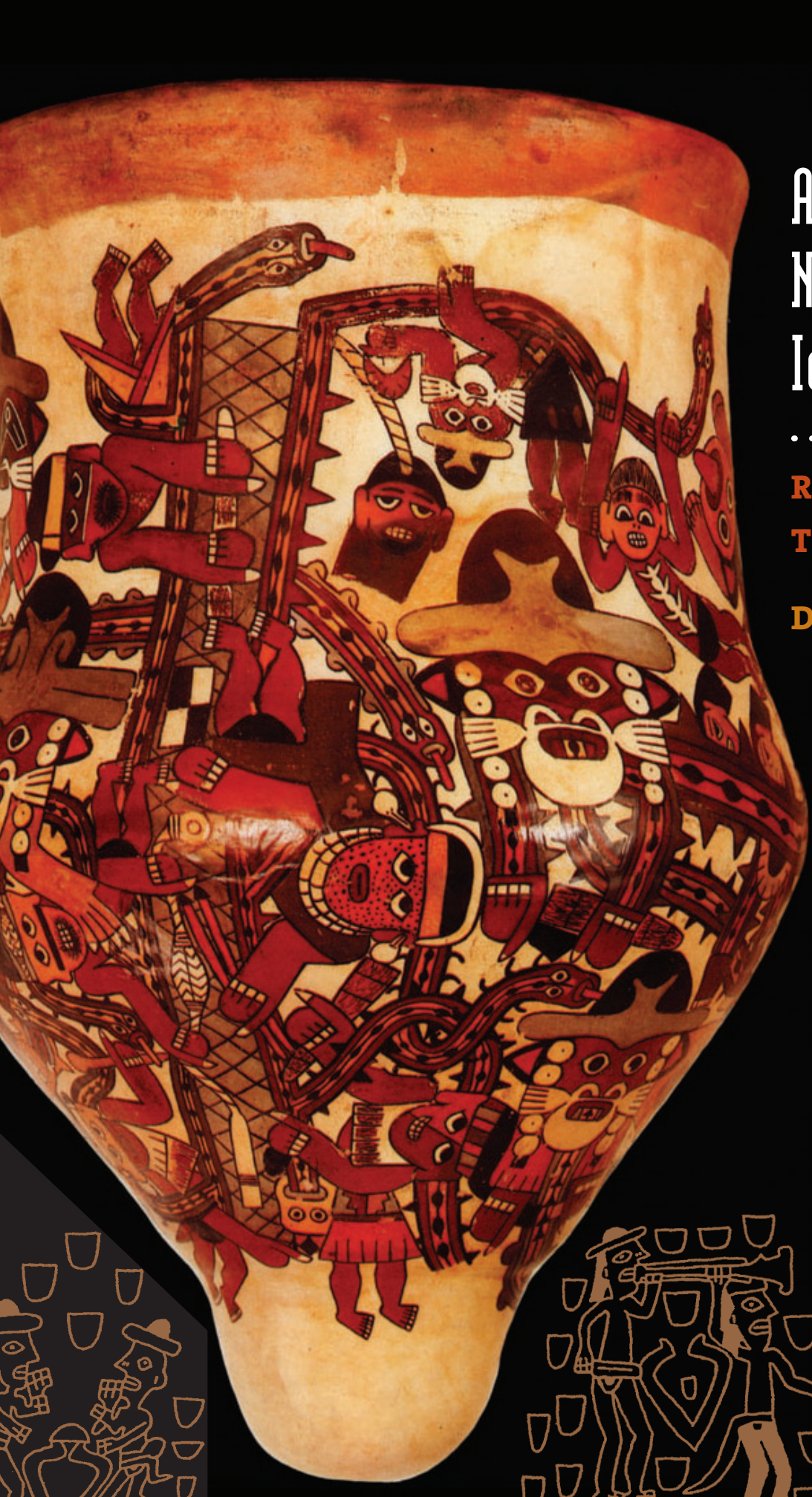

A Sourcebook of Nasca Ceramic Iconography

Reading a Culture Through Its Art

Donald A. Proulx

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This book is dedicated to the three individuals most responsible for inspiring my interest in Nasca iconography, for their friendship and guidance throughout my career.

John Howland Rowe (1918–2004), my teacher and mentor at the University of California, Berkeley, who introduced me to Peru, guided my research, and taught me the skills of scientific writing.

Lawrence E. Dawson (1925–2003), who as chief preparator at the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology and leading expert on Nasca pottery shared his wisdom with me and taught me his methods of iconographic seriation.

Lee Allen Parsons (1932–1984), who as assistant curator of anthropology at the Milwaukee Public Museum first instilled in me a passion for Nasca pottery.

Contents

Preface

Among the premier art styles of Precolumbian America is the beautiful polychrome pottery of the Nasca culture of south coastal Peru. Nasca ceramics, which include both modeled and painted varieties, display naturalistic renderings of the plants, animals, birds, and fish that were indigenous to their homeland on the coastal desert, as well as a myriad of supernatural anthropomorphic creatures whose form and meaning are often incomprehensible to Western eyes. As the Nasca pottery style evolved through time, many of these motifs became more abstract and abbreviated, further confusing the nonspecialist.

The purpose of this book is to describe and explain the form and meaning of the major themes painted on Nasca pottery and then to use this information to augment our archaeological knowledge of Nasca society. The focus is on iconography — the painted and modeled symbols that represented a complex system of meaning to this nonliterate civilization. Art was the primary means of symbolic communication in Nasca society, especially to convey sacred or religious ideology.

Interpretation of the art of a nonliterate society can be a major challenge to the anthropologist and to the art historian. This study utilizes a combination of techniques to arrive at a plausible Andean explanation of the meaning encoded in the symbolism. But first a systematic description of the main artistic motifs must be presented. Thus a good portion of this study is devoted to an outline of the major themes displayed on Nasca ceramics.

Art, like other aspects of human society, changes over time. With the Nasca culture we are dealing with a period of at least seven hundred years, during which artistic conventions were greatly transformed — sometimes due to natural internal evolution and sometimes due to external contacts with other cultures which influenced the art and society of the Nasca people. Some discussion of chronology and artistic change is necessary here. The minute changes that allow for a fine seriation of the art style, however, will be the subject of another book. My goal is to describe the canons of Nasca art to make them understandable to the general reader as well as the scholar and then to demonstrate how this knowledge can lead to a better understanding of ancient Nasca society.

To provide the reader with some elementary background, the text begins with an overview of the Nasca culture. Next I explore the canons followed by Nasca artists in producing their pottery that distinguish this art style from that of other cultures. A historical section dealing with the discovery of the Nasca style is followed by a discussion of scholars' attempts to develop a relative chronology for the evolution of the style. Another background section recounts the efforts of earlier scholars to interpret the complex iconography before I present my own methodology of iconographic analysis. A detailed outline of the main themes in Nasca iconography is presented next, along with my interpretation of their meanings. Finally, I use these iconographic data to augment what we know about Nasca society from the archaeological record.

THE SIZE OF THE sample used for this study was necessarily in constant flux due to the regular addition of new specimens to my archive and the shifting of individual pieces from one phase or category to another as analysis progressed. For the purpose of the statistics presented here, a total sample size of 6,173 vessels was used. This number is based on classification by vessel shape, which gives a more accurate total than using the sums derived from iconographic themes (because several themes can be represented on an individual vessel). The total represents 5,228 vessels recorded in my photographic archive and an additional 945 vessels published in catalogs or books. These statistics have been used only in the chronological portion of this book, to demonstrate changing frequencies from one phase to another; for this purpose alone the percentages are accurate and useful. The sample of iconographic themes is much larger, for I have been adding to the archive on a daily basis. In this regard, the sample size is closer to 8,000 specimens.

The vessels used in this study come from 151 different collections of varying size located in 17 countries. Some are better documented than others. Although every effort was made to eliminate vessels of questionable origin and date, it was not always possible to detect forgeries from photographs alone. Among the largest and best-documented collections are those from the Lowie Museum of Anthro-

pology (now the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum) at the University of California, Berkeley; Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago; Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, Lima; Museo Regional de Ica, Peru; American Museum of Natural History, New York; Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin; Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich; Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg; and Museo de América, Madrid.

Gravelot associations were very important not only for chronological ordering but also in studies attempting to deduce the range of iconographic variation at a given time. Wherever possible this type of context was used. Patrick Carmichael, in his study of Nasca mortuary customs (1988), has compiled a listing of most scientifically excavated Nasca gravelots known from the Río Grande de Nasca drainage — a total of 213 graves (ibid: appendix 1). Not included in Carmichael's study, but of equal importance, are approximately thirty early Nasca gravelots excavated in 1901 by Max Uhle at Ocucaje in the Ica Valley and another fourteen gravelots, represented by photos, excavated by Aldo Rubini in the Ica Valley. The majority of the vessels accompanying these burials form part of my photographic archive and represent some of the better-documented specimens in the study. The most important of these are the thirty gravelots excavated in Ica in 1901 by Max Uhle and located today in the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum, Berkeley; William Curtis Farabee's twenty-two gravelots excavated in 1922, now in the University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia; Alfred L. Kroeber's ninety-nine gravelots excavated at various sites in the Nasca Valley in 1926, now in the Field Museum in Chicago; and William Duncan Strong's thirty-seven gravelots excavated at Cahuachi in 1952, now at Columbia University.

The sample used in this study is composed almost entirely of fancy painted pottery. Undecorated utilitarian ware, while present in domestic sites (see Massey 1986; Browne 1992; Silverman 1993a), was rare in burial contexts, even in the scientifically excavated tombs. *Huaqueros* (grave robbers) seldom save utilitarian pottery when they discover it, for the collectors who purchase their finds have little interest in cooking or storage vessels. Museum collections also consist mainly of the finest pieces, more often selected for their aesthetic beauty than to produce a balanced, representative collection. It is obvious, therefore, that we are dealing with a biased sample (especially in the representation of a full range of vessel shapes), but one which suits our needs very well in terms of iconographic expression.

Acknowledgments

The roots of this study go back almost forty-five years to the time when I was an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. I was working as an intern at the Milwaukee Public Museum when Malcolm Whyte donated a large collection of Peruvian artifacts to that institution. My interest in Nasca pottery was stimulated by assistant curator Lee Parsons, who, along with curator Robert Ritzenthaler and director Stephen de Borhegyi, assigned me to catalog and research parts of this collection, especially the Nasca pottery. This experience led me to pursue graduate study at the University of California, Berkeley, under John H. Rowe, one of the leading Peruvian scholars of the day. The Lowie (now Phoebe Apperson Hearst) Museum of Anthropology at Berkeley housed the famous collections of German scholar Max Uhle, including a large selection of Nasca vessels with excellent provenience. Under the tutelage of Rowe and with the assistance of Larry Dawson and Dorothy Menzel, I chose to study local differences and chronological differences in the early Nasca pottery from the Ica and Nasca drainages and wrote my dissertation on this topic. For their profound influence on my life and career, I dedicate this volume to Rowe, Dawson, and Parsons.

Over the intervening years, although my research in Peruvian archaeology expanded to include site surveys and settlement pattern studies in both the northern and southern coastal areas, my passion for Nasca pottery never waned. I began photographing collections of Nasca ceramics whenever and wherever I could, eventually forming what could be called a Nasca archive, following in the footsteps of Christopher Donnan at the University of California, Los Angeles, and his famous Moche archive. My archive contains photos and drawings of approximately eight thousand Nasca vessels from over a hundred and fifty public and private collections. I photographed or scanned most of them myself, but others were provided by colleagues. The archive now contains close to eleven thousand slides, twenty-two thousand digitized images, and ten card-file drawers of photographs and line drawings. It was my hope to include CDs containing the entire archive with this volume, but legal, technical, and budgetary constraints prevented this. More work also needs to be done to perfect the quality of the images. If these obstacles can be overcome, it is my profound desire to make the archive available to interested scholars in the future.

I have many people to thank for their help and encouragement over the years, beginning with the museum directors and curators who allowed me access to their collections: Donald Collier and Charles Stanish (Field Museum, Chicago), Betty Meggers (Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.), Craig Morris and Peter Kovetik (American Museum of Natural History, New York), Richard Townsend (Art Institute of Chicago), Dieter Eisleb and Immina von Schuler-Schömig (Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin), Corinna Raddatz (Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg), Manfred Boetzkes (Roemer-Museum, Hildesheim), Helmut Schindler (Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich), Axel Schulze-Thulin (Linden-Museum, Stuttgart), Frank Norick and Lawrence Dawson (Lowie [now Phoebe Apperson Hearst] Museum of Anthropology, Berkeley), Elizabeth Carmichael and Ian Mackay (British Museum), Philip Watson (Birmingham City Museum), George Bankes (University of Manchester Museum), Dale Idiens (Royal Museum of Scotland), Carol Robbins and Gail Davitt (Dallas Museum of Art), Elizabeth Hill Boone (Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Washington, D.C.), Sandrea Galbraith (Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida), Susanna Arce and Rubén García (Museo Regional de Ica), Hermelio Rosas (Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, Lima), Giuseppe Orefici (Museo Antonini, Nasca, Peru), Andrea Kalis (Orlando Museum of Art), Lee Parsons (Milwaukee Public Museum), and David Pendergast (Royal Ontario Museum).

Many other individuals have generously shared materials with me and/or provided valuable insights from their own research. I would especially like to single out Helaine Silverman of the University of Illinois, Urbana. Helaine has emerged as the world's leading Nasca expert following her seminal work at Cahuachi. Her many books and articles have dramatically changed our perception of Nasca society. I am most grateful to her for many years of sharing ideas and materials and for her friendship, which culminated in our writing a general book together on the Nasca (Silver-

man and Proulx 2002). I would also like to acknowledge many others, if only in this abbreviated manner: Joerg Haeberli, Patrick Carmichael, Steven Wegner, Katharina Schreiber, Kevin Vaughn, Josué Lancho Rojas, Anita Cook, Lisa DeLeonardis, Christopher Donnan, Miguel Pozas, Fernando Herrera, David Johnson, Stephen Mabee, Lidio Valdez, Antonio Aimi, Edward de Bock, Colin McEwan, Monica Barnes, Tonya Panion-Bishop, Ana Nieves, Richard Daggett, Antonio Guarnotta, Michael Tellenbach, Markus Reindel, Johny Isla Cuadrado, Karsten Lambers, David Browne, Dwight Wallace, Terence Grieder, Ulf Bankmann, and, last but not least, my wife, Mary Jean, who has put up with me for thirty-seven years. If I have forgotten anyone, I offer my sincere apologies.

The numerous illustrations in this book come from a wide variety of sources, and I owe the following individuals and institutions special thanks for permission to use images from their museums or publications: Enrique González Carré (Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, Lima); Judith Rickenbach (Museum Rietberg Zürich); Erika Sawyer; Ann Rowe (Textile Museum); Justin Kerr; David Johnson; Helaine Silverman; Patrick Carmichael; Helmut Schindler (Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich); Donna Kurella (Linden-Museum, Stuttgart); Nicole Nowatzki (Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg); Monique Koek (Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden); Concepción Blasco Bosqued; Luis Javier Ramos Gómez; Madeline Fang (Institute of Andean Studies); Patricia Uzátegui Danz (Banco de Crédito del Perú); Art Institute of Chicago; Milwaukee Public Museum; Ministerio de Cultura, Madrid; Imschoot Uitgevers, Ghent, Belgium; Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino, Santiago; Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin; Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology, Berkeley; David Bernstein Fine Art; and Blackwell Publishers.

Finally, I want to thank the entire staff at the University of Iowa Press for their support and help in seeing this book into print, especially Holly Carver, director of the press, whose encouragement and advice were indispensable; my editors, Charlotte Wright and Kathy Lewis; Karen Copp; and Sara Sauers. Finally, I want to thank my draftsperson, Elizabeth Harlow, for her drawings of many motifs in this book.

Over the years my research has been supported by grants from a number of organizations and foundations, which I wish to acknowledge: the American Philosophical Society (1985), University of Massachusetts Faculty Research Grants (1985, 1988, 1990, 1992), a DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Ausrauschdienst) Study Visit Grant (1988), and a National Endowment for the Humanities Travel to Collections Grant (1990). The inclusion of color plates in this book was made possible by the generosity of the following individuals: Ronald and Maxine Linde; Georgia de Havenon, Michael de Havenon, and the Foundation for the Research and Conservation of Andean Monuments; and David Bernstein of David Bernstein Fine Art, New York. Herbert L. Lucas kindly provided funds for the indexing of the book. To all I am most grateful.

One » Overview of the Nasca Culture

Distribution and Chronology

The Nasca culture emerged during the Early Intermediate Period (100 B.C. to A.D. 650) and was centered in the Ica and Nasca Valleys of south coastal Peru (fig. 1.1). Over time its influence was felt in a territory ranging from the Cañete Valley in the north to the valleys of Ocoña, Camaná, and Sihuas in the Department of Arequipa to the south. Nasca also interacted with the highland area, especially the region near Ayacucho to the east. We have no evidence for actual colonization or military expansion into these outlying areas; the influence occurred through prestige or trade relationships. Using a technique known as seriation, by which archaeologists analyze subtle changes in the form and decoration of the pottery, it has been possible to subdivide the Nasca period into nine phases described below. It is clear that the Nasca culture developed directly out of Paracas culture of the Early Horizon (900 – 200 B.C.) and in many respects represents a continuation of the same cultural tradition with only minor changes.

Geographic Setting

The Nasca people were concentrated in the Río Grande de Nasca drainage, which incorporates ten separate tributaries covering an area of about 10,750 square kilometers (Silverman 1993a: 1). These tributaries extend high into the Andes, where they collected the summer rains and water from melting glaciers to provide sustenance for the Nasca people, especially during the winter months of January to March (fig. 1.2). To the north is the Ica Valley, unusual in having no major tributaries and flowing in a general north – south direction. Although the mouths of the Ica and Nasca Rivers are only 25 kilometers apart, the two systems diverge inland, leaving a vast expanse of desert that separates their middle and upper segments. Any contact between the valleys in the past most likely occurred in their lower portions.

The Nasca heartland has been described as a "sub-tropical desiccated desert" with an average rainfall of only 0.3 millimeter per annum (ONERN 1971). Agriculture is dependent on irrigation, with water coming either from the unpredictable annual flow of the rivers or from natural springs or wells, which derive their water from seepage through geological faults or from water trapped in alluvial fans. The primary agricultural lands are located in the middle valley region, some 30 to 50 miles inland from the ocean. Agriculture in the lower valleys is confined to intermittent oases. The middle valley, known as the *chala*, was the major settlement zone in the Nasca heartland. Starting at 500 meters above sea level and extending to 2,300 meters is a hot, dry transitional region known as the *yunga.* This ecological zone was also important to the Nasca people, although population density there was not nearly as great as in the *chala*.

The littoral zone (the narrow strip along the Pacific shore) was economically very important to the Nasca for the rich maritime resources located there. Archaeological

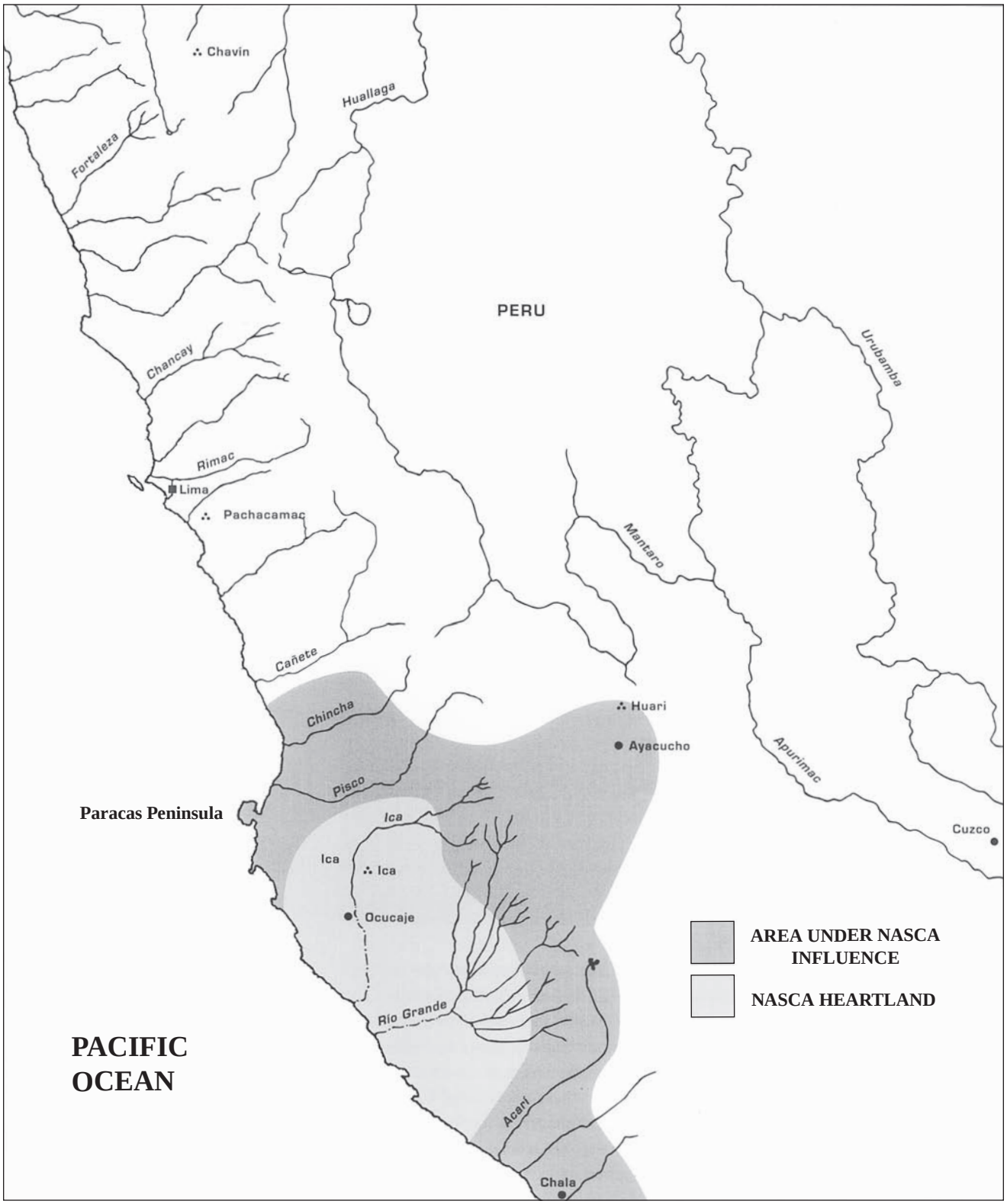


Fig. 1.1. Map of the Nasca realm. After Rickenbach 1999: fig. 66.

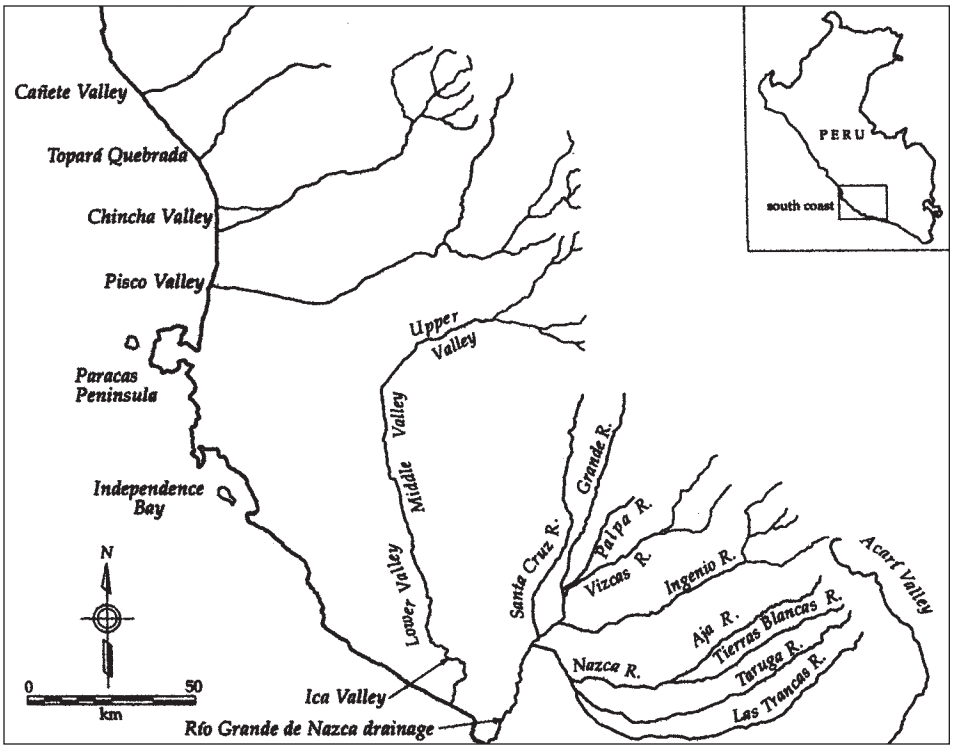


Fig. 1.2. Map of the Ica and Nasca Valleys. After Silverman and Proulx 2002: fig. 1.1.

surveys of this region, however, have failed to reveal any large settlements near the ocean, suggesting that the people who exploited this zone commuted from their habitation sites well inland (Kennedy and Carmichael 1991).

Physical Appearance

Like other Precolumbian peoples, the Nasca were physically similar to the Asiatic peoples of Siberia and Mongolia, with whom they are thought to share a common ancestry. Their well-preserved mummies and ceramic representations support this interpretation. The Nasca had high, padded cheekbones, an epicanthic fold of the eyelids, "shovel-shaped" incisor teeth (a concave depression in the back of these teeth), and straight black hair. Andean people are short. In his study of the Quechua Indians of the Cuzco area, H. B. Ferris (1916: 80) reported an average height for males of 5 feet 1 inch, with women averaging slightly smaller. The ancient Nasca also were short. Marvin Allison (1979: 77) states that the height of the people of the region has not changed appreciably since Precolumbian times and that "[m]odern rural inhabitants of mixed blood are still about the same size as their Indian ancestors."

The Nasca people practiced frontal-occipital cranial deformation, which created a skull that was unnaturally elongated and flat across the forehead (fig. 1.3). Individuals of both sexes with characteristically deformed skulls are commonly portrayed on ceramic effigy vessels and figurines (pls. 39, 40). Cranial deformation was accomplished by binding a cushion on an infant's forehead to a board at the back of the head. Sloan Williams (personal communication, 2000) indicates that frontal-occipital cranial deformation is divided into two types, erect and oblique, which implies the use of different deforming devices. The actual distribution and frequency of cranial deformation in Nasca society have not been determined, but it appears to have been common. In Carmichael's (1988: 183) sample of 102 skulls from Nasca burials, 68 percent were artificially modified. The fact that the practice was not universal must be important, but the social significance remains to be determined. Nasca cranial deformation is a dramatic example of the situational manipulation of ethnic identity. Clearly, Nasca people specifically identified themselves and recognized each other by particular physical attributes, both permanent (cranial deformation) and impermanent (for example, language and dress).

The Nasca also practiced a primitive form of skull surgery (trephination), either to relieve pressure from battle wounds or for the ritual curing of disease. Trephination is the re-

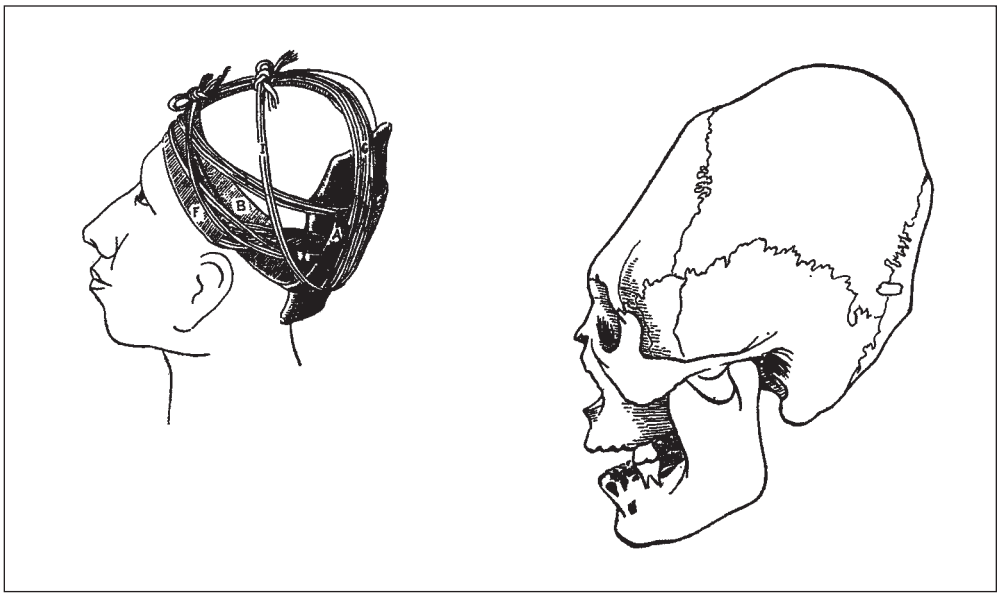


Fig. 1.3. Cranial deformation and the method used to produce it. After Weiss 1961: pl. 4, fig. 19.

moval of one or more sections of bone from the cranium while the person is still alive (fig. 1.4). The ancients used simple instruments made of obsidian for the operation (fig. 4.7), which was performed with minimal pain relievers. Some people died as a result of the operation. Remarkably, others lived, as evidenced by healed bone (closure). Trephination is very well known on skulls attributable to the Paracas Cavernas and Paracas Necropolis cultures of the Paracas Peninsula, Pisco, and Ica. According to Marvin Allison and Alejandro Pezzia Assereto (1976), a study of nine skulls in the Museo Regional de Ica confirms that trephination was also practiced by their successors, the ancient Nasca people.

In addition, an individual's appearance involved impermanent features. Archaeological remains include some examples of clothing and bodily ornaments. The most complete information on costume, jewelry, facial painting, tattooing, gender differences, and occupations comes from the ceramic iconography. These data are presented in the final chapter.

Subsistence

The Nasca people practiced intensive agriculture in a precarious area characterized by unpredictable natural events such as frequent droughts, earthquakes, and flash flooding. The need for water affected the entire Nasca lifestyle and played a major role in the form and practice of their religion. The alluvial soils were ideal for the growing of corn (*Zea mays*), the common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*), lima bean (*Phaseolus lunatus*), manioc (*Manihot esculenta*), potato (*Solanum* spp.), sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*), achira (*Canna* spp.), squash (*Cucurbita maxima*), peanut (*Arachis hypogaea*), lucuma (*Lucuma bifera*), guayaba (*Psidium guajava*), pacae (*Inga feuillei*), palta (*Persea americana*), jíquima (*Pachyrhizus tuberosus*), and pepper (*Capsicum* spp.), among others. The Nasca also exploited the cold waters of the Pacific Ocean, hunting mammals such as seals and otters, using nets to obtain corvina, *coco, anaque*, and other local species of fish, collecting shellfish and mollusks, and acquiring other products of the sea. Nonedible plants such as cotton, cane, totora reeds, gourds, and junco were used for utilitarian purposes. Domestic animals such as the llama and alpaca had been imported from the highlands at an earlier time and were present in Nasca society, as was the guinea pig (*Cavia porcellus*), which was used in ritual and as a ceremonial food.

Settlement Patterns

Our knowledge of Nasca settlement patterns has been expanded through recent systematic archaeological surveys in the heartland valleys of Nasca and Ica (see chapter 3). Unfortunately, in most cases, the data from these surveys are still undergoing analysis; only preliminary reports have been published, with the exception of Silverman's detailed study (2002b). Until this occurs, even a basic knowledge of

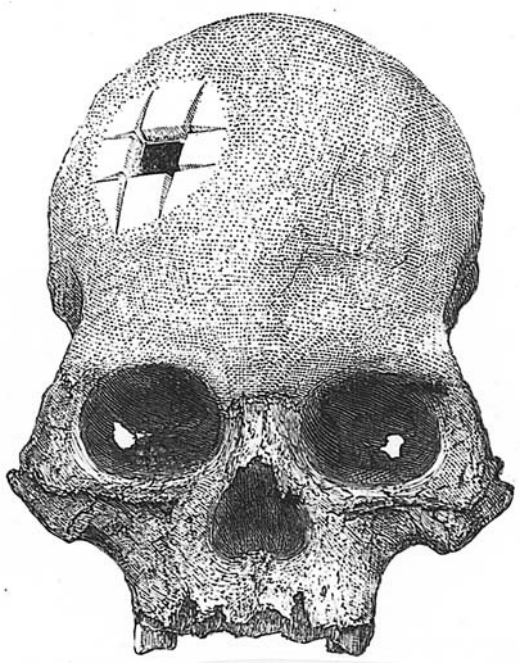


Fig. 1.4. Trephination or primitive skull surgery, used to relieve pressure on the brain from battle wounds or for ritual purposes. After Squier 1877: 457.

the nature and distribution of Nasca settlements remains elusive. Despite these qualifications, a few observations about Nasca settlements can be made.

In the Río Grande de Nasca drainage, the majority of the Nasca period settlements are located well inland, along the flanks of the tributary rivers. Although Brenda Kennedy and Patrick Carmichael (1991) have argued for the absence of Nasca sites in the littoral zone, recent work by Anita Cook (1994) in the lower Ica Valley has revealed a continuous Nasca occupation in that valley from the mouth of the river inland. Silverman (2002b) has provided the best data on Nasca architecture and settlement patterns to date. Until recently, the majority of Nasca sites recorded were cemeteries, often located on the barren flanks of the river or on the adjacent hills. Habitation sites and "administrative" or "civic-ceremonial" sites were poorly understood and are only now receiving proper attention.

One of the largest and best-known Nasca sites is Cahuachi, located on the southern bank of the Río Nasca at an elevation of 365 meters above sea level. Cahuachi covers an area of approximately 150 hectares, but its monumental architecture is concentrated on 25 hectares located near the center of the site (Silverman 1993a: 57). Some forty mounds compose the core of the site, along with three- and four-sided enclosures (fig. 1.5). The mounds were fashioned by modifying natural hills found on the ancient river terraces. All the mounds were truncated or had platforms on their summits; some were used for burials, while others supported construction with a ritual function. The areas between the mounds consist of bounded open spaces referred to by Silverman as *kancha*s (Silverman 1993a: 57).

Cahuachi was once thought to be a major urban center, the capital of a regional state (Strong 1957; Rowe 1963; Proulx 1968). Excavations by Silverman (1993a) and Giuseppe Orefici (1993), however, have demonstrated that the site was an empty ceremonial center, which apparently served as a place of pilgrimage and ritual. Orefici (1996) traced the first occupation at Cahuachi to the end of the Early Horizon (Paracas 10, ca. 200 B.C.). The site reached its zenith in Nasca Phase 3 (ca. A.D. 150), when it was the primary ceremonial center in the drainage. Its prestige began to decline in Phase 4, after which it became a ritual burial place and a locus for sacred offerings. Ritual deposits, such as those found in the "Room of the Posts" by Silverman (1987a), suggest long use of the site as a sacred location, with burials continuing into the Middle Horizon (ca. A.D. 650).

According to Helaine Silverman, one of the largest Nasca population centers lay directly across the Pampa de San José from Cahuachi on the flanks of the Ingenio River tributary. She has argued that some of the "Nasca Lines" or geoglyphs in the Pampa de San José may connect Cahuachi to this large settlement, known as Ventilla or Site 165 (Silverman 1990a). Ventilla extends along the side of the valley for close to 4 kilometers and covers an area of 200 hectares. It consists of hundreds of habitation terraces containing the remains of densely agglutinated houses, some large enclosures, and a few artificial mounds (Silverman 1990a: 439). Silverman has also argued that Ventilla and Cahuachi may have served as "dual capitals of early Nasca society," one secular and the other religious (Silverman 1993a: 326). This hypothesis seems less credible in light of recent speculation on the nature of Nasca political structure. Other scholars who have visited Ventilla dispute Silverman's claim that it is an urban center, pointing out not only that it is multioccupational and therefore does not belong entirely to the Nasca period but that the structures are small and ill defined (Valdez 1998). In her more recent book, which presents a detailed account of her surface survey, Silverman (2002b: 50) concedes that her characterization of the site as urban may have been premature. Learning the true nature of Ventilla must wait until excavation of the site is undertaken.

The lack of major urban centers is one of the most puzzling aspects of Nasca society. Many sites that John Rowe

Fig. 1.5. Aerial view of the Nasca ceremonial center of Cahuachi. Courtesy Helaine Silverman.

considered to be large Nasca habitation sites in his classic 1963 study have now been demonstrated to be either vacant ceremonial centers, like Cahuachi, or sites built by non-Nasca local populations, like Tambo Viejo in the Acarí Valley (see Rowe 1963).

Our understanding of Nasca settlement patterns recently has been enhanced by the survey and excavations of Markus Reindel of the Swiss-Liechtenstein Foundation for Archaeological Research Abroad and his team, including Johny Isla Cuadrado of the Andean Institute for Archaeological Studies (INDEA). Working primarily in the Palpa Valley near its confluence with the Río Grande, they have recorded over a hundred and fifty sites and numerous geoglyphs (Reindel and Isla 1999b, 2001). Among their discoveries are the two important "civic-ceremonial" sites at Los Molinos and La Muña, which they believe to be regional centers reflecting a "clear settlement hierarchy" of at least two levels in Palpa (Reindel and Isla 1999b). Other civic-ceremonial sites are present in the drainage; these seem particularly prevalent in Phases 3 and 5 (Cabildo, Coyungo, Pueblo Viejo, and Paredones, among others).

Los Molinos is situated on the southern side of the Río Grande at the base of a series of low hills called the Cresta de Sacramento. The main part of the site covers an area measuring 200 by 100 meters and is characterized by monumental adobe architecture, including ramps, platforms, and residences, which the excavators argue were used for both administrative and ritual functions by the elite who lived there (Reindel and Isla 1999b, 2001). The site dates primarily to Nasca Phase 3, but burials from Phase 5 continued to be placed in this special site. The location and the nature of this site support the concept of a chiefdom form of political structure for the Nasca (see below). On the crest of the hills above the site are numerous geoglyphs, which attest to the importance of the site and affirm that the Nasca were responsible for the construction of the giant ground etchings.

La Muña is located at the tip of the Cresta de Sacramento, where the Río Palpa merges with the Río Grande. Such river junctions are sacred places in the minds of both ancient and modern Peruvians, known as *tinkuy*, a Quechua concept meaning "a socially and supernaturally charged place of competition, cooperation and structural balance" (Silverman and Proulx 2002: 190). La Muña contains civic ceremonial architecture spread over several hundred meters of the hillside and dates primarily to Nasca Phase 5. Perhaps the most notable aspect of the site is the special mortuary architecture with elite burial chambers, measuring 40 by 40 meters on the surface and up to 13 meters deep. Unfortunately, these tombs have been looted, and thus much of the information that they could have provided on the social organization of Nasca society has been lost.

Although a number of large Nasca "civic-ceremonial" sites have been recorded and more will undoubtedly be found in the future, the vast majority of Nasca domestic sites appear to be small villages or hamlets measuring under 2 hectares in size. In the upper tributaries, houses were constructed on artificial stone terraces carved onto

the slopes of the hills flanking the valley. Near the sandy pampas, houses were constructed of wattle and daub, a framework of poles and matting covered with a clay plaster. Adobe bricks are also used in some of the constructions. Few domestic structures have been scientifically unearthed. Kevin Vaughn (2000) has recently excavated a typical early Nasca habitation site at Marcaya along the Tierras Blancas tributary, and the results of his work have been valuable in defining the nature of Nasca domestic sites. The construction material at this site appears to be fieldstone rather than more perishable material. The houses were arranged in eighteen patio groups consisting of houses, patios, and activity areas, with little variability seen. Much additional work of this type needs to be performed on the south coast before an adequate picture of Nasca life emerges.

From the surveys undertaken, it is clear that the distribution of sites changed from one phase to another during the seven hundred–year sequence. David Browne's survey (1992: 77) in the Palpa region suggests that there was a major expansion into that area during Nasca Phase 1, with a visible hierarchy of sites. By Nasca Phase 3 civic and ceremonial centers were fully developed and part of the hierarchy. Major changes occurred in Phase 5, however, when many of the civic and ceremonial centers were abandoned and thereafter used for burial purposes. This pattern was also evident at Cahuachi and other sites in the Río Nasca tributary. The cause of this shift may have been the onset of a major drought that occurred between A.D. 540 and 560 and again between A.D. 570 and 610 (Schreiber and Lancho 1995: 251). The drought apparently stimulated the construction of wells and filtration galleries called *puquio*s, which were located mainly in the middle part of the valley. Population shifts resulted; new sites were established in the mid-valley to take advantage of the new sources of water, while in other areas the people appear to have been consolidated into larger settlements. The last phases of the Nasca sequence witness a major decrease in population and in the number of sites. Weakened by these natural disasters and other factors, the Nasca eventually succumbed to more powerful forces emanating from the highlands.

Sociopolitical Organization

Reconstruction of the political organization of the Nasca people has changed over the past few decades. It was once thought that the Nasca controlled an early state-level society, with a strong central government centered at the large site of Cahuachi (Strong 1957; Rowe 1963; Proulx 1968). The striking homogeneity of the pottery found in the Río Grande de Nasca drainage and in the Ica Valley, especially during Phase 3, suggested a strong central control (Proulx 1968). The sudden appearance of Nasca pottery in peripheral valleys, at sites such as Tambo Viejo in Acarí and Tambo Colorado in Pisco, indicated a possible military conquest of these regions by this same central authority (Rowe 1963: 10–12).

This picture changed dramatically due to the work of Helaine Silverman and Giuseppe Orefici at Cahuachi. As we have seen, Silverman's excavations demonstrated that Cahuachi was an empty ceremonial center that had few permanent inhabitants, not a thriving city (Silverman 1993a). Similarly, Orefici's excavations over a period of more than twenty years also failed to discover evidence of major domestic activity (Orefici 1993). At the same time, Lidio Valdez (1998), working in the Acarí Valley, has convincingly demonstrated that no evidence exists for a Nasca invasion and colonization of this valley. The few Nasca ceramics found at Tambo Viejo and other Acarí sites can be explained as trade items. There appears to be no strong evidence for an invasion of the Pisco Valley either, although Nasca presence can be seen in its prestige influence on the local pottery style (Carmen) and presumably in religious practices.

Based on these new data, it seems more likely that the Nasca political realm consisted of a number of local chiefdoms united by a common religion and symbolic system. Although archaeological evidence is still being evaluated, regional centers of power were likely located throughout the Nasca drainage. From time to time some of these local chiefdoms may have been consolidated into larger entities, but the notion of a single central government with Cahuachi as its capital has now been discredited. The leaders of Nasca society had dual functions as religious leaders (shamans) and secular warriors. The role of warrior-chief seems to have become more important in Phases 5, 6, and 7, although religion remained an important function of the leadership.

In later Andean societies, like the Inca, the basic social unit was the *ayllu*, an endogamous group claiming descent from a common ancestor. Some scholars believe that the *ayllu* was present in Nasca society, represented archaeologically by the multiple mounds or temples at the ceremonial site of Cahuachi, each built and maintained by an individual *ayllu* (Silverman 1993a: 309–311). Carmichael has argued that Nasca society was ranked, not stratified, meaning that the position of individuals in the society is based on a

continuum, not separated into distinct classes, as would be true in a state (Carmichael 1988: 400). Using mortuary data, he attempted to demonstrate that there are no exclusive or absolute differences in the types of graves for any individuals in Nasca society. Carmichael's arguments were based on a relatively small sample of 213 Nasca graves that have been scientifically excavated. Museum collections containing gold mouth masks, forehead ornaments, and other body adornments in the Nasca style suggest that elite tombs did exist but were looted before any archaeologists could examine their contexts.

A few new discoveries in recent years are forcing a review of earlier perceptions. The cemetery of La Muña (described above), with its large, deep tombs, appears to have been the resting place of elite Nasca leaders. Fragments of gold ornaments found in Tomb 6 give us a tantalizing idea of what the *huaqueros* or grave robbers may have looted from this important site in the past. Isla and Reindel also found *Spondylus* shell along with quantities of finely painted Nasca pottery at the site. Puente Gentil in the Santa Cruz Valley, originally excavated by Julio Tello in 1927, was recently reexamined and analyzed by Johny Isla Cuadrado (2001). Tomb 2 was particularly rich, containing forty-six ceramic vessels dating to Nasca Phase 5 and, most importantly, several objects of gold, including a mask, nose ornament, and two pendants (Isla 2001: 218 and fig. 10). The gold and uncharacteristically large amounts of fine pottery in certain graves suggest that an elite class may indeed have been present during certain periods in Nasca history.

Religion

For people raised in the Judeo-Christian religious tradition, understanding the world view and mindset of the ancient Nasca people and attempting to comprehend their religious beliefs is a difficult task. Archaeological evidence for their religious practices is sparse, and my analysis relies heavily on the ceramic iconography described below. A detailed reconstruction of Nasca religion is presented in the final chapter; here I introduce some of the main concepts to provide background.

Nasca religion is based on the belief that humans and nature are interrelated in an active, sacred relationship (Townsend 1985). This viewpoint incorporates the concept of animatism: the belief in supernatural forces present in nature which control resources and affect human lives. These spiritual forces were often symbolized in the ceramic art by images of mythical creatures composed of elements of the most powerful creatures of the sky, the earth, and the ocean. The greatest concerns of the Nasca people were adequate food for sustenance and a predictable supply of water in their harsh desert environment. At the same time they were at the mercy of natural forces such as droughts, earthquakes, flash flooding, and agricultural pests. It is no wonder that their spiritual lives revolved around attempts to understand and control these forces.

The Nasca had no structures that could technically be called temples. Here I define a temple as a large monumental structure that housed an image or images of a deity. The mounds and associated architecture at Cahuachi seemed to serve more as shrines or sacred places used by individual social groups. No single central building served as a common place of worship by the people. The Nasca envisioned a sacred landscape — locations where there was a concentration of spiritual forces known in the Andes as *huaca.* Cahuachi is thought to have had *huaca* due to the prevalence of water-bearing aquifers in the area that seep to the surface in the form of springs (Silverman 1993a: 305).

Certain mountains were considered to be the home of powerful spirits. In Inca times these spirits were known as *apu*s and were thought to control the weather, especially rainfall. The large sandy mountain known as Cerro Blanco overlooks the upper Tierras Blancas valley near the town of Nasca and was considered sacred by the ancient Nasca peoples (Reinhard 1996). Local legends associate Cerro Blanco with water (Urton 1982).

Johan Reinhard and other investigators have found offerings of ancient pottery as well as modern river stones and cotton plants on the summit of Cerro Blanco. The modern offerings were made in 1983 by local inhabitants petitioning the mountain spirits for water during a drought (Reinhard 1996: 17).

Shamans, rather than priests, were the officiates in Nasca rituals. Shamans were the intermediaries between the spirit world and the everyday world. In many noncomplex societies shamans often used hallucinogenic drugs to induce visions and to gain control over supernatural forces. The use of psychedelic drugs in ancient Peruvian society has been well documented for cultures such as Chavín and Moche in the north (Cordy-Collins 1977; Donnan 1978). Their use in the Nasca culture was suggested as early as 1980 (Dobkin de Rios and Cardenas 1980; Dobkin de Rios 1982, 1984). The most likely source of hallucinogens was the San Pedro cactus (*Trichocereus pachanoi*) and perhaps floripondium (*Datura arborea*) (Sharon 1972, 1978: 2). Mescaline can be

Fig. 1.6. Ritual scene of a shaman/musician and participants drinking a hallucinogenic brew made from the San Pedro cactus. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima) C-65296. After Carmichael 1998: fig. 13.

Fig. 1.7. Harvest ritual from a scene on a ceramic drum. Museo Regional de Ica. After Tello 1959: pl. 88.

extracted from the San Pedro cactus by boiling sections cut from this plant. Although neither the brew itself nor preserved remains of the cacti have been found in Nasca sites, representations of rituals on the pottery that depict people drinking from cups filled with a liquid obtained from large storage jars are clearly associated with representations of cacti (fig. 1.6). Many iconographic representations of shamans are found on the ceramics, providing us with a wealth of information on ritual and other religious practices (pl. 8). These scenes are described and interpreted in detail in the concluding chapter.

An important aspect of Nasca religion was the ritual use of human trophy heads taken in battle. Severed human heads are pervasive in the art: individually, in association with mythical creatures (fig. 5.1), and in scenes of warfare and ritual (fig. 5.124). The role of trophy heads in Nasca religion can be explained as follows. The shedding of blood and especially the removal and group burial of the heads of enemies were closely linked to agricultural fertility and regeneration in the Nasca culture (Proulx 1971, 1989a, 2001c; Silverman and Proulx 2002). Severed human heads are sometimes depicted with plants growing from the mouth — they are sprouting plants or in some cases are even symbolic metaphors of the plants themselves (fig. 5.104). Just as the Egyptians equated their god Osiris with resurrection and regeneration (as exemplified by the annual flooding of the Nile and the agricultural bounty that resulted from his sacrifice and dismemberment), so too the Nasca people appear to have visualized a continuity involving sacrifice and death, the burial of human trophy heads, and the regeneration of agricultural plants. Human trophy heads not only were the most sacred offering made to the nature spirits but were an integral part of their world view.

Major Nasca rituals centered around planting and harvesting, preparation for war, and (judging from other contemporary societies) the primary rites of passage such as birth, adolescence, marriage, and death. The iconography provides an incomplete picture of these activities, but ritual scenes always include a central figure (shaman or impersonator) and the playing of music. These ritual scenes include harvest ceremonies (fig. 1.7), the burial of a mummy bundle (pl. 23), the entombment of a cache of trophy heads (pl. 21), and a procession (pl. 9). These activities and their iconography are described below.

The Nasca buried their dead in pits dug into the sandy pampas or on the slopes of hills flanking the river valleys. These graves averaged 6 to 10 feet in depth and could be either square or round in cross section (fig. 1.8; Uhle 1913: fig. 13). The dead were buried in a seated position, knees flexed against the chest, with the body dressed in typical clothing and additional textiles wrapped around the bundle. Small children were sometimes buried in large pottery jars. Most

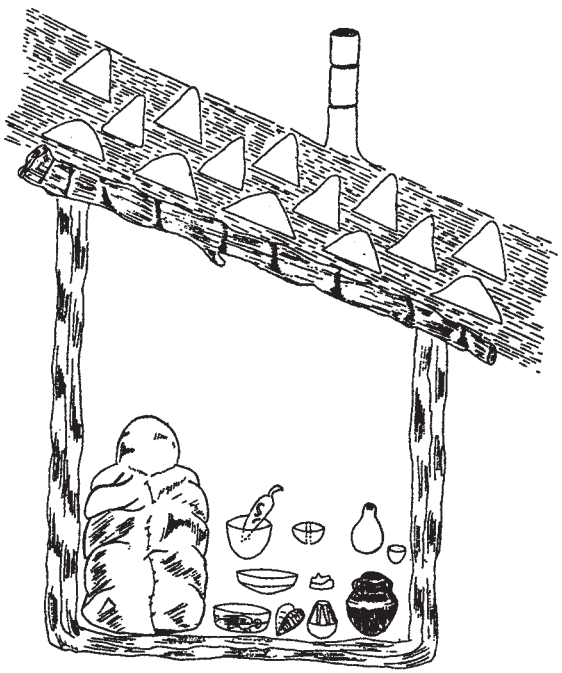


Fig. 1.8. Model of a Nasca tomb. After Pezzia 1968: pl. 21.

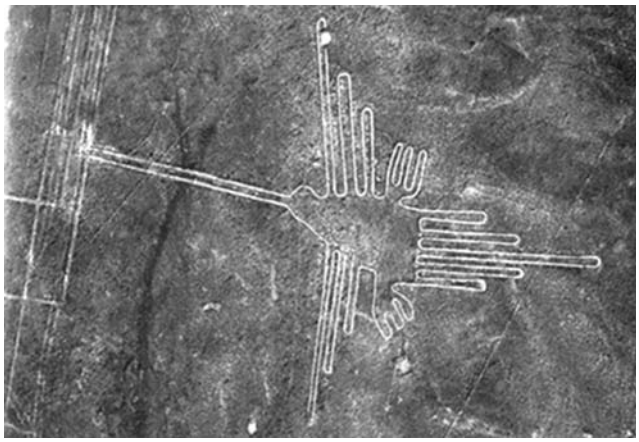


Fig. 1.9. Biomorph or naturalistic Nasca geoglyph in the form of a gigantic hummingbird. Photo by Donald A. Proulx.

graves contained only a single body, sometimes accompanied by offerings such as pottery vessels (often containing food and drink), gourd containers, textiles, feathers, guinea pigs, llama hooves, sewing kits, weapons, and other items of everyday use. The graves were roofed over with *huarango* wood beams, which in turn might be covered with small fieldstones or adobe bricks (fig. 1.8). No markers existed on the surface to indicate the location of the burial. Scientifically excavated burials provide direct and indirect data for interpreting ancient Nasca society.

The Nasca Lines or Geoglyphs

On the rainless plain or pampa near the town of Nasca, the ancient inhabitants etched gigantic lines, geometric forms, and naturalistic drawings (geoglyphs) onto the surface of the desert by sweeping aside the thin layer of oxidized darker stones on the surface to expose the lighter sand beneath. Several dozen representational geoglyphs or "biomorphs" are present in the form of hummingbirds, a spider, pelicans, killer whales, a lizard, and a monkey, among others (fig. 1.9). These designs can clearly be linked to the Nasca culture, for they are nearly identical to the motifs present on the painted Nasca ceramics. The function of the biomorphs seems to be religious: they graphically represented some of the supernatural forces in Nasca religion. They may also be clan or *ayllu* symbols (Silverman and Proulx 2002:180), but this interpretation is less likely.

The majority of the geoglyphs are geometric in form. Some are straight lines that run for miles across the desert, while other geometric forms (such as triangles, trapezoids, and clusters of lines radiating from small hilltops) cover many acres (fig. 1.10). Although most of the geometric geoglyphs were constructed during the time of the Nasca culture, Persis Clarkson (1990) has argued that at least some of them date to later periods, such as the Late Intermediate Period (A.D. 1000–1470). Curiously, no mention of the geoglyphs exists in early Spanish colonial reports.

It was not until 1926 that the American archaeologist Alfred Kroeber "drew what may be the earliest plans of Nazca's geoglyphs and noted that they were made by removing surface rock. He described 'ray roads' radiating out from 'island-like rocky knolls,' what today are called 'ray centers'" (Silverman and Proulx 2002: 165). In 1927 Toribio Mejía Xesspe "observed long lines, trapezoids, and several zigzags on the hillsides of various valleys of the Río Grande de Nasca drainage and on the Pampa. He interpreted these as 'seques' [*ceque*s] or 'religious roads'" (Mejía Xesspe 1940: 565–569; Silverman and Proulx 2002).

Many theories have been proposed to explain the function and dating of the geoglyphs (see Aveni 1990a, 2000; Silverman and Proulx 2002: chap. 7, for a more thorough discussion). First introduced to the lines by the American historian Paul Kosok, the German-born Nasca scholar Maria Reiche long argued for an astronomical orientation for the geoglyphs (Reiche 1968, 1974). Following Kosok's lead, she believed that many of the lines pointed to locations on the horizon where the sun rose and set during the summer and winter solstices, while other lines were thought to

Fig. 1.10. Trapezoidal Nasca geoglyph or "Nasca Line." Courtesy David Johnson.

point to constellations. In other words, Reiche believed that the pampa, with its many geoglyphs, served as a gigantic calendar used to determine the beginning of the planting season and other seasonal events. Subsequent research by professional astronomers has negated most of Reiche's theories (e.g., Hawkins 1969).

Other scholars suggest different interpretations. Silverman (1990b) feels that many of the straight lines served as ritual pathways used for religious pilgrimage. Johan Reinhard (1985) argued for a direct relationship between the geoglyphs and the worship of mountain deities, rainfall, water supply, and agricultural fertility. Anthony Aveni (1986) and Gary Urton (1990) suggest that many of the radiating lines were prototypes of the later Inca *ceque*s (ritual lines connecting sacred locations) and were swept clean and maintained by members of different *ayllu*s. Recent work by David Johnson (1997) has revealed the presence of large numbers of geometric geoglyphs in previously undocumented areas. He suggests that many of these Nasca Lines point to sources of water, especially where geological faults or alluvial fans have diverted underground aquifers into the valley (Johnson 1999; Proulx and Johnson 1999; Johnson, Proulx, and Mabee 2002).

In the final analysis, the function of the geoglyph has no single explanation. The deserts of southern Peru served as a giant sketchpad for the ancient peoples to communicate both visually and literally.

External Contact

The Early Intermediate Period was a time of regional polities with varying sociopolitical complexity and differing degrees of interregional contact. For most of its existence, the Nasca culture was a relatively isolated ethnic group that developed independently of its neighbors, continuing traditions that began in the ancestral Paracas culture. However, some contact with foreign societies seems to have taken place in the late phases. During Phases 6 and 7 Moche traits begin to appear in Nasca iconography (Proulx 1994). These include new vessel shapes such as the single spout bottle and face neck jars. More importantly, new ways of depicting humans, especially warriors, are found on some Nasca vessels. Warriors are sometimes portrayed in a running position, in a manner very common in Moche art but foreign in the earlier Nasca phases (fig. 5.123; pl. 17). The depiction of terrain (mountains or hills) is found for the first time (pl. 16). Elements of Moche costume and certain facial features appear as well. One or two imitation Moche stirrup spout bottles have been found in the Nasca drainage (see Proulx 1994: fig. 19).

Anna Gayton and Alfred Kroeber (1927: 16) were the first to note resemblances between Moche and Nasca iconography. Much later, in the 1960s, Lawrence Dawson of the Lowie Museum of Anthropology (now the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology) made great strides in examining the similarities and differences between the two styles. Unfortunately, Dawson never formally published his ideas, but he did compare representations of human activity in Moche IV and Nasca 7 pottery in a conference paper (Dawson 1973). Allison Paulsen (1986) described a number of convincing attributes that suddenly appeared in the Nasca style during Phase 7, which could only have been derived from Moche prototypes. Expanding on the work of Daw-

son and Paulsen, I published an article on the relationship of Nasca and Moche (Proulx 1994), including additional iconographic evidence for the contact.

The mechanism for the interchange of ideas between Moche and Nasca cannot be determined conclusively on the basis of available archaeological evidence. Direct overland contact seems unlikely. The southernmost valley with any substantial Moche settlements seems to be Huarmey on the central coast, well north of Lima, and even this occupation may have been sporadic. This leaves a large geographic gap between the two societies. It could be possible for Moche ideas to transfer through intermediate groups, but examination of the iconography of contemporary groups such as the Lima, Nievería, and the local cultures in Chincha shows no Moche traits present. A more likely means of contact was by sea. The Moche built and utilized large reed boats, which allowed them to procure maritime resources as well as to reach islands off the north and central coasts. These boats are frequently seen in Moche iconography (e.g., Kutscher 1983: figs. 314, 316, 318, 319). It is not inconceivable that Moche fishermen sailed along the coast as far south as the Nasca Valley, thus exposing the local people to a new and prestigious style from the north. The contact, however, was short lived; and by the middle of Phase 7 new ideas began to influence the south coast.

Another source of influence on the south coast came from the highland area around the present-day city of Ayacucho. A local culture known as Huarpa appears to have made contact with the Nasca people in the latter part of Phase 7. In this case the exchange was more two-sided, with some elements of Huarpa iconography being found on Nasca ceramics (fig. 5.302), but Nasca traits also penetrated into the highlands and are clearly seen on Huarpa pottery as well. Later, as the Middle Horizon Huari culture grew both politically and militarily in this same highland region, it cast its sights on the resources of the south coast. Major changes began to occur in Nasca ceramics during Phases 8 and 9, along with the introduction of new architectural forms. Huari eventually replaced the declining Nasca culture and established its control over much of coastal Peru.

Summary

The Early Intermediate Period was a time of artistic florescence and technological advancement. The Nasca ceramic tradition, along with its beautiful textiles, is among the finest in the Andes. Their culture adapted to the drastic desert conditions through knowledge and control of the subterranean water resources. The *puquio*s and aqueducts of the Nasca drainage were an ingenious response to the climatic changes that periodically affected this region. Although their architectural achievements pale in comparison to the mammoth pyramids, elaborate murals, and spectacular tombs of the contemporary Moche, the monumental constructions at Cahuachi along with the myriad geoglyphs constructed on the pampa by the Nasca people attest to their organizational skills and abilities. Much more needs to be learned about this fascinating culture, including their political organization, the nature of their settlements, and aspects of everyday life. Research currently being undertaken on the south coast should greatly improve this picture in the near future. In the meantime, studies of the ceramic iconography have provided valuable new information on the cultural history of the Nasca people.

Two » Nasca Pottery and Its Artistic Canons

The Origin and Nature of Nasca Pottery

Of all the materials available for artistic and symbolic expression, the Nasca people chose pottery to communicate their ideas to other members of their society. The shift from textiles to ceramics took place over many generations; pottery became the dominant medium for expression beginning in the early Nasca phases, while textiles remained secondary in importance. The reasons for this transfer from textiles to ceramics are not completely known, but the invention of slip painting is thought to be an important factor.

Pottery first made its appearance on the south coast of Peru in the Initial Period (1800 – 900 B.C.). Crude pottery was first found at the sites of Erizo in the Ica Valley and at the Hacha site in Acarí. In many respects it was quite experimental; the surfaces of the vessels often exhibit uneven firing and have minimal decoration — incision, punctation, or raised bands with teethlike projections. The most common vessel shape is the neckless olla, although several prototypes of the characteristic double spout bottle form are known.

The Early Horizon witnessed the appearance of the Paracas style as well as a number of regional styles such as Tajo in the Nasca drainage and Jahuay in Pisco and Chincha (Silverman 1991, 1994a). The defining characteristic of Paracas pottery was the use of postfired resin paints for decoration. Resin paints are derived from the gummy sap of certain plants such as the acacia bush (*Cercidium praecox*) or pepper tree (*Schinus molle*); into this matrix was mixed finely ground mineral pigments such as hematite or cinnabar (for red colors), limonite and goethite (for yellow and brown colors), malachite (for green), or azurite (for blue) (Donnan 1992: 21 – 22). These were applied *after* firing to zones on the surface of the pottery that had been outlined with incisions by the Paracas potters. As a result, the designs were painted in brightly colored pigments, but with paints that were highly fugitive (subject to flaking off), because they were not fused to the surface during the firing process. "Paracas potters skillfully combined modeling, coiling and paddle and anvil techniques. They made ceramics with thin even walls, and carefully modeled spouts and handles. Surfaces were well smoothed and burnished. Most Paracas ceramics, including those that were to be painted with resin paint, were fired in a smudging atmosphere, creating a dark gray-to-black surface" (Donnan 1992: 35).

The beginning of the Nasca style is marked by the introduction of slip paints, which were applied *before* firing, unlike the resin paints of the Paracas tradition. Slip paints were made from some of the same minerals that were used with resins, but in this case the finely ground mineral pigments were suspended in a thin solution of clay rather than mixed with resins. Because they were applied before the firing process, these minerals were chemically fused to the surface of the vessel, actually becoming part of the pot, unlike the postfired resin paints, which so easily flaked off with washing and abrasion. Through trial and error, Nasca potters also had to learn how the mineral pigments changed

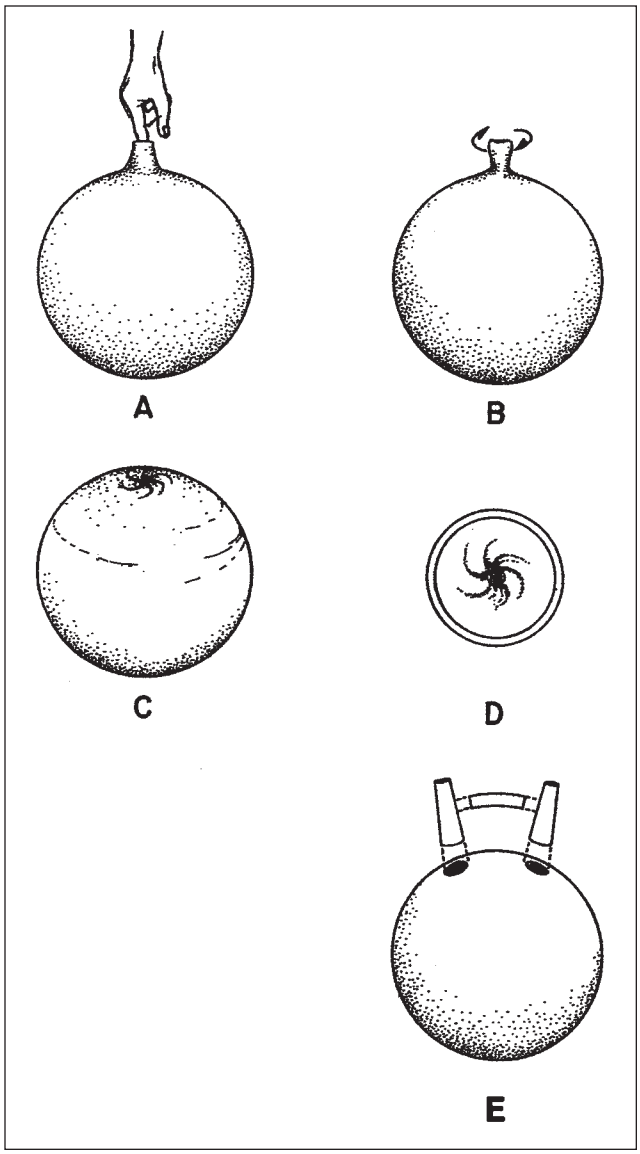


Fig. 2.1. "Twist top" method for closing the chamber of a double spout bottle. (A) Shoulders are worked inward until the clay surrounds a single finger; (B) the residual collar is pinched and removed with a quick twist; (C) a fold is left on the exterior, but these traces are quickly removed by smoothing; (D) a spiral fold remains at the top center interior of the bottle between the spouts; (E) the spouts and bridge are attached after the bottle chamber has been sealed. After Carmichael 1988: figs. 11 and 12.

color during firing and to make the proper selection for the final tints that they desired.

We do not know where slip paints were first invented in the Andes or how and why they began to be used on the south coast. Other cultures, such as the contemporary Moche, also used slip paints, but not to the extent seen among the Nasca. We can say that at the beginning of the Early Intermediate Period (ca. first century A.D.) the Paracas people began to use slip paints, and archaeologists use this innovation arbitrarily to mark the start of the Nasca cultural tradition. In most other aspects of their lives, Nasca culture is a continuation of the earlier Paracas culture — the same religion, artistic iconography, and lifestyle.

The Nasca constructed their pottery from local clays, some of which included mica as a natural additive that appears as shiny glasslike inclusions in the finished product. The mica can cause surface pitting and spalling as a result of differential thermal expansion (Proulx 1968: 23). Cooking and storage vessels were tempered with sand and crushed quartz, but finer clays used for the fancy polychrome pottery required little or no temper (Carmichael 1998: 217). Vessels were manufactured by using a combination of techniques. Potters often used a shallow plate or bowl as a support. Although the true potter's wheel was absent, these platforms served as a rotational device upon which to build a vessel. Pots were constructed using combinations of coiling, drawing, and direct shaping, with some use of the paddle and anvil technique (fig. 2.1). It is important to note that, unlike the Moche, the Nasca never used molds in making their ceramics.

Nasca potters formed their vessels into a wide variety of conventional shapes, many of which have been cataloged by other authors (e.g., Pezzia 1968: pls. 22 to 30; Kroeber and Collier 1998: fig. 90). These include bowls of various types, vases, goblets, jars, double spout bottles, and plates (fig. 2.2). In addition, a wide variety of effigy vessels were made in the form of humans, animals, birds, plants, mythical beings, and trophy heads, among others (for example, figs. 5.102, 5.134, 5.172, 5.250). Both solid and hollow figurines were constructed (figs. 5.145, 5.146, 5.147). Numerous clay musical instruments (drums, panpipes, trumpets, whistles) with complex painted iconography complete the inventory (figs. 5.128 to 5.133). Vessel forms changed and evolved throughout the seven hundred – year sequence. Some shapes appeared suddenly and had short life-spans, while others lasted throughout the sequence, slowly changing through time. The double spout bottle was one of the most characteristic forms associated with the Nasca culture and one of its most prestigious shapes (for example, pls. 2, 5; fig. 5.75). In the earliest phases much of the complex religious iconography occurred on this form.

Prior to applying the decorative paints to the vessels, the surface of a semidry container was smoothed or "burnished" to remove any irregularities and to prepare it for the pigments. Often a small smooth stone was used for

Fig. 2.2. Chart of principal Nasca vessel shapes.

burnishing, although fragments of gourds or other materials might also be used. The surface had to be dry enough so that the slip paints would not run or smear but damp enough so that further burnishing could take place if necessary to produce a glossy surface. Early vessels often exhibit an uneven surface due to experimentation with this technique. Sometimes vessels were burnished a second time after the paint was applied, as evidenced by the smearing of paints over the surface.

Nasca ceramics were decorated with slip paints of multiple colors, including black, white, purple, red, dark red, light red, orange, light orange, yellow, gray, brown, violet, and pink. Light blue was added in the middle of the sequence, and specular hematite provided a sparkle to some of the gray tones. Some vessels exhibit as many as eight to twelve different shades. The sources of the pigments for the slip paints were minerals, particularly iron oxides, along with kaolin and carbon. These were ground to a fine powder and mixed with fine clay in varying ratios to produce different color densities (Carmichael 1998: 217). Deflocculants such as wood ash, sea salt, and potash alum may have been added to keep the mixture suspended in water (ibid.). Paints were applied with brushes of various widths, some of which have been found in archaeological contexts. These were made from human hair or from the wool of the llama or alpaca. After application of a background color, usually white, black, or red, the artist then colored in the solid design areas prior to adding the outline bands.

Although no Nasca firing sites have yet been discovered, modern studies suggest that pots were fired in oxidizing fires in shallow pits, using wood of the local *huarango* tree, rushes, or llama dung as probable fuel. During firing the mineral pigments were transformed into different colors, depending on variations in the temperature, firing process, and impurities.

Several families in Nasca now replicate the ancient techniques of their ancestors to produce pottery for the tourist market. Using technologies passed down through the generations as well as their own careful studies of the clays and pigments available in the drainage, they manufacture ceramics which are difficult for the nonspecialist to tell from the originals. Modern potters have made some changes in the traditional methods, particularly in regard to firing. Kilns are now used along with charcoal for fuel. We have no archaeological evidence for the use of kilns in the past, and potters from many communities in other parts of Peru today continue to use shallow firing pits along with animal dung fuel.

The Canons of Nasca Ceramic Art

The art of every ancient culture can be defined by the standardized rules or canons that distinguish it from the art of other cultures. It is true that these rules evolve and change over time, and Nasca was no exception; however, certain traits differentiate Nasca ceramic art from that of the contemporary Moche or Recuay cultures. Occasionally outside influences can affect a local art style (such as when a few Moche traits were introduced into the Nasca style in Phase 7), but these are usually easy to distinguish from the normative rules of the Nasca style. When enough significant changes have occurred, we can say that the style in question has ended or been replaced by a new style.

In the past it was a common practice to define an ancient culture by its ceramic style, equating people with their art. In recent years this supposition has been criticized as being too simplistic and even misleading (Conkey 1990: 8). Rather than taking this narrow approach, it is more valuable to view style as a means of symbolic or nonverbal communication based on doing something in a certain way (its canons) (Wiessner 1990: 106). We will explore the symbolism and meaning of Nasca art a bit later in this book. At this juncture, let us try to decipher the rules followed by Nasca ceramic artists in making their pottery.

Polychromic Painting

The distinguishing characteristic of Nasca ceramic art is its use of polychrome painting; no other ceramic style in ancient Peru used the number and variety of colors seen on Nasca vessels. Rich polychrome painting predominated during the entire Nasca sequence in the Early Intermediate Period (Phases 1 through 7). Only when the style was heavily influenced by highland cultures in Phases 8 and 9 did the polychrome painting decline. Because of the drastic changes that took place in Nasca Phase 8, we now consider the last two phases (8 and 9) to date to the Middle Horizon and not to be truly Nasca in the technical sense.

Layout

Careful planning of the design layout occurred on most Nasca vessels. Space was divided into registers, so that the images produced could be viewed to their maximum advantage. With the exception of bowls and plates, decoration on the vast majority of Nasca pottery was confined to the exterior. As vases and jars grew in height, multiple registers

were produced, each containing a different design element (fig. 5.278). The use of horizontal bands, sometimes symbolic of Mythical Killer Whale fins, to separate these vertical registers was the norm (figs. 5.56, 5.87). Most vessels had a narrow painted band around the rim to distinguish the upper limits of the design area (figs. 5.88, 5.92); a wide band of slip paint often was used to decorate the upper portion of the interior of such vessels. Beginning in Phase 3, a band along the lower edge of the design area was also added. In Phases 5 and 6 it was a common practice to divide the bottom of vessels (both interior and exterior decorated) into quadrants (fig. 5.202).

Modular Width and Symmetry

Lawrence Dawson was the first to use the term "modular width" to refer to the Nasca potters' practice of painting bands of equal width when composing design elements. "Non-linear features, such as eyes and noses, are accommodated to the modular framework as well" (see Rowe 1962d: 14). This convention is most apparent in Phase 5, where multiple, parallel horizontal bands are found on many vessels (figs. 5.156, 5.321), but it applies to more complex designs as well. Many Nasca motifs also have a certain level of symmetry, especially in the faces of mythical beings, which tend to be identical on both sides, as if an imaginary line were drawn vertically through the center of the face.

Outlining

One of the most unusual aspects of Nasca painting technique is the manner in which motifs were outlined. Outlines were applied last — after the colored portions of a design had been painted. This gives the motifs a crisp appearance, because the black outlining covers the irregular edges of the colored interior parts of the design. Children in Western culture are given outlined designs in coloring books and told to fill in the spaces with colors. If they start from scratch, they first draw an outline and then fill in the colors. The Nasca painters did just the opposite, and this is one of the best ways of detecting forgeries or modern copies.

Alternation of Colors

When potters depicted multiple examples of the same object — be they geometric figures, birds, or mythical motifs — they frequently alternated the colors to provide variability. The earliest examples are solid balls in red and black alternation or footprint/bag designs in these same two colors. Slightly later trophy heads, plants, and other forms were painted in multiple alternating colors (figs. 5.86, 5.287, 5.317). It is not unusual to find major motifs duplicated on both sides of a vessel — identical but in different colors.

Perspective

Nasca artisans were only partially successful in conveying the sense of depth in their ceramic art. They did this through a technique that I call layering. Layering can be seen on a number of very elaborate mythical pieces where snakes, streamers, and similar appendages cross over and under one another, giving the visual perception of depth. One of the best examples of this technique can be seen on the Nasca 2/3 drum recently owned by David Bernstein and formerly exhibited at the Guggenheim Museum (pl. 12 and Sawyer 1968: 57). Modeled vessels are better adapted to communicate the sense of three dimensions, as seen in numerous examples of warriors holding modeled trophy heads in their hands or in the models of birds, animals, and other life forms.

Kennings

John Rowe was the first to apply the term "kennings" to ancient Peruvian art in his seminal work on Chavín art (Rowe 1962d). A kenning is a substitution of one element for another; the term is derived from Old Norse court poetry, where it was especially fashionable (ibid.: 15). An example in Chavín art is the replacement of hair by snakes or the addition of tongues shown issuing from the mouths of extra faces which take the place of body parts such as legs and feet (ibid.: 15). While scholars have never applied the term "kennings" to Nasca ceramic art, the technique is clearly present, although not at the same level as in Chavín art. I would argue that the concept of kennings was brought to the south coast by Chavín traders, who, in turn, greatly influenced the art of the earlier Paracas culture. Paracas textile art is replete with kennings, and many of these motifs made their way into Nasca art. In the early phases, for example, we find several types of mythical beings with tonguelike streamers emerging from their mouths in the form of snakes, rivers, or other recognizable forms (fig. 5.15). The relationship between blood and the taking of trophy heads to promote agricultural fertility is exemplified by plants that are partially in the form of trophy heads or by trophy heads with plants

sprouting from their mouths (fig. 5.104). In the Proliferous phases (6 and 7) we have many examples of kennings where representational objects, such as weapons or trophy heads, are replaced by quartet rays, volutes, and other geometric abbreviations (figs. 5.19, 5.77).

Effigy Vessels

Although the Nasca style is characterized by ceramics painted with polychrome designs, it also includes a wide range of modeled or effigy pottery, ranging from representations of humans (e.g., warriors, fishermen, women, trophy heads: figs. 5.148, 5.149; pls. 19, 36) to animals, birds, plants, and other naturalistic themes (figs. 5.177, 5.189, 5.249). Figurines, house models, and other rare types were also made. Modeled vessels were present in the earlier Paracas style and continued into the succeeding Nasca style. Nasca effigy vessels exhibit many differences, however, from those made by the contemporary Moche and other cultures. Moche vessels portray a much wider range of themes, including portraits of leaders and scenes of everyday life. They are usually painted in only two colors, either red-on-white or black-on-white. Nasca effigy pots are painted in polychrome colors but lack the variety of themes seen in Moche art. Many Moche effigy vessels were mass-produced, using molds; the Nasca effigy vessels were never made with molds.

Subject Matter

The individual motifs in Nasca art are described later; the purpose of this section is to provide some generalities about the subject matter represented in the style, which can be considered part of its canons. Nasca motifs fall into two major categories: sacred and profane. Sacred motifs include the wide variety of mythical creatures present in the art along with associated themes such as trophy heads, blood, and ritual scenes. Profane or secular motifs include the wide variety of naturalistic themes, such as birds, fish, plants, farmers, and fishermen. Carmichael (1992b: 187) has argued that "most Nasca iconography [was] a symbolic, interrelated system from which specific themes cannot be isolated and treated as reflections of ordinary reality." He is correct in assuming that many Nasca representational motifs symbolize more than just the object portrayed (e.g., the swift or *vencejo* bird is attracted to insects that appear with the emergence of water in the rivers and thus is associated with concepts such as fertility of the crops and abundant water supply). Yet a wide variety of animals, birds, plants, insects, fish, and other motifs seem to represent the natural world of the Nasca. Thus I feel that the art served two primary purposes: (1) to celebrate the natural world in which they lived through the representation of the naturalistic themes that they encountered on a daily basis; and (2) to symbolize through a variety of motifs the powerful supernatural forces that affected their existence.

It is important to single out the many differences between the Nasca stylistic tradition and that of other cultures, particularly contemporary Andean cultures, such as the Moche of the northern coast of Peru. These differences allow us to define and to understand the canons of these distinct art styles. The Nasca style contains nothing comparable to the famous Moche "portrait vessels." No specific individuals are identifiable in Nasca iconography; individuals are portrayed in a "generic" form, with no idiosyncratic characteristics. Nasca pottery has no detectable scenes portraying class differentiation, no leaders being attended by subordinates or elaborately dressed elites interacting with others, as is common in the art of the Maya, Moche, and other early civilizations. We do see people of different occupations and ranks, from scantily clad farmers to shamans, warriors, and others identifiable by their distinctive costumes or accessories. The only interactive scenes depict warfare, agricultural rituals, or hunting. Most other individuals are portrayed in isolation, depriving us of additional knowledge of social interaction. Women do not appear in the style until Phase 5 (in the middle of the ceramic sequence), after which they become quite predominant. Scenes of everyday life are extremely rare, especially depictions of women's activities, such as cooking, weaving, and child-rearing. Landscapes (such as mountains) appear only in the last phases, having been introduced through contact with the Moche; rivers and the ocean as well as celestial bodies (such as the sun, moon, and stars) are either absent or as yet unidentifiable.

Three » The Discovery of the Nasca Style and Its Chronological Placement

The Discovery of the Style

Since the Spanish Colonial Period, antiquities from the New World have been sent back as curiosities to Europe. Hernán Cortés sent Aztec gold and silver ornaments, feather-work, mosaics, cloth, animal skins, bronze and copper objects, and two painted books to Charles V as early as 1519 (Boone 1993: 315). Virtually all the artworks sent to Europe during this time were Mexican; nothing is recorded as coming from South America (ibid.: 318). Elizabeth Hill Boone suggests that the transportation costs for carrying bulky or fragile objects overland to boats moored on the Atlantic coast may have been too high or that Francisco Pizarro and his colleagues may simply not have been impressed by the aesthetics of the artworks they found in the Andes (ibid.: 318). Whatever the causes may have been, archaeological specimens from Peru did not find their way to museums and private collections in Europe until the nineteenth century. Many of these were collected by travelers, who took them home as novelties; others were brought back as part of collections amassed by scientific expeditions sent out by various governments after the collapse of the Spanish empire in the New World.

The first known Nasca pottery to be brought to Europe was collected in 1842 by a Frenchman, Captain François Joseph Amedée de Campe de Rosamel (1809–1853) during a trip around the world aboard the ship *La Danaïde* (Hamy 1898: 596). Five Nasca vessels were included among the Peruvian pottery brought back to France and deposited in the Provincial Museum at Boulogne-sur-Mer in that same year. These escaped notice by the scholarly community until they were described by Jules Hamy in 1898. Three vessels in the collection of Dr. José Mariano Macedo of Peru were the first Nasca pottery to come to the attention of scholars. Dr. Macedo sent his collection to Europe in 1881 with the intention of finding a buyer. It was displayed in several cities, including Paris, before being purchased by the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin in 1884. Hamy (1882) wrote a short article on the collection and illustrated one of the Nasca vessels (a Nasca Phase 3 double spout bottle with a double-headed masked Serpentine Creature from the Ica Valley). This is the earliest-known illustration of a Nasca ceramic vessel with proper provenience (see Eisleb 1977: pl. 81, for a photograph; Berlin catalog VA 4674). Charles Wiener (1880: 627) can be credited with publishing the first illustration of a Nasca vessel (a Phase 5 or 6 double spout bottle with a band of women's faces surmounted by an indistinguishable design). He erroneously attributes this vessel to the Recuay area.

Five more Nasca vessels were acquired by the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde in 1888 as part of the Centeno Collection, making a total of eight when added to the three previously mentioned Macedo pieces. Eduard Seler illustrated four of these vessels in 1893 (pl. 7, nos. 12, 13, 14, and pl. 14,

no. 19; all eight are illustrated in Eisleb 1977: pls. 81, 82, 129, 183, 219, 255, 261, 286). This small collection of Nasca vessels in the Berlin museum caught the attention of a young scholar by the name of Max Uhle.

Frederich Max Uhle was born in Dresden, Germany, on March 25, 1856 (Rowe 1954: 1). He entered the University of Leipzig in 1875; after a year's interruption for military service, he completed his Ph.D. in the field of linguistics in 1880 (ibid.: 1). Uhle was not destined to become a philologist, and his interest began to turn to the newly emerging field of anthropology (see Rowe 1954 for more details on Uhle's life; also see Kaulicke 1998; Thiemer-Sachse et al. 1999; Wurster 1999). His first job was as an assistant to the director of the Königliches Zoologisches und Anthropologisch-Ethnographisches Museum in Dresden, where he remained from 1881 to 1888 (Rowe 1954: 2). Rowe maintains that while in Dresden Uhle became friends with Alphons Stübel, one of the leading Peruvianists of that day. Uhle first took an interest in South America at that time.

In 1888 Uhle accepted a position at the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, where he spent the next four years. He apparently took a great interest in the Andean collections there, including several Nasca vessels acquired from the Macedo and Centeno Collections. Uhle appears to have been most affected by the double spout bottle painted with the double-headed Serpentine Creature that had been illustrated in 1882 by Hamy (VA 4674). Adolph Bastian, Uhle's superior, interpreted this motif as a variation of the Feathered Serpent god of the Maya and Aztec. Bastian seems to have had a great influence on Uhle, particularly in seeing connections between the Andean area and Mesoamerica. The provenience of the double spout bottle in question was listed as the Ica Valley, and it is no coincidence that Uhle was to discover a major cemetery containing similar vessels in that valley a little over a decade later.

While in the employ of the Berlin museum, Uhle undertook his first fieldwork in South America, a trip to Argentina and Bolivia in 1892 to make archaeological and ethnographic collections. In 1895, while still in South America, he was hired by the University of Pennsylvania to augment its South American collections. He subsequently worked at the sites of Tiahuanaco and Pachacamac, among others. It was at Pachacamac that Uhle most effectively applied the technique of stratigraphic excavation, which was to provide the evidence for his later chronological sequence.

Uhle spent the period from 1897 to 1899 in Philadelphia, writing his report on Pachacamac (Rowe 1954: 6). When his patron, Dr. William Pepper, died in 1898, Uhle was fearful that his career in Philadelphia would be over. He was rescued by Phoebe Apperson Hearst (1842 – 1919), the wife of Senator George Hearst (who had made a fortune in mining and railroads) and the mother of William Randolph Hearst, who built the publishing empire. Among her philanthropic activities was the financing of a major expansion of the University of California at Berkeley. Phoebe Hearst was particularly interested in anthropology, and one of her dreams was to establish a Museum of Man. Toward this end she began to finance anthropological fieldwork in 1895, supporting first George Reisner in Egypt and then Max Uhle in Peru. As a result, between 1899 and 1905 Uhle excavated and made collections in Peru, which are now housed in the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley.

Even before the contract was finalized with Hearst, Uhle was back in Peru, beginning work in the Moche Valley in August 1899. The gravelots he excavated near the Huaca de la Luna are among the best documented in the world. Uhle was justifiably proud of his achievements there, which he rated as equal in importance to his subsequent discovery of the Nasca style. After working briefly at Huamachuco in the highlands, on the coast near Lima, and in the Chincha Valley, Uhle finally arrived in the Ica Valley in December 1900. One suspects that he chose this particular valley for exploration because the Nasca-style vessel in the Berlin museum that most impressed him was said to have come from there.

After excavating for two months (mainly in the middle Ica Valley) and finding burials from the Middle Horizon and Late Intermediate Period, Uhle finally arrived at the Hacienda Ocucaje in the lower valley in January 1901. He was welcomed by the manager, Dr. Ernesto Mazzei, an old acquaintance. Uhle was invited to excavate anywhere he wished. After digging at several late cemeteries, he finally found the "long sought cemetery [containing] the beautiful polychrome painted ware" (Uhle 1914: 6). The location was near a depression on top of a small hill now named Cerro Max Uhle in his honor, which Uhle called Site A. The grave he found at Site A contained four Nasca-style vessels and four Paracas (Ocucaje Phase 9) vessels. It is likely that in his excitement Uhle mixed two gravelots from different cultures. The date was February 3, 1901. Uhle was the first to excavate Nasca-style vessels scientifically in situ and thus is credited with "discovering" the style. He went on to excavate five additional Nasca gravelots at Site B, two at Site C, and twenty-three more at Site F (for a complete record of Uhle's daily activities in the Ica Valley as reconstructed from his field notes and letters, see Proulx 1970).

The looting of archaeological sites in Peru grew from a

trickle to a hemorrhage during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Although some scientific archaeology was being done at this time by trained individuals such as Uhle, Wilhelm Reiss, and Alphons Stübel, the activity of *huaqueros* (local grave robbers, often hired by private collectors to augment their holdings) far surpassed any organized endeavors by the museums. Uhle himself purchased a collection of 660 Nasca vessels while on a visit to the Nasca Valley in 1905. These came from over eighteen sites within the valley and attest to the amount of looting already in progress at that time (Kroeber and Strong 1924). Uhle himself was forced to share his finds by having to divide the contents of some of his gravelots in Ica with the manager of the hacienda, Ernesto Mazzei.

One of the largest private collections amassed during these years was made by the German textile merchant Christian Theodor Wilhelm Gretzer (1847–1926). Born in Hannover, Gretzer arrived in Peru in 1872 at the relatively young age of twenty-five. His interest in antiquities seems to have developed from his profession as an importer of textiles. He soon became familiar with the beautiful Precolumbian textiles from his adopted country and began to collect these, soon including all other types of artifacts as well. By 1884 his house in Lima was a veritable museum. During the thirty-one years he lived in Peru (1872–1903) his collections grew to over thirty thousand specimens (Raddatz 1985: 4). In 1898 Gretzer sold part of his collection to Arthur Baessler (ibid.: 7). Many of these specimens went to the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin.

Gretzer returned to Germany in 1903, bringing the bulk of his collection with him. In 1907 most of this collection was also purchased by the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin. Of the 297 Nasca vessels in the Berlin museum illustrated by Dieter Eisleb in his catalog (1977), 159 — more than half the total — had been collected by Gretzer. A smaller collection of 1,200 Peruvian artifacts that had been part of Gretzer's own private holdings was obtained by the Hannover Museum in 1927 on the death of his widow (Raddatz 1985: 10).

Knowledge of the attractive polychrome pottery became more widespread as more and more Nasca specimens were brought to Europe. Thomas A. Joyce (1912) was the first to use a color drawing to illustrate the beauty of the ware in the frontispiece of his book *South American Archaeology*. He also seems to have been the first to use the term "Nasca Style" to describe this pottery (ibid.: 181). In an article in *Burlington Magazine,* he elaborated further on the nature of the pottery (Joyce 1913a). Henry Forbes (1913) wrote a short article on the pottery in which he described the mummy bundles of this culture and illustrated (in color) eleven superb vessels from his own collection. It is unclear where Forbes obtained his information about Nasca mummy bundles, but it could have come from an article by Uhle in the *Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris* (Uhle 1913). This was Uhle's first major publication on his work in the Ica Valley, written twelve years after the event and published when he was living in Santiago, Chile. Also belatedly, he published an account in English of his discovery of the Nasca style and his chronology for the Ica Valley (Uhle 1914).

The physical anthropologist Ales Hrdlicka made two trips to Peru, the first a brief survey in 1910 and the second a three-month tour in 1913, which included visits to sites in the Acarí and Nasca Valleys (Hrdlicka 1911, 1914). Hrdlicka's objectives were "to determine, as far as possible, the anthropological relation of the mountain people with those of the coast; to make further studies regarding the distribution of the coast type; to determine the type of the important Nasca group of people; and to extend the writer's researches on Indian and especially Precolumbian pathology" (Hrdlicka 1914: 2). Although Hrdlicka's research added little information on Nasca ceramics, it did provide valuable insights into the form and variety of Nasca graves, the amount of looting in the area, and the range of grave goods being extracted by *huaqueros*. He was among the first to describe important Acarí Valley sites such as Chaviña and Tambo Viejo. He also contributed valuable information on Nasca practices of skull deformation and trephination.

After Uhle's departure from Peru in 1912, scientific archaeology continued in different hands. In July and August of 1915 the young Peruvian Julio C. Tello undertook a reconnaissance of southern Peru and Bolivia. He spent some time in the Nasca Valley, visiting among other locations Cahuachi, Majoro, Ocongalla, Estaquería, and Las Salinas. In a paper presented at the Second Pan American Scientific Congress in Washington, D.C., that same year, Tello (1917) described the form and construction of Nasca graves, discussed the deformed skulls of the mummies, and illustrated a selection of twenty drawings of mythical creatures that appeared on the pottery. In a later paper (Tello 1918) he was among the first to describe Nasca trophy heads and to compare them with Jívaro shrunken heads in an attempt to understand their significance.

North American archaeologists lagged behind their European counterparts in carrying out fieldwork in Peru. When they did arrive, however, they brought excavation and analytical skills that included a recognition of the importance of context and provenience. William Curtis

Farabee (1865 – 1925) was appointed curator of the American Section of the University Museum in Philadelphia in 1913 (Madeira 1964: 31). In 1921 he was an official U.S. representative to Peru for the celebration of the centennial of its foundation as a republic (Mason 1926: 130). While in Lima he viewed the exhibits of Precolumbian pottery on display for the celebration, including a large number of Nasca vessels (ibid.: 130). In 1922 he led an expedition to Peru for the University Museum with the express purpose of recovering a collection of Nasca ceramics for that institution.

Farabee spent six weeks in the Nasca Valley, excavating a total of twenty-eight gravelots from five different sites: seventeen from Cahuachi, five from Paredones, four from Cantayo, and one each from Las Cañas and Cruz. This was the second major collection (after the gravelots excavated by Uhle at the turn of the century) brought to the United States that had good documentation. During this trip to Peru, Farabee contracted inflammatory dysentery and became quite ill. He never recovered and, after suffering ill health for several years, died in 1925 (Mason 1926: 141).

Nasca studies took a giant leap forward with the fieldwork of Alfred Louis Kroeber (1876–1960) in 1926. Kroeber, one of the leading figures in American anthropology, was one of the first individuals to receive a Ph.D. in the newly emerging discipline of anthropology, in 1901. In 1900 he accepted a position as curator of anthropology at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco (Rowe 1962c: 395). The following year he was selected as the first resident instructor in the newly founded Department of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley. The position was funded by Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the great benefactor of that institution, who was also supporting the fieldwork of Max Uhle in Peru at that time. Uhle returned to the United States in late 1901 and spent 1902 and 1903 in Berkeley and San Francisco, unpacking his collections, writing reports, and giving occasional lectures. It was there that Uhle and Kroeber first met, and this relationship sparked Kroeber's interest in Peruvian archaeology (Kroeber 1944: 5). In 1908 he became curator of the Museum of Anthropology and was thus in charge of all the collections, including the materials that Uhle had brought back from Peru.

Kroeber had made up his mind "to work either in Mexican or Peruvian archaeology, partly because he regarded these areas as the major sources of cultural influences spreading to the rest of the New World" (Rowe 1962c: 400). He decided to concentrate on Peru largely because of the excellent collections made by Uhle, which he could work on conveniently with students (ibid.: 401). With his new student, William Duncan Strong, Kroeber began a systematic analysis of the collections, having determined that Uhle did not plan to publish anything further on them (ibid.: 401). One of their first reports was a description of Uhle's collection from the Ica Valley (Kroeber and Strong 1924). Another graduate student, Anna H. Gayton, joined Strong and Kroeber in 1925 and contributed to the series of reports with her analysis of the materials from Nievería and later of the Nasca Valley collection (Gayton and Kroeber 1927).

