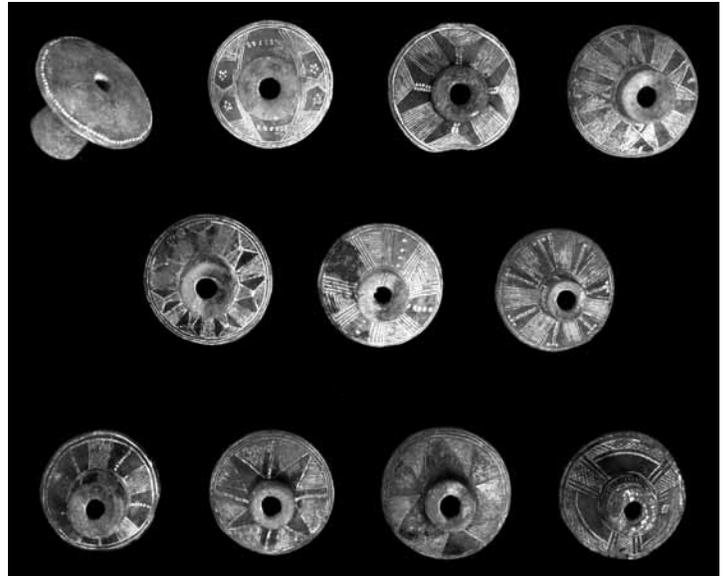


22 Fragment of an Inka Key Tunic Central Andes, Inka. Late Horizon, AD 1430–1534. Interlocked tapestry. Cotton, (*Gossypium barbadense*) warps, camelid fiber wefts, natural dyes. 2002.1.128 Ex coll. C. Clay and Virginia Aldridge

The creation of Inka textiles, and those of the many earlier Andean cultures, required the use of many tools. In one sense these tools were surprisingly simple, just bars of wood and circles of clay, especially considering the fine quality of the resulting cloth. (The Inka royal tunic has over 300 weft threads per inch.) Yet, despite this spare technology, since textiles were highly valued, the tools used to create them were likewise treated as tiny works of art. Such “art-tools,” practical objects nonetheless highly elaborated, were characteristic of all ancient American cultures. While we usually make a distinction between the “useful” and the “artistic,” Amerindians made functional things beautiful. Art-tools not only served their owners in life, but also traveled with them into the afterlife as grave offerings: spindles and whorls often were placed in reed baskets and interred with Andean women, apparently the majority of the weavers.

Spindles were carved from wood and spindle whorls modeled from clay. A spindle is a thin, smooth stick that the spinner turns around to give twist to the strands of raw fiber in order to make a thread. The spinner winds the thread onto the spindle’s shaft above a bead or cylinder, the spindle whorl (23), which helps keep the thread in place. These whorls are held onto the shaft by a bit of unspun fiber wedged between the two. Later the spindle can be used as a bobbin, carrying the thread across the emerging cloth face during the weaving process.

Both spindles and whorls were decorated in the Andes. Many spindles were painted with stripes, yet these patterns were visible only before the thread was made or after the bobbin was emptied. The whorls were incised on the underside with geometric patterns (the illustration shows them bases up). Like the “invisible” spindle decoration, the spinner could not see the whorl’s patterns while working. Although such hidden decoration may seem superfluous, Andean cultures valued art that was not necessarily visible to humans, as part of their belief in the living force found in all things, including Mother Earth. To Andeans, *Pachamama* sees all, especially from her perspective below our feet, and art needed to be perfect for Her as well as us. In Western culture we may expect a work of art to have one main finished or elaborated face, whereas the ancient American aesthetic valued art that was equally finished on all sides, even the bottom of a container (see (9) *Brownware Vessel with Intertwined Rattlesnakes*, p. 17). We can infer from these practices a widespread belief in the importance of the whole creative process, from the tools to the completely finished product.



23 Spindle Whorls
South America, Northern Andes, Colombia, Middle Cauca region. Period and date unknown. Ceramic.
Top row: 1992.15.78, 1990.11.26, 1990.11.302, 1992.15.77; center row: 1990.11.300, 1992.15.82, 1992.15.88; bottom row: 1992.15.87, 1992.15.75, 1992.15.79, 1992.15.73. 1990 accession numbers, gifts of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau; 1992 accession numbers, gifts of Cora and Laurence C. Witten II



24 Tapestry Fragment with Monkey Motifs
*South America, Central Andes,
Central Coast, Chancay.
Late Intermediate, AD 1000–1450.
Camelid fiber and cotton,
slit tapestry with wrapped warps.
1991.2.162.
Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau*

The creation of a textile, such as this tapestry (24), featuring one-inch high monkey motifs, required effort from almost everyone in the society, people living along the coasts growing cotton, highlanders herding fur-bearing camelids such as alpacas and llamas, and those in between gathering dyestuffs. To begin with a cotton seed for a textile like this one and produce a fine warp, (the structural threads first placed on the loom) and to obtain a colorfully dyed weft (the crosswise pattern-bearing threads) involved a great deal of time and labor by a great number of people.

Growing cotton necessitated massive irrigation of the dry desert coast and careful field preparation; the planting, tending, and harvesting of the plants; and finally the ginning (removal of the seeds), cleaning, and combing of the fibers to a uniform direction (carding). After the fibers were carded they were spun (twisted in one direction), then plied (two or more threads retwisted to make a strong, straight thread). Miles and miles of thread were needed for the many thousands of cloths created. For example, there are an estimated six to nine miles in each tunic created by the Wari, precursors of the Inka. Looms also had to be constructed from wooden bars cut and carved then lashed together. Finally the threading of the loom and the actual weaving could begin.

Extracting camelid fiber (the fur of New World camels, such as llamas, alpacas, guanacos, and vicunas) required even more labor, including years of constant herding and the periodic shearing of the animals. Like cotton, the fur had to be laboriously washed, carded, spun, and plied before it was ready to be dyed. The consummate Andean dyeing tradition, producing natural colors still vibrant after thousands of years, required locating, picking, and extracting the dye from plants and even animals, such as the cochineal beetle, which produced brilliant scarlet and pink. The actual dyeing processes took from hours to days in the case of indigo used to make blue, green, and purple.

Andean textiles form the longest continuous fiber record in world history and one of the most impressive. From gossamer cotton scarves to knotted cord writing, these textiles may delight—and even surprise us, illustrating not only the talent, but also the unique mindset of their makers.