In 1924 Dr. Berthold Laufer, head curator for anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, along with its director, D. C. Davis, initiated plans to retain Kroeber to lead the Captain Marshall Field Archaeological Expedition to Peru. In 1925 Kroeber made his first fieldtrip to Peru and undertook investigations at the mouth of the Chillón Valley, in sites in the Lima area, in the Cañete Valley, and north to the Trujillo area (Rowe 1962c: 403). In May and June of that year he also made a brief trip to Paracas and Nasca.

In the fall of 1926 Kroeber returned to Peru with his new wife, Theodora, and a field assistant, William Egbert Schenck, under the auspices of the Field Museum. He and Gayton had worked out a chronology for the Nasca vessels in the Uhle Collection, and he hoped to collect a much larger sample with grave associations to check and refine his seriation (Rowe 1962c: 404). In a very short period of several months he worked at eight different locations, excavating a total of ninety-eight gravelots (thirteen at Cahuachi, eighteen at Soisongo, twenty-one at Ocongalla, twenty-two at Majoro Chico, fourteen at Cantayo, two at Agua Santa, one at La Huayura, and seven at Aja; see Carmichael 1988: appendix 1). These specimens are now all at the Field Museum in Chicago. Kroeber and Collier's manuscript on the collection, edited by Carmichael, was finally published (Kroeber and Collier 1998). During September Tello and Kroeber jointly excavated several cemeteries. They did not split up any of the gravelots (as Uhle had done previously in Ica), however, but excavated independently in different parts of the same cemetery. Tello's gravelots are now part of the collections of the Museo Nacional in Lima, and his field notes have been published (Mejía Xesspe 2002). Kroeber's gravelots are the third largest major collection of documented Nasca ceramics in the United States (after Uhle's and Farabee's).

German scholars' interest in the Nasca area was revived in 1932 when Heinrich Ubbelohde-Döering excavated on the Santa Cruz tributary of the Nasca drainage. Ubbelohde-Döering (1889 – 1972) was born in Bonn and studied his-

tory and geography in Munich and Göttingen before concentrating in anthropology at the University of Marburg (Neudecker 1979: 2). His 1924 dissertation was on the culture of the Inca in the highlands of South America. His interest in Nasca pottery began soon afterward, when he had the opportunity to read Seler's 1923 monograph on Nasca iconography and to study the private collection of Dr. Eduard Gaffron (Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: 1–2). Ubbelohde-Döering (1925/26, 1931) produced two monographs on Nasca iconography with excellent color drawings. His work at Huayurí on the Santa Cruz tributary revealed a number of late Nasca gravelots (Ubbelohde-Döering 1958, 1966), later analyzed by Angelika Neudecker (1979). Carmichael (1988: appendix 1) reports that Ubbelohde-Döering excavated eight gravelots at Huayurí and two at Cahuachi. He also excavated and surface collected a large number of unassociated vessels, especially at Cahuachi, all of which are housed in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Munich, where he served as conservator of the collections.

A twenty-year gap in Nasca fieldwork intervened until William Duncan Strong (1899-1962), whose early work included an analysis of part of the Uhle Collection when he was Kroeber's student at Berkeley, launched a major survey and excavation project on the south coast. In 1952–1953 Strong excavated in the Nasca and Ica Valleys, with the primary objective of working out a detailed chronology for the Paracas, Nasca, and Tiahuanaco (Huari) cultural sequence (Strong 1957). Strong's most important discoveries included evidence for the earliest and latest phases of the Nasca style and the excavation of thirty-seven gravelots at the site of Cahuachi, which are now housed at Columbia University. He and his crew conducted a surface survey in the Nasca and Ica Valleys, which resulted in the listing and description of seventy-eight sites.

About this same time (1954–1955), John Rowe and his colleagues Lawrence Dawson, Dorothy Menzel, Francis Riddell, and Dwight Wallace began a research project on the south coast, which included partial surveys in all of the principal valleys along with Menzel and Riddell's test excavations at the site of Tambo Viejo in the Acarí Valley (Rowe 1956). A major objective of the project was to clarify the chronological sequence, using ceramics as the main indicator of change. Dawson, who had previously worked out a new seriation of Nasca pottery based on qualitative associations of shapes and designs (using the Berkeley collections as the basis of his study), took this opportunity to excavate test pits at several sites to verify his sequence.

As part of this project David Adair Robinson, a graduate student at Stanford University, conducted an archaeological survey of a portion of the Nasca drainage, including the main portions of the Aja, Tierras Blancas, Taruga, and Poroma tributaries as well as the central portion of the Río Grande. He located and recorded a total of 111 sites of which about 50 contained Nasca cultural materials (Robinson 1957: 94). The majority of Robinson's sites were looted cemeteries, and his report provides little information on habitation sites, thus perpetuating our skewed picture (until recently) of the nature of Nasca settlements.

For almost twenty years, from the mid 1960s to the mid 1980s, little fieldwork took place on Nasca sites, save for a sporadic site survey in the Ica Valley undertaken by John Rowe and his students. Analysis of Nasca ceramics, however, was ongoing, especially by Rowe's students at Berkeley. Among the dozens who participated in Rowe's seminars and conducted research on the Uhle and Wattis Collections were Richard Roark (1965), Donald Proulx (1968), Steven Wegner (1975, 1976a, 1976b), Elizabeth Wolfe (1981), and Richard Gould (1962). These contributions are described in the chronology section. This is just a sampling of many studies (the majority unpublished seminar projects, written by a generation of graduate students at Berkeley).

Berkeley was not the only place where Nasca studies were taking place. Concepción Blasco Bosqued and Luis Javier Ramos Gómez were analyzing the extensive Nasca collection in the Museo de América in Madrid (Blasco and Ramos 1974, 1980, 1986, 1991). Mary Blagg at the University of Texas was examining the complexities of substyles present in Phase 5 (Blagg 1975). Patrick Carmichael at the University of Calgary was examining Nasca pottery construction (Carmichael 1986, 1994b), the reflection of social structure seen in Nasca mortuary practices (Carmichael 1988, 1995), and various aspects of Nasca iconography (Carmichael 1992b, 1994a).

Active fieldwork on Nasca sites was revived in the mid 1980s by Sarah Massey's survey in the upper Ica Valley (Massey 1986), Helaine Silverman's excavations at the site of Cahuachi (Silverman 1993a), Giuseppe Orefici's excavations at Cahuachi, Pueblo Viejo, and Bajada de San José (Bueno Mendoza and Orefici 1984; Orefici 1988), and Katharina Schreiber's survey of the Nasca drainage (Schreiber 1989). Schreiber and her Peruvian colleague Josué Lancho Rojas began a survey of the middle Nasca drainage, which resulted in a study of Nasca underground filtration systems (*puquios*), including their chronology and significance (Schreiber and Lancho 1988, 1995, 2003). David Browne conducted a survey on the Palpa tributary (Browne 1992) and

Silverman (1993b, 2002b) in the Ingenio region, while Francis Riddell and his colleagues from the California Institute for Peruvian Studies carried out extensive survey and excavation in the Acarí Valley (Riddell 1986, 1989; Kowta 1987; Riddell and Valdez 1988; Valdez 1990). In 1998 I completed a survey of the major portion of the Nasca drainage that had not been systematically investigated: the lower portion of the Nasca River from Usaca to its confluence with the Río Grande and the Río Grande from Cabildo to Maijo Grande (Proulx 1999d, 2001b). Nasca studies are now flourishing, and much new information is being generated about the ancient culture and its associated pottery.

Chronology

Following the discovery of the Nasca style by Uhle, the next task was to place it securely in the temporal sequence being established by Andean scholars. Initially this was accomplished through seriational techniques at a time preceding the establishment of more accurate absolute dates. The major steps in developing this chronology are described below, followed by a brief outline of the nine Nasca phases.

Although some early chroniclers like Pedro de Cieza de León recognized that there were pre-Inca ruins in the Andes (Cieza 1959 [1553]: 284), many of the first books describing Peruvian antiquities lumped all the materials under the designation "Inca" or attributed them to contemporaries of the Inca such as the "Chimú" (for example, see Rivero and Tschudi 1851). Slightly later authors illustrated artifacts from obviously different cultures, but these were simply described as Inca pieces coming from specific locations, such as Recuay, Trujillo, Chimbote, and the like (for example, Wiener 1880).

Max Uhle, considered by many the "Father of Peruvian Archaeology," was the first to develop a relative chronology for the pre-Inca cultures of the Peruvian coast. As Rowe (1954: 20) points out, Uhle was familiar with the stratigraphic method derived from geology and paleontology then being applied by archaeologists and was the first to use this technique effectively in Peru during his excavations at Pachacamac (Uhle 1902, 1903). But Uhle's true contribution was the seriation of ceramic styles. Starting with Inca pottery, with which he was familiar through his studies of the Centeno Collection in Berlin, he went on to recognize differences between Inca ware and "Tiahuanaco" pottery that he excavated at Pachacamac (Rowe 1954: 20). Historically the Inca culture dated to the time of the Spanish conquest; thus the Tiahuanaco pottery must be earlier. This was confirmed by his discovery of Tiahuanaco graves stratigraphically beneath Inca graves at Pachacamac. When new styles were encountered, they were placed in his sequence, based on their similarity to Inca or Tiahuanaco wares.

When Uhle discovered the Nasca style in the Ica Valley in 1901, he at first referred to it as the "new-found style of Ica." In a letter written to his benefactor Phoebe Hearst on February 26, 1901, he described a sequence of five styles that he had found in the valley: (1) "an ancient civilization whose remains alone would have deserved a visit" (Nasca), (2) "fading epigones of the civilization of Tiahuanaco" (Huari), (3) "an older local civilization of Ica and adjacent valleys" (Early Ica), (4) "a later local civilization of the same valley" (Late Ica), and (5) "traces of Inca civilization" (published in Kroeber and Strong, 1924: 128). This sequence was established by using stylistic seriation, which was in turn supported by differences in the forms of the graves associated with the pottery. He recognized "the new-found style of Ica" as quite different from both Inca and Tiahuanaco and placed it earlier than Tiahuanaco partly on the basis of similarities that he saw between this new (Nasca) style and his earliest style on the north coast (Moche), which, he had determined, preceded Tiahuanaco in that region (Uhle 1924: 131).

Uhle published very little on his Nasca work until almost a decade after the discovery. His article for the Davenport Academy of Sciences (Uhle 1914), written in 1911, records his impressions of the discovery of the style and the similarities of the motifs to those of other cultures. In the few references he makes to Nasca vessels between 1901 and 1911, he calls them "vessels from Ica" (e.g., Uhle 1906). In 1911 he first used the term "Proto Nasca" to refer to the style, although by the time of publication in 1914 the term "Nasca pottery" had been adopted from Joyce and used in the Davenport *Proceedings* volume. Uhle's 1913 article in the *Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris* presents a more comprehensive discussion of the development of his chronology for the south coast and includes diagrams of Nasca grave forms for the first time. After 1914 Uhle's attention turned to other interests, and he wrote little more on Nasca except when promoting his diffusionist ideas of contacts between Mexico and the Andes. He never undertook an analysis of the Nasca gravelots that he had excavated in the Ica Valley or the large collection that he had purchased in the Nasca Valley in 1905. This was left to Alfred Kroeber and his students.

Julio C. Tello was the leading native Peruvian archaeolo-

gist during the first half of the twentieth century. In addition to his many other accomplishments (including discovery and description of the Chavín culture, Peru's first civilization, and excavation of the famous Paracas cemetery, which yielded over four hundred mummy bundles wrapped in elaborate textiles), Tello also excavated over five hundred Nasca graves in the Río Grande de Nasca drainage. In 1926 he worked in concert with Kroeber, returning in 1927 for additional fieldwork. Unfortunately, Tello published little on his Nasca excavations during his lifetime, but his notes have been published posthumously (Mejía Xesspe 2002). Tello developed his own three-stage chronological sequence for the Nasca ceramics that he discovered. The earliest (Chanka or Proto-Nasca) was thought to have been derived from cultures in the highlands, with some influences from tropical forest traits (Tello 1959: 60 – 61; Larco 1966: 116). Curiously, this material contains typical Nasca pottery from a number of phases, including Phases 5, 6, and 7 — certainly not an early stage in the development of the Nasca style. This is followed by Nasca Clásico, corresponding to Kroeber's Nasca A. The last phase is called Rukana or Post-Nasca and corresponds to what we now call Huari or Middle Horizon. Tello's chronological scheme is highly flawed, and no Peruvianists use the terms "Chanka" and "Rukana" today. The scheme is described here only because of Tello's predominance in the field of Nasca archaeology and the historical nature of the data.

In 1927 Anna H. Gayton and Alfred Kroeber published the results of their attempt to develop a chronological subdivision of the Nasca style. Using as their primary sample Uhle's collection of 660 vessels, which he purchased in the Nasca Valley in 1905, they established a quantitative seriation based on the numerical analysis of shape, color, and design attributes (Gayton and Kroeber 1927: 4). By correlating frequencies of specific designs and color combinations with the twenty-five shape categories that they established, these scholars were able to identify two major substyles (which they designated A and B), separated by an intermediate phase (designated as X) (ibid.: 10). Somewhat as an afterthought, they defined a tentative fourth phase, Nasca Y: "a heterogeneous style represented by about fifty pieces secured by Uhle" (ibid.: 26). "Style Y represents a late or decaying form of styles A-X-B, in which occasional A-X-B traits persisted, more were degenerate, still others were altered so as to be virtually new" (ibid.: 30). Gayton and Kroeber did not attempt to classify these fifty vessels by shape categories, but they did establish Y1, Y2, and Y3 varieties based on differences in design and painting (fig. 3.1).

Because they used individual vessels rather than gravelot associations for their seriation, Gayton and Kroeber could not take advantage of the presence of units of contemporaneity, which proved to be so useful to Lawrence Dawson in his later and more successful seriation of the Nasca style. It is unclear what basis Gayton and Kroeber used to designate Phase A as the earliest and Phase Y as the latest; most likely it was premised on an evolutionary model, which suggested that the simpler, more naturalistic motifs preceded more complex and abstract examples. In this case, the supposition just happened to be correct, but that is not always the case; a similar seriation of the "Paracas" style would have had quite different results. Furthermore, Gayton and Kroeber's knowledge of the iconography was rudimentary, and they made no attempt to interpret the meaning of the motifs in this work (ibid.: 6). This affected their ability to place some of the motifs in the proper relationship to others. For example, the B and X phases contained a mixture of vessels, including some which were quite early. Despite the faulty methodology, the basic subdivision of the style was accurate enough to provide scholars with a useful tool for understanding the development of the Nasca style.

In 1956 Kroeber published a revision of the chronological scheme that he had devised earlier with Anna Gayton (fig. 3.1). This new work was in part prompted by Kroeber's reaction to the efforts of a young undergraduate, Lawrence E. Dawson, who had taken an interest in Uhle's Nasca collection and had developed a quite different method of seriation. Both these men were using the same collection to support their chronological subdivision of the style. In the more than twenty-five years since Gayton and Kroeber had published the first seriation, Kroeber not only had excavated a large number of gravelots in Peru himself for the Chicago Field Museum but also had seen hundreds of additional specimens of the pottery, many of which did not fit neatly into his previous classification. He and Donald Collier were in the process of analyzing the pottery excavated in 1926 for a monograph that they planned to publish in the Field Museum's Fieldiana series. Meanwhile Junius Bird of the American Museum of Natural History in New York was working on his own classification of Nasca pottery. William Duncan Strong of Columbia University had recently excavated Nasca graves at Cahuachi and would soon publish his own thoughts on the local chronology (Kroeber 1956: 328). All these factors stimulated Kroeber to reexamine the methodology and results of his previous seriation.

In a retrospective self-criticism, Kroeber began his 1956 monograph by pointing out some of the errors and omis-

Dates	Periods	C–14 Dates	Stylistic Strains	Dawson's Phases	Sawyer's Phases	Kroeber (1956) Phases	Gayton and Kroeber (1927) Phases
800 A.D. 700 A.D.	Middle Horizon	N–9 750 ± 100 A.D.	Disjunctive	9 8	Nasca-Huari	Coast Tiahuanaco Y	Y–3 Y–2 Y–1
600 A.D. 500 A.D.	Early Intermediate Period	N–7 630 ± 60 A.D.	Proliferous	7 6	Late Nasca	B	B
400 A.D.		N–5 520 ± 90 A.D.	Transitional	5 4	Middle Nasca	AB	X
300 A.D. 200 A.D. 100 A.D. 0		N–3 270 ± 250 A.D. 110 ± 50 A.D.	Monumental	3 2	Early Nasca	A	A
100 B.C. 200 B.C.	Early Horizon	N–1 130 ± 160 B.C.	Proto-Nasca	1	Proto-Nasca		

Fig. 3.1. Chronological table.

sions made in 1927. As he admits, "we failed to be as successful as we could have been in that: (1) we partly substituted *concepts* of shapes for observable forms of them; (2) in designs we operated with only a minority of those actually occurring; and (3) we applied correlation technique *before* our stylistic observing . . . had been carried far enough" (Kroeber 1956: 330). Kroeber realized that the use of Uhle's Ica Valley gravelots from Ocucaje would have been useful for a "parallel correlation test," because these gravelot materials represented a "pure style phase" collection (ibid.: 330). He also noted his ignorance of local variations in the style in 1927 and cautioned that this could affect the outcome of the analysis (ibid.: 332–334).

The main improvements in Kroeber's 1956 seriation were its more detailed classification of Nasca vessel shape categories (including the recognition that there may be several variations of each type formerly identified) and his realization that he had misclassified some of these types in 1927 or did not have examples of them in his limited sample. Kroeber continued to codify his shape categories by using capital letters for the main type and numbers (e.g., U1) for subtypes. He was also aware that the number of motifs was much more extensive than he had realized in 1927, but his 1956 study still dealt mainly with shape categories, with little additional work on the iconography.

In 1956 Kroeber redefined his Y Phase, the decadent late ware that was poorly represented and understood in his 1927 sample. For the first time he described typical Phase Y shape categories and major motifs. His former Phase Y1 now became simply "Nasca Y," because it still belonged to the Nasca tradition (Kroeber 1956: 374–375). Phase Y2 was relabeled "Coast Tiahuanacoid" to acknowledge the highland influences dominating the pottery style. Phase Y3 was eliminated, and the few vessels contained in it were reassigned to other phases.

Kroeber's 1956 revision, while useful for its clarification and expansion of shape categories, did not essentially change the major subdivisions of the style: A, X, B, and Y. Its weakness lay in the quantitative method used and the neglect of iconography and design elements as alternative methods for deriving chronology.

A more refined chronology, now used by the majority of Andeanists, was developed by Lawrence E. Dawson in the early 1950s (fig. 3.1). Dawson was born and raised in Ukiah, California, and as a child developed an interest in anthropology as a result of family vacations in Arizona and New Mexico which exposed him to Native American technology, including ceramics (Dawson 1982). In these formative years he experimented with making pottery vessels in his backyard, including decorating them with slip paints and firing

them in primitive hearths (ibid.). After a period of military service, he entered the University of California at Berkeley under the G.I. Bill, planning to major in chemistry or the life sciences. He remembers viewing an exhibit on Peruvian archaeology during his freshman year, which made a lasting impression. In the fall of 1951 Dawson undertook a three-month trip to Peru as a tourist, visiting the usual sites of Cuzco and Machu Picchu as well as the Larco Museum in Lima. On his way back from Cuzco, Puno, and Arequipa by bus, he stopped at Nasca and among other things visited the "Nasca Lines." He was interested enough in this phenomenon to borrow some equipment from an engineer staying at the tourist hotel and attempted to map some of the lines. He saw a great deal of Nasca pottery, which evidently impressed him, and also visited the Museo Regional de Ica, photographing some of the Nasca collections there.

Back in Berkeley, Dawson made contact with John Rowe in the Anthropology Department in order to ask him some questions about Peruvian archaeology that had been stimulated by his trip, including inquiries about the chronology of the Nasca pottery. He was told of Kroeber's attempts to seriate the ware using quantitative methods. Dawson was more intrigued by the designs on the pottery and how they changed over time. Rowe instructed Dawson on the value of associations and the use of gravelots for achieving units of contemporaneity. Although not yet an anthropology major, Dawson decided to apply for a job in the Lowie Museum of Anthropology and to use his spare time to study the Nasca pottery. In 1952 he was hired as a museum preparator and spent most of his time cataloging California Indian artifacts. His work on Nasca pottery had to be put off until the evening hours or weekends. In his mind he had already formulated a research design, postulating that a chronological scheme could be developed by using changes in design elements over time.

The methodology that Dawson used is a form of "similiary seriation," which is based on the assumption that, "within a given cultural tradition, change in culture in general and change in style in particular are both usually gradual processes" (Rowe 1961: 326). Similiary seriation, or seriation by resemblance, can be accomplished by two techniques: ordering by type frequency or ordering by continuity of features and variation in themes (ibid.: 327). Type frequency seriation is a quantitative or statistical method in which ordering is done by "arranging the . . . samples in such an order that the frequency of each pottery type shows a pattern of gradual increase to maximum popularity and then a gradual decrease to disappearance" (ibid.: 327). It is a method that works best on refuse deposits, provided that the following conditions are present: (1) a sample of adequate size, (2) a relatively short time span, and (3) patterns of frequency in the samples that produce an order with few sudden jumps (ibid.: 327). We have already seen the problems that Kroeber encountered in using a variation of this quantitative technique on individual vessels in the Nasca style.

Dawson's chronological seriation, however, was based on the other form of similiary seriation — ordering by continuity of features and themes. The general principles underlying this form of seriation go back to the nineteenth century and were first used by John Evans in 1849 to arrange a series of British coins chronologically (Rowe 1961: 326). General A. L. H. Fox-Pitt-Rivers also wrote an early article on the technique (Fox-Pitt-Rivers 1875, as noted in Rowe 1961: 326). Dawson modified these general principles to address the specific nature of Nasca ceramics, including the complex mythical designs that he viewed from the perspective of an art historian rather than strictly as an anthropologist. Each trait (whether a portion of a larger design such as a particular form of mouth mask on a mythical creature or a specific cup bowl shape) was seen as representing part of a continuum through time. Each individual vessel contains specific traits of drawing and shape, representing an association of contemporaneity at a particular time (fig. 5.1). The greater the number of traits on a single vessel, the more precise the chronological order can be.

John H. Rowe recorded the steps that Dawson followed in a letter dated July 6, 1953, written to Junius B. Bird, curator of South American archaeology at the American Museum of Natural History (copy in possession of the author):

> The Nasca style is sufficiently complicated so that any one pot will show an association of a large number of shape and design traits. The association of traits on a single pot is of the same nature as the association of types in a gravelot, and if gravelots can be seriated, there is no reason why single pots of complex design shouldn't be seriated also. The important principle would be to make use of trait associations, instead of treating the traits as unassociated elements the way Gayton and Kroeber did.
>
> The assumption should be made that each trait had a continuous span of existence over a greater or lesser part of the Nasca sequence, and the object of the seriation would be to put the pots in such an order that all the traits studied occurred continuously, without long breaks.

In order to get the extremes of the seriation tied down, it would be desirable to study first the Paracas and Tiahuanaco styles and attempt to isolate Nasca pots showing associations of Nasca traits with traits of these earlier and later styles. Then pots showing these particular Nasca traits could be used to mark the extremes and the others arranged between them.

The validity of the seriation could be checked at a later stage by comparing it with Kroeber's Nasca gravelots in Chicago, and, at least for the earlier part, with the results of Strong's stratigraphic work [at Cahuachi].

The first step [in the seriation] was to prepare a card file of Nasca traits, drawing each trait on a card and giving it a conventional name. . . . Some of the traits are details of designs, others are details of shape. . . . The choice of traits depends on Dawson's ingenuity at predicting which ones will have chronological significance; the basis for the prediction is his perception of patterned associations of traits in trial layouts. We envisage the ultimate presentation as emphasizing a somewhat smaller number of traits which turn out to be particularly sensitive time markers.

Dawson did some work on the early end of the sequence first, to have a background of impressions of that extreme, and then began his trial layouts with a group of the latest Nasca materials in our collection. . . . Some of the latest pots shown had traits suggestive of Tiahuanaco influence, while others showed varying degrees of breakdown of indigenous Nasca designs. The inference that [the] Nasca style lasted well into the Period of Tiahuanaco [Middle Horizon] influence on the south coast was clearly suggested. The possibility that a form of Nasca style outlasted the Tiahuanaco influence on the coast appears to be ruled out, however, by the strong Tiahuanacoid influence on Middle Ica, which is obviously the style directly ancestral to the historic Late Ica.

In June [1953], Dawson made his second trial layout. . . . It covers the middle part of the seriation and is especially interesting because it involves attacking the problem of the relationship between the "cursive" [Proliferous] style, which was obviously ancestral to the "Y" or latest materials, and the "monumental" style, well represented in the Ocucaje gravelots. This particular trial layout is, I think, crucial for the whole project. Dawson has made a straight seriation in which the "monumental" style changes into the "cursive" style through a group of transitional specimens.

Dawson still has one more trial layout to make before the seriation is complete, and it is a little premature to talk about results, but the general outlines of the picture the project is leading to can already be seen. It will give a single continuous series from Paracas to just before Middle Ica. . . . We are now talking in terms of eight Nasca [phases]. . . .

According to his own account, it took Dawson about six months to work out the basic framework of his chronology. His seriation of the Nasca style was done backward — from the latest materials dating to the beginning of Middle Horizon back to the earliest (Dawson 1982). Due to lack of space at the Lowie Museum, Dawson had to lay the vessels out in three groups at different times (see the reference to these layouts in Rowe's letter above). His greatest difficulty was sorting out Phase 5, which he initially had put into two phases, one containing conservative pottery, the other including the more "radical" or experimental pottery. It was not until he discovered that Kroeber had excavated at least six gravelots in Nasca that contained vessels of both types that he came to realize that the two varieties of vessels were at least partly contemporary, reflecting very rapid innovation in the style at that time. When finished, Dawson's chronological scheme consisted of nine Nasca phases, the last phase dating to the Middle Horizon.

Initially Dawson planned to define the beginning of each phase with the first appearance of a specific trait or feature; but he found that this was difficult to accomplish, because it was always possible that an earlier example might be found in the future. By 1959 or 1960 he had defined the start of each phase by citing a specific gravelot.

In 1955 Rowe helped Dawson obtain a Wenner-Gren Grant, which allowed him to travel to New York to study the Nasca collection at the American Museum of Natural History and to confer with Junius Bird as well as William Duncan Strong at Columbia University and to examine the gravelots and sherds excavated from stratigraphic test pits at Cahuachi. From there he continued on to Peru, where he spent time in the Ica Valley, examining sites, conducting his own stratigraphic excavations, and photographing collections of Nasca pottery. The stratigraphic work verified Dawson's seriation, and the museum research allowed him to expand his sample while at the same time providing him with valuable new insights (for a recent but unpublished analysis of Dawson's contributions, see DeLugan, Larochette, and Ostoich 1997).

As Dawson's mentor, Rowe assisted the young scholar during the 1950s. In 1960 Rowe published an important ar-

ticle in which he grouped several of Dawson's phases into "stylistic strains" or "modalities." The earlier phases (Nasca 2 – 4), which roughly corresponded to Gayton and Kroeber's Nasca A, were called "Monumental," referring to naturalistic or representational qualities (Rowe 1960a; Silverman and Proulx 2002:19 – 23). The Monumental phases included representations of naturalistic birds, plants, animals, and mythical creatures drawn with easily identifiable icons. Rowe used the term "Proliferous" to refer to the more abstract representations found in Phases 6 and 7 and roughly comparable to Gayton and Kroeber's Nasca B (fig. 5.16). "In the Proliferous substyle the proportion of geometric designs is greater, and the representational themes often include abstract elements as part of the design. Large numbers of rays and tassels are appended to many of the designs, particularly those depicting mythical subjects, producing a visual impression of almost infinitely multiplied element" (Roark 1965 : 2). Phase 5 (Gayton and Kroeber's Nasca X) was seen as transitional between the purely Monumental and Proliferous Strains (fig. 5.9). Gayton and Kroeber (1927: 30) considered Phases 8 and 9 (their Nasca Y) to be "a late or decaying form of styles A-X-B, in which occasional A-X-B traits persisted, more were degenerate, still others were altered so as to be virtually new" (fig. 5.55). Dawson later referred to Phases 8 and 9 as "Disjunctive." Finally, the earliest Nasca Phase, Nasca 1, was given the name "Proto-Nasca" (derived from Uhle 1914) to indicate its transitional status between the late Paracas style and the more traditional Nasca style (fig. 3.1).

Although his Nasca chronology was fully established by the mid 1950s, Dawson himself never published the results of his seriation. Rowe attempted to describe its main features in several publications (e.g., Rowe 1960a, 1961, 1962a, 1962b). A visual overview of Dawson's nine phases is presented in Silverman (1993a: figs. 3.2 to 3.8) and is described in Silverman and Proulx (2002: chap. 2). Over the years Rowe and Dawson influenced many graduate students at the University of California at Berkeley, and some of these individuals have further refined the Dawson seriation. Richard Roark was the first, publishing a study of Phase 5 and 6 vessels that documented the shift from Monumental to Proliferous style iconography (Roark 1965). My own dissertation (completed in 1965) presented a refined seriation of Phases 3 and 4 of the style and a study of local differences in the ceramics of the Ica and Nasca Valleys during these phases; a revised version was published a few years later (Proulx 1968). Steven Wegner completed three excellent (but unpublished) studies during the 1970s. The first examined changes in vessel shapes from Phases 6 through 9 (Wegner 1975). The second was a refined seriation of selected mythical creatures from Phase 6, which allowed him to propose a division into three subphases based on changes in the design features of the mythical iconography (Wegner 1976a). The third was an attempt to discern local variation in the documented pottery from Phases 6 through 9 (Wegner 1976b).

Dorothy Menzel, best known for her analysis of Middle Horizon and Late Intermediate Period pottery (Menzel 1964, 1976), first studied Nasca Phases 8 and 9 and wrote a book-length manuscript (Menzel 1957) that was never published. Despite the title "The Disjunctive Nasca Styles," the manuscript contains quite a bit of information on Phase 7 as well. Menzel used Dawson's method of seriation in her research and worked closely with him during her years at the Lowie Museum. The manuscript indicates that by 1957 Phase 7 had been subdivided into two subphases, A and B. It is not clear whether Menzel or Dawson did this seriation; most likely it was Menzel, for she later indicates a third subdivision, a Phase 7C (Menzel 1977: chronological table). Menzel's analysis of Phases 8 and 9 (she also subdivides Phase 9 into A and B) is the only extensive seriational study yet undertaken on these important phases. It describes the highland influences that begin to affect the Nasca style toward the end of Phase 7 and that become very strong in Phase 8. Finally, she chronicles the transition of Nasca into the coastal Huari style in the Middle Horizon as it passes through Nasca Phase 9.

Aside from Strong's (1957) recognition of Nasca Phase 1 pottery (which he typed as "Cahuachi Polychrome Incised" and "Cahuachi Stylus Decorated"), no one has analyzed or published a comprehensive definition of Nasca Phase 1 and 2 pottery, although Silverman (1977) did cursorily examine Strong's Nasca 2 material. Others (such as Pezzia 1968; Eisleb 1977; Guarnotta 1979; and Carmichael 1988) have elaborated on Dawson's chronology by using vessels from other collections. Yet to this day a complete description of the full nine-phase seriation has not been written and is not attempted here. The main goal of this book is to describe and interpret the ceramic iconography of the Nasca. Additional analysis needs to be accomplished before the seriation can be published in its entirety.

In recent years there have been some challenges to Dawson's seriation. Helaine Silverman (1988a: 25) has argued that Nasca Phase 8 should not be called "Nasca" at all, because she perceives a dramatic change in the Nasca style during this phase (ibid.: 24) due to strong highland influence. She prefers the term "Loro Style" to refer to Daw-

son's Phase 8 ceramics, naming it after Strong's (1957) type site of Huaca del Loro, where he found large quantities of this late pottery (Silverman and Proulx 2002: 36). I agree with Silverman that Phase 8 marks the beginning of the Middle Horizon styles on the south coast. Phase 9, which Rowe and Dawson both placed chronologically in the Middle Horizon, should be considered Chakipampa, a Huari rather than a Nasca-related style (ibid.: 37). Thus the major Nasca sequence encompasses Phases 1 through 7, with the "Disjunctive phases" (8 and 9) falling chronologically into the Middle Horizon and related stylistically to highland cultures.

On the basis of settlement patterns, David Browne has recently questioned the validity of Dawson's Phase 4. He sees it as a "stylistic but not a chronological division; a not necessarily sequential variety of Nasca 3" (Browne 1992: 79). I have worked extensively on the seriation of Phase 3 and 4 pottery from the Nasca and Ica Valleys (see the remarks on Phase 4 below). Phase 4 clearly falls between Phases 3 and 5, on the basis of good seriational evidence. As with any phase, the beginning is based on the introduction of an arbitrary trait or group of traits. Many of these are exclusive to Phase 4 (see Proulx 1968: appendix 5). One can always argue whether a separate phase rather than an additional subphase should be established, but any seriation implies that change occurs through time. Phase 4 was a relatively short period compared to Phase 3, but I believe it can be justified on the basis of the seriation outlined in my 1968 monograph. More recent validation of Phase 4 comes from the excavations of Kevin Vaughn at the habitation site of Marcaya, which he has identified as dating to Nasca Phase 4 (Vaughn 1999).

Carmichael (1992a) suggests that local variation was not adequately addressed in the original Dawson seriation. Within the Nasca drainage, recent analysis of Phase 7 by myself (Proulx 1994) and others suggests a great deal of local variation at that time, perhaps the existence of two or more contemporaneous substyles. The same may be true for Phase 8. Although there is no question about Dawson's major outline for these two phases, further study is needed to identify these local traits and to clarify the interrelationships among the vessels from these phases. Similarly, the rapid innovation that occurred in Phase 5, resulting in the presence of three partially contemporaneous substyles (Conservative, Progressive, and Bizarre; see Blagg 1975), necessitates further work on the seriation of that phase.

Dawson's seriation of the Nasca style remains the best analytical tool to date for understanding the evolution of the Nasca style. As with any classification, it will be refined and modified with time. While more and more museums and specialists are adopting the Dawson terminology, it has faced resistance on the part of some, who would prefer a simpler division of the style into Early, Middle, and Late (e.g., Sawyer 1966 and fig. 3.1). This is adequate for the purpose of museum displays geared to the general public. Specialists working with the style for the purpose of tracing change and diversity in the archaeological record, however, are grateful to have a methodology for deriving a much more refined chronology, which can separate vessels from a single generation. Until we can confidently obtain much more accurate absolute dates than is presently possible from Carbon-14 analysis, the Dawson seriation will continue to be the method of choice.

It now remains for us to examine the origins of the Nasca style and briefly to trace its development through the nine phases proposed by Dawson. The outline presented here focuses on the defining shapes and motifs of each phase and the major innovations and changes that occur through time. No attempt is made here to explore the fine points of the seriation that was used to distinguish one phase from the next or the finer subdivisions; that seriation will be the subject of another volume.

Nasca Phase 1

The transition from the Early Horizon to the Early Intermediate Period is one of the most complex and least understood stages in Peruvian cultural history. The end of the Early Horizon witnessed the presence of several contemporary and competing ceramic traditions on the south coast made even more complex by the existence of differing textile traditions that overlap the ceramic sequence. Recent research suggests that the transition differed in each of the individual valleys of the south coast (Paul 1991; Peters 1991; Silverman 1991; Browne 1992).

The transition from the Paracas culture to the Nasca culture is marked by an arbitrary point in a ceramic sequence that corresponds neither to a radical change in the social or political organization of the peoples of the south coast nor to an invasion of new peoples or ideas, but rather to a technological innovation: the use of slip painting on ceramics. This new culture was named "Nasca" after the largest river system in the area. In all other respects, Nasca is simply the continuation of the earlier Paracas culture.

In some ways the transition from the Paracas style of the Early Horizon to the Nasca style of the Early Intermediate

Period was abrupt, with a great amount of innovation in the use of the new polychrome slip paints and new vessel forms. Phase 1 of the Nasca style retained elements of the former Paracas tradition, however, including use of incised outlines on the motifs painted on the vessels and the continuation of many themes formerly represented on Paracas textiles and pottery. Strong (1957) called these vessels "Cahuachi Polychrome Incised" and referred to this transitional phase as "Proto-Nasca."

It has long been assumed that the majority of these "Proto-Nasca" pieces were made earliest in the Nasca drainage, because William Duncan Strong first excavated fragments of the slip-painted ware with incised outlines at the site of Cahuachi. David Browne's survey of the Palpa branch of the Nasca drainage has revealed approximately sixty-eight sites datable to Nasca Phase 1 in just that part of the drainage (Browne 1992: map 3). He argued that "in Nasca Phase 1 there was a major expansion of settlement in the area. A hierarchy of settlement sizes is discernible, and a few civic/ceremonial centres were being built" (Browne 1992: 77). Silverman (2002b: 58) lists a total of 167 Phase 1 sites discovered in her survey of the Ingenio and Middle Río Grande region. With such a population size and with increasing cultural complexity, it would seem logical that the origin of the polychrome style took place in the Nasca Valley; yet, as Silverman (1994a) notes, this innovation is perplexing, because Paracas pottery was so restricted in occurrence in Nasca. She argues that Paracas traits were selectively introduced into the local Early Horizon style known as Tajo by means of a migration of Paracas people from the Ica Valley (Silverman and Proulx 2002: 18). She concludes that Tajo did not provide sufficient antecedents for the stylistic development of the Nasca 1 pottery style.

In 1997, however, Johny Isla Cuadrado and Markus Reindel began excavations at a Paracas habitation site called Jauranga in the Palpa Valley (Isla, Reindel, and de la Torre 2003). Five phases of occupation were revealed and over fifty-five hundred fragments of Paracas style pottery were collected, mainly from Paracas phases 5 and 9–10. The ceramics were substantially similar to the Ocucaje sequence in the Ica Valley. These discoveries suggest that the necessary antecedents for a transition from Paracas to Nasca did indeed exist in the Río Grande de Nasca drainage.

The Ica Valley cannot be ruled out as a candidate for the first experimentation with slip paints. It is clear that the Nasca polychrome style developed directly out of the Paracas (or Ocucaje) tradition on the basis of stylistic continuity of the major Paracas motifs as well as the clear transition between the styles seen in the use of incised outlines on the earliest Nasca style vessels of Phase 1 (see Sawyer 1961 for illustrations of the evolution of the iconography from Paracas to Nasca). Since the Ica Valley was the likely "heartland" of the Paracas style (see Menzel, Rowe, and Dawson 1964; Massey 1986; Cook 1994, among others), it is logical to assume that the transition to Nasca would occur in the same area.

The answer to the question of the place of origin of the first Nasca polychrome painted ceramics may lie in the role that textiles played in the transfer of iconographic themes. The iconography represented on Nasca Phase 1 pottery was rather limited, and the majority displayed naturalistic themes such as fish, animals, and birds. The complex mythical iconography that was to characterize later Nasca phases is seen mainly on the elaborately embroidered textiles of Early Intermediate Period Epoch 1 found at Paracas Necropolis, whose own origin is uncertain (see Dwyer 1971, 1979; Silverman 1991; Rowe 1995). Much more needs to be known of the origin, distribution, and spread of early Nasca textiles before we can completely understand the beginnings of the Nasca polychrome ceramic tradition. Clearly, more fieldwork is required in both the Ica and Nasca Valleys to ascertain the exact center of ceramic experimentation where the transition from Paracas to Nasca first took place.

The technology required for the transition from postfired resin painting to slip painting involved the development of a new set of experimental procedures, including the discovery of suitable mineral sources for the pigments, the technology for grinding these minerals into a fine powder and suspending them in a clay solution, and the knowledge that these pigments would change color upon firing in an oxidizing atmosphere. The earliest slip paints were thick and applied unevenly to the vessels, which were fired in pits dug into the ground. The vast majority of Nasca vessels were fired in an oxidizing atmosphere (i.e., air was allowed to circulate during the firing process), which then combined with the minerals in the clay to produce an orange clay matrix and the distinctive rich colors of the painted designs on the vessel surfaces. Ample evidence in the form of fire clouds, differing surface colors, and other forms of uneven firing demonstrates the experimental nature of ceramic production during this initial phase. The thick paints often show signs of "crazing," a network of fine cracks in paints fired at uneven temperatures. In Phase 1 only a limited number of colors were present: a jet black pigment (seldom duplicated in its intensity in later phases), orange, red, maroon, white,

and gray. Most Phase 1 vessels had only two or three of the colors represented, but some had all six.

In addition to slip-painted wares, some Nasca 1 pottery was closely related to the thin-walled monochrome pottery style called Topará (fig. 2.2LL), whose source appears to have been in the Chincha and Pisco Valleys and the Paracas Peninsula in Epoch 1 of the Early Intermediate Period (Wallace 1986). Strong's "Cahuachi Stylus Decorated" bowls from the Nasca Valley may reflect Topará influence (Strong 1957: fig. 7a, b, and c), although Silverman (1991: 405) feels that they were derived from the Paracas stylistic tradition. Despite Massey's claims (1986) that the Topará tradition was strong in the upper Ica Valley, this pottery does not seem to have influenced the lower Ica Valley to any great extent. In the lower valley the Paracas (Ocucaje) style predominated during the last phases of the Early Horizon, and the Nasca style emerged at the start of the Early Intermediate Period.

Along with Nasca polychrome and Topará style pottery found in Nasca Phase 1, a third variety of ceramics has been found in the Nasca drainage, especially at Cahuachi. These are utilitarian vessels, usually bowls (see Strong 1957: figs. 8a, c, d, e) that seem to be related to both the Paracas and Topará traditions. Silverman's survey of the Ingenio and middle Río Grande Valleys has revealed large numbers of Nasca 1 habitation sites, with these utilitarian bowls forming the major ceramic component (Silverman 1991: 405). Unfortunately, our knowledge of utilitarian pottery on the south coast is limited. Massey (1986) also describes and illustrates a wide variety from the upper Ica Valley.

Giuseppe Orefici excavated a structure at Cahuachi which has plastered walls decorated with large step-fret designs incised into the clay. He believes this building to be a temple datable to Nasca Phase 1. This discovery demonstrates that Cahuachi had ceremonial functions from its earliest occupation by the Nasca people. The incised decoration parallels incised designs on early Nasca pottery.

My Nasca 1 sample consists of 71 vessels, few with provenience and only a handful that were excavated under scientific conditions. The 71 vessels represent only 1.2 percent of the total sample of 6,173 vessels cited in this study, reflecting how little is known of this important transition phase. In addition, the sample is biased, because these vessels were selected by collectors for their beauty. We know nothing of their context or the range of utilitarian and other pottery types found with them. Unfortunately, many Nasca 1 pieces that I have seen appear to be fakes, and some of these are now in the collections of reputable museums, poisoning our understanding of the true iconography of this period. I have tried to eliminate these pieces from my analysis. Nonetheless, my sample does provide some glimpses of a society undergoing rapid change.

A limited range of vessel shapes is present in the sample. Over half (thirty-six specimens or 51 percent) are modeled bottles, usually in the form of a human (fig. 2.2GG) but also including birds and a few mythical creatures. The second most frequent form is the "bowl and cap" variety of double spout bottle (twenty-one or 30 percent). The lower portion of this vessel is in the shape of a modeled basket or ceramic bowl, and the upper portion of the bottle either consists of modeled objects such as fruits or is in the form of an overturned bowl (or cap), on which is painted various motifs such as beans, fish, or other naturalistic forms (fig. 2.2II). Large ceramic drums are a favorite form for the display of a rich repertoire of mythical designs; only three are recorded in my sample for this phase, but they become very prevalent in Phases 2 and 3. A number of Nasca 1 ceramic panpipes have been illustrated (Purin 1990: figs. 137, 138), which further demonstrates the importance of music in rituals at this time.

Two large ollas are present in the sample (3 percent). One (UCLA X86-3806) measures 45 centimeters high and has a low collar; it is decorated with multiple two-headed snakes. A similar vessel in the collections at Berkeley (UCLMA 16-10475) is also decorated with double-headed snakes as well as fish. Other forms include globular double spout bottles and two miscellaneous shapes.

Oddly enough, my Phase 1 sample contains no bowls decorated with slip-painted designs and incised outlines. Massey (1986: 95–96) describes a variety of Topará bowl forms from the upper Ica Valley; but, as we would expect, these are decorated not with incised slip-painted designs but rather with vertical red lines, false negative painting, reduced black surfaces, and plain incision. Incised slip-painted bowls may have existed in the Nasca Valley (see Strong 1957: figs. 10A, 10C), but in the upper Ica Valley Topará-style pottery seems to have predominated. The new Nasca polychrome style appears to have been painted on a very limited range of shapes in Phase 1.

The motifs represented on Phase 1 pottery consist of both naturalistic and mythical themes. Among the more common modeled or effigy forms are seated warriors holding weapons and/or trophy heads; Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings or shamans wearing mouth masks, forehead ornaments, and other religious paraphernalia; the spotted cat in both naturalistic and mythical form; and falcons. At least four fisherman bottles date to Phase 1, marking the begin-

ning of a long tradition of this motif (fig. 2.2HH). The sample also contains many vessels with painted motifs, including fish, beans, fruit, trophy heads, and double-headed snakes. Snakes and snakelike streamers are common in Paracas and early Nasca textile art and make their initial appearance on slip-painted pottery in this phase. These all have incised outlines, characteristic of this transitional phase.

It is interesting that the sample includes no representations of the killer whale (*Orcinus orca*: see Peters 1991: fig. 7.5), which has its roots in Paracas textile art and is so prevalent in the following Nasca phases. Its absence may be due to the small size of the sample, but it is equally likely that in many parts of the Nasca area textiles were still serving as the main medium for the display of mythical iconography. Many of the "Paracas Necropolis" textiles with their elaborate embroidered designs are in reality contemporary with Phases 1 and 2 of the Nasca sequence (Dwyer 1971, 1979; Paul 1991: 16 – 17).

Nasca Phase 2

Nasca Phase 2 witnessed the maturation of Nasca ceramic art and the growth of its influence on the south coast. The phase marks the end of the transitional "Proto-Nasca" Period and the start of the "Early" or "Monumental" Nasca phases. Incised outlining of motifs on the pottery now disappears and is replaced by painted outlines or the lack of any outlining whatsoever. Solid colored motifs painted on a white background are usually not outlined, while more intricate polychrome designs are outlined in black or sometimes red. The thickness and continuity of the outlines are quite variable.

As noted earlier, Phase 2 still includes a great amount of experimentation in ceramic technology. Paints tend to vary in thickness, and "crazing" or surface crackling of the paints is still a problem. The execution of designs is relatively crude in comparison to the following Phase 3, with the exception of some stunning ritual pottery such as drums and panpipes (e.g., Sawyer 1968: 57). Burnishing on the surface of the vessels tends to be uneven and incomplete, and the strokes are often visible if the vessel is held in the right way under the light. Fire clouds, indicative of uneven firing practices, are present on a good number of vessels.

It would appear from several lines of evidence that the Río Grande de Nasca drainage was the center of production of Nasca Polychrome pottery in Phase 2. At least thirteen Phase 2 gravelots have been scientifically excavated in the Nasca Valley. David Browne (1992: map 4) lists some 46 sites datable to Nasca Phase 2 in the Palpa and Vizcas tributaries, and Silverman (2002b: 87) discovered 132 sites with Nasca 2 pottery in her Ingenio and Middle Grande survey area. Only 5 Phase 2 vessels from my sample with valley provenience come from Ica (versus 38 from the Nasca Valley), however, and all of these are from the middle and lower valley areas. These data would tend to support the contention that the Nasca drainage had become the center for the production of the polychrome ware at this time.

While the primacy of the Nasca polychrome tradition in the Nasca drainage is undisputed, its role in the Ica Valley to the north is debated. Dwight Wallace (1986) defined an Early Intermediate Period Epoch 2 phase named Campana that he feels is part of the Topará tradition of the south central coast. Originating in the Chincha and Pisco Valleys, it is contemporary with both Phase 2 of the Nasca style of the Ica and Nasca Valleys and the Quebrada phase of the Topará tradition in Cañete (Wallace 1986; Silverman 1991: 377, 414). Campana is characterized by the following features: "vessels acquire slightly thick sides with a flat lip. A black line is painted on the lip. Sometimes the interior is slipped purple and the exterior slipped black" (Menzel 1971:120, translated by Silverman 1991: 414). The use of a black slip (as contrasted to the black reduced surfaces of Chongos phase vessels) and the use of banding or zoning, are perhaps the most distinguishable features of the Campana phase.

Massey (1986: 314) argues that Campana-style pottery dominated elite ceramic production in the upper Ica Valley during Phase 2, while the lower Ica Valley has no Campana pottery but instead Nasca polychrome. From this she concludes that the upper and lower Ica Valley functioned in two different spheres of economic and political interaction. Silverman disagrees with these assessments, stating that, "from the perspective of the published literature, Nasca 1 and 2 pottery is quite frequent in the upper Ica Valley at the same time as Topará influence and is frequent in the lower and middle Ica Valley [as well]" (Silverman 1991: 377). She goes on to suggest that "the upper Ica Valley Early Intermediate Period 1 – 2 collections should be re-examined, and the Topará and lower Ica Valley ceramic materials as well as Ica Valley settlement pattern data need to be fully published and illustrated so that archaeologists can better assess the nature and degree of Topará influence in Ica" (ibid.). Thus it is clear that further study is necessary to determine the extent and nature of Nasca influence on the Ica Valley during Phase 2 and whether these Early Intermediate Period 2 people of the Ica Valley were "ethnically" Nasca.

The Topará tradition continued to remain strong in the Cañete and Chincha Valleys in Early Intermediate Period Epoch 2, and apparently the Pisco Valley was still under the cultural influence (and perhaps political and economic control) of these south-central coastal polities. To my knowledge, no Nasca-style pottery was being produced in the Pisco Valley in Early Intermediate Period 2, and even trade pieces were rare (see Peters 1987/1988 for more discussion on Topará in Pisco). The Topará tradition, which originated in the Early Horizon, seems to have reached its peak influence in Early Horizon 10 and Early Intermediate Period 1, at which time it spread as far south as the Ica and Nasca Valleys. In Early Intermediate Period 2 it began to shrink, as the newly emerging Nasca culture with its attractive polychrome style of pottery started moving out of the Nasca Valley, eventually to dominate much of the south coast.

The Phase 2 sample includes 241 vessels, roughly 4 percent of the total. Bottles are the most frequent shape category. Effigy bottles are the most numerous category, with 46 examples (19 percent), ranging from modeled birds to various forms of human representations. The "bowl and cap" variety of double spout bottle (fig. 2.2JJ) is close in frequency, with 45 examples (19 percent of the sample), but globular double spout bottles increase dramatically in percentages from Phase 1 on their way to becoming the dominant form in Phase 3 (fig. 2.2KK). Phase 2 includes 35 of these globular bottles, representing 15 percent of the sample. Even more dramatic is the increase in bowls during this phase. Several types of bowls make their initial appearance, including 17 flaring bowls (7 percent), 11 round bottom bowls (5 percent), 8 bowls with low sides and sharp gambrels (3 percent), and 3 interior decorated bowls (1 percent). In contrast, only 2 flaring bowls were found in the Phase 1 sample. Another new category is the effigy jar, of which there are 15 (6 percent) in the sample. Panpipes (6), ceramic drums (4), and trumpets (2) represent another special category of ceramics in Phase 2.

As ceramics continued to replace textiles as the major medium for symbolic expression, a greater number of supernatural motifs appeared on Phase 2 pottery. Several new varieties of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being occur, including a winged version (AMB-2), the standing type (AMB-3), the Trophy Head Taster (AMB-4), and forms with extended tongues (AMB-5). Many of these varieties were present on Late Paracas and Early Nasca embroidered textiles but not on Nasca ceramics (see, for example, the "Paracas Textile" from the Brooklyn Museum, generally attributed to Early Intermediate Period 2: Martin 1991; Haeberli 1995). Many of these motifs were transferred, with a number of changes, to the ceramic medium in Nasca Phase 2. Other mythical creatures appear as well. A variety of modeled Mythical Harvester (HV-3) in the form of a human depicted with his face painted with multicolored dots is found for the first time (pl. 11). Such facial painting seems to be associated with agricultural rituals. The Mythical Killer Whale (KW-2) is found on pottery for the first time in Phase 2, although this motif was also found on earlier embroidered textiles. Modeled varieties of this creature (KW-8) are also present. The Mythical Spotted Cat (SC-1, SC-2) makes its appearance in Phase 2 as well.

On the more secular side, painted warriors (WAR-1), head jars (HUM-4), other painted human forms (HUM-5), and effigy musicians (MUS-2) are added to the repertoire. Naturalistic animals, plants, fish, and birds continue to dominate the inventory, but modeled varieties of reptiles, plants, and animals are found for the first time. The painted and modeled motifs of Phase 2 are truly transitional between the limited corpus in Phase 1, when textiles appear to have remained the major source of iconographic expression, and Phase 3, which witnessed an explosion of new motifs and the end of the textile dominance.

Nasca Phase 3

Phase 3 of the Nasca style witnessed a florescence of the ceramic arts, which included the introduction of new shape categories and further improvements in the technique of polychrome slip painting. At this time ceramics fully replaced textiles as the primary medium for the display of mythical iconography. New combinations of mythical creatures appear along with the more familiar plants, animals, fish, and birds that were so prevalent in the earlier ceramic art. Judging from the size of my sample (over fourteen hundred vessels datable to this phase) and the spread of the stylistic influence to adjacent valley systems, Nasca Phase 3 represents one of the longest and most important blocks of time in the history of this culture.

The Phase 3 sample has a total of 1,431 vessels, a number surpassed only by the pottery from Phase 5. In my original study (Proulx 1968), I was able to divide Phase 3 into four subphases, using similiary seriation applied to 45 gravelots from the Ica Valley and 35 gravelots from the Nasca Valley. In addition, a large number of unassociated whole vessels and sherds with valley provenience datable to Phase 3 were used in the study. Each of my Phase 3 subdivisions probably represents one generation, at most two. In my study I designated the subphases as 3A, 3B, 3C, and 3D.

The most frequent and highly visible vessel form in Phase

3 is the globular or "gumdrop-shaped" double spout bottle: 290 (20 percent) in the sample (fig. 2.2KK). Most gravelots contain only one double spout bottle, while other vessel forms are found in multiples; this suggests that the double spout bottle was one of the more prestigious shape categories. The bowl-and-cap variety of double spout bottle (fig. 2.2JJ) is still found in Phase 3 (38 or 3 percent in the sample), but this form disappears at the end of the phase.

Next in frequency are cup bowls, which make their first appearance in Phase 3; the sample contains 209 (15 percent). They are bell-shaped in profile, have a flaring rim, and were used for drinking (fig. 2.2F). Ritual scenes depicting musicians often display individuals holding similar-shaped cups (fig. 1.6). The sample also includes 212 flaring bowls (15 percent). Most have slightly rounded bottoms with a sharp gambrel where the wall meets the bottom (fig. 2.2D). The walls of the bowl have a slight flare at the rim. The sides of these vessels become taller toward the end of the phase. The gambreled interior decorated bowl completes the list of high frequency shape categories, with 139 examples (10 percent). This deep bowl (or plate) appears to have been used for holding food, for most of the motifs drawn on its inside surface are various types of plant products or fish (fig. 2.2A). These bowls become deeper with time (fig. 2.2B) and by the end of the phase have lost their gambrel and become almost hemispherical in Phase 4.

Round-bottom bowls (99 examples or 7 percent) are similar to interior decorated bowls (or dishes) in having much deeper and rounded bottoms than flaring bowls (fig. 2.2A). Round-bottom bowls are always decorated on the exterior wall, however, and are therefore less flaring than dishes. Like the interior decorated bowls, the bottoms become deeper and more hemispherical with time, and the gambrels eventually disappear. A small number of convex, straight-sided, and semicircular bowls (painted over the entire exterior surface) are found in our sample (fig. 2.2G).

Several new shape categories that appear for the first time in Phase 3 are bulbous vases (79 examples or 6 percent), head jars (47 examples or 3 percent), and collared jars (27 examples or 2 percent). Vases are an important shape category: they are relatively uniform in form during Phase 3 and 4 but proliferate into a wide variety of shapes in Phases 5, 6, and 7. Phase 3 bulbous vases have a pronounced bulge in the lower one-third of the vessel; they tend to become taller through time (fig. 2.2T). Head jars are closely related to the bulbous vase in overall form. The lower part of the vessel contains a partially modeled human head, while the "crown" of the vessel is used to portray a headdress, often with feathers in the front and tassels in the rear (fig. 2.2EE). Another variety of head jar is more spherical in shape, with the top portion modeled in the form of a turban composed of slings wrapped around the individual's head (fig. 5.140). Collared jars are open vessels with either a high or a low collar (fig. 2.2V).

Both effigy jars (33 examples or 2 percent) and effigy bottles (79 examples or 6 percent) constitute an important segment of the sample. These are defined as vessels that have been modeled or semimodeled into various forms; jars are the open variety, and bottles are vessels with constricted openings such as spouts. Human forms make up a large portion of the motifs represented (fig. 2.2DD), but modeled birds, plants, and mythical creatures are common as well. A separate but closely related variety of bottles called "head and spout bottles" are globular bottles with painted designs but have a modeled bird, human, or other head in place of one of the spouts (fig. 2.2BB for a later example). The prototypes of this vessel form can be found in the Paracas style, especially in Ocucaje Phase 8. The sample contains 15 (1 percent) of these "head and spout bottles." Canteen-shaped bottles or "flasks" are also found in small numbers, as are bottles with a short single spout protruding from the side.

Finally, the sample includes a large number of ceramic musical instruments, such as panpipes (fig. 5.130), drums (fig. 5.131), trumpets (fig. 5.132), and whistles (fig. 5.133) that were used in rituals. Many are decorated with complex religious iconography, while others are painted in solid colors. Some of the most elaborate ceramic drums date to this period (pl. 12). It is important to note that panpipes are common in archaeological excavations; Silverman reports 207 fragments from her excavations at Cahuachi (Silverman 1993a: 241–242), and many more found at sites in her survey (Silverman 2002b: 152).

Phase 3 marks a turning point in the evolution of Nasca iconography. As noted above, textiles became devalued as carriers of symbolic information and were replaced by polychrome painted and modeled ceramics, which had reached a high level of technological perfection by this time. Many new variations of the Type 1 Anthropomorphic Mythical Being appear, including those with signifers terminating in birds (fig. 5.4), plants (fig. 5.5), and animals (fig. 5.7). A new form of Mythical Harvester (HV-3-A; pl. 15) appears, as well as new varieties of the Serpentine Creature (SN-4, SN-5, and SN-6). More importantly, the first examples of a new mythical creature, the Horrible Bird (HB-1, HB-2, HB-5, and HB-6), are found on the pottery. The Mythical Harpy (HRP) also makes its debut. Naturalistic representations of plants, animals, birds, fish, and reptiles reach their peaks in numbers and variety during Phase 3. Geometric designs,

often alternating in red and black on a white background, are also common at this time.

Phase 3 represents the pinnacle of the so-called Monumental Strain in Nasca art. It is a style that emphasizes naturalism and simplicity of design and, to some, represents the high point of the Nasca artistic tradition. The Monumental Strain lasted from Phases 2 through 4, perhaps 250 years in duration.

Nasca Phase 4

Phase 4 corresponds to a time that witnessed the collapse of the site of Cahuachi as an integrative ceremonial center (Proulx 1968: 97–98; Silverman 1993a). Monumental construction greatly decreased, and only minor construction continued through Phase 5 (Silverman 1993a). During Phase 4 the site shifted from being an active center of pilgrimage and ritual to being a sacred burial ground (Silverman 1993a: 318). The sociopolitical changes that were responsible for the decline are still a matter of speculation. I have argued previously that the changes in Phase 4 were due to a loss of power and prestige, assuming that Cahuachi was a large urban capital. Even with the current realization that Cahuachi was an empty ceremonial center in Phase 3, loss of power and prestige could still have taken place at the local-level habitation sites that were responsible for the maintenance of the ceremonial site. For example, Silverman (1993a: 326) reports that no identifiable Phase 4 pottery was found at the "urban" site of Ventilla.

The best evidence for this decline is seen in the increasing heterogeneity of Nasca pottery. A great deal of local variation occurs in Nasca 4 pottery, not only between valleys such as Nasca and Ica, but also among sites within the same valley system. My study of Nasca style ceramics from the Ica and Nasca Valleys during this phase revealed differences in the frequencies of shape categories such as bulbous vases, round-bottom bowls, and dishes. The same was true of certain design themes and design layout. Within the Ica Valley, ceramics from the site of Santiago in the middle valley exhibited many differences from those found at Ocucaje in the lower valley. This suggests a breakdown of political power, religious prestige, and/or economic networks at this time.

The decline is also reflected in the decrease in the number of Phase 4 sites found on surveys. Browne noted a drop from 75 Phase 3 sites to only 24 Phase 4 sites in the Palpa area (Browne 1992: maps 5 and 6). Silverman also records a drop, although not as dramatic, in the number of sites with Phase 4 pottery in the Ingenio and middle Río Grande areas, from 194 Phase 3 sites to 85 in Phase 4 (Silverman 2002b: 100, 110). Browne (1992) was so puzzled by the sudden drop in the number of sites and by the dramatic increase to 70 sites in Phase 5 that he suggested that perhaps Phase 4 did not even exist.

I disagree with Browne's assessment and find evidence for Phase 4, based on my seriation of the pottery and the isolation of numerous traits of shape and design. Nasca 4 pottery probably corresponds to a much shorter period, however, than either Phase 3 or Phase 5. We may be talking about only one or two generations. This may account for my inability to subdivide Phase 4 and supports the contention that it lasted only a short time. Nonetheless, changes in shape and design features are sufficient to indicate chronological differences and an evolution out of the preceding Phase 3.

The Phase 4 sample consists of 671 specimens, less than half the number in Phase 3. Very few new shape categories appear in Phase 4. Frequencies change, however, as do the forms themselves. Cup bowls now become the single most prevalent shape, representing 30 percent of the sample (204 specimens). The Ica Valley sample seems to contain more variation than in the Nasca Valley (Proulx 1968: figs. 3, 4), with larger and wider-bodied cups making their appearance. Conversely, flaring bowls decline to only 8 percent of the sample (53 specimens) as opposed to 15 percent of the Phase 3 sample. Round-bottom bowls (57 specimens or 8 percent) become deeper and more hemispherical. Where the gambrel is still present, the walls of the vessel become taller, with more area available for display of designs. The number of gambreled interior decorated bowls (dishes) decreases dramatically in Phase 4 to only 22 (3 percent), down from 10 percent of the sample in Phase 3. These bowls have become deeper and more hemispherical in Phase 4—less a dish shape than a form of bowl. Designs in the interior are usually divided into quarter panels. A few convex and semicircular bowls are also found.

Globular double spout bottles are the second most frequent shape category in Phase 4 (91 specimens or 14 percent of the sample). The "bowl and cap" variety of bottle has virtually disappeared from the record by this time. Although the form of the globular bottles varies considerably, the body of the vessel tends to become more rounded or ovoid rather than retaining the "gumdrop" shape of Phase 3. Spouts are thinner and more conical than those of Phase 3. Other forms of bottles are rare in Phase 4: 13 effigy bottles, 9 head and spout bottles, 2 flasks, and 4 short spout bottles.

Standard vases, which are defined here as vessels whose height is at least twice their diameter, appear for the first time in Phase 4. They seem to have developed out of the bulbous vases first found in Phase 3. Our Phase 4 sample contains 34 bulbous vases, 18 standard vases, and 10 miscellaneous vases. The distinction between jars and vases is blurred at this time, and some overlap in classification occurs. This sets the stage for the explosion of various vase forms in Phase 5, where this form takes over as the dominant type.

The sample contains 39 high collared jars (6 percent) and 26 low collared jars (4 percent). Proportionately, head jars increase in number over those in Phase 3, with a stronger distinction made between trophy head jars (with closed eyes and pinned lips; 14 examples) and "living head" jars that have open eyes and headdresses (15 examples). A small number of effigy jars are also present.

Very few new motifs appear in Phase 4. These include the first depictions of non-naturalistic or Mythical Monkeys or monkeys with anthropomorphic characteristics (MKY-1 and MKY-2). As noted elsewhere (Proulx 1989c), monkeys are not indigenous to the coastal deserts of Peru and had to be imported, probably as pets. The first monkeys seen on Phase 3 ceramics are purely naturalistic; but in Phase 4 they take on human characteristics, and by Phase 7 they have become a major mythical creature in the art. Other Phase 4 innovations include new varieties of the Horrible Bird (HB-3 and HB-4) and a new Anthropomorphic Spotted Cat (SC-4). Almost all of the earlier Phase 3 motifs continue into Phase 4, but minor changes (such as the addition of white borderlines on hair hanks) are useful for chronological seriation.

In Phase 4 many motifs are painted using the principle of modular width (see the section on modular width and symmetry in chapter 2). To maintain the desired width, additional lines were often drawn as fillers in Phase 4. In Phase 3 less attention was paid to such regularities, and more free-flowing naturalistic themes resulted. The concept of modular width continues into the next phases.

Nasca Phase 5

Phase 5 has long been considered a transitional phase between the naturalistic art of "Monumental" or Early Nasca and the "Proliferous" art of Middle and Late Nasca. Even pioneers like Gayton and Kroeber (1927) classified this phase as "Nasca X," falling between the earlier "Nasca A" and the later, more complex "Nasca B." More importantly, it was time of major social change in Nasca society and great innovation in Nasca art. Judging from the size of the ceramic sample, the amount of innovation and diversity in the pottery, the large number of sites, and other evidence, Phase 5 (like Phase 3) was one of the longest in the Nasca sequence.

Silverman argues that Nasca 5 "is a very important time in the region for this is when the *acueductos* began to be elaborated in the southern Nasca Valley (Schreiber and Lancho Rojas 1988), when a major change in the Nasca style occurred (Blagg 1975, Roark 1965, Rowe 1960[a]), when Nasca mortuary patterns appear to have become more differentiated, when Nasca trophy head-taking increased . . . and [was] the period of peak geoglyph elaboration" (Silverman 1990a: 440).

The majority of Phase 5 pottery in the sample comes from the Nasca drainage. Of the vessels with valley provenience, 405 were collected in the Nasca Valley. Nasca Valley sites with pottery dating to this phase include Cahuachi, Pueblo Viejo, Ocongalla, Paredones, Cantayo, and Huayurí, among many others. Again, it would seem that the likely center for experimentation and innovation with the style was located in the Nasca drainage, but new discoveries in the Ica Valley must be taken into consideration.

The number of vessels in my sample with Ica Valley provenience is limited to twenty-two specimens, of which fifteen were collected by Uhle at the site of Santiago in the Middle Valley. Carmichael (1988) lists only two graves in his sample as coming from the Ica Valley during Phase 5. Uhle (see Proulx 1970: 39–70) apparently found no Phase 5 graves at Ocucaje, but many of the sherds that he collected at Santiago (Site S) fall into this phase. Alejandro Pezzia Assereto (1968: 196) listed two additional localities where Nasca Phase 5 pottery had been found: Ullujalla II in the lower valley and Tambo Norte at Ocucaje. My sample does not take into account recent work done in the lower valley by Anita Cook (1994), who has recorded Nasca Phase 5 pottery at fifty-one sites in that region. This amounts to a Nasca 5 occupation at almost half of the Early Intermediate Period sites that she has discovered in the lower valley, which suggests that our understanding of the distribution of pottery from this phase needs further examination, as do the centers of experimentation and innovation. Unfortunately, Sarah Massey's (1986) study of the upper Ica Valley only looked at sites through Phase 4, and thus there is little in print about this area. It is important to remember that the Ica Valley is a single entity with no tributaries, running in an unusual north–south direction. The Río Grande de

Nasca drainage is composed of ten separate tributaries that are marked by significant local variation in ceramics.

The situation in the Acarí Valley is quite different from Ica and Nasca. Riddell and Valdez (1988: 96) argue that no sites with Phase 4 or 5 pottery have yet been found in the valley, thus indicating the extent of the abandonment (Riddell and Valdez 1988: 96). When sites do reappear in Phases 7 and 8, they are completely different in form.

Carmichael (1992a: 5) concurs that Nasca pottery from Phases 5 and 6 has not yet been found in the Acarí Valley but also argues that pure Nasca pottery in general is "not as common as one might assume from the literature." He goes on to suggest (ibid.: 6), as noted, that each valley on the south coast had its own independent local tradition during the Early Intermediate Period and that any Nasca ware found in Acarí could easily be explained as trade pieces. Valdez (1998) also confirms that no Nasca Phase 5 pottery has been found in the Acarí Valley and that Acarí was never colonized by the Nasca.

Although the evolution of the Nasca ceramic style throughout its seven hundred–year history can be characterized by remarkable continuity and incremental modifications, two periods were characterized by bursts of rapid innovation and change. The first of these was Phase 5, when a tremendous amount of experimentation and innovation occurred in the ceramic iconography; the other was in Phase 7. Richard Roark was one of the first to publish on Nasca 5. His study (Roark 1965) remains the basic source on the pottery, although other researchers have elaborated on it (Blagg 1975; Wolfe 1981; Carmichael 1988, among others). Early in Phase 5, some of the conservative themes began to be embellished by the addition of appended rays, volutes, and tassels, which have been described as "Proliferous" elements. Roark (1965: 2) was the first to define in detail the term "Proliferous" for the stylistic changes that appeared for the first time in this phase:

> The Monumental substyle was based on the representation of natural and mythological themes by painted figures executed with relatively depictive technique. The figures have simple outlines, which enclose large areas of color. In the Proliferous substyle the proportion of geometric designs is greater, and representational themes often include abstract elements as part of the design. Large numbers of rays and tassels are appended to many of the designs, particularly those depicting mythical subjects, producing a visual impression of almost infinitely multiplied elements.

These Proliferous elements occur on some, but not all, of the pottery in Phase 5 and become much more common in the succeeding Phases 6 and 7. Thus Phase 5 represents a transitional stage between the more naturalistic pottery of Phases 2 through 4 and the more abstract pottery of Phases 6 and 7.

In 1975 Mary Margaret Blagg took this analysis a step further by defining three temporally overlapping substyles that were present during Phase 5: a Conservative substyle, which is essentially a continuation of the Monumental art of the earlier phases (see fig. 5.2); a Progressive substyle, which includes the addition of Proliferous elements to earlier Conservative motifs (see figs. 5.9 and 5.11); and a Bizarre Innovation substyle, consisting mainly of mythical subjects but drawn using such completely different canons that it represents a radical departure from the expected evolution of the style (see fig. 5.152 and pl. 7) (Blagg 1975: 37). Roark (1965: 25 – 26) was the first to identify the last substyle in print, referring to it as "Bizarre Innovations." One of the characteristic features of this experimentation within the style was the scrambling or mixing of various anatomical details of the once familiar mythical creatures, such as "legs growing from the top of the head, missing body parts, or mixed human and animal characteristics . . . some examples show an incorrect number of body parts" (Roark 1965: 26). Rayed Faces of several varieties are another aspect of the Bizarre movement. These may be elaborations of isolated elements of mythical creatures such as forehead ornaments or mouth masks. Roark (1965: 25 – 26) devoted little space to the Bizarre Innovations in Nasca 5 except to indicate that they could be roughly classified into three types: Scrambled Figures, Surrounded Faces, and Rayed Faces.

It was Blagg who first argued that Conservative, Proliferous, and Bizarre represented separate substyles that were partially contemporaneous, the Conservative dating to the earlier part of the phase and the Bizarre most likely falling toward the end. The body of her thesis consists of a description of the Bizarre Innovation substyle (she quotes Dawson as saying that it represents up to 10 percent of the Phase 5 sample) and an interpretation of its origin and impact.

Blagg (1975: 67 – 68) argued against outside influence as the source of Bizarre Innovation in Nasca 5, suggesting that the change was produced by an internal religious revolution initiated by the elite. The short life of this Bizarre substyle is attributed to the conservatism of the populace, who "preferred a more 'classic' iconography and who probably also rejected the esoteric cult on which the bizarre style may have been based" (Blagg 1975: 69).

The most extreme elements of the Bizarre substyle disappeared at the end of Phase 5, but many of the mythical creatures in Phase 6 were endowed with disproportionate bodies and greatly exaggerated mouth masks or other elements which seem to be the heritage of the Bizarre Innovation substyle (figs. 5.16, 5.19).

No attempt has been made to study the correlation between vessel shape and the three Phase 5 substyles expressed in the decorative motifs. A superficial examination of the sample suggests that vessel form remains fairly constant within the three substyles, but further analysis is needed to substantiate this impression. In general, not only do new vessel shapes appear in Phase 5, but those forms that continue from earlier phases occur in much greater variety.

In Phase 5 vases become the most frequent shape category, in contrast to the cup bowls of Phase 4 and the double spout bottles of Phase 3. The sample contains 441 vases, representing 25 percent of the 1,764 vessels present. This does not include 47 small vases and 16 wide vases. I have lumped together the last examples of the bulbous vase with standard vases, in several varieties. Roark (1965: pl. 2) illustrates four varieties of vases that he numbers I through IV. Vase I resembles a rather tall cup bowl with convex sides and a slightly flaring rim. Vase II is taller and seems to have been derived directly from the bulbous vases of Phases 3 and 4. It is widest in the lower one-third of the body, has a slightly convex wall, and flares slightly at the rim. Type III is widest in the lower half of the vessel, with the walls of the upper part sloping inward to the rim (fig. 2.2Q). Type IV is more cylindrical in shape, with a slight concavity in the upper third of the vessel wall.

Cup bowls are the second most frequent category, numbering 345 (20 percent of the sample). Characterized by its bell-shaped profile and widely flaring rim, this bowl is represented by several variations. Roark (1965: pl. 1) illustrates three types: one similar to earlier cup bowls (fig. 2.2H; pl. 1), another taller and more vaselike, and a third smaller, with a more convex wall just below the rim. Flaring bowls are represented by 153 examples (9 percent). These have high walls that flare more widely than earlier examples. The bottoms are almost flat and are attached to the walls with a sharp gambrel. Round-bottom bowls decrease significantly in number in Phase 5. The sample contains only 21 (1 percent). Interior decorated gambreled bowls have all but disappeared by this phase, while incurving or convex bowls continue to be present in small numbers (21 examples).

High collared jars are present in relatively large numbers (177 or 10 percent of the sample). These jars are widest at the midsection and spherical in shape (pl. 7; fig. 2.2W). Rims are wide and flaring (see Roark 1965: pl. 3). In contrast the sample has only 25 (1 percent) low collared jars, and that shape category disappears at the end of this phase (pl. 23; fig. 2.2V). The Phase 5 sample includes a total of 106 head jars (6 percent), the majority (74 specimens or 4 percent) classified as "living heads" in the form of cylindrical vases (fig. 2.2EE).

Double spout bottles continue to decline in popularity (9 percent — down from 14 percent of the Phase 4 sample and 20 percent for Phase 3). The 153 specimens are fairly consistent in form, with shallow rounded bottoms and large hemispherical bodies surmounted by rather vertical spouts (fig. 2.2NN; pl. 8; also see Roark 1965: pl. 3). Head and spout bottles, usually representing women or warriors, number 74 (4 percent), while the sample has 24 effigy bottles (1 percent). The head and spout bottles tend to be globular in form, with the spouts rising vertically or near vertically from the top of the vessel (figs. 2.2BB, 2.2OO). The number of short single spout bottles (46 specimens or 3 percent) dramatically increases; they display the design on the upper portion of the body.

The first vessels that could be classified as goblets appear in Phase 5. These have a narrow constricted base with a wide, flaring rimmed portion above (fig. 2.2I). The usual ceramic musical instruments are also found in this phase, specifically drums, trumpets, and panpipes.

Figurines and effigy bottles become quite common in Phase 5. Although representations of males are present in the sample from Phase 1 onward, females appear for the first time in Phase 5. Solid clay figurines of both sexes display gender differences in hairstyles, clothing, and of course genitalia. These figurines are generally small (6 to 8 cm in height) in this phase, in contrast to much larger examples in later phases (see fig. 5.145 and Morgan 1988 for examples). Bottles and jars in the form of humans also are prevalent (fig. 2.2SS). Here again female representations occur for the first time in the sequence. Most notable are large hollow figurines or jars in the form of a naked woman painted entirely with a white ground and black highlighting. The majority of these nude female vessels are decorated with elaborate tattooing on the thighs, buttocks, and pubic areas (fig. 5.146). Most of these tattoos are of supernatural themes, such as Killer Whales, Rayed Faces, or feline faces. The use of multiple female heads or faces (HUM-6) to form decorative bands around the circumferences of bottles and vases also appears quite suddenly in large numbers (fig. 5.141). The number of painted human representations on pottery increases dramatically in Phase 5 as well.

All of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings found in earlier phases continue into Phase 5, with several new variations making their appearance in the Conservative substyle. One of these is the addition of Killer Whale fin terminators on AMB signifers at this time (AMB-1-B, fig. 5.3) as well as the use of swimming pollywogs within these signifers (AMB-1-I, fig. 5.11). Male farmers, known as Harvesters (HV-1, fig. 5.67), wearing conical hats and holding plants in their outstretched hands, appear suddenly in Phase 5 and constitute a major theme during this phase. Although a few late examples are found in Phases 6 and 7, they are a hallmark of Phase 5, with 98 percent of the specimens in the sample datable to this period. The Serpentine Creature (SN-1 and SN-2), however, disappears from the sequence early in Phase 5, never again to reappear. The Mythical Spotted Cat seems to last a little longer into Phase 5, but it too disappears by the end of this phase. Other conservative elements include plants, animals, birds, fish, and reptiles. Most of these are derived from earlier representations, but all portray stylistic changes consistent with their evolution over time. Of these five major categories of motifs, only animals and reptiles appear more frequently in Phase 5 than in earlier phases; fish, birds, and plants become less popular. Geometric designs really take off as one of the dominant motifs during this phase. Almost three hundred vessels have geometric designs as their primary motif, while countless others incorporate such designs as part of their total display.

One of Roark's (1965) more interesting findings was that the frequency of militaristic themes increases dramatically in Phase 5, including representations of warriors that incorporate new profile-facing forms, which are to become the new standard from this point in the sequence forward (fig. 5.122). However, frontal warriors still outnumber profile warriors throughout this phase. Phase 5 shows a fourfold increase in the number of trophy head representations, reflecting both increased warfare and ritual activity. Head jars, many of which represent trophy heads, reach the peak of their popularity in Phase 5 (fig. 5.138). Paintings of musicians engaged in ritual activities also reach their height in this phase (fig. 5.128). A new variety of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being identified by a signifer of spears or darts (AMB-1-G, fig. 5.9) further suggests a warlike orientation in Nasca society. As noted above, we have evidence for increasing aridity during Phase 5, with corresponding changes in the settlement patterns. One is tempted to speculate that the increased military activity was associated with the need to acquire more and better agricultural land as well as the need to collect trophy heads for ritual purposes to ensure sufficient crop fertility.

Some of the Conservative motifs, such as the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, are now modified by the addition of volute rays and hair hanks to various parts of the composition. Minimal at first, these additions become more numerous over time and by Phase 6 become the main focal point of the motifs. Other mythical beings, specifically the Killer Whale (fig. 5.47) and the Horrible Bird (fig. 5.42), are dramatically altered by the addition of Proliferous elements, while at the same time taking a much more important place in the repertoire of sacred motifs. An abbreviated version of the Killer Whale, consisting of its head with open jaws enclosing a mass of blood, appears for the first time in the sequence. Known as Bloody Mouth, this motif is found on sixty-two vessels in the Phase 5 sample (fig. 5.47). Several other new varieties of Killer Whales and Horrible Birds make their appearance as well.

The most extreme elements of the Bizarre substyle disappeared at the end of Phase 5, but many of the mythical creatures in Phase 6 were endowed with disproportionate bodies and greatly exaggerated mouth masks or other elements that seem to be the heritage of the Bizarre Innovations of Phase 5.

Nasca Phase 6

In many ways the ceramics of Nasca Phase 6 represent the high point of Proliferous art. The experiment with Bizarre Innovation had ended for the most part, and the artistic rules for iconographic depiction were again standardized. Technically, the pottery of Phases 5 and 6 represents the true apogee of Nasca ceramic craft. From their mastery of slip painting to their control of the firing of the vessels, Nasca potters had perfected their techniques. In addition to ceramics, choice artifacts of textile, feather-work, and gold also date to this period. Phase 6 appears to have been a time of relative cultural stability, wedged between two periods of warfare, expansion, and change.

In terms of stylistic complexity and technological proficiency, Nasca 6 pottery has few equals. For some, the simplicity of the Monumental pottery of Phase 3 marks a high point in the style. For others, the stark beauty of the traditional and Bizarre motifs painted on the white backgrounds on Phase 5 pottery represents the pinnacle. Yet the intricacy of the Proliferous mythical motifs of Phase 6, with their profusion of colors and symbolic content, can also be appreciated as the epitome of the Nasca tradition.

Our sample contains 768 Nasca Phase 6 vessels, which seems to contradict the small number of sites that have been dated to this period. Vases are the most numerous

shape category in Phase 6, as they had been in Phase 5, with 236 specimens (31 percent of the total sample). Tall cylindrical vases with straight or slightly flaring rims are most common. These are slightly taller than their Phase 5 counterparts (see Roark 1965: pl. 2). Another variety is a bell-shaped vase with a widely flaring rim. These should not be confused with cup bowls, which are similar in shape but much smaller in overall dimensions. A third type of vase is widest in the lower part, with walls that gradually taper toward the rim.

Vessel forms and their variants continue to expand in number in Phase 6, so that no other single shape category comes close to the dominant position held by vases. Double spout bottles compose 10 percent of the sample, with 77 specimens. These tend to be larger in overall size than their Phase 5 predecessors; the gambrel has shifted upward, with the bottom now occupying one-third of the volume (pl. 5). Spouts remain relatively vertical. Head and spout bottles, however, take on a more "gumdrop" appearance, and the spouts begin to lean away from the vessel, perhaps at an angle of 5 to 8 degrees (fig. 2.2PP). The sample includes 61 examples of head and spout bottles (8 percent). Single spout bottles are rare in Phase 6 (only 11) before increasing again in Phase 7. The sample has 6 effigy bottles, 6 flasks, and 5 face neck bottles.

Flaring bowls are found throughout the early Nasca sequence and are present in at least two varieties in Phase 6. The first evolves directly from flaring bowls found in Phase 5. They are high sided, with a sharp gambrel separating the slightly rounded base from the sides. The second type looks like a wide cup bowl and is often difficult to distinguish from this type, except by its emphasis on width rather than height. The exterior bottom of this vessel type is often separated into alternating black and white quadrants. The sample includes 75 flaring bowls (10 percent) as well as 70 cup bowls (9 percent). The cup bowls differ from those of Phase 5 in having a much wider flaring rim. Bottoms on these cups are also divided into quadrants in many cases. Round-bottom bowls dating to Phase 6 (15 examples) tend to be very deep, with an almost mammiform shape. Interior decorated gambreled bowls and flaring bowls have all but disappeared from the sequence.

Jars, while far less frequent than vases, are another important category of vessels. A new form of head jar with a widely flaring rim makes its appearance (25 examples). The bottom portion representing a human head is semimodeled, with the nose often protruding from the vessel (figs. 2.2CC, 2.2FF). Facial painting is common, and males often are shown wearing a thin mustache. The hair is painted in a solid black field, with tassels or a sling hanging down over it in the back. The rim or collar serves as the main field for decoration. Mythical religious motifs, frequently including trophy heads, are painted on this portion of the vessel, often in two or more separate registers. Although most of the heads are drawn with open eyes and lips not pinned shut, I believe that the majority of these jars represent trophy heads. The bottoms of many jars display a red circle, surrounded by red dots, denoting the severed spinal column, foramen magnum, and blood (Townsend 1985: fig. 14). The more traditional cylindrical form of head jars also continues at this time (26 examples).

Other jar forms present in small quantities are high collared jars (20 examples), flaring collared jars, similar to the new head jar type described above but lacking the human attributes (12 examples), and neckless jars.

An early precursor of the Nasca 7 goblet is found in Phase 6 in small numbers. Goblets reach their height of popularity in Phases 7 and 8, but some experimentation appears to begin in Phase 6. Like the bell-shaped vase, the goblet probably developed out of the cup bowl form. The Phase 6 goblets look like a cup bowl with a wide flaring collar. What makes them different from the bell-shaped vase is the smaller, more constricted cup portion of the goblet.

Figurines are rare in my Phase 6 sample, but Alexandra Morgan (1988: 327) suggests that they reach their peak in numbers and quality during Phases 6 and 7. Following Phase 5, larger seated female figurines appear in Phase 6, along with a few large standing male figurines (ibid.). Both genders are depicted naked, and the females often have elaborate mythical body painting or tattooing in the genital area (see Morgan 1988: pl. 2:3 for an example). A more complete discussion of figurines is provided in chapter 5.

Ceramic drums (6 examples) continue a long tradition of musical instruments found in this style, which also includes the ceramic panpipe (*antara*). Late drums are more variable in form than those of the earlier phases. One notable example from the collection of the Banco del Créditio del Perú (ACE.978) has three separate sounding chambers (Purin 1990: catalog 136), while another has a widely flaring mouth.

The iconography of Phase 6 is characterized by the introduction of a veritable flood of new motifs, albeit many derived from earlier prototypes. Several new varieties of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being emerge, different enough from their ancestors to be placed in separate categories. Most of the differences occur in the face or head of these creatures, with the bodies playing a minor or insignificant role, unlike the varied signifers on the bodies

of earlier AMBs. The heads and their masks are disproportionately large in respect to the rest of the body. One variety has mouth mask "hooks" encircling the eyes and is referred to as the spectacled type (AMB-6-A, fig. 5.19), while a second has black areas surrounding the eyes (AMB-6-B, fig. 5.20). A third type has a yellow eye area (AMB-6-C, fig. 5.21). All three of these varieties have roots in the earlier AMB-1, but with many new elements added, including a stronger symbolism with the Mythical Killer Whale. A Cat-Faced Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB-6-E, fig. 5.23) occurs for the first time and becomes one of the most popular motifs in Phase 6 (over ninety examples). Another form of AMB is an anthropomorphic trophy-headed creature (AMB-8, fig. 5.29) — unusual in that most trophy head representations are disembodied. Many of these five Mythical Being forms have abbreviated versions as well as the more common full-bodied representations.

With few exceptions, Harvesters (HV), Serpentine Creatures (SN), Horrible Birds (HB), and Spotted Cats (SC) have all disappeared from the sequence by Phase 6. The Mythical Killer Whale alone survives as the primary mythical being (see Yacovleff 1932b), along with the various Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings described above (many of which have Killer Whale characteristics). A few other new mythical themes come into the style in Phase 6 as well: the Jagged-Staff God (JSG, fig. 5.77) and a warriorlike figure called the Hunter (HT, fig. 5.76). Trophy heads reach the peak of their popularity in the sample during Phase 6, with over 220 examples as primary motifs. Warfare and the ritual taking of heads continued to be important, as seen in a variety of effigy vessels that portray warriors holding severed heads in their hands. At the same time the number of vessels exhibiting plants, animals, bird, fish, and reptiles declines precipitously. For example, the sample has only 8 representations of birds on the Phase 6 vessels, as compared to 104 birds on Phase 5 vessels. Geometric designs, in contrast, remain very common, and vessels incorporating a variety of motifs usually have at least one or two registers or bands of geometric elements.

Nasca Phase 7

The discussion of Phase 5 points out that two periods of rapid change and innovation occurred during the evolution of the Nasca ceramic style. The first was in Phase 5, when three partially contemporaneous substyles emerged, including one that involved experimentation with Bizarre reformulations of motifs. A second period of rapid innovation occurred in Nasca Phase 7, when Nasca prestige and influence appear to have reached their greatest extent, if ceramic distribution is a reliable indicator of such factors. Nasca influence ranged from the Cañete Valley in the north to Arequipa in the south and up the tributaries of the Ica and Grande Rivers to affect the Ayacucho region of the highlands, an area extending over 1,000 kilometers along the coast and 220 kilometers inland. While Nasca people were influencing the groups with which they came in contact, foreign influences were also affecting the Nasca, causing much of the variation seen in the pottery. Unlike the earlier Nasca Phase 5 spurt of innovation, which Blagg (1975) argues was internal, ample evidence suggests that the changes taking place in Nasca Phase 7 pottery were stimulated by contacts with or ideas flowing from sources outside the Nasca realm.

I have argued elsewhere (Proulx 1994) that the primary source of this innovation was the Moche culture of northern Peru, which either directly or indirectly influenced the Nasca region. I believe that the acceptance of the new traits was probably based on prestige. Although local innovation was present to a limited extent, it does not account for the broad range of new traits that began suddenly in Phase 7. While Moche influence continued through most of Phase 7, it was strongest in the earliest part of the phase. During the second half of Phase 7, new influences began to be seen in the Nasca style, this time coming from the highland area near Ayacucho, which was now in direct contact with the coast.

Based on her unpublished seriation of a sample of Nasca vessels, Menzel (1977: 88) has divided Nasca Phase 7 into three subphases of unequal length, which are designated 7A, 7B, and 7C on her chronological chart. My own research on the ceramics of this phase has not been as detailed, and I have not been able to discriminate differences between subphases 7B and 7C. Therefore in this book I combine the two subphases into one entity, Phase 7B/C. I do believe, however, that in terms of temporal duration Nasca Phase 7A lasted at least as long as the combined Phase 7B/C.

When discussing the ceramic shape categories of Phase 7, it is necessary to make distinctions between vessels that fall in the first part of the period, Phase 7A, and those found in the second portion, Phase 7B/C. A number of major shape categories seem to disappear abruptly at the end of 7A, and others make their first appearance in 7B/C. The changes I refer to involve the disappearance of several traditional shape categories, including the popular tall vase, tall head jars, the head and spout bottle, and the collared bottle. New

shapes that emerge in Phase 7B/C include single spout and handle bottles, face neck bottles, cumbrous bowls, and goblets. Had this break been recognized by Dawson when he established the sequence, he might well have chosen to designate these two periods as separate phases. To avoid any confusion that might be caused by adding a new phase, I signal these differences by using the subdivisions of Phase 7 suggested by Menzel (1977: chronological table), modified by me as 7A and 7B/C. Steven Wegner (1975) produced an excellent study of changes in vessel shapes for Phases 6 through 9, which remains unpublished. This study helped me to sort through the chronological complexities in the changing shape categories and to develop my own variation of the typology presented here.

The Phase 7 sample contains 714 vessels; this includes specimens for both subphases. Vases again make up the largest percentage of vessel shapes in Phase 7 (144 examples or 20 percent). The majority date to Phase 7A, however, and vases disappear from the sequence by the end of Phase 7. Phase 7 vases occur in several varieties, the standard tall vase being distinguished by its great height and slightly flaring rim (figs. 2.2L, 2.2P). Taller than any Phase 6 examples, these vases often have four zones of motifs displayed, with trophy heads forming the most frequent component (pl. 16). A wide vase, cylindrical on the bottom with a broad flaring collar, is also present, as are conical vases and vases with modeled faces midway up the side of the vessel (fig. 2.2Z).

Goblets (32 in the sample) are a variant of the vase category but are also related to earlier cup bowls. By definition, goblets are drinking vessels that normally have a smaller, narrower bottom element on which a taller, more flaring cup is superimposed (fig. 2.2R). The most common goblet in Phase 7 is a form that Wegner (1975) called a "biconical cup" because it had the appearance of a tall cup bowl with a very narrow waist. Because of its height, I would categorize it more as a vase form, but it is definitely the precursor of more constricted goblet shapes in Phases 8 and 9. True goblets first appear in the sequence in Phase 7B/C.

The second most frequent shape category is the flaring bowl, numbering 62 examples (9 percent of the sample) and found in both subphases. These tend to be deeper than those of Phase 6 and appear to have had their origin in the flaring cup bowls of earlier phases. Phase 7 includes 34 round-bottom bowls, 21 cup bowls (pl. 17), and 10 convex bowls. Cumbrous bowls, which are similar to the interior decorated gambreled bowls of Phases 3 and 4, differ in being more conical in shape. They appear for the first time in Phase 7B/C. More importantly, they are considered a new category of bowl for several reasons: (1) there is a long gap between the earlier gambreled bowls and the cumbrous bowls, suggesting that this form either was reinvented in Phase 7 or was inspired by outside contact; (2) they are decorated mainly on the upper part of the interior rims, not on the bottom of the bowl as in the earlier phases; and (3) they appear suddenly in Phase 7B/C but continue into Phases 8 and 9, becoming an important new shape category.

A new form of bottle with a single long, tapering spout and handle makes its appearance in Phase 7B/C. Two varieties of this bottle need to be distinguished. The first is a bottle with a long vertical spout attached to the body of the vessel by a handle, not unlike that of a pitcher (fig. 2.2RR). These are very similar to Moche spout and handle bottles and may have been derived from that source. The second variety has a more lenticular body, with a single spout which slants at a sharp angle toward the edge of the bottle. It is attached by a broad strap handle to the top of the bottle, much like a tea pot (pl. 25). The sample contains 56 of these bottles (8 percent), and most are decorated with elaborate mythical iconography.

Head and spout bottles are numerous in Phase 7A (50 examples or 7 percent of the sample), but they disappear by Phase 7B/C, perhaps replaced by the single spout bottle described above. These bottles have spouts which diverge at a greater angle from vertical than any in the earlier phases (pl. 22). This form and the closely related effigy bottles (25 examples) are often painted in the form of humans accompanied by elaborate iconographic symbols (fig. 2.2QQ). Short spouted bottles are very similar in form to their Phase 5 counterparts but tend to be somewhat larger and more compacted when viewed in profile.

Another new shape category that makes its appearance in Phase 7B/C is the face neck bottle. These have globular bodies and relatively short spouts that are modeled in the form of a human head (see fig. 2.2UU for a later example). Usually the entire vessel is painted to represent the human form. The sample contains 26 examples of these bottles, none of which have handles. This form of bottle appears to evolve into the pitcher-shaped face neck bottles of Phase 8, which do have handles connecting the spout to the body of the vessel; 7 examples of this type make their appearance by the end of Phase 7.

Jars are a minor shape category in Phase 7. Head jars become exceedingly rare in Phase 7A (only 6 examples) and disappear entirely by Phase 7B/C. In Phase 7 the head portion of the vessel is much smaller than in the Phase 6 counterparts, and the rim is proportionately larger and more

flaring than before. Trophy heads are depicted on other forms as well, such as spout and handle bottles and wide vases. Other jar categories are a minor part of the sample: flaring collared jars (11 examples), high collared jars (5), effigy jars (5), and neckless jars (4).

The Phase 7 sample includes 11 figurines. They are usually solid clay in construction and most frequently are in the form of humans (fig. 5.147; pl. 39). Larger figurines are hollow, to allow for adequate firing, but by definition are closed vessels with no openings except small vent holes to allow air to escape during firing. Both sexes are depicted in the sample of solid figurines, although in some cases the gender is not clear and must be deduced from secondary characteristics such as hairstyle or clothing. In contrast to painted human representations, which are almost always clothed, many figurines are nude or seminude (pl. 39). Even in these cases, however, genitalia are minimally portrayed (e.g., a slight bulge in the crotch for males or a vertical slit for females). The Phase 7 sample includes a number of rather large, hollow female figurines that display mythical figures tattooed on or above the genitalia, buttocks, or thighs. These designs are cleverly oriented to incorporate the genitalia into the motif. Female tattooing (or perhaps body painting?) seems to be common in Nasca society, perhaps more common than for males. In addition to figurines, the Phase 7 sample contains a large number of modeled vessels, many in the form of humans, but also depicting mythical creatures such as the Killer Whale, plants, and animals. The motifs depicted on these vessels are described in chapter 5.

Turning to the iconographic motifs found in Phase 7A, most depictions of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being are of new abbreviated forms called "fan-headed" (AMB-7, figs. 5.27, 5.28) because of the replacement of the postcranial bodies by an elaborate Proliferous head ornament. The varieties of fan-headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings correspond to earlier Phase 6 Proliferous types, including the Spectacled AMB, the Dark Eye Area AMB, and the Yellow Eye Area AMB. The last of these types seems most popular, with at least 27 examples present in the sample. Only a handful of conservative Phase 6 specimens carry over to Phase 7 (more completely discussed in Wegner 1976a). Virtually all of the earlier varieties of mythical creatures have now disappeared from the sequence: the Horrible Bird, Serpentine Creature, Mythical Spotted Cat, Harvester, Harpy, and Jagged-Staff God. Only the Mythical Killer Whale in various manifestations remains, along with the much-modified Anthropomorphic Mythical Being types mentioned above. Fan-headed Killer Whale representations (45 specimens) are the most common sacred motif found in this phase (fig. 5.50). Even the Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings seem to emphasize Killer Whale traits rather than the feline elements associated with them in earlier phases.

A new mythical creature appears for the first time in Phase 7. Named the Affendämon or Ape-Demon by Karl Schlesier (1959), it has the body of a monkey with a curious head, often exhibiting a pug nose and sharp jagged teeth more like those of a Killer Whale than those of a primate (MKY-3, fig. 5.80). Although naturalistic monkeys were present in Nasca art early in the sequence, it seems more likely that this new mythical creature was reinterpreted by the Nasca people from representations of the "Humped Animal" or "Moon Animal" present in Moche and Recuay art from the north (see Bruhns 1976). The reinterpretation includes the addition of local Killer Whale attributes to the figure. A headless variety of the Affendämon (MKY-4) is also present in Phase 7 (fig. 5.84). In Phase 7 B/C the Affendämon becomes reduced to a disembodied head with the characteristic Killer Whale teeth (MKY-6, figs. 5.83, 5.84). Disembodied heads are often attached pendant-fashion to the upper rims of bowls and other vessel forms. The motif continues into Phase 8, where it becomes the major mythical representation.

One of the most characteristic iconographic themes in early Phase 7 is the depiction of warriors, commonly with feather staffs in their hands (fig. 5.123; pl. 17). The sample contains 42 examples of painted profile warriors, many of which have acquired alien features, such as new forms of headdresses, a running stance with elements of the terrain seen between the legs, flying missiles and other objects in the air, and different facial characteristics (fig. 5.123; pls. 16, 17). I have argued elsewhere (Proulx 1994) that the source of these traits appears to be the contemporary Moche culture of the north coast. Other vessels display what appear to be battle scenes resulting in decapitation of the victims. Trophy head representations, while numbering less than half of those found in Phases 5 and 6, remain a major iconographic theme in Phase 7. This militaristic orientation in the art continues a trend begun in Phase 5 and corresponds to a geographic spread of Nasca influence during Phase 7. What role military conquest may have played in this scenario is unclear.

Modeled vessels, especially human effigies, reach their technological peak in Phase 7. Many examples exhibit a high level of artistic skill in sculpture and composition. They often portray detailed information on costume, weapons, and other objects. Both solid and hollow figurines are

common, some reaching their maximum size at this time. Female faces painted in bands around the circumferences of vessels are present in large numbers during Phase 7A. In the second half of Phase 7 the finely constructed human effigy vessels fade away and are replaced by face neck jars. This begins a general decline in the style, which accelerates in the following phase.

Naturalistic motifs such as birds, plants, reptiles, animals, and fish are still present in the inventory but in reduced numbers. For example, only 16 vessels in the sample have animal representations, versus 153 for Phase 3 and 29 for the preceding Phase 6. Proportionately Phase 7 has a greater percentage of effigy vessels for these categories than before, but the total numbers remain small. Geometric designs continue to increase, especially in the second half of Phase 7, with over 240 vessels exhibiting these designs as their primary motifs.

Phase 7 witnessed a wide range of new innovations. Some of these may have been internally induced, while others were the product of outside influences. A number of unique vessels showing elaborate ritual scenes occur in this phase. One beautiful vessel, from the Amano Museum in Lima, shows an elaborate battle scene with warriors dressed in feathered garments capturing and decapitating enemy victims with obsidian knives (pl. 18). Other vessels display, for the first time, women with ankle-length garments in a frontal pose unlike any seen previously (pls. 24, 25). As in Phase 5, a great deal of artistic experimentation and change was apparently taking place in Phase 7. Unlike the Phase 5 innovations, which were derived from internal experimentation, many of the changes in Phase 7 were the result of outside contacts. More study will be necessary to understand the cultural dynamics of this period.

Early in Phase 7 Nasca influence spread out of the Nasca "heartland" of the Ica and Nasca Valleys to influence parts of the Chincha and Cañete Valleys, seen especially at the ancient cemetery site of Cerro del Oro in Cañete. Kroeber illustrates several Nasca 7 sherds (which he called "Middle Cañete"), including one with a typical Nasca warrior (Kroeber 1937: pl. 77-2). A head and spout bottle from this site (ibid.: pl. 73 – 4) reflects the strong Nasca influence on this valley, as does a figurine with a Nasca-type head (ibid.: pl. 70). Although it is often considered outside the traditional boundaries of the Nasca interaction sphere, the Cañete Valley was clearly influenced by Nasca in Phase 7, just as Cañete and Chincha, with their "Topará" and "Carmen" traditions, contributed to the formation of the earliest phases of the Nasca sequence. Confusing the picture is the unclear relationship of the Nasca polychrome style to a style known as Estrella. Estrella, the local style in Cañete, Chincha, and Pisco during the second half of the Early Intermediate Period, is characterized by the use of a white background (especially on the interior of bowls), scallop designs on the interior rims of bowls, and the use of black and white diagonal lines on an unslipped ground on the exterior of bowls (Wallace 1977). Menzel (1971: 126 – 128) has correlated Estrella to Nasca 7 and recognized the mutual influences. The nature and the extent of Nasca influence in the Pisco Valley are not well known at this time and must await further fieldwork. If Nasca pottery is known from Cañete and Chincha, however, it must also be present in Pisco.

During the second half of Phase 7 (Phase 7 B/C), we have evidence for increasing contact between the Nasca culture on the coast and a culture known as Huarpa located in the highlands near Ayacucho. Menzel (1957) coined the term "Trancas Strain" to describe these highland influences affecting the Nasca style. They included background stippling of design areas, black line spirals attached to bars, and special patterns of zigzag lines, along with a shift from a white to red or black background on vessels with flat rather than rounded bottoms (Menzel 1964: 9; also see Bennett 1953; Lumbreras 1960a; Benavides Calle 1971; Knobloch 1976, 1983; Paulsen 1983). While first discovered on pottery from the Las Trancas tributary of the Nasca River, these influences were widely distributed in the Nasca drainage starting in late Phase 7 and exploded in number and variety in the succeeding Phase 8. Patricia Knobloch (1983: 289 – 316) expanded on this argument, identifying specific Nasca 7 features on Huarpa pottery, including spirals, hooks, and dots on Huarpa 2 pottery and Nasca red paint on Huarpa 3 pottery, introducing polychrome painting to the earlier black and white bichrome style. The Nasca also borrowed black line spirals attached to vertical bars and new patterns of zigzag lines from the Huarpa (see Silverman and Proulx 2002: 93 – 94).

The case for Huarpa influence on Nasca during the second half of Phase 7 is not nearly as strong or convincing as the case for Moche influence during the first half of the phase. Highland influences continued to grow much stronger in Nasca Phases 8 and 9, however, when the interaction between coast and highlands increased. It would appear that Nasca's first contacts with the Ayacucho area occurred toward the end of Phase 7. As a result, some Huarpa traits diffused to the coast and were incorporated into the Nasca style. Nasca stylistic elements suddenly appear on Huarpa ceramics at the same time, clearly demonstrating the con-

tact between the cultures. As Nasca power waned on the south coast in Phase 8, these foreign elements from the highlands became more prestigious and consequently more frequent on Nasca ceramics. Although Moche influence diminished greatly in Nasca Phase 7B/C, it can still be seen in the sudden introduction of two new shape categories which are very characteristic of the north coast: the single spout bottle with a handle and the face neck bottle.

Nasca Phase 8

Phase 8 corresponds to a breakdown of the Nasca style, probably due to strong influences affecting it from the precursors of the emerging Huari culture in the highlands. Dawson refers to Phases 8 and 9 as "Disjunctive," alluding to the reduction of previously recognizable motifs to abstract geometric elements. Other authors have called this phase "Nasca Y" (Gayton and Kroeber 1927; Kroeber 1956), "Huaca del Loro" (Strong 1957), or "Loro" (Silverman 1988a; Carmichael 1988). Changes to the style signal both a loss of political power and prestige of the Nasca culture on the coast and an acceleration of influence and cultural interchange of the highland Huarpa culture. As noted earlier, most scholars now would argue that Nasca 8/Loro has lost its identity as a pure Nasca style and is contemporary with Middle Horizon Epoch 1A.

Stylistically, none of the vessels classified as Nasca 8 exhibit any religious iconography of the Huari culture. This is a critical distinction: Lawrence E. Dawson, who originated the nine-phase sequence, defined the beginning of Nasca 9 as the point when Huari influence was first felt on the south coast (Rowe 1962a: 125). In the highland area of Ayacucho, the terminal Early Intermediate Period culture is known as Huarpa. It began to interact with Nasca in Phase 7 and intensified in Phase 8, radically changing the Nasca style into something new and different.

The Phase 8 sample consists of 391 specimens displaying a wide range of vessel shapes, most of them derived from their counterparts in Phase 7B/C. A major shift in the frequency of vessel forms occurs in Phase 8, along with several new shapes, perhaps reflecting the outside highland influences. The most common shape category (81 examples or 21 percent) is a deep spherical bowl with designs painted in a broad horizontal band around the vessel, in rectangular zones, or in circular zones (fig. 2.2TT). Cumbrous bowls are also frequent in the sample (31 specimens or 8 percent). The depth of these bowls is quite variable, but the majority have geometric design elements pendant from the inner rim of the vessel. Square or oval bowls are also relatively common in Phase 8 (11 examples). This form first occurred in Phase 7 and reached its peak of popularity in Phase 8. Again this form may have been inspired by highland influences. Several other bowl forms occur in Phase 8 but in small numbers. The sample contains only 5 flaring bowls, 7 cup bowls, 14 convex bowls, 2 straight-sided bowls, and 4 bowls with semimodeled human faces on their sides.

The second most frequent shape category in Phase 8 (following spherical bowls) is the face neck pitcher (fig. 2.2UU). The sample contains 64 of these bottles with handles connecting the neck to the vessel body (16 percent). If we include another 22 face neck bottles without handles, these two varieties of face neck bottles make up the largest single block of vessels in the sample. The painted and modeled features of these bottles are rather poorly executed compared to earlier phases, suggesting to many art historians that the style is on the wane. Other bottle forms in Phase 8 include 12 effigy bottles, 9 head and spout bottles, 17 long spout and handle bottles, 12 short spout bottles, and 1 flask. It is significant to note that the double spout bottle has completely disappeared from the sample in Phase 8. When it reappears in the Middle Horizon, it has a quite different form with widely flaring spouts.

Jars are a minor shape category in Phase 8. Only 23 jars occur in the sample, the majority being high collared jars (7 examples), followed by 4 flaring collared jars, 3 effigy jars, 5 head jars, 2 necked jars, 1 low collared jar, and 1 neckless jar. The same is true of vases. Only 7 vessels in the sample could be classified as vases: 3 standard-size vases, 3 small vases, and 1 vase with a modeled human head. Most of these are different enough from earlier vase forms to suggest little continuity with the past.

In Phase 8 a fundamental change in the iconography occurs from motifs which, despite their intense proliferation, are still representational to motifs that consist of abbreviated geometric abstractions of previous design themes. At Berkeley Menzel, Rowe, and Dawson (1964) coined the term "Disjunctive" to refer to this late material, preferring to avoid Kroeber's (1956) term "decadent" with its negative implications. Few people have undertaken an analysis of the pottery from the Disjunctive phases 8 and 9. A great deal of work needs to be accomplished before we can trace the origins and evolution of many of the "geometric" motifs seen at this time. Dorothy Menzel (1957) spent the greatest amount of time working on this material. Allison Paulsen (1965, 1983) also made important contributions, especially in demonstrating highland (Huarpa) influences on the style.

More recently Helaine Silverman has taken a closer look at Phase 8 (1987a, 1987b, 1988a) as a result of her discoveries of Nasca 8 remains in the Room of the Posts at Cahuachi, and Anita Cook is also researching these late phases.

The majority of the motifs found in Phase 8 are either pure geometric designs (GEO) or geometric abstractions (GEO-F) of earlier motifs such as trophy heads, the Killer Whale, and the Mythical Monkey. In many cases it is still not possible to trace the origins of some of the geometric motifs; thus many designs which appear to be purely geometric may indeed be abstractions (fig. 5.325). One of the common abstract themes at this time is the "Star with Eye" (SWE) design, with over fifty examples seen in this phase (fig. 5.107). The Star with Eye is an irregular rayed figure with a human eye in the center. As explained in chapter 5, it may be an abstraction of a trophy head, the forehead ornament of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, or a Rayed Face. This design can be traced back to Phase 5 but does not become common until Phase 8. Another abstract design is MKY-6, the decapitated head of the Mythical Monkey, which first appeared at the end of Phase 7. In Phase 8 this motif is either suspended from the rim of a bowl or located in circular design areas on bowls and bottles.

Among the more naturalistic motifs in Phase 8 are human representations in the form of face neck jars that include vestiges of hair, arms, and legs on the body of the vessel or in the form of effigy vessels. These humans lack the detail and quality of painting seen in the earlier phases, but it is significant that so much emphasis is placed on the human form in this phase.

Nasca Phase 9

Phase 9 was defined by Dawson as the period when Huari influences began to appear on coastal Nasca pottery. Huari is the name of a militaristic culture that evolved out of local polities in the Ayacucho area of the southern Peruvian highlands around A.D. 650. Following the local Huarpa style in the Ayacucho area, Menzel (1964: 10–20) defined two early Middle Horizon styles in that region, which she named Conchopata and Chakipampa. These styles greatly affected the rapidly changing Nasca style in the Río Grande de Nasca drainage of the south coast. Knobloch (1991: 249), who studied this material, suggests that, while Nasca 8 pottery was being manufactured on the south coast, Nasca 9 pottery was no longer a south coast development but was borrowed from Ayacucho in the highlands and dates to Middle Horizon 1B. In other words, Nasca 9 is really the Chakipampa style. The "Huari" style of the highlands is in reality a heterogeneous grouping of local styles linked together by a common religious iconography. It is beyond the scope of this monograph to elucidate the complexities of the Middle Horizon sequence other than to point out the main features of Nasca Phase 9 pottery. For further information on Huari pottery the reader is referred to Menzel's (1964) major article and the research of Knobloch (1983, 1991).

The Phase 9 sample is relatively small (122 vessels), perhaps reflecting not only the final disintegration of the Nasca style and its rapid transformation into Huari but also the nature of the collections studied. Many museum collections fail to recognize Phase 9 materials as "Nasca" and group them with other Middle Horizon materials. If these vessels were physically separated from other Nasca materials in the storage areas, I might have missed some specimens, accounting for the small size of the Phase 9 sample.

The most common shape category in my sample is an elongated bottle with a single vertical spout, with 19 examples (16 percent). A similar bottle form but with a strap handle connecting the spout to the bottle is also present (10 specimens), as well as 7 flasks, 7 face neck bottles, and 2 effigy bottles.

Bowls are another important shape category. "The most common vessel shapes of the Nasca 9 style are open bowls of varying depth with convex sides of varying flare and either a rounded or slightly flattened bottom, often with a central concavity or 'dimple'" (Menzel 1964: 29–30). My sample contains 15 convex bowls (12 percent), as well as 9 flaring bowls, 8 round-bottom bowls, 6 cumbrous bowls, and 3 square or oval bowls.

Jars are practically nonexistent in the Phase 9 sample: 3 high collared jars, 1 low collared jar, and 1 neckless jar have been recorded. Only 4 vessels that could be considered vases are present. Goblets (6 examples) have small cylindrical bottoms with broader, vertical-sided chambers on top. Some of these have modeled human heads in low relief.

Menzel (1964: 28–29) describes the main decorative elements found on Phase 9 vessels:

> Like fancy Chakipampa A vessels, most fancy Nasca 9 ones have a deep red slip with a glossy finish covering all or most of the body. Sometimes this slip is the only decoration, but more commonly there are also polychrome designs in purple, cream, white and gray outlined with black. . . . Nasca 9 designs consist most commonly of ray motifs with rotational or radial symmetry derived from Nasca 8 antecedents, painted in alternating colors of gray

and purple or cream and purple, with filler elements dotting the surrounding space. The fillers are circular or near circular dots of white or cream outlined with black and with a black dot in the center. . . . A common representational design is a running humped animal shown in profile. . . . It is composed of three fillets of the modular width and has ray appendages projecting from the body and head. Another common figure design consists of a vertically extended creature with a "stinger" in front and often a triangular tail behind, a figure which may be derived locally from the preceding phases of the Nasca style. Trophy heads are another common representational theme of local origin.

More than half of the available Nasca 9 vessels are decorated with chevron band designs which are very similar to Chakipampa A ones, differing from the latter mainly in being slightly broader on the average. Like the fancy Chakipampa A ones, Nasca 9 chevron bands are usually placed horizontally around jar necks, the rims of bowls, and the borders of broad design fields, although vertical chevron bands are also used occasionally as panel dividers. Nasca 9 chevron bands are narrow compared to those used in the Huari styles of Epoch 2, most of them being 8 to 13 millimeters wide including the outline banding. . . . While most Nasca 9 designs can be traced back to Nasca 8 antecedents, some, notably the chevron band, represent foreign influence from the highlands.

A more thorough analysis of Nasca Phase 9 ceramics is necessary to understand the social and political changes that occurred on the south coast at the beginning of the Middle Horizon. Certainly by the time of Phase 9, Nasca had all but disappeared as a distinct political entity.

Four » Approaches to the Interpretation of Nasca Iconography

Previous Attempts at Interpretation

Among the first attempts to interpret Nasca iconography was a short article by the British archaeologist Thomas Joyce published in the journal *Man* (Joyce 1913b). Using a collection of thirty-four Nasca vessels acquired by the British Museum, Joyce argued that the mythical creatures represented on them could be deciphered as humans dressed in costumes which represented the totemic clan-ancestor in animal form (ibid.: 113). The basis for this interpretation appears to have been Joyce's familiarity with chroniclers such as Garcilaso de la Vega (whom he quotes), who described the use of animal costumes by the Inca in their rituals to portray the ancestors of their *ayllu*s. Using ethnographic analogy, Joyce suggested that the depictions on Nasca vessels could be interpreted in a similar manner. He was the first to use the terms "mouth-mask," "tunic," and "cloak" in describing the apparel worn by these figures.

In 1914 Edward K. Putnam described and illustrated a collection of ninety-four Nasca vessels purchased in 1911 by C. A. Ficke, then president of the Davenport Academy of Sciences. This was part of a larger collection of over four hundred Peruvian specimens brought back to Iowa from Peru by Ficke. Putnam, who cites Joyce's article and is familiar with his interpretations, attempts little analysis of his own, with a few exceptions. He classifies the themes present on the Davenport Nasca collection into several categories: animal figures (he also lumps in other naturalistic forms such as birds, plants, and fish); figure pots (head jars, effigy forms); rows of faces; human monster figures (six variations, labeled A through F); and miscellaneous forms (Putnam 1914). Putnam's taxonomy is limited by the size of the sample and by his own views on the nature of the art. Like Joyce, he argues that many of his Human Monster Figures "may be nothing more than men in the dress of a bird, or of a serpent, or a centipede, or a scorpion, or some other animal" (ibid.: 26), but he suggests that "others might perhaps be called animals with men's heads" (ibid.).

In an attempt to discover a more empirical method for understanding Nasca iconography, some scholars turned to archaeological evidence to aid in the identification of objects seen in the art. Julio C. Tello, considered by his compatriots to be the "father of Peruvian archaeology," was responsible for the excavation of large quantities of Nasca pottery that became part of the collections of the Museo Nacional in Lima. Tello was among the first to excavate mummified Nasca trophy heads and to recognize their ritual uses (Tello 1917, 1918). He was able to identify representations of trophy heads on Nasca pottery by their distinctive characteristics: the attachment of carrying ropes through a hole bored in the forehead and lips pinned shut with *huarango* thorns — features that he had seen on archaeological specimens and now saw clearly displayed on the painted pottery. He also was one of the first to use ethnographic

analogy in his interpretation, comparing trophy heads to contemporary Jívaro shrunken heads. Tello's pioneering work paved the way for a more empirical interpretation of the iconography.

The Peruvian historian Horacio H. Urteaga (1919a), despite his lack of training in archaeology, wrote an interpretive article on Nasca iconography in an obscure Lima publication. He viewed the creatures painted on the Nasca vessels as anthropomorphic representations of a religious nature — fetishes, idols, or totems (Urteaga 1919a: 109 – 110). Most of his examples were taken from vessels in the Museo Prado in Lima, the private museum of Javier Prado, the rector of San Marcos University. He recognized that much of Nasca art was religious in nature and that the representations were composite symbols, not meant to be naturalistic representations of animals. Urteaga wrote other articles on Nasca iconography and related themes over the next decade (e.g., Urteaga 1919b, 1919c, 1919d, 1924, 1928).

The first comprehensive work on Nasca iconography was written by the German Americanist Eduard Georg Seler (1849 – 1922). Seler was trained as a botanist but became interested in American Indian languages in the early 1880s (see Kubler 1991: 164 – 169). Under the patronage of the wealthy philanthropist Joseph Loubat, he undertook a number of expeditions to Middle America between 1887 and 1911 and was selected as the first recipient of a chair in American linguistics, ethnology, and archaeology at the University of Berlin, also endowed by Loubat (ibid.: 165). Seler's greatest achievement was the publication of his five-volume work entitled *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Amerikanischen Sprach- und Altertumskunde,* which appeared between the years 1902 and 1923 in Berlin. Consisting mainly of his studies of Middle American writing and calendrical systems, these volumes contained excellent drawings taken from the codices and monuments of the region.

Seler's interest in ancient religions and his familiarity with the large collection of Nasca vessels in the Berlin museum apparently led him to attempt a study of the iconography present on those vessels. This was published posthumously in volume 4 of the above-mentioned work under the title "Die buntbemalten Gefässe von Nasca im südlichen Peru und die Hauptelemente ihrer Verzierung" (Seler 1923). The great value of this study is the series of over four hundred drawings (many of them rollouts) of the motifs on the vessels. These have formed a major corpus of the iconography for the specialist and are still widely used as illustrations in almost every work dealing with the subject, including this book.

Seler was the first to attempt a systematic classification of the major mythical motifs in the Nasca style. He identified the following themes: (1) the Spotted Cat, bearer of the resources of life, (2) the Cat Demon, (3) the Cat Demon as a Bird, (4) the Bird Demon, (5) the Jagged-Staff Demon, and (6) other Vegetation Demons. In addition he also described representations of humans, including trophy heads, animals, plants, and other objects. Although we use different terms for these motifs, have added new ones, and now distinguish a multitude of varieties, Seler made major inroads in the understanding of the art. He correctly observed that Nasca religion, as seen through the symbolism of its art, focused on fertility of the crops. What he failed to note was the strong military component in the art and the relationship of warfare and the taking of trophy heads to fertility. Yet this should not detract from his pioneering contributions.

An important pioneer in the study of Nasca iconography was Eugenio Nicándrevich Yacovleff (1895 – 1934). Yacovleff was born in Russia and studied at the Agricultural College in Moscow, where he became interested in botany and geology. He took part in a scientific expedition to Tashkent in Asia. During World War I he served in the reserves but did not see combat. After spending some time as a refugee in Turkey, he immigrated to the Americas, planning to go to California to grow fruit (Anonymous 1934: 324). Apparently Yacovleff's ship stopped at Callao on the way, and he decided to stay in Peru. Soon after he arrived, he became affiliated with the Museo Nacional and was a regular contributor to its journal, the *Revista del Museo Nacional.*

Yacovleff used his knowledge of botany and zoology in his studies of Precolumbian Peruvian ceramics. His first article, "El vencejo (*cypselus*) en el arte decorativo de Nasca," examined the representations of the bird called *vencejo* (or swift) in Nasca art (Yacovleff 1931). His study of falcons, condors, and other raptorial birds (Yacovleff 1932a) was more ambitious. He examined cross-culturally the representations of these birds, both naturalistic and mythical, in all the Precolumbian societies of Peru, including Chavín, Nasca, Moche, Huari, and Inca. Not only was he able to differentiate the various species of birds by their markings in the art, but he attempted a cultural interpretation of their significance, often using the writings of chroniclers like Bernabé Cobo and Cieza de León. His recognition of falcon eye markings on Nasca head jars, for example, led to his argument that warriors painted their faces with falcon marks to symbolize the arrogance, strength, and swiftness of this creature (Yacovleff 1932a: 50). In a third study, "La

jíquima, raíz comestible extinguida en el Perú" (1933), Yacovleff identified the tuber represented on many Nasca ceramics as the jíquima plant, an edible root that was widely distributed and used in Precolumbian times. The article goes much further, identifying many of the other plants represented on the pottery and demonstrating the association of the plants with many of the Nasca mythical beings. In all of his articles, Yacovleff combined his scientific knowledge with ethnographic sources and contemporary evidence to produce a better understanding of the iconography represented on Nasca pottery.

Perhaps Yacovleff's most important and, at the same time, most speculative article was his treatise "La deidad primitiva de los nasca" (The Primitive Deity of the Nasca) (Yacovleff 1932b). In it he argued that the most important of the mythical creatures depicted in Nasca art was the killer whale (*Orcinus orca*). He was familiar with the Gayton-Kroeber chronological seriation of the style and consequently was able to trace the evolution of the Mythical Killer Whale theme through the sequence. Yacovleff astutely recognized that Killer Whale traits were used in conjunction with other Mythical Beings, including those that were associated with plants and warfare. His most controversial argument was that the Mythical Killer Whale was gradually endowed with the features of the agricultural deity, reflecting the evolutionary change in the society from primitive fishing to agriculture (Yacovleff 1932b: 148). His arguments were in direct contrast to those of the leading Peruvianist of that period, Julio C. Tello, who argued that the feline, specifically the jaguar, lay at the roots of Paracas and Nasca religion (Tello 1942: 689 ff.; 1959: 59).

Yacovleff's article also contains a fine description of Nasca ceramic art that was well ahead of its time. He was a very capable artist who produced hundreds of drawings of the motifs depicted in the Nasca collection in the Museo Nacional in Lima. Yacovleff should also be commended for his antidiffusionist stand against the leading Peruvianists of his day (e.g., Uhle, Seler, Walter Lehmann), who were arguing that some of the Nasca "deities" were in fact "feathered serpents" and thus were related to their Mesoamerican counterparts. Yacovleff demonstrated that the "feathers" on some of these creatures were representations of the dorsal fin of killer whales. By recognizing the presence of the Killer Whale motif in earlier Paracas textiles, Yacovleff implied that Nasca religious art was indigenous to the Andes.

When Yacovleff died prematurely in 1934, Peruvian archaeology lost one of its brightest young stars. Despite his call for caution, others who followed him continued to argue for cultural connections between Mesoamerica and Nasca. Among these was the German-born anthropologist Karl H. Schlesier. Schlesier (1959) published an imposing study of Nasca iconography entitled "Stilgeschichtliche Einordnung der Nazca-Vasenmalereien: Beitrag zur Geschichte der Hochkulturen des Vorkolumbischen Peru." It is most notable for its excellent illustrations of almost two hundred and fifty Nasca vessels from six German museums, many of which had not been published before.

Schlesier recognized two chronological phases into which the Nasca vessels could be divided, an older phase (corresponding mainly to Dawson's Phases 1 through 5) and a younger phase (corresponding to Dawson's Proliferous Phases 6 and 7). Although he clearly acknowledged the central role of fertility in Nasca religion, Schlesier was among the first to recognize the importance of trophy heads and warfare. He believed that the roots of Nasca religion lay in the worship of the skull and trophy heads (Schlesier 1959: 121), which had many analogies in some of the ancient Mexican cultures. Nasca deities were seen to change over time, and Schlesier distinguished between those of his older phase and those of the younger phase. In the older phase he identified and described the God with the Feline Mask, the Moon God, the Double-Headed Snake (representing the clouds or sky), the Rain God, the Vegetation Attendant, the Vegetation Bringer, and the God with the Feline Mask as a Bird. In the younger phase he listed the Multiple-Headed God, the Trophy Head Demon, the Feather Staff Bearer, the Monkey Demon, the Earth God, the White Woman, the Star God, and the Feathered Snake. Not all connections were with Mesoamerica; Schlesier also recognized the role of contact with and influences flowing from other Peruvian cultures, such as Moche, Chavín, and Paracas.

Much of Schlesier's interpretation of Nasca religion centers around his belief in a basic similarity between many of the gods found in Nasca art and the nature gods present in Mesoamerica, such as the rain god, earth god, moon god, and clouds. His monograph includes illustrations of Mesoamerican deities seen in the codices and attempts to understand the meaning of symbols in Nasca art by their similarity to better-known icons in Mesoamerican art. The identification of the "deities" on Nasca pottery as being associated with the moon, earth, clouds, or rain was quite speculative on Schlesier's part, influenced by his knowledge of Mesoamerican art and perhaps by his familiarity with Seler's writings.

Alan Sawyer, former curator of primitive art at the Art Institute of Chicago and later director of the Textile Mu-

seum in Washington, D.C., also contributed significantly to the study of Nasca iconography. His work on the Paracas style of the south coast added to our understanding of the evolution of Nasca iconography out of the earlier Paracas ceramic and textile art. In 1961 Sawyer wrote an essay on "Paracas and Nazca Iconography," which traced the roots of several Nasca creatures (felines, foxes, falcons, and the killer whale) back to Paracas. This further helped to dispel the arguments attempting to link Nasca religious iconography to Mesoamerica. Clearly there were ample local antecedents in Peru for the iconography we see in Nasca art.

In the 1980s the Spanish scholars Concepción Blasco Bosqued and Luis Ramos Gómez produced several important catalogs of the outstanding Nasca collection in the Museo de América, Madrid (Blasco and Ramos 1980, 1986, 1991). They have also written extensively on Nasca iconography, both in the context of the catalogs and in separate publications (Blasco and Ramos 1974; Ramos and Blasco 1977). The Nasca collection in the Museo de América is one of the largest in the world, consisting of over one thousand pieces. Blasco and Ramos have systematically described each piece and provided an initial classification of the vessel shapes and motifs. To their credit, Blasco and Ramos classified the iconographic motifs with a minimum of speculative interpretation. Using a broad typology, they assigned the designs to the following categories: geometric motifs, plants, naturalistic animals, the human figure, trophy heads, fantastic (mythical) animals, and fantastic (mythical) persons.

Blasco and Ramos suggest that the creatures wearing masks, forehead ornaments, bangles, and mantles are truly "mythical" creatures, not merely human impersonators dressed as deities (see, e.g., Townsend 1985). These scholars are quick to point out, however, that personal adornments found in some of the tombs indicate that people of special status at times wore the symbols of the mythical creatures (Blasco and Ramos 1980: 214).

Interest in Nasca iconography in the United States began with the large collection of Nasca vessels excavated by Max Uhle in 1901 for the University of California at Berkeley. Uhle was more interested in the chronological aspects of the pottery than in the iconography, and it was left to others to analyze the shapes and designs. Alfred Kroeber, the leading figure at the University of California, along with William Duncan Strong, undertook the first systematic analysis of Uhle's collections from the Ica Valley (Kroeber and Strong 1924). Other than listing some of the major motifs on the vessels for statistical purposes, however, this study produced little iconographic information. It was essentially descriptive in nature and was undertaken mainly for chronological purposes.

Three years later, Kroeber and Gayton published a more comprehensive study of Uhle's collection of Nasca vessels from the Nasca Valley (Gayton and Kroeber 1927). Uhle had not excavated in the Nasca Valley but purchased a total of 563 vessels, most with site or regional provenience. In this monograph Gayton and Kroeber established a more refined chronology for the Nasca style (described earlier in this book), compared the Nasca Valley materials with those from the Ica Valley and with other collections, and described the main vessel shape categories present. In terms of iconography, Gayton and Kroeber use terms such as "cat-demon," "jagged-staff demon," "centipede monster," and "trophy head," which they borrowed from other scholars such as Seler, Lehmann, Ubbelohde-Döering, and others. Although their interest in iconography was in documenting chronological change in the pottery, it remains useful to this day in illustrating the evolution of some of the motifs over time. Although Kroeber fine-tuned his Nasca chronology in his 1956 monograph, he attempted little additional work on the designs. True iconographic analysis had to wait for others.

Lawrence Dawson's research on Nasca pottery at Berkeley for his chronological seriation led inevitably to a study of the iconography as well, beginning with an identification and classification of the major themes and then attempts to explain the meaning of the motifs. Dawson was responsible for coining names for a number of the motifs, including "Horrible Bird," "Harvester," "Bloody Mouth," and others. The names for these mysterious representations on the pottery have been a problem from the first attempts to make sense of the iconography. Scholars had to devise referential terminology to classify the motifs, whether it be Putnam's "Human Monster Figures" or Seler's "Cat Demon" or Schlesier's "Vegetation Bringer." The plethora of names given to the same motif by various scholars has led to a certain amount of confusion, especially for nonspecialists. Perhaps the Andeanists could have taken a more benign approach, such as that used by the Mayanists, who traditionally have enumerated their gods using letters (God A, God G, etc.). But it is probably too late for that now, for much of the terminology is firmly entrenched in the literature.

Dawson became an expert on Nasca iconography through his attribute analysis. Although he published none of it himself, his ideas were planted in John Rowe's students, who nurtured, cultivated, and expanded them with their own studies. Many of these have been published: Roark's

(1965) study of many of the Phase 5 and 6 motifs; my studies of Nasca trophy head iconography (Proulx 1971, 1989a), monkeys (1989c), human representations (1992), Moche influences (1994), and more general summaries (1983, 1989b, 1990); Wegner's unpublished but important study (1976a) of Nasca 6 mythical creatures; and Wolfe's (1981) excellent study of the Spotted Cat and the Horrible Bird motifs, among others.

Other notable contributions are Catherine Allen's (1981) study of Nasca mythical creatures; Heinrich Ubbelohde-Döering's early attempts (1925/26, 1931, 1933) to decipher the motifs; Mary Blagg's (1975) important study of the Phase 5 Bizarre themes (discussed earlier); R. Tom Zuidema's (1972) structuralist approach to Nasca iconography; Patrick Carmichael's (1992b) argument that all Nasca art is sacred or religious in nature; Alan Sawyer's many publications on aspects of the iconography (e.g., 1961, 1966, 1975); Antonio Guarnotta's analysis of Nasca vessels in Italian collections (1979; Marini 1988); and Richard Townsend's (1985) excellent interpretation of the meaning of Nasca art.

The Methods of Iconographic Analysis Used in This Study

The value of changes in vessel shape and drawing details for deriving chronology has been demonstrated. We now turn to the art itself to determine what it can tell us about the nature of Nasca society. Unfortunately, the Precolumbian cultures of the Andes lacked any form of writing, and thus we are left with less accurate techniques for reconstructing these societies. "Finding the intended meaning behind imagery is particularly difficult in art lacking emic documentation. Scholars must determine what, if anything, was meant, and sometimes what is represented" (Pang 1992: 8). Before we look in detail at alternative methods of iconographic interpretation, let us examine some of the terminology and principles underlying this form of analysis and some of the previous attempts to apply it to Precolumbian art.

Iconography is the discipline which concerns itself with the subject matter or meaning of works of art, as opposed to their form (Panofsky 1955: 26). It is the study of symbols (*icons*) with visually, audially, or kinetically implied meaning (Pang 1992: 298). "Iconography is a description and classification of images much as ethnography is a description and classification of human races" (Panofsky 1955: 31). *Iconology* is the historical or interpretive study of symbols; it examines how visual symbols convey temporal and cultural values (Pang 1992: 298). Iconology involves the discovery and interpretation of "symbolical" values (which may be unknown to the artist) (Panofsky 1955: 31).

In her recent book *Pre-Columbian Art*, Hildegard Pang (1992) discusses various interdisciplinary approaches to the study and interpretation of iconography, including archaeology, ethnohistory, cultural anthropology, art criticism, and art history, to which we might add the structuralist approach. Some of the ideas that she presents are incorporated in the discussion below. The most fruitful disciplines for understanding Nasca iconography, however, are those described in detail in the following sections on art history, archaeology, ethnographic analogy, and comparative mythology.

Art History

The study of iconography was developed by art historians. The main tools used by these scholars are attribute analysis, iconics, and the concept of style. "*Style* is the distinctive organization of formal properties that characterizes the art of a place, group, individual or Period" (Pang 1992: 8; emphasis added). Thus the art produced by a particular society, such as the Nasca culture on the south coast of Peru, can be distinguished on the basis of its distinctive formal properties from the art of other contemporary groups, such as the Moche culture on the north coast. "*Attribute analysis* involves studying the range of stylistic features and how they may be combined" (ibid.: 8; emphasis added). *Iconics* is the study of how basic design motifs may be combined to create new forms.

Erwin Panofsky (1955: 28 – 32), a leading figure in art history and specialist on medieval and Renaissance art, distinguished three levels of meaning in art: (1) primary or natural subject matter consisting of pure forms; (2) secondary or conventional subject matter that connects artistic motifs with themes and concepts (iconography); and (3) intrinsic meaning or content that attempts to ascertain the mindset or world view of a culture. Panofsky's "levels of meaning" help us to understand and differentiate various stages in the analysis of art yet have limited value for the study of Precolumbian art in the Andes for several reasons. Panofsky had the advantage of written records and a continuous artistic tradition to use in his analysis of Renaissance art. The Precolumbian peoples in the Andes lacked writing until after the Spanish conquest. Panofsky often dealt with Christian themes, such as the crucifixion, nativity, and various portrayals of biblical events or personages. Andean

scholars cannot know which iconographic events were real and which were myth. Panofsky could use the Bible and other documentary sources to argue his interpretations and could follow most of his iconography from its origins through time and space to the Renaissance. The Andes may not have a single unitary cosmic vision. Finally, Panofsky had the advantage of being brought up in the Western artistic tradition. He did not have to interpret the mindset of an alien culture or to understand his subject matter from an anthropological perspective.

None of these circumstances apply to the scholar attempting to decipher Nasca iconography. The lack of written records in ancient Andean societies is only the first of many obstacles that must be overcome. When the Spanish conquistadors arrived in what today we call Peru, the Nasca culture had been extinct for almost eight hundred years. The Inca empire incorporated many Andean traditions, the roots of which extended back to earlier times, cross-cutting other cultures. As George Kubler (1962, 1967a, 1967b) warns us, however, a "conceptional disjunction" occurs as beliefs alter over time and symbols acquire new or different meanings. Pang (1992: 4) reminds us that "despite outward similarities among cultures, iconography is actually highly culture-specific: A cross may suggest the cardinal directions to one culture, the concepts of Christian crucifixion and resurrection to another." Therefore, we cannot assume that symbols interpreted in one way in Inca times meant exactly the same in the much earlier Nasca culture. Finally, our interpretations of Nasca art are all affected by biases inherent in the Western cultural tradition. We need to recognize those biases as well as develop anthropologically valid methods for understanding a preliterate society whose orientation, values, and perceptions were much different from our own.

Some anthropologists and art historians have used semiotic models as alternatives to Panofsky's scheme. The theory behind this approach is the extension of linguistic concepts to nonlinguistic phenomena, such as art. Proponents of this method argue that images are structured in much the same fashion as a linguistic system and that the interpreter can recognize meaningful contrasts by isolating discrete recurrent units, much as significant auditory contrasts were uncovered in phonemic analysis. In a pioneering study, George Kubler (1967a) analyzed the art of the Teotihuacán culture in Mexico by codifying the signs and images in the art and comparing them to nouns, verbs, and adjectives in a language. Christopher Donnan (1978: 8) makes a similar argument in discussing his interpretation of Moche iconography from northern Peru:

> Inherent in Moche art is a symbol system that follows consistent rules of expression. In many respects, this system is similar to the symbolic system of a language. In language the speaker can modify what he is saying about an object (noun) by selecting a set of modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) and inserting them in their proper place in the message according to a set of rules (grammar).
>
> In art, the communication is between the artist and the viewer. The artist conveys information about objects such as houses, men or ceremonies — we might call these "artistic nouns" — by using a set of stylistic modifiers or "artistic adjectives." Individuals can, therefore, be recognized as being rich or poor, high or low status, warriors, gods, or servants depending on the modifiers the artist chooses to make in the way he depicts them. . . .
>
> Similarly, the artist uses what we might call "artistic adverbs" to modify the action shown, and thus be able to convey the speed of a given runner, the force of a mace blow, or the intensity of a battle by the way he arranges the scene and the various details he adds to the representation.

Pang has suggested that one way to initiate an interpretation of iconography is "to start by arranging all known images from a particular group or period into categories of similar forms and their variants. Meaning may then sometimes be inferred by noting which basic motifs occur together" (Pang 1992: 8). Anthropologists recognize that artists in a particular society work according to culturally defined rules of expression that operate within a certain range of acceptable variation (see Donnan 1978). The method is based on the supposition that a finite number of basic themes in an art style are depicted using consistent correlations of details or patterns. Part of any analysis of the art and iconography of a society should include an understanding of these basic rules and a classification of the basic themes and their component parts.

Christopher Donnan has taken this concept a step further in his seminal work "Thematic Approach to Moche Art: The Presentation Theme" (Donnan 1978: part 6). As a way of explaining his methodology, Donnan used a historical example from Christian art: the nativity scene has several essential elements, including the Christ Child in the manger, the Virgin Mary, Joseph, the three wise men, angels, the star in the sky, and the stable. The scene could be abbreviated without any major loss of meaning for those familiar with the story. Often just the three main figures are represented: Christ in the manger, Mary, and Joseph. Christmas cards depict many different abbreviated versions

of the nativity scene: (the three wise men with a star above, the Christ Child alone in the manger, Mary holding the Christ Child, etc.). Each of these portraits recalls the image of the entire nativity scene to a knowledgeable viewer. The essential element is the symbolism evoked by the various component parts of the motif. Donnan (1978: 158) notes that the complete inventory of symbolic elements is rarely found in a single representation.

We can also argue that in nonliterate societies, such as those that existed in Precolumbian Peru, religious art also contained a finite number of basic themes that were rigidly portrayed by artists following set traditional values. Donnan used the thematic approach to identify and describe a wide variety of themes in Moche art, including the "Presentation (or Sacrifice) Theme," which depicts the ritual killing of prisoners. Their blood is collected in a goblet, which in turn is presented by a high-ranking individual to the central figure in the scene (see Donnan 1978: fig. 239b). In a like manner, Christopher Donnan and Donna McClelland (1979) identified examples of a burial ritual on six different Moche vessels, based on the similarity of the component parts.

In attempting to apply the thematic approach to Nasca ceramics, several problems arise. Moche art is more detailed and varied than Nasca art, often involving numerous figures in complicated scenes. In addition to having a rich mythological or religious artistic tradition, Moche art contains a wide variety of representations from everyday life. Nasca ceramic art is much more restricted, with fewer and less elaborate secular depictions. Nasca religious art, however, is more erratic than Moche in that Nasca "deities" or "mythical creatures" can consist of multiple combinations of elements which produce a wide range of forms. Finally, significant continuity exists between the Moche and Chimú cultures. Chimú survived in some manner until the Spanish conquest, whereas Nasca culture was obliterated with the Huari conquest of the south coast. Thus we need to redefine the "thematic approach" as it relates to Nasca iconography.

The identification of mythical figures in Nasca art rests on the presence of consistently recurring assemblages of design elements. Using a large enough sample, we can identify the main characteristics of each motif and then recognize the variations that occur. Just as Donnan was able to identify individual figures associated with the Presentation Theme in Moche art, we can identify major motifs in Nasca ceramic art (such as the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being or the Mythical Killer Whale) through consistently recurring combinations of design elements and — using the principles of the thematic approach — identify variants or abbreviated versions of these main motifs. Although it is more difficult to classify a finite number of specific motifs in Nasca art, it is possible to sort out the main attributes from those of secondary importance and to gain an understanding of the rules followed by the artisans who produced the fine ceramics.

An intensive analysis of the drawing details allows us to understand changes in form and style that occur through time. The naturalistic representation that marked the earlier part of the sequence gave way to proliferation and abstraction in the later phases of the style. As scrolls, volutes, tassels, and other embellishments were added to the major mythical motifs beginning in Phase 5, rules affecting the size and proportions of the figures also changed. Scholars unfamiliar with the earlier forms of these motifs often make erroneous identifications when they appear greatly altered in the later phases. A thematic approach, where we recognize a main motif and its component parts, can aid in understanding changes in form.

Having reviewed the efforts of some prominent art historians and anthropologists in the past, we might agree that iconographic analysis should begin with identification of the major motifs, Panofsky's preiconographic level. This can be accomplished by beginning with an adequate sample that theoretically should contain examples of the major themes in the art. By analyzing the art for patterns of consistently recurring design elements, we can then move to the iconographic level and identify the major motifs or themes, their variants, and their changes in form through time by using a thematic approach. Use of the principles of semiotic analysis may prove helpful as a supplementary approach. Once the major themes are classified, we can move forward to the third level of analysis: the attempt to interpret the meaning of the images.

Esther Pasztory (1997: chap. 5) attempts to reach this third level by using what she calls a structural/semiotic approach, which focuses not on classification of themes but rather on patterning. Here the entire image system is analyzed in terms of its constituent parts and clusters (ibid.: 67). "The result of such an investigation is not a myth or ritual but a mind-set or world view. . . . Its weakness is that it assumes universal psychological meanings associated with forms that are unproven" (ibid.: 97). Pasztory admits that her approach is "ultimately intuitive and subjective," but she feels that it is defensible (ibid.: 72). I would argue that several disciplines in addition to art history can assist in our attempt to interpret meaning in Nasca iconography.

Archaeology

Archaeology can provide valuable supportive data in iconographic interpretation. If we can match objects found in the iconography with actual artifacts discovered in archaeological contexts (such as tombs, houses, or activity areas), the accuracy of interpretation is greatly enhanced. One of the most frequently encountered motifs in Nasca art is a human head, sometimes drawn with a thick line protruding from the forehead and with two straight lines crossing over the lips (fig. 5.85). These heads are often grasped by the hair in the hand of a masked semihuman figure, who may carry a large clublike object in the other hand (fig. 5.1). Sometimes the heads are shown being devoured by a large anthropomorphic bird (fig. 5.37), while at other times they are held by a large whale with human arms (fig. 5.46). Although it is not difficult to identify these representations as severed human trophy heads, the archaeological discovery of caches of these heads at Nasca sites (e.g., Browne et al. 1993) has confirmed this interpretation. Furthermore, a careful analysis of the actual preserved specimens provides a greater amount of detail than is possible from the iconography itself. We know, for example, that the head was cut from the body with obsidian knives (these have been found at sites as well as displayed in the iconography). The base of the skull including the foramen magnum was broken out, and the brain and eyeballs were removed from the skull through this aperture. The thick wavy line protruding from the forehead seen in the art is a carrying rope for holding and displaying the head. This rope was passed through a hole drilled in the center of the forehead and then tied to a wooden toggle within the skull. The skull was often stuffed with textiles and occasionally plant remains (Baraybar 1989:13). Finally, the lips were pinned shut with one or two *huarango* thorns (figs. 4.1 to 4.3).

Another common theme in Nasca art is a creature often called the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (figs. 5.1, 5.13). Some have argued that it represents a human dressed in an elaborate costume (Townsend 1985), while others, including myself, feel that it is a symbolic composite of human and animal features representing a "deity" or "mythical being" (e.g., Seler 1923; Roark 1965: 17; Proulx 1983). The pros and cons of this argument are debated in chapter 5, but it seems evident that shamans or other religious leaders did impersonate mythical entities at least on certain occasions. Archaeology provides important confirmation for the identification of some component parts of this creature, as seen in the ornaments and costumes worn by the shamans. The Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is displayed wearing some type of necklace, an ornament on its forehead, catlike whiskers on the sides of its face, and a long flowing cloak, most frequently terminating in an animal's head. Nasca artifacts with the very same forms seen on the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being are present in numerous museum collections. The necklace of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is composed of square or trapezoidal pieces of *Spondylus* shell, one of the most sacred materials used in Peru as offerings to the gods. These shells are found only in the warm waters off the Ecuadorian coast and thus represent long-range trade in ritual goods (see Paulsen 1974; Marcos 1977/78, among others). Examples are present in the Museum of the American Indian (15/5635) and in the Masson Collection (Hotel Las Dunas, Ica, Peru).

Beaten sheets of gold were formed into forehead ornaments and mouth masks, probably worn during rituals by the individuals upon whose bodies these were discovered. Although they were most likely restricted to a small segment of Nasca society, the presence of these objects in museum collections verifies their identification in the iconography and provides valuable additional information about aspects of Nasca religious practice. A fine selection of these objects is illustrated in José Antonio de Lavalle (1986: 185 – 191) and in Miguel Mujica Gallo (1967: pls. 24, 25). The long cloak, which we call a "signifer" on the Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, appears to have been based on the pelt of an animal (complete with attached head), which was worn by individuals as early as Paracas times on the south coast. Preserved pelts have been found, including one on display in the Museo Regional de Ica in Peru and another at the Paracas Site Museum; both appear to date to the Paracas culture. Early Nasca effigy vessels portray individuals wearing headdresses made from fox pelts (fig. 5.134; Proulx 1968: pl. 31). Later the signifer becomes more symbolic in its form, terminating in plants, fish, birds, and other animals.

It is unfortunate that many of the items listed above have not been found in scientifically excavated burials where the context and dating would be secure. Most were acquired by museums from *huaqueros* or from private collectors. The objects have been identified as Nasca on the basis of style and/or location of the find.

Other objects present in the iconography which have been found in actual archaeological contexts include various weapons: spears, spear-throwers (atlatls) (fig. 4.4), clubs (fig. 4.5), slings (fig. 4.6), and knives (fig. 4.7); musical instruments such as drums (fig. 5.131) and panpipes (fig. 5.130); weaving implements; items of clothing such as tunics, tur-

Fig. 4.1. Nasca trophy head: frontal view showing carrying rope in the forehead and lips pinned shut with *huarango* thorns. After Tello 1918: pl. 3.

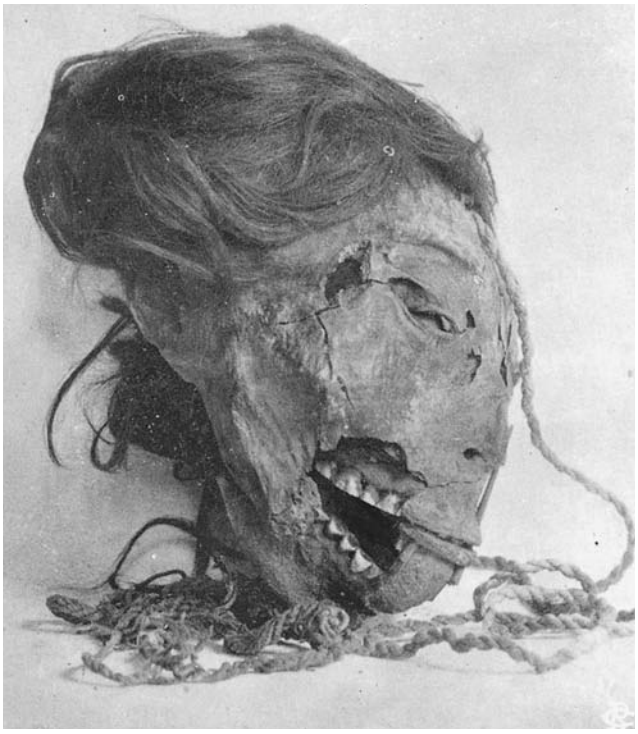


Fig. 4.2. Nasca trophy head: side view. After Tello 1918: pl. 4.

Fig. 4.3. Nasca trophy head: rear view, showing the large cavity produced by expanding the foramen magnum. Also seen is a wooden toggle to which the carrying rope was attached. After Tello 1918: pl. 5.

banlike headdresses, and breechcloths; and a whole range of preserved plants which occur in great numbers on the pottery (see Carmichael 1988: appendix 3).

Ethnographic Analogy

Ethnographic analogy is the method of interpreting nonobservable behavior of an extinct society based on the similarity of their artifacts or features to those of living peoples. Ethnographic analogy works best when applied to historically related peoples (such as the Basket-Maker, Anasazi, and Pueblo peoples of the American Southwest or to the cultures of the Central Andes or Mesoamerica), where common cultural traditions are likely to survive, albeit changed, over the centuries. This is sometimes called the "direct-historical approach" (for early examples, see Cushing 1886; Fewkes 1896; and Wedel 1938). Remembering Kubler's note of caution about "conceptual disjunction" mentioned earlier, however, we must be very careful in using ethnographic analogy: beliefs alter over time, and symbols can acquire

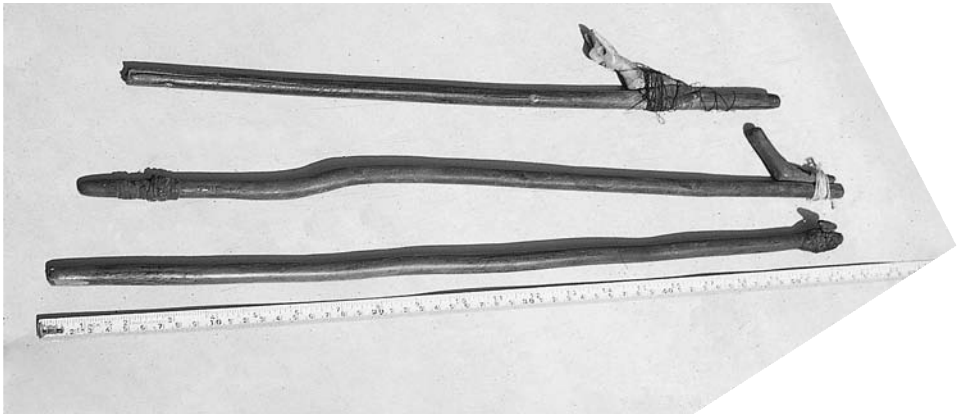


Fig. 4.4. Nasca atlatls (spear-throwers). Museo Regional de Ica. Photo by Donald A. Proulx.

Fig. 4.5. Paracas club, similar to those used by the Nasca in warfare. After Carrion Cachot 1962: fig. 4.

new or different meanings. Furthermore, as noted above, a severe population and cultural disruption occurred on the south coast in the Middle Horizon.

Another type of ethnographic analogy, where the cultures compared are not culturally related, is called the "comparative approach." This methodology is less accurate than the direct-historical approach, but it has utility if used carefully. Julio Tello (1918) was the first to apply comparative ethnographic analogy to Nasca iconography in his interpretation of the function of human trophy heads. Using his knowledge of head-hunting practices among the Jívaro Indians of eastern Peru and Ecuador as well as the Mundurucú of Brazil, Tello pointed out many similarities in the physical properties of the trophy heads and suggested that the taking of heads had ritual connotations. I expanded on this argument and pointed out the similarity in sewing shut the lips of the Jívaro specimens and the pinning of the lips on Nasca trophy heads, the use of a carrying cord in both cases, and the removal of the soft tissue in both instances (Proulx 1971). I went on to suggest, using ethnographic analogy, that the Nasca pinned shut the lips of their trophies to prevent the escape of evil spirits thought to reside in the head (fig. 4.1), just as the Jívaro sewed shut the lips on their shrunken heads to prevent the avenging spirit (Muisak) from harming the killer. Both cultures apparently believed that the mouth was the only orifice through which this spirit or soul could emerge. Admittedly this interpretation is somewhat speculative, because the Jívaro and Nasca are not historically related, but it represents an attempt to understand the meaning of a phenomenon using an almost identical example from a historic cultural group.

For over a century ethnographers have scientifically studied human societies ranging from the most "primitive" to highly industrialized polities such as our own. These comparative inquiries have produced data and theories that allow us to understand the nature of societies quite different from our own in an objective and nonethnocentric manner. John Murra has been in the forefront of those anthropologists and ethnohistorians who have successfully argued that the Andean mindset was quite different from that of the Europeans who conquered them. Their perception of the universe, their relationship with nature, and their way of doing things contrasted greatly with those of the conquistadors. In his excellent analysis of Nasca iconography, Richard Townsend (1985: 124) discusses these differences as they pertain to world view:

The evidence reveals an animistic perception of the world that was tied to the familiar features of local landscapes; an archaic vision that maintained that certain forms and forces were sacred, part of processes in nature that had important correspondences with the sphere of man. In this system of correspondences, earth and water, animals and plants, and the changing cycles of the seasons were part of a cosmic pattern that included the organization of society and all important individual and community activities. Humankind was not passive or dependent, and by carrying out the appropriate religious activity and conducting life in accordance with the order of the natural cycle, man played an active, helpful and necessary role in the cosmic system. This manner of perceiving the sphere of man as embedded and participating in the processes of nature is profoundly different from the pattern of western, Judeo-Christian thought, which places humankind in a dominant position, closer to a transcendent God than to other forms of life in the hierarchy of creation.

Fig. 4.6. Nasca slings. Courtesy Museo Colombiano de Arte Precolombino (Santiago, Chile).

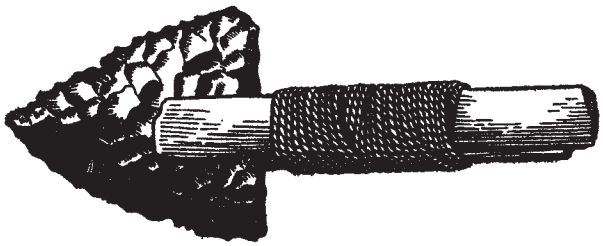


Fig. 4.7. Nasca obsidian decapitation knife. After Carrion Cachot 1962: pl. 24A.

Comparative Mythology

The use of contemporary mythology and metaphor to interpret past societies is quite risky, although, again, Tello (1942) was a key proponent of such an approach. We could consider such a use of mythology to be a form of ethnographic analogy, for it attempts to understand nontangible behavior in preliterate societies through a comparison with modern counterparts. Like ethnographic analogy, comparative mythology works best if done in the same geographic area, using societies that are historically related through time. Even this can lead to false results, because concepts and symbolism can and do change over time. Some scholars have made convincing arguments for the interpretation of iconography by using this method. Christopher Donnan (1978: chap. 5) skillfully uses ethnography and mythology to interpret some of the animal representations in Moche art, but he is careful to use only Andean comparisons. Yuri Berezkin (1972), in his study of Moche mythology, has also attempted this type of interpretation by arguing for the primacy of two anthropomorphic personages seen in the ceramic iconography. Other scholars compare Andean examples with those of more distant societies, such as tribal groups of the Amazon region or even further afield, as if there was a universal meaning to certain symbols (e.g., Lathrap 1977). I will not debate the validity of the cross cultural applicability of so-called universal symbols (e.g., see Grieder 1982) except to indicate that I am generally skeptical of this approach, which should more properly be discussed under the rubric of structuralism rather than mythology.

More recently, scholars with this structuralist orientation have attempted to interpret aspects of Nasca religion by using Inca mythology recorded by the early chroniclers. Maria Rostworowski (1993) identifies a late Nasca representation of an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with an ethnohistorically known coastal deity called Kón (see

Tello 1923: 97–98 for further discussion). She argues that Kón was the principal god of the Paracas and Nasca people in addition to their other *huaca*s and divinities. Another example is presented by P. A. Rossel Castro (1977: 39–41), who describes a myth centered on a sacred mountain in the Nasca Valley (Cerro Blanco) identified with Illakta, the Lord of Heights. Illakta's interactions with Tunga (the Lord of the Coast) and his wife are used to explain local cataclysms, topographic features, and fertility of the crops. This myth appears to have been derived from the Inca Huarochirí Manuscript, in which there is interaction between coastal and highland deities. In these cases, I question the validity of using Inca myths or ethnohistoric stories to interpret ancient Nasca beliefs.

Mythology has proved useful in my attempts to interpret some aspects of Nasca iconography, such as the meaning of certain animals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and sea creatures. Among the more helpful approaches in this regard are those by Gary Urton (1985), Harold Osborne (1968), John Bierhorst (1988), and Danièle Lavallée (1970), which deal with animal myths and symbolism in a variety of cultures. When used with caution, mythology can direct the scholar along the correct path toward an explanation that is plausible in Andean terms.

We will now turn to a description of the major motifs found on Nasca ceramics and a decipherment of the iconography.

Five » A Description and Interpretation of the Major Themes in Nasca Ceramic Iconography

Over the years I have devised a taxonomic classification of Nasca iconographic themes based on an identification of recurring motifs in the ceramic art. This has not always proven easy. Many Nasca motifs are the product of the combination of an infinite number of symbolic elements, which makes it difficult to identify any motif as "standard." Nevertheless, a broad outline of major themes can be identified by using a large enough sample. My classification begins with the identification of sacred themes and their major types such as the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB), the Horrible Bird (HB), and the Mythical Spotted Cat (SC), each denoted by an abbreviated code. These in turn are broken down into successive subtypes based on major variations of each theme. The Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, for example, has a number of major variations: AMB-1 is a common variety always painted with a human body wearing a cape or "signifer" and extending around the circumference of a vessel, while AMB-3 is a standing type, much more human in form, holding weapons and trophy heads in its hands. These major varieties can further be broken down into subtypes based on other commonly recurring attributes. In the case of AMB-1, we can make additional distinctions based on the terminator element on its signifer or cape. AMB-1-A has a feline head terminator; AMB-1-B ends in a killer whale tail; AMB-1-C has a bird terminator; and so on. I have identified approximately 40 major motifs in the ceramic iconography, which can be broken down into around 325 subvarieties.

The typology established to categorize the motifs in Nasca art is not etched in stone. Some motifs are unique or cannot be easily classified in my system; others may require reclassification in the future. This current effort is an attempt to present the motifs in a manner by which each can be easily identified through its individual characteristics and understood in the context of the Nasca culture. I do not attempt to present a detailed chronological seriation for each motif here, as seen, for example, in my earlier work on Phases 3 and 4 (Proulx 1968) or in Roark's (1965) study of Phase 5 and 6 motifs. While such a study is necessary and desirable, the present volume does not have space available for it; nor has all the research been completed to provide the required result. Chronological changes are noted in a few cases where a motif is of long duration in the sequence, but the major thrust here is to identify the main iconographic motifs and use them to attempt a reconstruction of certain aspects of Nasca society.

While it is tempting to categorize the themes in Nasca art as either "sacred" or "profane," I feel it is more accurate to include an intermediate group for those motifs that could fall into either category depending on their context.

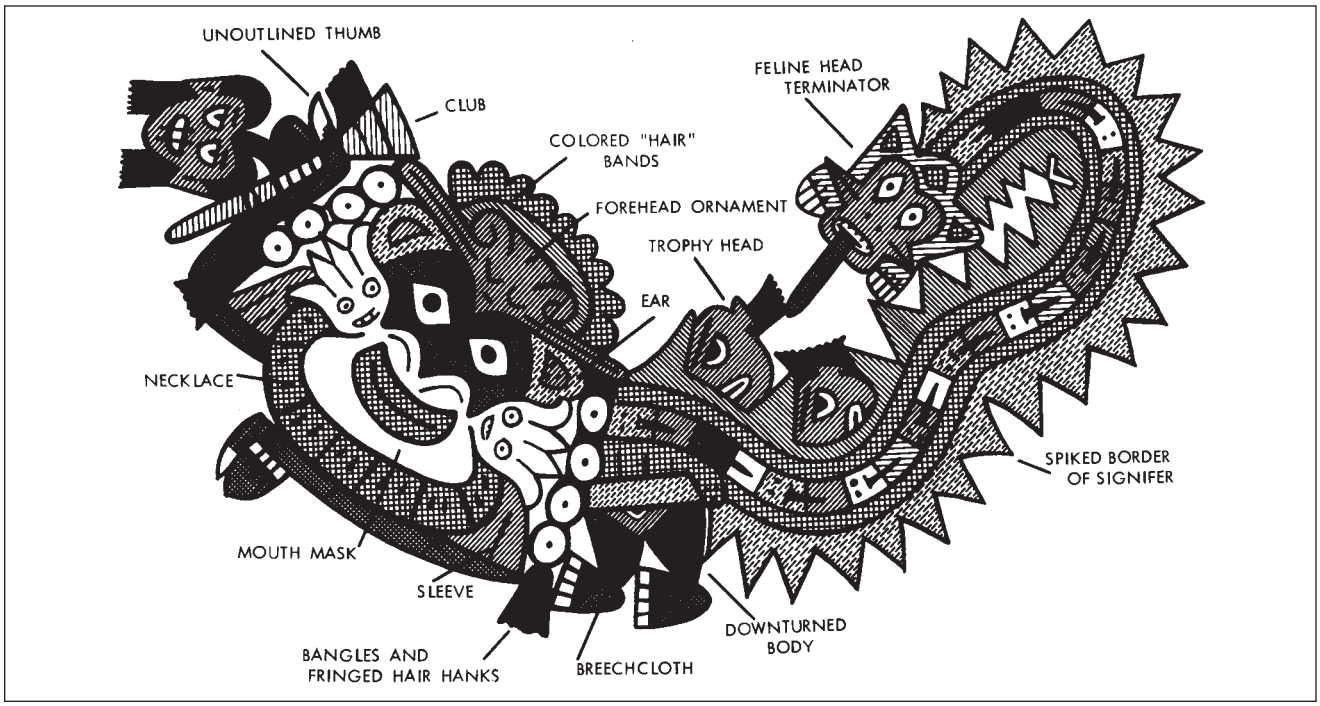


Fig. 5.1. Drawing of AMB-1-A with relevant parts labeled. After Proulx 1968: fig. 19.

Supernatural or Sacred Themes

AMB: Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings

The motif labeled the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB) is one of the most frequent sacred themes in Nasca art. Referred to in the past as the "cat-demon" or "masked god," this creature was thought to have its origins in the late Paracas culture. It is frequently seen embroidered on textiles of the so-called Paracas Necropolis Period (see Tello 1959 for numerous examples). As noted above, however, many of these "Paracas" textiles are now thought to date to and be culturally part of the early Nasca phases. This interpretation appears to be consistent with the archaeological evidence, for the earliest examples of this motif in the ceramic art are not found until Nasca Phase 2, suggesting a shift from the textile to the ceramic medium at that time. Variants of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being continue in the sequence through Phase 7, after which they break down into abbreviated geometric segments in the final two phases of the style.

The Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is identified by Townsend (1985: 131) as a masked human dressed in ritual regalia—a "ritual performer." The archaeological record supports this interpretation up to a certain point. Gold mouth masks and forehead ornaments, *Spondylus* shell necklaces, and animal-skin headdresses present without context in many museum collections were found in looted Paracas and Nasca tombs. This indicates that these ritual items may have been worn during ceremonies and certainly were an important part of the burial goods, reflecting the status and/or occupation of the deceased. Unlike the recent discoveries of Moche royal tombs at Sipán and San José de Moro, however, where the deceased were literally covered with ritual objects that are readily recognizable in the art (Alva 1988, 1990; Donnan 1988; Alva and Donnan 1993), no Nasca elite tomb has yet been discovered and scientifically excavated with a mummy adorned in full ritual regalia. Nor have graves of shamans been found containing bodies with such paraphernalia.

Anne Paul and Solveig Turpin (1986) argue along similar lines in their identification of this motif as an "ecstatic shaman" when found on embroidered Paracas Necropolis textiles from Phase 1. They go on to suggest that these religious practitioners used hallucinogenic drugs obtained from the San Pedro cactus to communicate with the spirit world (ibid.: 27). We have no direct archaeological evidence for the use of hallucinogens by the Nasca people, but it is highly probable in light of arguments made by Alana Cordy-Collins (1977) for its use in the Chavín culture, by Donnan (1978) for the Moche culture, and by Marlene Dobkin de Rios (1982) and Dobkin de Rios and Mercedes Cardenas (1980) for the

Nasca culture. Depictions of cacti on Nasca pottery, along with scenes of people drinking from small cups on the same vessels, also suggest hallucinogenic usage (fig. 1.6).

Other scholars, including Roark (1965) and myself (Proulx 1968, 1983), have viewed the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being as a "mythical creature" symbolizing powerful spirits thought to reside in nature, similar to the concept of *huaca* in later Inca religion. While I do not deny that shamans may have impersonated the AMB, it is my belief that the vast majority of the depictions on the pottery are not "costumed impersonators" but rather symbolic representations of the powerful natural forces that controlled the world of the Nasca. For example, many other motifs painted on Nasca ceramics cannot be considered human representations: Mythical Killer Whales, anthropomorphic birds eating trophy heads, and so forth. Many of the depictions of the AMB itself are endowed with a great variety of symbolic elements that cannot easily be explained as costume items or elements of ritual attire. Instead, the entire category of "mythical creatures," including the AMB, should be viewed as symbolic composite figures representing the essence of powerful natural forces. If we believe that hallucinogenic drugs were used, these figures might perhaps be seen as representing spirits seen under the influence of the drugs (see Harner 1972 for a contemporary example). Some of the earliest examples of the AMB have streamers flowing from the mouth, terminating in various animal or bird forms. It is hard to explain such elements in purely naturalistic terms. Similarly, later forms of the AMB are quite different from those of the earlier phases. If my interpretation of the continuity of the themes is correct, then something quite different from a masked dancer or shaman is being symbolized in the later phases.

At least fifteen subtypes of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being are found. Some represent contemporary variants of this theme, while others correspond to chronologically later forms that evolved from the earlier types. Each of these is described and illustrated, along with many varieties of these sixteen subtypes. Where possible, the evolutionary linkages between earlier and later varieties are shown.

AMB-1: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Extended Horizontal Body

This form of the AMB is the basic early type found primarily in Phases 2 through 5. The body is human in form and is drawn horizontally around the vessel regardless of its shape (fig. 5.1). The creature's body and legs may be either downturned (as in the case in most of the earliest examples) or extended horizontally. A striped orange tunic with a navel depicted as a human eye normally covers the upper body, while a simple breechcloth is found on the loins. A long flowing cloak, possibly modeled on an animal-skin cape, extends along and then beyond the creature's back (see Proulx 1968: pl. 31). This element is referred to as the "signifer" (after Roark 1965) because the elements contained within it and the form of its terminator appear to reflect the identity of the particular manifestation represented. The AMB wears a gold mouth mask with lateral whiskers representing feline attributes, a gold forehead ornament decorated with a face in the center, disk-shaped bangles in the hair on either side of the face, and a *Spondylus* shell necklace beneath the head. In its hands, which emerge from the sleeve of the tunic, the creature holds a club and a human trophy head. Trophy heads are often appended to the edges of the signifer between spikes which symbolize the fins of the killer whale. Ten subvarieties of AMB-1 are based on differences in the signifer.

AMB-1-A: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Feline Signifer

This variety is the most common subtype and is identified by its signifer, which terminates in a feline head and paws (fig. 5.2). The animal represented is most likely the pampas cat (*Felis colocolo*), a small feline found near the coastal agricultural fields. The edges of the signifer are scalloped or spiked, with human trophy heads the most frequent appendage. On later examples fruits or plants or trophy heads sprouting plants from their mouths are sometimes attached (pl. 1; fig. 5.104). The center band of the signifer may be decorated with a band of snakes or with circles or ovals linked on a "chain." The signifer exhibits much more experimentation in Phase 5 than in the earlier phases.

AMB-1-B: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Killer Whale Signifer

The characteristic feature of this variety is a signifer that terminates in a bifurcated killer whale's tail (fig. 5.3). All of the specimens of this type in the sample date to Phase 5, with a great deal of variation. As explained below, the killer whale is the most powerful creature of the sea and was highly respected by the Nasca people.

AMB-1-C: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with a Bird Signifer

This variety has a signifer that terminates in a bird, always a swift or *vencejo* (fig. 5.4). This bird is associated with water and hence fertility of the crops. Trophy heads are often appended to the edges of the signifer.

Fig. 5.2. AMB-1-A (feline terminator). After Roark 1965: fig. 39. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

Fig. 5.3. AMB-1-B (killer whale terminator). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 124.

Fig. 5.4. AMB-1-C (swift terminator). After Proulx 1968: fig. 21.

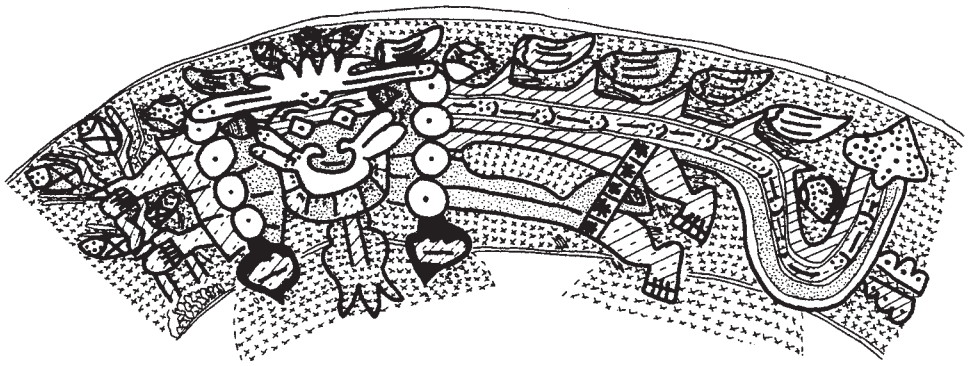


Fig. 5.5. AMB-1-D (lucuma fruit terminator). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 190.

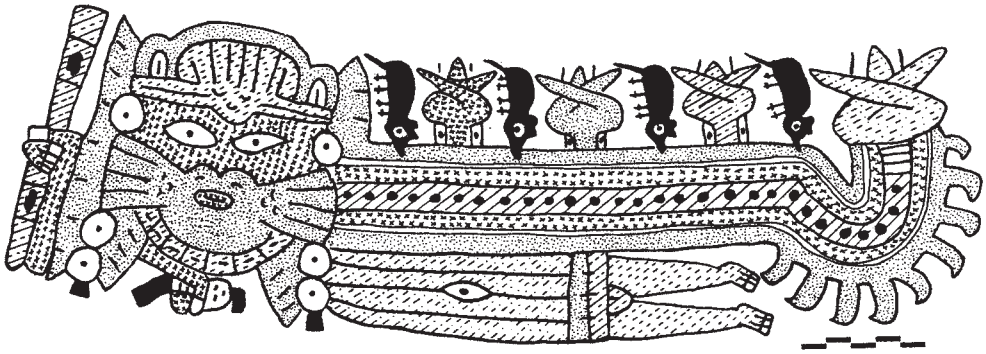


Fig. 5.6. AMB-1-D (corn terminator). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 191.

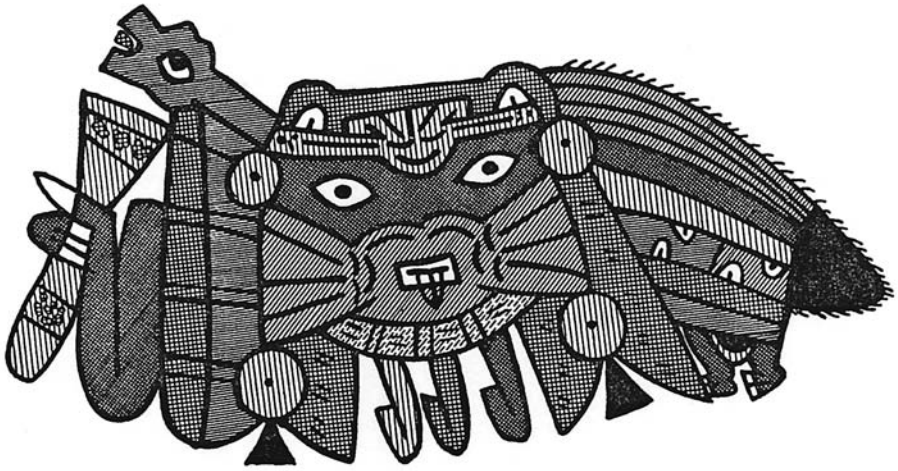


Fig. 5.7. AMB-1-E (fox terminator). After Roark 1965: fig. 41. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

AMB-1-D: Anthropormorphic Mythical Being with a Plant Signifer

This creature has a signifer that terminates in a plant. The Phase 3 specimens, of which there are only a few, have a lucuma fruit terminator (fig. 5.5). The Phase 5 specimens, which make up the bulk of the sample, all have corn tassels for a terminator as well as corn tassels along the border of the signifer, often accompanied by small mice, which were a major pest in the agricultural fields (fig. 5.6). The symbolism of this subtype is agricultural fertility.

AMB-1-E: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with an Animal Signifer

Animals are the terminators on the signifers of this variety of AMB. Foxes, identified by their distinctive tails, are the most frequent form (fig. 5.7). The fox is considered a trickster in some cultures, an evil omen in others. In the Andes the fox is connected to plant fertility and is seen as a bearer of grain and plants. Although lizards are technically reptiles, I have included them in the category of animal signifer terminators. Lizards are frequently depicted in the iconography and seem to symbolize water, since these creatures congregate in areas where water is present.

AMB-1-F: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with a Snake Signifer

The signifer on this variety of AMB ends in a snake's head (fig. 5.8). The form of the signifer itself is quite simple: a sinuous snake's body, often with a patterned center line. Snakes, like frogs, the pampas cat, foxes, and other creatures have strong connections with fertility and the agricultural fields. Snakes eat many of the pests in the fields, thus protecting the crops. Because they shed their skin, they are also a symbol of regeneration.

AMB-1-G: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with a Dart Signifer

This variety of the AMB has an elongated signifer, often enclosing or terminating in a trophy head (fig. 5.9). The distinguishing feature is the presence of spears (or "darts"

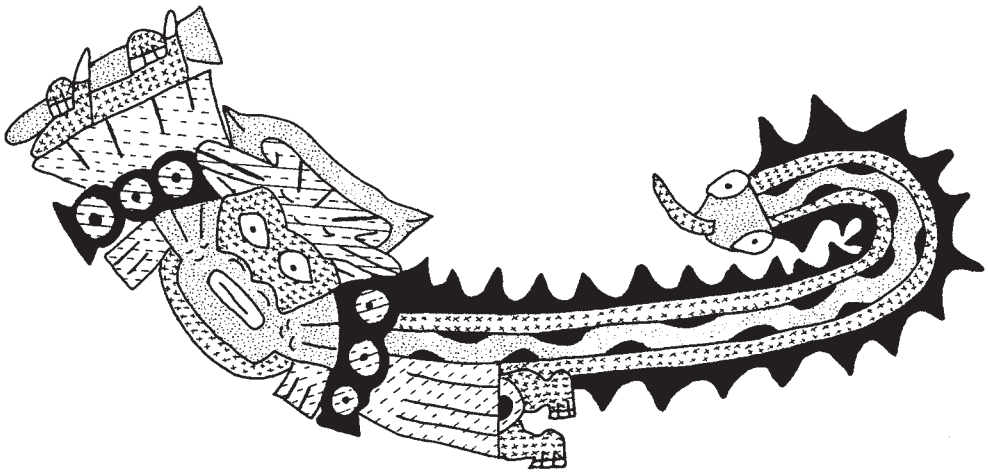


Fig. 5.8. AMB-1-F (snake terminator). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 138.

Fig. 5.9. AMB-1-G (trophy head terminator). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 170.

Fig. 5.10. AMB-1-H (crustacean terminator). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 341.

Fig. 5.11. AMB-1-I (pollywog terminator). After Seler 1923: fig. 56.

Fig. 5.12. AMB-2 (bird manifestation). After Seler 1923: fig. 85.

as they are often called) along the borders of the signifer. When the signifer terminates in a trophy head, spears emanate from the base of the head, and the extended tongue of the trophy head is drawn to resemble a spear. Spears are often found on other parts of the AMB: for example, under the creature's neck (like a necklace). All of the specimens in my sample date to Phase 5, making this motif an important time marker and also reflecting the increase of militarism seen at this time.

Several variations exist in the depiction of this creature. Included in this category are all examples of dart attachments with the traditional Anthropomorphic Mythical Being head, including its distinctive forehead ornament, mouth mask that covers both nose and mouth, and multicolored necklace. Specimens are found with either vertical and horizontal heads, but these have not been used to subdivide them. A great amount of variation also exists in the manner of depicting the body and the signifer. In some examples darts emanate directly from the back of the head, while in others the complete body is shown, with darts attached to the traditional signifer.

AMB-1-H: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with a Fish or Crustacean Signifer

This variety of the AMB corresponds to those with signifers in the form of a fish or crustacean (lobster or crab: fig. 5.10). In the case of crustaceans, the segments of the shell are clearly depicted, along with three lobes at the end. Fish representations are more varied but differ from depictions of the Killer Whale signifer described above in that they represent common varieties of fish rather than the large sea mammal. The varieties under this category date from Phase 3 through Phase 5.

AMB-1-I: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with a Pollywog Signifer

Signifers on this variety of AMB are oval, with a long, curled tail, almost resembling that of a monkey. I have identified it as representing the pollywog, which is shown in a more naturalistic form on pottery from the same period (fig. 5.11). Pollywogs are associated with water and fertility, both major concerns for the irrigation farmers of the south coast. The hollow interior space of the signifer contains a wide variety of secondary motifs, usually plants but also fish, mice, and other creatures. Most examples of this variety date to Phase 5.

AMB-1-J: Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings with Miscellaneous Signifers

This category is used to record unique or otherwise unclassifiable forms of signifers that do not fit neatly into any of the other categories.

AMB-2: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being in the Manifestation of a Bird with Downturned Body

A second major type of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is depicted in the manifestation of a bird (fig. 5.12). The earliest examples dating from Phase 2 clearly show the combination of a human body with the wings and tail of a bird — very likely a falcon, judging from the markings on these early specimens. The human body (with its masked face, downturned body with tunic and breechcloth, and hands grasping weapons and trophy heads) is almost identical in form to the AMB-1, except that in place of the signifer with its distinctive terminator and peripheral markings are an actual wing panel and the tail of a bird. Trophy heads are almost always present within the wing panel, as they are on later representations of the Horrible Bird. The majority of my sample dates to Phase 5, by which time the tail of the bird has for the most part disappeared, leaving only the feathers and enclosed trophy heads as symbolic of this type.

Anthropomorphic birds are a common theme in Nasca art (as seen in some of the succeeding motifs). The most

Fig. 5.13. AMB-3 (standing type). After Seler 1923: fig. 27a.

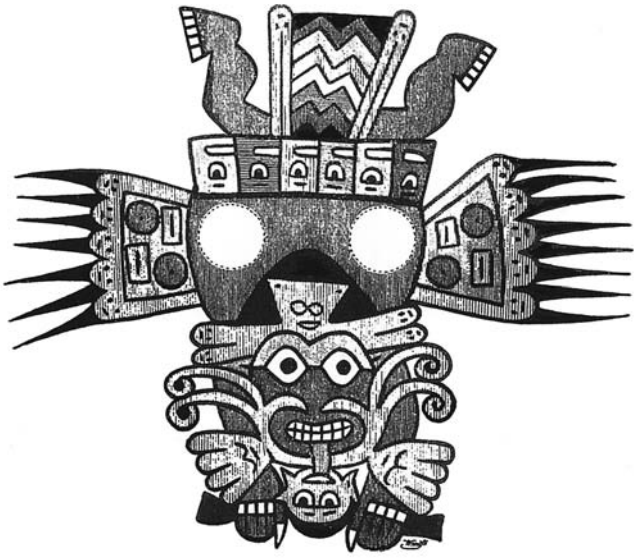


Fig. 5.14. AMB-4 (Trophy Head Taster). After Seler 1923: fig. 73.

powerful birds of the skies are portrayed, especially raptorial birds such as the condor (*Vultur gryphus*) and the falcon (*Falco femoralis*). Respected for their power as the dominant predators of the air and a manifestation of the mountain gods, raptors also have connections with fertility: they protect the crops by preying on some of the animal pests and have contact with the sky and mountains, from which water originates.

AMB-3: Standing Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

The next major type of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is an upright standing figure, whose body is usually draped over the top and sides of a double spout bottle. It has distinctive snakelike hair streaming from the top of its head. This standing AMB may have a head that is vertical (i.e., in its natural position in regard to the rest of the body) or turned horizontally for visual effect. It has all the characteristics of other Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, such as the mouth mask, forehead ornament, *Spondylus* shell necklace, and arms holding weapons and trophy heads (fig. 5.13). A cloak or signifer with varying terminators is often attached. In many cases the striped orange tunic is flanked by two snake streamers, which curve away from the body when they reach the bottom edge of the garment. The bottom of the tunic is always decorated with trophy heads, plants, or other symbols. This type is found in the sequence from Phase 2 into Phase 5, with the largest number dating to Phase 3. Most are drawn on double spout bottles, but a few are on exterior painted bowls, and the few Phase 5 examples are on the interior of bowls. Of all the representations of the AMB in the corpus, this variety is the best candidate for representing a "ritual performer" or a costumed shaman.

AMB-4: Trophy Head Taster

Known as the Trophy Head Taster, this type of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is in the form of a masked human figure with avian characteristics, including outstretched bird wings and a falcon's tail (fig. 5.14). Its most distinguishing characteristic is the trophy head grasped in its two hands, with the tongue of the creature extended to touch the head (pl. 2). Because of its orientation, the *Spondylus* shell necklace usually seen on AMBs is seldom present, but most of the other features of an AMB are represented: mouth mask, forehead ornament, bangles in the hair. An equally large number of specimens have a different form of head, however, more feline than human in nature, with protruding ears on either side and a rounded crest above. This variety has no forehead ornament or hair bangles. The same type of head is seen on Serpentine Creatures.

This form of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is usually depicted on a double spout bottle with the motif painted over the top of the vessel, the creature's head and arms on one side, and the legs and tail on the other (pl. 2). Trophy heads are always present, first grasped in the hands of the creature and then in the wing panels, along the fringe of the tunic, or forming the breechcloth. This type of AMB is first

Fig. 5.15. AMB-5 (streamers from mouth). After Tello 1959: fig. 98.

found in Phase 2, reaches its peak of popularity in Phase 3, and lasts into Phase 5, after which it disappears from the repertoire.

AMB-5: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Extended Tongue or Tongue Streamers

This category of AMB has a number of varieties, all characterized by creatures with tonguelike streamers flowing from their mouths (fig. 5.15). Some have a single streamer emerging from the mouth, similar in form to the Serpentine Creature — a long snakelike body with scalloped edges, terminating in a feline head and paws. Others have dual streamers. These terminate in a variety of creatures, some of which are described below. In a number of cases, a single primary streamer leads to a large head from which dual secondary streamers emerge, forming what appears to be a hierarchical sequence (pl. 12). Zuidema (1972) has attempted to use Inca ethnohistory to interpret this type. He gives several examples of a hierarchical triad in Inca society: on the cosmological plane, they represent Viracocha the Creator god, the Sun god, and Venus or Thunder as a single deity. Zuidema goes on to argue that a similar hierarchy can be inferred from the multiple streamers emanating from the mouth of the central figure in Nasca art. His analogy continues in great detail, describing what he feels is the meaning of many of the Nasca symbols. In the methodology section above I have urged caution in using ethnographic analogy in comparing two cultures separated by long spans of time, for "conceptual disjunction" is a very real possibility.

The interpretation of the exact meaning of the complex iconography represented by the streamers flowing from the mouths of this form of AMB can be approached through ethnographic analogy, but using a more generalized comparative approach rather than the very specific structuralist analogies of Zuidema. For example, many of the AMB-5 specimens have a single tongue in the form of a serpent with the head of a feline or a snake. The replacements of body parts by nonhuman creatures such as animals, birds, and reptiles have been called "kennings" (Rowe 1962d). Nasca iconography includes many instances where the use of combined animal forms or the substitution of other symbols for natural body parts conveys a message understood only by the members of this society who were familiar with what the substitutions really represented.

An examination of the *total* iconography associated with these creatures suggests first that much of the symbolism involves agricultural fertility. Some of the tongues are metaphors for water or streams, even containing creatures such as pollywogs in suspension. Other tongues expand to form panels in which groups of farmers are depicted, often drinking a ceremonial brew. Many of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings with these extended tongues also have appended to their bodies trophy heads from whose mouths emerge sprouting plants. All of these symbols point to agricultural fertility exemplified by water, farmers, and plants.

This type (AMB-5) is found from Phase 1, where they appear mainly on large ceramic drums, through Phase 5 (see pls. 11, 12). Various types of AMBs with extended tongues occur in Phases 6 and 7, but they conform to other rules and therefore are categorized as separate types in my classification.

AMB-6: Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings

This category of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings consists of a wide range of subtypes, all sharing a number of

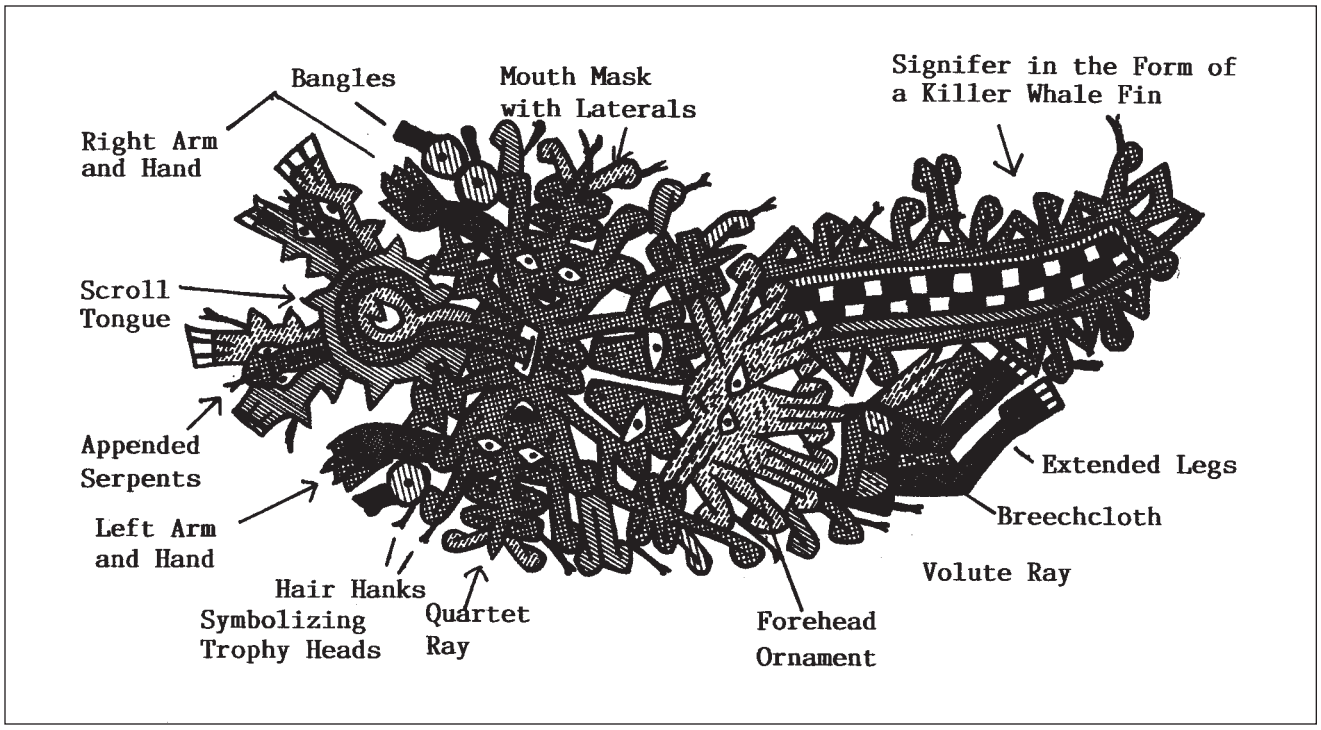


Fig. 5.16. Labeled Proliferous AMB-6 from Phase 6a, showing component parts. Compare with fig. 5.1. After Roark 1965. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

common traits. Virtually all AMB-6 specimens date to Phase 6 of the ceramic style, a period that witnessed the height of Proliferous elements in the art. It has been noted elsewhere that the use of Proliferous elements such as volute rays, scrolls, jagged rays, and quartet rays began during Phase 5, when innovation within the art style was very active. By Phase 6 the majority of the motifs seen on the pottery had been affected by the new trends.