Things to Do

☞ Have students bring contemporary textiles to school for an exhibition. Include hand-made blouses, wall hangings, and rugs from Peru, Mexico, or Guatemala. Or find pictures of them. How do these compare to the ancient Andean textiles in materials, finish, and design? Do any of the patterns have symbolic meanings, such as the sun, a particular town, or agricultural fields? Are any animals shown that are either indigenous to the Americas (llamas, dogs, turkeys) or introduced by Europeans (sheep, cows, or horses)?

☞ All cultures have developed woven textiles designed and made by women artists. Research weaving practices in a number of countries including Greece, Egypt, and the Kuba people of Ghana.

☞ All cultures rely on textiles for practical uses. Look around your classroom to find a variety of weaving examples, such as clothing, net bags on backpacks, curtains, and wall hangings. What about hair braids or friendship bracelets?

☞ After looking at and discussing this royal Inka tunic, have your students design a modern tunic with symbols for your city's diversity, geography, history, architecture, government, and any other themes they might choose.

☞ Take a field trip to see sheep shearing or a weaving demonstration or a llama show (an annual event at the Georgia International Horse Park in Conyers, see <http://www.georgiahorsepark.com/> for the schedule).

☞ Research the rug manufacturing businesses in North Georgia. Griffin, and Cabbage Town in Atlanta were founded around a textile mill. Invite some older residents of Cabbage Town to talk to your class about the mill.

☞ Invite a guest artist from the Carlos Museum to do the Andean Threads workshop.

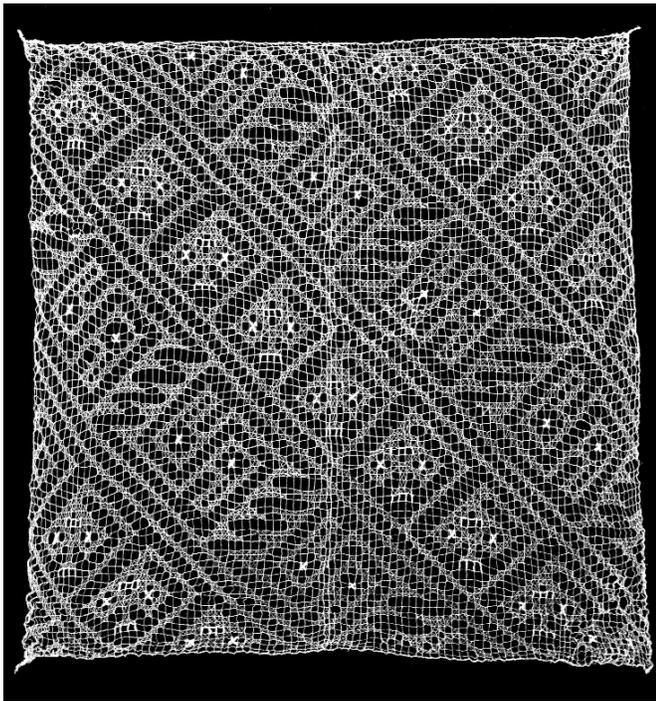
Q&A On Textile Primacy

☞ Discuss the importance of textiles in our culture.

☞ What special textiles do we make for our leaders to wear (priests, presidents, princes, rock stars, beauty queens, etc.)? What about special occasions (weddings, confirmation, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, church, Halloween)?

☞ How do machine weaving and chemical dyeing make our clothes different from hand-woven ones?

☞ Do we have “art-tools” in our culture? Think about decorative fireplace implements, door knockers, sun dials? Add to the list.



25 Openwork Headcloth with Bird and Snake/Feline Motifs

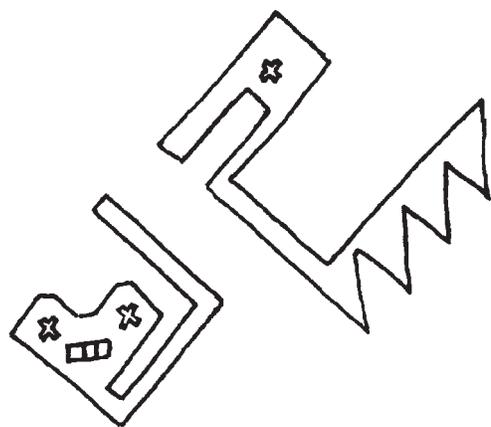
South America, Central Andes, Central Coast, Chancay.

Late Intermediate Period, AD 1000–1450.

*Cotton, *Gossypium barbadense*.*

1989.8.163.

Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau



26 Snake/Feline and Pelican design

The weavers of the Chancay culture are renowned among the legendary textile artists of the Andes. Thin threads, even execution, and precise detailing of figural and geometric repeats are the hallmarks of Chancay textiles. The monochrome technique (25) is an arduous type of embroidery, in which certain squares of a loose grid are filled in with extra threads (like a free-form darning) to form more solid areas. In this piece, these more opaque sections make up two sets of motifs: a series of interlocked long-beaked birds, probably pelicans, and a line of motifs that can be read one way as cats and the other way as snakes (26). You may have to squint your eyes to make them easier to interpret.

In the shamanic cultures of the Andes, these three motifs are typical animals adopted by shamans as their alter ego or power spirit (the transformed animal self lending that person special abilities to fly, swim, or burrow in search of divine knowledge). The representation of the bird, cat, and snake in this headcloth, at left, can be interpreted as placing these power spirits on the head, the origin of visions and source of communication with other realms. Many women, perhaps including the one who wore this scarf, were shamans in their community.

The Chancay, like nearly all Andean weavers, wove fabric to shape. In other words, unlike us, they only very rarely made a length of cloth, cut it into pieces, and sewed them together to form garments. This would have been seen as sacrilegious, as if destroying the life force of the textile. Consequently, the Colonial Spanish had difficulty convincing “Indian” weavers to adopt European tailoring practices. According to Chancay custom, this headcloth was created on the loom, just as it is seen here. However, we see the pattern as clearly as the original weaver did only because it has been stretched and mounted for preservation and photographic purposes. The threads of this headcloth were only spun, not plied, so they twist around on themselves and have elasticity. The fabric springs together, a bit like the child’s string game Jacob’s Ladder when you let go. Therefore, when the headcloth was worn loosely, the images would have collapsed together as only an undifferentiated mass of white threads. Such deliberate obscuring of imagery (like the finishing of unseen parts of weaving tools or bases of containers mentioned above) may seem counter-

productive to us, since we require a human audience to recognize an object and define it as art. However, this acceptance of hidden forms is deeply and consistently Andean. Although the images were withheld from view when worn, it was deemed crucial that the textile should have the sacred and powerful patterns. The “essence” of such objects takes on even greater power when the supernatural subjects are contained, but remain unseen.