The Anthropomorphic Mythical Being remained the dominant form of mythical creature in Phase 6, but it underwent many changes during this phase, along with a major expansion in subvarieties. Each of these is described in turn, but let us examine the general features of those motifs classified as AMB-6 (fig. 5.16). All specimens in this category retain the human body seen on earlier (Monumental) forms of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. A human torso, waist with breechcloth, and legs with feet are always found on AMB-6 specimens. The creature's head, however, undergoes major changes, and each subtype is defined partly on these differences. In general, the head becomes disproportionately large compared to the remainder of the body and becomes the focus of attention (pl. 5). The orientation of the head shifts from vertical to horizontal, and the forehead ornament is enlarged to resemble the "Rayed Faces" that first appear in Phase 5. If arms are present, they are placed on the sides of the mouth mask and extend directly forward in front of the head. These hands are often empty but in some cases hold Proliferous elements, which I interpret as trophy heads or weapons, not unlike their more naturalistic counterparts seen in the earlier phases. The fingers often have red nails. With few exceptions, the entire figure of the Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is drawn with the head to the viewer's left and its body stretching around the vessel to the viewer's right.

Using Steven Wegner's Nasca 6 seriation, I sketch a broad outline here of the main features of the Phase 6 Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings and the major changes that occur in this phase. Wegner found that the treatment of the signifer and the breechcloth were particularly important for making chronological distinctions and used these traits (among others) to divide Phase 6 into three subphases: 6a, 6b, and 6c. The earliest AMB-6 creatures (dating to Phase 6a) are characterized by the presence of full signifers, most frequently in the form of the Mythical Killer Whale, a three-colored serpent, or a wing — attached to the top side of the forehead ornament (fig. 5.16; pl. 5). The breechcloth on these figures characteristically has three D-shaped trophy heads with dot eyes and mouths (Wegner 1976a: 9).

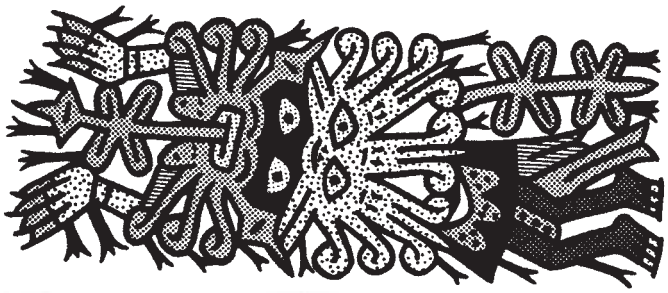


Fig. 5.17. AMB-6 from Phase 6b. After Sawyer 1975: fig. 143a. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

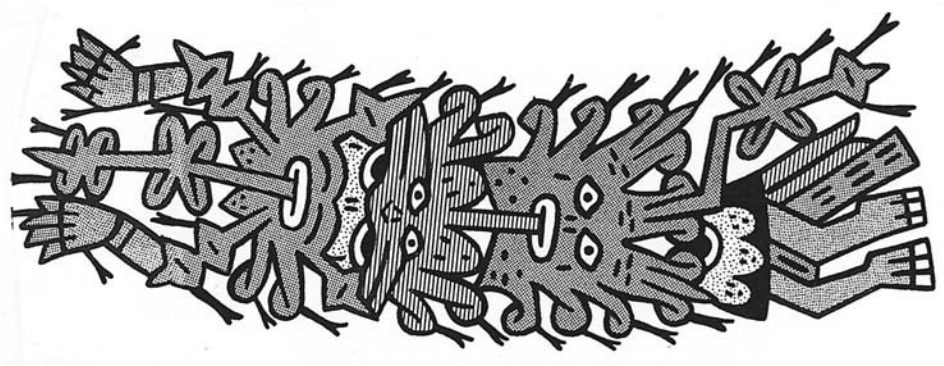


Fig. 5.18. AMB-6 from Phase 6c. After Sawyer 1966: fig. 214. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

A change from fully depicted signifers to ray bar signifers marks the 6a/6b boundary (Wegner 1976a: 8). Specifically, the naturalistic signifer is replaced by a narrow bar with a quartet ray and/or jagged ray elements on it (fig. 5.17). It is attached in a variety of positions, either to one of the triple composite rays of the forehead ornament or to the top of the rear-most chained Rayed Face element, if one is present (ibid.: 8). "The chaining of Rayed Faces between the forehead ornament and the breechcloth and signifer is most specific to this subphase" (ibid.: 9). The trophy heads on the breechcloths are similar to those of Phase 6a, with some minor variations.

Finally, the change to a ray bar signifer attached directly to the horizontal bar of the forehead ornament of the AMB-6 creature marks the 6b/6c boundary (Wegner 1976a: 8; fig. 5.18). "The proximal segment of the ray bar is horizontal and carries at least one quartet ray or jagged ray element. Then, there is a sharp turn to a short, unornamented vertical segment, and then another sharp turn backward to the distal segment, which is variously ornamented" (ibid.: 10). The central triple composite ray disappears from the forehead ornament to make way for the ray bar signifer. This in turn leads to the disappearance of all the chained Rayed Faces between the forehead ornament and the signifer, a modification which shortens the length of most of these Mythical Beings (ibid.: 10). The trophy heads on the breechcloth become elongated and are uniformly yellow and merged together (ibid.: 10).

My classification of Type 6 Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings follows Wegner's subdivision of Phase 6, using the type of signifer or signifer bar to reflect the taxonomy for each type of creature.

AMB-6-A: The Spectacled Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

The first subtype of full-bodied Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings is distinguished by a peculiar form of mouth mask with lateral elements that curve up, encircling the eyes much like spectacles (fig. 5.19). Sometimes these spectacles are adorned with dots. Visual emphasis is on the large mouth mask, which often occupies one-third to one-half of the total space of this creature. Proliferous elements in the form of quartet rays, hair hanks, and volute rays are essential parts of the mouth mask and associated parts of the creature's head. Above the mouth mask, in its anatomically correct position, is the forehead ornament, similarly proliferated and containing the standard mouth, nose, and eyes of a human face.

One of the most variable elements of this motif is the tongue, which emanates from the oral opening in the mouth mask. In some cases the tongue is in the form of a single or a bifurcated snake, often with paws. In other instances it is proliferated into the shape of a quartet ray, while on still other specimens the tongue projects into a proliferated human trophy head. This last form has similarities to the earlier Trophy Head Taster (AMB-4). Hair hanks and

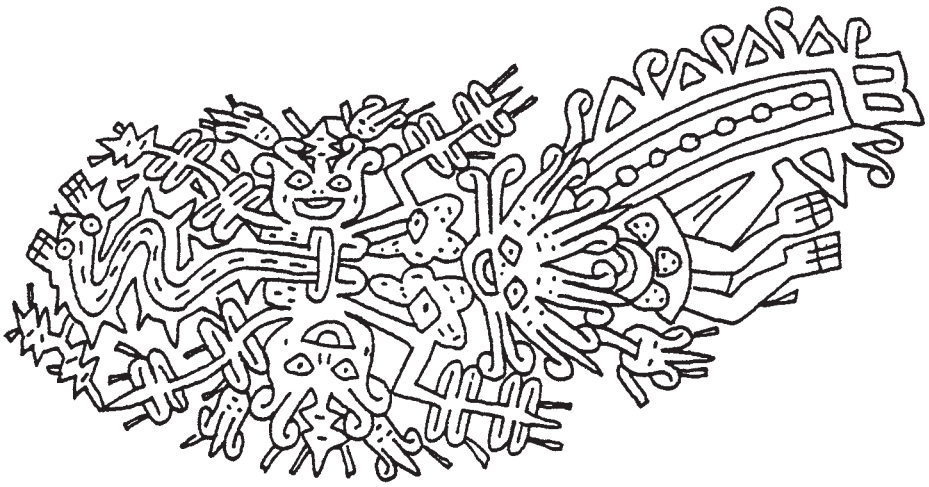


Fig. 5.19. AMB-6-A (spectacled AMB). After Allen 1981: fig. 8.

bangles are attached to the sides of the mouth mask, at which point two arms and hands also can be seen. These appendages are stubby and disproportionate; the fingers are frequently colored red on the tips, suggesting that they have been dipped in blood or stained by taking part in a decapitation ritual.

As if considered an afterthought, the creature's human torso and legs project from the top of the forehead ornament, continuing the horizontal imagery characteristic of this depiction. Trophy heads encircle the belt, and the long ties of the creature's breechcloth stretch parallel to its legs. Often these breechcloth ties consist of two parts: the first a rectangular piece often decorated with dashes, the second a bifurcated element, slightly shorter and of a different color.

The treatment of the signifer and the body can be used to subdivide AMB-6-A into three further subtypes:

AMB-6-A-1: Spectacled Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Full Signifer

This subtype has a full signifer, a conservative feature that links this Proliferous form back to its more naturalistic ancestors in Phase 5. The vast majority of these signifers symbolize the Mythical Killer Whale, with its bifurcated tail and multiple triangular fins along the border. A checkerboard or dots are often used as filler for the central part of the signifer (fig. 5.16). According to Wegner's classification, this subtype dates to Phase 6a.

AMB-6-A-2: Spectacled Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Bar Ray

In this variety, the naturalistic signifer has been replaced by a bar ray: a long flowing streamer with quartet rays terminating in a point (pl. 5). Often hair hanks are appended to the rays. The streamer itself can be attached to the head in a number of positions, usually to the topmost lateral of the creature's forehead ornament.

AMB-6-A-3: Spectacled Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Forehead Bar Ray

The signifer bar on this variety is attached directly to the center of the forehead ornament, replacing the triple composite ray that was formerly located in this position (Wegner 1976a: 9).

AMB-6-B: Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Dark Eye Area

This variety of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is very similar to AMB-6-A except for the following features. The eyes of the mouth mask on this type are not encircled with "spectacles." Instead, they are surrounded by a mask-like area painted black or gray (fig. 5.20). In addition, this type tends to have a "chain" of linked masks or heads between the creature's head and its body, thus extending the total length of the motif. Three subtypes can be defined.

AMB-6-B-1: Dark-Eyed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Full Signifer

This subtype retains a signifer, which, as in AMB-6-A-1, is often in the form of a fish or Mythical Killer Whale tail (fig. 5.20).

AMB-6-B-2: Dark-Eyed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Bar Ray

This subtype has a bar ray rather than a signifer (fig. 5.17).

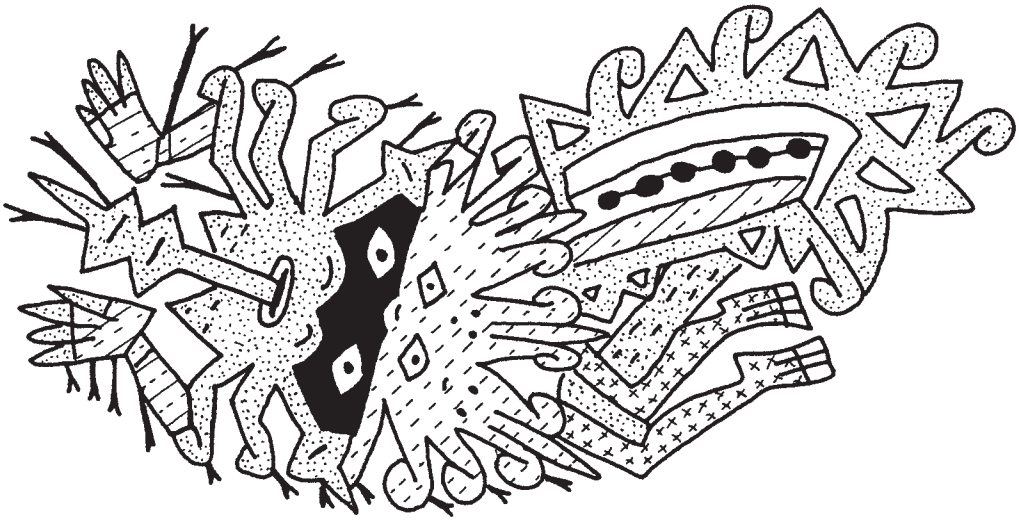


Fig. 5.20. AMB-6-B (AMB with dark eye area). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 225.

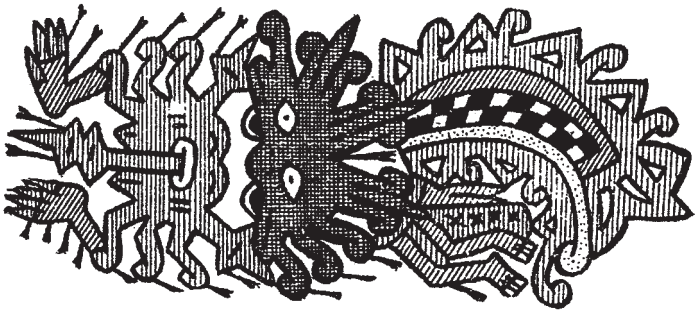


Fig. 5.21. AMB-6-C (AMB with yellow eye area). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 13c.

AMB-6-B-3: Dark-Eyed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Head and No Body

This subtype consists of the head of a Dark-Eyed AMB with no attached body. A tongue, often in the form of a quartet ray, extends from its mouth, and arms are usually depicted on either side of the tongue. They are frequently decorated with hair hanks, representing trophy heads. The top of the creature's head may be in the form of a trident of volutes or may have one or more chained heads attached.

AMB-6-C: Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Yellow Eye Area

This variety of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is very similar to AMB-6-B except that the area surrounding the eyes is yellow instead of black (fig. 5.21). It is unclear what significance this color differentiation may have. Three subtypes can be distinguished.

AMB-6-C-1: Yellow-Eyed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Full Signifer

This variety has a full signifer (fig. 5.21).

AMB-6-C-2: Yellow-Eyed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Lateral Bar Ray

This variety has a bar ray attached to the lateral side of the forehead ornament.

AMB-6-C-3: Yellow-Eyed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Central Bar Ray

This variety has a bar ray attached to the center of the forehead ornament.

AMB-6-D: Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Chained Rayed Heads

This Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, confined to Phase 6, has a full torso similar to those of AMB-6-A-1, AMB-6-B-1, and AMB-6-C-1. Its primary head, however, is separated from the torso by a series of chained Rayed Heads (fig. 5.22) linked to one another by protruding tongues. These heads seem to be a proliferation of the creature's forehead ornament. They often alternate in color.

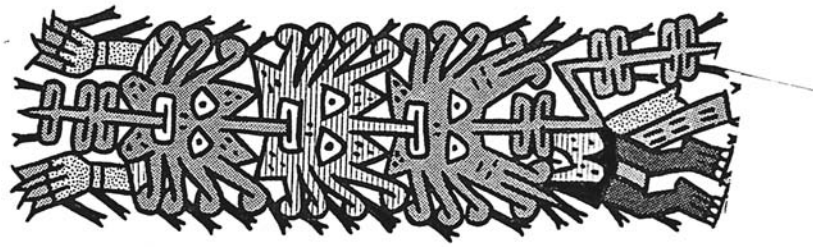


Fig. 5.22. AMB-6-D (chained Rayed Heads). After Sawyer 1975: fig. 144. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

Fig. 5.23. AMB-6-E (cat-faced AMB). After Seler 1923: fig. 225 (redrawn in Eisleb 1977).

Fig. 5.24. AMB-6-F (multiple-rayed Proliferous AMB). After Putnam 1914: fig. 12.

AMB-6-E: Cat-Faced Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

A new variety of Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Being makes its appearance in Phase 6c, becoming the most popular type, with over ninety specimens in the sample. The depiction of this creature is amazingly consistent, and it disappears almost as suddenly as it begins. The Cat-Faced Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is characterized by its single-colored head with pendant eyes, single-pointed tongue, and triangular whisker/fur tufts on the sides of the head (fig. 5.23). The usual color of the head is yellow, although a few gray and red examples are known. Two paws with distinctively small thumbs extend outward from the bottom of the head. Black hair hanks, symbolic of trophy heads, are appended to the head and arms. Above the head is an orange or red forehead ornament, equal in size or larger than the head itself, often with a pair of large open eyes in addition to the smaller dot face in the center of the ornament. The forehead ornament has a tripartite crest.

Extending backward from the center of the forehead ornament is a signifer bar angled like a reverse "Z," containing quartet rays and hair hank symbols. Also attached to the back of the forehead ornament is the creature's breechcloth with mono-colored trophy heads, below which extend the legs and breechcloth flaps seen on other AMB-6 types. In a handful of cases chained heads link the forehead ornament with the creature's waist.

The origins of this new form are unclear, as are the reasons for its short duration in the sequence. Its immense popularity for the period of a generation or two is notable.

AMB-6-F: Proliferous Trophy Head Taster with Multiple Rays

This rare and unusual form of a Phase 6 Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is characterized by a horizontal gray face attached directly to its legs (the torso is missing). A protruding tongue extends into a trophy head, much like the Trophy Head Taster (AMB-4) of earlier phases. Extensive fluted rays surround the body (fig. 5.24). This creature may represent a Proliferous revival of the Trophy Head Taster.

Fig. 5.25. (*left*) AMB-7 (generalized image). After Lothrop and Mahler 1957: fig. 3.

Fig. 5.26. (*right*) AMB-7-A (spectacled fan-headed AMB). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

AMB-7: Fan-Headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

Phase 7 of the Nasca ceramic style witnessed further changes to the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, the major form of which is classified as AMB-7. Almost the entire emphasis is placed on the depiction of the creature's head, which is surmounted by a large hemispherical fan-shaped element, painted black, with radiating elements along its periphery (fig. 5.25). This "fan" is derived from the forehead ornament of earlier AMB types, but gone are the lateral projections and the dot face at its center. The middle of the fan displays an oval or irregular space of several types. A plantlike design, perhaps a cactus, is seen on some examples (figs. 5.26 to 5.28). Dual eyes attached to the side walls (wall eyes) are seen on others, perhaps representing a snake or a trophy head.

Below the fan are the eyes of the AMB. Depending on type (see below), these eyes are spectacled, painted on a dark background, or painted on a yellow field. The pupils are pendant from their upper rims. Immediately below the creature's eyes is its mouth mask, which has changed only slightly from those of earlier phases. A tongue (sometimes trident in shape, sometimes singular with quartet rays) emerges from its mouth. Tabular sleeves are found to each side of the tongue, with naturalistic hands projecting from only a minority of these.

The body (waist and legs) has disappeared entirely from a majority of the fan-headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being examples, but in a few cases they include a rectangular waist area with short stubby legs splayed out from it (fig. 5.27). A short tail-like element (a penis?) is often located between the legs. The depiction of this form of AMB varies greatly, indicating a high degree of experimentation and change taking place within Phase 7. All forms of this creature, however, share the presence of the fan-shaped element above the head, which is the hallmark of this type.

AMB-7-A: Spectacled Fan-Headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

This subtype is distinguished by the encirclement of the creature's eyes either by hook-shaped "spectacles" or by other colored elements enclosed in individual borders, thus emphasizing the eyes (fig. 5.26). The other features correspond to the description of AMB-7.

AMB-7-B: Dark-Eyed Fan-Headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

This variety, like its antecedent AMB-6-B, is distinguished by a black or gray background surrounding its eyes (fig. 5.27).

AMB-7-C: Yellow-Eyed Fan-Headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

This type has a yellow background around the eyes (fig. 5.28). It seems to have developed out of AMB-6-C.

AMB-8: Trophy-Headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

Another new category of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being makes it appearance in Phase 6. It exhibits all the character-

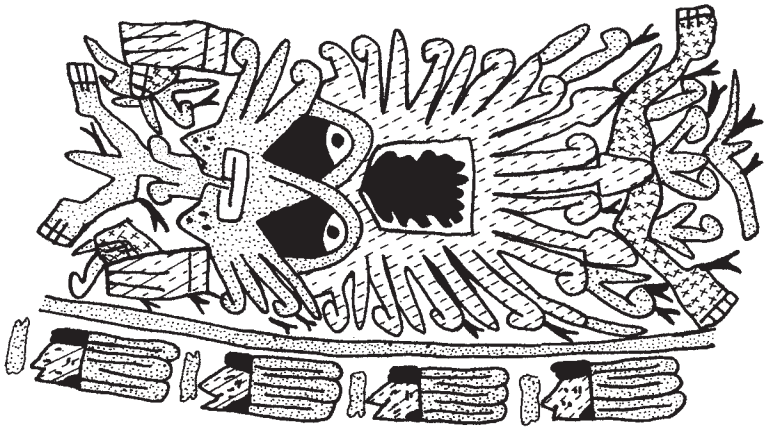


Fig. 5.27. AMB-7-B (dark-eyed fan-headed AMB). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 40.

Fig. 5.28. AMB-7-C (yellow-eyed fan-headed AMB). After Della Santa 1962: fig. 71.

Fig. 5.29. AMB-8 (trophy-headed AMB). After Seler 1923: fig. 250.

istics of AMB-6 (large forehead ornament, signifer or signifer bar, breechcloth with trophy heads, breechcloth ties, and extended legs), but with one major difference: its head is in the form of a human trophy head (fig. 5.29). Trophy heads (discussed in detail below) are portrayed in a variety of ways, especially during Phase 6, when the majority of the AMB-8 motifs were painted. All have "pendant eyes" (pupils attached to the upper edge of the socket)—a trait which Patrick Carmichael (1994a) associates with corpses. Many of the AMB-8 trophy heads have a thick tongue protruding from the mouth, with symbols for blood painted nearby. Many of these heads are also decorated with a zigzag red stripe running across the cheek and down the nose. This is a common marking found on enemy warriors in the art. It reinforces the concept that the heads of these decapitated enemy soldiers have taken on the aspects of a mythical being. It was a common practice for the Nasca people to take powerful objects like the killer whale, jaguar, condor, or trophy heads and combine these elements to form mythical creatures that also had anthropomorphic attributes. Thus these trophy heads took on sacred characteristics not evident in the more naturalistic depictions of them in the art.

Judging from the type of bar ray signifer found on this

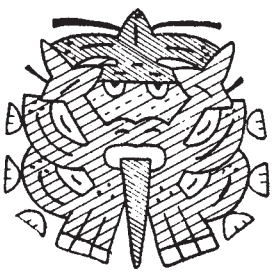


Fig. 5.30. (*left*) AMB-9 (AMB with Harvester attributes). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 6e.

Fig. 5.31. (*right*) AMB-10 (bodiless AMB). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 6b.

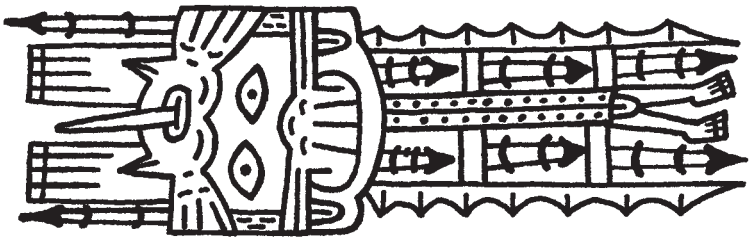


Fig. 5.32. AMB-11 (dart-bodied AMB). After Seler 1923: fig. 93 (redrawn in Eisleb 1977: 47).

motif, the majority of the specimens date to Phase 6c or early Phase 7. Fifty-eight specimens are found in the sample, making this one of the most popular sacred motifs during Phase 6 after the Cat-Faced Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB-6-E). One puzzling aspect related to the precise dating of this motif is the great variety in the form of the trophy heads as compared to the rather standardized form of the bar ray signifer. Trophy heads range from very naturalistic to very abstract, some with tongues, others without. A finer seriation of this motif will probably be possible with additional research.

A very few bodiless examples of AMB-8 are known, but they appear to be aberrations rather than a distinct type, as once thought. Usually they reflect an individual artist's inability to squeeze the entire motif into the space available, and thus it has been abbreviated in a few instances. A distinct fan-headed variety of AMB-8 does not appear in Phase 7, as was the case with AMB-6.

AMB-9: Masked Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Harvester Attributes

This rare version of the AMB (only two examples) appears to be a merger of the Harvester with an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. In one example the standard face of an AMB is surmounted with a Harvester's conical cap (fig. 5.30). The other example is a standing AMB (AMB-3), who is holding plants in the manner of a Harvester.

AMB-10: Bodiless Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

This category incorporates a range of depictions of an early (more naturalistic) Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, where only the head and attendant parts are present (fig. 5.31). These would appear to be abbreviated versions of the more standard AMB but lacking the torso, breechcloth, legs, and signifer. Early examples display a head with the usual forehead ornament, mouth mask, and necklace. Some examples have sleeves, from which an arm emerges to clutch a club and/or trophy head. These early examples often have streamers in the form of snakes flowing from the back of the head, replacing the signifer and body of the creature.

Later examples lose the streamers but often are anatomically incorrect. Several examples have an arm and hand emerging from sleeves on each side of the head and a third arm located below the chin. Others, which are crudely drawn and may reflect the work of children, have extra eyes. In most respects, however, these depictions seem to be only condensed versions of the more common form of AMB. All of the specimens date between Phase 2 and Phase 6, with the largest number (eighteen) being found in Phase 5.

AMB-11: Dart-Bodied Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

A new and quite distinct form of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being appears in Phase 5, probably as a result of the Bizarre Innovation and experimentation that was occurring during that phase (fig. 5.32). This new form evolves directly

Fig. 5.33. (*above*) AMB-12 (step-masked AMB). After Seler 1923: fig. 35.

Fig. 5.34. (*right*) AMB-13 (effigy AMB). After Tello 1959: fig. 85.

out of AMB-1-G, a traditional AMB with a signifer lined with spears or "darts." While coexisting with these more traditional or conservative forms during Phase 5, the AMB-11 reflects some rather revolutionary changes in the manner of depicting this militant spear-studded creature.

The focus of the changes is the head, which retains the customary forehead ornament and ears; but the mouth mask is greatly modified into a semicircular or oval form that covers only the nose of the creature, not its mouth, as is the case with traditional mouth masks. Below the mask we most frequently find a much smaller semicircular lower face with a tongue in the form of a spear protruding from the mouth. Other spears or "darts" are attached to the lower border of the face (Seler 1923: figs. 95, 96). Parallel to this and stretching forward from either side of the face are two arms with hands clutching spears (pointing backward). The thumbs are conspicuous by their large size relative to the rest of the hand, and in most cases the hands appear to have the palms facing upward, with fingers clenched over them. Multiple spears and trophy heads are located at the rear of the head, where a body may or may not be present. More conservative varieties of this type retain the head and other attributes of earlier AMBs (Seler 1923: fig. 93).

AMB-12: Step-Masked Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

Although few in number, examples of the step-masked Anthropomorphic Mythical Being are remarkably consistent in the manner of depiction, despite the complexity of its iconography. The creature is easily distinguished by its facial markings: the lower face is painted/masked with a distinctive stepped design not unlike the profile of a stepped pyramid (fig. 5.33). From the mouth protrudes a tongue in the form of plants, as if they were sprouting from this orifice. Above the head is a traditional forehead ornament, from which dangle snakes which frame the face. Another plant is often portrayed in the space above the forehead ornament. The creature's right hand often holds a weapon, the lower portion of which is kenned as a serpentine creature. Small Harvester caricatures are often located around the creature's head.

The body of AMB-12 includes a signifer, which has representations of *vencejos* or swifts (often associated with water) along its border. Fish are often portrayed in the central band of the signifer, as if swimming in a river. Pollywogs, another symbol of water and fertility, are also present on many of the specimens, and in several cases the body itself has the configuration of a large pollywog. All nine specimens found in the sample date to Phase 5 and seem to be restricted to that period.

The step-masked Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is clearly related to agricultural fertility and to water. Its closest similarities are to figures represented on Paracas and early Nasca embroidered textiles, where similar step-masked figures are present (e.g., Tello 1959: pls. 62, 71B, 74B). Perhaps this distinctive type of facial decoration was used specifically in agricultural rituals. AMB-12 also has similarities to the representations of Phase 5 trophy heads, which have plants sprouting from their mouths (as in fig. 5.33), although in this case we have little evidence for the bloody side of the fertility

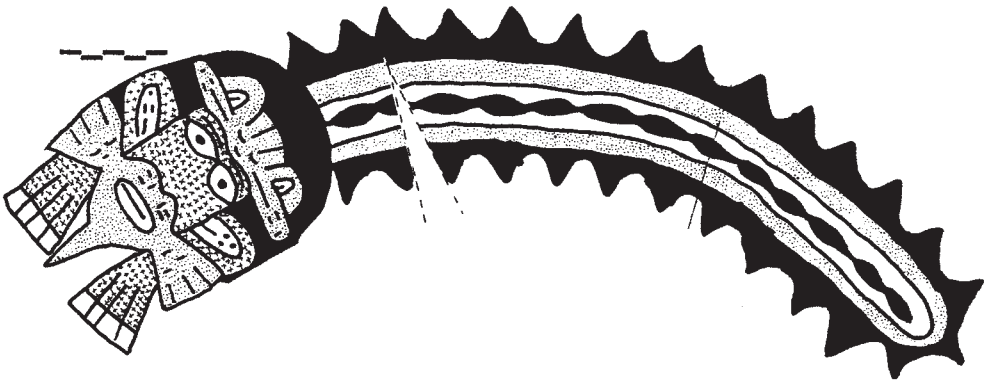


Fig. 5.35. AMB-15 (AMB with serpentine body). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 194.

rituals. Trophy heads are rarely associated with the AMB-12, while more benign symbols for fertility (the *vencejo*, pollywogs, and Harvester) are common. It is unknown why depictions of this form of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being are so few and are restricted to Phase 5.

AMB-13: Effigy Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings

This category includes a variety of effigy vessels sharing a common denominator: they are all modeled versions of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (fig. 5.34). All nineteen examples date to the earlier part of the sequence, Phases 1 through 3. Some are in the form of ceramic drums (pl. 12); others are large effigy bottles or figurines. In each case the modeled parts of the vessel are augmented with elaborate painted designs. While human attributes are most common and clearly seen on most specimens, a few combine the masked human head with a bird's body or other supernatural forms. Phase 1 examples, like their painted counterparts, have incised grooves outlining the main parts. Beginning in Phase 2, painted lines are used for outlining.

AMB-14: Late Conservative Anthropomorphic Mythical Being

Four Phase 7 vessels in the sample appear to depict revivals of a more naturalistic form of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. These are full-bodied creatures, not the usual fan-headed Phase 7 types. Yet all display typical Proliferous elements found on late Phase 6 and 7 mythical beings, and other traditional Phase 7 motifs are found associated with them on the same vessel.

AMB-15: Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with Serpentine Body

This variety of Anthropomorphic Mythical Being is a cross between the Serpentine Creature and the AMB. The creature has the head of a typical AMB (mouth mask, *Spondylus* necklace, forehead ornament, etc.), which is then attached to a serpentine body identical to the Serpentine Creature (fig. 5.35).

AMB-16: Uncategorized Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings

Approximately eighty Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings are either unique or sufficiently different in form that they cannot be placed in any of the previously described categories. These specimens are lumped together in this class. The presence of so many uncategorized examples exemplifies one of the characteristic features of Nasca iconography—the seemingly endless combinations of symbols present in the art.

HB: Horrible Birds

The Horrible Bird is an anthropomorphic raptorial bird, probably a combination of condor and hawk, representing two of the most powerful forces of the sky. Falcons (*Falco femoralis*) appear in late Paracas art, where they are particularly abundant in the Ica Valley sample (Sawyer 1961: 292 ff). Yacovleff (1932a) has written the definitive study of falcons and other birds of prey in the art of ancient Peru. Condors (*Vultur gryphus*) are less frequently depicted in Paracas art (see Peters 1991: fig. 7.41) but become a common theme in early Nasca ceramic art. Both naturalistic falcons and condors are seen in the repertoire, and the Horrible Bird seems

to be a mythical creature derived from components of both scavengers along with the addition of human characteristics. Wolfe (1981) has written the best study on this theme, tracing it from its beginnings through Phase 5, with the many Bizarre Innovations that alter it at that time; see Yadin Larochette (1994) for an additional study.

In the earliest phases, the Horrible Bird is depicted as a naturalistic predator, often shown eating human body parts (Peters 1991: fig. 7.39). Beginning in Nasca Phase 3, the motif becomes anthropomorphic, with the addition of human legs to the creature. Its form becomes more stylized, with a long, white-tipped beak clutching a human trophy head and wing panels also displaying trophy heads. Even more Bizarre Innovations are seen in Phase 5, when the Horrible Bird reaches its apogee. The motif suddenly and inexplicably disappears at the end of Phase 5; no Horrible Bird representations occur in the Proliferous Strain. The Horrible Bird has eight main variations.

HB-1: Naturalistic Raptorial Bird with Supernatural Characteristics

The earliest form of Horrible Bird to appear in Nasca ceramic art is a naturalistic depiction of a condor shown eating various human body parts, such as legs, hands, the intestinal track, or the entire corpse (fig. 5.36). Unlike slightly later variations that are always associated with trophy heads, this variety lacks this trait. This mythical form of the bird differs from naturalistic depictions of condors in its association with corpses and blood (often seen spotted on its beak). Unlike most other varieties of the Horrible Bird, it also lacks falcon markings around its eyes or any anthropomorphic characteristics. Eleven examples of this type are found in the sample. Nine of the specimens date to Phase 3, and the other two to Phase 4. It is evident that the more typical form of Horrible Bird (HB-2) evolved from this more naturalistic variety, even though the two types are partially contemporaneous.

HB-2: Horrible Bird with Divided Head

This variety is the most common form of the Horrible Bird motif, with approximately one hundred specimens in the sample (pl. 3). The creature is an anthropomorphic bird which is primarily condor but has attributes of another dominant bird, the falcon, best exemplified by the U-shaped black marking around the creature's single eye, shown in profile (Seler 1923: fig. 107). The creature's head is composed of an abbreviated version of the forehead ornament of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, which forms the dominant visual attribute. Surmounting the head is a dome-shaped element, often in the form of a trophy head but also resembling the domed heads of the Spotted Cat and the Serpentine Creature. Extending downward from the head is a great spiked beak with white tips, sometimes exhibiting whiskers or hair along the edges. This powerful beak clutches a human trophy head, either in a naturalistic form or symbolized by a long tress of hair extending from the beak (fig. 5.37). Minor variations of the head are known, but all of these are included in this category.

The Horrible Bird's body is dominated by a long wing panel, on which are drawn trophy heads. Feathers, symbolized as parallel tabular snakes, are another example of the use of "kennings" in Nasca art (pl. 3). The upper border of the wing panel, much like the signifer of the AMB, is variable, with subtle iconographic symbolism. For example, one specimen has a spiked border not unlike the fins of the Mythical Killer Whale. The lower part of the body is bifurcated on earlier examples, much like that of naturalistic birds. Later examples are more oval. Small dotted trophy head faces often appear on this part of the body, whereas those on the wing panels are more naturalistic. Human legs and feet complete the lower portion of this mythical creature, although bird legs and claws are sometimes present.

This form of Horrible Bird is confined to Phases 3, 4, and 5, with the majority (fifty-six) dating to Phase 5. It was an important motif in the early part of the sequence, but it disappeared quickly after Phase 5. Horrible Birds are displayed on a wide variety of vessel forms, from double spout bottles and cup bowls to collared jars.

HB-3: Rectangular Horrible Bird

This variety of Horrible Bird emerged from the Bizarre Innovation that took place in Phase 5. Wolfe (1981: 12–13) best describes its main features in the following words:

> These birds have a rectangular head, most often joined to a rectangular body. The angularity is softened somewhat by the addition of a tail with curved contours. Anatomical details, as well as the arrangement of the body parts, are inconsistent and unnatural. For example, wings may be attached directly to the head and their feathers oriented in more than one direction. Despite such bizarre renderings, each bird has a well formed beak with a white tip and has realistic bird feet with claws. . . .

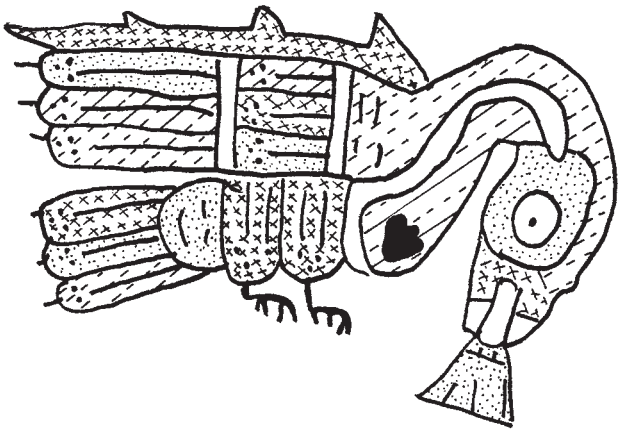


Fig. 5.36. HB-1 (naturalistic raptor with supernatural characteristics). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 278.

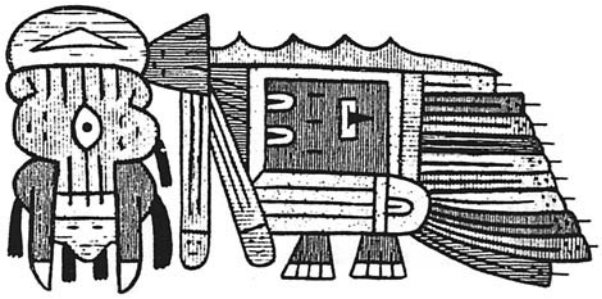


Fig. 5.37. HB-2 (Horrible Bird with divided head). After Seler 1923: fig. 114.

Fig. 5.38. HB-3 (rectangular Horrible Bird). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1933: fig. 1b.

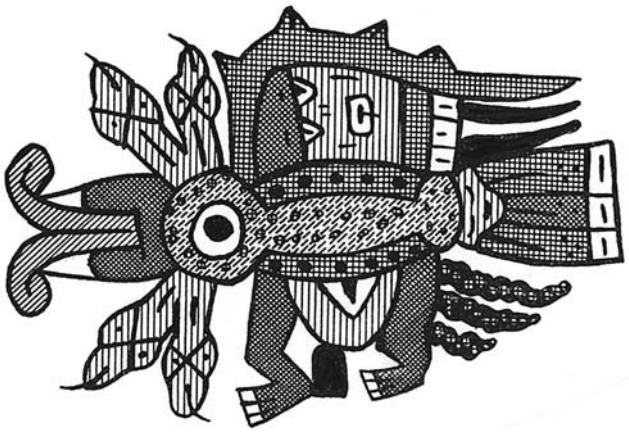


Fig. 5.39. HB-4 (Horrible Bird with circular head and eye). After Roark 1965: fig. 44. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

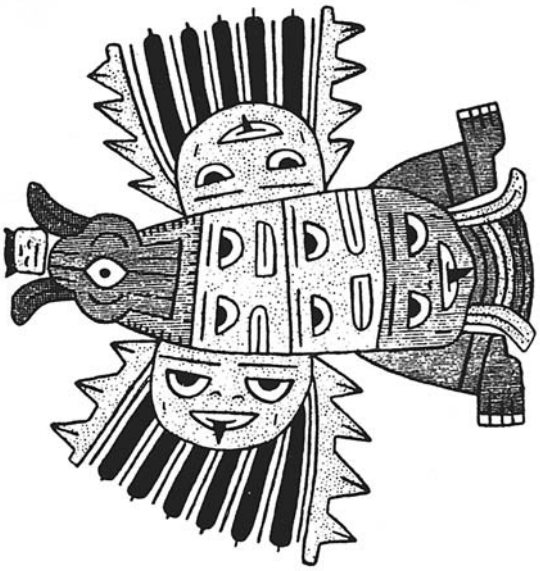
The boxy head is decorated with an equally box-shaped eye marking. Vestiges of the mythical wing border indicate the wing location. The body is reduced to the trophy head, which, in other variants, forms the base of the tail, and the wing also has a prominent trophy head decoration. The bird also holds a trophy head in its beak. No other body parts are observed in this variant.

The sample contains nine specimens of this subtype, all dating to Phase 5 (fig. 5.38).

HB-4: Horrible Bird with Circular Head and Eye

Another Bizarre form of the Horrible Bird appears in Phase 5, identified by a circular head, quite large relative to the body size, with a circular eye and centered pupil (fig. 5.39). The beak is tipped white but has several possible forms, including some with sharp points, others that are truncated, and still others terminating in volute rays, showing the first use of Proliferous elements on this motif. Sometimes a bifurcated element representing a trophy head emerges from the beak.

The body of HB-4 is long and narrow, sometimes with a T-shaped crossbar at the tail. The wing has a spiked border at the top with several possible types of feathers, including snakelike feathers or several solid black feathers such as those found on naturalistic birds. The tail feathers are also variable, but many are bordered with volute rays. This mythical bird form is highly anthropomorphized, having human legs and feet and sometimes a single human arm



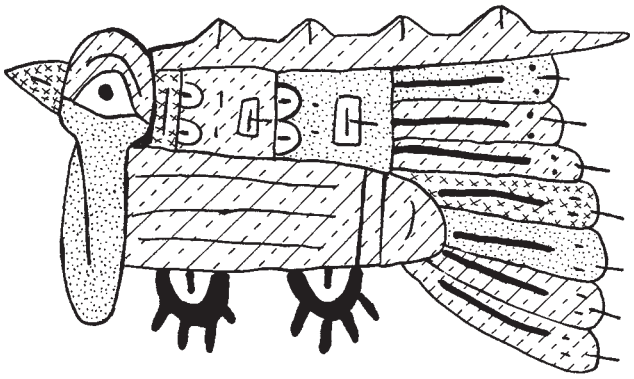


Fig. 5.40. (*left*) HB-5 (Horrible Bird with outspread wings). After Seler 1923: fig. 99a.

Fig. 5.41. (*above*) HB-6 (Not-So-Horrible Bird). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 259.

and hand, which often clutches a trophy head or a club. This variant never displays a distended crop or caruncle such as found on the more frequent HB-2 variety.

The sample contains specimens of this form of Horrible Bird, all dating to Phase 5. Many are found on "woman bottles," a term used to describe head and spout bottles modeled in the form of an effigy woman. The globular body of the vessel portrays the woman's mantle, which serves as a canvas for displaying mythical creatures, in this case the Horrible Bird.

HB-5: Horrible Bird with Outspread Wings

This category of Horrible Birds includes a wide variety of forms with one trait in common — they show the Horrible Bird with outstretched wings, as if in flight (fig. 5.40). In order to portray its avian characteristics as fully as possible, the HB-5 was painted on vessel forms with broad surfaces, such as the interior or exterior of bowls, where the creature is depicted in flight.

The bird's head has a variety of forms, but the eye is most frequently encircled with a stylized falcon marking, much like that seen on other Horrible Bird forms. The powerful beak, viewed from above, clutches a trophy head, which is usually semicircular in form. The body of the bird is sometimes in the form of a tunic with a navel in the form of a human eye — like that present on the AMB. In other cases, the body is greatly abbreviated. On either side of the body are large, outspread wing panels, with feathers represented by tabular snakes (another example of kenning). Trophy heads are an integral part of these wing panels. Legs (either human or avian) are attached to the body, and a full, frontal trophy head symbolizes a breechcloth between the legs. Twenty-seven examples of HB-5 occur in the sample, the majority of which (twenty-two) date to Phase 5.

HB-6: Not-So-Horrible Bird

Wolfe (1981: 14) defined a category of birds that retain some mythical traits and thus cannot be considered naturalistic representations of birds but differ from other Horrible Bird representations in lacking the white-tipped beak or any association with human body parts other than trophy heads (fig. 5.41). Unlike true Horrible Birds, these creatures do not symbolize raptorial condors and falcons but rather portray more pacific birds that have trophy heads in their wing panels. The sample contains twenty-five specimens of this type, ranging in date from Phase 3 through Phase 5.

HB-7: Oval Horrible Bird

This variety of Horrible Bird is Wolfe's "variant 2," which she describes in the following manner:

> The head, body and tail are usually integrated into a single oval unit to which the beak, tail and legs are attached. The head is always decorated with eye markings. The beak has a prominent white tip. The feet are stylized bird claws usually attached to the body by lobes that bear semicircular decoration (abbreviated trophy head?)

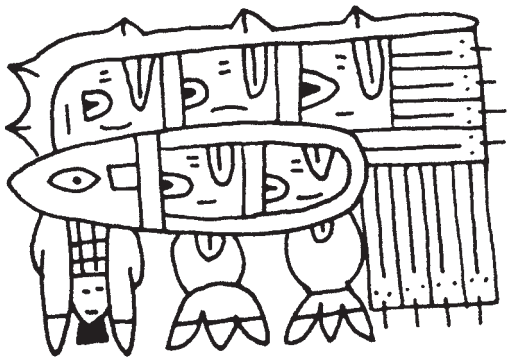


Fig. 5.42. HB-7 (oval Horrible Bird). After Wolfe 1981: fig. 91a.

Fig. 5.43. HB-8 (symbolic HB beak clutching a trophy head). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 608.

> pendent from the body contour. This variant omits the crop from the depiction and the wing no longer covers the upper portion of the body but rests upon it. The front of the wing profile is curved and a mythical wing border follows the new contour. The wing, body and tail are filled with stylized but prominent trophy heads. The feathers of the wing are always rendered as snake feathers. Tail feathers are sometimes attached to the wing feathers at a more or less right angle and in such cases the tail feathers are straight ended. Each bird carries a stylized trophy head in the beak. (Wolfe 1981: 11)

Six specimens of this type occur in the sample, all datable to Phase 5 (fig. 5.42).

HB-8: Abbreviated Horrible Bird Beak Clutching Trophy Head

A highly abbreviated form of the Horrible Bird is found in Phase 6, usually painted on the bottom registrar of a vase. In this variety, the Horrible Bird is symbolized by two volute rays representing the open beak of the bird. Clutched in this "beak" is a trophy head, which itself is often highly abstract (fig. 5.43). The sample contains thirteen examples, all dating to phase 6.

KW: Mythical Killer Whales

To the ancient Nasca people the killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) was the most powerful and feared creature of the sea and was frequently represented in the ceramic art. The killer whale can be identified by its squared jaws and prominent teeth, dorsal fins, and distinctive bifurcated tail. Its mythical forms are anthropomorphic and can be distinguished from realistic killer whale representations by the presence of a human arm, often holding a knife and/or a human trophy head. Some early examples depict a complete human body being devoured in the jaws of the creature, but soon emphasis is placed on trophy heads. Later examples emphasize the mouth and jaws of the creature, with blood symbolically portrayed as red patches or spots and with trophy heads abbreviated as hair tassels. As described earlier, the killing of individuals and the use of their heads in ritual have been associated with attempts to promote agricultural fertility. Thus the Mythical Killer Whale represents concepts of power, blood, death, and fertility.

Over the years scholars have viewed this creature from a number of different perspectives. Yacovleff (1932b) considered the Mythical Killer Whale to be the supreme Nasca deity, overshadowing the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. His argument was based, at least in part, on data collected in interviews with fishermen living in the central coastal valley of Chilca. Patricia Lyon (1978: 126), however, argued that the Mythical Killer Whale was not really meant to represent the killer whale per se but rather a composite creature symbolically representing the "Master" or "Mistress of Fishes" — a "supernatural being who has in its charge all water creatures and who is in a position to provide rich fishing to those who please it and destroy those who do not." This interpretation is based mainly on contemporary folklore, some of which

is derived from the tropical forest area. Otto Zerries (1968: 263–265) describes "boss spirits" among the Mundurucú and other tribes. These deities control whole categories of creatures, be they fish or animals.

I would argue that folklore is not the best device to use to interpret iconography, especially when the data are collected from contemporary societies separated from the Nasca by almost fifteen hundred years. Furthermore, much of this folklore is derived from the tropical forest area, well outside the Andean zone. That said, I would agree with Lyon that the Mythical Killer Whale is a composite of many sea creatures, including the killer whale and the shark, along with human attributes which were meant to be symbolic rather than representational. Whether the Mythical Killer Whale should be viewed as "Master/Mistress of Fishes" or as representing aspects of fertility, including agricultural fertility, is debatable. The close association of trophy heads and human blood with the Mythical Killer Whale cannot easily be explained under the rubric "Master/Mistress of Fishes." As we will see, the taking of human trophy heads is more closely related to agricultural propagation and cyclical renewal.

The origin of the Killer Whale motif is found in the Paracas style, where representations are most numerous on embroidered textiles, but examples are found on ceramics late in the sequence (e.g., Sawyer 1961: figs. 12a, 12b). Some confusion exists over the identity of these early examples; for unlike Monumental and Proliferous Nasca examples, the Paracas and Proto-Nasca (Nasca 1) specimens vary greatly, leading experts to identify at least some of the motifs as "sharks" or "snake mackerel" (Peters 1991: 254–258; Paul 1990). By the early phases of the Nasca ceramic style, however, the Killer Whale emerges as the only mythical marine creature depicted in the art. Through time, manifestations of the Mythical Killer Whale multiply, while they simultaneously become less and less naturalistic as Proliferous elements are added and abbreviation of the figures occurs. The earliest Mythical Killer Whales in the sample are found in Phase 2. The numbers increase dramatically in Phase 5, when the largest number and variety are found. The motif continues through Phase 7, after which it suddenly disappears.

At least ten distinct varieties of the Mythical Killer Whale can be identified. Some are restricted diachronically to a single phase or two, while others can be traced through several phases, but with corresponding changes in the manner of depiction.

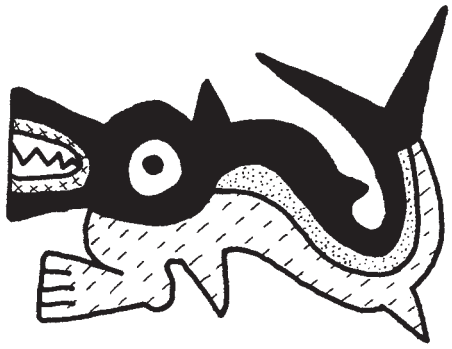


Fig. 5.44. KW-1 (naturalistic Mythical Killer Whale). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 206.

Fig. 5.45. KW-2 (traditional early Mythical Killer Whale holding a dagger or knife). After Seler 1923: fig. 330.

Fig. 5.46. KW-2 (traditional early Mythical Killer Whale holding a trophy head). After Sawyer 1966: fig. 205. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

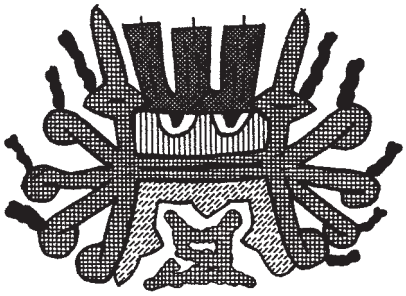


Fig. 5.47. KW-3 ("Bloody Mouth" abbreviated Mythical Killer Whale). After Roark 1965: fig. 45. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

KW-1: Naturalistic Mythical Killer Whale

This form of the Mythical Killer Whale is the most naturalistic and elementary variety (fig. 5.44). It has a curvilinear fishlike body, with both dorsal and ventral fins, terminating with a broad, bifurcated tail. The head, which is disproportionately large, has an eye with a single round black pupil centered in a white socket. Its jaws flare out and are characterized by multiple jagged teeth. A curved element is often seen extending from under the eye, forming a comma-shaped "chin" under the creature's head. Finally, a single human arm and hand project from beneath the whale's body. In this first variation, the hand is always empty; yet because of this anthropomorphic element, the creature is considered a mythical form rather than a naturalistic mammal.

KW-2: Traditional Mythical Killer Whale Holding a Weapon and/or Trophy Head

This variety is identical to KW-1, with the exception of the presence of a pointed obsidian knife held in its hand and/or a human trophy head or other body part (figs. 5.45, 5.46; pl. 4). The primary cutting instrument for the taking of trophy heads by Nasca warriors has been identified as a hafted obsidian blade — very sharp and effective. The killer whale, known for its natural ferocity, is thus converted into an anthropomorphic "warrior" who kills and takes heads for ritual use in fertility ceremonies. This variety of Mythical Killer Whale is found primarily in Phases 2 through 4 and is seldom associated with symbols of blood, which become so prevalent in Phase 5 and later.

KW-3: "Bloody Mouth" Mythical Killer Whale

An abbreviated form of the Mythical Killer Whale known as "Bloody Mouth" appears suddenly in Phase 5, where over sixty examples occur in my sample (fig. 5.47). Bloody Mouth is a frontal depiction of the head of the Mythical Killer Whale with two pendant eyes and large open jaws, usually pointed downward. Between the open jaws is a large red patch representing the blood of its human victim. Only the head is portrayed; the remainder of the creature's body is absent. Proliferous volute rays extend from the head, mimicking hair or a headdress, and black tassels symbolize additional trophy heads. This motif continues into Phase 6, where thirteen examples are found, only one-fifth of the number present in Phase 5. By Phase 7 this motif has disappeared.

KW-4: Anthropomorphic Mythical Killer Whale

This variety of Mythical Killer Whale first appears in Phase 5 (with nine examples present in the sample) but is most prevalent in Phase 6 (over twenty specimens). Its form and major characteristics parallel changes that occur in the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being motif described above (see AMB-6). A large killer whale head with open jaws is attached to a human torso and legs in the same fashion seen in the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. Parallel to the human body, however, is a signifer symbolizing the body of the killer whale (fig. 5.48). This element is very standardized, having alternating triangular "fins" separated by Proliferous volute rays. The terminator is a distinctive bifurcated whale's tail. Centered in the signifer can be found a variety of elements ranging from pollywogs (symbolizing water and fertility) to spears (symbolizing warfare and death).

The depiction of this type of Mythical Killer Whale varies greatly. The jaws usually display a solid red patch or a multitude of red dots symbolizing blood, although some early examples clutch a human corpse or body parts. The legs are usually outstretched, parallel to the signifer, but a few examples show the creature in a running position. Large elliptical elements extend on either side of the single eye in most cases.

Also included in this category are anthropomorphic Mythical Killer Whales that are closely related to the Phase 6 Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings described above. These composite representations have typical KW open jaws, but the head and facial characteristics, including dark-eyed and yellow-eyed varieties, link them to the creatures described under the categories of AMB-6-A, AMB-6-B, and AMB-6-C (fig. 5.49).

KW-5: Fan-Headed Mythical Killer Whale

Fan-headed Mythical Killer Whales are another abbreviated version of the central theme and are the predominant subtype found in Phase 7 of the ceramic style. This variety appears to have evolved directly out of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Killer Whales (KW-4) of Phase 6; like the similar Anthropomorphic Mythical Being motif (AMB-6), the full-figured examples of Phase 6 become condensed into the fan-headed varieties of Phase 7. Forty-four examples of this motif are present in the Phase 7 sample, far exceeding any other form of the Mythical Killer Whale in this period.

The fan-headed Mythical Killer Whale is characterized by a dominant head with wide open jaws displaying mul-

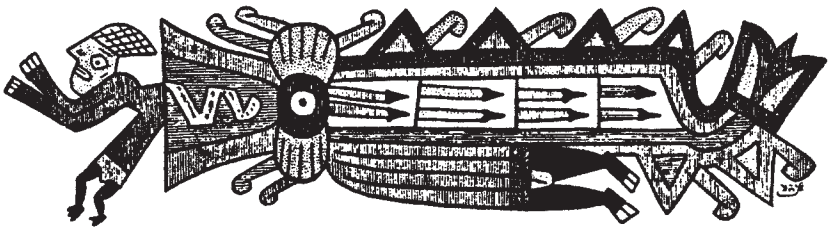


Fig. 5.48. KW-4 (Anthropomorphic Mythical Killer Whale attacking a human). After Seler 1923: fig. 334.

Fig. 5.49. KW-4 (another form of Anthropomorphic Mythical Killer Whale). After Putnam 1914: fig. 6.

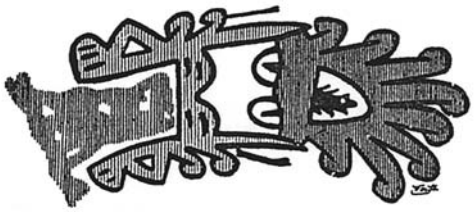


Fig. 5.50. KW-5 (fan-headed Mythical Killer Whale). After Seler 1923: fig. 234.

tiple teeth, with blood in the form of red spots or a patch inside (fig. 5.50). From the head two large eyes of varying form stare at the viewer, giving the appearance of a ferocious monster. In place of a body, the head is surmounted by a broad semicircular element made up of a multitude of rayed elements. In the center of the "fan" is a geometric motif, often resembling a cone with whiskerlike projections. In some cases small stubby hands clutching jagged rays, which are thought to symbolize trophy heads, emerge from the area around the jaws. In a few instances human legs are attached to the back of the "fan," representing a transitional form between the full-bodied Anthropomorphic Mythical Killer Whales and those that are fully fan-headed.

Prototypes of the Fan-Headed Mythical Killer Whale first appear in Phases 5 and 6, but they are the dominant type in Phase 7. They continue into Phase 8, where a few highly abstracted specimens are found.

KW-6: Winged Mythical Killer Whale

This category represents only a small percentage of the sample, with six specimens dating to Phase 5 and one perhaps dating to Phase 6. This KW has avian attributes in the form of winglike elements attached to the head (fig. 5.51). A further suggestion of an avian identification is the empty space surrounding the creature, as if to convey the feeling of flying through the sky. Human legs and arms are standard on this variety.

KW-7: Miscellaneous Mythical Killer Whale

All painted forms of the Mythical Killer Whale that do not easily fit into the first six categories are placed here, and they range in date from Phases 3 through 7. Nasca artists were particularly adept at recombining killer whale attributes to form a wide variety of miscellaneous forms. Although this is frustrating in our attempt to categorize them neatly into pigeonholes, the essential qualities of the Mythical Killer Whale can always be detected in the myriad of symbols. These creatures always have the jaws and associated features of other Mythical Killer Whales. Of the forty such specimens in the sample, sixteen date to Phase 5; Phase 6 is close behind, with a total of thirteen (fig. 5.52).

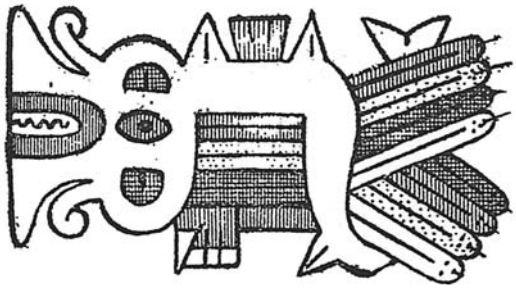


Fig. 5.51. KW-6 (winged Mythical Killer Whale with legs). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 13a.

Fig. 5.52. KW-7 (miscellaneous Killer Whale). After Harth-Terré 1965: pl. 2.

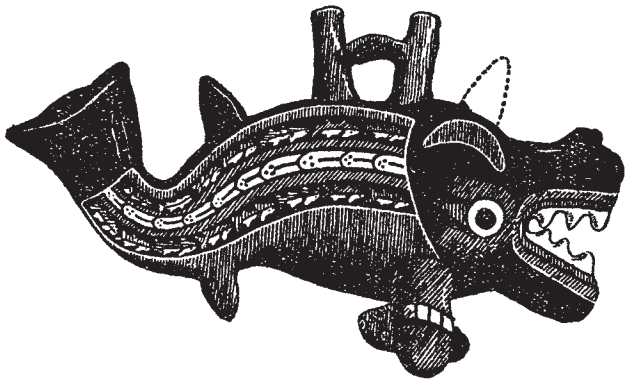


Fig. 5.53. KW-8 (early effigy Mythical Killer Whale). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 6a.

KW-8: Effigy Mythical Killer Whale

Among the most interesting manifestations of the Mythical Killer Whale are those modeled in three dimensions, for they display features not clearly seen on the painted varieties and exhibit a wider range of attributes. Best known to the general public are the earliest examples, frequently illustrated in the literature (e.g., La Farge 1981: 68), which often have been compared to the geoglyph of the killer whale etched into the sandy surface of the Pampa de San José in the Nasca Valley. Clearly seen on these early specimens are human arms and hands, along with severed trophy heads (fig. 5.53).

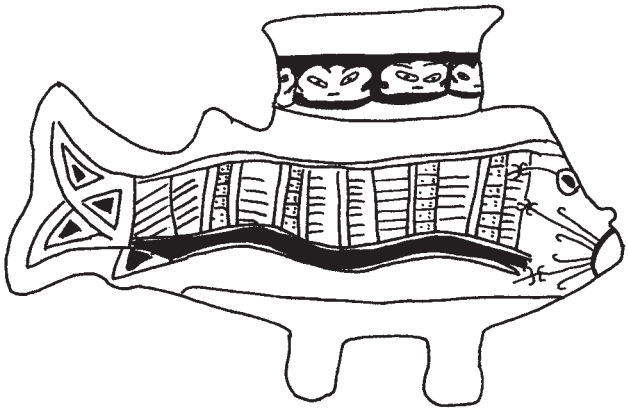


Fig. 5.54. KW-8 (late effigy Killer Whale). After Buse et al. n.d.: La Pesca, fig. 151. Rostworowski Collection. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Less well known are later specimens dating from Phases 6 and 7. These display Proliferous elements, such as those seen on other supernatural creatures (fig. 5.54). My sample contains seventeen specimens, ranging in date from Phase 3 through Phase 7.

KW-9: Late Mythical Killer Whale Head

One other variety of Mythical Killer Whale makes its appearance in Phase 7. It consists mainly of the disembodied head of the creature, with some symbolic vestiges of its other characteristics (fig. 5.55). Sometimes confused with the Decapitated Mythical Monkey Head (MKY-6), the Late Mythical Killer Whale Head has several distinguishing characteristics that allow us to separate the two motifs. The Late Mythical Killer Whale Head has one or more of the following traits: a fishlike shape to the head, the presence of killer whale fins, larger jaws than the Affendämon, and a different form of eye.

KW-10: Mythical Killer Whale Fin Bands

Mythical Killer Whales are often symbolized in a highly abbreviated form, consisting only of their fins (fig. 5.56). This motif is found mainly in Phase 5, where the fins are drawn as pointed orange spikes attached to a horizontal band of the same color. A variety of plants, animals, or trophy heads are inserted between the fins. They often form the border on the signifers of the AMB, but many stand-alone examples are also found.

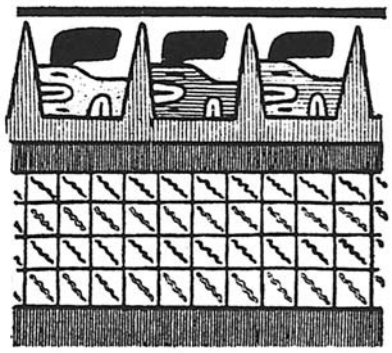


Fig. 5.55. (*left*) KW-9 (late Mythical Killer Whale head). Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima) exhibit. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Fig. 5.56. (*right*) KW-10 (band symbolizing Mythical Killer Whale fins). After Seler 1923: fig. 195.

HRP: Harpy

Included in my category of mythical creatures is an anthropomorphic bird called the Harpy, named after a voracious monster in Greek mythology composed of a woman's head and trunk on a bird's body (fig. 5.57). Wolfe (1981: 15–16) was one of the first to recognize it as a separate motif in Nasca art, yet it is closely related to the Horrible Bird. The major features of the Harpy are an avian body that may have either bird talons or human legs. The bird has an unmasked human head, flanked by long tresses of black hair. The eyes are frequently depicted with hawk or falcon markings, and a long protruding tongue emanates from the mouth in a majority of the examples. "Always depicted with a human head, the Harpies contrast with the Horrible Bird theme, where the most predominant and distinguishing trait is the beak. While Harpies, like many other mythical beings in Nasca art, are decorated with trophy head motifs, there is no hint that they also ate carrion" (Wolfe 1981: 16).

Harpies first appear in the sequence in Phase 3, where there are three in my sample. The motif reaches its highest frequency in Phase 5, with twenty-six specimens, and disappears at the end of Phase 6, where at least two examples are present in the sample.

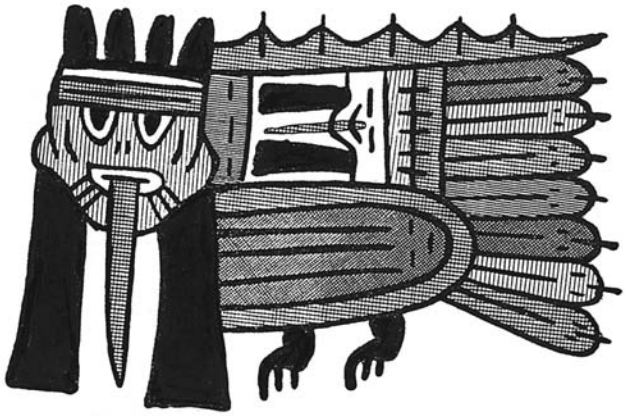


Fig. 5.57. HRP (the Harpy, another mythical creature). After Roark 1965: fig. 43. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

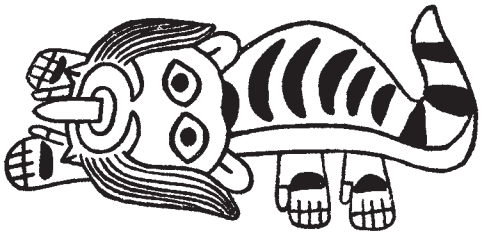
SC: Mythical Spotted Cats

The Mythical Spotted Cat can be traced back to its naturalistic prototype in the Paracas style (e.g., Sawyer 1961: fig. 6). Once identified as a river otter or *gato de agua* by Valcarcel (1932), it is now clear that this entity represents a small local feline known as the pampas cat (*Felis colocolo*), characterized by semicircular pelage markings, a striped tail, and small ears separated by a "cap" (see Peters 1991: fig. 7.44). Beginning in Phase 2, a mythical version with a mouth mask appears; and in Phase 3 plants are attached to the body, a feature that links this creature to agriculture and fertility. The Mythical Spotted Cat becomes more angular in Phase 4, and hawk markings are often found on the eyes. Like the Horrible Bird, the Mythical Spotted Cat virtually disappears at the end of Phase 5.

SC-1: Masked Mythical Spotted Cat

This early form of the Mythical Spotted Cat is distinguished by a mouth mask that covers the lower face of the creature (fig. 5.58). The body, with its characteristic crescent-shaped pelage markings, is curvilinear, with a thick, upturned

Fig. 5.58. SC-1 (masked Mythical Spotted Cat). After Sawyer 1966: fig. 206. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.



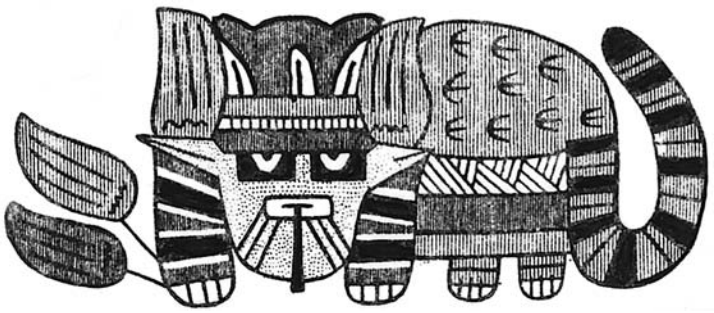


Fig. 5.59. (*left*) SC-2 (horizontal-headed Mythical Spotted Cat). After Seler 1923: fig. 56.

Fig. 5.60. (*right*) SC-3 (unmasked Mythical Spotted Cat). After Seler 1923: fig. 24.

striped tail. The head is portrayed naturalistically (that is, vertical to the animal's body). A small tongue usually protrudes from the mouth, sometimes drawn in the form of a pepper or other domesticated plant. In other instances, plants are held in the paws or are attached to the creature's body by their stems. This version of the Mythical Spotted Cat first appears in the ceramic art in Phase 2 and continues through Phase 5. Fifty-four specimens are present in the sample, thirty-four dating to Phase 3.

sc-2: Horizontal-Headed Mythical Spotted Cat

This form of the Mythical Spotted Cat is nearly identical to SC-1 except that the head is attached horizontally to the animal's body, giving it a somewhat distorted appearance (fig. 5.59). Only ten specimens are found in the sample, ranging in date from Phase 2 through Phase 5. The four Phase 5 examples might more correctly be classified in the radical mode (SC-5), thus making this variety rare indeed.

sc-3: Unmasked Mythical Spotted Cat

Like the Serpentine Creature, the Mythical Spotted Cat has masked and unmasked varieties. SC-3 is the unmasked variety, with twenty-seven specimens in the sample, ranging in date from Phase 1 through Phase 5 (fig. 5.60). The faces of the earliest examples are distinctly animal in form but take on a more human appearance beginning in Phase 2. Although lacking the mouth mask, many of the specimens of this variety have painted black hawk markings around the eyes. The animal's body, in addition to displaying the usual crescent-shaped pelage marks, often incorporates a band containing either plants or cross-hatching, which I interpret to be a symbol for water.

sc-4: Anthropomorphic Mythical Spotted Cat

Some Mythical Spotted Cats are found with anthropomorphic elements, such as the legs or lower portion of a human body attached to the creature (fig. 5.61). In another instance, a human hand holding a club emerges from the side of the creature's head. In all these cases it appears that the artist is symbolically combining traits of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being with the Spotted Cat. These anthropomorphic versions of the Mythical Spotted Cat are rare and quite variable. Only six examples of this type occur in the sample, ranging in date from Phase 3 through Phase 5.

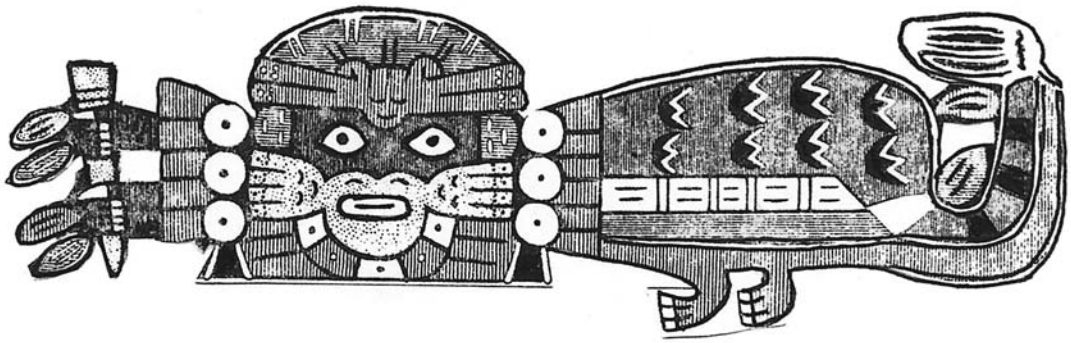


Fig. 5.61. (*above*) SC-4 (anthropomorphic Mythical Spotted Cat). After Seler 1923: fig. 25.

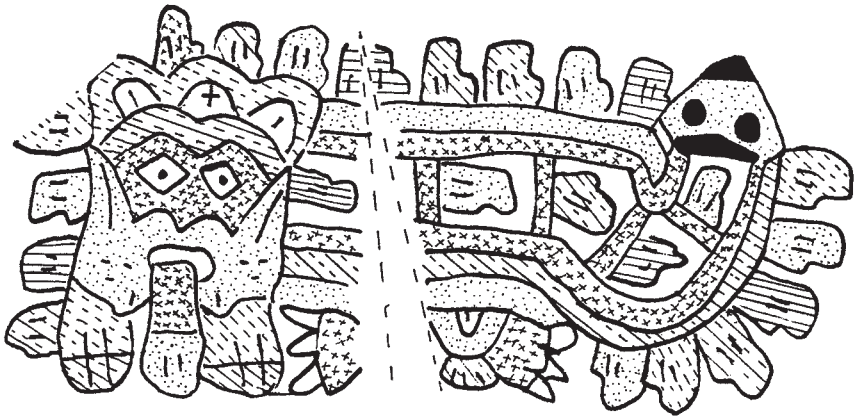


Fig. 5.62. SC-5-A (Mythical Spotted Cat in radical mode, vertical head). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 94.

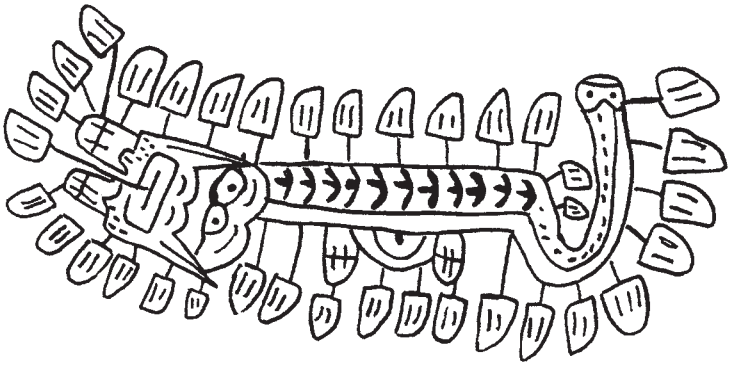


Fig. 5.63. SC-5-B (Mythical Spotted Cat in radical mode, horizontal head). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 92.

Fig. 5.64. SC-6 (Mythical Spotted Cat with Anthropomorphic Mythical Being features). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 126.

Fig. 5.65. (*left*) SC-7 (effigy Mythical Spotted Cat). Private collection. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.66. (*right*) SC-8 (symbolic pelage marks of the Mythical Spotted Cat). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 496.

sc-5: Mythical Spotted Cat in Radical Mode

During Phase 5 there was a great deal of experimentation in the ceramic art style, which Blagg (1975) calls the "Bizarre Innovation." Although traditional forms of the Mythical Spotted Cat continue to be found in Phase 5, a new "radical" form appears (see Wolfe 1981 for a detailed description of the sequence). The most commonly found new traits are: "[a] mixture of features from previously well-delineated stylistic variants, the substitution of alien limbs for feline ones, extra legs, oversimplification of designs, abbreviations of depictions, proliferation of symbols including the replacement by fruit of the trilobite head format, and the increasing use of three-mark faces" (Wolfe 1981: 7). I have subdivided SC-5 into two varieties: SC-5-A has the normal vertically placed head (fig. 5.62), and SC-5-B has a horizontally attached head (fig. 5.63; see Wolfe 1981 for a more complete discussion of these changes, along with numerous illustrations).

sc-6: Mythical Spotted Cat with Anthropomorphic Mythical Being Features

This form of Spotted Cat is depicted wearing attributes of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, such as a distinct form of mouth mask with horizontal lateral elements (rather than the upturned "whiskered" mouth mask found on SC-1), or with a signifer attached (fig. 5.64). This subtype is very ambiguous, since some of its features overlap with other varieties. Yet there are sufficient differences from other forms to classify it as a separate entity.

sc-7: Effigy Mythical Spotted Cat

This subtype of Mythical Spotted Cat is an effigy form, with nine specimens in the sample (fig. 5.65). More naturalistic in appearance than the painted varieties, modeled Mythical Spotted Cats range in date from Phase 1 through Phase 3. Several of the earliest specimens are from a dubious source and may be fakes.

sc-8: Mythical Spotted Cat Abbreviated as Pelage Marks

Mythical Spotted Cats are sometimes depicted in a highly abbreviated or symbolic form, as pelage marks. The distinctive semilunar markings on the fur of the pampas cat are occasionally drawn as a separate motif, often in an agricultural context (fig. 5.66). These geometric markings are meant to symbolize the essence of the Spotted Cat.

HV: Harvester 5

The name "Harvester" was first used by Richard Roark (1965: 26 – 27) to describe a frontal full-bodied human figure wearing a curious conical hat stitched up the front and holding in his outstretched hands various agricultural products. He correctly points out that the Harvester is the single most frequent human figure depicted on Nasca Phase 5 pottery. Although most of the examples of the classic Harvester (HV-1) date to Phase 5, effigy forms (HV-3) can be identified as early Phase 2. Roark has argued (ibid.: 27) that in Phase 6 the Harvester loses his association with plants and is depicted holding jagged staffs in his hands and is usually seen with crossed legs. I believe that this creature, although perhaps drawing inspiration from the Harvester, should be considered a new and separate entity that emerged out of the Bizarre Innovation of Phase 5. I am calling this creature the Jagged-Staff God (JSG, described below). Except for one or two late isolated examples in Phase 6 and what I believe is an archaistic example from Phase 7, the Harvester disappears quickly at the end of Phase 5.

Fig. 5.67. (*above*) HV-1 (Traditional Harvester). After Sawyer 1979: fig. 17. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

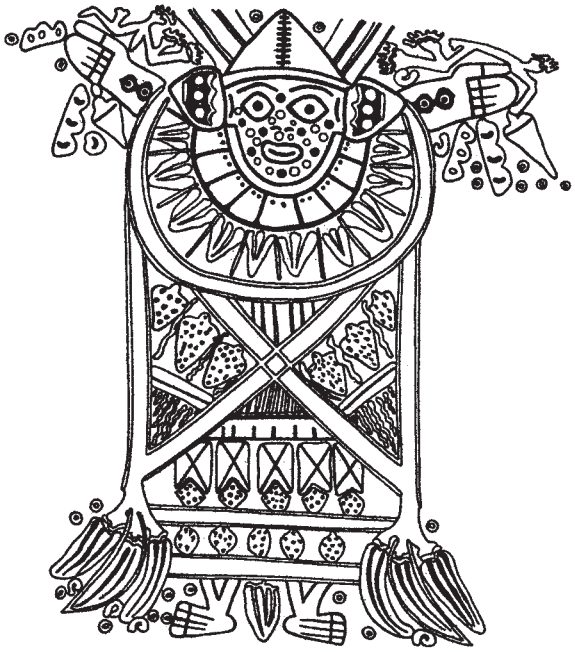


Fig. 5.68. (*right*) HV-2 (Mythical Harvester). After Townsend 1985: fig. 7.

Several subvarieties of Harvesters are described below, including some with "supernatural" characteristics and others that appear to be naturalistic depictions of farmers. Most are painted flat on the walls of vessels of varying shapes, but modeled varieties occur as well. Seler (1923: 238 ff.) calls the Harvester a "Vegetation Demon" because of his association with agricultural plants, while Blasco and Ramos (1980: 112) refer to this group of figures simply as "Farmers."

HV-1: Traditional Harvester

This is the primary form of the Harvester, with thirty-eight specimens dating to Phase 5 in the sample. This creature is depicted very consistently, although some of the minor details vary in form and composition. The Traditional Harvester is a frontal male wearing a conical hat stitched up the front and a semicircular breechcloth covering the loins (fig. 5.67). Often the torso is bare, revealing sets of ribs; otherwise the torso is drawn in a solid color, and never do we see the striped shirt that is a common feature of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. The plants most commonly held in the hands are peppers, cornstalks, and jíquimas. Occasionally weapons are held in the hands along with the plants, but this is atypical and appears to be secondary to the main symbolism. In some cases plants are shown projecting from the sides of the conical hat. The hat, which seems to be the most characteristic identifying feature of the Harvester, was probably manufactured from animal skins rather than textiles, judging from its stiff upright appearance. One example, where the Harvester's head is turned in profile, shows a flap coming down from the hat to cover the back of the neck.

Carmichael (1994a: 82) argues that the pendant, "rolled-back" eyes of the Harvester and the emaciated body with protruding ribs suggest that the Harvester is a corpse, from which spring life-giving plants, much as some Nasca trophy heads are depicted with plants sprouting from their mouths. I agree with Carmichael that a relationship exists between trophy head rituals and agricultural fertility, but I am not convinced that the Harvester should be considered a corpse. Most corpses in Nasca art either are dismembered (missing the head or other body parts) or are drawn limp. While one or two examples of Harvesters may be endowed with trophy head symbolism (e.g., Carmichael 1994a: fig. 15), I believe that the Harvester was meant to be seen as a Mythical Being or a "Supernatural" symbolizing fertility, not as a human corpse that has been sacrificed to ensure continued fertility of the crops.

Previously I have argued that HV-1 was essentially a secular representation of a farmer displaying the harvest as a symbol of agricultural fertility (Proulx 1989b: 150, 1990: 395) and that HV-2 was a mythical or supernatural version of that creature. I now recognize that HV-1 is not an ordinary mortal but a Mythical Being on the same plane as the Horrible Bird or Mythical Spotted Cat. The category HV-4 also includes depictions of secular human Farmers, however (described below).

Fig. 5.69. HV-3-B (late Effigy Harvester). Sotheby Auction Catalog, May 19, 1987, A39. Private collection.

HV-2: Mythical Harvester

This form of Harvester is more clearly a mythical or supernatural form, because it is endowed with attributes most commonly associated with the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being: a *Spondylus* shell necklace, a striped shirt and navel, and eyes with a central pupil rather than pendant from the upper lid. The most distinguishing features of HV-2 are the painted spots covering its face, possibly representing decoration worn during harvest festivals (fig. 5.68). The sample contains sixteen specimens of this type, ranging from Phase 3 through Phase 5. It shares many features with HV-1, including the conical hat and plants held in the hands or appended to parts of the body. Its early appearance links it to the effigy form of Harvester (HV-3), which also exhibits the spotted facial painting.

HV-3: Effigy Harvester

Modeled examples of the Harvester in the form of effigy jars and bottles are common in my sample. Significant differences exist between those dating to the early (Monumental) phases and those dating to the middle (Transitional) and late (Proliferous) phases. These have been categorized into two subtypes, HV-3-A representing the early effigy Harvester and HV-3-B representing the late effigy Harvester.

HV-3-A: Early Effigy Harvester

This variety represents the first appearance of the Harvester in the Nasca style, in the form of an effigy vessel representing a human figure wearing the conical hat that is the trademark of the Harvester. Most examples are open-topped effigy jars with the human figure shown in a seated position, holding plants in its hands (pl. 15). The depiction of the head and facial area of these earliest representations varies greatly. The conical hat often lacks the front stitching that is so typical in Phase 5, instead appearing as a hood, often masking the upper part of the face and eyes. The rear portion of the hat or hood covers the back of the neck and frequently extends down to cover most of the figure's back, thus producing an extensive area of solid white on these vessels. The face is usually painted with multicolored dots, but other forms of facial painting are present, as are many specimens with no facial painting. Aside from the hat or hood, other clothing is minimal. Many examples portray a collar and tab, representing a shirt or tunic frequently seen on males. The sample includes twenty-one specimens of this effigy Harvester; a few date to Phase 2, with the majority dating to Phase 3.

These early effigy Harvesters appear to be depictions of farmers engaged in Harvest rituals (as suggested by the facial painting); however, they have not yet taken on the "supernatural" characteristics seen on later Phase 5 specimens, which I have classified as variants HV-2 or HV-3-B.

HV-3-B: Late Effigy Harvester

By Phase 5, Effigy Harvesters no longer resemble naturalistic Farmers but have become transformed into complex "supernatural" forms. The principal shape category depicting this creature has changed from an open-topped effigy jar to a closed effigy head-and-spout bottle. Nine examples occur in Phase 5, all representing a Harvester with multicolored spotted facial painting. In this respect, these creatures appear to be direct descendants of the earlier effigy Harvester (HV-3-A) described above. One major change in form is the presence of objects emanating or flowing from the Harvester's mouth (fig. 5.69). Some of these objects seem to be related to water, such as several with depictions of crayfish or pollywogs. In other instances a snakelike streamer emerges from the mouth, terminating in a feline head which in turn bifurcates into two branches, each containing small figures of human farmers. All of these vessels have various plants (corn, peppers, etc.) appended to the main figure.

The sample contains one example of a Phase 6 Harvester of this type. It has a different form of facial painting and has small Rayed Faces instead of plants painted on its body. It

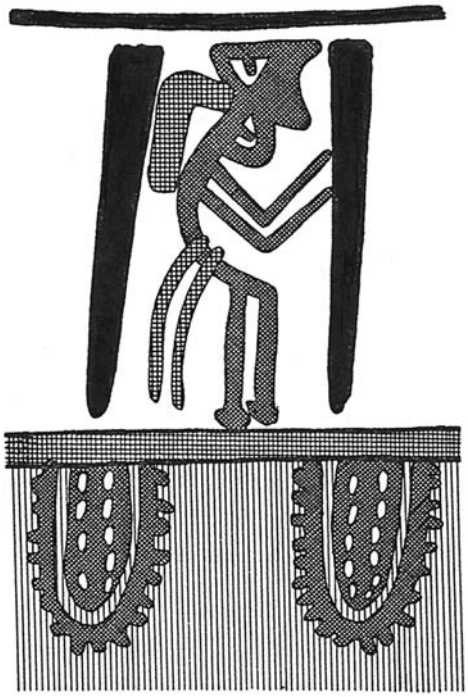


Fig. 5.70. HV-4 (representation of secular Farmer). After Roark 1965: fig. 64. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

would appear that this vessel is an archaistic example representing the last traces of the Harvester in the style.

HV-4: Farmers

This category consists of naturalistic depictions of Farmers as opposed to the mythical or sacred varieties of the Harvester described above. We could classify Farmers under the general category of human representations, but they are included here because of their close association with other Harvester motifs.

Farmers are found in the art from Phase 3 through Phase 6 and can be identified by several common traits that carry through the sequence. Farmers are predominantly male, drawn in profile and represented as a lightly dressed individual wearing a breechcloth and a head covering which extends down to the back, effectively covering the back of the neck (fig. 5.70). It is curious that Farmers are never shown wearing the conical stitched hat seen on Mythical Harvesters, but perhaps that is a misconception based on the perspective of the viewer. Mythical Harvesters are shown in a frontal, full-faced position, thus allowing the viewer to see the stitching, whereas Farmers are drawn in profile. The flap of the Farmer's headgear is drawn like a net, suggesting a woven material like cotton or perhaps a more open weave. Conical hats on Harvesters, in contrast, appear to be made of stiffer materials, perhaps animal skins. This is just speculation, however, because preserved examples of either type of headgear have not been found. Farmers are also identified by the long, polelike digging sticks that they hold in their hands; sometimes a bag or basket for collecting the harvest is seen on their backs.

The earliest Farmers seen in Phase 3 are full-bodied, like other human depictions seen at this time. As time goes on, however, Farmers become more sticklike in appearance, so that by Phase 6 they are represented by a series of identical skeletalized forms (fig. 5.70). The sample contains twenty-five representations of Farmers, eighteen dating to Phase 5. Farmers are also found as secondary motifs in complex iconograpic scenes. For example, groups of Farmers are seen enclosed within streamers emanating from the mouths of Harvesters or other mythical creatures (figs. 5.15 and 5.69). They are also a common element on vessels depicting musicians as the principal motif, in the form of small groups of Farmers engaged in dancing and drinking associated with agricultural rituals (fig. 1.7).

SN: Serpentine Creatures

This motif has been placed in the category of mythical creatures because of its anthropomorphic attributes and the presence of a mouth mask on one of the variants. The identity of this creature has been debated by scholars since Uhle's time. Uhle believed this creature to be a centipede rather than a snake because of the scalloped projections surrounding its body, a position accepted by Gayton and Kroeber (1927: 14) and by Philip Ainsworth Means (1931: 100). Seler (1923: 207) identified it as a "scalloped snake." Naturalistic snakes are frequent in Nasca art, but they usually are depicted with smooth skin, although some have hairlike projections emanating from the body. I believe that the Serpentine Creature symbolizes a snake that has been combined with a feline head and paws to produce a distinctive mythical creature.

The origins of the Serpentine Creature can be traced back to late Paracas textile iconography, where scalloped streamers are found attached to the clothing of many anthropomorphic figures or in the form of long tongues projecting from the mouths of these figures (e.g., Tello 1959: pls. 68–78; Paul 1990: fig. 5.14). While many of these "streamers" end in snakes' heads, some terminate in other creatures, such as killer whales. In Nasca ceramic art, these "streamers" take

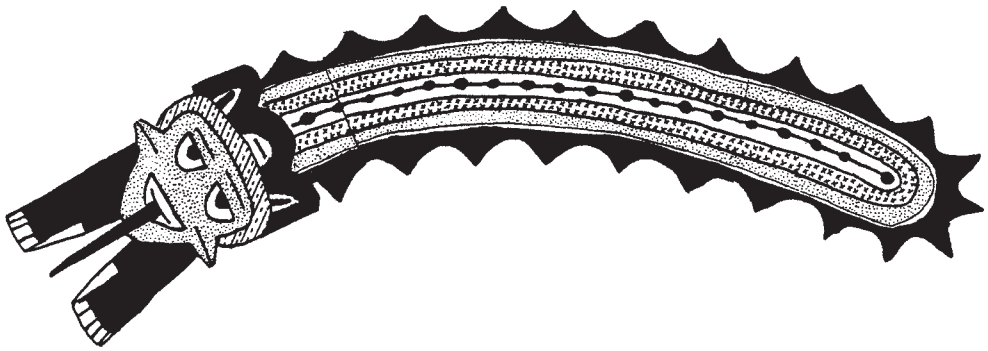


Fig. 5.71. SN-1 (unmasked Serpentine Creature). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 115.

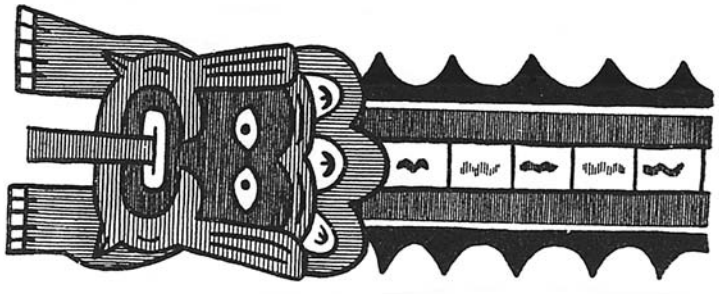


Fig. 5.72. SN-2 (masked Serpentine Creature). After Seler 1923: fig. 67.

the form of signifers on Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, with many of these signifers terminating in a variety of animal, fish, bird, or reptile forms. The Serpentine Creature may have been derived from the most common form of these signifers, which terminates in a feline head, becoming an independent motif. This new form, the Serpentine Creature, appears to be symbolic of snakes, commonly found protecting agricultural fields from predators such as mice. Like many other Nasca motifs, the Serpentine Creature seems to be closely connected to agriculture and fertility. This hypothesis is further supported by the presence of agricultural products drawn inside bands within the bodies of these creatures or attached to the tongue or peripheries of their bodies. Six varieties of Serpentine Creatures are described below.

SN-1: Unmasked Serpentine Creature

An early form of Serpentine Creature is a variety with a long, sinuous body composed of two or more multicolored bands bordered with a scalloped edge (fig. 5.71). The body of the snake encloses a decorated band, which, in the earliest examples, contains geometric elements (balls, ovals, rectangles) but in later specimens is replaced by identifiable plants. The head of the Serpentine Creature is equivalent to the head of the Mythical Spotted Cat, a creature that has been identified as representing the pampas cat (*Felis colocolo*). The creature's head has some human features, but most scholars would identify it as having primarily feline characteristics, such as two small ears on either side at the top of the head, what appear to be triangular whiskers projecting from the sides of the face, and a semicircular lobe on top of the head, sometimes decorated with an "X" or "+" motif. A short triangular tongue, sometimes in the form of a plant, protrudes from the creature's mouth. This variety (SN-1) is characterized by the lack of a mouth mask. Humanlike hands, often holding plants, extend from either side of the head. The sample contains fifty-three examples of SN-1, with thirty-four dating to Phase 3. They are first found in Phase 2 and extend through Phase 5, after which they disappear.

SN-2: Masked Serpentine Creature

This variety of the Serpentine Creature is virtually identical to SN-1, except that it is wearing a mouth mask with upturned lateral elements (fig. 5.72). It is not known how this added feature may have changed the symbolic meaning of the creature. Fewer specimens (twenty-seven) of this variety are found in the sample, with sixteen dating to Phase 3. Its distribution from Phases 2 through 5 is identical to that of SN-1.

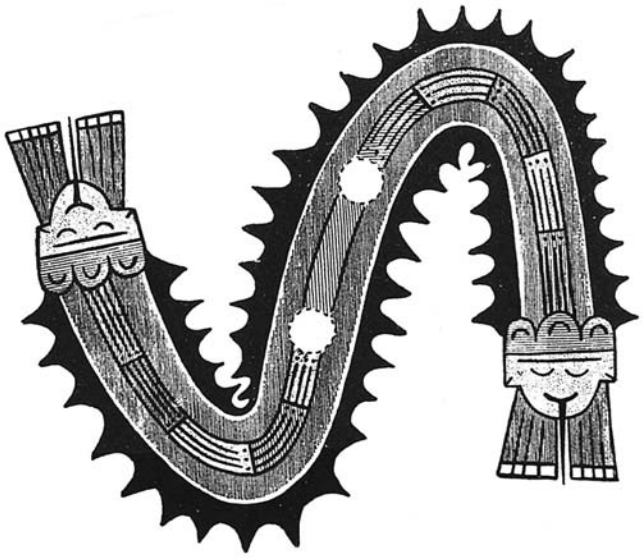


Fig. 5.73. SN-3 (two-headed Serpentine Creature). After Seler 1923: fig. 64.

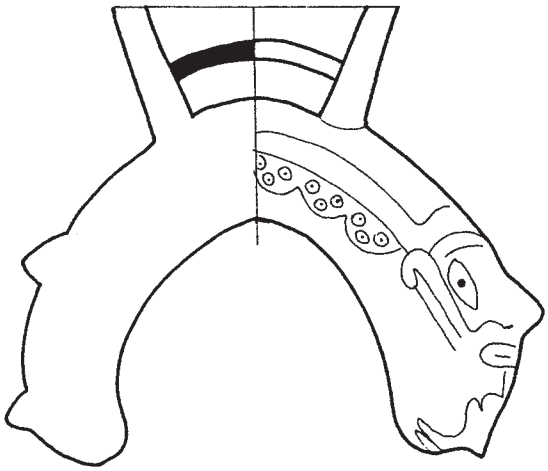


Fig. 5.74. SN-4 (effigy Serpentine Creature). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 127.

SN-3: Two-Headed Serpentine Creature

This variety of mythical serpentine is a two-headed form, with the heads attached to either end (fig. 5.73). In all other respects it has features identical to those of SN-1 and SN-2. Both masked and unmasked forms exist, but they are lumped together in this subtype. Some primitive early examples (dating to Phase 1) exist, but sixteen date to Phase 3. In all, twenty-two specimens occur in the sample, all falling in the first four phases and disappearing after that time. A new form of double-headed snake appears at the very end of the Nasca ceramic sequence, when Huari influence can be seen in the art. That variety is not included in this classification.

SN-4: Effigy Serpentine Creature

Three examples of effigy Serpentine Creatures are present in the sample: one from the Museo Regional de Ica, another in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the third in the Museo de América, Madrid (fig. 5.74). All are in the form of an effigy double spouted bottle. Four more specimens have since been added to my archive but are not part of the sample. Although very rare, these specimens give added insight into this motif.

SN-5: Miscellaneous Serpentine Creature

This category represents a miscellaneous group of Serpentine Creatures with added elements which prevent them from fitting easily into the other standard categories. Some specimens have necklaces or forehead ornaments of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being added to the standard form. Another version has human legs attached to the rear end of the snake, while yet another has a very foreshortened body. Each of these is relatively distinct and difficult to classify. The sample contains such specimens, dating from Phase 3 to Phase 5.

SN-6: Serpentine Band

Some vessels are encircled with a scalloped serpentine band, obviously an abbreviation of the entire Mythical Serpentine Creature motif (fig. 5.75). These have the traditional scalloped edges and must be distinguished from bands with long pointed or triangular projections which symbolize the fins of Mythical Killer Whales (fig. 5.56). Like their full-bodied counterparts, these serpentine bands enclose plants or geometric elements. Nineteen specimens are found in the sample, ranging in date from Phase 3 through Phase 5.

HT: Hunters

Richard Roark coined the name "Hunter" for a warrior-like figure whose image is restricted to pottery from Phase 6 (Roark 1965: 45, fig. 65). The Hunter is a special form of male warrior drawn horizontally on a vessel as if in flight (fig. 5.76). His head invariably points to the left, with the body and legs extending to the right (Lavalle 1986: 167). The

Fig. 5.75. SN-6 (symbolic serpentine band). After Seler 1923: fig. 70.

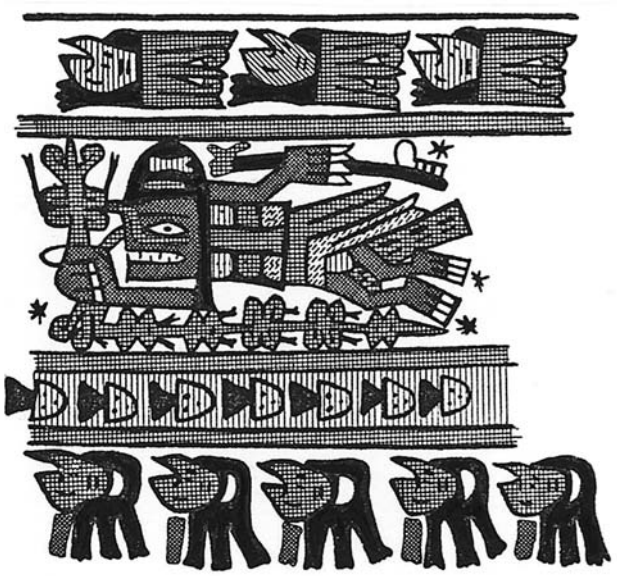


Fig. 5.76. HT (mythical creature known as the Hunter). After Roark 1965: fig. 65. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

Hunter differs from other warriors in a variety of ways. The head is almost always marked with a Z-shaped red facial marking from the bridge of the nose to underneath the large slanting eye. Snarling teeth are seen in the mouth. The hat is often a pillbox shape or in some cases hemispherical, often marked with an "X" design in the center. The Hunter's upper torso has a distinctive shirt with a central band flanked by three or more small trophy heads on either side. The breechcloth with its long flowing flaps is similar to those seen on Anthropomorphic Mythical Being varieties of this same phase.

The warrior's right hand, which appears to emerge out of the back of his head, holds an atlatl or spear-thrower, often naturalistic in form but sometimes proliferated into a geometric shape. The left hand, connected to an arm that emerges from beneath the creature, holds a long, sinuous element made of up jagged rays and volute rays. The identification of this object is speculative; it probably represents a trophy head or series of trophy heads, since small hair hanks are attached to the periphery of the element. Other possible interpretations would be spears or feather staffs.

The sample contains fifteen examples of the Hunter, all dating to Phase 6 and found on several shape categories, including double spout bottles, vases, and the rim of a head jar. Although related to other warrior representations, the Hunter is classified as a separate motif because of its many differences from the more naturalistic warriors. The peculiar markings on this individual's face are seen on some trophy heads and Trophy-Headed Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings (AMB-8).

JSG: Jagged-Staff God

The name of this motif is derived from Seler (1923: 267), who called the creature the Zackenstab-Dämon or Jagged-Staff Demon after the strange lightning-bolt elements held in its hands. Because of the presence of elements associated with other mythical beings (forehead ornaments, masks, *Spondylus* necklaces, bangles in the hair, etc.), I changed the name from "demon" to "god" to reflect its sacred nature. The manifestations of this motif vary greatly, however, with the only consistent feature being the jagged staff held in each of its hands.

This creature may have evolved from the Harvester, as Roark suggests (1965: 27). One or two specimens in the sample appear to depict naturalistic plant stalks held in the Harvester's hands that begin to take on the appearance of the Proliferous elements associated with the Jagged-Staff God. Enough significant differences exist between Harvesters and the Jagged-Staff God, however, to classify them as separate entities. I suspect that the Jagged-Staff God emerged in Phase 5 as part of the Bizarre Innovations that took place and continued through Phase 6, where the majority of the examples are found. Twenty-one specimens occur in the sample, seventeen of which date to Phase 6 and the remaining four to Phase 5.

The Jagged-Staff God is depicted as a male human holding jagged "lightning bolts" or more correctly Proliferous elements (jagged rays) in its two hands (fig. 5.77). Phase 5 examples are all depicted frontally, while many of the Phase

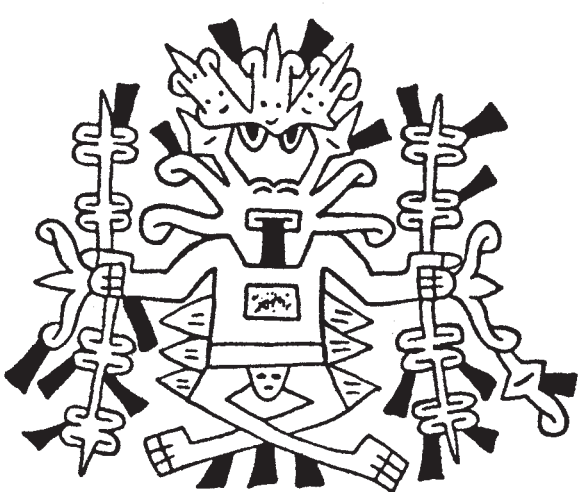


Fig. 5.77. JSG (the Jagged-Staff God). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: fig. 65.

6 specimens are shown in profile. The most common depiction of those frontally oriented is an individual with an extended body, as if standing, but with the lower legs characteristically crossed: it would be anatomically impossible to stand in such a position. Early examples have a tripartite headdress and a long streamer extending tonguelike from the mouth that bifurcates near the waist to form two separate elements terminating in snakes' heads. One or two examples wear the forehead ornaments and bangles of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, while others have a shortened tongue or no tongue at all.

In Phase 6 the examples are almost evenly divided between frontal specimens (nine) and those in profile (eight). The former are much like their Phase 5 ancestors, with the exception of more variability in the face and upper torso and the loss of the bifurcated tongue/streamer on some specimens. Only those that face frontal demonstrate characteristics of a sacred nature. A few have black, yellow, or gray areas around the eyes, like some of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings. The Jagged-Staff God representations in profile are another story. Many of these take on characteristics of warrior representations and may form the prototype of the feathered-staff warrior of Phase 7. A continuing enigma is the correct identification of the jagged rays held in the hands. Do these represent plants originally held by the Harvester or are they perhaps symbols for weapons or trophy heads? Could there have been a change in the ideology of the symbol from one representing plants to one denoting warfare? Agriculture, warfare, and trophy head acquisition are all interconnected with fertility, so the shift in ideology is more plausible than a Western perspective may suggest. The Jagged-Staff God disappears at the end of Phase 6, having had a very brief existence in the sequence.

MKY: Mythical Monkeys

One of the more enigmatic themes in Nasca art is the monkey, which is not indigenous to the coastal valleys of Peru. Both naturalistic and mythical depictions of monkeys are present in the art. Naturalistic monkeys and their origins are discussed below (ANM: Animals). It is easy to understand our fascination with monkeys, not only because of their anatomical similarity to humans but also because of their intelligence, agility, and compatible social behavior. On a symbolic level, monkeys "may have been seen as protectors or as symbols of water because of their association with places where water is available" (Reinhard 1992: 297).

Depictions of Mythical Monkeys are first seen on Paracas and early Nasca embroidered textiles, where human figures are often endowed with primate feet (the large toe is much shorter than the remaining digits and the appendage appears to be capable of grasping — see Peters 1991: 282–285). Most depictions of monkeys in early Nasca ceramic art are naturalistic, but monkeys take on supernatural attributes beginning in Phase 5. Many are painted clutching plants in their hands, as if to suggest some relationship with agriculture and fertility. Others are portrayed as if mimicking human warriors, holding weapons and trophy heads. A new variety of Mythical Monkey suddenly appears in Phase 7: the "Affendämon" (Ape Demon) as it was called by the German scholars Eduard Seler and Karl Schlesier. In its earliest and most naturalistic form the Mythical Monkey appears in an active "jumping" or "springing" posture, holding Proliferous rays, probably representing plants, in its hands. Later in Phase 7 an abstract version of the Mythical Monkey appears on the pottery. This creature has lost its head, and the stumplike neck is stuck into the ground, much like the proverbial ostrich burying its head in the sand.

Mythical Monkey heads appear as an independent item in the art beginning in Phase 7 but become the only form of the monkey in Phase 8. In my classification they are considered a separate subtype and are designated MKY-6 (discussed below). The Mythical Monkey reappears as the "Humped Animal" in the Middle Horizon after undergoing a major reinterpretation as a result of the introduction of highland traits (see Menzel 1964: 28–29). Monkeys are found in the art of other Peruvian cultures such as Chancay and Chimú, but only in the Nasca culture did monkeys become incorporated into the religious iconography to such

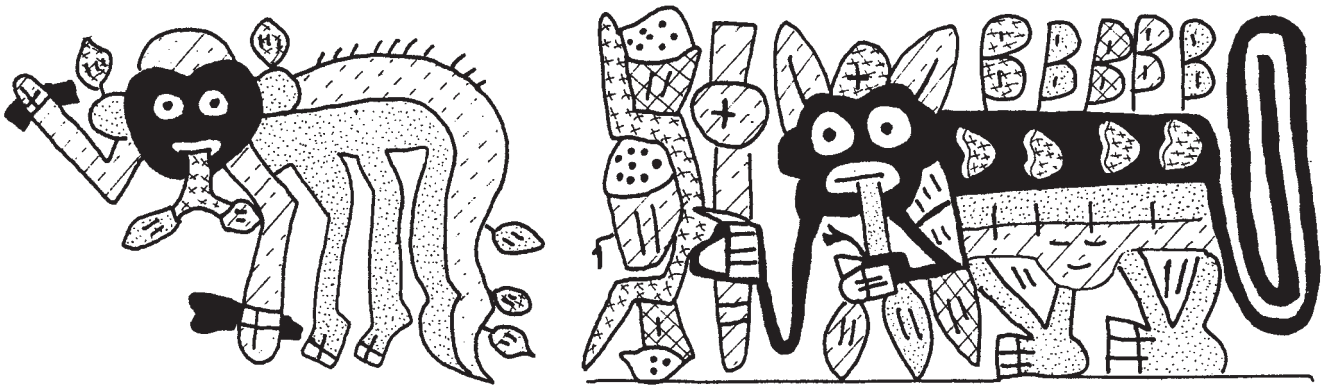


Fig. 5.78. (*left*) MKY-1 (early Mythical Monkey). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 335.

Fig. 5.79. (*right*) MKY-2 (anthropomorphic Monkey). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 336.

a great extent. Based on their manner of depiction, several varieties of Mythical Monkeys have been identified.

MKY-1: Early Mythical Monkey

Mythical Monkeys in this category are distinguished from their animal counterparts either by the presence of human attributes or by sacred paraphernalia associated with other mythical beings such as forehead ornaments or *Spondylus* shell necklaces (fig. 5.78). They are identified as primates by their long curled tails, yet they are invariably associated with agricultural plants. Another feature that links them to fertility is the presence of pollywogs on many of the examples. The thirteen specimens exhibit a fair amount of variation. All but two date to Nasca Phase 5, and these other two may be antecedents dating to Phase 4.

MKY-2: Anthropomorphic Monkey

Although similar to MKY-1, Mythical Monkeys in this category are painted to look like humans engaged in human activities. Several are "monkey warriors" engaged in battle with ordinary human soldiers, while others mimic farmers holding plants and agricultural implements (fig. 5.79). The heads and tails are clearly primate, but other body parts often look more human than simian.

MKY-3: Mythical Monkey or Affendämon

The Mythical Monkey, first illustrated by Eduard Seler (1923: fig. 254), was initially identified as a "jumping" or "springing" demon ("Springender oder Fliegender Dämon") by Heinrich Ubbelohde-Döering (1925/26: 63) but later called by him a "Demon in an Ape/Monkey Mask" (Dämon in Affenmasken) and identified as a rain god, based on its similarity to representations of the Mesoamerican rain deity Tlaloc (Ubbelohde-Döering 1931: 3). Karl Schlesier (1959: figs. 201–204) illustrates numerous examples of this creature, which he renames the "Affendämon" (Ape/Monkey Demon), retaining its association with rain (ibid.: 74–75).

My sample contains almost twenty-five examples of the Affendämon (MKY-3), almost all of which date to Phase 7, with a few conservative forms continuing into Phase 8. The Affendämon is a very distinctive motif, consisting of the sinuous body and curled tail of a monkey surmounted by a very distinctive head (fig. 5.80). This head, often turned 180 degrees to look back toward its tail, has a mouth filled with jagged, bucked teeth, quite unlike the teeth of a naturalistic monkey and more like the jaws of a killer whale (pl. 6). A small pug nose rises above the mouth area. A single eye, eyebrow, and curled ear are found near the top of the head. The Affendämon wears a hat or forehead ornament. Its hands grasp Proliferous staffs, which may represent plants or perhaps weapons.

Although this monkey figure may be associated with agricultural fertility and/or water, as suggested earlier by Ubbelohde-Döering and Schlesier, it also has a military aspect. The creature has the same running stance seen in warrior representations in Phase 7 as well as a plethora of "fillers" or elements that surround the body. Many of these floating elements appear to be missile stones or spears, also seen in representations of warriors. This method of portraying motion in the figures and the use of floating fillers are new to the Nasca style in Phase 7; the source of these innovations may be contact with the contemporaneous Moche culture of the north coast. Indeed the Mythical Monkey

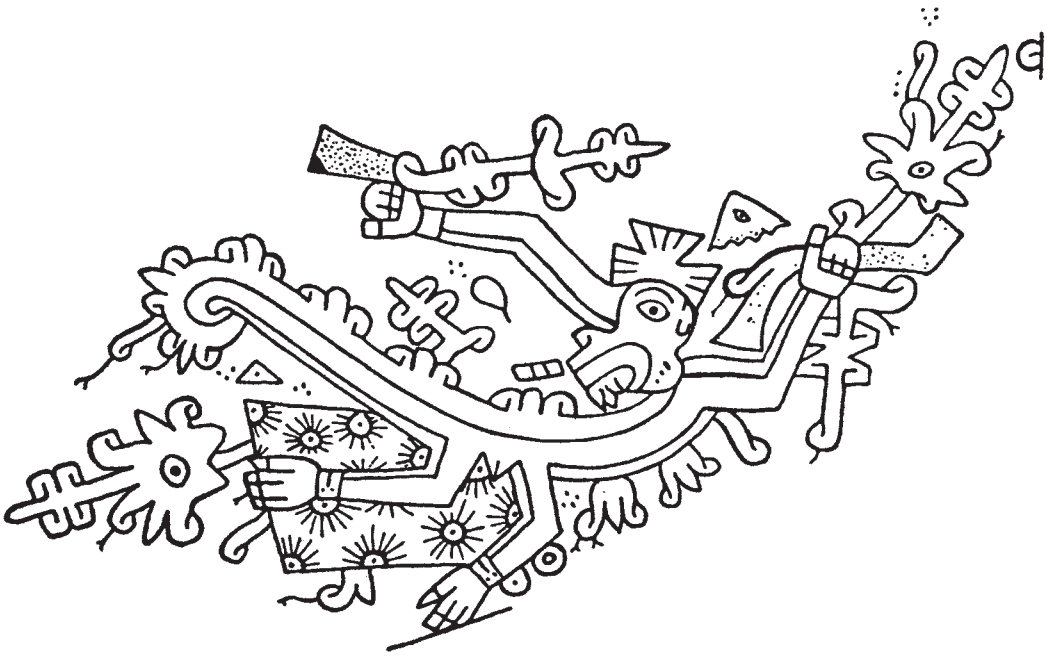


Fig. 5.80. MKY-3 (traditional Mythical Monkey or Affendämon). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: fig. 22.

figure itself, which appears so suddenly in the iconography, may itself be derived from the Moche "Humped Animal" or "Moon-Animal" (Bruhns 1976).

In addition to Ubbelohde-Döering's interpretation of the Affendämon as a "rain god," others have incorporated this motif in their arguments relating to Nasca astronomical knowledge and calendrical systems. Lorenzo Roselló Truel used the Affendämon, which he calls the "Deidad-Mono-Adornado" (the Ornamented Monkey God), as a key to the understanding of the function of the Nasca Lines (Roselló 1988). Briefly, he relates this creature to the astronomical cycle of the sun and constellations that occurs between the June 21 solstice and the September 21 equinox. By superimposing the Affendämon figure over the constellations of stars, he argued, Nasca priests were able to predict the major annual cycles and develop a form of calendar. Maria Reiche also used the large geoglyph of the monkey in the Pampa de San José in her arguments about the astronomical and calendrical function of the Nasca Lines (Reiche 1959). In another article, Reiche (1962) used representations of monkeys on a Nasca vessel to argue that they represented two seasons, based on artistic differences in the drawing of the creature. On one side of the vessel she saw the monkey and accompanying parrot as representing a time of bounty, while on the other side she saw them in a slightly different form, reflecting a time of hunger and want. Although I am not convinced by either Reiche's or Roselló's interpretation, it is interesting that in both arguments the monkey is related to agricultural abundance and fertility, either directly or through connections with an agricultural calendar.

MKY-4: Decapitated Mythical Monkey

In Nasca Phase 7 another variety of the Mythical Monkey appears, usually painted solid black on a white background, with its back and tail arched upward and its headless neck pointing into the ground (fig. 5.81). Human trophy heads are often represented on the container, and occasionally the decapitated head of the Mythical Monkey itself. Also drawn on the vessel in many cases is a series of circular elements with a central dot, much like an eye, but often with lines radiating from beneath them. Like its more complete counterpart MKY-3, this creature seems to have a closer association with symbols of warfare and decapitation. For example, the symbols for earth or terrain are seen between its legs, much as human warriors are depicted in the art.

It is unusual that this form of the Mythical Monkey seems to be contemporaneous with the traditional Mythical Monkey (MKY-3). Lorenzo Roselló Truel (1988) tried to explain this dichotomy in calendrical terms by arguing that the Affendämon lost its head between June and September as part of an astronomical cycle and that this in turn reflected rites of decapitation that took place during this period. While it seems clear that this form of the Mythical

Fig. 5.81. (*left*) MKY-4 (decapitated Mythical Monkey). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: fig. 23b.

Fig. 5.82. (*right*) MKY-5 (the Humped Animal of the Middle Horizon). After Kauffmann Doig 1983: 398.

Monkey has some association with trophy head rituals, the reason for the monkey's decapitation is still a mystery. All eleven specimens in the sample date to Phase 7.

MKY-5: Humped Animal

In Nasca Phase 9, which dates to the beginning of the Middle Horizon, a new monkeylike creature reappears in the art. Referred to as the "Humped Animal" by Menzel and others, it retains the long arched tail of the Phase 7 Affendämon yet adds many new characteristics. A new form of head, including a curled snout and elongated jaws, marks this new creature (fig. 5.82). Remnants of the Affendämon's hat can be seen in the plumed ornament on the Humped Animal's head, and space fillers in the form of floating balls or missile stones also connect the two creatures. Menzel (1964: 29) feels that the Mythical Monkey may have evolved into the Humped Animal after Nasca traits spread to the highlands in Phase 7 and mixed with those of the local Chakipampa style. If this was the case, the coastal monkey was transformed into the highland feline in this process, and the Humped Animal returned to the coast under a new guise.

MKY-6: Decapitated Mythical Monkey Head

At the end of Phase 7 Mythical Monkeys with full bodies disappear and are replaced by representations of the creature's head. This new method of depiction suggests several explanations. The heads may be the product of decapitation, analogous to human trophy heads, which were quite prevalent in the art style up to Phase 8 but which now decrease dramatically in number. Since monkeys are anatomically and behaviorally so similar to humans, perhaps the monkey heads symbolically replace these human heads for some unknown reason. Decapitated Mythical Monkey bodies (MKY-4) seen earlier in Phase 7 give credence to this explanation. Emphasis on the head may merely be a form of abstraction, however, similar to the abbreviation of the Mythical Killer Whale in the Bloody Mouth form during Phase 5.

The earliest Decapitated Mythical Monkey Heads are relatively naturalistic and are oriented vertically on the sides of vessels (fig. 5.83). Their most characteristic features are large buck teeth that literally fill and overflow the mouth area. The mouth is outlined by lips that form part of a mask, shown in profile, which extends toward the back of the head. Most of these creatures have a small pug nose and some type of ornamentation on the head, usually a plume with three elements. By Phase 8, which is the date for the majority of these representations, the heads assume an abstract form; their orientation shifts, so that the mouth and lips point increasingly upward to the top of the vessel. The large teeth disappear and are replaced by white outlined lips (fig. 5.84). In Phase 8 many of these Mythical Monkey heads are painted within circular frames on the sides of vessels, which in turn are surrounded by black paint, thus spotlighting the design elements within their frames.

To complicate our understanding of this unusual motif, a very similar depiction is sometimes used to represent the

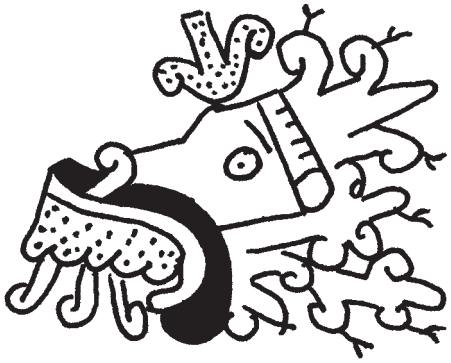


Fig. 5.83. MKY-6 (early decapitated Mythical Monkey head). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 10-A. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Fig. 5.84. MKY-6 (late decapitated Mythical Monkey head). After Seler 1923: fig. 255.

Mythical Killer Whale in Phase 8 (see the discussion of KW-9). Although depictions of the two creatures sometimes intergrade, each has its own specific method of portrayal.

TH: Trophy Heads

Human trophy heads are one of the most common yet important motifs found on Nasca pottery, and a discussion of them is essential for the understanding of Nasca religious practices and world view. Decapitation and the ritual use of trophy heads are an Andean tradition long predating the Nasca culture. Seven decapitated heads and two bodies without heads were excavated at the Preceramic site of Asia, the first indication of this practice in the Peruvian area (Engel 1963: 67). Trophy heads are seen in the art and iconography of the Chavín culture, at the site of Cerro Sechin in the Casma Valley, and in the Pucara, Moche, and Huari cultures (see Browne et al. 1993 for more details). Even the Inca, not usually associated with the practice of head taking, sometimes used the skulls of their enemies as trophies, from which they drank *chicha* (a fermented beer made from corn) in celebration of a victory (Time-Life Books 1992: 16). The immediate precursors of Nasca trophy heads are seen on Paracas and early Nasca embroidered textiles, where mythical creatures are often seen holding or eating trophy heads. Numerous Paracas trophy heads have been found in archaeological contexts, some of which are on display in the Museo Regional de Ica (Pezzia 1968: 99–105). Nasca religion, including the taking of heads, is clearly a continuation of well-established practices seen in the ancestral Paracas culture.

Although the function of Nasca trophy heads has been discussed in chapter 1, a short review of the preparation of the heads for ritual use is in order. Decapitation occurred during battle or shortly afterward; the head was severed from the body with a sharp obsidian knife. Archaeological specimens of these knives have been found, and a decapitation scene can clearly be seen on a Nasca 7 vessel in the Amano Museum in Lima (pl. 18; fig. 4.1). Next the cervical vertebra was broken off to expose the foramen magnum, which in turn was enlarged by fracturing the base of the skull to produce a hole large enough to remove the brain and other soft tissue (fig. 4.3). A hole was bored or drilled through the forehead for the attachment of a cotton carrying rope, which was secured in the inside of the head with a wooden toggle (figs. 4.1 to 4.3). Sometimes the cranium was filled with cotton rags and with seeds or plants. The eyes were removed, and the sockets were filled with cotton cloth. Finally the lips were pinned shut with one or two thorns from the *huarango* tree (fig. 4.1). A detailed study of eighteen trophy heads collected by Alfred Kroeber during his expeditions to Peru in 1925–1926 has recently been published, which provides a thorough description of the process, the specimens, and the accompanying artifacts (Williams et al. 2001). Ceramic vessels, frequently referred to as "head jars," often are faithful reproductions of actual trophy heads (fig. 5.137). Pinned lips, a bloody foramen magnum, and flaps of skin from the severed neck are carefully modeled in the ceramics (fig. 5.102). In several cases headless bodies have been found with head jars as a substitute for the individual's missing head (Carmichael 1988; Silverman 1993a).

What was the function of these decapitated heads in Nasca society? The term "trophy head" implies that they were spoils of war — symbols of a warrior's prowess and resulting prestige. The display of body parts as trophies following battle can be seen in a number of societies, from the scalps taken by many North American Indian tribes, sometimes displayed on poles (Driver 1961: 359, 362, 367, 370),

to the heads decapitated by most tribes of the Northwest Coast of Canada and Alaska (Driver 1961: 362). Other body parts such as arms and hands were sometimes included on this grisly list, but the head of an enemy was often considered a prime target. Were Nasca trophy heads used in this fashion?

Some iconographic evidence suggests public display of Nasca trophy heads. An interesting collared jar in the collections of the Museo de América in Madrid shows a series of trophy heads hanging by their carrying ropes from decorated poles (see Proulx 1989a: fig. 12) Another vessel in the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia in Lima has a similar scene (specimen C-11515). Some early Nasca vessels display dismembered hands and arms as well. Yet, despite these scenes, I argue that Nasca trophy heads were primarily ritual in nature.

The strong correlation in the iconography between trophy heads and mythical beings and the careful preparation of the heads argue for a ritual rather than a secular use. Max Uhle (1901) was the first to note a similarity between Nasca trophy heads and shrunken heads of the Jívaro tribe of Ecuador and Peru. Tello (1918) and Proulx (1971, 1983, 1989a) have also expanded on this ethnographic analogy. The Jívaro believed that they were born with two forms of souls, one of which (the Arutam Wakani) protected them from illness and death. The power of the Arutam Wakani to protect ebbed through time, however, and had to be periodically replenished. Jívaro males engaged in murder and head-taking in order to be eligible to acquire additional Arutam souls (Harner 1962, 1972). Under the influence of hallucinogenic drugs, which gave courage and allowed them to visualize the souls of their victims, the men would raid neighboring groups of Jívaro and murder individuals or families in order to acquire these souls. Heads were taken because they were believed to harbor an avenging spirit, the Muisak, which could harm the killer. The Muisak was contained in the victim's head and could exit only through the mouth of the dead person. Thus the Jívaro carefully prepared the trophy head, sewing up the lips in order to prevent the escape of the Muisak. A rope through the forehead allowed the shrunken head to be worn around the neck during rituals. The Muisak lost its power after a year or two, at which time the killer could safely dispose of the head.

It has been suggested that the use of wood thorns to pin shut the lips of Nasca trophy heads had a similar function — to prevent harm to the warrior from a spirit (thought to reside in the dead person's head) which uses the mouth as a passageway (Uhle 1901; Tello 1918; Proulx 1971, 1983, 1989a). But here the analogy ends. The Nasca did not shrink the heads like the Jívaro; nor do we believe that they practiced ritual warfare for protection against disease. Ethnographic analogy does allow us to suggest a reasonable explanation for the pinned lips seen on these specimens. John Verano (1995: 204) has recently proposed a more mundane reason for the pinning of the lips, however — to preserve the proper articulation of the jaw with the remainder of the head by preventing retraction during the desiccation of the head. To me it seems unreasonable to think that these slender thorns could hold the mandible in place after death, since the flesh of the lips and the tendons of the jaw would decay. The condyles of the mandible would need to be tied to the skull to achieve this effect. Thus I still maintain that the pinning of the lips was ritual in nature.

What was the ritual function of Nasca trophy heads? The decapitation and careful preparation of the trophy head seem to be closely connected with rituals associated with agricultural fertility. The iconography includes a number of depictions of plants sprouting from the mouths of trophy heads (fig. 5.104). The Moche, contemporaries of the Nasca, seem to have engaged in an elaborate sacrificial ritual involving decapitation of prisoners of war, whose blood was collected in a cup and offered to a warrior-priest (Alva and Donnan 1993: fig. 143). The purpose of this activity also seems to have been to promote agricultural fertility. In the case of the Nasca, the individual's head rather than the blood seems to have been more important, although some scholars equate blood with water in Nasca iconography. The Nasca buried their trophy heads together in caches, perhaps after ritual ceremonies were completed. The best evidence of such activity is a large cache of forty-eight trophy heads discovered by David Browne and colleagues at Cerro Carapo in the Palpa Valley (Browne et al. 1993). Other caches were found at Tambo Viejo (Riddell 1986) and Chaviña (Coelho 1972; Neira and Coelho 1972/73) in the Acarí Valley. A scene portraying the ritual burial of a group of trophy heads can be found on an extraordinary vessel in the collections of the Museo Nacional de Antropología y Arqueología in Lima (fig. 5.117; pl. 21). This vessel illustrates two individuals (one wearing a mask, the other holding clubs) standing before a pyramidal mound containing three trophy heads. In the same chamber with the heads is a cup, perhaps containing *chicha* or a hallucinogenic brew. A feline hovers over the mound (also see Proulx 1989a: figs. 14, 15). Another vessel portraying a cache of buried trophy heads has recently been discovered (pl. 22).

Although it seems clear that human trophy heads were taken for ritual use, the manner in which they were obtained has been a matter of dispute for some time. As I have argued elsewhere (Proulx 1989a, 2001c), we have ample evidence that the Nasca were a militant society constantly involved in warfare, probably for territorial expansion or for control of scarce resources. I believe that the victims of decapitation were members of neighboring groups who were killed in battle and beheaded during warfare or, if taken prisoner, shortly afterward. The following evidence supports this view. Battle scenes are common, especially in Phase 7, and some vividly portray victims being decapitated with obsidian knives during the course of the battle (pl. 18). These victims often have facial painting different from that of the victors, and different-colored paints are often used to distinguish the two groups of combatants (fig. 5.115). If it is true that the political organization of the Nasca was in the form of chiefdoms centered in individual valleys or even tributaries in the same valley system, the aggressors could either be fighting members of their own culture who belonged to an opposing chiefdom or be fighting neighboring ethnic groups whose territory they coveted. It is difficult to believe that they would be decapitating members of their own group for ritual purposes.

In addition to actual battle scenes, the iconography is replete with weapons: slings, clubs, spears, and atlatls. Military costume can be identified, including feather staffs carried into battle, helmets, and other distinctive ornamentation unique to warriors. This suggests the presence of military specialists — soldiers — not priests or shamans engaged in a ritual practice. The vast majority of the trophy heads are those of young males of military age; women's and children's trophy heads are rare (see Verano 1995). If decapitation had been solely a ritual event, we would expect to find a more balanced age and sex distribution, as is the case in other societies where human sacrifice is practiced.

Some scholars (Coelho 1972, among others) have suggested that the battles were only ritual in nature, with the main purpose of obtaining victims for sacrifice. While this may be true for the historic Jívaro (Harner 1972) and the Ilongot (Rosaldo 1980), it does not seem to be the primary motivation of the Nasca people, for the reasons discussed above. The Moche on the north coast also practiced decapitation and collected blood for ritual use, but we have overwhelming evidence that they expanded their kingdom through military means, and the ceramic iconography depicts warriors engaged in battle and decapitation.

José Pablo Baraybar (1989) takes this argument a step further by suggesting that prisoners captured in these wars were ritually tortured by having incisions cut in the scalp to cause bloodletting prior to decapitation (the scalp is rich in capillaries and bleeds profusely when cut). This view suggests that blood rather than the head itself was the object of Nasca ritual. As evidence he cites a few trophy heads with cut marks in the bone. Baraybar's hypothesis has not been tested on the majority of the known Nasca trophy heads. John Verano (1995: 212 – 213) and Sonia Guillén (cited in Silverman and Proulx 2002: 233) maintain that the cut marks observed on the various trophy heads are the result of peeling away the skin during the process of preparing the heads for ritual use. While blood is frequently depicted in Nasca iconography, it is almost always seen in association with trophy head decapitation. The human head is the center of the ritual, not the blood.

Therefore it is my contention that the decapitation and the subsequent use of trophy heads were ritual in nature but that the battles during which the victims were captured and killed were basically secular. Perhaps the closest analogy would be to Classic Maya warfare, where the kings of one city battled those of another city. The result of a successful conquest was the addition of territory and prestige for the victorious leader and humiliation, death, and decapitation for the loser. Warfare had both secular and ritual components among the Nasca, as among the Maya.

TH-1: Painted Trophy Heads

Over 175 vessels in the sample have trophy heads as the primary motif, while over 300 more have them as secondary motifs. Trophy heads are found throughout the entire sequence but reach their height of popularity during Phase 5, which sees an increase in military themes in general. In the earliest phases of the Nasca sequence, trophy heads are usually associated with mythical beings — grasped in their hands (the AMB), beaks (the HB), or jaws (the KW). They seem to be offerings made to these creatures. Depictions of warriors are infrequent in the early phases. Usually they hold weapons rather than trophy heads, but a number of warriors clutching heads are known. Beginning in Phase 5, the number and variety of trophy heads increase dramatically, and this continues through Phase 7. At the same time trophy heads are increasingly associated with warriors, although they remain essential components of mythical beings as well. After Phase 7 trophy heads rapidly decline in frequency but never disappear entirely from the sample.

The earliest painted trophy heads tend to be drawn in

Fig. 5.85. TH-1-A (frontal trophy head). After Seler 1923: fig. 163.

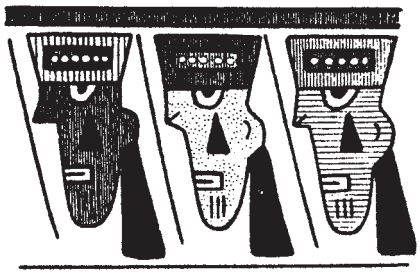


Fig. 5.86. TH-1-B (profile trophy head). After Seler 1923: fig. 188.

profile, although more frontal examples are found in the earliest (Monumental) phases than later. Both varieties tend to be drawn very naturalistically but have a good deal of variation in their individual attributes. For example, the pupils of the eyes are usually pendant from the upper eyelid (Carmichael argues that this trait symbolizes death); but others have pupils centered in the orbit, while still others have closed eyes. Trophy heads drawn in profile have their noses high on the face, near the forehead. These noses gradually migrate down the face over time, and by Phase 4 the nose often merges with the upper lip of the individual (see Proulx 1968: pl. 5). Pinned lips are present only on frontal trophy heads, and less than half of them have this feature. Profile trophy heads never have pinned lips. Carrying ropes are found on both frontal and profile heads, but again not all specimens are endowed with this trait.

Radical changes begin to occur in Phase 5, coinciding with the introduction of Bizarre Innovation and the beginning of proliferation in the style. Some profile heads, especially those found incorporated into the bodies of mythical beings, become rectangular forms which lack noses and emphasize the mouth and eye. Virtually all trophy heads are drawn in profile from this point on, except for a few minor categories. Proliferous elements are introduced into depictions of trophy heads, resulting in the appearance of a wide amount of variation in Phase 5 that continues through Phase 7.

In Phases 6 and 7 the majority of the trophy heads are oriented horizontally, with the chin to the viewer's left and the headdress to the right. Often the proliferated headdress, which has replaced the naturalistic hair of the victim, is larger in volume than the face itself. Many of these late trophy heads have long, pointed noses that merge into a mouth line (if indeed a mouth is even present). For the first time, some of these heads are associated with red dots or patches representing blood. This symbolism was never present during the Monumental phases.

In Phases 8 and 9 recognizable trophy heads diminish greatly in number. Many of the "geometric" designs seen on these Disjunctive ceramics are probably trophy head symbols; however, an adequate study of these late motifs has yet to be accomplished.

In the course of digitizing the many slides containing painted trophy heads, it became apparent that this motif had many more variations than these generalized statements suggest. Nineteen subcategories of painted trophy heads can be distinguished.

TH-1-A: Frontal Trophy Head

This variety is a frontal trophy head, usually drawn with pinned lips, hair hanks, and pendant eyes (fig. 5.85). These heads may be clutched in the hands of a mythical creature or be depicted as an independent theme. A carrying rope is often shown, sometimes in the form of a sling. Most examples date to the early phases of the sequence.

TH-1-B: Early Profile Trophy Head

This subtype of trophy head is drawn in profile (fig. 5.86); it is naturalistic, with a prominent nose, mouth, and eye.

TH-1-C: Rectangular Trophy Head

A new form of profile trophy head, rectangular in form with a flattened face, appeared in Phase 5 (fig. 5.87). This new shape was developed to enable the heads to be placed between upright elements such as Killer Whale fins and along the borders of signifers on Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings.

TH-1-D: Proliferous Profile Trophy Head

This category consists of a large and varied group of abstract or Proliferous trophy heads found in Phases 5, 6, and 7. Its primary defining characteristic is the presence of some form of proliferation or abstraction common to these phases (fig. 5.88).

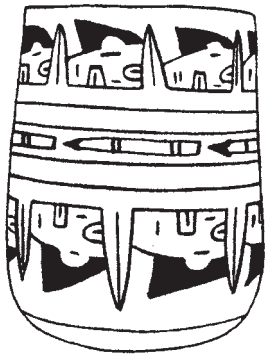


Fig. 5.87. TH-1-C (rectangular trophy head). After Seler 1923: fig. 196.

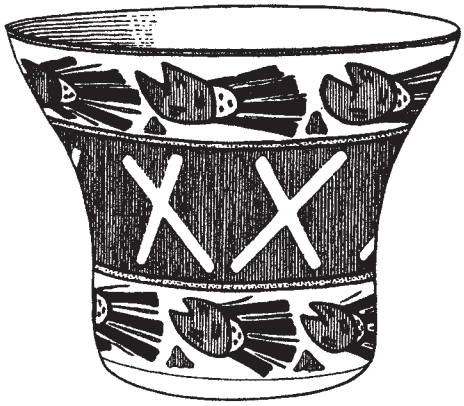


Fig. 5.88. TH-1-D (Proliferous profile trophy head). After Seler 1923: fig. 185.

Fig. 5.89. TH-1-E (Disjunctive trophy head). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 4g.

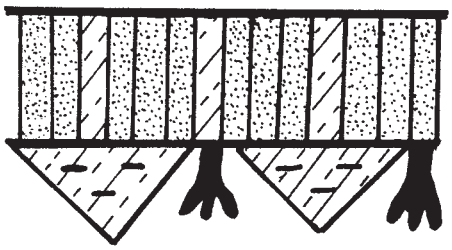


Fig. 5.90. TH-1-F (triangular trophy head). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 567.

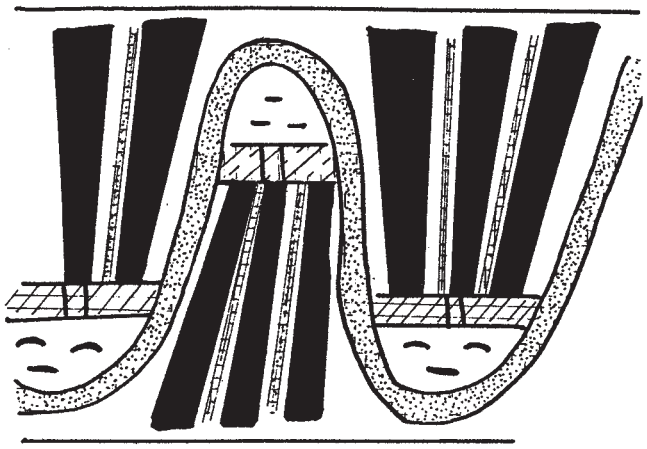


Fig. 5.91. TH-1-G (elongated frontal trophy head). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 535.

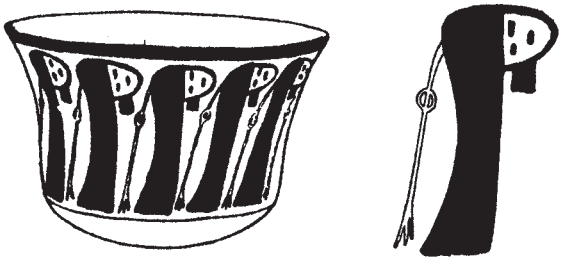


Fig. 5.92. TH-1-H (small trophy head with long black hair). After Seler 1923: fig. 171.

Fig. 5.93. TH-1-I (rectangular trophy head with flanking hair hanks). After Seler 1923: fig. 175.

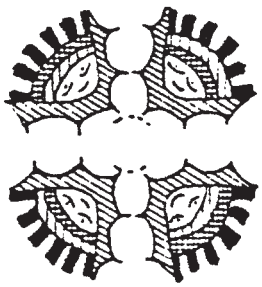


Fig. 5.94. TH-1-J (quartet trophy heads). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 3-12.

Fig. 5.95. TH-1-K (small trophy head with elongated vertical tongue). After Seler 1923: fig. 166.

Fig. 5.96. TH-1-L (small horizontal trophy head). After Seler 1923: fig. 176.

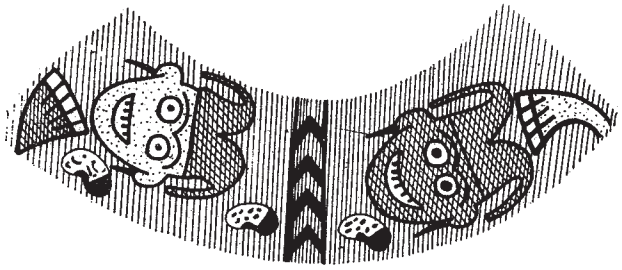


Fig. 5.97. TH-1-M (late frontal trophy head). After Kauffmann Doig 1983: 399, fig. 2.

TH-1-E Disjunctive Trophy Head

Similar to Proliferous profile trophy heads, these late abstract trophy heads are drawn in profile, often with long wavy hair streaming from the top of the figure. They are found in Phases 8 and 9 and are derived from Middle Horizon influences (fig. 5.89).

TH-1-F: Triangular Trophy Head

These trophy heads are small triangles, with eyes and mouth in the form of dots or dashes (fig. 5.90). They are often used as fillers or borders.

TH-1-G: Elongated Frontal Trophy Head

This variety is similar to TH-1-A except that the semicircular face has dot or dash features, with three parallel hanks of hair that flow from the top of the head (fig. 5.91).

TH-1-H: Small Trophy Head with Long Black Hair

This variety dates to the middle phases of the style (Phases 5 and 6). It consists of a small semicircular head, usually turned in a horizontal position, with dot eyes and mouth (fig. 5.92). A thick shock of black hair is attached, often longer than the face itself.

TH-1-I: Rectangular Trophy Head with Flanking Hair Hanks

This type, dating mainly to Phase 5, is a front-facing head with a squared forehead and a bulging chin. Parallel flanking hair hanks are found on either side of the head (fig. 5.93).

TH-1-J: Quartet Trophy Heads

This motif consists of four triangular-shaped trophy heads arranged symmetrically around the bottom of a bowl or on the walls of a collared jar (fig. 5.94).

TH-1-K: Small Trophy Head with Elongated Vertical Tongue

The sample contains a wide variety of small trophy heads of differing shapes. The common features used to classify them into this category are a long, thin tongue extending downward or a long tress of hair attached to the lower portion of the head (fig. 5.95).

TH-1-L: Small Horizontal Head

This is a type of trophy head similar to TH-1-H, but with triangular hair tresses that extend horizontally (fig. 5.96). These trophy heads are usually found in multiples, often in bands above or below a major supernatural creature. They date to Phases 5 and 6.

TH-1-M: Late Frontal Trophy Head

In contrast to early frontal trophy heads (TH-1-A), these examples date to the last phases of the Nasca style, some reflecting highland influences from Middle Horizon cultures. This variety always has an open mouth, exposing a full set of teeth. Most have a thick head of hair, which curls into a point (fig. 5.97).

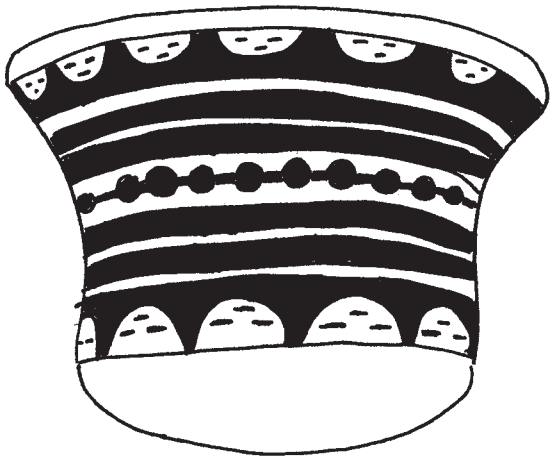


Fig. 5.98. TH-1-N (semicircular trophy head). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 16-10428. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

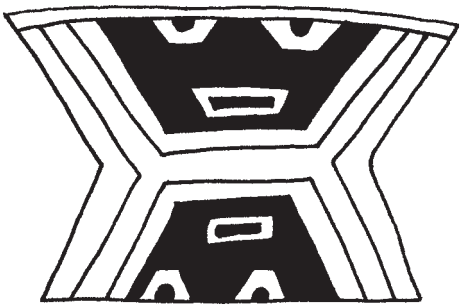


Fig. 5.99. TH-1-O (trapezoidal trophy head). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 4-08570. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

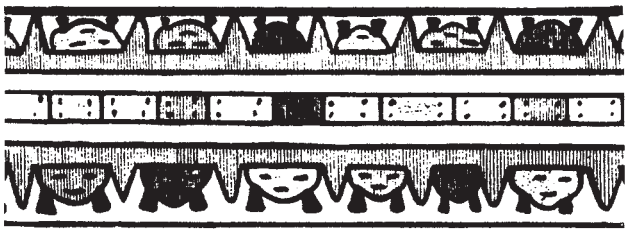


Fig. 5.100. TH-1-Q (rounded trophy head with hair hanks). After Seler 1923: fig. 177.

Fig. 5.101. TH-1-R (late profile trophy head). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 529.

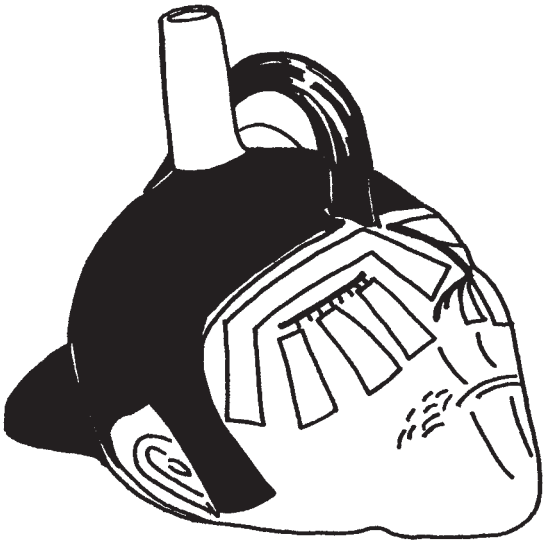


Fig. 5.102. TH-2 (modeled trophy head). Art Institute of Chicago 55.2154. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

TH-1-N: Semicircular Trophy Head

Lumped into this category are a wide range of small semicircular trophy heads with eyes and mouth drawn as either dots or slits (fig. 5.98). Some are accompanied by a semicircular collar, often with adornments; some have long hair tresses, although most are simple semicircular elements.

TH-1-O: Trapezoidal Trophy Head

Trophy heads of this variety have a trapezoidal shape and either are drawn in pairs, chin to chin, or alternate in direction in multiples (fig. 5.99).

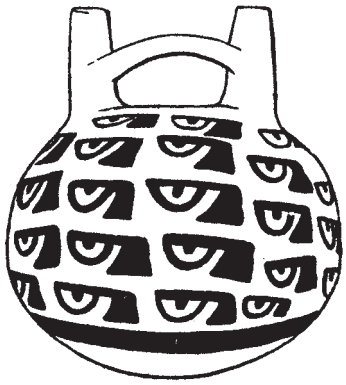


Fig. 5.103. TH-3 (symbolic "eye" form of trophy head). After Seler 1923: fig. 202.

TH-1-P: Trophy Head in the Jaws of a Horrible Bird

Various trophy head forms fall into this category, but they share the distinction of all being clenched in the jaws of the Horrible Bird (fig. 5.43).

TH-1-Q: Rounded Trophy Head with Hair Hanks

This type is similar to TH-1-I, except that the head is semicircular rather than square (fig. 5.100).

TH-1-R: Late Profile Trophy Head

In Phases 8 and 9 a new form of profile trophy head appears, with a scroll-like ear, wavy hair, and other elements suggesting highland or Middle Horizon influence (fig. 5.101).

TH-1-U: Unclassified Trophy Head

This category includes unique trophy heads and those that cannot be easily placed with any of the other types.

TH-2: Modeled Trophy Heads

If we were to include "head jars" in the category of modeled trophy heads, the numbers of specimens would be quite large. The classificatory scheme used in this book, however, uses the designs painted on the rims of head jars as the primary motifs to classify them. Thus the category of modeled trophy heads refers to a much smaller group of vessels, which emphasize a modeled trophy head as the main theme (fig. 5.102). My sample includes a number of bottles in the form of a severed trophy head, realistic down to the modeling of the flap of skin at the back of the neck left from the decapitation process as well as the frequent painting of a symbolic circular foramen magnum on the base of the vessel, surrounded by red dots or blotches representing blood.

This category also includes Phase 6 and 7 modeled warriors who hold modeled trophy heads in their outstretched hands (pl. 19). Finally, several vessels display groups or piles of modeled trophy heads, perhaps representing caches of the heads (see Osborne 1968: 73).

TH-3: Symbolic "Eye" Form of Trophy Head

An abbreviated or symbolic form of trophy head appeared during Phase 5, became extremely popular, and just as rapidly disappeared from the sequence in Phase 6. To the novice it looks like a single human eye surrounded by a thick, comma-shaped black border (fig. 5.103). In reality, the Nasca artist was reducing the representation of a trophy head to a minimal abstract symbol: a pendant eye surmounted by the victim's hair and/or carrying cord. Just as we use symbols in our own world (a skull and cross bones for poison or the outline of a male body for a men's restroom), the Nasca artist often also abbreviated well-known motifs. Another symbol (discussed below) is the use of red dots, mazes, or patches to represent blood. The "eye" form of trophy head always appears in multiples: sometimes all in one color, at other times in alternating colors.

TH-4: Trophy Heads with Plants Sprouting from Their Mouths

TH-4 is a separate category of trophy heads found in Phase 5. These trophy heads are attached to the signifers of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being and are differentiated from other trophy heads in having plants sprouting from their mouths (fig. 5.104). I have argued that the taking of trophy heads in warfare had a ritual function. The heads were buried in caches to ensure agricultural fertility. Thus the strong relationship of trophy heads, plants, and fertility is further exemplified by the metaphor implied by these sprouting heads. Plants and trophy heads are often stylized as interchangeable elements (see TH-5).

TH-5: Trophy Heads in the Form of a Plant

In the Nasca world view, the taking of trophy heads provides the supernatural power necessary for the growth of plants, and plants and trophy heads are often seen as interchangeable. Indeed we can see the transformation or "morphing" of trophy heads into plants on some of the pottery vessels. A good example is the presence of trophy head features (eyes, mouth, hair hanks) on the exposed ears of corn

Fig. 5.104. TH-4 (trophy heads with plants sprouting from their mouths). After Sawyer 1979: fig. 24, close-up included. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

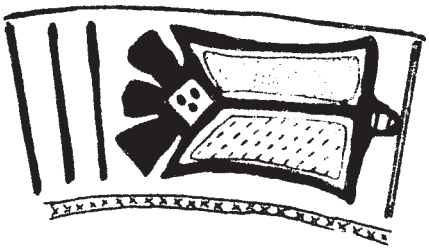


Fig. 5.105. TH-5 (trophy head in the form of a plant). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 6(2b).

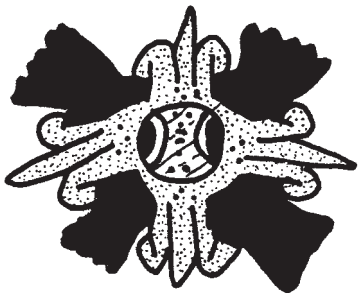


Fig. 5.106. TH-6 (Proliferous "snake-eye" form of trophy head). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 51.

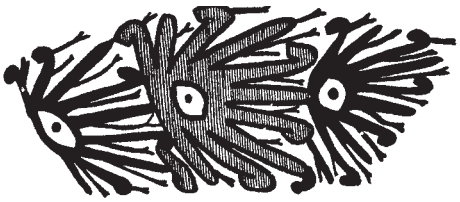
emerging from their husks (fig. 5.105). Beans are sometimes drawn to resemble trophy heads. These representations are found mainly in Phase 5.

TH-6: Proliferous "Snake Eye" Form of Trophy Head

In Phases 5, 6, and 7 a variety of motifs appear that are accompanied by objects with a pair of large eyes, similar to the eyes of a snake. The most common form consists of small balls or circles with a pair of eyes; these balls appear to float in the air, especially in battle scenes (figs. 5.106, 5.123; pl. 17). At first glance these might be interpreted as sling stones or other weapons, but closer examination suggests that these are symbolic representations of trophy heads. Other variations of this motif are squares with one or two sets of eyes or ovals with eyes and fanlike elements. The origin of this type of trophy head may be in the Bizarre Innovations seen in Phase 5, where a ball-with-eyes is portrayed surrounded by rays (fig. 5.106).

SWE: Star with Eye

A very common "geometric" design found late in the sequence consists of an eye surrounded by a series of rays, some of which might be described as a "fleur-de-lys" (after Lumbreras 1960b: 84) or "radial ray design" (after Menzel 1964). The origins of this design are obscure, but its roots seem to reach back to the innovative spurt during Phase 5 when Rayed Faces and Bizarre motifs were first introduced and to the Proliferous expansion during Phase 6, when volute rays and tassels were commonly appended to many motifs. This motif has a number of variations, but its basic form is a singular circular "eye" surrounded by radiating Proliferous elements (fig. 5.107). In some cases this motif appears to be similar to the Rayed Faces (RF-2), which were derived from proliferated forehead ornaments. Others are different, some looking more like geometricized Decapitated Mythical Monkey Heads, some perhaps derived from trophy heads, while still others look like "sunbursts" (a circle surrounded by symmetrical rays). It is possible that



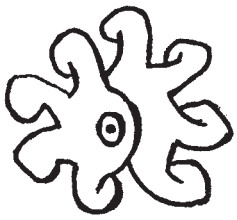


Fig. 5.107. SWE (Star with Eye). After Seler 1923: fig. 253.

several quite different symbols are being lumped together in this category due to lack of understanding of their true meaning.

The sample includes about eighty examples of the Star with Eye, most of them dating to Nasca Phases 8 and 9. A few prototypes begin in Phase 5 and increase slightly in Phase 6. Eighteen examples are from Phase 7, but the remaining fifty-five specimens all date after Phase 7. Due to the lack of published sources on Phases 8 and 9, dating of some vessels is tenuous; a fair number of specimens may technically fall in the Middle Horizon (where the Star with Eye continues as a major motif) and be associated with such regional styles as Atarco. Menzel illustrates a number of Middle Horizon examples that date to Nasca Phase 9 (1964: fig. 15) or to the Atarco Style of M.H. 2A and 2B (1964: figs. 4a, 5a, 22), referring to them as the "Fleur-de-Lys" motif. She argues that this design originated in the highlands, whence it spread to the coast. Until further study of the late Nasca phases is undertaken, the relationship between the "Star with Eye" examples from Nasca Phase 7 and the "Fleur-de-Lys" designs of M.H. 2 is not clear. Menzel (1964) contains the only detailed discussion of the transition from Nasca to the Middle Horizon styles.

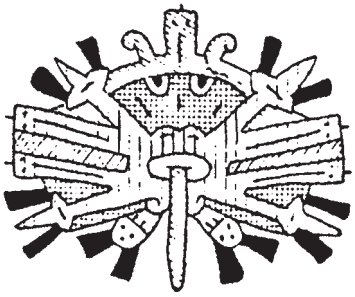


Fig. 5.108. RF-1 (Rayed Face with trident crown and upturned mouth mask). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 6c.

RF: Rayed Faces

In his seminal article, Richard Roark (1965: 26) distinguished between "Rayed Faces" and "Surrounded Faces," devoting only a few sentences to each motif. Other scholars (e.g., Blasco and Ramos 1980; Seler 1923) also had little to say about them, often including them under the general category of trophy head. Indeed the term "Rayed Faces" refers to a wide variety of ornamented human faces or heads that are painted as independent motifs. Some may be intended to represent trophy heads, but others clearly are not. Rayed Faces first appear in the sequence in Phase 5, with perhaps a handful of earlier examples serving as prototypes. Their origin may lie in the Bizarre experimentation in this period, since some of these Rayed Faces appear to be "scrambled figures" in Roark's terminology. The majority of them date to Phase 5, with the remainder falling into Phases 6 and 7. Only a few latent examples are found in the Disjunctive phases. I have identified five subtypes of Rayed Faces.

RF-1: Rayed Face with Trident Crown and Upturned Mouth Mask

This variety of Rayed Face may be an abbreviated head of an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. It is distinguished by its large mouth mask with upturned lateral elements and the three-segmented crown or headdress above the face (fig. 5.108). The figure has pendant eyes, and a tongue often protrudes from the mouth. The eyes are surrounded by an irregular area that is always colored (black, yellow, etc.), much like that found on representations of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings in Phase 6.

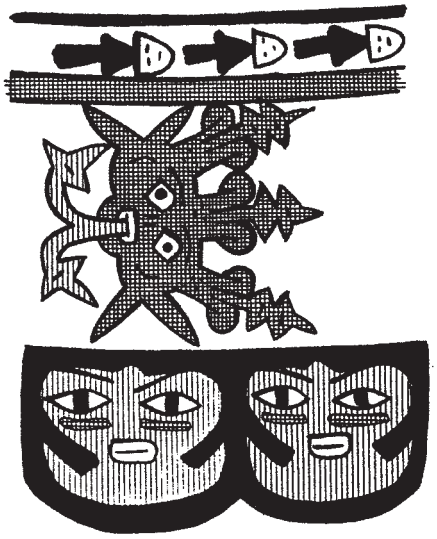


Fig. 5.109. RF-2 (Rayed Face with extended tongue). After Roark 1965: fig. 50. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

RF-2: Rayed Face with Extended Tongue

Possibly derived from the forehead ornament of Proliferous Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, this variety of Rayed Face is usually drawn horizontally. It has wide-open eyes with pupils centered in the sockets and rays protruding from the top of its head. A tongue protrudes from its mouth; sometimes this organ is bifurcated, suggesting the tongue of a snake (fig. 5.109). This identification is further supported by the actual use of snakes as kennings for a tongue in some motifs. These Rayed Faces, however, are also similar to certain Phase 5 trophy heads that have sprouting plants emanating from their mouths. Nasca artists cleverly substituted one symbol for another in the art. Although its closest similarity is to the forehead ornaments of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, this variety of Rayed Face may indeed symbolize a trophy head in its manifestation as a source of agricultural fertility.

Many of these type 2 Rayed Faces are displayed as tattoos on figurines of nude females. They are frequently drawn in the pubic area, with the creature's tongue touching the vagina (pl. 40; fig. 5.146). Obviously this motif is associated with fertility, either human or agricultural.

RF-3: Surrounded Heads

Surrounded Heads "consist of a face surrounded or framed by smaller faces, hair hanks, paws or peppers" (Roark 1965: 26). The facial features are minimal: the use of dots for the eyes and mouth is common (fig. 5.110). They are a frequent

Fig. 5.110. RF-3 (Surrounded Heads). After Roark 1965: fig. 49. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

motif in Phase 5 and continue to be found in Phases 6 and 7 as well. Some of these faces undoubtedly are meant to be trophy heads, but the identification of other representations is less clear. Like RF-2, they too are often displayed as tattoos on female figurines and effigy bottles (figs. 5.146, 5.149).

RF-4: Chained Heads

Included under the general classification of Rayed Faces are isolated groups of Chained Heads, not associated directly with an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. Chained Heads look very much like RF-2, the horizontally drawn symbols of forehead ornaments. In this case, however, protruding tongues are used to link several of these heads together into a "chain." Usually these linked elements connect the head of a Phase 6 Anthropomorphic Mythical Being to its body (fig. 5.111). On some pottery, the linked heads are used independently as a motif.

RF-5: Miscellaneous Rayed Heads

A number of specimens of Rayed Heads do not fit neatly into any of the other four categories and are thus lumped together under a "miscellaneous" label. Many are innovative or radical forms that appeared in Phase 5 as a result of experimentation.

BLOOD

Blood appears as an independent motif in Nasca art as well as in association with warriors, trophy heads, and battle scenes. Decapitation scenes often portray quantities of red spots or dots representing blood in the portion of the vessel surrounding this activity (pl. 18). Similar red spots or solid red plumes are commonly depicted in, or coming out of,

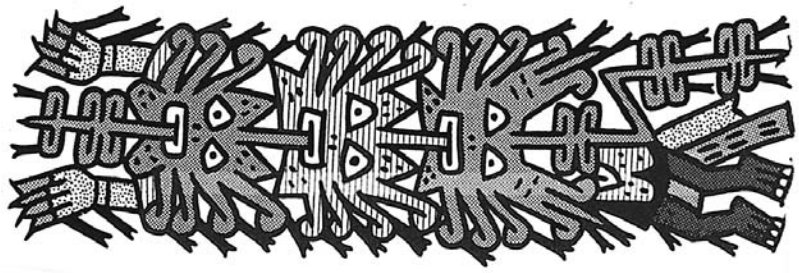


Fig. 5.111. RF-4 (Chained Heads). After Sawyer 1975: fig. 144. Courtesy Erika Sawyer.

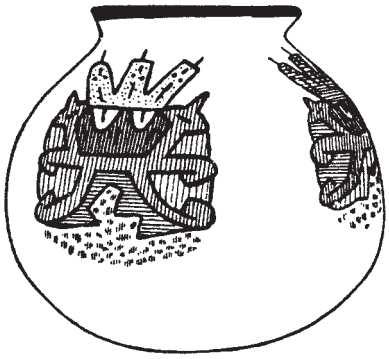


Fig. 5.112. Blood (blood symbolized by multiple red spots). After Seler 1923: fig. 238.

Fig. 5.113. Blood (with symbol of the foramen magnum at the base of the skull exposed during decapitation). The solid circle is the FM and the red spots symbolize blood. In this illustration the symbols appear as a decorative motif on clothing. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

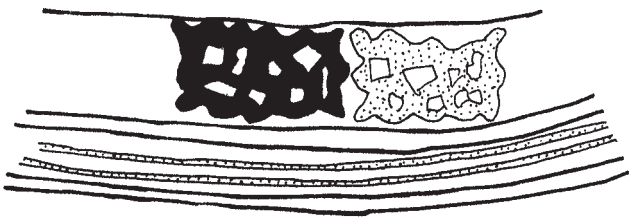


Fig. 5.114. Blood (blood symbolized by a lacelike patch). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 415.

the mouths of Mythical Killer Whales. Indeed, the quintessential example of the blood motif is "Bloody Mouth," an abbreviated version of the Killer Whale, emphasizing its jaws and its prey (figs. 5.47, 5.49, 5.112). Blood is also seen in the FM (Foramen Magnum) motif (see below), where the severed neck of a victim of decapitation is represented by a solid circle surrounded by an outer ring of red spots (fig. 5.113).

More subtle examples of blood are found in Phase 6, where it is symbolized by red or maroon rectangles that resemble a swatch of lace (fig. 5.114). This motif is commonly drawn in multiples within a band around the circumference of vases, often associated with trophy heads. To the uninitiated, the colored rectangle appears to be a geometric motif, but its origins and meaning can be discerned from its evolutionary sequence.

Occasionally blood is associated with battle wounds, a rare motif best exemplified by the "Wounded Warrior" with a gaping wound on his leg (fig. 5.127). Another rare example shows a naked victim with blood running down his chest.

CORPSE

Although trophy heads are by far one of the most prevalent motifs in Nasca iconography, the bodies from which they were removed are rarely seen in the art. Several examples of headless corpses are clearly the products of battles that included decapitation (fig. 5.115). Usually these corpses are displayed naked, a sign of conquest and humiliation. Other corpses are seen in the mouths of Mythical Killer Whales (fig. 5.48), or body parts are seen being devoured by raptors such as the Horrible Bird (fig. 5.116). Mythical Beings sometimes hold corpses in their hands. One example depicts an individual, probably representing a corpse, whose body is being picked at by birds — very similar to Moche representations of prisoners tied to posts being eaten by vultures (Lavalle 1986: 166). In this case it is likely that Nasca artists were influenced by Moche iconography.

Fig. 5.115. Corpse. Representations of corpses are found on many vessels. Many, like this example, have been decapitated. After Carmichael 1988: fig. 19. Drawing by Elizabeth LeMoine.

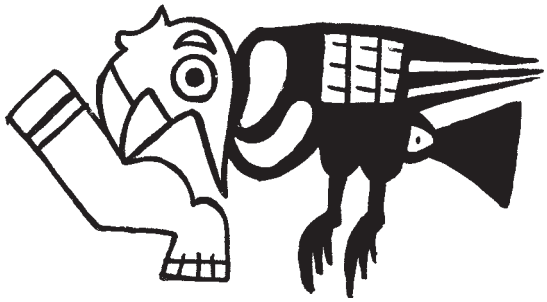


Fig. 5.116. Corpse. Corpses are also represented by body parts, usually being eaten by raptors. After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: fig. 10.

Fig. 5.117. Ritual burial of a cache of trophy heads with shamans officiating. After Uhle 1959: fig. 1.

FM: Foramen Magnum

Closely associated with trophy heads and decapitation is a motif that represents the hole at the base of the skull where the cervical vertebrae attach to the head. After a warrior separated the head from the body by cutting through the neck, this hole, the foramen magnum, was enlarged in order to remove the brain and begin the process of transforming the specimen into a trophy head. The foramen magnum is symbolized in the iconography by a solid circle surrounded by an outer ring of red dots representing blood. These are best seen painted on the underside of modeled head jars that represent trophy heads, but these symbols are also used as independent motifs. Effigy bottles often portray the individual wearing a tunic decorated with foramen magnum symbols (fig. 5.113). The Nasca people recognized this abbreviated symbol as representing decapitation, trophy heads, and blood.

RITUAL

This category refers to rare scenes in Nasca iconography that represent ritual activity. Two vessels, for example, portray burial scenes (pl. 23). A mummy bundle is flanked by officiates playing panpipes, shaking gourd rattles, and, very importantly, holding trophy heads. This is one of the few glimpses we have into Nasca burial ceremonies. Another vessel depicts the ceremonial internment of a cache of trophy heads, not unlike that found by David Browne et al. (1993) at Cerro Carapo in the Palpa Valley. Here we can clearly see a group of trophy heads which have been placed in or beneath a small stepped pyramidal structure (pl. 21). Two shamans are conducting the ceremony, one wearing a mask and the other associated with small cups holding a ritual brew (fig. 5.117). A second rare vessel depicting a cache of trophy heads is from a private collection in Lima (pl. 22). Another vessel, this one modeled, depicts a group of people seated on the roof of a house with large jars containing *chicha* or some other beverage (fig. 118). This is just a sample of the unique ritual scenes that are so important in reconstructing the lives of the ancient Nasca.

HSW: Human in Spiderweb

Fifteen examples, dating mostly to Phase 5, depict a curious theme: humans trapped in a spider's web (fig. 5.119). The web is drawn in several variations, but in each case segments consisting of a number of parallel black lines intersect at various angles with other segments to form a patterned network. Suspended in the web are one or more extended human figures. These victims are usually depicted naked or with minimal clothing; while most appear to be males, both sexes are represented. In two cases the subject is a Farmer or Harvester wearing the traditional peaked hat with stitching up the front. The spider itself is seen on only one specimen, a cup bowl from the collections of the Milwaukee Public Museum, yet this important piece verifies that the hatched lines represent a web and not water with people drowning, as suggested by some scholars.

We can only conjecture about the symbolism of this scene. Perhaps the Nasca people had a local myth that told of the entrapment of humans by this cunning insect. We

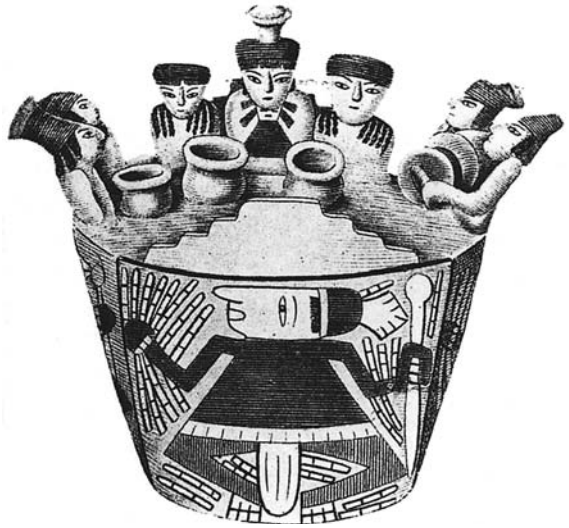


Fig. 5.118. ARCH (Architecture) /RITUAL effigy vessel in the form of a house with women sitting on the roof preparing corn beer (*chicha*). After Tello 1959: fig. 111 (MNAAH C-55264).

are reminded of the gigantic geoglyph of a spider etched into the pampa near Nasca as well as naturalistic representations of spiders on the pottery. They may also indicate an analogy between the capture of the humans by spiders and the capture of prisoners for sacrifice by warriors. Although we may never know the exact meaning of this motif, the archive contains a good corpus of examples.

ABNS: Anthropomorphic Beans

Sprouting plants, especially beans, are an important theme in Nasca art, for they symbolize agricultural fertility and life. I have described plants sprouting from the mouths of human trophy heads (TH-4) and the role that these heads, blood, and warfare played in agricultural fertility rites. Naturalistic germinating plants are also seen in the art, especially in the early (Monumental) phases, when realism is the norm. The sample contains eight examples of what I am calling anthropomorphic beans. These sprouting beans form the body or torso of a mythical composite creature, often with a feline head and paws and human legs (fig. 5.120). All eight examples date between Phases 2 and 4; they represent only a small fraction of the total sample. Yet this motif is important for our understanding of the emphasis on fertility and the use of kennings by the Nasca artists.

STNG: Stinger

The last two phases of the Nasca Style (Nasca 8 and Nasca 9) technically fall into the Middle Horizon. Although this book does not treat all the motifs found in these Disjunctive phases, an exception is made for the Stinger, a reptile/amphibian-looking creature characterized by a prominent triangular pointed element emerging from between its legs (fig. 5.121). It resembles a large stinger such as found on certain insects. A prototype for the Stinger is found as early as Nasca 6/7 (see specimen G1314 from the Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich).

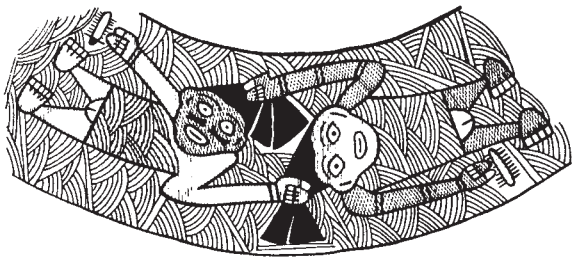


Fig. 5.119. HSW (human in spiderweb). After Kauffmann Doig 1983: 399.

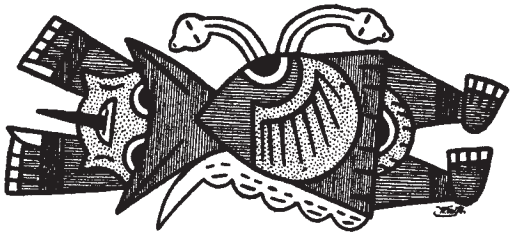


Fig. 5.120. ABNS (anthropomorphic beans). After Seler 1923: fig. 403.

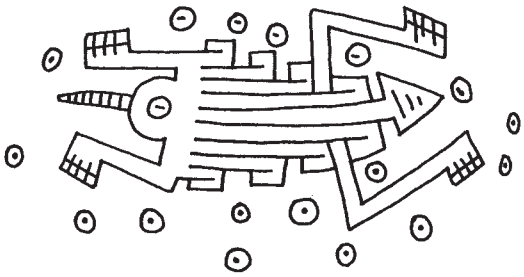


Fig. 5.121. STNG (a creature known as the "Stinger" dating to the Middle Horizon). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 4-9016. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Intermediate Sacred/Secular Themes

WAR: Warriors

Like the contemporary Moche on the north coast, Nasca society had a strong military orientation, as witnessed by numerous representations of warriors, weapons, and trophy heads. In both cultures warriors played a dual role: one

sacred, the other profane. Ample evidence demonstrates that the Moche used their armies to expand their territory. As coastal valleys were added to the realm, a major administrative/ceremonial complex was established in each. Battle scenes are common in Moche art, and prisoners were captured, stripped, and decapitated. Donnan (1975, 1978) has identified a major ritual in Moche society consisting of decapitation of a prisoner, collection of blood in a cup, and offering of the blood to an elaborately dressed warrior-priest, who presumably drank the sacred offering (also see Castillo 2000). The recent discovery of a richly attired male at the burial site of Sipán in the Lambayeque Valley has been identified as a warrior-priest, based on the paraphernalia associated with the body in the tomb (Alva and Donnan 1993). Warfare was essential to Moche religion in supplying victims for the sacrifice.

Nasca religion also focused on decapitation, but here the severed head of the individual was the sacred offering rather than the blood itself. Trophy heads were elaborately prepared and used in ritual ceremonies (as described above). Like the Moche, Nasca warriors obtained the heads from victims of warfare, but the iconography and the archaeological record are less clear on the exact nature of Nasca warfare. I have argued elsewhere (Proulx 1989a, 2001c) that the battle scenes depicted on Nasca vessels represent true conflict for the purpose of defense or territorial expansion, not merely ritual battles for the purpose of obtaining prisoners for sacrifice. Archaeological evidence to support this interpretation includes the preponderance of young male victims represented in the samples of trophy heads (Verano 1995; Williams et al. 2001) and iconographic representations of heads being displayed as trophies, either hanging from poles or carried by warriors. Not only are weapons such as spears, spear-throwers, slings, and clubs predominant in the iconography, but preserved examples are commonly found in male burials (figs. 4.4 to 4.6). The depiction of warriors becomes much more numerous beginning in Phase 5, corresponding to a major climatic stress on the south coast and a redistribution of populations within the Nasca drainage. A shift from individuals with the dual role of warrior/shaman in the early phases to more secular and militaristic leaders in the middle and late phases seems to have occurred.

Warrior representations appear under many guises: some naturalistic, others combined with mythical attributes. I begin by examining realistic portrayals of warriors. The earliest warriors (WAR-2) are depicted frontally, with hands extended to the sides holding weapons. They first appear in Phase 2 and reach their peak in Phase 5, after which they disappear, except for a few conservative vestiges. Profile warriors (WAR-1), representing the most numerous category of this motif, are found sporadically in the earlier phases but become the dominant type in Phases 6 and 7. Their various permutations are examined below. Effigy warriors (WAR-3) are also a common variety, especially in the earlier phases. Wounded warriors are the final variety (WAR-4) of this category.

WAR-1: Profile Warrior

Warriors drawn in profile are very rare in the iconography until Phase 5, when they become the dominant type. A rare specimen from Phase 4 (Seler 1923: fig. 137) illustrates a warrior with a frontal body but with his head turned in profile. Most Phase 5 profile warriors face left and are naked save for a loincloth (fig. 5.122). The right hand frequently holds a spear-thrower on which is perched a parrot; the significance of this is unknown. In the left hand are a bundle of spears and sometimes a bola. Trophy heads are occasionally clutched in the hands as well. These early forms of warriors have sharply pointed noses with a line bisecting them. Headdresses are variable in form, including rounded caps and hemispherical helmets. Most representations are placed on the sides of vases and other open vessel forms. Some of these "warrior" depictions may actually represent hunters, since animals are displayed in association with the figures on a few of the vessels. However, the association of these men with trophy heads and warfare is quite consistent on the majority of the pieces.

In Phase 6 warriors take on a more stylized look, including changes in facial features such as the appearance of teeth, facial painting, and a squared jaw on some specimens (Seler 1923: fig 133). The flowing ends of the breechcloth are longer than before and are bifurcated. Weapons increase in number and, in addition to being held in the soldier's hands, are found floating in the air against the background of the vessel. Trophy heads are seldom found in the warrior's hands but now appear in multiple numbers in bands encircling the vessel. My Phase 6 sample contains nineteen examples of WAR-1.

The number of profile warriors doubles to forty-one examples in Phase 7, reflecting the importance of warfare and trophy head acquisition at that time. Phase 7 warriors appear in a variety of forms, some in manifestations which are quite alien to the style. For example, many warriors now are depicted holding "feather staffs" in their hands (fig. 5.269), along with round-headed clubs in addition to the more familiar atlatls and spears (fig. 5.123; pls. 16, 17).

Fig. 5.122. WAR-1 (profile warrior). After Seler 1923: fig. 134.

Fig. 5.123. WAR-1 (running warrior showing Moche influence). After Townsend 1985: fig. 16.

The clothing worn by these individuals is a combination of traditional Nasca style loincloths and fringed shirts, with the addition of new varieties of head ornamentation. These warriors are often drawn as if running or in motion, a concept heretofore alien in the Nasca style (fig. 5.123). In addition, elements of the terrain (mountains, plants, and earth) are painted between the outstretched legs (fig. 5.123; pls. 16, 17). Facial features have changed from the more curvilinear Nasca expression to a more angular expression, including a hawklike nose and open mouth, sometimes exposing teeth. Finally, the warriors in these scenes are surrounded by flying missile stones, clothing, and many other unidentifiable elements (fig. 5.123). The source of these "alien" traits just described is the Moche culture of the north coast, which appears to have made contact with the Nasca through their maritime explorations down the coast rather than directly overland, sometime near the beginning of Nasca Phase 7 (see chapter 1 on external contacts).

Fig. 5.124. WAR-2 (frontal warrior). After Carmichael 1988: fig. 17. Drawing by Elizabeth LeMoine.

WAR-2: Frontal Warrior

Early warriors are nearly always depicted in a frontal, full-face manner, displaying facial painting and holding weapons in their hands. They wear a tunic on the upper portion of the body along with the traditional loincloth (fig. 5.124). Headdresses range from slings wound around the head in turbanlike fashion as seen on modeled vessels to fancy fan-shaped helmets. Weapons include clubs, spears and atlatls, bolas, and slings. These early forms are known for their simplicity and naturalism. The sample contains twenty-one specimens, eleven of them dating to Phase 5.

In Phases 2 through 4 frontal warriors are the only type found in the ceramic art. Although they begin to be replaced by profile warriors in Phase 5, front-facing examples are also found in this phase, after which their numbers drop dramatically. The sample contains a few Phase 6 specimens and one unusual Phase 7 piece.

WAR-3: Effigy Warrior

Originally lumped together with other human effigy forms, effigy warriors form a distinct classification of vessels, most of which fall in the earlier phases of the style. Beginning in Phase 2, head and spout bottles and effigy jars appear in the form of a seated male wearing a large cloth turban, around which slings are often wound. This headdress is modeled in such a way that it balloons above the head, adding to its mass. The warrior's face is often painted with a rectangular bar across the cheeks and the bridge of the nose (fig. 5.125). Weapons, usually slings, are held in his hands; one example

Fig. 5.125. WAR-3 (early effigy warrior). After Seler 1923: fig. 149.

Fig. 5.126. HUM-8 (late effigy warrior). After Seler 1923: fig. 209.

holds a trophy head. The sample includes twenty-one examples of this early form of effigy warrior; all but one date prior to Phase 5.

Elaborate effigy warriors are found in Phases 5–7, but these have been grouped with a wide variety of other human effigy forms (HUM-8), all with complex iconography painted on them (fig. 5.126). They are different in form from WAR-3, and sometimes it is difficult to determine whether they were meant to portray primarily warriors, elite leaders, or shamans (pl. 19). A few seated effigy warriors are clearly meant to exhibit men in this profession (pl. 20). In the future this category must be reexamined and selected pieces reclassified. For the present, late effigy warriors are included in the category HUM-8.

WAR-4: Wounded Warrior

The sample contains eleven examples of a very distinctive effigy vessel form: a modeled figure of a seated warrior holding his leg, with a large gaping wound near the knee (fig. 5.127). The figure varies only slightly from one piece to another (see Lavalle 1986: 124, 125 for two more examples). Four of the warriors are wounded on the left knee, another two on the right knee. Clothing is elaborate on several of the specimens, while one of the figures is completely naked. The most interesting aspect of this motif is that no other forms of battle wounds are seen in the art style. Certainly a wounded knee is a minor impediment compared to a skull fractured by a club or sling stone or a body wound caused by a spear. These types of representations are not seen in the art.

I would argue that the individual portrayed on these several vessels represents a folk hero, perhaps a famous warrior who distinguished himself in some battle and was remembered in the local mythology. Although Nasca ceramic art has no portraiture such as found on Moche vessels, perhaps this motif is as close as they came to honoring a specific individual. All eleven vessels date to late Phase 6 or Phase 7 and thus would have been made within a few generations of one another.

MUS: Musicians

Music was an important aspect of Nasca ritual. Wind and percussion instruments (including ceramic drums with animal-skin heads, ceramic panpipes, ceramic trumpets, flutes, small whistles, and gourd rattles) were the principal devices used to produce music. It is impossible to determine whether these instruments were used for recreational or individual use; most of the representations in the art seem to be connected in some way to agricultural rituals, but music was also played at other sacred events, such as burials or

Fig. 5.127. WAR-4 (wounded warrior). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: 298.

Fig. 5.128. MUS-1 (painted musician). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: fig. 13.

the internment of caches of trophy heads. On the famous "Procession Tablet" the main figure (an elaborately dressed male) is playing a panpipe (pl. 9). The category of motifs that I have classified as MUS includes painted and effigy versions of musicians and rituals along with their instruments.

MUS-1: Painted Musicians

Painted scenes of musicians conform to strict rules, leading to the conclusion that a very specific ritual is being depicted. The musician is always a male who is playing a panpipe (fig. 5.128). Sometimes a clay trumpet protrudes from his ear, or trumpets are carried by smaller figures that surround him. The upper part of his body is covered with outlines of panpipes, as are the vacant spaces on the vessel surrounding the figure. The musician's headdress is a turban that incorporates a sling wrapped in the form of a figure-8. The lower portion of the musician's body is naked, and his penis is inserted into a large clay vessel (often resembling a drum) located between his legs. Either the musician has the outline of a cactus plant drawn on his torso or shirt or cactus plants are found elsewhere in the scene (fig. 1.6). Small cups and larger ceramic storage jars are frequently depicted as well. It would appear that this ritual scene has something to do with the drinking of hallucinogenic juice from a cactus plant either in preparation for warfare or as part of an agricultural fertility ceremony (pl. 8). Ubbelohde-Döering (1931: pls. 13, 14, 15) illustrates several examples of this motif. The sample includes twelve examples.

MUS-2: Effigy Musicians

At least twelve examples of effigy musician vessels are found in the sample, ranging from Phase 2 through Phase 7 (pl. 13). Unlike their painted counterparts, these vessels concentrate on the depiction of the musician himself and do not contain the other participants or paraphernalia of the rituals described above. Several of the specimens portray a "one-man-band": the musician is playing the panpipes with one hand, holding a trumpet in the other hand (often adjacent to the ear), and holding a drum between the legs (fig. 5.129). As in the painted versions, the shirt worn by the individual is often decorated with outlines of panpipes, while the lower part of the musician's body is naked.

MI: Musical Instruments

Nasca rituals were closely associated with music and dance. The primary musical instruments were the panpipe and drum, but trumpets, flutes, whistles, and rattles were also used. It is important to note that these are all wind and percussion instruments. No string instruments were found in the Americas until they were introduced by the Europeans. Today Andean natives play music synthesized from both worlds.

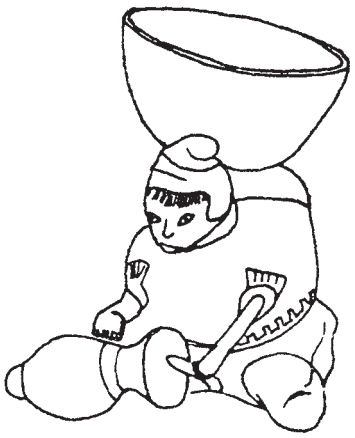


Fig. 5.129. MUS-2 (effigy musician). After Pezzia 1968: fig. 25-4.

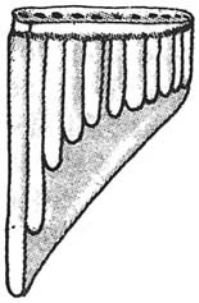


Fig. 5.130. MI-1 (ceramic panpipe). After Rossel Castro 1977.

MI-1: Panpipes

At least nineteen examples of ceramic panpipes are present in my sample. These range in size from one having only three tubes to one with eleven tubes and in length from only a few inches to gigantic ritual specimens eighteen inches long. Panpipes have been studied for their tonal properties by several scholars. William Suggs of the College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, argues that "by the time of Phase 3 of the Nasca style, panpipes were produced which could play several modes of the pentatonic scale, and many pipes were made in graduated sets of two or three instruments, presumably to be played in some polyphonic combination" (quoted from Dawson 1964: 109). Joerg Haeberli (1979) published a study on twelve Nasca panpipes and questioned the presence of a pentatonic scale. He determined that "seven panpipes were definitely and four were probably tuned to an arithmetic scale" rather than a logarithmic scale (ibid.: 68). This Nasca scale "is based on a frequency interval of about 43 Hz. or multiples thereof in various combinations" (ibid.: 70). Panpipes are decorated with mythical creatures or geometric designs or are painted in solid colors (fig. 5.130). One is in the form of an effigy Mythical Killer Whale. Dawson argued that the individual tubes for this musical instrument were made by a complex technique called slip casting, in which a liquid clay was poured repeatedly in and out of a mold to produce the thin-walled tubes (Dawson 1964). More recently this has been disputed, with the suggestion that the tubes were formed by applying clay over small sticks or reeds (D. Peter Kvietok, cited in Silverman 1993a: 241; also see Olsen 2002: 64–65). It is important to note that only ceramic panpipes have been found in archaeological contexts as well as in the iconography throughout the Nasca sequence, in stark contrast to reed panpipes prevalent on the north coast associated with the Moche culture. Haeberli (1979: 71) claims that reed panpipes appear on the south coast at the end of the Early Intermediate Period. Perhaps the introduction of reed panpipes accompanied the other Moche traits that were brought to the south coast during Phase 7. One vessel in our sample appears to portray a musician holding a reed panpipe (MNAA C-04736); curiously, this piece dates to Phase 3 or 4, quite early in the sequence. If reed panpipes were indeed present early in the Nasca sequence, they were a rare novelty.

The panpipe is the most common musical instrument found in the Nasca culture and was used in a variety of contexts, especially religious. Agricultural rituals always include shaman/musicians playing panpipes. Other ceremonies (including burials, the interment of caches of trophy heads, and processions) include the playing of panpipes. This instrument was widely distributed across Peru and is still an integral part of indigenous religion today.

MI-2: Drums

Ceramic drums are the second most popular musical instrument in the iconography as well as in actual examples found in archaeological sites. The sample contains nineteen specimens, ranging in date from Phase 2 through Phase 7. Several early drums are elaborately decorated with complex iconography and are partially modeled in the form of mythical beings (fig. 5.131; pls. 11, 12). Later drums include simpler designs: birds, geometric designs. Late drums tend to be smaller than their predecessors. Several studies of Nasca drums have been published, including Josafat Roel Pineda (1982) and Jorge Silva, Daniel Morales, and José Yamunaque (1982). Arturo Jimenez Borja (1950–1951) and Dale Olsen (2002) have written more general studies on musical instruments in the Andean region.

Fig. 5.131. MI-2 (ceramic drum). After Roel 1982: fig. 1.

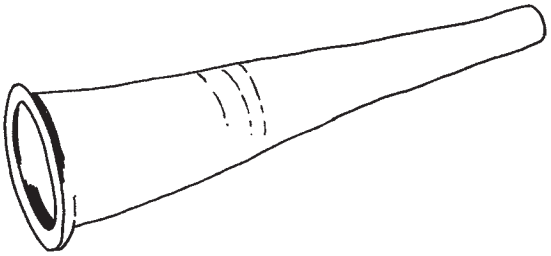


Fig. 5.132. MI-3 (ceramic trumpet). MRI N-1373. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.133. MI-4 (ceramic whistle in the form of a swift or *vencejo*). Museum der Allerheiligen (Schaffhausen, Switzerland). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Like panpipes, Nasca drums were constructed of clay. A small number still have their animal-skin heads attached. An example in the Museo Regional de Ica had a skin placed over the opening, which was secured by thongs or sinew wrapped many times around the circumference of the vessel. One of our specimens (MAI 11/2595) is a modeled drum, with the bindings clearly depicted. Another specimen has perforations around the edge of the opening to allow the skin head to be attached. The skins used were probably derived from llamas, although no analysis of the few surviving examples has been undertaken.

Drums were an integral part of most Nasca rituals and ceremonies. Effigy musicians are often pictured holding drums between their legs (fig. 5.129). Sometimes these individuals are "one-man bands" playing several instruments at the same time (pl. 13). I have actually seen contemporary Peruvians performing the same improbable feat!

MI-3: Trumpets

The sample contains six clay trumpets, five dating to early phases and one quite late, perhaps even Middle Horizon (fig. 5.132). The early trumpets are each decorated with a mythical creature: Killer Whale, Harvester, or Anthropomorphic Mythical Being. In addition to the actual specimens recorded here, many effigy musician vessels portray a male holding or playing these horns (pl. 13).

Trumpets or horns, like panpipes, drums, and rattles, were used almost exclusively in rituals, ranging from agricultural ceremonies to burials (fig. 1.6). Jimenez Borja (1950/51) illustrates and discusses this instrument.

MI-4: Globular Flutes, Whistles, or Ocarinas

Small whistle-shaped musical instruments are technically called globular flutes or ocarinas. Olsen (2002: 101) states that whistles and ocarinas are the same, except that whistles have no finger holes while ocarinas do. He feels that these devices are used for calling and communication with supernaturals rather than for their pure musical qualities (fig. 5.133). Many are in the form of animals or birds, reflecting, he argues, the power and symbolism of these creatures as an axis mundi to connect with the spiritual world (ibid.: 100).

Three examples of globular flutes are found in our sample, representing a bird (*vencejo*), a llama, and an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being.

MI-5: Rattles

Rattles, probably made from gourds, are pictured in the hands of shamans/musicians on several vessels (fig. 1.7; pl. 23). Few rattles have been found in archaeological contexts, but Silverman (1993a: 181 and her fig. 13:38) describes two from the "room of the posts" at Cahuachi.

HUM: Representations of Humans

Humans are portrayed in Nasca ceramic art in three different forms: painted figures, modeled effigy forms (including face neck jars), and figurines, either solid or hollow. Unlike the contemporary Moche, the Nasca never attempted to portray individuals, such as the portrait head jars so distinctive in Moche iconography (see Donnan 2004). The art includes no scenes of elite leaders being presented with war captives or with tribute. We do find generic representations of people engaged in specific occupations: farmers, warriors, shamans, and so forth. Curiously, females do not appear in the art until Phase 5, after which they become a major theme. Gender differences are not always apparent, however, and the sex of many individuals is based on secondary characteristics, such as clothing, hairstyle, facial hair, and occupation.

In the early phases humans were depicted naturalistically, with minimal embellishment; elaborate costumes and accessories first appeared in Phase 5 and continued through Phase 7. This may reflect the secularization of Nasca society that has been proposed by some scholars. Certainly military paraphernalia became extremely important in Phase 5 (a period that coincided with severe climatic stress and population movements) and continued into late Nasca times (Phases 6 and 7). Human representations in the form of effigy vessels were particularly prevalent in Phases 5 and 6, along with a great increase in the number of figurines.

Phase 7 witnessed a great deal of outside influence and innovation in the style. New and quite variable human forms appeared on the pottery, including a new female type that I have dubbed "Lucy" after Charles Schulz's character in the comic strip "Peanuts." These Lucy figures have square faces with wide eyes, flaring dresses, and elaborate headdresses that look like hair standing on end (pl. 24). In other representations, women are most frequently associated with fish, especially on modeled head and spout bottles.

In Phases 8 and 9 human figures became abstracted and distorted. Face neck jars (likely the result of outside influence from the Moche area) are the principal manner of representing humans, but the quality of artistry and the variety of motifs are greatly reduced. Painted humans in solid colors devoid of any sign of clothing are found on cumbrous bowls. By the end of the sequence these humans have become Cyclopes, one-eyed caricatures.

The range and the variety of human representations in Nasca ceramic art are greater than is apparent from looking at the small samples presented in a single catalog or art book. Although space does not permit a thorough discussion of the full corpus of human representations in my archive, the major categories are described in more detail below.