Q&A On Beliefs about Textiles

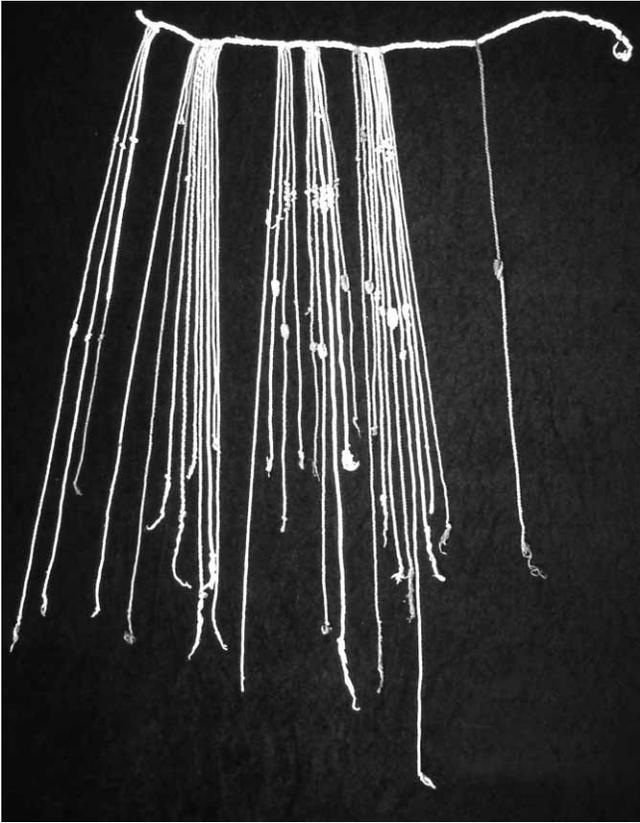
☞ In the ancient Americas the role and status of a person was defined by the type of clothing he or she wore. Discuss clothing as status. What uniforms, official and not, do we recognize? Why do societies use clothing to make distinctions and hierarchies.

☞ Whereas Western cultures place the greatest emphasis on human life, many other cultures believe that living spirits embody inanimate objects as well. In contrast to Amerindians’ spiritual belief in the unity of all life, contemporary American popular culture toys with anthropomorphizing (giving a ‘human’ personality) to objects. For example, in the *Wizard of Oz* the apple tree throws apples at Dorothy, and in *Beauty and the Beast* Chip the Cup and the other ‘living objects’ in the enchanted castle speak, sing, dance, and influence the story’s unfolding. Think of other examples of this Western approach and how it differs from ancient American belief that objects had their own distinct spirits. Have the class write a story about an inanimate object that sees, hears, and “comes to life” in our world, perhaps both from our point of view and from a Native American one.

Things to Do

☞ Creating patterns that can be interpreted in several ways, like the headcloth’s cat/snake motif, requires a keen sense of design. Explore other Chancay textile designs, the prints of M.C. Escher, and some of Salvador Dali’s work for other such “double reading” motifs. Think about what artists mean by making images that are two things at once. Does it make their art interesting, confusing, or both? What deeper conceptual or spiritual meaning might this have?

☞ Using graph paper, have the students copy the bird, cat, and snake design from the Chancay Headcloth and design their own geometric version of an animal. For a more advanced project, make a pattern that can be interlocked, like the two birds.



27 *Quipu* (Knot Record)
 Central Andes, Inka.
 Late Horizon, AD 1430–1534.
 Cotton (*Gossypium barbadense*)
 natural dyes (including indigo).
 2002.1.130.
 Ex coll. C. Clay and Virginia Aldridge



28 Drawing of a *Quipu*
 by Guaman Poma de Ayala
 from *Nueva Cronica Y
 Buen Gobierno*, 1615

The people of the Andes used fibers from plants and animals to adapt and survive in their marginal, diverse climates: the coastal desert, the rugged Andes Mountains, and the jungle to the east. The coastal desert required protective clothing and knotted fishing nets to catch the abundant fish carried by the warm Humboldt Current. The Andes mountain range, second highest in the world, posed challenges for living and moving around that forced a human dependence on the New World camelids. These animals could navigate the rocky terrain with their two-toed feet. Llamas were raised not only for their fine, warm hair, but also to serve an important role as a pack animal. In the highlands, carrying cloths, bags, and other portable containers was crucial, as were plant fiber rope bridges to span impassable chasms. The jungle's wet environment meant that plant fibers were used for roofs, hammocks, and containers. In all these climates, textiles were the solution to life's many problems.

Perhaps the most unique and ingenious function for fiber in the Andes was the knotted string record and writing device called the *quipu* [kee-poo]. The *quipu* (27) was used to keep accounts of crops and trade goods, census figures, and even history, astronomy, and poetry. Because the Inka oversaw the largest empire in the world during their time, building over 20,000 miles of road to connect the empire, they needed an elegant and ecologically appropriate system of information management. With the aid of the *quipu*, they efficiently conquered and governed an expansive empire stretching more than 3,000 miles from north to south. Since this vast territory spanning three environmental zones provided different products, trade between regions was the only way for everyone to survive. From all corners of the empire, the Inka gathered and redistributed goods, including maize (corn), potatoes, lima beans, fish, cloth, dyestuffs, thread, and raw fibers. In this enormous undertaking, one great advantage of the *quipu* was its portability. Another image from Guaman Poma (28) shows how easily it could be rolled up and transported to convey crop status, current census numbers, or the news of natural disaster. During the Spanish takeover, a man brought to the ruler Atahualpa a *quipu* that recorded the number of textiles the invaders had stolen from his warehouses in the city of Tumbes; further evidence of the value the Andeans placed on textiles.

A few decades after the Spanish victory, Guaman Poma de Ayala (“Hawk Puma”) wrote a 1,000-plus page letter to King Philip iii complaining about Spanish colonial governance. He also presented copious evidence about Inka traditions before they were destroyed. Guaman Poma included his own images of kings and queens, workers, and farmers; of celebrations and burials, as well as of *quipus* and their makers called *quipucamayocs*, or knot makers. The drawing, at right (29), shows the *quipucamayoc* [kee poo ca ma gawk] displaying the *quipu*. Each Inka village had at least four *quipucamayocs* and the capital city of Cuzco had over four hundred. They “read” the knots with their hands, from left to right as we do, and recited the facts to their superiors. Old *quipus* were kept in a special building in Cuzco, much like our libraries or archives.