HUM-1: Humans with Animal-Skin Headdresses

One of the earliest human representations in the style is an effigy bottle depicting a seated male wearing a fox-skin headdress (fig. 5.134). The features of the animal are plainly visible, with the creature's snout extending outward over the man's forehead and the pelt of the animal draped over his head and back, with the animal's legs dangling to the sides. Actual fox-skin headdresses first appear in an archaeological context in Paracas mummy bundles but are also depicted on embroidered figures on Paracas mantles (Paul 1990: 43). The humans wearing the animal skins on our Nasca bottles are usually holding agricultural plants in their hands. This association of the fox with agriculture corresponds well with ethnohistoric data on the Inca where fox-skin headdresses are worn by persons who guarded the agricultural fields (Arriaga 1968 [1621]: 36, quoted by Paul 1990: 43). "Guaman Poma de Ayala's illustrations (1980 [1615]: pls. 859, 1138, 1159) of seventeenth-century Inca life include drawings which show a man guarding a maize crop. The guardian holds a staff, hurls a stone at birds with his sling, and wears a fox skin on his head" (Paul 1990: 43).

The sample contains fifteen specimens of HUM-1, all dating to the earliest phases. An unusual Phase 1 vessel is present in the collections of the Manchester University Museum. It differs from later examples in that the human is holding a partially modeled snake in his hand rather than a plant. The remainder of the specimens date to Phases 2 and 3, with one possible example dating to Phase 4. Supernaturals are sometimes depicted wearing fox-skin headdresses as well (pl. 12).

HUM-2: Fisherman Bottles

A common theme in Nasca iconography is the fisherman bottle, which portrays a male straddling some form of wa-

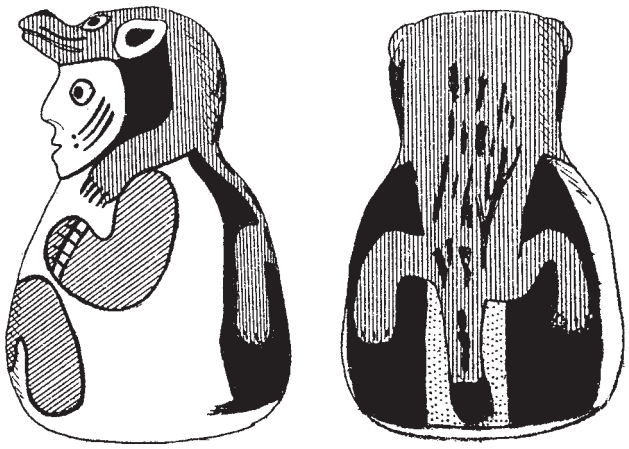


Fig. 5.134. HUM-1 (effigy human with animal-skin headdress). After Yacovleff and Muelle 1934: fig. 20b.

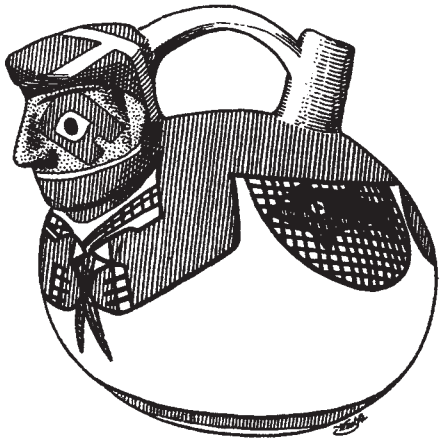


Fig. 5.135. HUM-2 (fisherman bottle). After Seler 1923: fig. 349.

tercraft while holding the ends of a fish net (fig. 5.135; pl. 32). Speculation on the identity of the watercraft has centered on the possible use of inflated animal skins, but no archaeological evidence supports this contention. The presence of totora reed boats would seem more logical, but the iconography, which is usually quite naturalistic, does not clearly indicate the presence of such craft until Phase 7, when a rare modeled example of what may be a reed boat appears in the sample (pl. 33). Moche art much more clearly illustrates the presence of large reed boats used for a variety of tasks (see Kutscher 1983: figs. 314–320).

Fisherman bottles are of the "head and spout" variety, where a conical spout at the back of the vessel is connected to a modeled head at the front by means of a strap handle. In this case, the fisherman's head is the protruding modeled element, with the remainder of his body being painted on the exterior of the bottle. The form is very consistent. The head, with a modeled mouth and nose, is covered by a cloth hat of some kind, into which the individual has placed some of his equipment. This very likely is an accurate depiction of a near naked mariner, who has little space on his small craft to place the tools of his trade. The individual's painted body lies prone on top of the bottle, imitating the position required of the fisherman on his small craft.

Invariably the fisherman holds a fish net, which often covers his body (pl. 32). In some cases a net is also found as part of his head covering. Fish of various types are frequently positioned within the net or attached to it. The net appears to be the primary means of catching the fish, although in a few cases fish are seen with lines attached to their mouths, suggesting that hooks may have been used on occasion. Fishermen are frequently seen holding what appear to be net menders in their hands. Archaeology has not been very useful in aiding us to identify either the watercraft or the fishing equipment. Indeed, few Nasca fishing communities have been found, despite the prevalence of maritime themes in the art.

Fisherman bottles first appear in the style in Phase 1, where the figures have incised outlines. The earliest examples also have projections on the forehead that represent the individual's hair tied into a knot or bun (see HUM-3). Thirty-six examples of this motif are found in the sample, the majority (fifteen) dating to Phase 3. The fisherman theme seems to die out at the end of Phase 5, but three examples (two from Phase 7 and the other perhaps as late as Phase 8) appear to be archaistic revivals of the theme. In one case the fisherman is completely modeled (in contrast to the partially modeled earlier examples) and kneels on top of what is clearly a totora reed boat (pl. 33). In light of strong evidence for Moche contact with Nasca in Phase 7, it is very likely that these late vessels combine an old artistic tradition with the knowledge of new forms of watercraft at this time.

HUM-3: Effigy Males with Hair Tied in Topknots

A number of early human effigy jars depict males with a pointed projection emanating from the forehead (fig. 5.136). This appears to symbolize hair tied up in a knot or bun. It differs from the turban headdress, also seen on early male effigies, in that the projection is confined to the forehead area and has no visualization of the slings that the turbans often have wrapped around them. Although many of these males appear to be warriors (i.e., holding weapons), some are associated with plants.

Fig. 5.136. HUM-3 (effigy male with hair tied in topknot). De Young Museum 54519. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.137. HUM-4 (trophy head jar). After Seler 1923: fig. 155.

Fig. 5.138. HUM-4 (early living head jar). After Yacovleff 1932a: fig. 4b.

Fig. 5.139. HUM-4 (late living head jar). Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

HUM-4: Head Jars

This category incorporates a wide variety of vessel forms that have one feature in common: they are all in the form of a modeled or semimodeled human head. Some of these are obviously meant to represent trophy heads, for they display, in a three-dimensional format, the characteristic identifying traits of this motif. These include lips that are pinned shut with *huarango* thorns, represented by two lines drawn vertically across the mouth, a carrying rope protruding from the center of the forehead, closed eyes or pendant pupils which symbolize death, and sometimes the addition of a red circle surrounded by red spots on the bottom of the vessel, representing the severed spinal column or location of the foramen magnum (fig. 5.137). Occasionally these trophy head jars have a modeled projection at the rear, representing a flap of loose skin produced by the decapitation process. The majority of these trophy head jars have modeled noses and ears, with the remainder of the features represented by painted designs. Most of the individuals have some form of facial painting, suggesting that these are warriors whose heads were taken for ritual reasons after they were slain in battle.

An even larger number of head jars appear to be representations of "living" persons, for they lack the morbid fea-

Fig. 5.140. HUM-4 (warrior head jar exhibiting turban wrapped with sling). After Seler 1923: fig. 141.

tures described above. Most of these are in the form of tall cylindrical vases that vary in form through time (fig. 5.138). The modeled human head forms the lower half of the vessel in the earlier phases, decreasing to one-third of the vessel height in Phases 5 and 6. The nose is always modeled, while the lips and ears may sometimes be modeled in low relief. The eyes are usually open and the pupil centered, although both closed-eyed and pendant-pupil forms are present. Individuals often have facial painting, a mustache on occasion, rectangular pendant earrings, and a cord or sling that circles the head and is tied at the rear. The most striking feature of this form of head jar is the decoration of the portion of the vessel above the head. On earlier examples this area portrays a headdress or crown, perhaps with feathers and tassels (fig. 5.138). By Phase 5 and later this area was used to display a wide variety of natural and mythical themes, including birds, the Mythical Spotted Cat, and various forms of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (fig. 5.139).

Another form of head jar appears to represent the modeled head of a warrior. These are found only in the earliest phases and disappear by Phase 5. Warrior head jars are distinguished by a bulging black turban headdress that is wider than the head portion of the vessel which lies below it, thus making the vessel appear to be top heavy. Wound around the circumference of this turban is a clear representation of a sling or slings (fig. 5.140). As in the other form of head jars described above, this variety has a modeled nose and ears. Facial painting is usually present, including a mustache and beard on some specimens.

Head jars first appear in Phase 3, where the modeled warrior and living heads predominate. The highest frequency of head jars is in Phase 5, where fifty-six examples are recorded, nearly twice the number found in Phases 3 and 4. They decline sharply in Phase 6 (thirteen specimens) but continue in small numbers through Phase 9. Shapes evolve from rather cylindrical forms to those with flaring rims in Phases 6 and 7. In the future it may be prudent to subdivide the head jars into the varieties described above, but for the present they are grouped together.

HUM-5: Painted Human Figures

Included in this category are varied human representations that do not easily fit into a more standard type. These include solitary individuals, hunters, people holding tethered animals, mummy bundles, individuals engaged in intercourse, people engaged in ritual behavior, and a variety of scenes in which the activity portrayed cannot be identified (pl. 10). In some situations we can make educated inferences. For example, some scenes depict groups of people holding hands, sometimes in an agricultural context. This suggests some type of harvest or planting festival. In other instances the humans are holding strange unidentifiable objects or are simply shown standing alone. These portrayals are not easy to interpret.

As noted above, depictions of males predominate in the first few phases, but identifiable females appear in Phase 5 and become very common in the later phases. Some of the female representations are treated as separate motifs and described below. Others, of a miscellaneous nature, have been placed in this category. An example would be those Phase 7 representations of women with elaborate headdresses whose bodies are clothed with a bulky ankle-length dresses (pl. 25). Many other modeled or semimodeled human representations are described separately. Furthermore, humans are included as secondary motifs on a wide variety of vessels, such as the small figures associated with musicians in ritual scenes or diminutive figures often incorporated within streamers flowing from the mouths of mythical beings. These are too numerous to be described individually, but many are discussed in terms of their relationship to the major motifs.

HUM-6: Girl Faces

Painted full-faced heads of women arranged around the lower circumference of bottles and other vessel shapes are a very common theme in Phases 5 and 6 (fig. 5.141). They can be identified as female by the long hair hanks on each side of the face that often curve over the cheeks toward the center of the face (pl. 5). Black hair frames the face and is divided by an inverted "V" between the eyes, suggesting that it was parted in the middle of the head. The individual's

Fig. 5.141. HUM-6 (girl faces). After Lothrop and Mahler 1957: fig. 5a.

Fig. 5.142. HUM-7 (semimodeled face). Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VA63363. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

eyebrows arch above the eyes but do not meet above the nose. The eyes themselves are elongated or slanted, with centered pupils. Examples from Phases 7 and 8 sometimes have closed eyes, symbolized by a solid line. Simple facial painting in the form of a bar beneath each eye or a comb-shaped element is sometimes found. The mouth is small and rectangular with rounded corners, most frequently white. The term "Girl Faces" was coined by Roark (1965: 27–28, 45) and is employed here because of this prior usage, just as I have used Dawson's term "Horrible Bird" because of its precedence in the literature.

The significance or symbolism evoked by these female heads is not understood. Clearly they are not meant to be trophy heads, for they lack the morbid elements of that theme. This motif is first found in Phase 5 and remains a major theme in Phases 6 and 7, declining in Phase 8, where only a few late examples are present. The sample includes at least forty-five specimens, but many vessels where they appear as secondary motifs are not included in this total.

Fig. 5.143. HUM-8 (human effigy vessel). After Seler 1923: fig. 210.

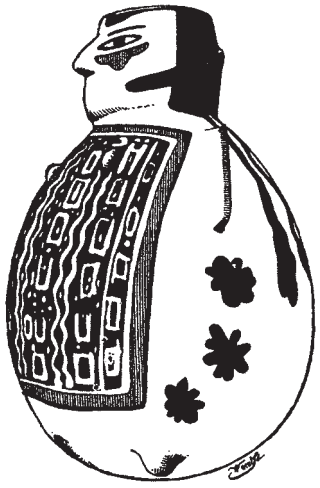


Fig. 5.144. HUM-9 (face neck jar). After Seler 1923: fig. 206.

HUM-7: Semimodeled Human Faces

This motif is found on a variety of jars, bowls, and tall vases that feature a human with a partially modeled face protruding from the side of the vessel, while the remainder of the body is painted flat. All of the earliest examples have painted bodies attached to the modeled faces (fig. 5.142), but Phase 8 bowls feature one or more large detached faces on the exterior of the vessel. Both sexes are portrayed, but the majority of the examples seem to be male, judging from the mustaches and scraggly beards. What appear to be animal-skin

capes are found on some specimens, recalling human effigy bottles found in earlier phases discussed above (HUM-1). Most of the figures are depicted in a seated position with crossed legs rather than standing. Elaborate mythical iconography is often contained on these vessels, usually on the back of the pot on what might be considered the individual's mantle or clothing. Some of the figures appear to be warriors, for they hold slings, have slings wrapped around their headdresses, or have feather staffs.

In Phases 6 and 7 some vessels have disarticulated semimodeled heads turned horizontally, suggesting that they may indeed be trophy heads, yet they lack pinned lips or carrying ropes that could clearly identify them as such. Contemporary representations of trophy heads are quite different from these semimodeled faces, and I am inclined to think that some other symbolism is intended. The earliest of these HUM-7 vessels are found in Phase 5, with the majority (fourteen) falling in Phase 7. They continue through Phase 8, after which they disappear. The sample includes thirty-two specimens.

HUM-8: Human Effigy Vessels

A large number of effigy human representations in the sample that do not fit neatly into any of the established categories are placed in this subtype. After reclassifying some of the pieces and eliminating a number of vessels thought to be fakes, the number of specimens was reduced to 119, still a sizable amount. Although they are spread through the entire sequence, the largest number are found in Phase 5 (twenty-nine specimens), with substantial numbers also found in Phases 6, 7, and 8.

The modeled individuals in this category represent people from many occupations and different social ranks: warriors, peasants carrying burdens on their backs, naked women, shamans, leaders dressed in elaborate costumes, mothers carrying children, people chewing coca leaves, others who have had too much to drink, and so forth. These human effigy vessels represent our best view of everyday life in Nasca society (fig. 5.143).

HUM-9: Face Neck Jars

This new category of vessel first appears in Phase 7 and becomes one of the major forms in Phase 8. The source of this innovation may be the Moche culture from the north coast, which influenced Nasca iconography in so many other ways in Phase 7. These globular jars are surmounted with a short spout in the form of a modeled human head. The upper half of the jar is painted with the upper torso of the individual—shirt, arms, and hands (fig. 5.144). Other motifs are sometime depicted on the clothing of the individual; the lower portion of the jar is usually undecorated. The sample includes approximately 123 specimens, the vast majority dating to Nasca Phase 8.

HUM-10: Figurines

Alexandra Morgan (1988) has written the most complete study on Nasca figurines to date. An abstract from her work provides a very useful summary of the main features of the figurines and their changes through time.

> Human pottery figurines in the typical Nasca style first appear at the end of phase 3 of the Nasca cultural sequence, following a break of several centuries, when no figurines were produced on the south coast. During phases 4 and 5 the figurines are small, standing females and males. At the end of Nasca 5, larger sitting females and a few large standing males make their appearance. Both groups reach their peak in numbers and quality in phases 6 and 7. Whilst the sitting females survive during phase 8, standing figurines all but disappear; they are replaced by large, extremely stylized, stelae-like figures. Nasca figurines represent human beings, without mythical, ethnic or status related attributes, such as may occur in other cultures. However, whilst the males are always dressed, the females are naked and mostly decorated in some form of body paint. A careful analysis of the motifs featuring this body paint and their occurrences and association in Nasca iconography suggests that they constitute the symbolic language of a specific set of magico-religious beliefs, closely linked with marine fertility. The figurines may have functioned as votive offerings to a marine deity, tentatively identified as the "Mother of Fishes"/"Master of Fishes." (Morgan 1988: 327)

Judith Spielbauer (1972) also described and analyzed a group of ten Nasca figurines in the Malcolm K. Whyte Collection, now in the Milwaukee Public Museum. She pointed out important gender differences in the figurines and differences in early versus late Nasca specimens.

My own observations of figurines in my sample are as follows. Both solid and hollow figurines are included in this category, but effigy vessels (jars, bottles) with openings are

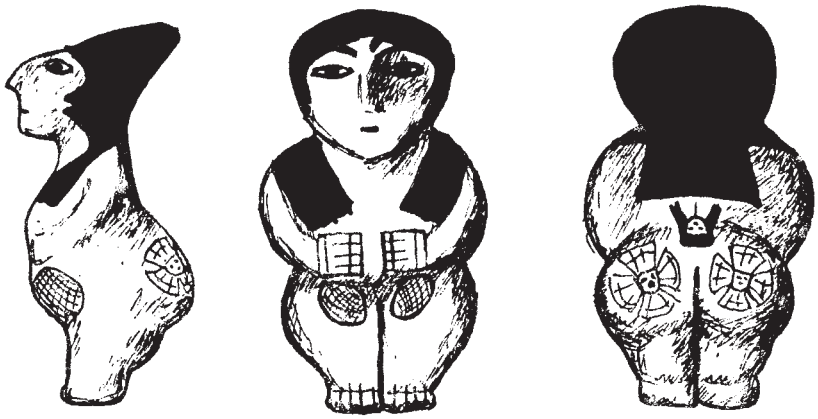


Fig. 5.145. HUM-10 (small male and female figurines). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: fig. 6.

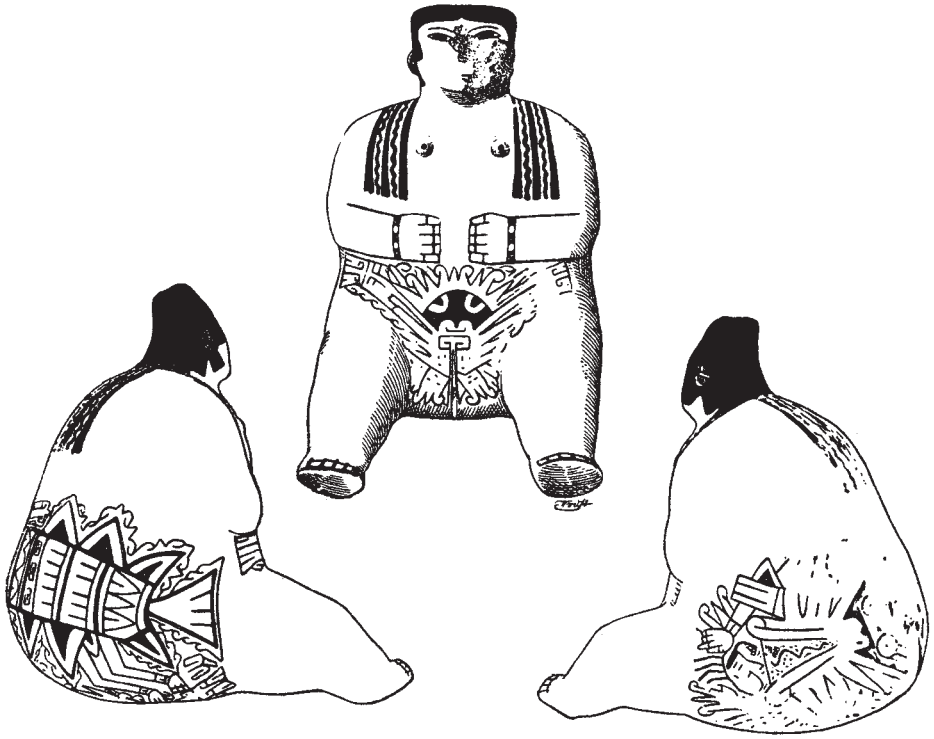


Fig. 5.146. HUM-10 (large naked female figurines). After Seler 1923: fig. 208.

not. Figurines do not appear in the sample until Phase 4, where the majority are small (two or three inches) and solid in composition. Individuals are depicted with minimal clothing, yet in most cases their gender can be determined by hairstyle, ornaments, genitalia, or breasts. For example, males on small Phase 5 figurines characteristically have short hair, tunics or borders of tunics, and a bulge in the genital area. Females have long tresses flowing down their backs, wear little or no clothing, and are painted white in most cases (fig 5.145).

Beginning in Phase 6 and continuing into Phase 7, large naked female figurines of the hollow variety appear. These women commonly display tattoos on their arms, thighs, and buttocks and surrounding the genital area (fig. 5.146). Most of these tattoos are of supernatural themes such as Mythical Killer Whales, Rayed Faces, and trophy heads. In some cases the genitals are incorporated into the sacred motifs, as if to emphasize the association with fertility (pl. 40 on a solid figurine). Several of the females are depicted in the act of giving birth, adding further strength to the fertility argument.

Contemporary with these female figurines are some rather tall solid male figurines, some measuring up to a foot in height (fig. 5.147). Thin-limbed with long torsos, these males contrast sharply with the rather corpulent representations of the women. Aside from a painted breechcloth,

the male figurines are usually naked (pl. 39). A simple headdress or a shell pendant on the chest is sometimes present. Both sexes exhibit skull deformation in the form of frontal and occipital flattening, a fashion seen on actual skeletal remains from Nasca burials. One unusual figurine represents the dismembered leg of an individual covered with tattoos, a motif seen in painted versions early in the art style but seldom in a three-dimensional form.

Morgan (1988: 343) suggests that the figurines were used as votive offerings as part of a cult of a maritime deity whose functions included the promotion of human fertility, protection of fishermen, abundance of maritime resources, and protection of fish from marine predators. While agreeing that the function of the figurines was primarily ritual in nature, I am not convinced that we can argue for a maritime connection based on so few representations of mythical sea creatures in the art. Many of the tattoos/body paintings are of nonmaritime themes, including plants, trophy heads, Serpentine Creatures, and Rayed Faces. Male figurines and small solid figurines of Phases 4 and 5 seem to have no connection at all with the sea or with her argument. Additional studies must be undertaken to reach a final verdict on the role and importance of these figurines in Nasca society.

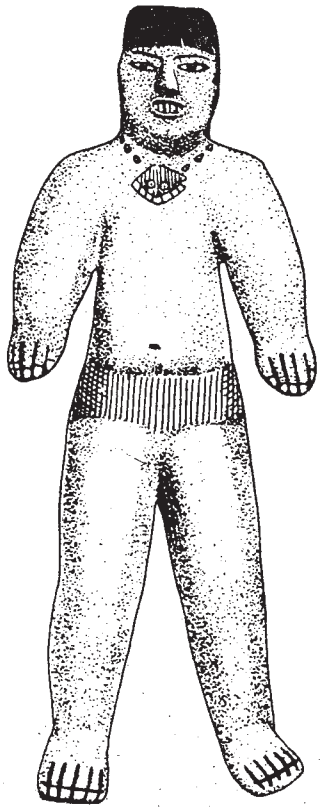


Fig. 5.147. HUM-10 (solid male figurine). After Kauffmann Doig 1983: 393, fig. 2.

SEX

Nasca ceramic artisans were more prudish than their Moche counterparts when it came to depicting sexual themes. We are all aware of the rich variety of sexual expression in Moche art, including realistic portrayal of various sexual positions and aberrations. The few Nasca ceramics with graphic sexual themes are found in both the early and late phases (pl. 34). They include several examples of coitus and models of male and female genitalia as well as naked figurines (described separately) and a few examples of childbirth (also described separately).

BIRTH

A number of large female effigy vessels are present in the sample that portray women giving birth (pl. 35). The women are invariably naked, often with tattoos present on their arms, abdomens, and genital areas. The infant's head is depicted emerging from the birth canal. No representations of blood are shown; nor can we tell from the iconography whether the woman is giving birth in the supine or squatting position.

CHILD

We have only a handful of representations of children in the corpus of Nasca ceramic art. The reason for this disparity is not fully understood; yet, as we have seen, scenes of everyday life are rare in the iconography. Three examples are illustrated here: the family in procession on the Tello Plaque (pl. 9), a child clinging to his father's neck on a fisherman bottle (fig. 5.148), and a Phase 7 bottle in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, which portrays a woman carrying a child on her back, apparently in the folds of her mantle (pl. 38).

TATTOO

Both males and females decorated their bodies with tattoos, judging from the many representations in the art as well as archaeological evidence of mummified body parts with vibrant tattoos. The majority of the designs are on the arms, but facial tattooing as well as probable tattoos in the genital area (especially of females) are suggested by the art (pl. 40; fig. 5.146). Designs consist of naturalistic motifs (such as birds, snakes, and fish) but also include supernatural themes such as Rayed Faces, Mythical Killer Whales, and

Fig. 5.148. CHILD (effigy vessel of a fisherman carrying a child on his back). After Buse 1977: 543.

Fig. 5.149. TATTOO (female effigy bottle displaying tattoos). Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, 33-15-1. After Rickenbach 1999: no. 126.

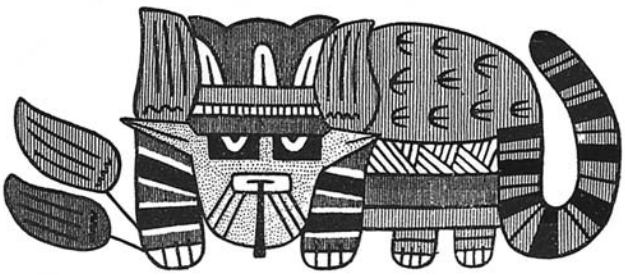


Fig. 5.150. WATER (water symbolized by cross-hatched lines seen in a band within the body of this Spotted Cat). After Seler 1923: fig. 24.

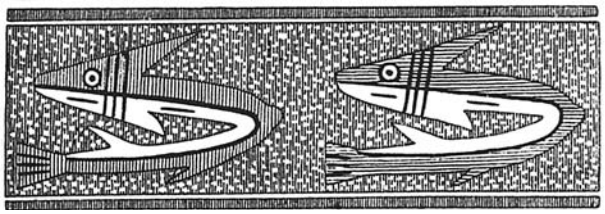


Fig. 5.151. WATER (water symbolized by multiple dots). After Seler 1923: fig. 342.

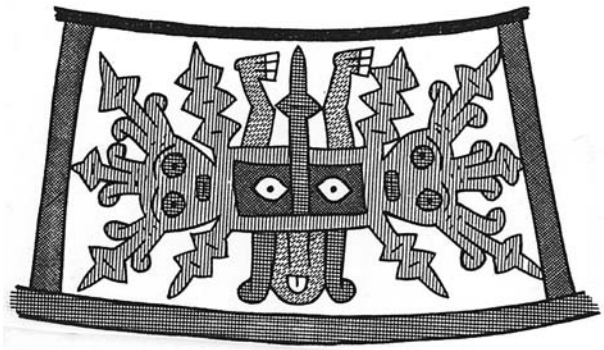


Fig. 5.152. BIZ (scrambled figure of the Bizarre substyle in Phase 5). After Roark 1965: fig. 48. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

Serpentine Creatures (fig. 5.149). Some scholars have argued that the designs portrayed on human effigy vessels may be simple body painting rather than tattooing. Body painting was present and is best exemplified by the geometric designs painted on the faces of warriors. Even women seem to have been adorned with facial paints. The best evidence for tattooing is found on mummified remains exhibiting this art form.

WATER

Water is represented in Nasca art by parallel black lines drawn on a white background. Often these groups of paral-

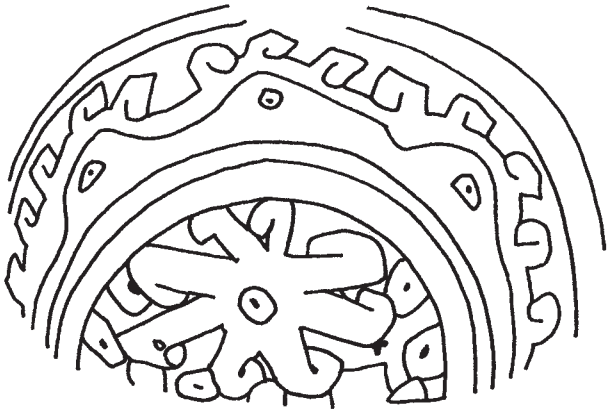


Fig. 5.153. SKY (an arched design interpreted as representing the sky). Museo Regional de Ica DA-1446. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

lel lines alternate in patterns resembling triangles (fig. 5.150). Another symbol for water, although less popular, is a solid background with multiple spots (fig. 5.151). Usually a fish or some other water creature is displayed on this background, confirming its identification as water rather than blood. The hatched water symbol is displayed on creatures associated with the sea, such as AMB-1-B or KW. It is significant that water is one of the few motifs of natural resources present in Nasca iconography; there are hardly any examples of celestial phenomena (sun, moon, stars) or other aspects of the landscape (trees, rivers, etc.).

BIZ: Bizarre

Mary Blagg (1975) was one of the first scholars to define the innovative artistic experimentation that took place during Nasca Phase 5. She described this category of motifs as a "substyle consisting mainly of mythical subjects but drawn using such completely different canons that it represents a radical departure from the expected evolution of the style" (Blagg 1975: 37).

Roark (1965: 26) described these designs as "a wide variety of unfamiliar motifs which lack clear Phase 4 antecedents." He goes on to classify the Bizarre Innovations into three categories: Scrambled Figures, Surrounded Faces, and Rayed Faces. Most of the themes included in my BIZ category correspond to Roark's varieties, although I also use a separate category (RF) for different forms of Rayed Faces. Examples of Scrambled Figures are seen in fig. 5.152 and plate 7.

SKY: Sky Band

The sample includes twelve vessels in Phases 7 and 8 decorated with a semicircular arc that I am tentatively calling a sky band (after similar interpretations of such bands on Chancay textiles from the central coast). These bands always arc upward toward the top of the vessel and frequently have projections along the edges (fig. 5.153). They often arch over a motif I am calling Star with Eye, which may be an abbreviation of a trophy head. I believe that the arc is meant to represent the vault or arch of the sky overhead. This is a tentative interpretation, and further research may determine a completely different meaning for this motif.

ARCH: Architecture

Architecture in Nasca ceramic art is usually portrayed in the form of modeled vessels, but a few rare painted examples exist as well. Nasca houses are depicted as square structures, with no visible door but with an opening between one of the walls and the roof to allow air to circulate (pl. 26). All the houses in the sample either have an upright "roof-comb" (vertical element) or have stepped or gabled wall edges (fig. 5.118). The other major architectural form seen in the art is the terraced pyramid, similar to the actual mounds excavated at the site of Cahuachi. The sample contains several examples of these pyramids, sometimes portrayed with an individual or individuals sitting on top (pl. 27). Painted pyramids or mounds are seen in ritual contexts, such as the famous scene of shamans burying a cache of trophy heads beneath a pyramid (fig. 5.117; pl. 21).

Secular Themes

BIRD: Birds

Over twenty species of birds are represented in Nasca iconography, more variety than for any other life form. These birds range from large maritime feeders such as cormorants and pelicans to tiny hummingbirds found in agricultural areas well inland to condors who rule the skies of the Andean mountains and coast. Judging from the sheer number of representations of birds in the art, the Nasca people were particularly fond of these avian creatures and well aware of their distinctive characteristics and habitats. For example, the beaks are painted with great care: long and pointed for the fish-eating marine birds, flat and rectangular for ducks,

Fig. 5.154. BIRD-1-A (hummingbird). After Seler 1923: fig. 282b.

Fig. 5.155. BIRD-1-B (early *vencejo* or swift). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: pl. 12.

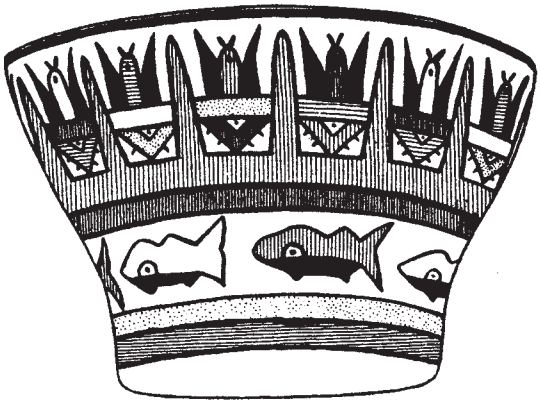


Fig. 5.156. BIRD-1-B (Phase 5 *vencejos* heavily abstracted, with beaks pointing down). After Seler 1923: fig. 372.

Fig. 5.157. BIRD-1-C (garza or white egret). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 20-1a.

short and crooked for parrots, and stiletto-shaped for hummingbirds. Body and feather markings were also used effectively to convey species, such as the white collar encircling the neck of the condor and the wavy lines seen on the tail feathers of the falcon. Often the feet of a bird indicate whether it is a water bird or one adapted to a vegetated region. Some birds in the sample can easily be identified from these characteristics; others are more problematic. The categories used in this book are based on my efforts to distinguish among the twenty or more groups of painted birds. Not every category can be positively identified as to species, but an attempt is made to suggest logical possibilities for those "problematic" types.

The sample includes over three hundred vessels where birds are the primary motif and at least another seventy-five where they are secondary motifs. The majority are found in Phase 3 (184 specimens), which marks the height of naturalistic expression in the style. More plant, animal, reptile, and bird depictions occur in Phase 3 than in any other phase. Birds, however, are found throughout the entire sequence, from Phase 1 through Phase 9.

BIRD-1: *Painted Birds*

The vast majority of bird representations in the iconography are painted in polychrome colors, either as primary or as secondary motifs. These are described first, followed by modeled or effigy birds (BIRD-2).

BIRD-1-A: *Hummingbirds*

Sixteen species of hummingbirds are found in the coastal valleys of Peru, all belonging to the family Trochilidae (Koepcke 1970: 79–84). No attempt is made here to differentiate among these various species represented in the art, because Nasca artists used a "generic" form to symbolize all varieties of hummingbirds. The distinguishing characteristic of all the hummingbird specimens is the presence of a long thin beak (fig. 5.154). Often the birds are portrayed with their beaks penetrating flowers (fig. 5.246). Like other birds, they are always painted in groups on the walls of double spout bottles, on the sides of bowls, and on other shape categories. Some species have longer beaks than others, and the Nasca potters accurately portray this difference.

Over sixty vessels in the sample have hummingbirds as their primary motif, dating from Phase 2 through Phase 5. Most are found in Phase 3, where we also find a wide variety of other life-forms.

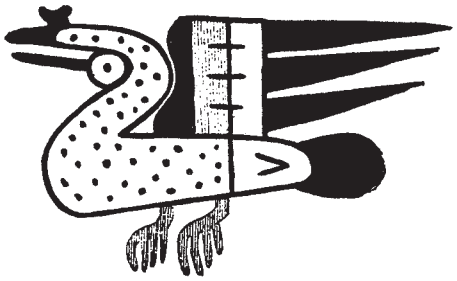


Fig. 5.158. BIRD-1-D (duck). After Seler 1923: fig. 298.

BIRD-1-B: White-Collared Swifts (Vencejos)

The *vencejo* (*Streptoprocne zonarius albicincta*) is the largest swift in Peru. It feeds on insects, particularly those that hover near water, and therefore may have been used by the ancient Nasca people to locate sources of water. These swifts can be seen today flying rapidly over swimming pools and lagoons in south coastal cities. After the hummingbird, the swift is the most frequently depicted bird on Nasca ceramics. The earliest examples from Phase 3 are very naturalistic, with the birds oriented vertically, beaks toward the top of the vessel. The beak is cocked slightly to the side and has small hairlike projections (similar to those of the flycatcher) extending outward from its base. The bird's body is painted black in these early phases, and the white collar, which identifies the species, is clearly visible (figs. 5.155, 5.133).

By Phase 4 the beak of this bird points straight up, yet the body remains very naturalistic. Dramatic changes occur in Phase 5 as part of the innovative artistic experimentation that took place then. Representations of swifts become even more common, but they are difficult to interpret because they have been greatly reduced in size and turned upside down. The Phase 5 *vencejos* are always painted between projecting spikes that symbolize the fins of the Mythical Killer Whale. The small pointed beak with protruding hair points downward, with the bird's feet and tail feathers extended toward the top of the vessel (fig. 5.156). The collar appears as a broad horizontal line separating the triangular beak from the remainder of the bird's body. The feathers are no longer black but appear in polychrome colors. Some individuals have misinterpreted this manifestation of the swift as an ear of corn, but closer examination demonstrates that it has all the features of the earlier naturalistically painted *vencejo*.

Almost all examples of the *vencejo* occur between Phases 3 and 5, with the majority occurring in Phase 5. One or two late "archaistic" representations of what appears to be a swift are found in Phases 6 and 7, as if someone was attempting to copy a much earlier version of the bird. It is clear, however, that these were unique pieces and that the popularity of this creature had declined considerably after Phase 5.

BIRD-1-C: Great White Egrets (Garzas)

One of the birds easiest to identify in the iconography is a large white waterbird with a yellow bill and long black legs, known locally as a garza (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) (fig. 5.157). A member of the heron family, the garza frequents the shores of lagoons and rivers and swampy areas of the coast, feeding mainly on fish and other maritime creatures (Koepcke 1970: 30). Reinhard (1992: 297) notes that in the Nasca area today the sighting of a heron is interpreted as a sign that it will rain in the mountains. Twenty-six specimens in the sample display the garza as a primary motif, dating between Phases 3 and 5, with the majority falling in Phase 3.

The Phase 3 garzas all have circular heads with a large central eye and yellow/orange beak. A long wavy neck connects the head to the pure white body. Although in reality the bird has long black legs, the artists did not focus on this feature with this species or with any other long-legged waterbirds. Apparently they believed that the other distinctive characteristics were sufficient for the viewer to identify the bird.

BIRD-1-D: Ducks

Maria Koepcke (1970) identifies fourteen different species of ducks in the Department of Lima, all of which belong to the family Anatidae. No attempt is made here to differentiate these species in the iconography (although a number of different varieties are clearly intended), because the artistic features are not specific enough. Most of the examples are small, have short, flat beaks, and are painted with spots on their breasts, reflecting several varieties of ducks with distinctive mottling (fig. 5.158). One variety, of which there are several examples, is completely black, with oval spots on its feathers. Another type has an exaggerated rectangular beak. None of these species can be definitely identified.

The sample contains thirty-eight specimens with ducks, dating from Phase 3 through Phase 5. They often are associated with fish or water plants, confirming that they are waterbirds.

BIRD-1-E: Forest Birds

The term "forest bird" is somewhat of a misnomer. I am using it to describe a wide variety of species that inhabit the

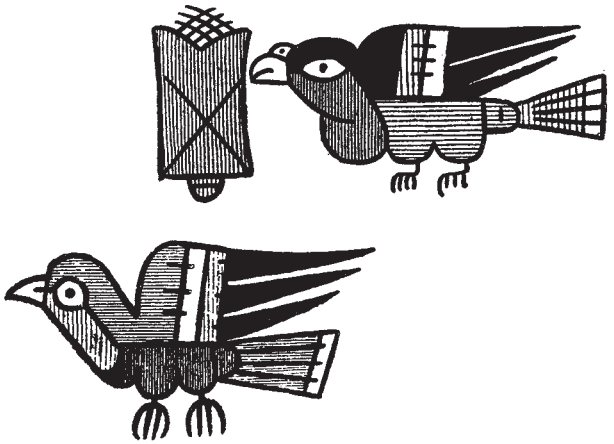


Fig. 5.159. BIRD-1-E (forest birds). After Seler 1923: fig. 286 (top) and 287 (bottom).

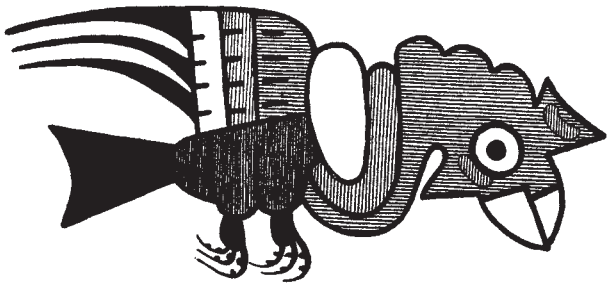


Fig. 5.160. BIRD-1-F (condor). After Seler 1923: fig. 278.

valley bottoms and surrounding hills containing the agricultural fields and adjacent ecozones. These are seed, fruit, and insect eaters with short beaks and relatively small bodies (fig. 5.159). It is interesting that Nasca potters not only painted a wide variety of waterbirds on their vessels but did so with such care that we can easily identify the species. This is not the case with the forest birds. A few examples display spots on the breast or a slightly different form of beak, but most characteristic markings are absent, forcing us to lump the specimens together into a single category.

The sample contains twenty-seven examples of forest birds, most dating between Phases 3 and 5. They appear on a wide variety of vessel forms, especially bowls and double spout bottles.

BIRD-1-F: Condors

The most impressive bird of the Andes based on its size and power is the condor (*Vultur gryphus*). With a wingspread of up to 10 feet and a body 3 feet long, this bird is easily distinguished by its size, naked head with prominent caruncle on top, and white down collar encircling the neck of its mostly black body (fig. 5.160). Condors range from Colombia to Tierra del Fuego, preferring the higher elevations but also present in the coastal valleys. Many Andean cultures revered this creature and represented it in their iconography. Among the descendants of the Inca, the condor has come to symbolize the mountain spirits of the Andes and in some respect the Inca themselves. Each year the Yawar Fiesta is still held in the southern Andes of Peru, during which a captured condor is tied to the back of a bull, the symbol of the Spanish conquistadors. When the condor is finally released and soars over the mountains, the Quechua Indians are expressing their desire for freedom from the abuses of the past and for the independence of their people.

We cannot be certain of the exact meaning of the condor in the lives of the ancient Nasca people of southern Peru. It is likely that they viewed this bird as a powerful spirit or force, the lord of the skies or a messenger to the mountain and water spirits. This concept is manifested in some of the mythical creatures that encompass features of the condor such as the Horrible Bird. The naturalistic representations of condors described here are more secular, portraying just one of the many bird species present in the coastal environment. The seventeen specimens in our sample all date to Phases 3 and 4. Several examples are drawn "double," with two heads emerging from a common body, not unlike the birds seen on the royal coat of arms of the Hapsburgs or on the Russian flag under the tsars. These are always found painted on the bottom of plates. A few birds have red spots on their beaks representing blood, for they are raptors that feed on flesh.

*BIRD-1-G: Inca Terns (*Zarcillos*)*

The Inca tern (*Larosterna inca*) is one of the prettiest terns of the Peruvian coast. It is about the size of a small gull, dark gray with a white stripe formed by lengthened feathers on the sides of the head; its bill and legs are red (Koepcke 1970: 64). It feeds on fish that it captures by diving from the sky (ibid.). Sixteen examples of this bird are present in the sample, all dating to Phases 3 and 4. Several are depicted eating fish or associated with fish on the same vessel. The distinguishing characteristic of this bird is a white S-shaped marking above its eye, more exaggerated than the true markings of this bird, which tend to emerge from the sides of the eye and curve downward (fig. 5.161).

BIRD-1-H: Guanay Cormorants

The most likely identity of an all-black bird with a large bill seen on over a dozen Nasca vessels is the ever-present

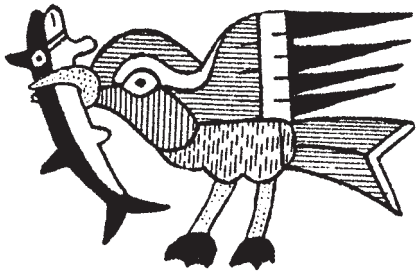


Fig. 5.161. BIRD-1-G (Inca tern). After Yacovleff and Muelle 1934: fig. 29h.

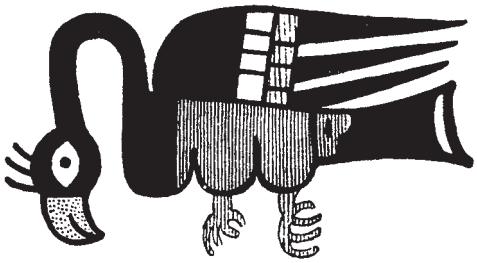


Fig. 5.162. BIRD-1-H (guanay cormorant). After Seler 1923: fig. 295.

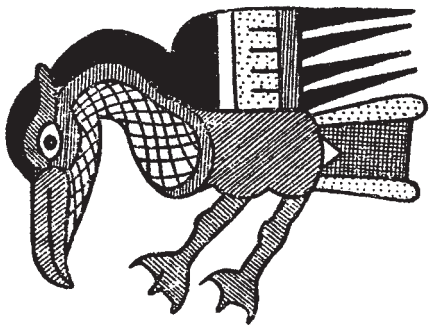


Fig. 5.163. BIRD-1-I (pelican). After Yacovleff 1932a: fig. 51.

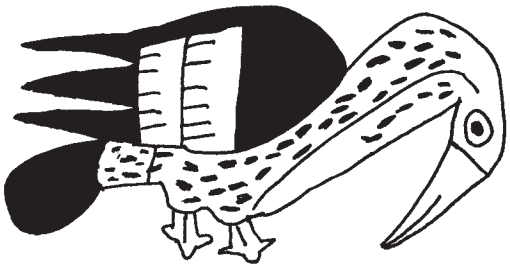


Fig. 5.164. BIRD-1-J (striated heron). Royal Ontario Museum HP-169. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Guanay cormorant (*Phalacrocorax bougainvillii*), one of the major guano birds of the coast. This bird is black with a long neck and a white belly and has a crest on its head. It feeds on anchovies and lives on the rocky shores and islands, depositing its droppings in thick layers that were used by the Inca and later peoples for fertilizer. The creature we see in the iconography is solid black, has three spikes (a crest) protruding from its head, and has a distinctive beak (fig. 5.162). All twelve examples date to Phase 3, except for one unique representation found on a Phase 6 or 7 vase. This last specimen appears to be an "archaism," that is, an attempt to replicate a past design by a much later group that may have seen heirlooms containing examples of this bird.

BIRD-1-I: Pelicans

Another large waterbird that appears on eleven vessels from Phase 3 has been tentatively identified as a pelican (*Pelicanus thagus*), although specific markings are lacking and the body proportions are not what we would expect for this species. Pelicans are a common shore bird, feeding primarily on fish, as is the case with the birds represented on these vessels. A distinct crop, colored differently from the neck, may be an attempt by the artist to reflect the thick neck of the pelican (fig. 5.163).

BIRD-1-J: Striated Herons

The sample contains several examples of a large waterbird, always depicted on the pottery with spots on its neck and breast, which possibly could be identified as the striated heron (*Butorides s. striatus*). This bird inhabits the reed beds and shores of lagoons and rivers, feeding on fish (Koepcke 1970: 31). It is one of the few large waterbirds with spotted or mottled body markings and thus is a good candidate for the birds depicted on the vessels (fig. 5.164).

BIRD-1-K: Parrots and Parakeets

At least four species of parrots or parakeets belonging to the family Psittacidae are present on the south coast of Peru. These include the mountain parakeet, the Andean parakeet, the scarlet-fronted parakeet, and the canary-winged parakeet (Koepcke 1970: 74–75). Representations of parrots become common in Phase 5, where they are often associated with warriors. In these scenes they appear as secondary motifs perched on the atlatls of the warriors (fig. 5.165). This type of representation continues with decreasing frequency into Phase 7, after which they disappear. The meaning of this association is unclear, but we have some evidence that tropical parrots may have been imported to the south coast as pets, much like monkeys (see above). Modeled parrots are also seen perched on the shoulders of two of the in-

Fig. 5.165. BIRD-1-K (parrot). After Yacovleff 1932a: fig. 6b.

Fig. 5.166. BIRD-1-L (aplomado falcon). After Yacovleff 1932a: fig. 2d.

Fig. 5.167. BIRD-1-M (Humboldt penguin). Art Institute of Chicago 55.1965. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

dividuals in the famous "Procession Tablet" first illustrated by Tello (1931) and in plate 9. Kroeber found the mummified remains of a "mealy parrot" at Cahuachi in 1926 in his grave 11 (see Carmichael 1988: pl. 5C). The date for this grave was Phase 3. Among Amazonian tribes, parrots are frequently kept as pets and perch on the shoulders or on the burdens carried by people. The parrots sitting on the raised atlatls of Nasca warriors or on the shoulders of the people in the procession may therefore represent cherished pets.

Only five examples of pottery with parrots/parakeets portrayed as independent or primary motifs are found in the sample, all except one dating to Phase 5. The bird is recognized by its crooked beak and distinctive plumage.

BIRD-1-L: Aplomado Falcons

Representations of falcons and hawks are common in Nasca iconography, ranging from naturalistic depictions of the bird to the use of falcon eye and tail feather markings on certain mythical beings and for human face painting. Over sixty years ago Eugenio Yacovleff published a detailed study on falcon representations in the art of ancient Peru and clearly distinguished the features present on a variety of raptorial birds, including the Aplomado falcon (*Falco femoralis pichinchae*) and the condor (Yacovleff 1932a). He traced the origins of the falcon motif from its first appearance on Paracas embroidered textiles, through the depictions of falcons in Nasca, Moche, and Tiwanaku iconography, to references by Spanish chroniclers to these birds in Inca mythology and ritual. He concludes that the falcon was a symbol for warfare (ibid.: 101), a suggestion supported by the frequent use of facial painting on warriors in the form of falcon markings around the eyes. Certain mythical beings including the Horrible Bird and the Mythical Spotted Cat are sometimes endowed with this feature. Yacovleff also believed that the birds perched on the atlatls of warriors were all falcons; but, as I have argued above, many seem to be parrots rather than falcons (although in some cases falcons may be represented). Falcons prey on other birds—members of their same family—just as warriors prey on other humans. All of these points bolster Yacovleff's argument for a connection between the falcon and warfare.

The aplomado falcon is characterized in the art by two features, a U-shaped black marking surrounding the eye and parallel wavy stripes across its tail (fig. 5.166). Only two painted specimens of naturalistic falcons are present in the sample, both dating to Phase 3, but many more modeled examples can be found (see below). Much more frequent is the presence of falcon markings on mythical creatures and humans.

Fig. 5.168. BIRD-1-N (crested bird). After Seler 1923: fig. 285.

Fig. 5.169. BIRD-1-O (owls). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: pl. 15, 2a.

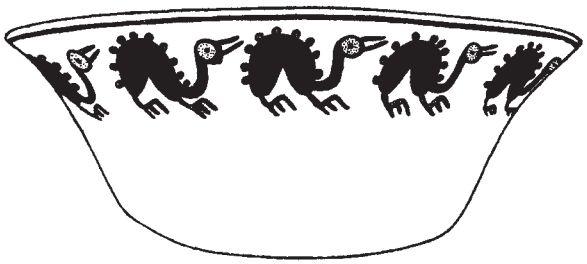


Fig. 5.170. BIRD-1-P (baby birds). After Seler 1923: fig. 300.

BIRD-1-M: Humboldt Penguins

The sample includes at least one example of a painted Humboldt penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*), on a Phase 5 vase from the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago (fig. 5.167). This piece clearly portrays the basic black color of the bird along with other distinguishing features, such as a white band stretching from the eyes down the sides of the creature. This Antarctic bird is present in the cold currents that exist off the Peruvian littoral, feeding off the plentiful fish that share its habitat. Today these penguins are found primarily on the small guano islands offshore rather than along the coast; we do not know if they had an expanded range in earlier times. The penguin does suggest the Nasca people's familiarity with the sea and the possibility that they made trips by some form of watercraft to the guano islands.

BIRD-1-N: Crested Birds

Four examples of an unidentified large bird with ruffles or cresting along its neck occur in the sample. The bird is depicted eating plants of some type, often in association with other "land" birds such as the hummingbird (fig. 5.168). The markings are insufficient to make a positive identification other than to single out four examples of this type that date to Phase 3.

BIRD-1-O: Owls

Several varieties of owls are found on the coast, including a strange burrowing owl (*Speotyto cunicularia nanodes*) commonly called a *lechuza* that excavates its nest in the ground. It is of medium size, spotted brown and white (Koepcke 1970: 75). Another coastal owl is the barn owl (*Tyto alba contempta*), which has a face framed by feathers in the form of a heart. These two varieties seem to be the models for the few owl representations seen in the iconography, although four other types of owl are found in the area.

Four vessels from Phases 3 and 4 are painted with a strange face that may be a representation of an owl. These faces have eyes framed by high arching brows that continue down to form the sides of the face — much like a representation of a barn owl. Beneath the eyes are a series of "tear lines," which may be an attempt to distinguish the facial features of this bird (fig. 5.169). Luis Valcarcel (1932) argued that these representations were of the otter or nutria (*gato de agua*), but I believe he is mistaken. Modeled owl vessels are also present and are discussed below.

BIRD-1-P: Baby Birds

The sample includes eight examples of relatively small birds whose arched bodies are surrounded by dots, suggesting the fuzzy down of young chicks (fig. 5.170). Perhaps a specific species of bird is intended by this motif, but enough variety exists to suggest that the potters intended to illustrate newborn birds. All eight specimens date to Phase 5, which is unusual in itself, and the possibility exists that a new way of depicting a familiar species may have been attempted at this time.

BIRD-1-Q: Unidentified Birds

Despite a relatively successful attempt to classify as many birds as possible by species, thirty-six specimens with birds, ranging in date from Phase 3 through Phase 9, are impossible to identify. These have been grouped together in this category, with the hope that someday additional research will allow a more specific classification.

Fig. 5.171. BIRD-1-R (Phase 5 pointed beak bird). Smithsonian 387698. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

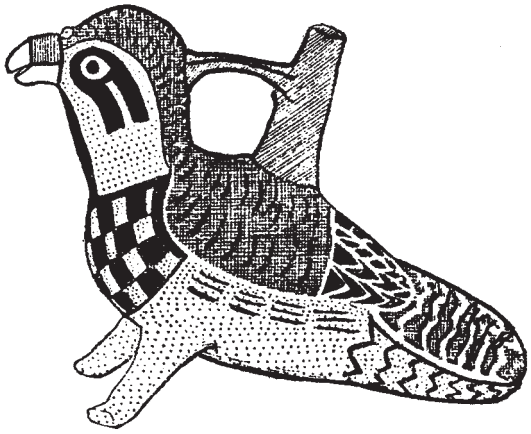


Fig. 5.172. BIRD-2-A (modeled falcon). After Yacovleff 1932a: fig. 2a.

Fig. 5.173. BIRD-2-B (modeled swift). Museum der Allerheiligen (Schaffhausen, Switzerland). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

BIRD-1-R: *Phase 5 Pointed Beak Birds*

A peculiar variety of bird is found only in Phase 5, usually on vessels which show either corn or pollywogs associated with a Mythical Being. These birds have sharp, pointed beaks and small wings (fig. 5.171). Obviously they are associated with water, but the species is as yet unidentifiable. Only three specimens are present in the sample.

BIRD-2: *Modeled Birds*

A second major category of avian motifs consists of modeled or effigy bird vessels. Not included here are Mythical Beings who may have avian attributes, such as the modeled body of a bird. The effigy birds categorized as BIRD-2 are all naturalistic birds representing a variety of species. All of these modeled birds also appear in flat painted form (BIRD-1), described in detail above.

BIRD-2-A: *Falcons*

The largest number of modeled birds can be identified as the aplomado falcon by its distinctive eye markings and tail feathers. The sample contains seventeen examples of modeled falcons, ranging in date from Phase 1 through Phase 5. The strong continuity of this motif with earlier Paracas iconography is exemplified by the presence of six pieces that date to Phase 1. On several specimens the bird is depicted perched on top of a cactus plant, recalling the familiar Aztec symbol of an eagle with a snake in its mouth perched on a cactus which became the emblem for the modern state of Mexico. Most of these vessels are in the form of a "head and spout" bottle (fig. 5.172).

BIRD-2-B: *White-Collared Swifts (*Vencejos*)*

Most examples of modeled swifts are in the form of small whistles, perhaps suggesting their use in agricultural rituals (fig. 5.173). As noted elsewhere in this book, Olsen (2002: 100) feels that these devices were used for calling or communicating with supernaturals rather than for their pure musical qualities. The swift's relationship with water makes this bird an ideal medium.

BIRD-2-C: *Great White Egrets (Garzas)*

A fine example of a modeled garza is present in the collections of the Museum der Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen, Switzerland (fig. 5.174). The pure white bird is modeled with a distinctive long neck, and its orange beak, eye, and wing panel add additional color. Only three specimens of this type are present in my sample.

BIRD-2-D: *Parrots and Parakeets*

The sample contains nine examples of modeled parrots. One of the best portrays a pair of these birds perched on top a square-shaped double spout bottle painted with a series of Mythical Beings, dating to Phase 5 (fig. 5.175).

BIRD-2-E: *Owls*

Ten modeled owls are present in the sample, ranging from Phase 2 to Phase 8. All are characterized by large concentric

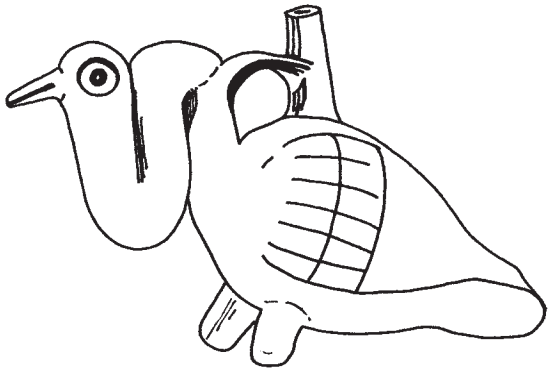


Fig. 5.174. BIRD-2-C (modeled egret). Museum der Allerheiligen (Schaffhausen, Switzerland). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

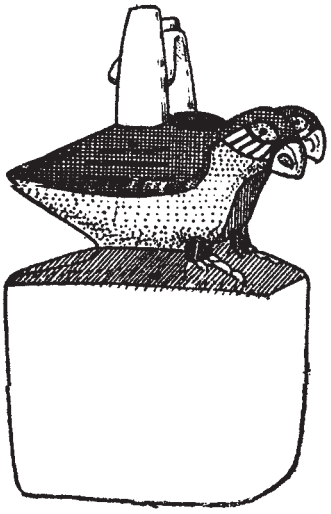


Fig. 5.175. BIRD-2-D (modeled parrots). After Yacovleff 1932a: fig. 1.

Fig. 5.176. BIRD-2-E (modeled owl). Private collection. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

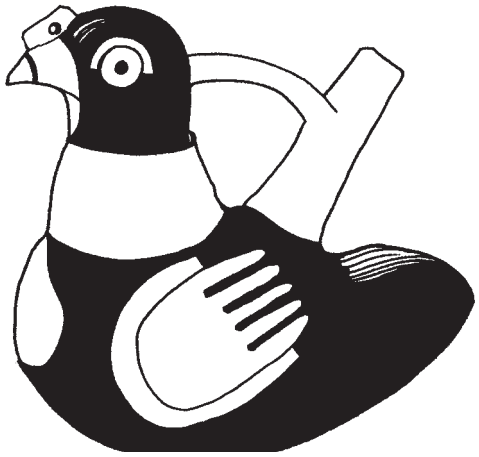


Fig. 5.177. BIRD-2-F (modeled condor). National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution 21/6912. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

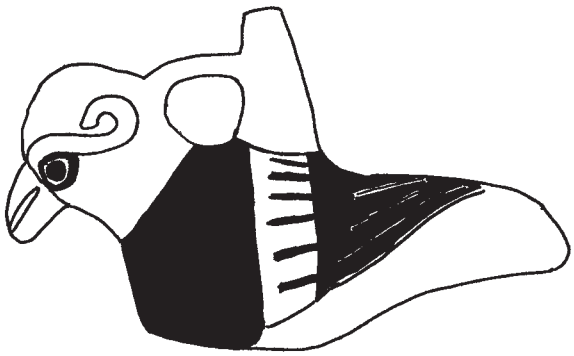


Fig. 5.178. BIRD-2-G (modeled Inca tern). Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg, 52.57.123. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

circular eyes that easily identify them as owls (fig. 5.176). In addition to vessels in the form of modeled owls, the sample includes two Phase 6 "head jars" in the form of modeled owls' heads.

BIRD-2-F: Condors

Three early bottles in the form of modeled condors are present in the sample. Each portrays lifelike birds, complete with carbuncle and prominent white collar (fig. 5.177). A fourth example, from the collections of the Museo del Banco de Crédito in Lima, has been published in Purin (1990, vol. 2: fig. 160).

BIRD-2-G: Inca Terns

The sample contains six examples of modeled Inca terns, all dating to Phase 3. They are identified on the basis of the distinctive wavy white line above their eyes (fig. 5.178).

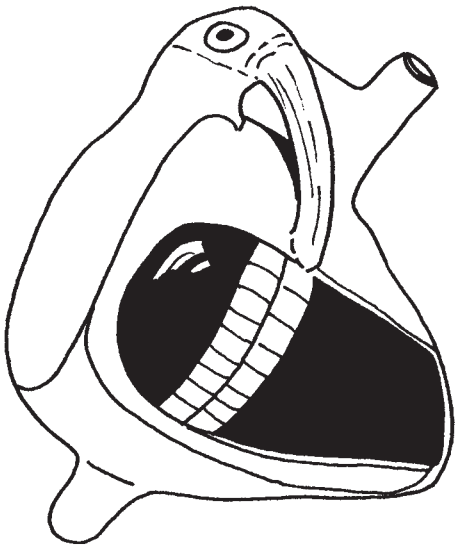


Fig. 5.179. BIRD-2-J (modeled cormorant). Art Institute of Chicago 56.1186. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

BIRD-2-H: Pelicans

Modeled pelicans and cormorants are similar in form and difficult to differentiate. Two effigy vessels in the sample appear to represent pelicans. Pelicans are characterized by their very long beaks and association with multiple fish on the vessels.

BIRD-2-I: Penguins

Two examples of modeled penguins are present in the sample. One specimen is a head and spout bottle that may date to Phase 7. It has modeled flippers along with the other markings of a penguin. The second vessel is an unusual three-handled jar of unknown date in the form of a penguin.

BIRD-2-J: Cormorants

Fourteen vessels in the form of a beautiful modeled black bird with a white throat and breast in the sample appear to be representations of a cormorant (fig. 5.179). The bottom portions of most of these bottles are decorated with painted fish, confirming that the birds are indeed waterbirds.

BIRD-2-K: Unidentified Modeled Birds

Nineteen vessels in the sample have the form of unidentified modeled birds. Some may be parrots and hummingbirds, and others are a variety of waterbirds. These pieces date from Phase 2 through Phase 9.

ANM: Animals

The physical world of the Nasca culture encompassed a range of ecological zones from the Pacific littoral and adjacent valley bottomland to the foothills of the Andes and beyond. Some of the animals found in these zones and displayed on the pottery were exploited for food (guinea pigs), others used for wool or as pack animals (llamas), while others were kept as pets (monkeys, dogs). The art also depicts agricultural pests (mice) and the predators who controlled them (pampas cats, foxes). Marine animals portrayed include whales, otters, and perhaps seals. The list is somewhat selective; some creatures, like deer, are very rare in the art, although their presence is known from other physical evidence.

Carmichael (1992b: 187) has argued that Nasca art should be viewed as "a symbolic, interrelated system from which specific themes cannot be isolated and treated as reflections of ordinary reality." In other words, motifs such as animals, plants, and fish represent sacred symbols reflecting concepts of fertility, water, and the like and should not be viewed as secular or mundane representations of everyday objects. I disagree with this argument and think that Nasca art *does* contain naturalistic representations of subjects in the real world as well as supernatural or sacred motifs — a sacred/profane dichotomy present in all societies (see Durkheim 1915). While some of the animals described below may sometimes be associated with supernatural creatures (such as a fox-tail signifer on certain Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings), this is not true in the majority of cases. The art of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome portrays both sacred and representational themes that can easily be differentiated. There is no reason why Nasca artists cannot replicate the wonders of the world around them without suggesting a deeper, religious motivation. In Nasca iconography representational themes can be secular as well as sacred, depending on their context.

ANM-1: Painted Animals

Animals appear in the ceramic art in two different forms: painted representations (AMN-1) and those modeled into effigy figures (ANM-2). The painted variety is found in every phase of the style but reaches its peak in Phase 5, when forty-one specimens are found. Next in frequency is Phase 3, with nineteen specimens. In contrast, modeled animals are most frequent in the first few phases, with fif-

teen examples in Phase 2 alone. After that time only one or two examples are found in each phase through Phase 7. A decided shift from modeled to painted animals begins in Phase 3.

ANM-1-A: Foxes

Foxes are common nocturnal predators in the coastal valleys of Peru, feeding on mice and other rodents as well as small mammals. The Andean fox (*Dusicyon culpaeus*) is today, and probably was in ancient times, the largest land animal native to the south coast, thus making it one of the more important animals in the Nasca universe (Sawyer 1961: 289). An intelligent creature, the fox is best known for its cunning and slyness. Foxes live in burrows in the ground, frequenting areas near agricultural fields where they can seek out their prey. Elizabeth Benson (1997: 41) argues that the "fox's underworld, earth, and agricultural connotations are enhanced by its use of burrows." The fox is considered a trickster in some cultures, an evil omen in others. Lavallée (1970: 133) states that in the Andes the fox is connected to plant symbolism. The fox is seen as a bearer of grain and plants, bringing them from the sky or heavens to humans.

Contemporary myths give another perspective on the role of foxes in Andean society that may or may not be applicable to the Nasca culture:

> There are more data on pumas and foxes which demonstrate continuing patterns in Andean concepts about these animals. In Pacariqtambo, also south of Cuzco, pumas are referred to, among other terms, as "son of the earth." This is related to the belief that they are able to communicate with the earth, will "hear" about things through the earth. The fox is also called "son of the earth." Both animals are often observed eating together during the day what the puma has hunted during the night. They are related, each in his own way, to the rainy season. While the pumas are said to enter the village only during this time of year, foxes predict in October and November the outcome of the next year's crop. If they howl loudly during these months, it will be a good year with plenty of rain and a large harvest; if they howl weakly it will be a bad year. One of the principal functions of the *ararihuas* [guardians of the cultivated fields], which still survives in Pacariqtambo, is to guard against foxes and pumas.
>
> As Guaman Poma shows the use of fox skins in October and in March, we can understand his and other ethnohistorical data in the light of modern practices. In October foxes howl, predicting the outcome of the harvest, and in this way they also have a propitious influence; in March, when the crops ripen, their interest in eating them has to be forestalled. The habit pumas and foxes have of eating together demonstrates a certain dependency of the latter upon the former and supports an apparent ranking of fox skins, which are worn by young men in the year of their initiation, under puma skins, worn by their elders, who supervise them. (Zuidema 1983, reprinted in Urton 1985: 193)

A further view of the importance of the fox in the calendrical cycle of the Andean peoples can be seen in the following observation:

> If one sees the fox [*atuj*] in September [the time of sowing] moving towards the mountains, the year will bring a good harvest in the puna; but if one sees him coming down, the year will be good in the valley. In the same way, if the excrement of the fox has potato peels, the puna will be prosperous; but if it has corn husks, the valley will have an abundant harvest. (Platt 1980: 146–147)

Foxes first appear in the Paracas style at Juan Pablo in the Ica Valley, where they may have been the symbol of a local deity preceding the introduction of the Chavín feline (Sawyer 1961: 289). They appear in both modeled and painted versions on the ceramics (see Sawyer 1961: fig. 9). Preserved fox skins, presumably worn as headdresses, have been found in archaeological contexts, and examples are present in the collections of the Museo Regional de Ica and at the Paracas Site Museum. Early Nasca ceramics also portray modeled human figures wearing fox-skin headdresses (fig. 5.134), but these representations disappear after Phase 3. Painted figures of foxes, however, continue through Phase 5, with a few isolated examples found in later phases.

Painted foxes are drawn in profile to accentuate the most distinguishing features of the animal: the elongated snout, pointed ears, whiskers, and long tail (fig. 5.180). A rectangular head with long, bristlelike whiskers is attached to a body with a highly arched back. A thick black tail is attached to the back of the body. Four legs are always present, with paws sometimes displaying toes. In some late examples Proliferous elements appear in place of the legs. Fox tails are present as signifers on one variant of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB-1-E; fig. 5.7), which represents a crossover to the sacred world from the secular for this motif.

Fig. 5.180. ANM-1-A (foxes). After Seler 1923: fig. 270.

ANM-1-B: Monkeys

The earliest traces of monkeys on the south coast are seen in the Paracas Necropolis mummy bundles discovered by Tello in 1925. The skull of a small monkey was found wrapped within the bundle of mummy number 6 in the Paracas Necropolis cemetery (Tello and Mejía 1979: 484). Obviously the Paracas people were familiar with monkeys and considered them of sufficient value to include them in the burials of their elite. A few of the elaborate textiles that enveloped the bodies were also adorned with images of naturalistic monkeys. Many others displayed mythical creatures that possessed feet with opposable toes, just like those of primates.

In the Nasca culture, pottery replaced textiles as the major medium for artistic expression. Naturalistic monkeys appear on early Nasca ceramics in both painted and modeled forms. Although more than one species may be present, monkeys are generally recognizable by their long prehensile tails and a round head, often surrounded by stylized thick fur. In some of the modeled examples, monkeys hold a small cup in their hands, much like trained pet monkeys today. These early Nasca monkeys appear to be purely secular in nature. The Nasca fascination with monkeys is also seen in one of the most outstanding of the geoglyphs drawn on the Pampa de San José. A gigantic spider monkey, measuring over 300 feet across and etched on the desert surface in a continuous line, is further testimony of the presence of these creatures in the desert oases.

If monkeys were not indigenous to the south coast, how did they arrive there and what role did they play in the society? New World monkeys are found primarily in the tropical forests, including the montaña on the eastern slopes of the Andes, where some varieties of spider monkeys exist at altitudes of up to 8,000 feet (Morrison 1972: pl. 10). Most monkeys, however, are restricted to elevations below 4,000 feet. The high elevations of the Andes present a physical barrier to the natural movement of monkeys westward out of the forests. Tony Morrison (1972: 21) states that monkeys are not found west of the Andes in a region south of Ecuador.

As one moves northward into the northern fringes of Peru around the area of Tumbes and then up into the coastal plain and forests of southern Ecuador, the climate and flora change dramatically. Coastal Ecuador contains several ecozones, ranging from tropical rain forests found mainly in the northern province of Esmeraldas, to semideciduous forests in the Manabí and Guayas provinces, to tropical woodlands in El Oro (James 1959: 152). Selected species of monkeys are found in these coastal Ecuadorian provinces, and it would seem logical that Ecuador was the source of the monkeys in coastal Peru. The desert terrain, wide rivers, and lack of trees along the desert coast of Peru provide convincing evidence against the natural movement of monkeys down the Peruvian coast. I contend that monkeys were traded down the coast from group to group, beginning as early as the Initial Period, much like *Spondylus* shell.

The most likely monkeys to have spread to Peru are the white-fronted capuchin monkey (*Cebus albifrons*), the spider monkey (*Ateles paniscus*), and the mantled howler monkey (*Alouatta palliata*). All three of these species have been recorded in the coastal regions of Ecuador (see Wolfheim 1983). Capuchin monkeys are an extremely adaptable species that can survive in very reduced and degraded habitats (Wolfheim 1983: 295). They are among the most intelligent of the New World monkeys and can be trained in complex tasks; they are found in the Esmeraldas and Manabí areas of Ecuador and in the Tumbes area of northern Peru. Spider monkeys are noted for their highly adaptable prehensile tails that compensate for their atrophied thumbs. Spider monkeys are found in the Ecuadorian provinces of Esmeraldas, Guayas, Los Ríos, Manabí, and Pichincha. Howler monkeys have saccular diverticula in their larynxes which

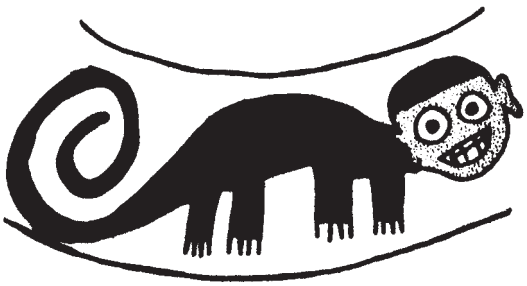


Fig. 5.181. ANM-1-B (monkey). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 58(2).

allow them to project their sounds over long distances. Their range includes portions of Esmeraldas, Manabí, and Los Ríos on the northwestern coast of Ecuador.

If we can conclude that monkeys were brought down the coast of Peru from Ecuador rather than over the mountains, what purpose did they serve in Nasca society? In the tropical forest, where monkeys are plentiful, they are hunted for food by many tribes (e.g., the Tapirapé), kept as pets by others (the Tupinumba), or seen as the embodiment of spirits (the Tenetehara). Monkey teeth are used for ornaments (upper Xingú), their skulls for eating utensils (Peruvian Montaña), and their bones for arrow points. The Taulipáng view the howler monkey as a charm that can help relieve a sore throat. Garcilaso de la Vega (1966 [1609], book 1, chap. 9) wrote that the Inca worshipped various animals for their cunning, such as the fox and monkey.

Of all these uses of monkeys, use as pets best fits the evidence for their role in the societies of coastal Peru. Anyone who has observed monkeys in a zoo or in their natural habitat is struck by their intelligence and their human characteristics. Garcilaso de la Vega wrote that the Inca said that monkeys carried their children on their backs in order to mock the Indian women. He also stated that the Indians felt that monkeys could talk but kept their language secret lest the Spanish make them dig for silver and gold (1966 [1609] book 8, chap. 18).

I contend, therefore, that monkeys were kept as pets in a wide variety of early Peruvian cultures, including Nasca. They may have been an item of tribute collected by powerful leaders from subservient tribes or an item of exchange between equal groups. This trade pattern has important implications. If monkeys were passing from tribe to tribe, how many other commodities and ideas were also being transferred between cultures? The role of trade in the formation and maintenance of complex societies perhaps has been underrated in the Central Andes. Monkeys join a long list of more significant items such as *Spondylus* shell and obsidian, which have played an important role in this process.

Our sample contains only a few naturalistic monkeys painted on vessels. They can be identified by their prehensile tails, humanlike characteristics, and distinct heads (fig. 5.181). Although the most representational examples date to the earliest phases, several good examples are found in Nasca Phase 7. It is not a coincidence that Mythical Monkeys reach their peak in Phase 7 as well (see above).

ANM-1-C: Camelids: Llamas, Alpacas, Guanacos, and Vicuñas

Four varieties of native camelids are found in the central Andes: the llama and its smaller cousin the alpaca, both of which were domesticated, and the wild guanaco and vicuña, which were hunted for their meat and wool. It appears that both the wild and domesticated forms were portrayed on the pottery, using the same general form.

The llama (*Lama glama*) was the most important domesticated animal in the Andean area in Precolumbian times. After thousands of years of being hunted for their meat, llamas were eventually domesticated in the highlands of Peru or the Bolivian altiplano in the late Preceramic Period (Rick 1980: 296ff; Pires-Ferreira et al. 1976). A herding economy accompanied by the cultivation of tubers became firmly established in the highlands at that time. Llamas were introduced to the coastal valleys during the Initial Period by an incursion of highlanders for either military or economic reasons (Moseley 1992:157). Although not ideally suited to the lower elevations or desert terrain, llamas became an important element in coastal societies like the Nasca, Moche, and Chimú.

The largest of the four native camelids in the Andean area, the llama became an essential animal to the peoples of this region. It served as a beast of burden, both individually and in caravans, which became particularly important in Huari and Inca times. Llamas provided meat for food, wool for clothing, and dung for fertilizer and fuel (Urton 1981: 187). Among its first noneconomic uses, beginning in Preceramic times, was as a sacrificial victim to their gods. This use is exemplified in the Early Intermediate Period by the presence of a multitude of severed llama hoofs placed in the grave of a young Nasca boy in Phase 7, now on display in the Museo Regional de Ica.

To the Inca and to their descendants, the contemporary Quechua, the llama was also part of their cosmology. Juan Polo de Ondegardo (1916 [1571]: chap. 1) states that "in general [the Inca] believed that all animals and birds on the

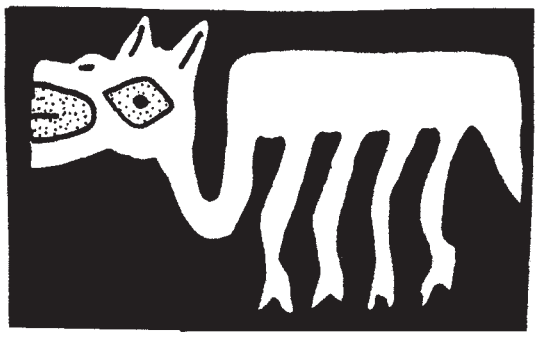


Fig. 5.182. ANM-1-C (llama). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 27(5).

Fig. 5.183. ANM-1-C (guanaco being hunted). After Roark 1965: fig. 69. Reprinted by permission of the Institute of Andean Studies.

earth had their likeness in the sky in whose responsibility was their procreation and augmentation" (translated in Urton 1981: 169). The southern portion of the Milky Way, which has the densest clustering of stars and the greatest surface brightness, also contains the "dark cloud" constellations. Among the creatures present in these constellations were the llama, serpent, toad, and fox (Urton 1981: 169-170). It is uncertain whether these same beliefs can be traced as far back as the Nasca culture; it is more likely that these people were most interested in the economic aspects of the beast.

Camelids are one of the most commonly depicted animals in Nasca art. These creatures are the primary motif in thirty-three specimens in the sample. Camelids can be identified by their distinctive peaked ears, snouts, and body form (fig. 5.182). It is likely, however, that the Nasca artists used the same general image to represent all four varieties: llamas, alpacas, guanacos, and vicuñas. Three of the four varieties are known to have inhabited the coastal region, the exception being the vicuña, which was probably restricted to the higher elevations, as it is today. The wild guanaco is known to have fed on the lomas vegetation in some coastal valleys. One argument for identifying the wild forms of camelids (guanaco and vicuña) in the artistic repertoire is that a number of vessels portray animals in the act of being hunted by individuals using spears and spear-throwers as well as sling stones (figs. 5.262, 5.183). It seems unlikely that the domesticated varieties of these animals (the llama and alpaca) would be treated in this fashion.

Many vessels portray tethered llamas or alpacas, however, indicating domesticated varieties. Several vessels illustrate tethered llamas being led by humans (fig. 5.184; pl. 36). One curious addition on some vessels is the drawing of something emerging from the mouths of the beasts. Often this element is in the form of a chain of balls or Proliferous elements. I would suggest that the artist is attempting to portray the llama spitting the acrid saliva for which this species is famous, especially when the creature becomes annoyed.

Camelids are often drawn in association with other motifs on the same vessel. The most common pairings are with cacti, trophy heads, spears, and other animals such as the fox. The significance of such combinations is not known. Another form of depiction is the decapitated head of a camelid, often painted on the bottom of a dish. Perhaps this is meant to symbolize the ritual use of the animal. Even today in some Quechua and Aymara communities llamas are still decapitated and their blood spilled on the ground as an offering to the spirits in fertility ceremonies.

ANM-1-D: Rodents (Mice and Rats)

Rodents were the scourges of the agricultural fields, especially due to their propensity to eat the corn crop (pl. 31). Several charming Nasca vessels illustrate mice (*Phyllotis* sp.) or rice rats (*Oryzomys xantheolus*) nibbling on corncobs with their large jaws. Rodents are rarely depicted in the art until Phase 5, when they become a major theme for reasons unknown. According to Schreiber and Lancho (1988), Phase 5 corresponds to the building of *puquio*s in the Nasca Valley and an increase in agricultural production in areas previously underutilized due to drought conditions. Perhaps these events are connected in some way. Tony Morrison (1972: 43) reports that the village of Palpa was the center of a rat plague in 1968. Thousands of rats can suddenly appear in the agricultural fields and cause massive destruction. The frequency of depiction of this motif in Phase 5 could also be associated with a similar plague at that time.

Some rodents are drawn very realistically, with clearly defined heads and jaws, while others appear in a more styl-

Fig. 5.184. ANM-1-C (tethered llamas). After Carmichael 1988: fig. 2. Drawing by Elizabeth LeMoine.

Fig. 5.185. AMB-1-D (mice). After Seler 1923: fig. 268.

ized outlined form, utilizing a large semicircle for the body and a smaller one for the head (fig. 5.185). They are almost always painted black, on a white background. Rodents are never drawn singularly; they always occur in multiples, in imitation of their natural proclivity to live in packs. They often appear in a band encircling the rim of a vessel or in multiple rows in the design area. Natural predators such as snakes, felines, and foxes are seldom painted on the same vessel with mice, which seems odd to our way of thinking. Following Phase 5 mice rapidly disappear from the style.

ANM-1-E: Guinea Pigs (Cavies)

The Peruvian "guinea pig" is neither a pig nor from Guinea. It is more correctly known as a cavy (*Cavia porcellus*), a member of the family of rodents that includes larger varieties such as the capybara and agouti in South America. Guinea pigs were an early domesticate in the Central Andes and are still used by the contemporary Quechua for food and ritual (Morales 1995). In many rural communities guinea pigs are kept in the kitchen area and are fed scraps until they are needed for a meal. *Curanderos* use guinea pigs in healing ceremonies and for divination. The animal is rubbed over the body of a sick person then killed, and its organs are "read" to determine the source of the illness. While we cannot be certain that such functions can be traced to Nasca times, the presence of multiple guinea pig pelts in Nasca tombs suggests ritual uses going back to that period.

Native Andean cavies are about twelve inches long and lack tails. Both long- and short-haired varieties are present. They are usually white or white with mixtures of brown or black (Morrison 1972: 115–116). Affectionately called *cuy* by the native peoples because of their distinctive sounds, these animals, next to llamas, have become most identified with Andean societies.

Nasca pottery has very few painted representations of cavies; when they are found, they are usually part of a group of animals of various species. A vessel from the collections of the Milwaukee Public Museum contains a veritable "zoo," including a monkey, lizard, llama, snakes, and a cavy (pls. 28, 29, 30). In this case the guinea pig is painted in a solid color (pl. 29). Modeled pottery versions of guinea pigs are also present and are described below. These are usually painted with horizontal stripes.

ANM-1-F: Dogs

We usually do not think of dogs as part of the indigenous fauna of the Central Andes. Until the Spanish introduced new breeds, dogs were rare and less favored as pets than other creatures. Domesticated dogs were present in ancient Peru from early times, but their evolutionary history is poorly known. At least four varieties of domesticated dogs existed in Precolumbian Peru (see Allen 1920; Cardoza 1990; Schwartz 1997). The most common was a medium-sized animal with fur, sometimes referred to as an Inca dog, which closely resembled European breeds that were later introduced into the area. Preserved remains of this type of dog have recently been excavated in the rich Moche tombs at Sipán in northern Peru (Alva 1988: 525 [illustration], 548 [description]).

The hairless dog (*Canis carabicus tschudi*) was a rather ugly creature with wrinkled folds of leathery skin and numerous wartlike growths on its face and body. Alana Cordy-Collins (1994) of the San Diego Museum of Man has been studying representations of this animal in the ceramics of the Chimú and Lambayeque (Sicán) styles from northern Peru. A rare Nasca vessel perhaps representing this type of dog is present in the collections of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University (illustrated in Purin 1990: 129). Its identification is based on distinctive markings on the muzzle, the proportions of the

neck and ears, and the markings on the body. An almost identical vessel has been located in the Precolumbian Collections of the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections in Washington, D.C. If these vessels do indeed depict hairless dogs, they would be among the earliest such representations in ancient Peruvian art and would verify the presence of this animal on the south coast, in addition to its better-known distribution on the north coast.

Painted representations of dogs (ANM-1-F) are very rare. The double spout bottle from the Milwaukee Museum (referred to elsewhere as the "zoo") may contain a dog representation (pl. 28), and a ritual scene depicting the entombment of a cache of trophy heads (fig. 5.117) displays an animal which might be a dog. To my knowledge, no dog bones have yet been uncovered in a Nasca context. The presence of this animal on the south coast was very limited.

ANM-1-G: Felines

The only feline native to the south coast that can be positively identified is the pampas cat (*Felis colocolo;* for a picture, see Peters 1991: fig. 7.44). Today it inhabits the dry scrub forest of the upper slopes of the central Andean cordillera, but it has also been seen in areas of seasonal fog vegetation (lomas) between 400 and 1,000 meters above sea level (ibid.: 275). Usually this creature is portrayed in its mythical form, with plants appended to its body (SC-1). Naturalistic or "secular" representations also occur, more frequently in an effigy form in the early part of the sequence. Felines are sometimes seen in other contexts, such as ritual scenes where animals are represented.

Larger felines, such as the puma (*Felis concolor*), the jaguar (*Leo onca*), and the ocelot (*Felis pardalis*), may have been present in the coastal valleys in the past, although the evidence is more compelling for the far north of Peru, and no direct evidence for these animals has been found in the Nasca and Ica Valleys. Morrison (1972: 40) notes:

> At one time ocelots were seen occasionally in the Chicama valley, not far from Trujillo 400 miles north of Lima, but now they are restricted on the coast to the forest fringe near Ecuador. Pumas on the other hand have remained in most parts but this is not surprising as they have the ability to adapt to a wide range of habitats; the animal occurs in damp forests, the high frozen cordilleras and the arid desert. Unfortunately, the puma is regarded as a serious danger to farm stock, and when encountered it is killed in all inhabited areas. These animals reach the coastal valleys where their natural predatory instinct takes them to the farms and wild parts of the desert coast where they possibly attack isolated sea-lion colonies or feed on young sea birds. Authenticated sightings are infrequent but Ian Grimwood identified puma tracks on the seashore at Morosama in the Department of Tacna when he was making studies on behalf of the Peruvian Government in 1967; also they have been reported by the guardians of the guano bird sanctuaries on the mainland.

Although no naturalistic representations of pumas are known in Nasca art, some of the feline attributes of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings may be derived from this creature. The puma or mountain lion was an important creature in later Inca mythology and ritual (see Zuidema 1983), as was the jaguar in Chavín and Paracas religion. Not all feline traits seen in Nasca art were necessarily drawn from local creatures. The Nasca people incorporated concepts from other religious traditions in the formation of their own cultural manifestation.

ANM-1-H: Nutrias or Otters

The nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) is actually a large rodent about 30 inches long, with a ratlike tail 12 to 15 inches long. Lengthy, swept-back whiskers characterize its wide face. Known commonly as an otter, or to the Peruvians as the *gato de agua*, the nutria has an especially fine pelt, usually black. At home both in water and on land, it is especially adept at catching fish but will eat rats and birds if fish are not available. It lives in burrows near rivers and swamps.

Valcarcel (1932) wrote an essay on "El Gato de Agua" and examined the mythology surrounding this creature. To the Precolumbian Chileans and Argentines, the otter was a monstrous animal to some, a "water tiger" to others, playing a role in their creation myths. Valcarcel identified many of the feline images in Nasca iconography as being in reality representations of the otter. The whiskers on Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, on the Mythical Spotted Cat, and on other mythical forms were seen as otter symbolism rather than feline. I would argue against this interpretation but at the same time suggest that otters are indeed being represented in the art. The animal's association with water is probably what makes this creature, like others described above, associated with life, fertility, and agriculture.

A number of early Nasca vessels may be otter representations. Some are naturalistic in form, while others have anthropomorphic or mythical characteristics. Identified mainly by the form of whisker and the semicircular arches above the eyes, these animals make up a small but significant portion of the iconography (fig. 5.186).

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PLATE 1. Nasca 5 cup bowl painted with an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB-1-A). Attached to the border of its signifer are human trophy heads with plants sprouting from their mouths (TH-4). Cactus fruits (PLT-1-H) appear above the head. Courtesy Art Institute of Chicago, 55-1934.

PLATE 2. Nasca 3 double spout bottle portraying a Trophy Head Taster (AMB-4). This winged anthropomorphic creature holds a human trophy head in its hands, and its tongue protrudes into the head as if tasting or eating it. Courtesy Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VA61650.

PLATE 3. Nasca 5 collared jar with a "Horrible Bird" (HB-2). This supernatural creature is a combination of various raptorial birds, often with human aspects, always depicted clenching a trophy head in its pointed beak. More trophy heads are displayed in its wing panel. Courtesy Art Institute of Chicago, 55.2059.

PLATE 4. Nasca 3 double spout bottle portraying a Mythical Killer Whale (KW-2). This anthropomorphic sea creature holds a trophy head in its human hand. Courtesy Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VA63456.

PLATE 5. Nasca 6 double spout bottle with a Spectacled Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (AMB-6-A-2) The creature's head and mouth mask are emphasized and drawn in typical Proliferous style. A row of girl faces (HUM-6) is drawn around the base of the vessel. Courtesy Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-10092.

PLATE 6. Nasca 7 double spout bottle with a Mythical Monkey (MKY-3) or Affendämon. Courtesy Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, (Lima), C-10022.

PLATE 7. Nasca 5 collared jar with a Bizarre (BIZ) scrambled figure, indicative of the artistic experimentation in this phase. Courtesy Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg, 52.57.218.

PLATE 8. Nasca 5 double spout bottle with an elaborate ritual scene (RITUAL). Farmers are drinking a hallucinogenic brew made from the San Pedro cactus shown in the scene. A shaman or musician, playing a panpipe, is present on the opposite side (see fig. 1.6 for the entire scene). Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, (Lima), C-65296. Photo courtesy Patrick H. Carmichael.

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PLATE 9. Nasca 5 or 6 plaque portraying a procession of individuals (an extended family?), perhaps to a ritual location. The adult male and the two children are playing musical instruments. Several pet dogs and parrots accompany the group. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-55308. Photo courtesy Banco de Crédito del Perú, from *Los dioses del Antiguo Perú*. (Colección Arte y Tesoros del Perú).

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PLATE 10. An unusual Nasca 7 double spout bottle with a ritual scene. A naked male lies on his back on a rocky terrain while a curious animal places an offering on his torso. The male is playing a panpipe and has a wound on his left arm. A strange insect or amphibian is crawling on his chest. Two "Lucy" females flank him. A few other vessels with this strange iconography are found in Phase 7. After Tello 1959: pl. 90.

PLATE 11. Nasca 2/3 large ceramic drum painted with a complex iconographic scene including warriors with weapons and a host of supernatural beings, snakes, and trophy heads. Private collection, Lima. Photo courtesy Banco de Crédito del Perú, from *Nasca* (Colección Arte y Tesoros del Perú).

PLATE 12. Another early ceramic drum dating to late Phase 2 or early Phase 3. It is modeled in the form of an Anthropomorphic Mythical Being wearing a fox-skin headdress. A snakelike streamer emanating from his mouth terminates in several different supernatural creatures. Photo courtesy David Bernstein.

PLATE 13. Nasca modeled musician (MUS-2), tentatively dated to Phase 5. This "one-man band" portrays a naked male musician playing the panpipe, holding a trumpet, and balancing a drum on his leg. Courtesy Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology and Regents of the University of California, 4-8418.

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PLATE 14. Contents of a Nasca shaman's kit, including a miniature ceramic pepino plant, a wooden human head with inlaid eyes and teeth, and three stone figures: a llama, llama head, and human. Courtesy Milwaukee Public Museum, Malcolm K. Whyte Collection.

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PLATE 15. Nasca 2/3 early effigy Harvester (HV-3-A). This modeled farmer holds a pepper in one hand and an agricultural implement in the other. The conical hat with stitching is distinctive of agriculturalists, and the painted spots on the face were used during rituals. Photograph © Orlando Museum of Art, 2003.67, gift of Dr. and Mrs. Solomon D. Klotz.

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PLATE 16. Nasca 7 vase with a running profile warrior (WAR-1). The warrior holds spears (OBJ-1-A) and a feather staff (OBJ-1-T) in his hands. Spherical symbolic trophy heads float nearby. The bottom of the vessel symbolizes a rocky or mountainous terrain with cactus plants. This vessel and the following one reflect Moche influence on Nasca art in Phase 7. Courtesy Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology and Regents of the University of California, 4-9094. Photo courtesy Patrick H. Carmichael.

PLATE 17. Nasca 7 goblet displaying a running warrior (WAR-1) holding a feather staff and an atlatl. The odd-shaped spotted objects surrounding him are bloody pieces of clothing from his victims. The bottom of the container is painted with a series of Chained Heads (RF-4). Courtesy National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 11/2758. Photo by Lawrence E. Dawson.

PLATE 18. Closeup of a decapitation scene on a Nasca 7 bottle. An elaborately costumed warrior holding an obsidian knife is decapitating his victim as blood, represented by red spots, covers the scene. Amano Museum (Lima), MAR-037.

PLATE 19. Nasca 7 bottle of an effigy warrior holding a modeled trophy head. The figure has his hair tied up toward the front and wears a highly decorated tunic. Amano Museum (Lima).

PLATE 20. Nasca 6 effigy of a seated warrior (WAR-3). The warrior's tunic is decorated with the same design seen on the Hunter (HT) and the headdress may have antecedents in the animal skins seen in earlier phases. Art Institute of Chicago, 57.427.

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PLATE 21. Nasca 7 spout and handle bottle with a rare scene of the ritual burial of a cache of trophy heads within a stepped mound. Two shamans, one with a mask, officiate in a ceremony that includes music and drinking from small cups. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-13466. Photo courtesy Patrick H. Carmichael.

PLATE 22. Another Nasca 7 vessel with a scene showing the ritual interment of a cache of trophy heads, much like the one found at Cerro Carapo in the Palpa Valley. The nature of the semimodeled figure on top of the vessel is unknown. Private collection. Photo courtesy Justin Kerr, photo K3355.

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PLATE 23. Nasca 5 or 6 collared jar displaying a mummy bundle flanked by two shamans conducting a burial ritual. The ceremony includes the playing of music (panpipes and rattles) and the use of a trophy head. Courtesy Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology and Regents of the University of California, 16-10453. Photo courtesy Patrick H. Carmichael.