The Inka mathematical system was actually very similar to our own base ten system including the concept of zero, as well as all four mathematical operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division as well as fractions. Various types of knots were tied onto the pendant strings hanging down from a horizontal main cord, grouped in units with the ones place toward the ends of the pendants and higher numbers (tens, hundreds, thousands) closer to the main cord. *Quipus* were not like an abacus used to actively count or calculate, but recorded numbers (including blank strings for zeros) and narrative information. Each string and its knots may represent numbers such as 483 units of maize, 129 unwed women in the province, or a code for “then the king went south” or “I love you.” Unfortunately, even though there are several Guaman Poma drawings of *quipus* being used, there are no known written records that explain how they recorded narrative information, a system too complex and foreign for the Spanish to document. Therefore, the exact subject of the Carlos *quipu* remains conjecture, although specific meanings must lie within its variety of colored strings, groups of pendants, and types of knots. The blue cords, dyed with rare indigo, may be especially significant. There are only about 600 known *quipus* which, for now, remain to be fully decoded.



29 A *quipucamayoc* “read” the *quipu* knots with his hands, from left to right as we do, and recited the facts to his superiors.

Q&A On the *Quipu*

☞ The Inka empire was the largest in the world in the late 15th to early 16th centuries and communication was key to keeping such a widespread organization together. Runners covered the 20,000 miles of roads, passing each other *quipus* and shouting messages; they could go faster than the Spanish on horseback as an early Colonial competition proved. Assign a research project to discover how these roads were constructed. What materials did they use? What other cultures used roads and message runners? How long was the Roman road system by comparison? If “all roads lead to Rome” where do all Inka roads lead?

☞ Discuss and compare the *quipu* format and the types of buildings connected by the Inka road with the storage facilities, government buildings, and ways of communicating found in your city.

☞ How do we keep records differently from the Inka? Where are government records stored?

☞ What do our types of records tell about our society?

☞ How is a *quipu* like and not like a computer?

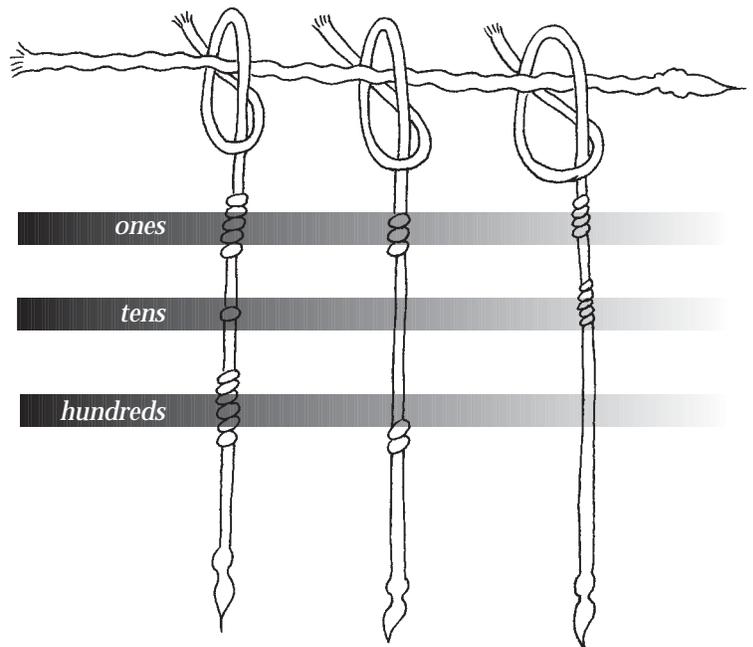
☞ How do we carry our records around, or is it not as important to us? Are our “invisible” computer records as unusual in their way as knotted string writing?

☞ What other kinds of writing/record keeping did the ancient world use? Find these in the Carlos Museum.

Things to Do

☞ Have each student make a *quipu*. Record the ages of family members, current baseball stats, the ingredients in a recipe, or the contents of the school library. If you need an extra challenge, figure out a way to write a (simple) poem or a historical account! For each *quipu*, include a written guide to the code so that it can be deciphered (blue threads are for males, red for females, etc.) and have other students try to “read” it. What are the advantages of a *quipu* over a newspaper, photographic, or computer record? Disadvantages?

Quipu diagram



Since textiles were a primary artistic expression and involved the contribution of so many people, their pervasive presence profoundly affected other art forms, such as metalwork and ceramics. Non-textile arts depict the animals that gave their fur to make cloth, show evidence of being wrapped in actual cloths themselves, and detail the remarkable clothing made and worn by the people of the Andes.

The handle of this Inka bronze ceremonial knife (30), at right, called a *tumi*, [too mee], is topped with a cast image of a mother and baby llama, one of the camels that provided silky fur for the Andean textile tradition. A key animal to Andean life, llamas can be identified by their characteristic two-toed feet that allow them to maneuver the steep and rocky terrain of the Andes, and even climb steps on the steep Inka roads. The llama, alpaca, guanaco, and vicuña are the world's oldest camels (sometimes called camelids); the former two were domesticated thousands of years before the Common Era, while the latter remain wild. Since the temperature changes in the Andes can be extreme, dropping as much as fifty degrees when night falls, camelids' warm yet lightweight wool was essential to human survival at high altitudes. The llama also could be eaten, their dung burned for fuel, their bones and sinews were used for ties, and they were the main pack animal used to bring food and other goods over the difficult landscape. Consequently, camelids can aptly symbolize the hardiness, efficiency, and dominance of the highland people, as they do in this knife.

This ceremonial knife (its blade was never sharp) had ritual uses. It represented the sacrifice of the precious llama, which was undertaken as a religious ritual to propitiate the supernatural to provide for animal and human fertility. To show a baby llama, as here, was to celebrate that fecundity, even as the knife foretold the animal's necessary demise. Life and death were perceived in their cyclical interdependence in the rugged Andes. Finally, there is evidence that this special symbolic knife was ceremoniously wrapped and protected in a cloth, almost certainly made of camelid fiber itself. The remains of this textile can be seen covering the left hand edge of the wide blade. The over-and-under pattern of threads have been preserved for us through a chemical change that over time, has turned the fibers into metal.



30 *Tumi* (Ceremonial Knife) with Two Llamas
South America, Central Andes, Inka.
Late Horizon, AD 1440–1540.
Copper-silver alloy with trace arsenic and gold.
1994.18.40.
Gift of Cora and Laurence C. Witten II

Q&A and Things To Do:

🔗 Research camelids in National Geographic and in nature and animal books. What other characteristics might artists emphasize (like the two toes)? What colors does their fur come in naturally? Can they be ridden? Find ceramic images of llamas in Andean art. Are there baby animals in other Andean and ancient American art?

🔗 Visit a llama farm or Zoo Atlanta. Observe their behavior toward each other and toward humans. How tame are they? Draw them in different typical poses. Feel how soft their hair is. Order some alpaca fiber or yarn and make it into a scarf.

🔗 Discuss animals that might be considered crucial to our survival today? How are animals used for practical and “aesthetic” purposes (from cows that are eaten to cats that are entered in competitions)? Do we include animals in any of our religious rituals?

The small effigy vessel (31), made in the form of a human being, reveals quite a bit about textiles and clothing from the Central Andes, even though it is made from clay. A man is shown wearing several brightly colored garments, a black-and-white headband, a reddish-brown cloak and an orange-and-gray belt. The headband is carefully painted to show how it crosses over itself as it wraps around his head. Its pattern features a stepped fret motif. This is a long-standing, high-status design found throughout the Americas associated with important people. He wears a tunic, its irregular circular patterns indicating it was tie-dyed. Perhaps most interesting of all, his double belt ends in snake heads, potent symbols of transformation as they molt, changing themselves dramatically many times a year. In several Andean cultures, only shamans wear snake images. It is understandable then, that the ceramic artist was specific about this man's clothing, something that defined a person's role, status, and importance in Andean society, as it does around the world. His stepped fret motif, time-consuming dyed material, and fantastical belts would all signal via the language of textiles that this man was an intermediary with the spirit world and so worthy of respect and artistic commemoration.

31 Male Effigy Vessel with Tie-Dye Tunic
*South America, Central Andes,
South Coast, Nasca.
Early Intermediate Period, AD 1–650.
Ceramic.
1989.8.101.
Gift of William C.
and Carol W. Thibadeau*



Things to Do

☞ Have the class try weaving on a paper loom with straw as the natural fiber. Each student will need 25 strands of straw or raffia. String each strand through the notches of a cardboard loom. This is the warp. Tape securely to the back and trim strands evenly as in the illustration.

To Weave: Weave strands of straw in-and-out across the loom from the bottom to the top. They will be loose at each end.

Finish: Remove the tape from the back and take the strands out of the notches. Gather several together and tie off. Repeat the process and you will have a little woven mat.

☞ Make a textile center with books from the library. Experiment with spinning and natural dyeing.

☞ For a written assessment, have students write a story about an Inka ruler, herding camels, or walking a *quipu* to the highest mountain in the Andes. Imagine the life of a woman weaver a thousand years ago.

☞ For more information about the contributions of women, read *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years: Women, Cloth, and Society in Early Times* by Elizabeth Wayland Barber.

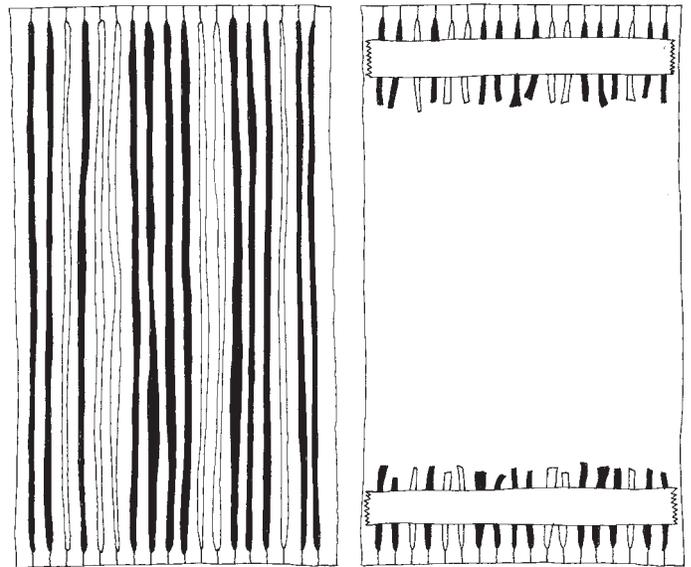
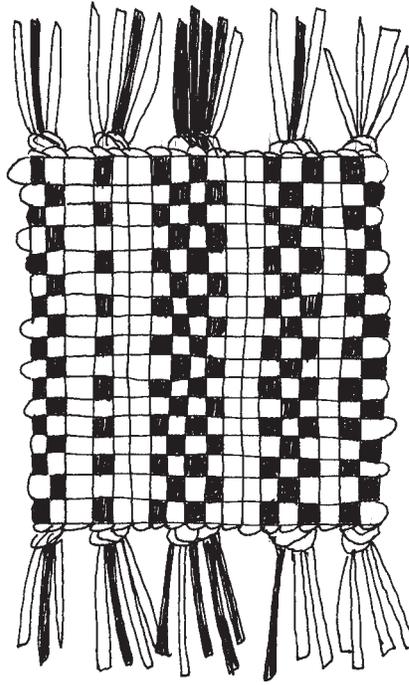
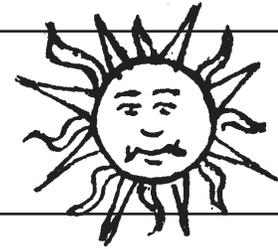


Figure 1 Woven mat

Figure 2 Warp threads (L);
back (R) with tape strips

Document-Based Questions



Note to the teacher

The importance of primary sources in teaching cannot be underestimated. Works of art provide the only direct experience with ancient cultures available to students. They are primary sources just as letters, diaries, and other documents. Works of art were created during the time period and by the artists and craftspeople who lived within and responded to a specific culture and environment. Original objects are containers of the worldview of the cultures they represent. They tell us about the availability of materials, technical approaches to the design and manufacture of useful wares, the importance (or not) of imagery, and the values of the society. Through close study, objects may even convey who made the piece, for whom, and how it was used.

Document-based questions (dbqs) are being used, not only in advanced placement classes, but also in the elementary grades as a way to “walk in the path” of the people and civilization being explored. dbqs assess the ability of each student to work with objects as original historical sources. Museum collections are key to this analysis of material culture by bringing primary sources into the classroom through web sites, visual materials, and tours of the collections. This section provides teachers with several dbqs to be used with the study of the ancient Americas and as an assessment tool for this resource unit.

In order to discuss objects as primary source material, teachers should provide opportunities for students to discuss what they see, taking into consideration the material, form, texture, technique, shape, and color of the object. These formal elements of art can provide deeper insight into the use of the object. Begin by asking questions addressing the visual nature of the artwork:

- ☞ What are the most prominent elements of this work: Line? Shape? Pattern? Texture? Color?
- ☞ How does the artist’s use of these formal elements relate to the subject or content of this work? For example, when looking at the (5) bat flute (p. 10), does the texture mimic that of a real bat? Do the incised lines and painted stripes on the face of the (3) *Rosales Zoned Engraved Effigy* (p. 8) add emphasis to a particular part of the figure?
- ☞ How does the content reflect the beliefs of the civilization?
- ☞ Can you draw a conclusion as to the object’s use?