PLATE 24. Nasca 7 double spout bottle with females wearing a distinctive costume. I have named this motif "Lucy" because of the similarity to the comic strip figure by Charles Schulz. She is surrounded by trophy heads and fish. The symbolism on this vessel is unknown. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, (Lima), C-10123.

PLATE 25. Another Nasca 7 vessel painted with a group of strangely dressed women wearing several types of head coverings. Their faces are haunting, almost skeletalized. The women are surrounded by plants and fish. This and the bottle in plate 24 represent new iconographic forms that appear in Phase 7 that are difficult to interpret. Their source is unknown. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-10128.

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PLATE 26. Nasca 5 double spout bottle in the form of a house (ARCH). The structure has stone corner construction (OBJ-1-Y) and a "roof comb" on one side. A male and female (HUM-5) stand at the entrance. The remainder of the vessel is decorated with supernatural themes. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-54252.

PLATE 27. Nasca 5 double spout bottle in the form of a terraced pyramid or mound, perhaps like those at Cahuachi. The vessel is decorated with a Mythical Killer Whale. Small birds and geometric designs are also included. Courtesy Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology and Regents of the University of California, 4-9094.

PLATES 28–30. Nasca 3 double spout bottle painted with such a variety of animals that it could be referred to as a "zoo." Among the identifiable animals are a monkey, llama, guinea pig, deer, lizard, snake, and toad. Courtesy Milwaukee Public Museum.

PLATE 31. Nasca 3 double spout bottle displaying cornstalks with cobs being attacked by mice. This naturalistic scene portrays only one of the everyday hazards faced by farmers. Courtesy Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology and Regents of the University of California, 4-8983.

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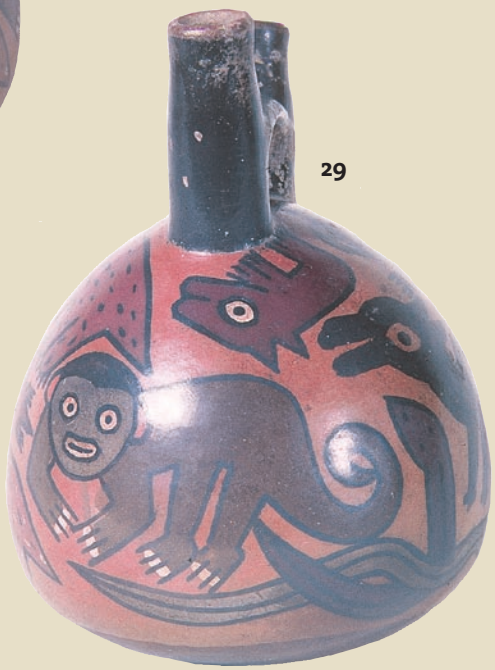

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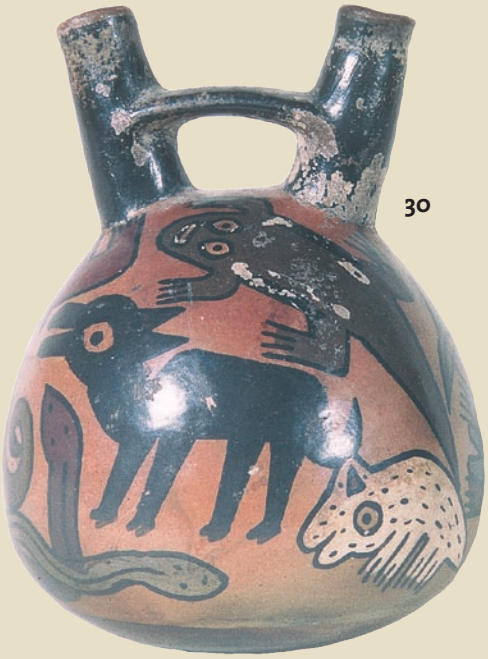

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PLATE 32. Nasca 4 fisherman bottle. The semi-modeled fisherman straddles a float or watercraft while holding a net. In his left hand he carries a net mender. Fish can be seen trapped in the net. Linden-Museum Stuttgart, 093337. Photo courtesy Museum Rietberg Zürich from the catalog *Nasca: Geheimnisvolle Zeichen im Alten Peru* (1999), plate 132.

PLATE 33. Nasca 7 fisherman bottle. This iconographic motif is rare after Phase 5, and only two late fisherman bottles exist in my sample. This example suggests that reed boats were present on the south coast, as can clearly be seen in the tied bundles of reeds forming the watercraft. Pablo Soldi Collection, Peru. Photo by Lawrence E. Dawson.

PLATE 34. Nasca 5 effigy vessel of a copulating couple (SEX). Erotic scenes are relatively rare in Nasca art compared to the contemporary Moche. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-52488.

PLATE 35. Nasca 5 effigy vessel of a woman (HUM-8) in the process of childbirth (BIRTH). Female effigies and figurines are often depicted naked. Their bodies are decorated with painted or tattooed designs (TATTOO), such as the Rayed Faces seen here (RF-3). Courtesy National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 17/8997. Photo by Lawrence E. Dawson.

PLATE 36. Nasca 5 effigy vessel portraying a woman carrying a burden on her back supported by a tumpline (OBJ-1-U) and leading a tethered llama (ANM-1-C). Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (Leiden), 32.77-10. Photo courtesy Imschoot Uitgevers (Ghent), from the catalog *Inca-Perú: 3000 ans d'histoire*, fig. 149.

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PLATE 37. Nasca 6 effigy bottle in the form of a man chewing coca leaves. His hand extends into a cloth bag containing the leaves, and the telltale bulge on his cheek confirms his actions. Private collection. Photo courtesy Banco de Crédito del Perú, from *Nasca* (Colección Arte y Tesoros del Perú), p. 140c.

PLATE 38. Nasca 7 effigy bottle of a woman (HUM-8) carrying a small child (CHILD) on her back. Children are rarely depicted in Nasca iconography. Small fish (FISH-1-T) and nets (OBJ-1-N) are painted on the piece. Courtesy Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, U-D X700.

PLATE 39. Nasca 7 male figurine (HUM-10). This solid figurine displays a near-naked male wearing a *Spondylus* shell pendant. His head is deformed, perhaps a status symbol. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima), C-54312. Photo courtesy Banco de Crédito del Perú, from *Nasca* (Colección Arte y Tesoros del Perú), p. 129b.

PLATE 40. Nasca 6 female figurine (HUM-10). Females are invariably depicted naked as figurines and usually have tattoos on their bodies, especially in the genital area. This piece has a Rayed Face covering the genital area. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, (Lima), C-54139. Photo courtesy Banco de Crédito del Perú, from *Nasca* (Colección Arte y Tesoros del Perú), p. 129c.

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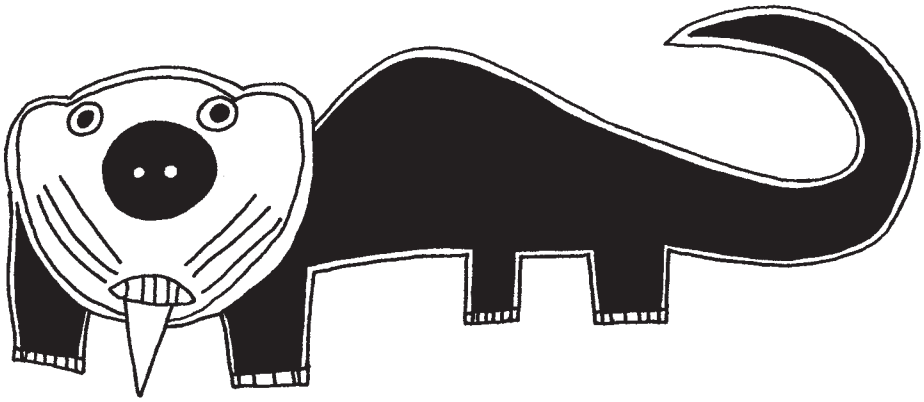


Fig. 5.186. AMN-1-H (otter or nutria). Museo Regional de Ica DA-57. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.187. ANM-1-K (sea lions). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 2L.

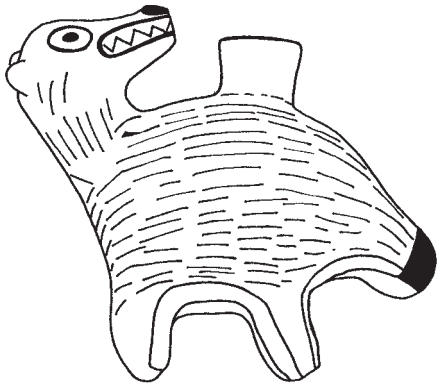


Fig. 5.188. ANM-2-A (effigy fox). Milwaukee Public Museum. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

ANM-1-I: Deer

White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) were present in abundance in some of the coastal valleys of Peru before deforestation robbed them of their natural habitat. Moche art has numerous scenes of elite males hunting this animal with spears. On the south coast deer were present but probably not in the same numbers as in the north, or perhaps the Nasca did not engage in hunting them. Only one or two examples of deer have been identified in the ceramic iconography. The famous "zoo" vessel (described above) has twelve different species of creatures represented on it, including one animal with horns that must be a deer (pl. 28).

ANM-1-J: Unidentified or Unique Animals

This category includes a number of animal forms that cannot be identified. The sample contains only two of these, attesting to the ease with which most animals can be categorized by species.

ANM-1-K: Seals and Sea Lions

Fur seals (*Arctocephalus australis*) and sea lions (*Otaria flavescens*) are plentiful along the south coastal littoral and today are found both on the rocks and beaches along the shore and on the small islands off the Paracas peninsula. They were hunted for their meat and pelts. Curiously, there are very few recognizable representations of this animal in the art. One example is illustrated in fig. 5.187.

ANM-2: Effigy Animals

A number of animals are depicted in a modeled or effigy form in Nasca iconography. These occur in a variety of vessel shapes, including double spout bottles, jars, and bottles. Most of painted animals described above are also found in effigy forms.

ANM-2-A: Effigy Foxes

Several fine examples of fox effigy vessels are present in the sample, most dating to the earlier part of the sequence, one to Phase 7. A Phase 3 fox, from the collections of the Milwaukee Public Museum, is portrayed naturalistically, with a very distinctive profile head (fig. 5.188). A later specimen, from the museum of the Banco de Crédito in Lima, portrays a slinking fox with a high collar protruding from the center of its back, on which is painted a farmer holding what appear to be plants in his hands. Two jars with semimod-

Fig. 5.189. ANM-2-B (effigy monkey). Museo Regional de Ica DA-140. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

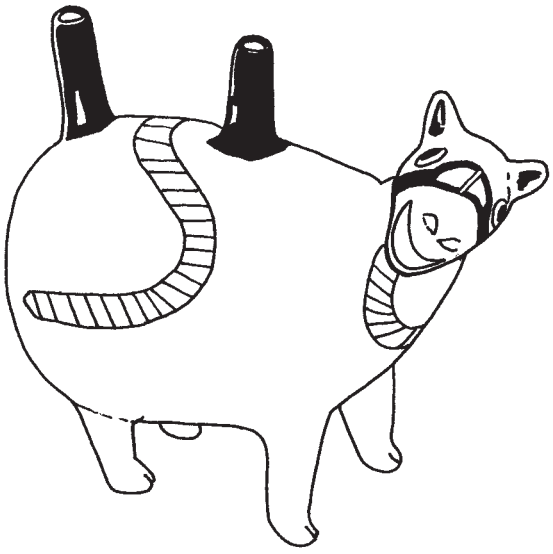


Fig. 5.190. ANM-2-C (effigy llama). Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima) C-12623. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

eled foxes are present in the archive. Semimodeled fox-skin headdresses could also be placed in this category (fig. 5.134), but the major type is the free-standing variety.

ANM-2-B: Effigy Monkeys

The sample contains ten examples of effigy monkeys, ranging in date from Phase 1 through Phase 8. To supplement the argument that monkeys were kept as pets by the Nasca, several of these monkey effigies are holding little bowls in their hands, containing food. They are identified by their spiral prehensile tails, flaring thumbs, and large toes; their flat faces are surrounded by a circle, which probably represents the heavy fur encircling the face (fig. 5.189).

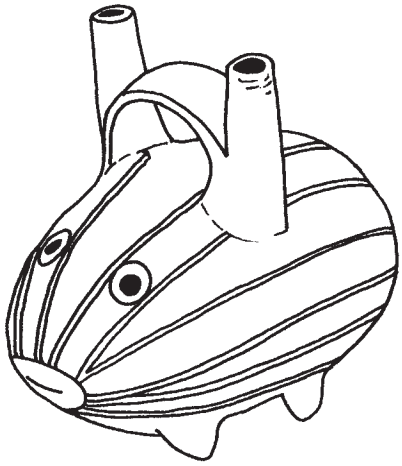


Fig. 5.191. ANM-2-E (effigy cavy or guinea pig). Amano Museum (Lima) MAR-636. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

ANM-2-C: Effigy Llamas

Although the dating is not as secure for some of these vessels, about eight ceramics appear to be effigy representations of llamas. One late specimen depicts a standing llama painted with a harness (fig. 5.190).

ANM-2-D: Effigy Rodents

Three examples of small effigy rodents are in the sample (Bird 1962: fig. 33C). Their dating, like that of the llamas, is not secure.

ANM-2-E: Effigy Guinea Pigs

A fine Phase 2 effigy guinea pig vessel is in the collections of the Amano Museum in Lima (fig. 5.191). It is painted with parallel stripes running the length of its body.

ANM-2-F: Effigy Dogs

Two examples of effigy dogs, probably representing the large hairless breed indigenous to Peru (*Canis carabicus tschudi*), are present in the sample. One specimen in the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, is illustrated in Sergio Purin (1990: fig. 163). A very similar example is present in the Precolumbian Collections of the Dumbarton Oaks Museum in Washington, D.C. (Proulx 1996: pl. 19).

Fig. 5.192. ANM-2-G (effigy feline). Art Institute of Chicago 55.1848. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

ANM-2-G: Effigy Felines

Eighteen examples of effigy felines are in the archive. The earliest dates to Phase 1 and is clearly meant to represent the pampas cat (*Felis colocolo*), which is more commonly portrayed in its painted variation (fig. 5.192). Later vessels exhibit the face of what appears to be a feline with sharp teeth, flaring nose, and double arched eyebrows. Valcarcel (1932) identified some of these representations as being the otter (*gato de agua*), and perhaps he may be correct. I believe that the feline attributes are more convincing, however, and therefore these specimens are placed in this category.

ANM-2-H: Unidentified or Unique Effigy Animals

Two examples of effigy animals in the sample that cannot be identified are placed in this miscellaneous category.

ANM-2-I: Effigy Sea Lions

A single example of an effigy sea lion has been located in a private collection in the Netherlands (de Bock et al. 1992: fig. 147).

FISH: Fish and Sea Creatures

The cold ocean waters off the coast of Peru are home to a wide variety of marine life from fish and mollusks to mammals and birds. The source of this bounty is the Humboldt (or Peru) Current, a body of water some 50 to 100 miles in width, found immediately along the littoral of northern Chile and Peru. Fed by cold waters from the Antarctic Ocean and following the deep Peru–Chile Trench with depths up to 26,000 feet, these constantly upwelling cold waters maintain a temperature between 58 and 64 degrees F at latitudes that range from temperate to tropical. The current flows north until it deflects westward near the present-day border between Ecuador and Peru. The cold waters are rich in plankton, which form the base of a food chain ranging up to the gigantic whales that inhabit this environment.

Between 7000 and 5000 B.C. groups of hunters along the coast of Peru began to exploit the maritime resources intensively. So abundant were the fish, shellfish, and sea mammals that permanent settlements and ceremonial architecture were constructed by these coastal societies even before domesticated plants were present. In most other parts of the world, agriculture was a prerequisite for settled village life. It has been argued that a similar result could occur along the Peruvian littoral, based on the stability provided by the abundant resources of the sea (see Moseley 1975, among others).

Nasca iconography abounds with representations of sea life. A wide variety of fish as well as crustaceans, shellfish, tortoises, and sea mammals are present in the art, especially in the Monumental phases. Many of the fish cannot be easily identified, because the placement and number of fins are not accurate; nor are enough distinctive markings provided to establish the identity of each species. In a number of cases a reasonable guess can be made based on (1) comparison with illustrated catalogs of Peruvian fish (e.g., Fowler 1945; Hildebrand 1946; Chirichigno 1974; Vélez 1980), (2) a survey of the archaeological evidence of fish remains at various coastal sites (e.g., Rodríguez de Sandweiss 1993 for the site of Cahuachi; Pozorski 1976 for the Moche Valley; and Sandweiss 1992 for the late remains from Los Demás in Chincha), and (3) studies of contemporary and historic fishing practices and resources on the Peruvian coast (e.g., Marcus 1987).

According to Joyce Marcus (1987: 9) contemporary fishermen recognize three basic types of coastal habitats: *peña* (rocky cliffs that plunge into the sea, including sea caves and small offshore islands), *costa* (stretches of cobble or gravel beach), and *playa* (sandy beaches). Each of these ecological niches has a slightly different mix of fish, mol-

lusks, and mammals. The *peña* zone supports a number of shellfish, including periwinkles, limpets, mussels, chitons, sea snails, the abalonelike *chanques*, and the acorn barnacles (ibid.). Among the fish in this zone are the grunt, the *pintadilla*, and the scaled blenny, along with varieties of drum (ibid.). The *costa* zone is home to the robalo fish, drum, *lorna*, and bonito. Finally, the *playa* contains polycheate worms, euphausiids, and coquina clams, along with two types of crustaceans, the mole crab and the burrowing shrimp (ibid.: 21–22). Corvina, one of the best-selling fish in today's marketplace, is found in this zone, along with the *lorna*, *mismis*, *ayanque,* and left-eye flounder (ibid.: 21). Various forms of sharks, rays, skates, and the like complete the list. Daniel Sandweiss (1992: table 36) provides a useful list of the thirty most common fish species in the Pisco area.

The analysis of fish and shellfish remains from archaeological contexts on the south coast has unfortunately been minimal. María del Carmen Rodríguez de Sandweiss (1993) has identified several species of fish excavated by Helaine Silverman at the inland site of Cahuachi. Included on this list is a fish known locally as *anaque* or *cachema* (*Cynoscion analis*), the popular corvina (*Sciaena gilberti*), and the *Coco* or croaker fish (*Paralonchurus peruanus*), along with other members of the families Sciaenidae and Clupeidae. On the north coast Shelia Pozorski (1976) undertook a thorough study of the economic resources in the Moche Valley and has archaeological evidence for the early exploitation of the corvina, *coco*, parrot fish (*Xenoscarus denticulatus*), rays (*Myliobatis peruvianus*), various species of sharks (*Mustelus* sp.) and a mullet known locally as *lisa* (*Mugil cephalus*). Coastal peoples, beginning in the Preceramic Period, utilized these and many other sea creatures.

The following categories represent an attempt to identify the sea creatures in Nasca ceramic iconography. In some cases various creatures have been grouped together based on artistic traits of depiction, such as the category "U-Shaped Fish." In many cases the possible identities of the sea creatures are noted. Further refinement will be necessary to deal with the large number of unidentifiable species in the sample. For our purposes "FISH" includes all forms of sea creatures, including shellfish and crustaceans.

FISH-1: Painted Fish

Fish are one of the most common naturalistic themes in Nasca ceramic iconography and are present throughout the entire sequence. Both two-dimensional painted varieties and modeled examples are found. The more numerous painted forms are described below.

FISH-1-A: Sharks

Sharks appear first on Paracas and early Nasca textiles (see Peters 1991: fig. 7.8) and then on Nasca pottery, beginning as early as Phase 1. Anne Paul (1990), who has studied Paracas textile iconography, argues that "the shark, which may have functioned in the minds of Paracas people as a custodian of the sea, may also have been a metaphor for the sea itself" (ibid.: 83). She identifies images of all large predatory sea creatures as sharks (e.g., ibid.: fig. 7.9), arguing that the placement of the fins and other characteristics are not consistent with the anatomy of a killer whale (ibid.: 158). I believe that both killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) and sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus* and others) are portrayed in Paracas textile art and that the distinctions are usually clear, although in some cases a "generic" sea predator with mixed attributes is displayed.

Juan Vélez Diéguez (1980) describes eleven different varieties of sharks present in Peruvian waters. For fishermen dependent on flimsy watercraft or inflated skins for any offshore fishing, sharks must have posed one of their greatest challenges. It is not surprising to see red spots representing blood painted on some vessels surrounding images of sharks, for the fishermen were well aware of the predatory nature of this fish toward both sea creatures and humans. Judging from the small samples of scientifically identified archaeological remains of fish, sharks do not appear to have been used for food on a regular basis. Their remains do not occur with the bones of other smaller edible fish, and we must conclude that their representations on the pottery reflect the fear and respect for this creature in the minds of the Nasca people.

Eight clear examples of sharks are present in my sample, ranging in date from Phase 1 through Phase 5. They can be identified by their length and distinctive profiles (fig. 5.193). One Phase 5 example has a series of shark heads exhibiting rows of teeth; another from the same phase illustrates the familiar outline form of this creature. Half the specimens have blood represented in conjunction with the fish (see Buse 1977: 285). The shark motif appears on a variety of vessel forms, including plates, ollas, collared jars, and double spout bottles.

FISH-1-B: Long Curved Fish

One of the most common depictions of fish found in Phase 3 is a single large curled fish painted on the bottom of inte-

Fig. 5.193. FISH-1-A (sharks). After Seler 1923: fig. 340.

Fig. 5.194. FISH-1-B (long curved fish). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 171231. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

rior decorated bowls (fig. 5.194). Thirteen specimens occur in the sample, with many more present in the literature. The identity of this fish is not known with any certainty. Blasco and Ramos (1980: 93) suggest that these also may be representations of sharks, and the presence of red dots (symbolizing blood) surrounding some of the specimens supports this identification. These curved fish are always painted in several colors, however, not black and white, as is more common with sharks. Also, the body proportions and outlines are not consistent with those of sharks. Ann

Fig. 5.195. FISH-1-C (crustacean). After Seler 1923: fig. 373.

Peters (1991: 257) has argued that this fish may be a snake mackerel (*Thyrsites atun*), a voracious predator on smaller fish that can grow up to 1.5 meters in length and travels in large schools that invade bays and inlets to feed on smaller fish and crustaceans. It is unclear how common this fish is on the south coast. Samuel Hildebrand (1946: 359–360) indicates that it prefers great depths (100 meters or more) and is found well offshore. Vélez (1980) also does not list it among his common Peruvian species.

Another possibility is that it is a tunafish or albacore (*Thunnus macropterus*), a large elongated fish with excellent meat. The problem again is that archaeological remains of this fish have not been found; nor does it seem to have been very common in the area. It is listed in Hildebrand (1946) as a coastal fish, but Vélez (1980) and Sandweiss (1992) do not include it among the more common fish of the area.

FISH-1-C: Crustaceans

The crustacean seen on the majority of the eighteen vessels in our sample is most likely a shrimp, specifically the burrowing shrimp (*Callianassa islagrande*) found on the playas and used today for bait by fishermen (Marcus 1987: 21). Some specimens, however, seem to have large well-developed claws and may represent either a lobster or a crawfish of some type (fig. 5.195). One specimen appears to be a type of crab found on the playas, the mole crab (*Emerita analoga*), which was eaten in Precolumbian times (ibid.). The literature on Peruvian crustaceans is very limited, and little has been written on the variety of crustaceans present on the south coast.

In the iconography shrimp are characterized by their multiple legs, broad tail, and long feelers. Lobsters have

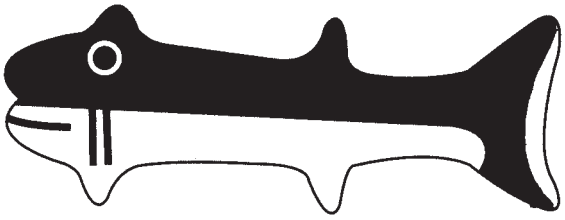


Fig. 5.196. FISH-1-D (anchovy). Drawing by Donald A. Proulx after Ruiz 2004.

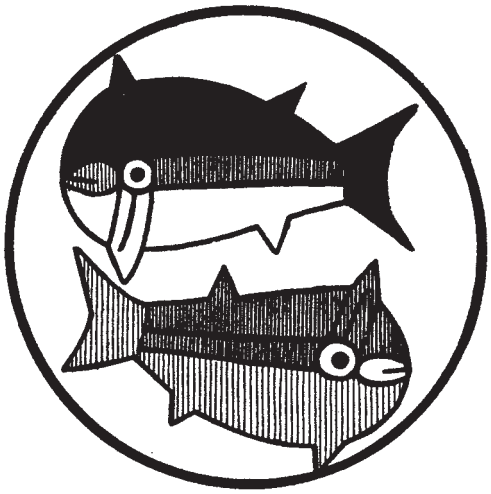


Fig. 5.197. FISH-1-E (high-backed fish). After Seler 1923: fig. 344.

Fig. 5.198. FISH-1-F (U-shaped fish). University of Pennsylvania Museum SA3213. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

large pronounced front legs and claws, too large to be considered shrimp. Five specimens in the sample consist of strange faces with eyes framed by high arching brows that continue down to form the sides of the face. Beneath the eyes are a series of parallel lines. Valcarcel (1932) argued that these represent the otter or nutria (*gato de agua*), and I have argued elsewhere that they may be representations of owls. But on further reflection I now believe that at least some of these are frontal views of crustaceans. All the specimens in the sample date from Phases 3 through 5 (fig. 5.203).

FISH-1-D: *Anchovies*

Many early vessels display schools of small "cigar-shaped" fish, always drawn with the body split down the center by a median line or even physically separated by a gap. The tail is attached to the upper half, which is always darker than the lower half. Lines representing gill slits are drawn in the lower half directly below or behind the eyes (fig. 5.196).

Blasco and Ramos (1980: 87) were the first to suggest that these fish were either sardines (*Sardinops sagax*) or anchovies (*Engraulis ringens*). I am inclined to favor the latter identification, since anchovies are very abundant along the coast, have been important since Preceramic times, and are easily caught from the shore with minimal equipment. Some of the specimens also very likely represent sardines.

Today anchovies are one of Peru's most important maritime resources, being used mainly for fishmeal. Large processing plants are present in such places as Chimbote and Pisco. In ancient times anchovies had the capability of being stored for long periods through the process of drying and grinding. It appears to have been one of the more important fish in the diet of the ancient Nasca people. The sample includes seventeen examples of this species, all dating to Phases 3 and 4.

FISH-1-E: *High-Backed Fish*

Present in the sample are fifteen examples of a relatively compressed fish whose height measures close to its length. These specimens all date from Phases 3 and 4. Based on comparison with the outlines of fish presented by Vélez (1980), Hildebrand (1946), and Marcus (1987), these fish might be the *chita* (*Anisotremus scapularis*), a well-known food fish found in the waters off the south coast. As depicted in the iconography, this variety of fish has two dorsal and two ventral fins, is divided by a median line or panel, and exhibits large gill slits behind the eye (fig. 5.197). The *chita* fits this description, but other possible candidates are the *morotilla* (*Calamus brachysomus*), *castañuela* (*Chromis crusma*), *burro* (*Sciaena fasciata*), and *cherlo* (*Acanthistius pictus*).

FISH-1-F: *U-Shaped Fish*

A number of bowls along with other vessel forms dating from Phases 3 through 5 are painted with multiples of a fish curved upward in the form of a "U." The top of the fish is usually darker than the bottom; black and white are the most common colors, but reds, grays, and other tints are also used (fig. 5.198). Similar to the little anchovies described above, the species depicted here is a much larger,

Fig. 5.199. FISH-1-G (black and white fish). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 16-11016. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

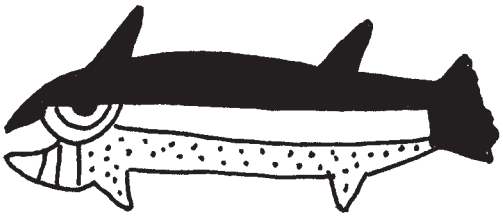


Fig. 5.200. FISH-1-H (speckled-bottom fish). Art Institute of Chicago 56.1169a. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

proportionately longer fish. It is not known whether the U-shape of the fish is meant to reflect the behavior of this species or whether it is an artistic convention. Its identity cannot be determined from the observed features.

FISH-1-G: Black and White Fish

The sample includes six examples of a fish of variable dimensions with a black top and white bottom but lacking any fins whatsoever. All specimens date to Phases 1 and 2 and thus might represent a generalized early method for depicting fish rather than anatomically accurate examples. The lack of ventral and dorsal fins, however, suggests that perhaps the left-eye flounder (*Paralichthys adspersus*), a common food fish with low, continuous fins, might be intended (fig. 5.199).

FISH-1-H: Speckled-Bottom Fish

Seven specimens ranging in date from Phase 2 through Phase 4 portray fish whose lower half is decorated with spots or stippling (fig. 5.200). The profiles and lengths of these fish are variable, and possibly more than one species is included in this category. Among the possible fish represented are the *negro* (*Pinguilabrum punctatum*), *sierra* (*Scomberomorus maculatus sierra*), and perhaps *jerguilla* (*Aplodactylus punctatus*).

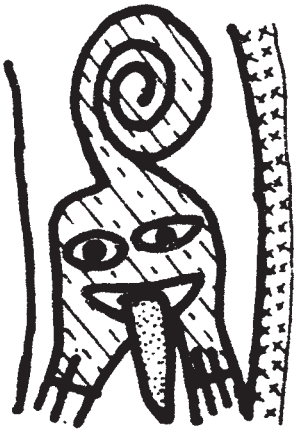


Fig. 5.201. FISH-1-I (gastropod). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 30-9.

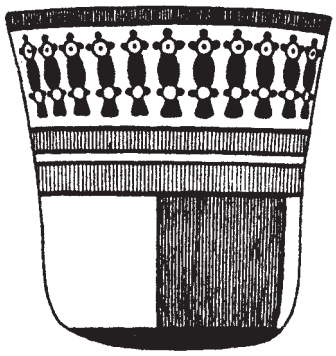


Fig. 5.202. FISH-1-J (banded fish). After Seler 1923: fig. 36b.

FISH-1-I: Gastropods

Sea snails or some other form of gastropod such as limpets or whelks are found in limited numbers in the iconography. The sample contains seven specimens, all dating to Phase 3 or Phase 4. In the majority of the cases, snail-like shells are portrayed in multiples, along with other sea creatures such as fish. One vessel has an underwater scene that includes seaweed. Two of the seven vessels have anthropomorphized snails—a head with arms emerges from the shell (fig. 5.201).

FISH-1-J: Banded Fish

A strange form of fish appears in the iconography during Phase 5, although antecedents can be seen as early as Phase 4. For want of a better term, these sea creatures are called "banded fish" here. The motif consists of a very small wormlike fish with a large prominent eye. The distinguishing characteristic is the presence of a circular raised band between the tail and the body and another behind the head (fig. 5.202). The most abstract examples look like sacks tied

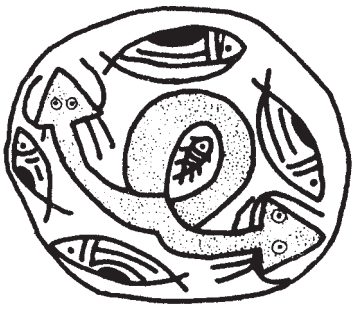


Fig. 5.203. FISH-1-K (late abstract fish and *bagre*). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 30(2).

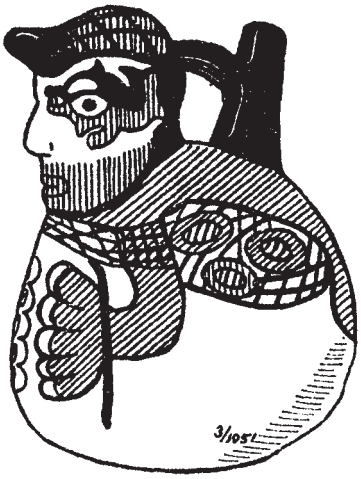


Fig. 5.204. FISH-1-L (chitons). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 6-b.

at both ends; however, more representational specimens are found, including two from Phase 4 that show a more naturalistic fish with these bands. Vélez (1980) and the other sources contain no illustrations that provide a clue as to the identity of this creature. Because of the small size of this fish and the large numbers represented on the vessels, the artists may be trying to portray schools of young fish or minnows.

FISH-1-K: Late Abstract Fish

A separate category is reserved for representations of fish that occur mainly in Phase 7 of the style. At this time many vessels include representations of small fish painted in the form of an oval with pointed ends (fig. 5.203). These abstract fish often have a minimal number of gill lines and an eye. Sometimes U-shaped elements are attached to the top and bottom of the oval representing the fins. These fish are often drawn out of context, floating around on the bodies of face neck bottles. No specific species are intended; these

Fig. 5.205. FISH-1-O (flying fish). After Seler 1923: fig. 346.

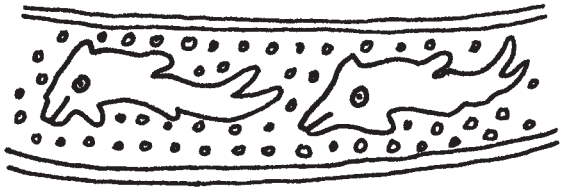


Fig. 5.206. FISH-1-Q (dolphins). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 4-4684. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.207. FISH-1-R (sea horses). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 16-10345. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

are merely late generic representations of fish. The sample contains six specimens of this type, all dating to Phase 7. Some overlap exists with the category FISH-1-T.

FISH-1-L: Chitons

Chitons (*Chaetopleura apiculata*) are small mollusks found in shallow waters. They have a soft fleshy body covered by a hard shell, consisting of eight plates which overlap but do not join. The creature has a strong muscular foot that it uses to move and to cling to rocks. Twenty-three vessels in the sample contain representations of chitons, dating from Phase 2 through Phase 5. The iconography clearly portrays the oval body, with the plates suggested by the use of parallel lines drawn across the creature's body at regular intervals (fig. 5.204).

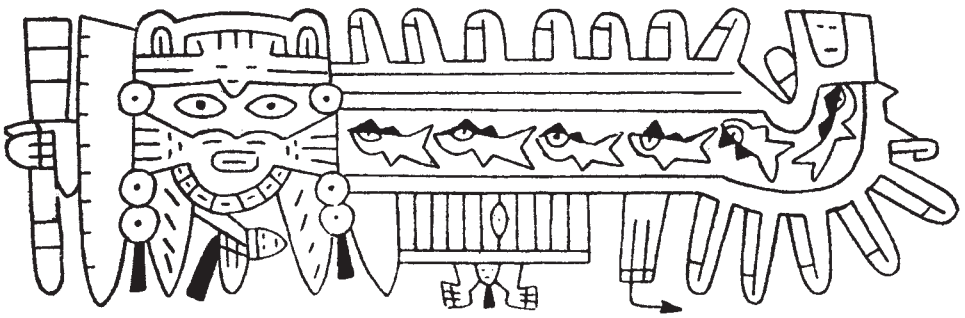


Fig. 5.208. FISH-1-S (pendant eye fish). After Seler 1923: fig. 46c.

FISH-1-M: **Bagres**

Two examples of fish with a catlike face and whiskers, both from Phase 3, very likely can be identified as the *bagre* (*Galeichthys peruvianus*), a fish with long feelers attached to its head (fig. 5.203). Sandweiss (1992: table 36) lists the *bagre* among the thirty most common fish in the Pisco area.

FISH-1-N: Eels

The sample contains one or two examples of eels; the best can be viewed on a Phase 1 olla, along with a shark and other sea creatures. The iconography portrays the eel as a snakelike creature but in a water environment. Several types of eels are present in Peruvian waters (see Hildebrand 1946: 129–143), but it is impossible to determine the species represented on the pottery.

FISH-1-O: Flying Fish

The sample contains four examples of flying fish. They are portrayed as fish with wings like a bird (fig. 5.205). Vélez (1980: 55) describes two species of flying fish in Peruvian waters, *Hirundichthys rondeletii* and *Exocoetus volitans*. The flying fish is native to warmer waters, so its presence on a Nasca vessel suggests that the fishermen sometimes went beyond the cold Humboldt Current in their travels.

FISH-1-P: Unidentified Fish

Thirty-four specimens represent fish that cannot be identified by species. Some of the most popular edible fish in Peru could not be identified in the categories above and are very likely represented in some of the iconography in this miscellaneous category. Fish such as the corvina (*Sciaena gilberti*), bonito (*Sarda chilensis*), *lisa* (*Mugil cephalus*), *coco* (*Paralonchurus peruanus*), and *ayanque* (*Cynoscion analis*) appear both in the archaeological record and in modern markets.

FISH-1-Q: Dolphins and Porpoises

One example painted on a jar clearly depicts a group of dolphins or porpoises (fig. 5.206). Another example of a dolphin image was found in the form of a petroglyph engraved on a rock in the Nasca Valley some 30 miles from the sea.

FISH-1-R: Sea Horses

A small creature resembling a sea horse was found on one Nasca vessel (fig. 5.207).

FISH-1-S: Pendant Eye Fish

A peculiar form of bicolored fish is found only in Phase 5. These fish have a black upper body and a distinctive pendant eye (fig. 5.208). Often they alternate: one right side up, the next one upside down. Twenty examples are present in the sample.

FISH-1-T: Phase 7 Small Fish

By Phase 7 most fish have lost their species identity. Fish are generally depicted as very small oval creatures, often with the tail fin formed by a crisscross line (similar to the early Christian pax symbol) (fig. 5.209). The sample contains nineteen examples.

FISH-1-U: Squids, Jellyfish

Several examples appear to be jellyfish (or perhaps squids), consisting of a large blob with multiple tentacles.

FISH-2: Modeled Fish

The sample contains eight examples of effigy fish vessels, and many others have been published in the literature (e.g., Buse et al. n.d.; Buse 1977). All date between Phases 2 and 4, but each is quite different from the others. Therefore no attempt is made to distinguish species. Three of the vessels

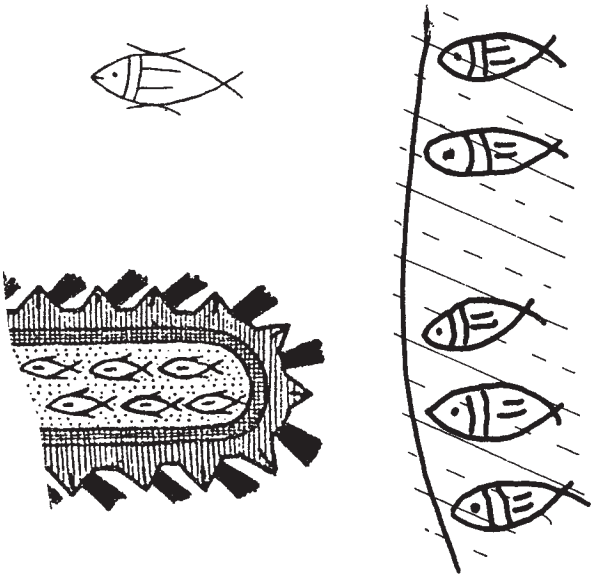


Fig. 5.209. FISH-1-T (late small fish). After Yacovleff 1932b: fig. 9m.

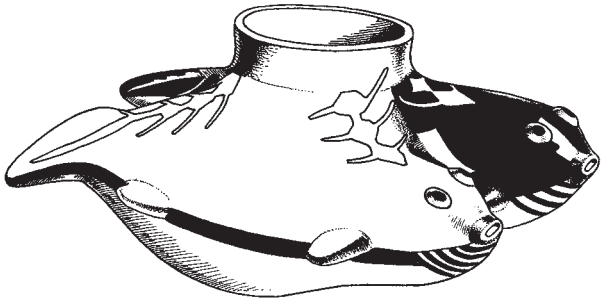


Fig. 5.210. FISH-2 (modeled fish). After Buse 1977, 1(2): 778.

portray pairs of fish (fig. 5.210), while a fourth is a partially modeled fish protruding from the rim of a bowl. The remaining four are all in the form of a single fish. Two of the specimens seem to be an attempt to portray whales, but the identity of the other six specimens cannot be determined.

With the exception of modeled Mythical Killer Whales, effigy fish disappear from the Nasca style after Phase 4. A revival of modeled fish occurs in the Middle Horizon at the Nasca drainage site of Locarí, where Ubbelohde-Döering excavated several examples in the 1930s (see Ubbelohde-Döering 1958: 77).

FISH-3: Interlocked Fish

Representations of interlocked fish begin in Phase 5 and reach their peak in Phase 6 (fig. 5.211). Although these are

Fig. 5.211. FISH-3 (interlocked fish). After Seler 1923: fig. 356.

thought by some to be snakes, perhaps a nest of snakes, it seems more likely that this motif represents fish, especially when finlike tails are evident on many of them (Seler 1923: 323 has several more examples). Infrequently displayed as an independent motif, interlocked fish are usually found in a decorative band around the circumference of a vase. The heads of these fish are trapezoidal, with a prominent mouth bifurcating the head. Two eyes are always present, giving the impression that the viewer is looking down at the fish. Two fish in contrasting colors are painted so that they appear to be linked. The tails of the fish interconnect with other fish, thus filling the space and completing the network. Similar interlocked fish are found in other Early Intermediate Period ceramic styles, including the Lima Style from the central coast (Kroeber's Interlocking Style), suggesting a possible connection or influences flowing between these two areas.

RPT: Reptiles and Amphibians

The desert and river valleys of the south coast were host to a wide variety of reptiles and amphibians, including snakes, lizards, toads, and frogs (and their developmental stages: pollywogs and tadpoles). Carmichael (1992b) has argued that all representations of these creatures were religious (sacred) symbols. Certainly anyone can see the connection of toads and frogs with water (or fertility). Such symbolism was intended in many examples of Nasca iconography. Yet this is not true in all cases. Such an argument is harder to make in the case of lizards and snakes. Each of these species is discussed individually below, attempting to segregate the sacred from the profane representations.

Fig. 5.212. RPT-1-A (snakes). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26: vol. 1: fig. 7b.

Fig. 5.213. RPT-1-A (feline-headed snake). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26, vol. 1: fig. 9.

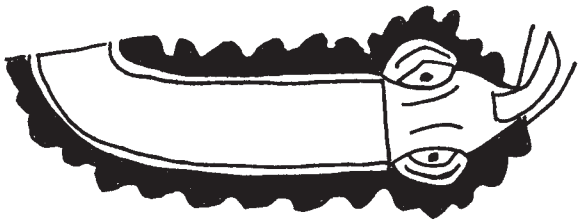


Fig. 5.214. RPT-1-A (symbolic scalloped edges of snake). Musée de L'Homme (Paris) 11.21.31. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

RPT-1: Painted Reptiles

As was the case with animals, the majority of the representations of reptiles and amphibians on pottery are painted rather than modeled. A few effigy forms of these creatures are categorized as RPT-2.

RPT-1-A: Snakes

A variety of snakes live in the south coastal region of Peru; however, some species such as the boa constrictor, once more widespread in times of heavier forestation, have largely disappeared. According to Peters (1991), who derived much of her information from Pedro Aguilar (1985), the main type of snake found in the south is from the family Colubridae. Some varieties of colubrids are poisonous, but the family as a whole is quite different from vipers, with their distinctive fang structure. *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* is a constrictor with mottled patterning that can group into blotches or into zigzag lines (Peters 1991: 288). Another colubrid is *Phylodryas elegans*, a striped snake whose dorsal stripe is broken into spots suggestive of the chain-of-balls marking on some of the snakes seen on Nasca ceramics. *Dromicus tachymenoides* and *Dromicus angustilineatus* range from sea level to 10,000 feet (ibid.). A viper (*Bothrops pictus*) also appears to be present on the south coast according to Aguilar (1985: 25).

Aside from being common in the everyday world, snakes prey on rats, mice, lizards, and birds. They are protectors of the agricultural fields, much like the fox, but they also have a mysterious quality. Nasca artists often used snakes as substitutes (kennings) for body parts, such as the tongues of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings. Only naturalistic snakes drawn as independent subjects are discussed here.

About thirty-five examples of painted snakes are present in the sample, the earliest dating to Phase 2 and the latest to Phase 9. Judging from the different geometric designs displayed on the snakes' bodies, Nasca artists attempted to differentiate several types, including the species mentioned above. Some have a series of spots drawn down the center line of the reptile; others have a series of oscillating semicircular elements bordering a central solid-colored area, perhaps an attempt to depict mottling (fig. 5.212). Snakes are identified by oval or elliptical eyes drawn vertically on either side of their heads — a form sometimes referred to as "wall-eyed." Often they are endowed with paws adjacent to the face, and the head may assume feline characteristics as well (fig. 5.213). Hairlike appendages, in groups, are commonly attached to the borders of the snakes' bodies. In other cases the edges of snakes are scalloped (fig. 5.214).

Snakes are frequently drawn intertwined, as if in a nest (fig. 5.212). Although all have tongues protruding from their mouths, these tongues are never bifurcated, as they should be. Beginning in Phase 5, a single snake is often displayed encircling the upper register of a short spouted bottle. This same form is repeated in Phase 7 and becomes a very common theme at that time, as does the use of three different colored bands to form the snakes' bodies.

RPT-1-B: Toads and Frogs

Little has been written about amphibians on the south coast of Peru; therefore much of the following interpretation is

Fig. 5.215. RPT-1-B (toads). After Seler 1923: fig. 320.

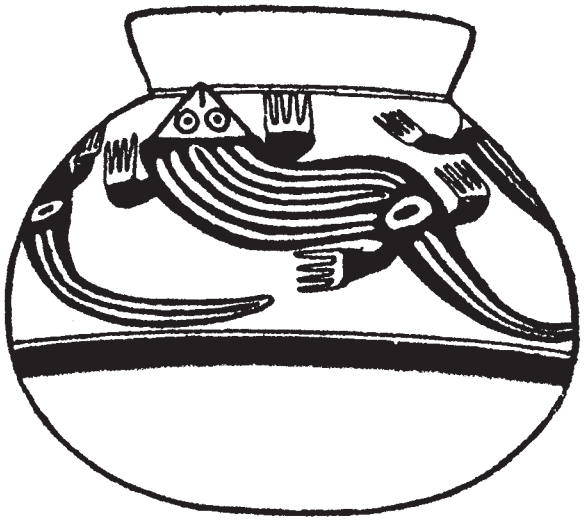


Fig. 5.216. RPT-1-C (lizards). After Seler 1923: fig. 323.

based on conjecture. Amphibians are associated with water, where they lay their eggs. Their spawn is dependent on water's life-giving properties until mature enough to take up a terrestrial life. Both humans and amphibians are dependent on water for their very existence. Thus amphibians and their developmental forms (eggs, pollywogs, and tadpoles) may symbolize this powerful relationship. Just as the waters nourish the eggs of the amphibians, they also nourish the seeds that provide sustenance for humans. The amphibian might symbolize water and life, water and fertility, water and sustenance — all of these.

In Inca times toads were used by sorcerers to cause harm to individuals. Rowe (1947: 314) reports that sorcerers took a toad, sewed up its eyes and mouth with thorns, tied its legs, and buried it where an enemy was likely to sit. The suffering of the toad was supposed to transfer to the human victim by means of sympathetic magic. While I do not feel that this association with toads is valid for the Nasca culture, it demonstrates another use of amphibians by Andean peoples.

The amphibians painted on Nasca vessels are probably toads, judging from their configurations (fig. 5.215). A Phase 7 vessel seems to display a frog, however, so both types were probably present in the coastal valleys, although it is difficult to find references to specific species. The sample contains thirteen specimens, the majority dating to Phases 3 and 4, but isolated examples as late as Phase 7 do exist. They are always drawn in multiples but with no other associated themes.

RPT-1-C: Lizards

After snakes, lizards are the most common reptiles seen on Nasca pottery. The sample includes twenty-three painted examples of these creatures, ranging in date from Phase 3 through Phase 5. According to Reinhard (1992: 297), lizards congregate in places where water is available; the presence of many lizards is taken as a sign that it will rain. While we cannot assume that all representations of this reptile were symbolic of water or fertility, at least some of the examples may be interpreted this way. Lizards also appear in contemporaneous Moche art from northern Peru.

Lizards are distinguished by their pointed heads, long tails, and legs with prominent toes (fig. 5.216). Most are depicted with parallel stripes running the length of the body. One example is painted with spots, which may be an attempt to portray a salamander or perhaps a rare form of lizard or gecko. Geometric elements, roughly resembling an "E," often surround the creatures and may be a symbol for vegetation of some type (fig. 5.247). Lizards are always drawn in multiples, and rocks are also frequently depicted in the scenes. One unusual example has spears interspersed with the reptiles.

According to published sources, numerous varieties of lizards are present in the coastal deserts of Peru (Aguilar 1985; Peters 1991), including several types of small desert lizards (*Dicrodon* sp). It is probably this genus that is represented in the art. The striped markings on the backs in the art are similar to those seen on skinks, but we have no evidence that this variety is present on the south coast of Peru.

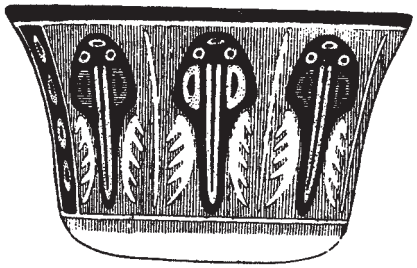


Fig. 5.217. RPT-1-D (tadpoles). After Seler 1923: fig. 319.

Fig. 5.218. RPT-1-E (pollywogs). After Seler 1923: fig. 318.

RPT-1-D: Tadpoles

In this book a distinction is made between the terms "tadpole" and "pollywog," because the Nasca artisans clearly seem to have recognized the biological differences. "Tadpole" refers to the immature larvae of toads and frogs that have evolved to the stage where legs are visible. "Pollywog" refers to the earliest evolutionary state of the free-swimming larvae, represented by a large black dot and slender tail, before legs have emerged.

The large numbers of tadpoles and amphibians in Nasca art could be interpreted as symbolically representing water, the medium in which these creatures are born and develop. Perhaps the appearance of the larvae heralded the reappearance of water from the mountains and the beginning of the agricultural season, just as tadpoles in local ponds in the spring mark the beginning of the growing season today. Thus we can connect tadpoles with both water and agricultural fertility.

The ceramic art includes the complete developmental cycle of frogs, beginning with egg clusters, then pollywogs through the various phases of the tadpole stage, and finally mature amphibians. Tadpoles are usually portrayed with a large head/body, finlike back legs, and tail (fig. 5.217). Twenty-one examples of pollywogs are present in the sample, dating from Phase 2 through Phase 5.

RPT-1-E: Pollywogs

As noted above, the term "pollywog" designates the earliest developmental stage of amphibians after hatching from the eggs. Pollywogs have a body and tail but no legs. Unlike tadpoles, pollywogs are never drawn as independent elements on Nasca pottery (fig. 5.218). They are frequently seen associated with a wide variety of motifs, however, including Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, where the pollywogs are often displayed swimming in or around the signifers. In several cases an AMB seems to be disgorging a streamer of water filled with pollywogs, perhaps suggesting a gift of water from the gods. Pollywogs are often used to symbolize water in cases where water may be ambivalent. Bands of pollywogs are often painted on Nasca vessels, especially in Phases 5 and 6, when this motif seems to have reached its peak of popularity.

The Anthropomorphic Mythical Being sometimes assumes the form of a pollywog — either by the use of a pollywog signifer (AMB-1-I) or by displaying its body in the form of a pollywog. As if to emphasize this attribution, naturalistic pollywogs are often displayed in or around the body of this creature, along with other motifs such as fish, plants, or sprouting trophy heads. These associations again support the relationship of pollywogs, water, and agriculture.

RPT-1-F: Two-Headed Snakes

Snakes with a head at both ends of their bodies are a common decorative element, especially in Phases 3 and 4, where ten examples are found. Although Peters (1991: 288) suggests that this motif may be based on mutant two-headed colubrid snakes that occur in nature, I am not convinced. We would expect that such an unusual deformation would be portrayed as realistically as possible, but instead the heads are placed at opposite ends of the reptile's body (fig. 5.219). It is more likely that artistic license is being used to produce a decorative space filler.

In many Precolumbian cultures, double-headed snakes represent the sky or a band representing the spatial break between the terrestrial world and the heavens. In Peru this is best seen in painted textiles of the Chancay culture of the central coast (Ugarte 1999). We have no indication that two-headed snakes had this connotation in Nasca iconography. Snakes are never arched over other figures in the art, and

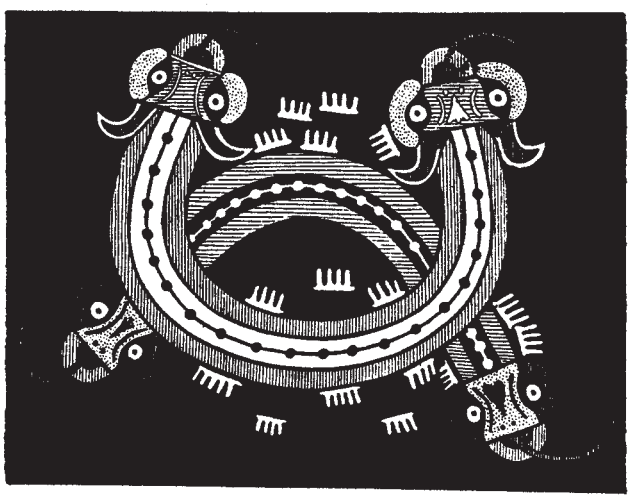


Fig. 5.219. RPT-1-F (two-headed snakes). After Seler 1923: fig. 316a.

Fig. 5.220. RPT-1-G (tabular snakes). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

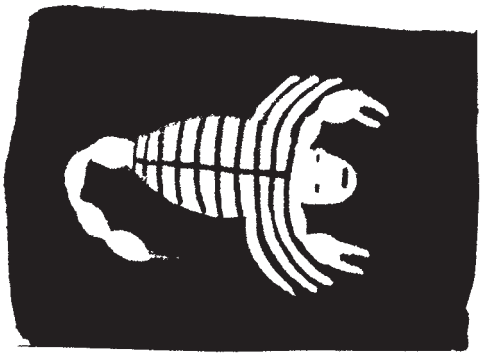


Fig. 5.221. RPT-1-H (scorpion). Private collection. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

virtually no symbols for the sun, stars, moon, or constellations can be positively identified in Nasca art.

RPT-1-G: Tabular Snakes

Flattened snakes with small dots for eyes and mouths are often arranged in rows and used as space fillers within the bodies of certain mythical creatures or as independent motifs (fig. 5.220). Sometimes these tabular snakes are substitutes (kennings) for other body parts, such as the feathers on mythical creatures with avian forms (fig. 5.12, 5.38, among others).

RPT-1-H: Scorpions

While scorpions are not technically either reptiles or amphibians, I am including them in this category for want of a better match. Several examples of scorpions are present in Nasca art, best seen in a pair of bowls now in a private collection (fig. 5.221). It is surprising that more examples of this creature are not found.

RPT-1-I: Salamanders

At least one example of a salamander exists on a Nasca vessel from Majoro Chico A (Kroeber and Collier 1998: fig. 334). Like other amphibians, salamanders symbolize water and are associated with the onset of water in the riverbeds.

RPT-2: Effigy Reptiles and Amphibians

The sample contains a small number of effigy vessels in the form of reptiles and amphibians, including snakes, frogs, toads, lizards, and turtles.

RPT-2-A: Effigy Snakes

Effigy snakes are rare in Nasca art, but several examples are present in the sample. Most are in the form of semimodeled snakes, with painted bodies and a raised, modeled head. An illustration of a fully modeled snake can be found in Lavalle (1986: 150). Effigy snakes become more common in the Middle Horizon.

RPT-2-B: Effigy Frogs or Toads

We have a substantial sample of Phase 2 and 3 effigy frog bottles (fig. 5.222). They are all very realistic depictions of the crouching amphibian, which is always painted with a striped body, suggesting that frogs rather than toads are the model. One specimen holds plants in its hands, while on another the frog is paired with a snake. Usually they are displayed alone.

Fig. 5.222. RPT-2-B (effigy toad/frog). Private collection. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

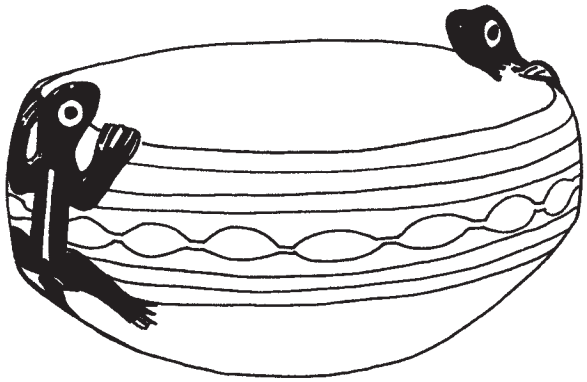


Fig. 5.223. RPT-2-C (effigy lizards). Museo Regional de Ica. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

RPT-2-C: Effigy Lizards

A few bowls with semimodeled lizards attached to their rims are present in the sample. Most of the reptile's body is painted on the surface of the vessel, but the upper torso, head, and front arms are modeled, to suggest that the creature is attempting to climb into the bowl (fig. 5.223). These charming pieces date to Phases 2 and 3.

RPT-2-D: Effigy Turtles

We have several examples of vessels in the form of turtles, probably a maritime species. These date to the Proliferous phases and are quite rare (see Schindler 2000: 66 – 67).

INCT: Insects

Insects affected the ancient Nasca just as they do in our own society. Some were agricultural pests, while others, like the worm and spider, were assets. Although worms are not technically insects, I am including them in this category in order to simplify the classification. I am unaware of any literature that describes Peruvian insects and their relationship to humans. Therefore the identifications for several of the insect species here are more tenuous than for some of the other forms discussed above. Forty-one insects are present in the sample, ranging from Phase 2 through Phase 8. All but one are painted versions. The single modeled insect is labeled INCT-2.

INCT-1: Painted Insects

The vast majority of insect representations are painted in two dimensions. They are found on a wide variety of vessel forms, including bowls, bottles, and jars.

INCT-1-A: Spiders

Spiders were apparently important or at least intriguing to the ancient Nasca people. One of the most interesting geoglyphs on the Pampa de San José is the image of a giant spider 150 feet long, constructed with a single continuous line (Reiche 1968: 23). The right rear leg, which is the starting and ending point of construction, is larger and extends farther than the left rear leg. Evan Hadingham (1987: 77) notes that the astronomer Gerald Hawkins "popularized the idea that the figure might depict an exceedingly rare creature known as *Ricinulei*. This tiny arachnid is found only in the Amazon; the male uses an organ on its extended leg for copulation." Few would agree with this argument, for in other details the figure does not resemble the genus known as *Ricinulei* but rather corresponds to local spiders found on the south coast. Spiders may have been important to the Nasca in controlling other insect pests in agricultural fields. Reinhard (1992: 297) points out that spiders and millipedes appear when it is about to rain, thus linking them to water and fertility. Spiderwebs may be a metaphor for nets used to catch fish or snare animals. This analogy can be further extended to include the category HSW or Human in a Spiderweb, which appears to reflect a story or myth centering on humans caught in webs — the spider perhaps being a metaphor for a warrior who captures a victim. Another metaphor is the similarity of spiderwebs and textiles, weaving, and cloth.

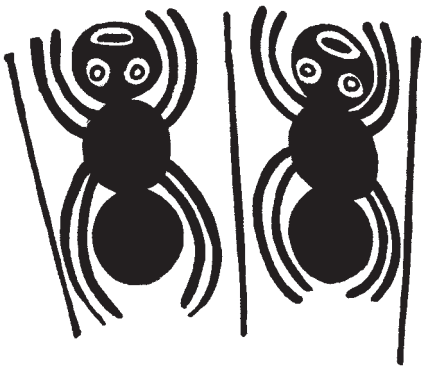


Fig. 5.224. INCT-1-A (spiders). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 171191. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

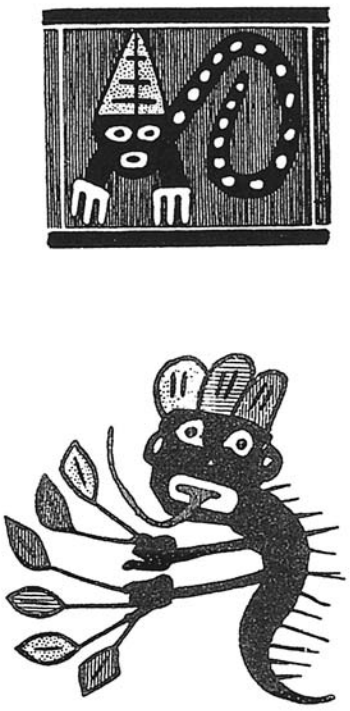


Fig. 5.225. INCT-1-B (worms). After Seler 1923: figs. 126 and 121.

The sample contains seventeen examples of spiders, almost half the total of all insects. They range in date from Phase 2 through Phase 8, with the majority falling in Phase 3. Most are depicted with three body segments; the center one with parallel stripes perhaps indicates a specific species. In a few cases the depictions are anatomically correct, with eight legs, but in other instances twelve or more legs may be shown (fig. 5.224). A visible "stinger," more likely the organ for spinning the web, is sometimes drawn on the rear body segment. Early spiders are very naturalistic in form, including at least one example of a spider in its web. Beginning in Phase 5, anthropomorphic elements are added, mainly in the form of a humanlike head. A Phase 8 specimen consists of a square anthropomorphic head with arms radiating out from it.

INCT-1-B: Worms

The creature that I am tentatively identifying as an earthworm has a black spiral body (sometimes covered with spots) and most distinctively has an anthropomorphic head surmounted by a conical hat — the same hat worn by the Mythical Harvester and by Farmers (fig. 5.225). Small hands or pendant fingers are found beneath the head. Because of its association with Farmers/Harvesters, I am arguing that this creature probably represents an earthworm that is beneficial to the growth of the crops. All five specimens in the sample date from Phases 3 through 5.

Various other types of worms are present in the art, some terrestrial worms and others possibly sea worms of one sort or another. A good example is illustrated in Blasco and Ramos (1980: pl. 30[8]).

INCT-1-C: Bees/Wasps

It is hard to miss the gigantic stinger at the end of this insect's body. Although the body configuration and the lack of identifiable wings raise some questions, I argue that this representation is probably a bee or wasp of some type — unless some other stinging creature can be identified (fig. 5.226). Two small antennae are seen emanating from the insect's head, while a rectangular area behind the head may be its wings. The sample contains eight examples of this motif, dating from Phases 5 and 6. This also corresponds to the first appearance of the Mythical Harvester in the sequence.

INCT-1-D: Dragonflies

One example of a winged wormlike creature with a strangely marked face could be either a dragonfly or a butterfly (fig. 5.227). It dates from Phase 5 and is unique.

INCT-1-E: Centipedes

A creature with multiple legs probably represents a centipede or similar insect (fig. 5.228). The iconography includes only one good example, dating to Phase 4.

INCT-1-F: Unidentified Insects

Eight vessels contain depictions of various types of insects that cannot be positively identified from their attributes. A good catalog of coastal Peruvian insects would be very useful in this regard, but I am unaware of any such resource.

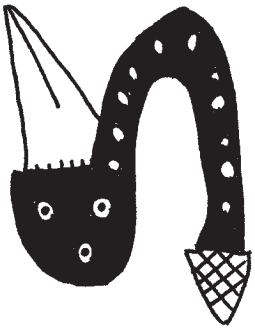


Fig. 5.226. INCT-1-C (bee/wasp). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 51(2b).

Fig. 5.227. INCT-1-D (dragonfly). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 4-5481m. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.228. INCT-1-E (centipede). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 4-8932. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

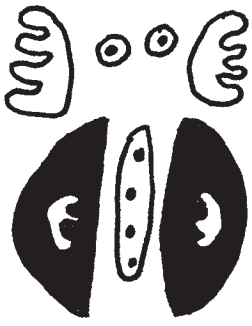


Fig. 5.229. INCT-1-G (butterfly). Birmingham (U.K.) City Museum 781.1982. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

INCT-1-G: Butterflies

A more likely candidate for a representation of a butterfly is seen in fig. 5.229. This creature has what appear to be two large wings on either side of a central body.

INCT-2: Effigy Insects

My sample includes only one example of what appears to be an effigy insect. It is a late Nasca (Phase 8 or 9) single spout bottle in the form of trilobed insect, possibly an ant or similar creature. Its human head is painted orange, with each eye pinned shut with two *huarango* thorns, much as the lips of trophy heads are pinned shut. Its body is covered with geometric designs (GEO-F) that date it to the very end of the sequence, but it retains many elements of Nasca iconography. A small projection at the end of the body may be a form of "stinger" and has four stubby legs. The specimen (C-4937) is in the collections of the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia, Lima.

PLT: Plants

Nasca art depicts a wide range of plants between Phases 1 and 7. Most are domesticated varieties shown in a very naturalistic manner, so that identification of each species is relatively easy. The majority of the specimens date to Phase 3, which has twice as many examples of plants as any other phase. This coincides with the height of the Monumental Strain and its emphasis on the naturalistic portrayal of lifeforms. After Phase 5 the number of plants seen in the art decreases dramatically, and by Phase 8 plants have all but disappeared from the repertoire, unless some of the abstract geometric designs common at that time were meant to be plants.

Beans and chili peppers are the most commonly depicted plants on the pottery, with fifty-seven specimens of each in the sample. Whether a correlation can be drawn between frequency of portrayal and the relative importance of the plant in the diet of the people is not clear. Next in frequency comes maize, followed by cactus plants and their fruit. Two unidentifiable plants, both heart-shaped with stems emanating from the top, are also well represented. Lucuma fruits, jíquimas, manioc, squashes, peanuts, pepinos, and kelp complete the survey of illustrated plants. Curiously, no identifiable tubers are seen in the art — no potato, *oca*, *ullucu,* or the like. Perhaps this is because tubers grow best at higher elevations and may not have been a common product in the coastal valleys. Or could the heart-shaped plants be

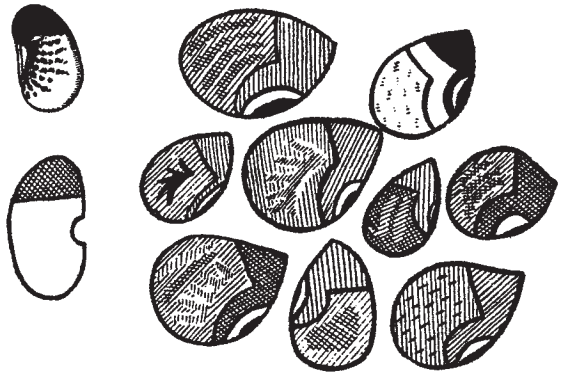


Fig. 5.230. PLT-1-A (lima beans). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 16, pt. 2.

Fig. 5.231. PLT-1-A (common beans). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 16, pt. 1.

Fig. 5.232. PLT-1-B (bean pods). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 16a.

tubers? It is interesting to compare this list with the depictions on contemporaneous Moche pottery from the north coast. Potatoes are seen on Moche modeled pottery, as well as gourds, maize, pacae, peanuts, manioc, beans, and cacti. Environmental factors as well as cultural preference may dictate the differences in the representations of plants from these two groups.

Two main categories of plant motifs occur on Nasca pottery: painted (PLT-1) and modeled (PLT-2).

PLT-1: Painted Plants

Painted plants far outnumber effigy forms, and their numbers are greatly increased when plants as a secondary motif are included. The following major plants are included in the art.

PLT-1-A: Beans

Although several varieties of beans were present in Precolumbian Peru, the primary type seen in Nasca iconography seems to be the lima bean (*Phaseolus lunatus*). Deborah Pearsall (1992: 174, table 9.1) notes that the common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) and the jack bean (*Canavalia plagiosperma*) are also present in Peru, and many of the beans seen in the iconography were clearly meant to represent these types.

Beans are always drawn in multiples, with one end of the seed pointed and the opposite end somewhat larger and more rounded (fig. 5.230). The oval-shaped scar or hilum, where the seed was originally attached to the pod, is clearly drawn on the edge of the bean. The hilum is also the locus for germination when the bean is used for propagation, and many of the Nasca vessels show germinating beans with sprouts emerging from this location — a visual lesson in botany. Beans are frequently painted in several colors, although some of the earliest examples are solid in pigmentation. The diverse coloration suggests some of the many varieties of common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) found in the Andes (fig. 5.231).

PLT-1-B: Bean Pods

A separate category was established for bean pods in order to keep this motif separate from the beans (seeds) themselves. Many bean pods have three seeds clearly visible, suggesting that they are most likely lima beans (*Phaseolus lunatus*) (fig. 5.232). In other cases multiple seeds are depicted; these could be interpreted as representing other varieties of

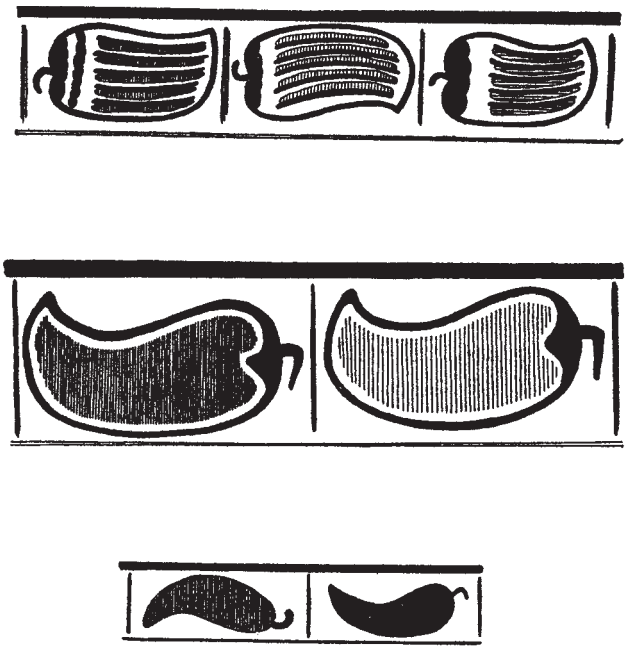


Fig. 5.233. PLT-1-C (peppers). After Seler 1923: figs. 392, 388, 387.

beans, the large pods of the pacae tree (*Inga feuillei*), or the seeds on the stalk of the jíquima plant.

PLT-1-C: Peppers

Among the earliest domesticates in the Andes were chili peppers, which were used both to season food and as a preservative. These spicy peppers (*Capsicum baccatum*, *Capsicum chinense*) were present on the coast of Peru prior to 4000 B.C. and are the second most frequently depicted plant in Nasca ceramic iconography. The plant has a distinctive elongated profile, which includes the presence of parallel stripes within the fruit (unless drawn in monocolor), a calyx or cap at the stem end of fruit, and a pointed distal end (fig. 5.233). The majority of the peppers seen in the art date from Phases 3 and 4; they are also commonly attached to Mythical Beings.

PLT-1-D: Maize

According to paleobotanists, maize (*Zea mays*) or corn was first domesticated in Mesoamerica and spread to South America prior to 5000 B.C. (Pearsall 1992: 191). It appeared in Ecuadorian coastal sites quite early (3000 – 4000 B.C.) and finally arrived in coastal Peru during the late Preceramic (prior to 1800 B.C.) but did not become firmly established in this zone until the Early Horizon (900 – 200 B.C.). In the Andes maize was used more for ceremonial purposes in the form of *chicha* than as a staple foodstuff (Murra 1960: 397). The Inca and their predecessors, however, used maize flour in both stews and *humitas* (tamales or cakes) (Kendall 1989: 40). The archaeological and iconographic records are unclear as to the exact function of maize in the lives of the ancient Nasca people. Large storage jars seen in rare ritual scenes may have been used to hold *chicha*, but there is evidence to speculate that a stronger hallucinogenic brew made from the juice of a cactus may also have been used.

Drawings of maize are usually in the form of partially husked ears of corn, identified by the enclosing leaves, partially exposed cob, and "silk" protruding from the top (fig. 5.234). The earliest examples of maize ears in the art are drawn on a large scale (usually on the walls of double spout bottles or bowls) in multiples, with alternating colors used to emphasize the plant. This motif is found from late Phase 2 through Phase 5, after which it disappears from the style. In Phase 5 the maize ears become more geometrical in form and are reduced in overall size.

Paintings of maize ears on their stalks are also present in the art, although not as frequently as individual ears (fig. 5.234). When maize stalks are shown, rats or mice are invariably depicted in the field eating the plants (pl. 31). Many of these cornfield representations date to Phase 5, when rodents are commonly seen in the iconography.

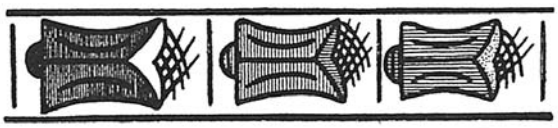
PLT-1-E: Lucumas

Less familiar in the northern hemisphere is the lucuma (*Pouteria lucuma*), a fruit with a smooth bronze-yellow skin and a bright yellow or orange flesh tasting much like maple syrup; it is used to add flavor and coloring to foods and can be dried and stored for long periods (National Research Council 1989: 263). It appeared on the coast of Peru no later than the Initial Period (1800 B.C.) and seems to have been an important crop for the Nasca people.

Lucuma fruits are usually portrayed as heart-shaped or pear-shaped plants with two or three large seeds (or pits) drawn on the side, as if the fruit had been cut in half to display this trait (fig. 5.235). The top of the fruit is often covered with a calyx much like that seen on peppers, and a small single stem emerges from the top. All the examples of this plant in the sample date to Phases 3 and 4.

PLT-1-F: Single-Stemmed Kidney-Shaped Plants

The sample includes nine examples of an unidentifiable kidney-shaped plant with a single stem attached to the center



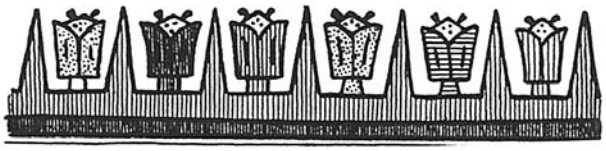


Fig. 5.234. PLT-1-D (maize). After Seler 1923: fig. 384; Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 4g; Seler 1923: fig. 386.

(fig. 5.236). All of these plants are monochrome, although a few are decorated with a large "X." All of these examples are found on the bottoms of interior decorated bowls and date to Phases 3 and 4.

The identity of this plant is enigmatic. It could be some type of fruit, as I suggested in a previous monograph (Proulx 1968), but this is just conjecture. Wild tomatoes were present in the Andes at this time, but we have no archaeological evidence that they were used for food at this time (Heiser 1985:133). Perhaps they are potatoes — as noted earlier, no depictions of this plant seem to occur in the Nasca style. Could these be our missing tubers? An argument against this interpretation is the seemingly smooth skin of the plant. All other cultures that illustrate potatoes carefully depict the irregular surfaces or the "eyes."

Fig. 5.235. PLT-1-E (lucuma). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 9b.

Fig. 5.236. PLT-1-F (single-stemmed kidney-shaped plant). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 170659. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

PLT-1-G: Double-Stemmed Heart-Shaped Plants

Thirteen examples of another plant that eludes identification are similar to category PLT-1-F but differ slightly in shape and in the presence of a bifurcated stem. The dual stem suggests that a sprouting plant is intended rather than one plucked from its stalk, in which case we would expect to find a single connecting stem (fig. 5.237). Some are decorated with an "X," while on others the stems are unattached to the plant and seem to "float" above it. All date to Phases 3 and 4 and are painted on the bottoms of interior decorated bowls. The on-line catalog of the Museo Larco Herrera identifies this motif as a sprouting bean, but the plant seems too large to represent this vegetable. Sprouting beans always depict the germination emanating from the hilum. The identity of this plant remains unknown; as in the previous case, it may be an attempt to portray potatoes or some other tuber.

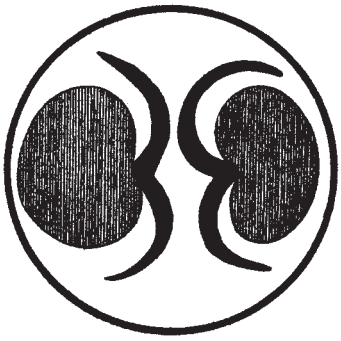


Fig. 5.237. PLT-1-G (double-stemmed heart-shaped plants). After Seler 1923: fig. 407.

Fig. 5.238. PLT-1-H (cacti). After Seler 1923: fig. 410.

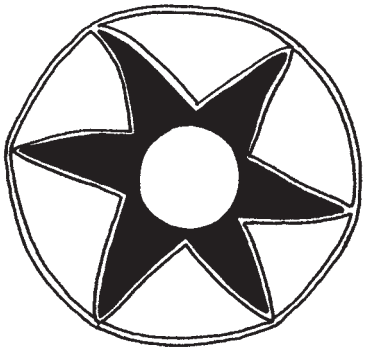


Fig. 5.239. PLT-1-H (cross section of a San Pedro cactus). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 170926. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

PLT-1-H: Cacti

Several species of cacti grow in the arid deserts of southern Peru. Although these plants were not domesticated, they did provide a number of products of importance to the Nasca people, as witnessed by their frequent representations in the iconography (fig. 5.238). Cacti first appear in Phase 3 but reach the height of popularity in Phase 6, when the plant and its fruits are commonly portrayed on various vessel shape categories.

Among the more frequently depicted species of cacti are members of the genus *Opuntia*, a treelike plant with many branches, measuring between 2 and 5 meters in height (Towle 1961: 70). One species of this type is the "prickly pear" cactus, with tasty pear-shaped fruits that are still eaten as a delicacy by the local inhabitants today. The spines of this cactus, clearly depicted in the iconography, were used by the ancients for combs and pins. The cacti in this genus also serve as hosts to the cochinilla insect, which produces a brilliant red dye used for coloring textiles.

Another cactus that produces a sweet edible fruit is *Lobivia corbula*, a thick barrel-shaped plant with twelve ribs separated by deep longitudinal indentations (Towle 1961: 70). Yacovleff and Herrera (1934: 319) illustrate a modeled Nasca vessel with this cactus, which they misidentify as *Mammillaria herrerae*.

Of all the cacti found in Peru, one of the most interesting is the San Pedro cactus (*Trichocereus pachanoi*). It is a source of mescaline, a hallucinogenic drug used for religious rituals and by shamans for curing purposes. Much has been written about the San Pedro cactus in northern Peru, where it apparently was used by the Chavín culture (Cordy-Collins 1977) and is still used today in the Trujillo area by *curanderos* (Sharon 1972). It is unclear whether this species was present on the south coast during Nasca times, but several scholars (e.g., Dobkin del Rios and Cardenas 1980) argue that it was an essential part of their religious lives, connected with shamanism and personal ecstasy as a means of contact with the supernatural. These scholars explain many themes in the iconography, including most of the Mythical Beings, as being derived from visions of shamans under the influence of these drugs. Dr. Fernando Cabieses, director of the Museum of Health Sciences in Lima, has made such arguments and believes that starlike representations seen on Nasca pottery represent the cross sections of this cactus, with its particular circular marking (fig. 5.239).

Several ritual scenes on Nasca vessels support the use of mescaline. A number of "musician" vessels portraying an agricultural ritual include a musician simultaneously playing several instruments, who is surrounded by smaller figures of farmers playing trumpets and drinking some type of brew from small cups filled from large storage jars present in the same scene (fig. 1.6; pl. 8). The presence of cacti in many of these ritual scenes is important, suggesting that the drink was derived from these plants.

PLT-1-I: Jíquimas

An important edible root crop on the south coast was the jíquima (*Pachyrhizus tuberosus*). Yacovleff (1933) wrote an

Fig. 5.240. PLT-1-I (jíquima). After Yacovleff 1933: fig. 2e.

important article about the jíquima, a relatively large, turnip-shaped rhizome that produces only one root per plant. Its stalk is angular and is characterized by leaves arranged in clusters of three; some representations show small seed pods attached. Nasca artists portrayed this plant with such naturalism that it can easily be identified from its major characteristics: a tuber shaped much like a turnip with vertical creases clearly depicted on the surface (fig. 5.240). The tip of the root often displays a bump where the stalk was attached. The angular stem of the plant as well as its leaves, flowers, and pods are all quite distinctive. Although only six examples of the jíquima plant as a primary motif exist in the sample, many more specimens display the root in the hands of Mythical Beings or Harvesters. Most specimens date to Phases 3 and 4, and the motif seems to disappear from the style after Phase 5.

The jíquima is not native to Peru, originating either in the Amazon lowlands or in Central America. It first appeared on the south coast during the Early Horizon in the Paracas culture, where examples can be seen embroidered on the textiles. During the Colonial Period, when the Europeans introduced new crops and native traditions underwent great modification, the cultivation of jíquima was discontinued. In other countries of Latin America, however, it continues to be grown up to the present day (Yacovleff 1933: 65).

PLT-1-J: Manioc (Yucas, Cassavas)

Manioc is the staple crop of the tropical forest region, and most botanists believe that it was first domesticated in the northern lowlands of South America. It eventually diffused to the coast of Peru, where it became widespread during the Early Horizon (900 – 200 B.C.), following its earlier appearance in a few isolated locations (Pearsall 1992: 194). There are two varieties of manioc, sweet and bitter (containing cyanide compounds which must be removed before the plant is edible). It would appear that the variety found on the coast of Peru is sweet manioc, judging from the lack of the typical paraphernalia needed to remove the poisonous substances.

Manioc (*Manihot esculenta*) is a root crop whose stalk may grow as tall as 15 feet. "The edible part is the tuberous root, which sometimes resembles a sweet potato but is usually much larger — some grow to be a yard long and weigh several pounds" (Heiser 1981: 154). Most plants yield about three good-sized roots. Today in the tropical forest manioc is usually peeled to remove the rough cortex, then the fibrous starchy root is grated to make flour for tortillas or to be boiled in stews. It is unclear how the coastal peoples of Peru used the plant, but we have no archaeological evidence for the use of manioc griddles or grating devices. Probably the roots were simply boiled and eaten, much like other tubers.

Several examples of manioc plants used as an independent theme are present in Nasca iconography. All three specimens in the sample date to Phase 3. The plant is represented by a trilobed mass, often suspended from a stalk (fig. 5.241). Many other examples of manioc occur as secondary motifs, held in the hands of Harvesters or incorporated into other Mythical Creatures (pl. 1).

PLT-1-K: Squashes

Squash (*Cucurbita* sp.) was one of the earliest domesticates of coastal Peru, with several varieties already differentiated by the Late Preceramic Period (4000 – 1800 B.C.). Some botanists claim that the first squashes were used primarily for their seeds, because these earliest types had little flesh (Heiser 1981: 196). Later varieties were selected for their pulp and became the dominant varieties.

Curiously, representations of squash are rare in Nasca art. Only one vessel dating from Phase 3 definitely portrays a squash (fig. 5.242). It is likely, however, that some of the "generic" plants seen in the hands of various Mythical Beings may be squash.

PLT-1-L: Peanuts

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*) were first domesticated in what botanists call mid-elevations (1,500 – 3,000 meters), probably in Bolivia or Argentina (Pearsall 1992: 195). Preserved remains of peanuts have been found in archaeological contexts from a number of sites in Peru, including the south coast. Representations of peanuts in ceramic iconography are most numerous in north coastal cultures such as Moche. Only one example of a Nasca vessel from Phase 3 appears to portray this plant (fig. 5.243).

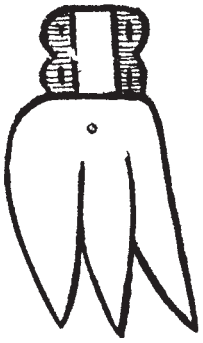


Fig. 5.241. PLT-1-J (manioc). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 9L.

Fig. 5.242. PLT-1-K (squash). Royal Scottish Museum 1914.813. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.243. PLT-1-L (peanut). Royal Ontario Museum HP-381. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.244. PLT-1-M (pepino). Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

PLT-1-M: *Pepinos*

The pepino (*Solanum muricatum*) is a sweet fruit that comes in a wide variety of shapes, colors, sizes, and qualities. Some are bright green with jagged purple stripes. Inside "they are somewhat like honeydew melons: watery and pleasantly flavored" (National Research Council 1989: 297). Pepinos were cultivated by the Nasca people, and both painted and modeled ceramic representations of them are known. One painted specimen from Phase 2 is present in the sample (fig. 5.244).

Fig. 5.245. PLT-1-N (seaweed). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1935: fig. 61.

PLT-1-N: *Seaweed*

Several specimens have iconography that includes what appears to be seaweed, sargasso (*Macrocystis humboldtii*). Usually these same vessels include marine creatures as well, which tend to support the identification of the plants as seaweed (Yacovleff and Herrera 1935: fig. 61). It is likely that the plants are illustrated to enhance the scene, but some of this vegetation may have had an economic use. Seaweed is rich in potassium; when some varieties are burned, they yield an alkaline ash, which can be used as a fertilizer. Seaweed could also be used to package fish for transportation to inland sites by keeping it moist and cool. Two examples of seaweed are present in the sample, both dating to Phase 3 (fig. 5.245).

PLT-1-O: *Unidentified Plants*

The sample contains a number of plant representations which cannot be identified. Some of these may be variations of the plants described above; others may be species thought to be present (e.g., *cherimoya*, gourd, *maca*, pineapple, etc.) but so far not identifiable in the iconography. This category is used for those unidentified plants.

PLT-1-P: *Flowers*

Flowers in the form of blossoms with large petals are seen in the sample (fig. 5.246). Frequently hummingbirds are shown with their beaks protruding into these plants.

PLT-1-Q: *Ground Vegetation*

Vessels with reptiles and amphibians often also include small plants or ground vegetation. These plants typically have three leaves and look similar to pelage marks found on the Mythical Spotted Cat (fig. 5.247). Perhaps this is yet another example of the substitution of one symbol for another

Fig. 5.246. PLT-1-P (flower). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 18(3).

Fig. 5.247. PLT-1-Q (ground vegetation). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 288087. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

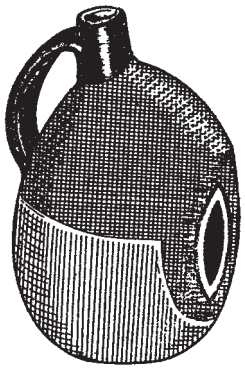


Fig. 5.248. PLT-2-A (modeled bean). After Kauffmann Doig 1983: 388.

(kenning). Lizards are the most common reptile associated with these plants, but snakes and other ground-dwelling creatures also occur.

PLT-1-R: Algarrabo Beans

Long pods in the iconography appear to represent some type of bean, most likely the pods found on the local *huarango* or algarrabo trees. Alternatively, these may represent the pods found on the jíquima plant (see Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: 282, fig. 14).

PLT-2: Modeled Plants

The sample contains a number of vessels in the form of modeled plants (PLT-2). Where possible the same subsidiary letter has been used for these subtypes below, as was the case with PLT-1 (painted plants).

PLT-2-A: Modeled Beans

The sample includes six examples of vessels in the form of modeled beans (fig. 5.248). Other examples are an early Phase 2 single spout bottle with a handle in the form of a beautiful model of a bean. Painted in several colors with pigments that reflect experimentation with slip paints, this vessel is a rare example of this bean in effigy form. A second vessel, also dating to Phase 2, is in the form of a jar with its wide-open mouth at the location of the hilum.

PLT-2-B: Modeled Achira

Achira is the only plant which is found only in a modeled form and is not duplicated in a painted version.

> Achira (*Canna edulis*) looks somewhat like a large-leafed lily and is closely related to the ornamental cannas widely grown in both temperate and tropical zones. It was probably one of the first plants to have been domesticated in the Andean region. Easy to plant and easy to grow, it develops huge, edible underground rhizomes sometimes as long as a person's forearm. (National Research Council 1989: 27)

Based on ethnographic analogy, the ancient Nasca people probably roasted or baked the root and ate it much like any other tuber. Today the achira root is also shredded to produce a fibrous pulp that can be used in a variety of foods. Achira appeared in the Ayacucho Caves between 3100 and 1750 B.C., and at La Galgada between 2662 and 2000 B.C.; it was present on the coast of Peru at Huaynuma in the Casma Valley at 2250 B.C. and at Huaca Prieta in the Chicama Valley about the same time (Pearsall 1992). Its original source has been traced to the Bolivian Andes or the Montaña (ibid.).

The sample contains nine examples of modeled achira roots (fig. 5.249). Dating these vessels is difficult because of their unusual shapes, but most appear to fall between Phases 3 and 5. The rhizomes are shown in clusters, usually with one large root out of which smaller bulbs are growing. The plant is always painted with black triangular elements, forming the peculiar patterning of the plant on a white background. Several are in the form of double spout bottles; others are jars.

Fig. 5.249. PLT-2-B (modeled achira). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: 311C.

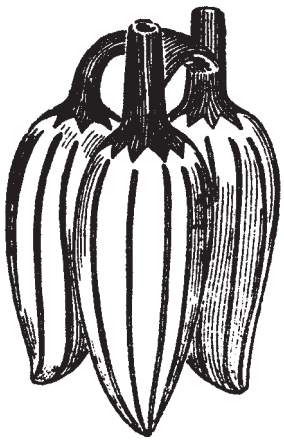


Fig. 5.250. PLT-2-C (modeled peppers). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: fig. 12c.

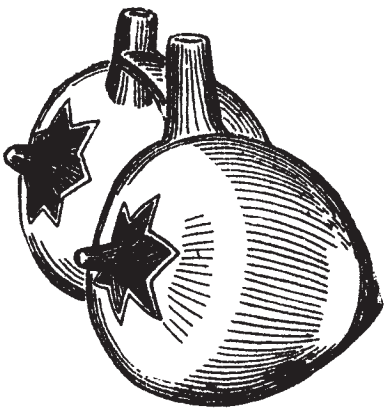


Fig. 5.251. PLT-2-E (modeled lucumas). After Yacovleff and Herrera 1934: 253, fig. 1a.

PLT-2-C: Modeled Peppers

Five vessels in the form of lifelike peppers are present in the sample, all dating to Phase 3 except for one example with long conical spouts that may date to a later phase. The peppers are displayed in groups of two to five plants with characteristic stripes or dashes painted on their sides (fig. 5.250). Four of the vessels are in the form of double spout bottles; the fifth is a small collared jar.

PLT-2-D: Modeled Maize

To date only one example of a modeled maize stalk with ears of corn is known for the Nasca style; others may exist in unpublished private collections. An illustration of this piece, from the collections of the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia in Lima (C-12485), appears in Reinhard (1992: 294).

PLT-2-E: Modeled Lucumas

Ten examples of modeled lucuma vessels are present in the sample, beginning with two very nice Phase 1 bottles. A double spout bottle in the form of a woven basket filled with lucuma fruits is present in the collections of the Museo Regional de Ica (Lavalle 1986: 119). A number of double spout bottles composed of two or more chambers in the form of lucuma fruits are present in Phase 3 (fig. 5.251). In addition to the bottle forms, three lucuma-shaped jars are included in the repertoire. The plants are distinguished by their distinctive markings, including their heart shapes and the presence of a calyx at the top where the stem connects.

PLT-2-F: Modeled Squashes

At least five vessels in the sample seem to represent squash. Two are bowls (probably dating to Phase 3) that display deep grooves in a clockwise manner around a central stem. One of these is in the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum at the University of California, Berkeley (4-9007), and the other almost identical example is at the Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg (52.57.168). Another from Hamburg (52.57.144) is a double spout bottle with two chambers, modeled in the form of a plant that also appears to be a cucurbit of some type.

PLT-2-G: Modeled Pepinos

Two early vessels are fashioned in the form of a pepino. The first is a Phase 2/3 double spout bottle from the City of Birmingham Museum (673.1982) with a pear-shaped striped body; it is too large to be a pepper, and the markings are closer to a pepino than to any other plant. The sec-

ond example is a Phase 3 small olla in the shape of a striped pepino.

PLT-2-H: Modeled Cacti

One fine example of a double spout bottle in the form of a modeled cactus is present in the sample. This piece from the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia in Lima has two columnar cacti forming the base of the spouts of a bottle (fig. 5.252). Five additional specimens portray cacti modeled on the shoulders of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings or with falcons perched on them.

PLT-2-I: Modeled Manioc

The sample includes at least one example of a seated Anthropomorphic Mythical Being holding a modeled manioc plant in his hand (fig. 5.34 and Lavalle 1986: 123).

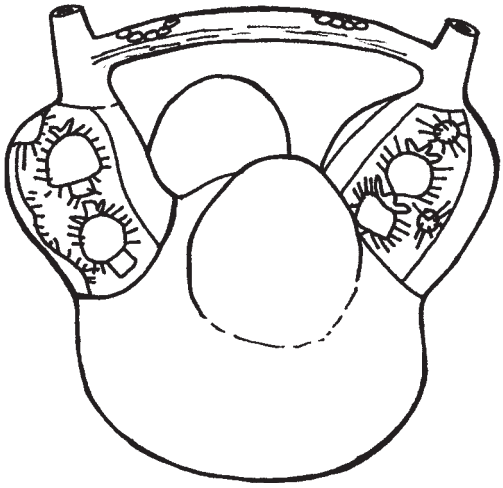


Fig. 5.252. PLT-2-H (modeled cacti). Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia (Lima) C-100294. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

OBJ: Objects

Nasca art portrays a wide variety of identifiable objects. Many of these objects are weapons, but others have more mundane connotations. The subjects on this list are somewhat arbitrary, for it would be difficult to single out every type of inanimate object seen in the art. The objects chosen for detailed description and classification are those that appear frequently, often in association with mythical beings or humans; sometimes they are drawn as separate motifs.

Archaeology has been very useful in helping to identify most of the items listed as objects. Preserved examples of most of these items have been found in graves or living sites. In a few cases it has not been possible to make a positive identification of the objects depicted. For example, poles with multiple parallel streamers appear in several scenes, but the function of these devices is not known. Most of these unknown items are discussed under the category OBJ-1-I (unidentified).

OBJ-1: Painted Representations of Objects

The objects described in this category specifically refer to those painted in two dimensions on the pottery. Examples of modeled objects are so rare that they are not included here. We have archaeological examples of almost all the objects listed, from spears to coca bags to fishnets. These actual specimens of material culture have been useful for the identification of many motifs in the iconography.