The dbqs require many of the same skills used in developing a research paper: interpreting primary and secondary sources, evaluating sources, considering multiple points of view, using historic evidence, developing and supporting a thesis. In addition, the dbqs require the students to be able to talk about the formal elements of the objects; in other words, a thorough exploration of what they see. The second question for each document (object) involves interpreting the object within the ancient American cultural context based on prior knowledge gained from this resource packet. The student will write an essay using the documents, secondary sources, and their understanding of history to respond to the questions.

Question One: *Elementary, Middle, or High School Students*

Directions: The following questions are based on the image of the *paccha* from the Michael C. Carlos Museum's Art of the Ancient Americas collection, and a drawing from the 17th century. This question is designed to test your ability to work with art historical evidence as the source of information. When responding to the questions take into account the object's design, stylistic qualities and patterns, materials, and evidence of wear.

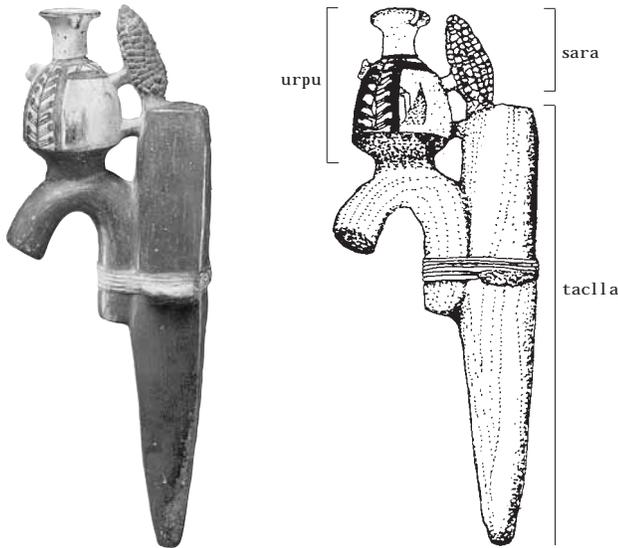
Document a

33 *Paccha* (Ritual Watering Vessel)

South America, Central Andes, Inka.

Late Horizon, AD 1440–1540. Ceramic. 1989.8.161.

Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau.



Document b

34 This drawing by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, a Spanish/Kechwa Indian chronicler, dates from 1613. It illustrates a man forcing a *taclla* into the ground, a woman digging with a hand-held plow further breaking open the earth, and another woman carrying off the harvest.

Questions for Students

1. Describe the three distinct parts of the *paccha*. Note each shape, color, pattern, texture, and the physical relationship of each object to the whole.
2. The separate parts of the *paccha* all have to do with corn. Taken as a whole, what is the implied meaning of the *paccha* as a ritual tool? How does the *paccha* reflect the ancient Andean societies reciprocal relationship with the earth?

Background

The primary crop grown by the Inka was maize. While it was consumed in a variety of forms (baked, roasted, popped, ground), fermented maize or *chicha* (corn beer) was one of the most popular and widely consumed beverages in the empire. Early Spanish reports state that this drink was used in many Inka rites and celebrations. The pouring of *chicha* as a libation offering, and drinking *chicha* became an important way of honoring the natural forces that helped in the production of the crop.

The nature of the individual elements represented on the *paccha* body mirror the notion of irrigating the earth. While each piece is composed of clay, the potter used clay slip coats of red, black, and white to accentuate and identify the three individual elements familiar to the Inka: a miniature foot plow (*taclla*), a corn beer storage vessel (*urpu*), and an ear of corn. *Tacclas* were used by farmers to churn up the earth in preparation for seeding and irrigating. A traditional Inka vessel form known as an *urpu* rests on top of the arched arm of the *paccha* body. The fern-like motif of parallel bands stemming from a vertical line and ending in solid dots, common to Inka *urpus* of all sizes, is believed to be an abstracted maize shoot. The Inka used larger *urpus* to transport raw maize from the fields to storage facilities as well as containers for processing, fermenting, and distributing *chicha*. Attached to the vessel by clay hinges and resting on the lip of the *paccha* base is a depiction of a corncob free of its husk. The ear of corn completes the *paccha* as the last element.

Excerpted from: Klemm, Peri M. "The Paccha Performed: An Exploration of the Ritual Use of an Inka Ceramic vessel from the Michael C. Carlos Museum." Master's thesis, Art History Department, Emory University, 1998.

Question Two:

Middle and High School Students

Directions: In the texts in the Carlos Museum’s installation of the Art of the Ancient Americas, curator Dr. Rebecca Stone-Miller writes, “Ancient American artists were masters of abstraction and reveled in the possibilities of geometric patterning. Abstraction can be defined generally as the process of reducing an image to its basic shapes and colors rather than aspiring to a literal rendering of its surface appearance.” Read Dr. Stone-Miller’s description of Document a and compare it to Document c. These questions are designed to test your ability to work with art historical evidence as the source of information. When responding to these questions take into account the object’s design, stylistic qualities and patterns, and materials.

Questions for Students

1. Compare the details of Documents a, b, and c. Explore and describe Document c and make a case for the “shorthand” or abstracted forms as a toad vessel.
2. Define abstraction. Discuss the visual imagery on the two vessels (Documents b and c), and how they work—or don’t work, as expressions of the essence of animals with power and meaning to the Amerindians.

Background

Images of toads abound in Costa Rican art. Both toads and frogs were considered miraculous for their dramatic metamorphosis from fish to legged creatures and for their remarkable hibernation and reappearance with the spring rains. For example, see the *Tripod Vessel with realistic toads* (Document a). In general they symbolize transformation and rebirth, ideas that figure prominently in ancient American spirituality. In Document b, the artist built a very symmetrical and light bowl with smoothed coils, skillfully attaching a massive loop handle that is equally perfect in geometric form. Appliqué work was then added to the surface, such as the bumps and toads at the ends of the handles and the series of low-relief faces around the bowl. Painting of slip came next above the heads in a series of emphatic, wide brush-strokes beginning at the bottom and ending at the rim. These painted marks were left without burnishing, which would have likely smudged them, as were the thinner stripes added to the toads and the faces. The wide red stripes of these toads, the round eyes, and the bumpy appliqué dots are the features that denote this creature in other, more abstracted designs.

Document a

35 Tripod Vessel with Toads

Central America, Costa Rica, Atlantic Watershed, Ticaban.

Period IV, 100 BC–AD 500.

Ceramic. 1991.4.79.

Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

Document b

36 Vessel with Appliqué Toads and Modeled Toad Faces

Central America, Costa Rica, Atlantic Watershed, El Bosque. Period IV, 100 BC–AD 500.

Ceramic. 1991.4.46.

Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

Document c

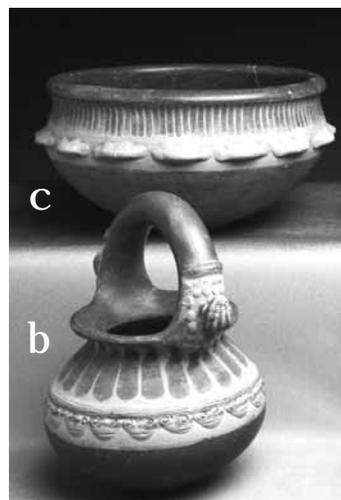
36 Large Bowl with Abstract Toad Appliqués

Central America, Costa Rica, Atlantic Watershed, El Bosque.

Period IV, 100 BC–AD 500.

Ceramic. 1991.4.60.

Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau



Excerpted from: Dr. Rebecca Stone-Miller. Installation label and Seeing with New Eyes: Highlights from the Michael C. Carlos Museum Collection of Art of the Ancient Americas. Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta 2002.

Map of the Ancient Americas



Glossary

asua maize beer, a staple of the Inka made from fermented corn (maize)

camelid New World camels; two-toed, sure-footed animals of which there are four types: llamas, alpacas, guanacos, and vicunas

cosmology a theory or belief structure dealing with the natural order of the universe and the place of humans therein

effigy an image or representation, most often of a person

glyph a symbolic figure conveying information non-verbally

hybrid a composite; something performing as a whole but made up of two different parts

jadeite rare green mineral, valued for carving in the ancient Americas

Quipukamayuc “knot-maker” in Kechwa, specialists in the Inka Empire responsible for making and reading the *quipus*

libation the pouring of a liquid as sacrifice

paccha ritual watering vessel

Pachamama the name for Mother Earth in later Andean cultures

psychotropic acting on the mind (i.e. altering brainwaves to induce hallucinations)

quipu knotted textile record-keeping device

reciprocal shared or felt by both sides; corresponding jointly

regeneration spiritual rebirth or renewal

sara the Kechwa word for ear of maize

shaman member of the community able to communicate with other realms through altered consciousness and bring back solutions to community problems

shamanism a religious/spiritual system based on the belief in the abilities of shamans to communicate with other realms through visions

slip clay watered down to liquid consistency, used to paint ceramics and fired with the piece, becoming permanent

spindle tapered stick used to twist raw fiber into yarn

spindle whorl the clay bead pushed onto the spindle in order to hold the spun thread in place

taclla the Kechwa word for foot plow, the long, pointed wooden agricultural implement used to punch holes in the soil for planting

Tawantinsuyu the Kechwa word for the Inca Empire, “Land of the Four Quarters”

textiles cloth or other fiber arts such as fiber sculptures, basketry, and featherwork

tumi ceremonial knife with a long shaft, decorated top, and crescent-shaped blade

urn an ornamental vessel, can have many purposes including burial container

urpu the Kechwa word for maize beer or maize kernel storage vessel

Vision Serpent the Maya concept of a double-headed snake apparition seen by shamans in visions after blood letting

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www.andes.org
Includes information on instruments, music in RealAudio, songs in Kechwa language, basic lesson in Kechwa, photographs of the landscape and people.
- The Aztec calendar
www.azteccalendar.com
Explanation of the Aztec calendar. Includes a calendar converter.
- Michael C. Carlos Museum
www.carlos.emory.edu
Objects from the collection and link to Odyssey Online, interactive web site for middle school students including ancient Egyptian, classical Greek and Roman, African. Ancient American section to come in 2005.
- The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection
www.doaks.org
Includes images in "slide sets" from the major civilizations and visual tours of eleven galleries devoted to the art of the ancient Americas.
- Rabbit in the Moon: Mayan Glyphs
www.halfmoon.org
Calculate your name in Mayan glyphs and dates on the Mayan calendar.
- Lonedeer Inc.
www.lonedeer.com
A directory of links to ancient American archeological sites.
- The Mint Museum of Art
www.mintmuseum.org
Includes objects from the collection and maps of archaeological sites. "Junior Mint" links to interactive sites for elementary (Dig It) and Middle School students (*The Sport of Life and Death: The Meso-american Ballgame*).
- The Peregrine Fund: Working to Conserve Birds of Prey in Nature
www.peregrinefund.org
Information about raptors and field notes by students working in Panama to help restore the eagles' depleted population.

List of Images

Shamanism and Transformation in the Ancient Americas

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2. *Seated Female Shaman-Effigy Secondary Burial Urn*
South America, Northern Andes, Colombia, Moskito, ad 1000–1500. Ceramic. 1990.11.1. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

3. *Rosales Engraved Female Effigy Figure*
Central America, Costa Rica, Greater Nicoya, Rosales Zoned Engraved, Rosales Variety. Period iv, 500 bc–ad 300. Ceramic. 1991.4.344. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

4. *Flute in the Form of an Armadillo*
Central America, Costa Rica, Greater Nicoya, Marbella incised. Period iv, 300 bc–ad 500. Ceramic. 1991.4.323. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

5. *Flute in the Form of a Bat*
Central America, Costa Rica, Greater Nicoya, Marbella Incised. Period iv, 300 bc–ad 500. Ceramic. 1991.4.21. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

6. *Pear-Shaped Tripod Vessel with Modeled Jaguar Features*
Central America, Costa Rica/Nicaragua, Greater Nicoya, Pataky Polychrome, Pataky Variety. Period vi, ad 1000–1350. Ceramic. 1991.4.337. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

7. *Female Effigy*
South America, Central Andes, Late Chancay. AD 1200–1450. Ceramic. 1988.12.12. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

8. *Incense Burner with Sun God–Jaguar God of the Underworld Lid*
Mesoamerica, Highland Guatemala, Maya. Early Classic, ad 200–550. Ceramic. 1992.15.176. Gift of Cora W. and Laurence C. Witten ii

9. *Brownware Vessel with Intertwined Rattlesnakes*
South America, Northern Andes, Colombia, Tairona. ad 1000–1500. Ceramic. 1992.15.51. Gift of Cora and Laurence C. Witten ii

10. *Paccha (Ritual Watering Vessel)*
South America, Central Andes, Inka. Late Horizon, ad 1440–1540. Ceramic, residue of maize beer and sand. 1989.8.161. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau.

11. Drawing, x-ray and diagram of *paccha*

12. *Urpu (Long-Necked Jar) with Maize Motif*
South American, Central Andes, Central Coast, Chancay/Inka. Late Horizon, ad 1440–1540. Ceramic. 1989.8.162. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

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13. *Pair of Earspools with Spondylus Shell Diving Scene*
South America, Central Andes, North Coast, Chimú. Late Intermediate Period, ad 1000–1450. Gold-copper alloy (fronts) and silver alloy (posts), textiles. 1992.15.261a,b. Gifts of Cora W. and Laurence C. Witten ii

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15. *Spondylus Shell Earspool*
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16. *Pedestal Plate with Crocodile-Bird Motif*
Central America, Panamá, Macaracas. Period viB, AD 800–1000. Ceramic. 1990.11.292. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

17. Photograph of praying mantis

18. *Pedestal Plate with Praying Mantis Motif*
Central America, Panamá, Macaracas. Period viB, ad 800–1000. Ceramic. 1990.11.298. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

19. *Fragmented Pedestal Plate with Crocodile-Headed Figure Motif*
Central America, Panama. Macaracas. Period viB, ad 800–1000. Ceramic. 1991.2.2. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

20. *Pendant with Harpy Eagle and Human Skull*
Central America, Costa Rica, Greater Nicoya, Maya/Costa Rica Interaction. Late Period iv–Early Period v, ad 300–600. Omphacite. 1991.4.397. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

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21. Drawing of Inka tunic by Guaman Poma de Ayala, from *Nueva Cronica Y Buen Gobierno*, 1615

22. *Fragment of an Inka key Tunic*

Central Andes, Inka. Late Horizon, ad 1430-1534. Interlocked tapestry. Cotton, (*Gossypium barbadense*) warps, camelid fiber wefts, natural dyes. 2002.1.128. Ex coll. C. Clay and Virginia Aldridge

23. *Spindle Whorls*

South America, Northern Andes, Colombia, Middle Cauca region. Period and date unknown. Ceramic. Top row: 1992.15.78, 1990.11.26, 1990.11.302, 1992.15.77; center row: 1990.11.300, 1992.15.82, 1992.15.88; bottom row: 1992.15.87, 1992.15.75, 1992.15.79, 1992.15.73. 1990 accession numbers, gifts of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau; 1992 accession numbers, gifts of Cora and Laurence C. Witten ii

24. *Tapestry Fragment with Monkey Motifs*

South America, Central Andes, Central Coast, Chancay. Late Intermediate, ad 1000–1450. Camelid fiber and cotton, slit tapestry with wrapped warps. 1991.2.162. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

25. *Openwork Headcloth with Bird and Snake/ Feline Motifs*

South America, Central Andes, Central Coast, Chancay. Late Intermediate Period, ad 1000-1450. Cotton, *Gossypium barbadense*. 1989.8.163. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

26. Drawing of the snake/feline and pelican design

27. *Quipu (Knot Record)*

Central Andes, Inka. Late Horizon, ad 1430–1534. Cotton (*Gossypium barbadense*) natural dyes (including indigo). 2002.1.130. Ex coll. C. Clay and Virginia Aldridge

28. Drawing of a *quipu* by Guaman Poma de Ayala from *Nueva Cronica Y Buen Gobierno*, 1615

29. Drawing of the *quipucamayoc* (knot maker) by Guaman Poma de Ayala from *Nueva Cronica Y Buen Gobierno*, 1615

30. *Tumi (Ceremonial Knife) with Two Llamas*

South America, Central Andes, Inka. Late Horizon, ad 1440–1540. Copper-Silver alloy with trace arsenic and gold. 1994.18.40. Gift of Cora and Laurence C. Witten ii

31. *Male Effigy Vessel with Tie-Dye Tunic*

South America, Central Andes, South Coast, Nasca. Early Intermediate Period, ad 1–650. Ceramic. 1989.8.101. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

32. Map of the ancient Americas

Document Based Questions

Question One

33. Document a

Paccha (Ritual Watering Vessel)

South America, Central Andes, Inka. Late Horizon, ad 1440–1540. Ceramic, residue of maize beer and sand. 1989.8.161. Gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau. Drawing, x-ray and diagram of Paccha

34. Document b

June: Time of Giggling by Guaman Poma de Ayala from *Nueva Cronica Y Buen Gobierno*, 1615

Question Two

35. Document a

Tripod Vessel with Toads

Central America, Costa Rica, Atlantic Watershed, Ticaban. Period IV, 100 BC–AD 500. Ceramic. 1991.4.79. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

36. Document b

Vessel with Appliqué Toads and Modeled Toad Faces

Central America, Costa Rica, Atlantic Watershed, El Bosque. Period iv, 100 bc–ad 500. Ceramic. 1991.4.46. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

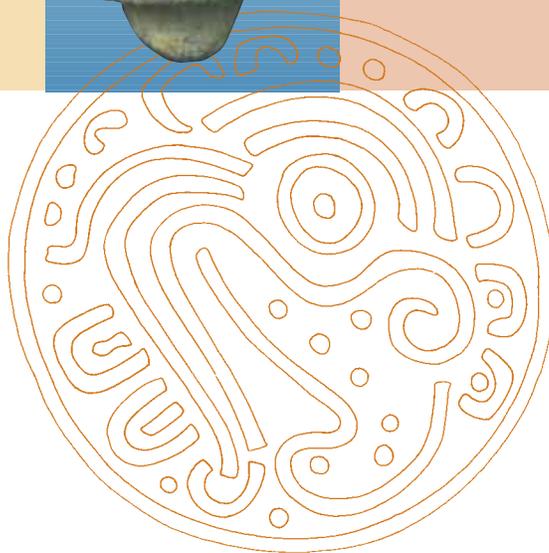
36. Document c

Large Bowl with Abstract Toad Appliqués

Central America, Costa Rica, Atlantic Watershed, El Bosque. Period iv, 100 bc–ad 500. Ceramic. 1991.4.60. Ex coll. William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau

37. Actual jaguar followed by *Pataky* jaguar rattle

38. Bat flute played by Antonio Zapeta, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994



michael c.
carlos
museum

Michael C. Carlos Museum
Emory University
571 South Kilgo Circle
Atlanta, GA 30322
<http://carlos.emory.edu>

EMORY