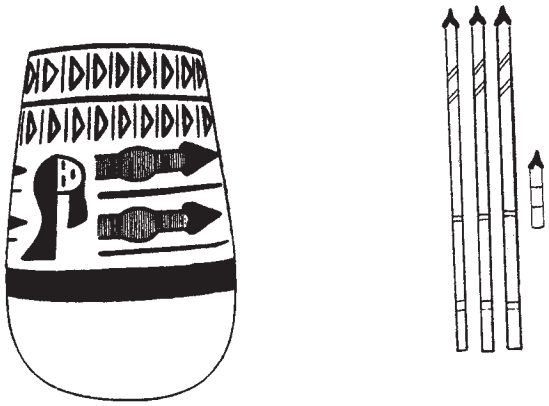


Fig. 5.253. OBJ-1-A (spears or "darts"). After Seler 1923: fig. 420 (left); Tello 1959: fig. 116 (right).

OBJ-1-A: Spears

Sometimes referred to as "darts" in the literature, wooden spears were used both for hunting and for warfare. Preserved examples are rare, but Farabee reported finding eight to ten spears with obsidian points on top of a male burial at Las Canas in the Nasca Valley, which is dated to Phase 3 (Carmichael 1988: 484). Kroeber also discovered fragments of spears and atlatls in three graves at Cahuachi (his graves 10, 12, and 13) during his 1926 excavations (ibid.). These also date to Phase 3. No references have been found describing the type of wood used for the spears, but an educated guess is that they were made either from the wood of the durable *huarango* tree (the major source of wood on the arid south coast) or from cane that grows in marshy areas.

Fig. 5.254. OBJ-1-B (early slings). After Della Santa 1962: fig. 27.

Fig. 5.255. OBJ-1-B (sling held in warrior's hand). After Seler 1923: fig. 209.

Fig. 5.256. OBJ-1-B (sling wrapped around turban). After Seler 1923: fig. 142.

Spears are always drawn in multiples, often arranged in parallel rows either vertically or horizontally in the display area (fig. 5.253). In a number of cases groups of three or more spears are tied together into bundles, a practice reminiscent of the weapon bundles seen in Moche iconography. Thirty-nine vessels in the sample have spears as the primary motif. These date from Phase 3 through Phase 7, with the majority falling into Phase 5, a time of increased warfare. In addition, at least triple this number of vessels have spears as secondary motifs: held in the hands of warriors, as appendages to the signifers of Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings, and so forth (figs. 5.32, 5.253). Spears seem to be the preferred weapon for killing at a distance.

OBJ-1-B: Slings

Slings are a very old and traditional Andean weapon and are found from Colombia to the tip of Chile, including portions of the Gran Chaco and the Pampas of Argentina (Métraux 1949: 248, map 4). Often measuring a meter in length, slings consist of woven cords attached to a tightly woven central cradle, which frequently has a slit in the center to provide elasticity (ibid.: 252). One of the cords ends in a loop that can be slipped over a finger. The device is fitted with a stone in the central cradle, which is whirled over the individual's right shoulder. The unlooped cord is released, allowing the projectile to be hurled at its target. Slings are fashioned from either cotton or wool, the latter being more common.

Slings have been found in an archaeological context in burials at Cahuachi and other sites (fig. 4.6). Kroeber found one in a male's tomb (his burial 5) excavated in 1926, and Strong discovered one in the grave of an adult female (his burial 37) in 1952 (Carmichael 1988: 484). Numerous examples can be seen in museum collections, although their proveniences are often in question.

Slings in the ceramic art appear as independent motifs in the early phases (3 and 4; fig. 5.254) and held in the hands of effigy warriors in the later phases (fig. 5.255). They are also commonly depicted wrapped around the turbanlike headdresses of males (fig. 5.256), especially on Phase 3 head jars, where they constitute a unique variety of representation. No scientifically excavated mummies with slings wrapped around their heads have yet been discovered, so it is unclear whether warriors or hunters normally carried their slings in this fashion when not in use. Slings were used to hunt guanacos and as a weapon of warfare. They continued to be used through Inca times.

Fig. 5.257. OBJ-1-C (atlatl or spear-thrower). After Tello 1959: fig. 116.

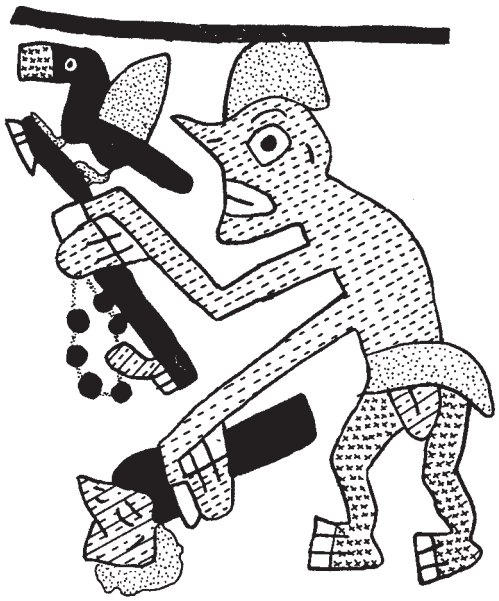


Fig. 5.258. OBJ-1-C (atlatl held by a hunter). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 383.

OBJ-1-C: Atlatls

The spear-thrower or atlatl first appears in the Andes associated with the Nasca culture and may have been independently invented in this region. Alfred Métraux (1949: 245) provides a generalized description of the spear-thrower:

> a stick about 38 to 60 cms. long with two hooks or prongs inserted in grooves at each end and lashed with cotton twine or sinew. The hook on the distal end served to engage the butt of the missile; the second prong, turned backward and placed near the other end, was intended for the fore-finger that was crooked over it. Thus the hand was forced into the most convenient position to hurl the dart. The hooks for engaging the darts were of stone, bone, shell, or copper in conventionalized shapes of birds or human figures.

Spear-throwers appear as independent motifs on pottery from Phases 2 through 6 and as adjuncts to hunters and warriors from Phases 2 through 7. They are easily recognizable in the iconography by their prominent hooks, sometimes painted in greater numbers than in reality. When atlatls appear individually, they are most often drawn in a vertical position in multiples, with a series of hooks spaced up and down the length of the weapon (fig. 5.257). Those associated with warriors or hunters are drawn more realistically, sometimes held alongside the spears that were used in conjunction with them (fig. 5.258). However, we never see an individual in the act of using a spear-thrower. Nasca art is very static, with motion occurring only in a limited manner on some Phase 7 vessels, probably as the result of contact with the Moche tradition.

OBJ-1-D: Tied Bags

Some of the most curious objects seen in Nasca iconography are bags tied shut with a prominent cord (Lavalle 1986: 162). They may be cloth bags used to collect agricultural products such as corn, beans, or peppers; but this seems unlikely judging from the scale, which suggests that the bags were too small to be agricultural sacks. It has been proposed that these bags may have been made of leather. Moche mythical figures carried similar but smaller bags containing painted beans. Rafael Larco Hoyle (1942) has argued that the Moche beans were a form of writing and that the running figures were messengers, much like the later Inca *chaskis*. Carmichael (1988) lists no cloth or leather bags in the contents of the 213 Nasca burials that he studied.

If the bags were not used by farmers for their products, what could they have contained? The answer would partly depend on the composition of the bags. Coca leaves are traditionally carried in cloth bags. These bags are clearly seen in the iconography in the Proliferous phases as rectangular or square in shape, with sewn sides and fringes dangling from the bottom (pl. 37). They look nothing like these tied bags made from a single bunch of material. Could they contain a shaman's paraphernalia? One such example is in the collections of the Milwaukee Public Museum (pl. 14; also see Sawyer 1962). Until examples are found in an archaeological context, we will never be certain of their use.

Thirteen examples of tied bags are present in the sample, all dating from Phases 3 and 4. All of the specimens are

Fig. 5.259. OBJ-1-D (tied bag). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 36(6b).

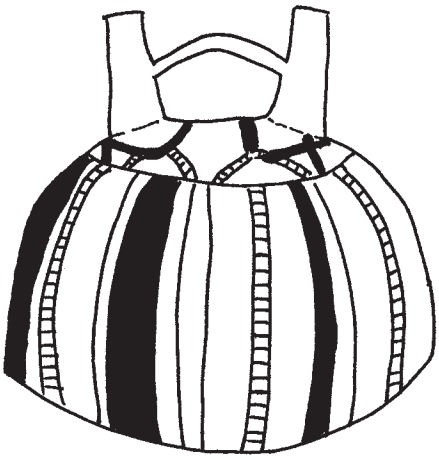


Fig. 5.260. OBJ-1-F (net bag). Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VA64264. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Fig. 5.261. OBJ-1-G (musical instruments in the painted iconography). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26, vol. 2: fig. 14.

painted as individual motifs (fig. 5.259). We have no examples of these bags depicted in the hands of an individual or Mythical Being.

OBJ-1-E: Pottery

A few rare examples of pottery containers are painted as an iconographic motif. Several of the scenes associated with musicians (MUS-1) contain small human figures drinking or holding cups which have been filled from larger storage jars included in the same scene (fig. 5.15). One such storage jar has a smaller dish or plate inverted over its mouth to prevent evaporation (fig. 1.6). We have two examples of pottery as independent themes. A Phase 3 short spouted bottle displays a series of handled collared jars surrounded by foxes, while a Phase 5 vase has multiple representations of the same type of jar (Eisleb 1977: fig. 133).

OBJ-1-F: Net Bags

Three vessels from the earliest part of the sequence clearly depict net bags. This type of container probably dates back to the Preceramic Period, and such bags may have been used later to suspend pottery vessels from beams in the house. Two Nasca Phase 1 double spout bottles have net bags painted on their surfaces (fig. 5.260). A Phase 2 single spout bottle has an identical design. It is likely that pottery continued to be suspended by such devices in later times, but for unknown reasons this method was no longer portrayed on the pottery.

OBJ-1-G: Musical Instruments

Panpipes, trumpets, and drums are incorporated into various ritual and secular scenes on pottery, especially in the earlier part of the sequence. Panpipes, in particular, are often used as an independent motif, with a distinctive outline that is easy to identify (fig. 5.261). In addition to these artistic representations, actual clay panpipes, drums, and trumpets have been excavated at Nasca sites (see the category designated MI). Under this classification, however, I am describing painted representations of the instruments as seen on various vessel forms, not the actual modeled pieces.

OBJ-1-H: Sling Stones

Although slings were used for both hunting and warfare, no representations of individuals in the art are shown actually firing a stone from a sling. We have numerous depictions of round objects on vessels with hunters and warriors, but these are seen in separate panels (fig. 5.262). It is my contention that these are meant to represent the stones used with this device.

OBJ-1-I: Unidentified Objects

A number of objects portrayed in the iconography cannot be identified (objects surrounding warriors on some late Nasca pieces, stafflike objects in other scenes, etc.). Those deemed most important are included here.

OBJ-1-J: Clothing

This category includes both pieces of clothing depicted in the art as separate elements and parts of the costume of individuals. The first variety can be seen in many battle scenes on vessels dating to Phases 6 and 7, where tunics are seen "floating" next to the warriors (fig. 5.123). Clothing is portrayed on a large number of individuals but is especially intricate on the human effigy jars of Phases 6 and 7 (see figs. 5.263; pls. 19, 36, and 37).

OBJ-1-K: Jewelry

The majority of the jewelry depicted on both mythical beings and humans was made from the spiny oyster or *Spondylus* shell (*Spondylus principiens*), found only in the warm waters off the coast of Ecuador. This material was traded down the coast of Peru from the earliest times and used as a sacred object representing water and blood. Frequently depicted on the Nasca elite in the form of necklaces, pendants, or earrings, *Spondylus* was an important symbolic item of Nasca religious paraphernalia (fig. 5.264; pl. 39). *Spondylus* necklaces are also an important component of many Mythical Beings (figs. 5.1 to 5.13, among others). Mythical creatures also wore gold mouth masks, forehead ornaments, and hair bangles.

OBJ-1-L: Coca Bags

Coca, the "divine plant of the Inca," was used as a stimulant in the Andes, starting in the Preceramic Period (prior to 2000 B.C.). In the Nasca culture, small woven cloth bags containing coca leaves have been found in graves. These coca bags are also depicted in the ceramic art. A few examples are quite explicit, showing an individual with his hand in the bag extracting the leaves while his cheeks bulge with the leaves he has placed in his mouth (pl. 37).

OBJ-1-M: Agricultural Implements

In addition to digging sticks (OBJ-1-V), other agricultural tools are associated with representations of farmers. These include a small club (a short shaft with a protuberance) that may have been used to break up the soil (clod buster) and smaller sticks used either for planting or for harvesting (pl. 15).

OBJ-1-N: Fishnets

Fishnets are an integral part of the fisherman bottle motif (HUM-2), where they are seen draped over the watercraft and are commonly shown with fish entangled in them (fig. 5.265; pl. 32). Other scenes include fishnets being held by groups of fishermen or as individual elements. Nets appear to be the primary method of obtaining fish (as opposed to hooks or harpoons), and preserved examples of both knotted and looped netting have been found in Nasca sites.

Fig. 5.262. OBJ-1-H (sling stones). Amano Museum (Lima). After La Farge 1981: 73.

Fig. 5.263. OBJ-1-J (clothing). Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, G1028. After Rickenbach 1999: no. 127.

Fig. 5.264. OBJ-1-K (jewelry). After Rickenbach 1999: no. 124. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

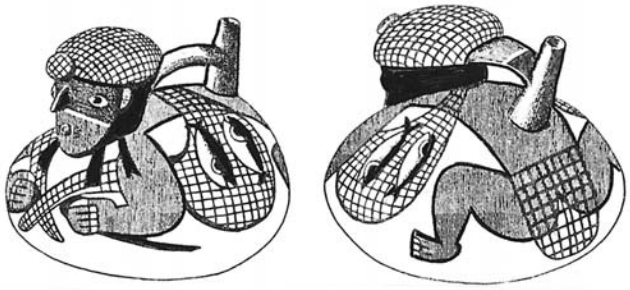


Fig. 5.265. OBJ-1-N (fishnet). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26, vol. 2: fig. 9.

Fig. 5.266. OBJ-1-Q (clubs). After Seler 1923: fig. 137.

Fig. 5.267. OBJ-1-R (obsidian knife or dagger). Drawing of Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 202 by Donald A. Proulx.

OBJ-1-O: Net Menders

Along with nets, small pointed objects which can be identified as net menders are commonly found on fishermen bottles (fig. 5.265). Usually made of wood, these tools were taken out to sea by fishermen to repair nets that were torn in use.

OBJ-1-P: Combs

Two types of combs were used by the Nasca. The first type was for combing the hair; the second was a weaving tool, used to comb fibers used for spinning and weaving. These combs are made from the sharp thorns of the *huarango* tree and are mounted in a reed or wood handle, with the thorns being held in place by resin or pitch (Orefici 1992: pl. 32). Five specimens in the sample appear to depict combs.

OBJ-1-Q: Clubs

One of the most common weapons used in Nasca warfare was a wooden club (sometimes tipped with a stone mace head, but often just a thick wooden shaft). Few have been found in archaeological contexts (e.g., see Kroeber and Collier 1998: fig. 45), but they are commonly seen in the iconography, associated with both warriors and Mythical Beings (fig. 5.266).

OBJ-1-R: Obsidian Knives

Obsidian is a form of volcanic glass that can be fashioned into cutting implements with extremely sharp edges. The Nasca used obsidian knives for the decapitation of trophy heads as well as for utilitarian purposes. Archaeological specimens in the form of sharp, daggerlike points mounted onto a wooden handle have been recorded (fig. 4.7; Wieczorek and Tellenbach 2002: fig. 8.7). The iconography depicts a number of scenes where warriors are using knives for decapitation (pl. 18). No known metal knives or daggers are present in the Nasca culture, such as the semilunar *tumi*s common on the north coast. A double spout bottle illustrated in Alan Lapiner (1976: fig. 513) painted with humans holding *tumi* knives surrounded by strange birds has iconography inconsistent with Nasca artistic canons and is likely a fake. The majority of these obsidian knives are depicted in the hand of a Mythical Killer Whale (fig. 5.267).

OBJ-1-S: Bolas

A bola is a cord or series of cords with weights attached to the ends, used for throwing and entangling the legs or neck of an animal. The Nasca practiced hunting in addition to

Fig. 5.268. OBJ-1-S (bola). After Tello 1959: fig. 117.

Fig. 5.269. OBJ-1-T (feather staff). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1925/26, vol. 1: fig. 19.

their main emphasis on agriculture. A series of round balls connected by a cord depicted on some vessels was meant to represent this hunting weapon (figs. 5.268, 5.122).

OBJ-1-T: Feather Staffs

Late Nasca warriors (Phases 6 and 7) are frequently portrayed holding a vertical staff in one hand, decorated with what appear to be feathers (fig. 5.269, 5.123). It is unclear whether these devices are decorated weapons (spears) or some type of battle insignia (flag or standard) (pls. 16, 17).

OBJ-1-U: Tumplines

A tumpline is a cord used for carrying burdens on one's back. Characteristically the cord is supported by an individual's forehead, which bears the brunt of the weight of the load. Large pottery jars, agricultural products, and even small infants are carried on the back supported by tumplines, which can clearly be seen in the art (pl. 36).

OBJ-1-V: Agricultural Digging Sticks

The planting of seeds for subsistence crops was accomplished with a simple digging stick about 4 to 5 feet long made from hardwood (probably *huarango*) that was thrust into the ground to produce a hole or to turn over the soil. In some cultures digging sticks are tipped with a metal point or have either a foot-rest or a donut-shaped stone weight attached to facilitate the work. Judging from the archaeological record and the iconography, Nasca digging sticks lack these embellishments. The tips were carved to a point, probably using obsidian knives. They are portrayed as long, pointed staffs in the art (fig. 5.270).

OBJ-1-W: Carrying Bags

Cloth carrying bags were used to transport commodities as well as infants. Smaller versions (OBJ-1-L) were used by men to carry coca leaves, and net bags (OBJ-1-F) were used for transporting fish and similar goods. Cloth bags (fig. 5.271) are similar to carrying baskets except for differences in shape.

OBJ-1-X: Baskets

Depictions of baskets are rare in Nasca iconography. Some early (Phase 1) ceramic vessels are modeled in the form of a basket holding fruit and other plants (Lavalle 1986: 119). A later example illustrates a farmer with a collection basket on his back.

OBJ-1-Y: Rocks

Landscape scenes appear rather late in Nasca art and are particularly prevalent in Phase 7, perhaps influenced by the Moche. Large boulders or rocks, which may represent mountainous terrain, are present in some of the scenes of this period (fig. 5.272; pl. 16).

Fig. 5.270. OBJ-1-V (agricultural digging sticks). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 370.

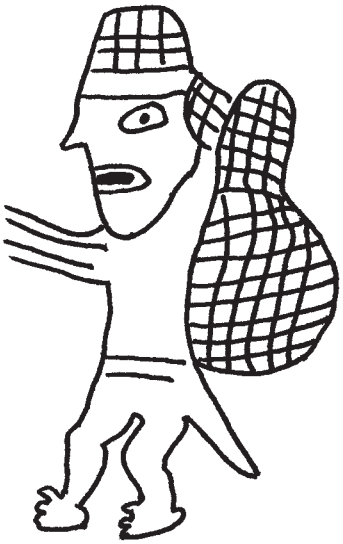


Fig. 5.271. OBJ-1-W (carrying bag). Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, U-D X-950. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

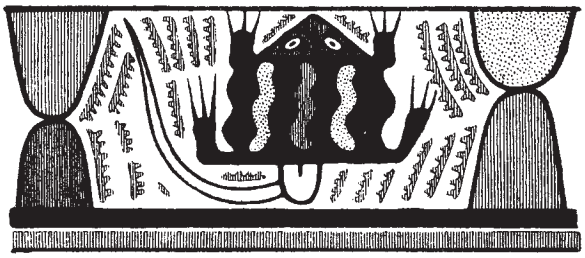


Fig. 5.272. OBJ-1-Y (rocks). After Seler 1923: fig. 324.

ARCH: Architecture

Among architectural features seen in Nasca ceramic art are models of houses, adobe pyramids (pl. 27), and walled compounds, including one identified as a "tavern" (Clifford 1969: fig. 88). Houses are usually depicted as square in shape, with a roof flange (a raised area) along one edge (pl. 26). The function of such a device was probably to allow air to circulate through the building. Another well-known example depicts a group of women apparently on the roof of a house preparing *chicha* (fig. 5.118). These vessels are usually of the modeled or effigy variety, but some painted examples also exist. An unusual bowl depicting the interior of a house (Lapiner 1976: figs. 523 and 524) is very unusual and likely a fake.

GEOM: Geometric Designs

Geometric designs represent a large percentage of the motifs found on Nasca pottery and are present throughout the sequence, increasing in frequency as the style evolves. I have made a distinction between motifs that are purely geometric in form, such as step-frets, spirals, and wavy lines (designated GEOM) and other "geometric" forms which are clearly symbolic abbreviations of creatures or objects (designated GEO-F and discussed below). Pure geometric forms are often present as primary motifs (used alone on a vessel) in the first few phases but soon become used more frequently as space-filling devices (secondary motifs), beginning in Phases 5 and 6. By the end of the Nasca sequence, Phases 8 and 9, primary and secondary geometric motifs constitute the bulk of the ceramic iconography. Where it has been possible to identify a geometric form with its naturalistic counterpart, the motif is classified in that category. For example, solid-colored balls accompanied by flying spears found floating in the space around a naturalistic llama or guanaco have been interpreted as sling stones used to hunt the animal. These stones are classified as OBJ-1-H (objects) rather than as geometric motifs.

Over fifty distinct geometric designs appear in the art. Some can be grouped together into a single category, such as step designs. In reviewing the hundreds of slides in the sample containing geometric motifs, it is difficult to find two vessels that are identical unless they were made in pairs. Whether this was done intentionally as a way of differentiating vessels made by individual potters or owned by specific family groups cannot be demonstrated at this

point, but it is a possibility that has not been considered before. Although part of the iconographic repertoire, geometric motifs are less useful for reconstructing aspects of Nasca society than the other "naturalistic" and "mythical" designs discussed earlier. In addition to classifying and describing the major geometric motifs that exist in the sample, I describe major trends through time.

Geometric designs appear on both Paracas textiles and pottery, yet the very earliest pottery found in Nasca Phase 1 has surprisingly few geometric motifs. What we do find are vessels painted with panels or stripes in alternating colors, usually black and red, a pattern that continues well into the Monumental phases of the style (Phases 2–4). As with other motifs, the use of incised outlines to separate the color areas is the most distinguishing feature of Phase 1.

Phase 2 witnessed a great increase in geometric motifs (46 examples), although they remained relatively simple in form. They constitute 19 percent of the motifs in the sample for this period. One of the most common designs is a pattern of multicolored vertical stripes that alternate in a regular pattern. When used on double spout bottles, they may be an attempt to imitate net bags used for suspension or perhaps to replicate basketry containers. These stripes appear as independent motifs but are found as well on effigy vessels, such as the famous modeled frogs or toads that date to this time. Other motifs include simple unoutlined step designs, concentric circles, black and red balls (sometimes connected by a cord), stars and half-stars, and "foot-step" designs. Experimental thick paints, which often exhibit crackling or thinning, are common on these Phase 2 vessels.

An explosion in the number of geometric motifs occurred in Phase 3, where we find the greatest number of primary (independent) geometric motifs in the sample. In all, 155 vessels decorated solely with geometric designs are present at this time, reflecting a wide variety of forms. Another 45 vessels contain geometric designs as secondary motifs. For the first time many of these motifs have outlined borders. New forms include double spirals, triangles, nested rectangles, step-frets, multicolored wavy lines, split diamonds, and chevrons. Although black, red, and white predominate as the favorite color combinations, other polychrome colors are used in the designs.

Few changes in overall designs occur in Phase 4, with the exception that many more vessels with geometric designs occur with black or red (dark) backgrounds rather than the more common white background found in Phase 3. In Phase 4 geometric designs make up 19 percent of the motifs in the sample.

In Phase 5 a major shift occurs in the conceptual use of geometric designs. While the number of primary (independent) geometric motifs declines, the overall usage of geometric motifs increases dramatically, to 292 specimens (or 17 percent of the sample) as a result of the use of geometric designs as secondary motifs in combination with mythical or naturalistic themes. In other words, geometric designs are utilized as space fillers or as a means of visually separating two or more design areas on a vessel. Horizontal bands are used for this purpose, especially on cup bowls and vases. Globular vessels often have vertical stripes, forming trapezoids in which various motifs are painted. In some cases bands are used to segment the bottom of a vessel into four quadrants. Some designs that appear to be geometric are in reality abstract symbols of mythical or naturalistic designs. One such example is the frequent use of a horizontal band with spikes protruding from it to enclose motifs like birds or trophy heads. It can now be said with some certainty that the spikes symbolize the fins of the Mythical Killer Whale, and I have categorized this motif under Killer Whales (KW-10) rather than under geometric designs.

Geometric designs continue to increase in Phase 6 as adjuncts to other motifs, while at the same time their use as primary motifs declines. Geometric designs occur on 228 vessels (30 percent of the sample). Roark (1965: 47) notes that "geometric designs as a group constitute the single most frequent theme in Phase 6." In Phase 6 step-fret designs, multiple horizontal bands, wavy lines (which may be the origin of the chevron design), and stepped pyramid designs are common. The number of "symbolic" geometric designs (GEO-F) increases, as discussed below.

The percentage of geometric motifs continues to be high in Phase 7, where fully 25 percent of all vessels contain them. Significantly, foreign elements now appear in the sample, especially in the second half of this phase. The source of many of these designs is not clear, but some are derived from the interaction between the south coast and the Ayacucho area of the highlands beginning in this phase. The Huarpa style was the first to affect Nasca (and vice versa), especially in the changes that occurred in geometric motifs. Triangles with dots, vertical bars with attached spirals, and the shift to black backgrounds are some of the possible highland influences seen at this time (see Bennett 1953; Lumbreras 1960a; Benavides Calle 1971; Knobloch 1976, 1983; Paulsen 1983). Contact with the Moche culture of the north coast (discussed in chapter 1) led to the introduction of many motifs, including some geometric forms. An example is the use of a circular ring around the neck of a spouted bottle, from which hangs a rectangular element.

Other geometric forms appear in Phase 7 that may or may not be the result of outside contact. The use of an "X" or "cross" design appears for the first time and continues into Phase 8, where it becomes even more common. Multiple wavy lines become thicker and now frequently have "bristles" attached. Stepped pyramid designs with three elements occur with the middle "step," extending well beyond the flanking ones. A "vertical eye" design, often in bands along the rims of tall vases, is characteristic of this phase. The list is endless; suffice it to say that geometric motifs are many and variable at this time.

As with Phase 7, some geometric motifs in Phase 8 may be foreign in origin. Most Nasca specialists now consider Phase 8 to fall in the Middle Horizon due to the very strong highland influences on the style, which overwhelm or dramatically change most of the traditional Nasca motifs. These traits have their prelude in the second half of Phase 7 but reach a crescendo in Phase 8. Geometric motifs increase in number to 38 percent of the sample at this time. A great deal of additional study needs to be undertaken on both geometric and GEO-F motifs in the late phases before any definitive correlations can be made with various highland sources. In Phase 8 many vessels exhibit black backgrounds with either rectangular or circular design areas. New colors and color combinations occur, including alternating yellow, orange, and gray designs. A typical motif is a series of parallel steplike designs with a central line and dot decoration. The use of "X" designs, which began in Phase 7, increases greatly at this time. Cumbrous bowls with semicircular designs along the rims appear, along with a revival of ollas and a plethora of pitchers and face neck jars.

Nasca Phase 9 has numerous geometric motifs, including multicolored chevrons (especially along the rims of vessels), small white circles outlined in black with black dots in their centers, and the use of a deep red background slip on many vessels. Many designs are painted in purple, white, cream, and gray outlined in black (Menzel 1964:28). In this phase fully 42 percent of the motifs in the sample are geometric — the greatest percentage in the nine-phase sequence. Thus the percentage of geometric motifs increases incrementally from a low of 17 percent in Phase 5 to 42 percent in Phase 9.

I have made an attempt to classify the majority of the geometric designs present in the Nasca style. Approximately fifty-three separate geometric motifs were differentiated, including one subtype containing unclassified or unique forms that do not fit into any of the other categories (GEOM-1-UN).

Fig. 5.273. GEOM-1-A (simple step design). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 8-A.

Fig. 5.274. GEOM-1-B (simple step-fret design). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 7.

Fig. 5.275. GEOM-1-C (recurved step-fret design). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 7-A.

GEOM-1: Painted Geometric Motifs

With only a few exceptions, virtually all the geometric motifs in my sample are painted rather than modeled. An illustration is provided for each example, but the reader should be aware that there is a great deal of variability for each category.

GEOM-1-A: Step Design

This motif is a right triangle with the hypotenuse in the form of a series of steps (fig. 5.273).

GEOM-1-B: Step-Fret Design

This step design has an additional bar drawn at a right angle to the triangular motif (fig. 5.274).

GEOM-1-C: Recurved Step-Frets

This elaboration of the step-fret design has additional bars attached to the primary triangle at two 90-degree angles, forming an element that points back at the triangle (fig. 5.275).

GEOM-1-D: Conjoined Steps

A square is bisected by a stepped line, producing two halves (fig. 5.276).

Fig. 5.276. GEOM-1-D (conjoined steps). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 3-5.

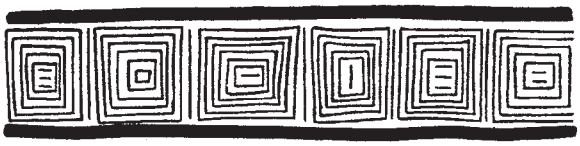


Fig. 5.277. GEOM-1-E (nested boxes). After Ubbelohde-Döering 1931: fig. 1a.

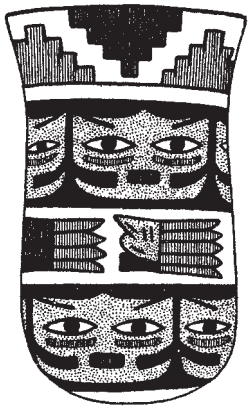


Fig. 5.278. GEOM-1-F (stepped pyramid design). After Seler 1923: fig. 215.

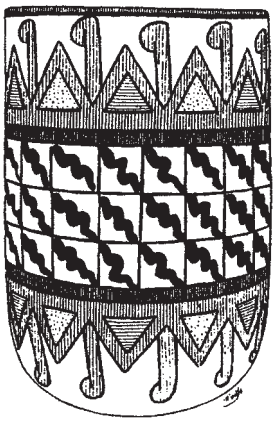


Fig. 5.279. GEOM-1-G (checkerboard design). After Seler 1923: fig. 334a.

Fig. 5.280. GEOM-1-H (triangular points). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 489.

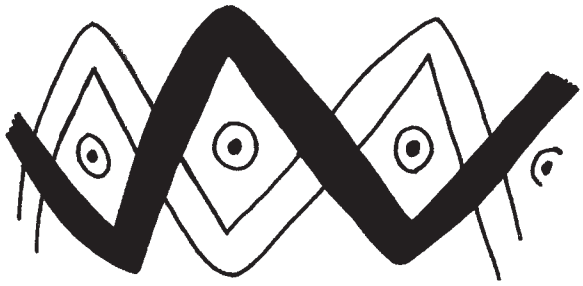


Fig. 5.281. GEOM-1-I (interlocked diamonds). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 3.14. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

GEOM-1-E: Nested Boxes

This motif consists of a series of squares or rectangles of decreasing size nested within one another (fig. 5.277).

GEOM-1-F: Stepped Pyramid Design

This stepped pyramid consists of either steps or horizontal rectangles of decreasing size stacked on top of one another or a series of vertical rectangles, with the center one the highest and those of decreasing size to either side (fig. 5.278).

GEOM-1-G: Checkerboard Design

This series of conjoined squares is similar to a game board. The squares may alternate in color or contain other repetitive designs (fig. 5.279).

GEOM-1-H: Triangular Points

This is a series of triangular elements, often in a horizontal series (fig. 5.280).

GEOM-1-I: Interlocked Diamonds

Diamond-shaped elements, sometimes formed by thick wavy lines, are linked in a series (fig. 5.281).

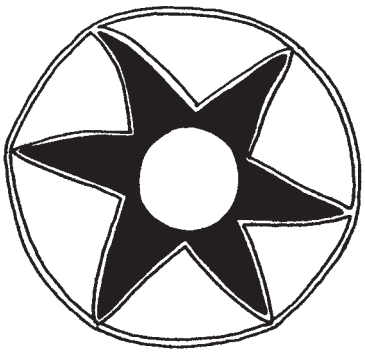


Fig. 5.282. GEOM-1-J (solid star). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 170926. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

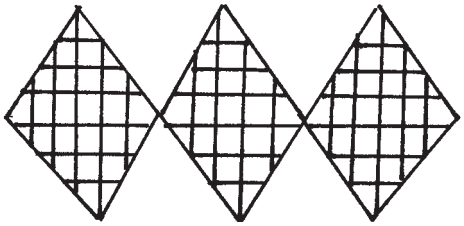


Fig. 5.283. GEOM-1-K (hatched diamond design). Columbia University, Strong Collection 322-F. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

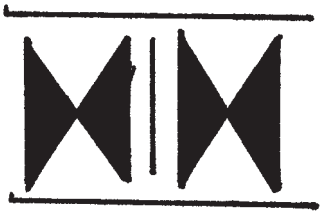


Fig. 5.284. GEOM-1-L (bow-tie design). Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VA51057. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Fig. 5.285. GEOM-1-M (S-shaped design). Columbia University, Strong Collection 357-E. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.286. GEOM-1-N (half-circles). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 4.6.

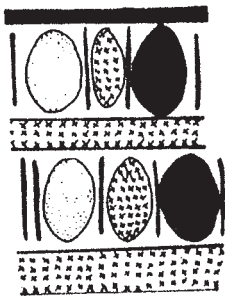


Fig. 5.287. GEOM-1-O (solid-colored balls). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 3.1.

GEOM-1-J: Solid Star Design

This motif has a solid-colored center with points on the periphery. It sometimes contains a circle or dot in the center, resembling a flower (fig. 5.282).

GEOM-1-K: Hatched Diamond Design

These diamonds resemble GEOM-1-I, but with internal fine line hatching (fig. 5.283).

GEOM-1-L: Bow-Tie Design

Two triangles are attached point-to-point, forming a bow (fig. 5.284).

GEOM-1-M: S-Shaped Design

This sinuous element looks like an "S" (fig. 5.285).

GEOM-1-N: Half-Circles

This motif consists of a series of pendant semicircles, some with scallops or spikes around the outer circumference (fig. 5.286).

GEOM-1-O: Solid-Colored Balls

These spheres are often painted in alternating colors, such as red and black. Early examples are separated by vertical lines (fig. 5.287).

GEOM-1-P: Star Motif

Unlike the solid star design (GEOM-1-J), these stars are made up of three or more straight lines crossing at a central point (fig. 5.288).

GEOM-1-Q: Quarter-Moon Motif

This geometric form resembles the moon in its first phase (fig. 5.289).

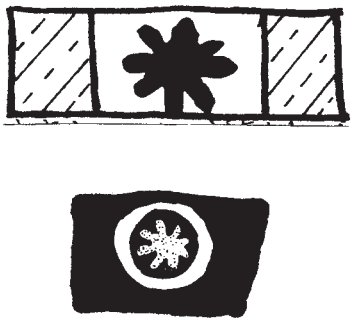


Fig. 5.288. GEOM-1-P (star motif). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 2.10; Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 591.

Fig. 5.289. GEOM-1-Q (quarter-moon motif). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

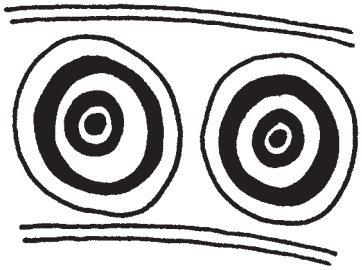


Fig. 5.290. GEOM-1-R (concentric circles). Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VA51019. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

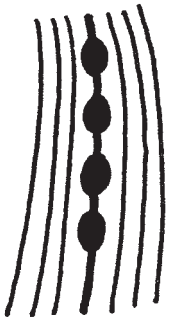


Fig. 5.291. GEOM-1-S ("quipu" design). Museo Regional de Ica DA-2285. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

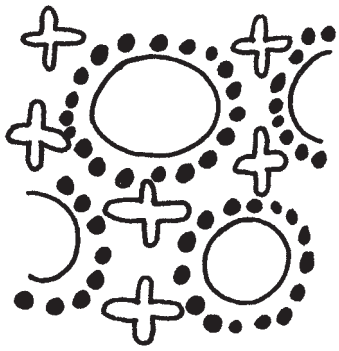


Fig. 5.292. GEOM-1-T (cruciform or X-shaped design). After Seler 1923: fig. 226.

Fig. 5.293. GEOM-1-U (multiple "eyebrows"). Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire (Brussels) AAM-5015. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

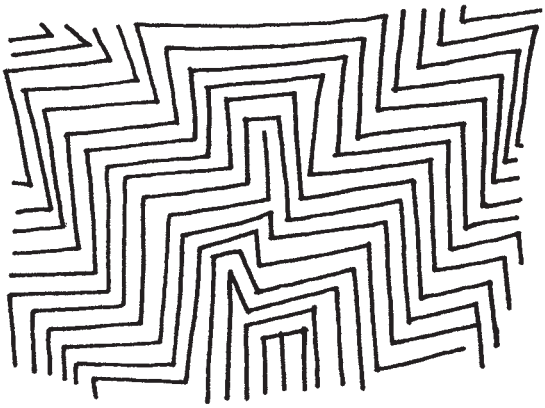


Fig. 5.294. GEOM-1-V (stacked pyramids). De Young Museum (San Francisco) 70.25.94. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.295. GEOM-1-W (parallel zigzag diagonal lines). Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.296. GEOM-1-X (multiple parallel zigzag lines). Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 4-8937. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

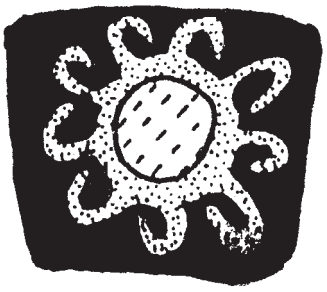


Fig. 5.297. GEOM-1-Y (spinning circle). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 4.2.

GEOM-1-R: Concentric Circles

This category consists of a series of circles, of decreasing size, inside each other (fig. 5.290).

GEOM-1-S: "Quipu" Design

Vertical lines are suspended from a horizontal bar, some of which have dots spaced along them, resembling the later Inca knotted quipus (not to suggest that Quipus existed in the Nasca Culture) (fig. 5.291).

GEOM-1-T: Cruciform or X-Shaped Design

This motif includes elements in the form of a cross (fig. 5.292) or an "X" (frequent on Phase 8 pottery).

GEOM-1-U: Multiple "Eyebrows"

This series of parallel arcs resembles eyebrows (fig. 5.293).

Fig. 5.298. GEOM-1-Z (double reverse spiral). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 170662. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

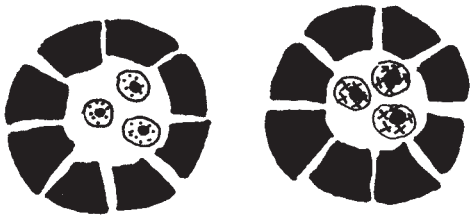


Fig. 5.299. GEOM-1-AA (segmented circles). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 552.

GEOM-1-V: Stacked Pyramids

This motif consists of a series of pyramids one on top of the other (fig. 5.294). They are similar to GEOM-1-F, except that these have extended lateral lines.

GEOM-1-W: Parallel Zigzag Diagonal Lines

Found particularly on late vessels, this motif consists of a series of parallel wavy elements vertically diagonal to one another (fig. 5.295).

GEOM-1-X: Multiple Parallel Zigzag Lines

This common design consists of multicolored parallel wavy lines drawn horizontally on a vessel (fig. 5.296).

GEOM-1-Y: Spinning Circle Design

This design is a series of concentric circles with hooks around the periphery, suggesting movement or radiation. Perhaps it is a symbol for the sun (fig. 5.297).

GEOM-1-Z: Double Reverse Spiral Design

This motif consists of two interconnected spirals which reverse direction (fig. 5.298).

GEOM-1-AA: Segmented Circle Design

The circle is made up of pie-shaped elements or segments (fig. 5.299).

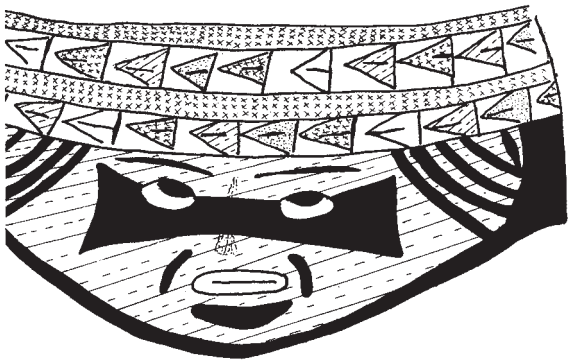


Fig. 5.300. GEOM-1-BB (triangles). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 483.

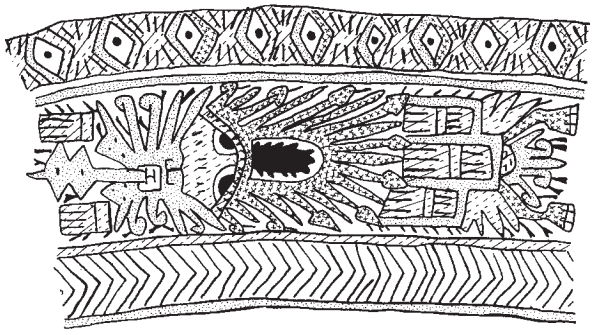


Fig. 5.301. GEOM-1-CC (diamonds with a dot in the center). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 334.

Fig. 5.302. GEOM-1-DD (flowering staffs). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 439.

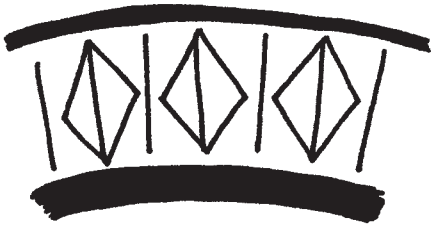


Fig. 5.303. GEOM-1-EE (double diamonds). Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, UD-20. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

GEOM-1-BB: Triangles
Solid triangles are drawn as single elements, unlike interconnected triangles (GEOM-1-H) (fig. 5.300).

GEOM-1-CC: Diamonds with a Dot in the Center
This design includes multiple diamond-shaped elements, each with a central dot (fig. 5.301).

GEOM-1-DD: Flowering Staff Design
This design, dual vertical staffs with hooklike elements attached, seems to have originated in the Huarpa style of the highlands and appears suddenly on Nasca pottery in Phase 7. It may symbolize a plant (fig. 5.302).

GEOM-1-EE: Double Diamonds
A bisected square is oriented to form two conjoined triangles (fig. 5.303).

GEOM-1-FF: Greek Fret Design
Linear frets are suspended from a horizontal band, resembling a Classical Greek design (fig. 5.304).

GEOM-1-GG: Diagonal Lines and Spears
Parallel diagonal lines are interspersed with spears. Most examples date to Late Nasca (Phase 7 or 8) (fig. 5.305).

GEOM-1-HH: Nested Diamonds
This motif consists of a series of diamonds, one inside the other, decreasing in size (fig. 5.306).

GEOM-1-II: Multicolored Vertical Bands
Upright bands or lines of variable widths are painted in multiple colors (fig. 5.307).

GEOM-1-JJ: Solid Nested Boxes
This motif is similar to GEOM-1-E except that the nested boxes are painted in solid colors (fig. 5.308).

GEOM-1-KK: Flying Half-Circle Design
An arc with a solid semicircle in the center makes the design appear to be moving or flying (fig. 5.309).

GEOM-1-LL: Circle and Dot Design
This motif consists of a circle drawn with a small dot in the center, usually in multiples (fig. 5.310).

Fig. 5.304. GEOM-1-FF (Greek fret design). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 1.2.

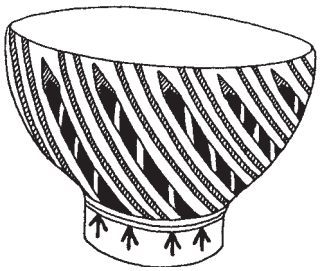


Fig. 5.305. GEOM-1-GG (diagonal lines and spears). After Kroeber and Collier 1998: fig. 360.

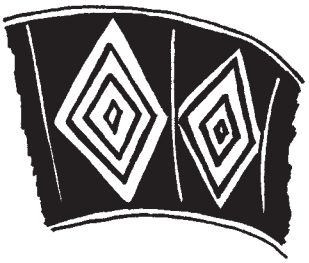


Fig. 5.306. GEOM-1-HH (nested diamonds). Palpa Tomb 6. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

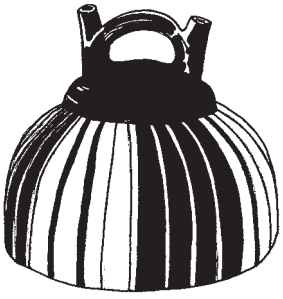


Fig. 5.307. GEOM-1-II (multicolored vertical bands). Private collection. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

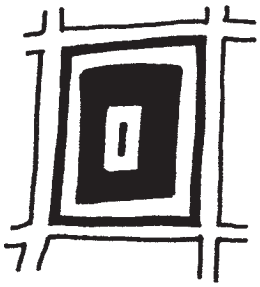


Fig. 5.308. GEOM-1-JJ (solid nested boxes). National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution 11/2694A. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.309. GEOM-1-KK (flying half-circle). National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution 15/2664. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

Fig. 5.310. GEOM-1-LL (circle and dot design). After Seler 1923: fig. 213.

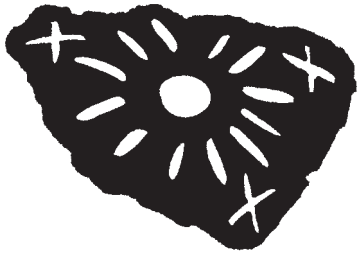


Fig. 5.311. GEOM-1-MM (radiating circle). Putnam Museum (Davenport, Iowa) AR7530. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

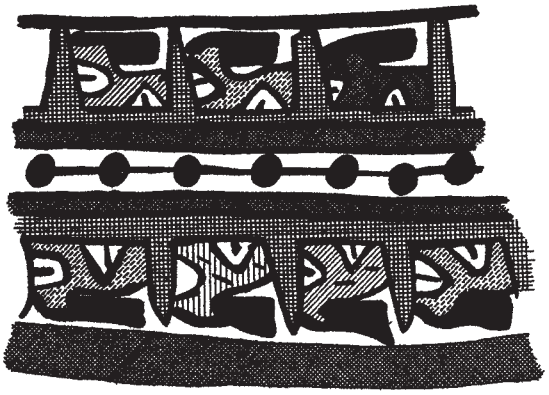


Fig. 5.312. GEOM-1-NN (ball-and-chain motif). After Roark 1965: fig. 57.

Fig. 5.313. GEOM-1-OO (squiggle motif). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 5.

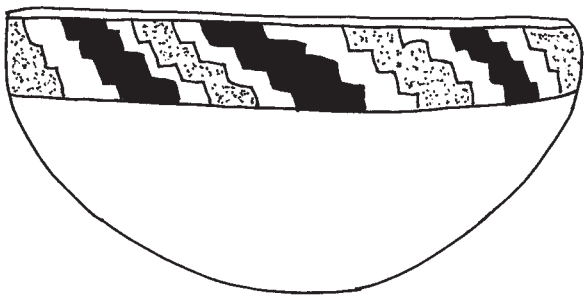


Fig. 5.314. GEOM-1-PP (parallel diagonal steps). Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) 170472. Drawing by Donald A. Proulx.

Fig. 5.315. GEOM-1-QQ (diagonal bands). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 622.

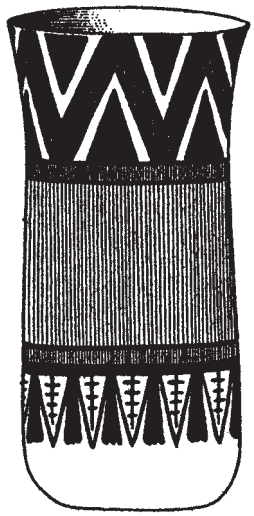


Fig. 5.316. GEOM-1-RR (zigzag bands with solid triangle cores). After Seler 1923: fig. 125.

GEOM-1-MM: Radiating Circle Motif

This solid circle with lines protruding or radiating from the circumference (fig. 5.311) differs from GEOM-1-Y (Spinning Circle) in that the projections are straight, not hook-shaped.

GEOM-1-NN: Ball-and-Chain Motif

This series of balls or spheres attached to one another by a solid line, much like a chain, may represent a bola or similar device (fig. 5.312).

GEOM-1-OO: Squiggle Motif

This motif consists of a short wavy element, often used to decorate the rim band of a vessel (fig. 5.313).

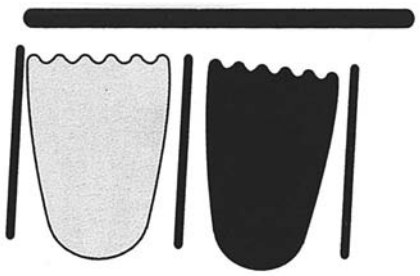


Fig. 5.317. GEOM-1-SS (half-circle with fringe design). After Blasco and Ramos 1980: fig. 5.3.

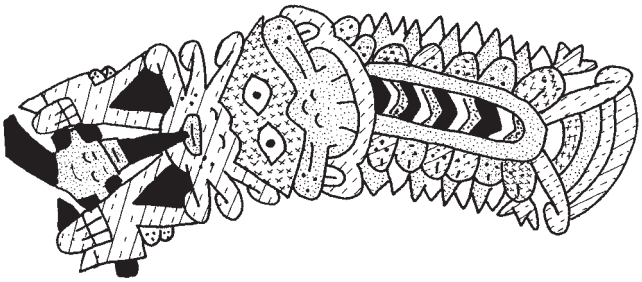


Fig. 5.318. GEOM-1-TT (chevron design). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 332.

Fig. 5.319. GEOM-1-UU (parallel vertical wavy lines). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 227.

GEOM-1-PP: Parallel Diagonal Steps

This series of diagonal stepped elements is found mostly on Late Nasca (Phases 7 and 8) vessels (fig. 5.314).

GEOM-1-QQ: Diagonal Bands

Parallel diagonal bands (fig. 5.315) differ from GEOM-1-W in that they are bands, not thin lines.

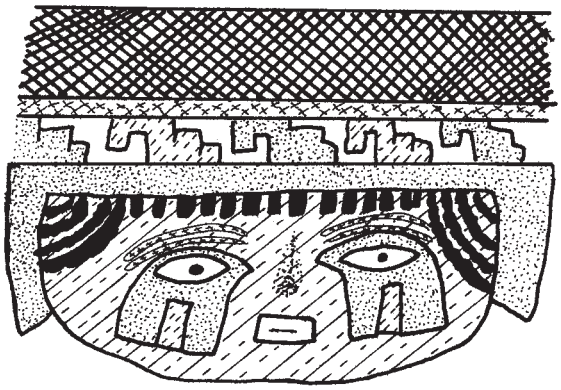


Fig. 5.320. GEOM-1-VM (cross-hatching). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 450.

GEOM-1-RR: Zigzag Bands with Solid Triangle Cores

Wavy bands with solid colored triangles are used as fillers (fig. 5.316).

GEOM-1-SS: Half-Circle with Fringe Design

This common design consists of a solid-colored element in the form of a half-circle or ellipse with a fringe of parallel lines extending from the flat edge (fig. 5.317). Especially common on early (Phase 3) vessels, they look like giant footprints, but their true identification remains a mystery.

GEOM-1-TT: Chevron Design

Chevrons are common in Middle Horizon iconography, and their presence on Nasca vessels may indicate highland influences (fig. 5.318).

GEOM-1-UN: Unclassified or Unique Geometric Motifs

Many designs do not fit into the other categories described and are thus lumped into this miscellaneous group.

GEOM-1-UU: Parallel Vertical Wavy Lines

This motif consists of a series of vertical wavy elements (fig. 5.319).

GEOM-1-VM: Cross-hatching

This motif consists of cross-hatching that cannot be identified or connected to other forms (fig. 5.320).

GEOM-1-WW: Parallel Horizontal Lines

This design includes a series of horizontal lines used as fillers (fig. 5.321).

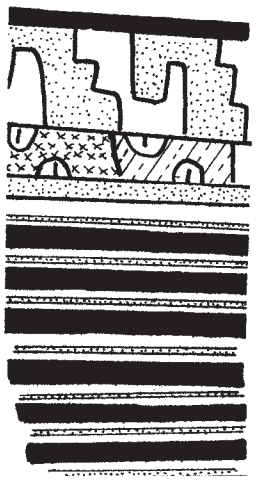


Fig. 5.321. GEOM-1-WW (parallel horizontal lines). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 336.

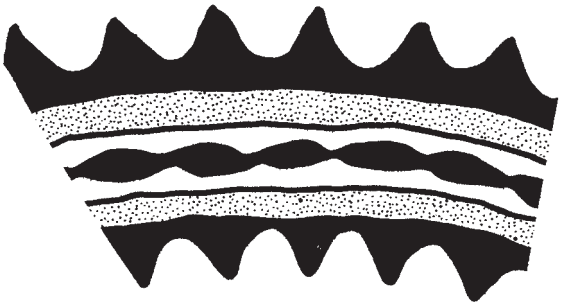


Fig. 5.322. GEOM-1-XX (linked ovals). After Blasco and Ramos 1986: fig. 191.

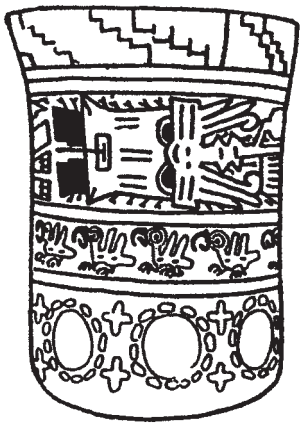


Fig. 5.323. GEOM-1-YY (solid circles surrounded by dots). American Museum of Natural History (New York) 41.0/1032. Drawing by Elizabeth Harlow.

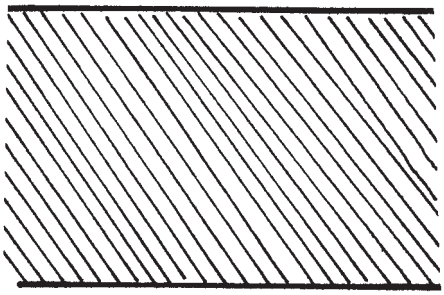


Fig. 5.324. GEOM-1-ZZ (sets of parallel diagonal lines). After Blasco and Ramos 1991: fig. 473.

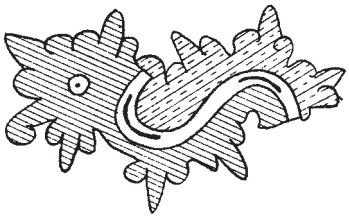


Fig. 5.325. GEO-F (abstract geometric forms). After Gayton and Kroeber 1927: fig. 10D.

GEOM-1-XX: Linked Ovals

These are similar to GEOM-1-NN (Ball-and-Chain), but the main elements are ovals instead of round balls or circles (fig. 5.322).

GEOM-1-YY: Solid Circles Surrounded by Dots

This design resembles the "foramen magnum" motif seen on head jars, but it is not clear if it has this symbolic meaning on clothing or is just a type of geometric decoration. It is often seen as a pattern on women's clothing, especially in Phases 6 and 7 (fig. 5.323).

GEOM-1-ZZ: Sets of Parallel Diagonal Lines

A common pattern is a series of parallel diagonal lines (fig. 5.324).

GEOM-2: Modeled Geometric Forms

A small number of vessels in the sample are modeled in a geometric form, such as a double spout bottle in the shape of a step-fret (Lavalle 1986: 146, 147). A partial view of one of these vessels can be seen in plate 18.

GEO-F: Geometric Forms

I have established a separate category for geometric designs that appear to be abbreviations of or metaphors for natu-

ralistic motifs. The vast majority of these designs date to Phase 8, which along with Phase 9 is known as the "Disjunctive style." Not only does Phase 8 witness the transfer of many foreign traits from the highlands to the coast, but the remaining Nasca traits are frequently condensed, geometricized, and abbreviated to such an extent that their naturalistic counterparts are difficult to identify. A great deal of additional work needs to be done to sort out the identity and chronological placement of these geometric forms.

The designs designated GEO-F have been selected for inclusion in this category based on the presence of attributes such as an eye, hair hanks, the general form of an animal or fish, and so forth. It is not difficult (albeit somewhat arbitrary) to distinguish between purely geometric forms and those which were meant to represent a mythical or naturalistic motif — even if the original form is still beyond our reach. Although it is not practical to describe all the Geometric Form motifs in the sample, one example is offered. The sample includes several specimens of a figure composed of curvilinear bands painted in purple, red, and white with an attached "head" surrounded by steps and volute rays. The head has a single eye; and the central band of the body, which is always white, is decorated with black dashes (fig. 5.325). This design is probably derived from the Mythical Killer Whale or perhaps from the Mythical Monkey.

Six » New Insights on Nasca Society

Archaeologists seek to reconstruct the history and lifeways of ancient peoples, using field data as well as comparative approaches that may lead to a better understanding of the causal mechanisms that lie behind the development of human societies. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the iconography present on Nasca pottery can serve as a powerful adjunct to archaeology to gain a better understanding of the nature of this society, especially in the absence of documentary evidence. Scholars reconstructing the more complex civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Ancient China, and even Mesoamerica have the distinct advantage of having not only the artifacts and elaborate art of these groups to use for interpretation but also a wide range of written records that can provide the names of their rulers, a history of important events, names of major settlements, and literary and scientific achievements. These documents provide direct clues for interpreting the material culture. In the Andes no formal system of writing was present until introduced by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. Iconography provides a viable substitute for writing, however, if we recognize it as a symbolic system reflecting the ideas and beliefs of the people who produced it. Yet, as Panofsky (1955) has pointed out, it is much easier to interpret the descriptive themes present in an art style than to understand the mindset and world view of the people who produced the images. Fortunately an extensive corpus of data on Andean societies is available to anthropologists and ethnohistorians. We are in a much better position today in attempting a synthesis of Nasca society than ever before.

My goal in this final chapter is to reexamine the main components of Nasca society briefly outlined in the introductory chapter, pointing out how the study of ceramic iconography by myself and others has aided the interpretation and understanding of this early culture. This discussion includes some unavoidable repetition and review of earlier materials, but a more detailed examination of the main components of Nasca society results from the addition of new iconographic documentation.

Physical Appearance and Occupations

Chapter 1 describes the physical characteristics of the ancient Nasca people based on mummies and skeletal remains found in their graves, including data on racial affiliation, pathology, longevity, cranial deformation, and trephination. In addition, the ceramic art provides a wealth of information on clothing, ritual attire, jewelry, hairstyles, facial painting, tattooing, and occupations that is much more detailed than the archaeological evidence.

Although humans do not appear as frequently in Nasca ceramic art as in contemporary Moche art, a wide corpus of human representations can be used, along with archaeology, to reconstruct many aspects of Nasca society. Let us begin by examining gender differences as seen on the pottery. Males are represented throughout the nine-phase sequence, while females are virtually absent from the ceramic art until Phase 5, when they become a major theme. The reason for

this distribution is still a mystery. Most males are depicted with minimal clothing, a breechcloth constituting the primary article of attire (fig. 5.122). When seen from the front, the breechcloth is represented as a semicircular element between the legs; in profile, it can be seen that the breechcloth is knotted in the rear and has long, flowing ties. The legs of males are always depicted bare; Nasca men are never shown wearing kilts or any other form of leg covering. The upper body is often shown naked, in which case inverted V-shaped ribs are sometimes used to amplify this condition. In other cases the upper torso is covered with a tunic or shirt with short sleeves (much like a modern T-shirt), usually either orange or yellow (figs. 5.123, 5.124). Another variety of shirt has a V-shaped neckline, indicated by a painted Y-shaped band representing the collar of the garment. In this variety, most often represented on effigy vessels, the actual shirt is seldom delineated: the surface color of the vessel serves as a symbol of the garment (fig. 5.125).

Assorted headdresses, which change over time and with occupation, were worn. In the earlier phases men are often depicted wearing turbans, held in place with headbands and/or slings (fig. 5.256). Farmers wore a distinctive conical hat (fig. 5.67), while warriors displayed a variety of head coverings, including a fez-shaped cap in the later phases (pl. 16). Tassels, feathers, and other appendages are often attached to these headpieces (pl. 17). In the earliest phases, men are seen wearing animal-skin headdresses, particularly foxes or small felines (fig. 5.134). These seem to have been the prototype or origin of the "signifers" that were an integral part of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings (fig. 5.1). Although most men went barefooted, leather sandals have been found preserved in graves but are not depicted in the art.

Both sexes wore square or rectangular earrings, perhaps made of *Spondylus* shell and attached to the earlobes with loops of string (fig. 5.264). It is interesting that males in Nasca society did not wear earspools as a sign of rank, as in other cultures of ancient Peru. Men wore necklaces composed of rectangular pieces of *Spondylus* shell, and shell pectorals are sometimes depicted on the chests of individuals of both sexes, but other jewelry is rare (fig. 5.147; pl. 39). Gold mouth masks and forehead ornaments are very commonly depicted on supernaturals, and the presence of these items in museum collections argues that some males wore these symbols in their role as impersonators in shamanistic rituals. Men may also sport facial hair in the form of a mustache and/or a small goatee (fig. 5.263), but facial hair is on average relatively sparse on American Indians, and most individuals do not have this characteristic.

The overwhelming majority of male depictions fall into two major occupational/social categories: farmers and warriors. Early Nasca farmers are very naturalistic in their depiction, holding either plants or agricultural digging sticks in their hands (figs. 5.270, 5.271). These individuals wear minimal clothing, often only a loincloth and a distinctive conical cap with a flap extending down the back of the neck. In the hot desert climate of the south coast of Peru, it is not surprising to find near-naked agriculturalists toiling under the hot sun. By Phase 5 some farmers have acquired supernatural attributes in the form of a front-facing male, often referred to as the "Mythical Harvester" (see Roark 1965: 26–27) with a sewn conical cap, holding plants in each of his outstretched hands (fig. 5.67). Painted and modeled versions of these Mythical Harvesters continue through Phase 5 and then suddenly disappear.

Other depictions of farmers seem to be more ritualistic. The earliest figures are always modeled and portray men wearing their distinctive caps but often with faces painted with multicolored dots (pl. 15). Perhaps this was done for special ceremonies marking major events in the agricultural cycle. Another early modeled variety shows individuals with fox-skin headdresses and capes, holding plants in their hands. By Phases 6 and 7 farmers are depicted as multiple "stick-men" arranged in a line, holding their digging sticks (fig. 5.70). Strangely enough, naturalistic depictions of farming activities are practically nonexistent in Moche iconography.

Warriors represent the other major category of male occupation in Nasca art. Early warriors are nearly always depicted in a full-faced frontal position, displaying facial painting and holding weapons in their hands (fig. 5.124). These individuals are more elaborately clothed than farmers, wearing a tunic on the upper portion of the body along with the traditional loincloth. Headdresses range from slings wound around the head in turbanlike fashion on modeled vessels (fig. 5.140) to more standardized caps portrayed on the painted types. Weapons include clubs, spears and atlatls, bolas, and slings (figs. 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7).

By Phase 5 warriors painted in profile become the dominant type. These figures exhibit many of the same characteristics as earlier warriors, with several exceptions. Military paraphernalia becomes more and more elaborate through time. Even in Phase 5 it is common to see parrots perched on the spear-throwers of the combatants (fig. 5.122). The significance of this is not known. By Phase 6 a variety of headdresses (figs. 5.255, 5.257), facial expressions, and facial painting can be seen. Feathered staffs appear for the

first time (fig. 5.269; pl. 17). This variation reaches a peak in Phase 7, when several contemporaneous forms of warriors are displayed on the pottery. Some of these are conservative, continuing the traditional manner of depicting humans in Nasca art. Others, however, are quite different, reflecting influences coming from the Moche culture of the north coast (fig. 5.123; pls. 16, 17). I have elaborated on this connection in another paper (Proulx 1994) and will not repeat the details here except to point out new features such as the running stance of the figure, the addition of elements of the terrain in the scene, new styles of headdress, new facial features, and the presence of a range of "fillers" in the background.

Modeled figures of warriors are also frequent in the art, some holding a trophy head in their hands (pl. 19). The ten or eleven examples of wounded warriors in my sample are all virtually identical, representing a seated individual with a gaping wound in the area of his left knee (fig. 5.127). Could this be some folk hero in Nasca lore, or is it just a coincidence that the same scene is repeated several times?

Other male occupations represented in the ceramic art include fishing, hunting, and herding. Fishing is best exemplified by the fisherman bottles, which are common in many collections (figs. 5.135, 5.265). These portray individuals apparently straddling some type of watercraft while fishing with nets (pl. 32). Speculation on the identity of the watercraft has centered on the possible use of inflated animal skins, but we have no archaeological evidence to support this contention. The presence of totora reed boats would seem more logical. The iconography, which is usually quite naturalistic, does not clearly indicate the presence of such craft, however, at least until Phase 7, when an example of what may be a reed boat appears in the sample (pl. 33). Moche art much more clearly illustrates the presence of large reed boats used for a variety of tasks (see Kutscher 1983: figs. 314–320). The use of net fishing along the shore by pairs of men is also portrayed in Nasca art. These representations, along with the very frequent naturalistic drawing of many forms of sea life in Nasca art, emphasize the important role of the sea in the economy of this culture.

Hunting scenes are rare in Nasca art as compared to Moche iconography, and the principal animal pursued appears to be the llama or the guanaco (fig. 5.262). It is not clear whether the intention of the hunters was to capture live llamas (for bolas are the principal weapons depicted in these scenes) or to kill them. Tethered llamas being led by both men and women appear on many vessels, suggesting that they were an important part of the economy — used for their wool, as pack animals, and for ritual sacrifice (fig. 5.184; pl. 36). Scores of llama hooves are part of a Phase 7 gravelot on display in the Museo Regional de Ica. It is interesting to note that scenes depicting the hunting of deer, sea mammals, and birds are not present in Nasca art as in Moche art, but this does not necessarily mean that it did not occur. Animal-skin headdresses worn by males would suggest otherwise. Also recall the absence of agricultural scenes in Moche iconography, even though such activities were an integral part of their economy.

We will return to males engaged in other activities shortly, but at this juncture let me turn to female representations and contrast them with the manner in which males were depicted. As noted earlier, for whatever reason women do not appear in Nasca ceramic art until Phase 5. In some cases it is impossible to ascertain the gender of an individual, because genitalia and/or breasts appear only on naked figurines in Nasca art (figs. 5.145, 5.146). Therefore gender identification often is made on the basis of secondary evidence, such as clothing, hairstyle, and occupation. Women wore their hair longer than men and are portrayed with long tresses reaching midway down the back, while the hair in front frames the face and falls partway down the breast on either side (fig. 5.149). In the common "girl's face" motif, hair hanks are shown curved across the lower portion of the face (fig. 5.141; pl. 5). During Phases 5, 6, and 7 the use of female faces as a decorative element on the pottery is one of the more common motifs.

Although some females are shown with facial painting, the majority are not; painting is the rule rather than the exception for males, especially for warriors (figs. 5.125, 5.127, 5.138). Women commonly display tattoos on their arms, however, and, in the case of figurines, on their thighs and buttocks and surrounding the genital area (figs. 5.145, 5.146, 5.149). Most of these tattoos are of supernatural themes such as Killer Whales and Rayed Faces. Women's faces may also be the locus of tattoos; but this is more common on males, who are less likely to have these designs elsewhere on their bodies than on the arms and face.

The main item of clothing worn by females is an ankle-length mantle, which is most often shown wrapped around the body, sometimes fastened with a pin. When drawn on a ceramic vessel, these mantles served as the background for mythical creatures drawn on them (Lavalle 1986: 140, 141). Beneath the mantles women seem to have worn a long tunic with fringed sleeves, probably consisting of two rectangles of cloth sewn together. The major difference between male and female tunics is the length; some of the later female

examples extend to the ankles. In Phase 7 new forms of women's dress appear. Some females are depicted with what appears to be a flaring skirt (the so-called Lucy figures: see fig. 5.143 and pl. 24). Others are wearing a mantle draped over their heads and shoulders, unlike anything seen before (pl. 35). The source of these innovations is unknown.

Women, like men, are portrayed wearing *Spondylus* shell earrings, but few wear pendants of this material like those seen on male figurines. Shawl pins, while present, are rarely seen in the art. Most importantly, as far as we can tell, women never dressed as impersonators, wearing gold mouth masks, animal-skin capes, and forehead ornaments. Based on the iconography, it would appear that only males were shamans in Nasca society.

Unlike the tomb paintings of ancient Egypt, Nasca ceramics give few clues as to the range of women's activities in this society. A number of modeled Nasca vessels graphically depict scenes of childbirth (pl. 35). Erotic scenes are also present in the art but are much less prevalent than in contemporary Moche art and indeed may reflect influence from the Moche area in the later part of the sequence (pl. 34). Modeled vessels infrequently depict women carrying burdens on their backs, leading llamas by ropes (pl. 36), and either cooking or preparing *chicha* in a group (fig. 5.118). It is interesting that few family groups are seen in the art (pl. 9), and only a handful of examples depict children (fig. 5.148; pl. 38). Nor do we see activities such as weaving or ceramic production. Although women most likely played as important a role as men in agricultural activities, the ceramic art tells us little about gender differences.

The remaining human representations in Nasca art are more sacred than secular, representing individuals engaged in ritual activities or as the victims of such activities. The taking of human trophy heads for ritual purposes was an integral part of Nasca religion. Numerous vessels show decapitation occurring during battle (pl. 18). I have argued elsewhere that, while the heads were taken for ritual use, decapitation took place during actual warfare rather than in ceremonies of human sacrifice (Proulx 1989a). The ceramic art often depicts the "enemy" through the use of different paint color or different facial markings (fig. 5.115). Victims are seldom dressed as finely as their captors, yet physically and materially these "victims" differ little from the victors and may well be members of other Nasca subgroups from neighboring valleys rather than from other distinct tribal groups. If Nasca society was indeed composed of a number of distinct chiefdoms, it is quite plausible that warfare took place between these various subgroups, who shared the same culture and language but were ruled by independent local chiefs and lived in distinct geographical niches. Strontium isotope analysis of trophy heads, such as that being conducted by Tiffiny Tung and colleagues, should provide more exact identification of the victims and their origins.

Sociopolitical Organization

As noted earlier, our view of the political and social structure of Nasca society has undergone major revisions in the past decade due to new archaeological and iconographic evidence. Silverman's (1986, 1993a) and Orefici's (1988) excavations at Cahuachi have demonstrated that the site was not a capital city teeming with a dense population, as once thought, but rather a relatively empty ceremonial center serving as a place of pilgrimage. Only a few large Nasca residential sites have been recorded to date; unfortunately, only one or two of these have been excavated, thus leaving many unanswered questions about the level of centralization and the true nature of Nasca political organization. Silverman herself has vacillated among several structural models, including Nasca being a "primitive" state-level society (1987a, 1988b), a religious interaction sphere (1977), and most recently a flexible confederacy of independent societies at the chiefdom level (1993a: 320). While the final word cannot be written on this topic until more extensive fieldwork is completed, the evidence to date seems to point toward the chiefdom model (Silverman and Proulx 2002: chap. 10).

Recent and ongoing surveys of the tributaries in the Nasca drainage as well as in the adjoining Ica, Acarí, and Pisco Valleys have also raised doubts about the presence of a unified Nasca state. The greatest amount of homogeneity is found in the neighboring Nasca and Ica Valleys, which represent the "core" of the Nasca culture. Even in this heartland, however, both intravalley and intervalley differences are found, fluctuating in quantity from one phase to another. One interpretation that I presented many years ago was that homogeneity in the pottery reflected a strong centralized government while heterogeneity corresponded to times of loss of central power (Proulx 1968). While this explanation seemed to work well for describing the many similarities in Phase 3 pottery from Nasca and Ica, more and more local differences, even between tributaries in the Nasca drainage, developed as time progressed.

Part of the argument for centralized control was based on evidence for the sudden appearance of Nasca pottery in the peripheral valleys of Pisco and Acarí during Phase

3, along with the fortification of sites such as Tambo Viejo and Dos Palmas (Menzel and Riddell 1986 [1954]). Francis Riddell, who worked continuously with his colleagues at Tambo Viejo in the Acarí Valley, later argued that the site was not fortified: the walls appear to be part of the internal subdivision of the site (Carmichael 1992a: 5–6). Carmichael (ibid.: 5) went on to argue that Nasca style pottery is not abundant in the Acarí Valley and that the documented occurrences could be the result of interregional trade. Valdez's (1998) dissertation research confirmed that there was no Nasca invasion of the Acarí Valley and that a local culture he named Huarato occupied Tambo Viejo, importing small quantities of Nasca pottery from the heartland. Similarly, confusion over distinguishing between Carmen-style pottery and Nasca-style pottery in the Pisco Valley leaves undetermined the role played by the Nasca culture in that region during Phase 3.

Carmichael's (1988) analysis of 213 scientifically excavated Nasca burials suggested that Nasca society was not stratified into distinct classes but rather ranked in a continuous gradient in a pattern more in keeping with a chiefdom or a series of chiefdoms than a state. None of the graves studied by Carmichael contained an individual who might be considered a "king" or local lord, as was the case with the contemporary Moche on the north coast (see Alva and Donnan 1993). Neither the form nor the size of the graves varied to a great degree in Nasca cemeteries, in contrast to the Moche, where several distinct levels of burial were present (Donnan 1995). The iconography also supports this interpretation. No figures in the art are indicative of status comparable to the representations of the disproportionately sized and elaborately dressed kings seen in Egyptian or Mayan art; nor do we find the same complex level of dress and ornamentation found on Moche leaders, such as earspools, elaborate headdresses, and costumes. Although a number of gold mouth masks, forehead ornaments, and other objects made from flattened gold plates in the Nasca style are said to have come from undocumented Nasca graves, the context of these objects is unknown; the quality and the quantity of this Nasca metallurgy pale in comparison to recent discoveries at the Moche site of Sipán (Alva and Donnan 1993). Status differences are implied by the mortuary evidence in the forms of ceramic volume (wealth), tomb construction (expense), and grave depth (labor investment) (Brown 1995: 397).

Of course the discovery and scientific excavation of an undisturbed rich tomb of an elite Nasca lord could completely change this perception (see Brown 1995: 397). Recent excavations at the site of La Muña by Reindel and Isla (1999b, 2001) have revealed very large, deep (but looted) tombs. Fragments of gold left behind by the *huaqueros* support the existence of elite graves. It is my belief that we will soon have evidence for a class of secular leaders in Nasca society beginning in Phase 5. These individuals most likely controlled chiefdoms rather than a unified state.

In the Andes, the *ayllu* (a related group of kin or a lineage descended from a common ancestor) was the basic unit of social organization. The *ayllu*, rather than the individual or the head of a household, controlled and distributed land, herds, and water rights. In larger settlements where several *ayllu*s were present, they were commonly grouped into two moieties, each with its own leader. In Inca times the moieties were unequal in power and prestige; the upper or *hanan* moiety was superior to the lower or *hurin* moiety. Some scholars argue that the *ayllu* as well as the dual division of society are pan-Andean traits whose roots go back to the beginnings of complex society in Peru (e.g. Netherly and Dillehay 1986). Archaeological evidence for the presence of *ayllu*s in Nasca society is circumstantial. Silverman (1993a: 310) suggests that the repetitive spatial patterns of the many mounds at Cahuachi reflect discrete social groups performing rituals at the site. She hypothesizes that each Nasca social group constructed and maintained its own temple mound at Cahuachi (ibid.). The problem in accepting this argument is the general function of Cahuachi itself as a religious center for a series of chiefdoms. It would be just as likely that the temple mounds at the site were built by members of different chiefdoms rather than by members of individual *ayllu*s. It has also been suggested that some of the geoglyphs may have been built and maintained by individual *ayllu*s, much like the maintenance of the *chhiuta*s (sections, rectangular strips of territory) in the plaza of the contemporary Quechua village of Pacariqtambo (Urton 1990). Using ethnohistorical documents, Urton (ibid.: 196–197) goes on to argue for the presence of moieties in the Nasca drainage and for the use of *mit'a* labor in the construction of the geoglyphs as well as for agricultural tasks (ibid.: 199).

Little evidence in the ceramic iconography either confirms or denies the presence of *ayllu*s, moieties, or *mit'a* labor practices. Agricultural scenes invariably depict groups of farmers rather than individual family groups, thus suggesting historical practices of communal labor by members of an *ayllu* (figs. 1.6, 1.7, 5.69). The same is true for the few vessels depicting agricultural ritual scenes. Again groups of people are seen, participating in activities which include drinking some sort of beverage out of small ceramic cups filled from larger storage jars — not unlike the Inca prac-

tice of providing *chicha* to members of an *ayllu* as part of their compensation for fulfilling their agricultural *mit'a* tax (fig. 1.6; pl. 8; also see Murra 1960, 1968). On the basis of the above evidence, it seems likely that there were *ayllu*s in Nasca society and that some form of communal labor practices was in existence.

A picture is emerging of a group of Nasca chiefdoms of varying size and power controlling individual tributaries or other sectors of the south coastal valleys, each with its own leader but united by common religious beliefs and sharing in a common cultural heritage. At the village level, the *ayllu* seems likely to have formed the basic unit of society, as it did in the later Inca (and contemporary Quechua) cultures. Assuming the *ayllu* was present, then other features associated with it (such as communal labor practices, certain marriage patterns, and ritual practices) are also likely but not provable from the archaeological or iconographic evidence. Future fieldwork in habitation sites will help to clarify this model.

Religion

Religion is the most dominant theme in Nasca ceramic iconography, yet it is the most difficult aspect to reconstruct. To understand the symbolism in the art, it is necessary to attempt to enter into the ethos of this nonliterate, extinct group of people in order to grasp their view of the world around them. Panofsky (1955: 38) refers to this level of analysis as the "intrinsic meaning or content" of the art, "which is apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion." In his analysis of Renaissance art, Panofsky had the distinct advantage of working not only within his own Western European cultural tradition but with societies that have a rich record of documentary evidence to supplement the art. In attempting to understand Nasca religion through its art, we must try to understand the distinctive Andean psyche as it existed a millennium before it was recorded in written form. I have used a combination of archaeological evidence, ethnographic analogy, iconographic analysis, and comparative mythology. For over a century anthropologists have been applying the comparative approach to the study of human society. In looking at the similarities and differences of cultures at various levels from locations around the world, anthropologists, more than members of any other discipline, have made great strides in understanding variation in human society through relatively unbiased eyes. Yet with all the training and experience acquired by anthropologists, it remains a major challenge to understand and reconstruct certain intangible aspects of a preliterate society. The use of ethnographic analogy combined with a knowledge of local cultures and traditions can be productive, especially when the archaeological record is well preserved.

Anthropology has demonstrated the universality of religion in all human societies, yet the form and substance differ quite dramatically from one culture to another. In attempting to explain the origins of religious beliefs, three groups of theories seem to predominate: the psychological, the sociological, and a mixture of the two. "The psychological theories generally account for the universality of religion as a way of reducing anxiety or as a means of satisfying a cognitive need for intellectual understanding" (Ember and Ember 1981: 438). The pioneer anthropologist Edward B. Tylor was among the first to note the similarities in many contemporary religions, including the belief in the existence of souls, which he argued could be traced to attempts by "primitive" people to understand dreams and trances (Tylor 1874). "The lifelike appearances of these imagined persons and animals suggest a dual existence for all things — a physical, visible body and a psychic, invisible soul" (ibid.: 439). From this emerged the concept of *animism*, the belief in spirit beings.

> Man does not live alone. The beasts of the wood and field, the fowl of the air, and the fishes of the water are also endowed with vitality. So are the plants. By means of analogical reasoning, primitive man attributes souls to them also, as the cause of their vitality. Thus in most primitive belief, not only man but all living beings possess souls. (Hoebel 1972: 575)

Nature worship was the logical outgrowth of the concept of nonhuman souls according to Tylor, and this eventually led to the formation of the polytheistic gods of later time (sun gods, moon gods, rain gods, etc.). Most scholars agree that Tylor's evolutionary scheme for the formation of religion is flawed but that his basic concept of animism forms the root of most religions of the world.

"Supernaturalism does not find its only expression in beliefs in spirit beings; there are also beliefs in the existence of supernatural forces that do not emanate from any kind of being" (Hoebel 1972: 576). This concept is known as *animatism* and was first defined by R. R. Marett (1909), who

argued that these beliefs preceded the creation of spirits. Today anthropologists refer to this supernatural power as *mana*, a word derived from the languages of Melanesia. As we will see below, *animism* and *animatism* were integral parts of ancient Nasca religion.

> Emile Durkheim was the leading proponent of the so-called sociological theories of religion which saw the origins of religion in society and societal needs (Durkheim 1915). Durkheim recognized that it is the society, not the individual, which distinguishes between *sacred* and *profane* things. There is nothing in an object—a piece of wood, a stone, a statue—to make it automatically sacred; it must therefore be a symbol. But a symbol of what? Durkheim suggests that a sacred object symbolizes the social fact that society considers something sacred (Ember and Ember 1981: 439).
>
> Durkheim saw ritual participation as the true essence of religion. Man rises above the humdrum monotony of eking out his living and shares in the ecstasy of sacred experience obtainable only through periodic group dances and ceremonies. . . . Religion is an expression of social solidarity and collective beliefs. (Hoebel 1972: 561)

Today anthropologists use concepts from both the psychological and the sociological theories of religion and add to them new ideas that take into account individual responses to strains or deprivation caused by social and economic events in the society. The following sections attempt to link these concepts to a reconstruction of Nasca religion.

"Prehistoric religion centered in and developed around the three most critical and perplexing situations with which early man was confronted in his every-day experience—birth, death and the means of subsistence in a precarious environment" (James 1957: 229). While the rites of passage (birth, puberty, marriage, and death) are important in all religious systems, the iconographic evidence for them is largely absent from Nasca ceramics. Archaeology has filled in some of the gaps, but the major emphasis in Nasca religious practices appears to have been on agricultural fertility and attempts to secure a stable food supply.

To understand Nasca religion, we must first recall the desert environment in which this culture was situated. Virtually no rainfall occurs on the south coast of Peru, requiring the use of irrigation for agriculture and the mastery of water storage and distribution techniques. Life in this arid zone would not be possible without this primary resource, and we would therefore expect that water would play an important role in both the secular and sacred dimensions. The bulk of the water was derived from seasonal rains in the mountains of the interior that flowed by means of rivers and tributaries across the desert to empty into the Pacific Ocean. The amount of water available each year was quite variable, and droughts were common, especially along the smaller tributaries. It is believed that a lengthy period of drought in the sixth century A.D. led to the construction of underground filtration galleries (*puquio*s), which tapped water from subterranean gravels in the midvalley region. This secondary source of water was critically important to the Nasca people. Water, conducted through geological faults and gravels, emerged from the earth in the form of springs and seeps. The filtration galleries were an ingenious means of utilizing this secondary resource in times of need.

According to Johan Reinhard, the people living in the Nasca Valley during the early Colonial Period were said to have worshipped the spirits of mountains and springs, especially the spirit of a local mountain of sand known as Cerro Blanco, which was thought to be the source of the underground water supply that fed the *puquio*s (Reinhard 1992: 294). He interprets the Nasca Lines as being utilized in ceremonies relating to a water cult, likely as ritual paths to places where offerings were made (ibid.: 295). Thus mountains, the source of water, may have been an important element in Nasca religion as well but they are not represented in the iconography. I am not convinced that pre-Inca coastal societies, such as the Nasca, placed nearly as much importance on mountain spirits or *apu*s as did the Inca, whose origins and main centers of domination were in the highlands.

The ocean was also an important element in the lives of the Nasca people even though the majority of the people lived in the midvalley areas, some distance from the sea. Curiously, no coastal Nasca sites have yet been discovered despite a survey of this zone by Kennedy and Carmichael (1991), who also claim that maritime resources played only a minor role in Nasca subsistence. The archaeological and iconographic evidence argues against this position. Numerous fish and other sea creatures appear in the iconography, and the Killer Whale becomes the most important mythical creature in the late Nasca phases. Furthermore, Silverman (1993a: 3) reports that quantities of marine shell have been found at Cahuachi and other sites located in the surveys.

In many non-Western societies, the dividing line be-

tween the sacred and the profane, the supernatural and the natural, is often blurred.

> The Nasca, like other Indian peoples of the Americas, believed that there was an active, sacred relationship between man and nature. According to this mode of thought, the divine order of the universe was reflected in the organization of society and in all-important activities of human life. Thus the control of water, planting of fields, harvesting of crops, preparations and celebrations of war, inauguration of rulers, and similar communal events had symbolic meaning and were bound in a ramifying network of connections, to the forces and phenomena of the surrounding land and sky. This connection of cosmological ideas and social processes is the central point of inquiry in approaching the Nasca world. (Townsend 1985: 122)

This melding of the sacred and profane is more pronounced at the tribal and chiefdom levels than in state-level societies like the Inca, with their pantheon of gods and priestly classes to carry out ritual. I would argue, therefore, that many aspects of Inca religion, such as the worship of the creator god Viracocha and the sun god Inti, were creations of the Inca imperial state and were superimposed on a more basic traditional Andean religion, which consisted of the belief in numerous spirits that inhabited certain objects and locations. Nasca religion, therefore, seems more closely related to animatism and nature worship than to the supplication of specific deities. Therefore I have avoided using the term "deity" in referring to the images in the iconography, preferring to call them "mythical beings."

The spirit world of the Nasca included the most powerful creatures of the air (condor and falcon), earth (jaguar and puma), and water (killer whale). Although naturalistic representations of all these animals and birds appear in the art, they are more often represented in a sacred symbolic form — killer whale jaws and fins; falcon tails, wings, and eye markings; feline whiskers and body markings — in a myriad of combinations that often include human or anthropomorphic elements. These mythical beings (including the Horrible Bird, the Mythical Killer Whale, the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, and the Mythical Spotted Cat) should be viewed as symbolic visualizations of either the nature spirits themselves or the spiritual power (*huaca* or *mana*) that they emit. Most are combinations of several powerful elements. While there is some archaeological evidence suggesting that shamans may have dressed in the trappings of the spirits for certain ritual occasions, I have argued above that the iconographic representations of mythical creatures in Nasca ceramic art were purely symbolic and were not meant to portray masked impersonators or ritual performers. We must be cautious in stating that shamans are never depicted in the art, for there are analogies of priests in ancient Egyptian art wearing the mask of the god Anubis in embalming and funerary ceremonies (Wolinski 1987). Out of almost seventy-five types of Mythical Beings identified in Nasca art, however, only two or three varieties of the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being are good candidates to represent shamans. To use the Egyptian analogy again, it would be correct to say that only a small number of all the representations of gods in the corpus of Egyptian art can be identified as human priests dressed in the masks of a god.

> Religion and Magic are concepts based upon the ways in which man behaves in relation to the supernatural forces in which he believes. They constitute two forms of the external objectification of beliefs. The distinction rests on man's assessment of the motivating forces behind the supernatural. Is man subordinate to the caprice and will of the supernatural beings to which psychological characteristics are attributed? If his answer is "yes," his dealings with these beings, and theirs with him, will be religious in nature. Can man under certain conditions dominate and control the supernatural forces, be they animistic or manaistic? If his answer is "yes," his dealings with the supernatural will be magical in nature.
>
> Prayer and magic are the two basic techniques of dealing with the supernatural. The first is a means of seeking spiritual rapport on a basis of subordination to animistic beings. The second is a technique of gaining external control over supernatural powers, animistic or manaistic. (Hoebel 1972: 577 – 578)

On the basis of iconographic and archaeological evidence, I would argue that Nasca religion was more magical in nature than religious. The two are not mutually exclusive, as is evident in Inca religion; however, the formal state religion of the Inca was more religious in nature (prayer, ritual offerings, priests) than was the case for the local religions (*huaca*s, divination) that they incorporated. I believe Nasca religion was similar to that of the tribal societies taken over and absorbed by the Inca. Vestiges of these tribal religions can be seen in the spirits (*apus*) or spiritual forces (*huacas*) found in sacred places or objects. If there is any continuity between Nasca and Inca religions, it is at this level, not in the formal pantheon of gods invented by the Inca.

Another major difference between Inca and Nasca religion is the nature of the practitioners. The Inca state religion had a hierarchy of priests, headed by the high priest (Uillac Uma), who held that post for life (Kendall 1989: 192). These priests officiated over temples and shrines, and their duties included "a wide spectrum of activities: divining, interpreting oracles, hearing confessions and prescribing penances, praying, interceding for the dead, performing sacrifices, presiding over a variety of rituals [and] diagnosing and treating diseases" (ibid.). A priest was formally trained for the office and performed rituals on a regular (often full-time) basis for a congregation. As opposed to a shaman, a priest's authority derived not from personal charisma, but from the institution of the priesthood (Hunter and Whitten 1976: 318). In less complex societies like the Nasca, a shaman, rather than a priest, was the religious specialist. Shamans are usually male, except in some matrilineal societies, and are said to acquire their presumptive power directly from a supernatural source, either through a mystic experience or through an ability to perform rites and possession of the paraphernalia needed for this purpose (Hoebel 1972: 583). "Suggestibility and a greater or lesser degree of emotional instability are essential traits of the shaman. . . . He or she must be capable of hallucinations" (ibid.: 585). They are part-time magico-religious specialists adept at trance, divination, and curing (Hunter and Whitten 1976: 350).

Shamans are the intermediaries between the spirit world and the everyday world. They use various means to contact the spirits, including hallucinogenic drugs to induce visions and to gain control over supernatural forces. Nasca iconography supports the hypothesis that drugs were used for magical purposes (see Dobkin de Rios and Cardenas 1980; Dobkin de Rios 1982; and Hadingham 1987: 172 – 173 for further discussion). Ritual scenes on many vessels (described in chapter 5) include the association of images of cacti, large storage containers holding some type of beverage, and ceremonial participants drinking from small cups (fig. 1.6; pl. 8). It is likely that the shamans used the juice of the San Pedro cactus (*Trichocereus pachanoi*), which contains 1.2 grams of mescaline per kilo of fresh material (Sharon 1972: 119).

Evidence for shamanism is also supported by the discovery of what appears to be a "shaman's kit" included in the Malcolm K. Whyte Collection acquired by the Milwaukee Public Museum in the early 1960s (pl. 14; also see Parsons 1962; Sawyer 1962). A textile bundle was unwrapped and found to contain five small sculptures: (1) a marble figurine of a human corpse holding a trophy head in one hand and a whistle in the other; (2) a hollow modeled clay pepino fruit painted in polychrome colors; (3) a stone llama head and neck made of orange-brown limestone; (4) a smaller white marble sculpture of a llama; and (5) a carved wooden human (trophy?) head with inlaid bone eyes and teeth (pl. 14). The style of the pepino suggests that this grouping dates to the early part of the Nasca sequence, most likely Nasca Phase 2. Both Parsons and Sawyer argue that these objects were used as fetishes by a shaman in fertility rituals.

Several forms of Nasca ritual are depicted in the iconography. The most important ceremonies appear to revolve around agriculture. Planting and harvesting were the two most critical periods in the agricultural cycle. These events were accompanied by music and drinking. A good number of vessels portray a musician, who is often accompanied by much smaller human figures, probably representing farmers (fig. 1.6). Painted scenes of musicians conform to very strict rules, leading to the conclusion that a specific ceremony is being depicted. The musician is always a male who is playing the panpipes. Sometimes clay trumpets protrude from his ears or are carried by the smaller figures who surround him. The upper part of his body is covered with outlines of panpipes, as are the vacant spaces on the vessel surrounding the figure. The musician's headdress is a turban on the form of a horizontal figure-8, sometimes transformed into snakes (figs. 5.261). The lowest portion of the musician's body is naked, and his penis is inserted into a large clay vessel (often resembling a drum) located between his legs. I once thought this was an attempt at humor by the artists — the suggestion that the penis was used to beat a drum. After seeing a larger sample of this motif in various collections, I now interpret it quite differently. The musician is symbolically filling the drum-shaped container with a liquid from his body, an obvious correlation between semen/fertility and the liquid being released into the vessel. Either the musician has the outline of a cactus plant drawn on his torso/shirt or cactus plants are found elsewhere in the scene. Small cups and ceramic vessels are often part of the scene as well. It would appear that this ritual has something to do with the drinking of the hallucinogenic juice from a cactus (a San Pedro?) as part of an agricultural fertility ceremony. The musician seems to be generating the drug in his loins and dispensing it to the multitudes. Obviously music is an essential part of Nasca rituals, and the primary instruments include clay panpipes, drums, and trumpets.

Other depictions of shamans include males dressed with various elements of ritual attire: animal-skin capes, gold mouth masks and forehead ornaments, gold bangles or hair ornaments, *Spondylus* shell jewelry, and human trophy

heads (fig. 5.13). Almost all of these items have been found preserved in Nasca graves, although the majority were not found in good archaeological contexts, having been looted by *huaqueros* and later sold to collectors or museums. In this guise, the shamans or masked impersonators are representing the nature spirits or supernatural forces discussed above. It is not clear whether the shamans who officiated in the agricultural rituals are the same individuals dressed as masked impersonators.

Other agricultural ceremonies involve humans who have painted their faces with multicolored dots and wear special headgear — pointed or conical hats with a back-flap covering the neck — associated only with farmers. These elements are best seen on early modeled effigy vessels (HV-3-A) of humans holding plants in their hands (pl. 15). In a number of cases it appears as if the individual's eyes are covered with a hood. Although facial painting is commonly seen on human representations, the use of multicolored spots was restricted to ceremonies associated with agriculture. This connection with agricultural ceremonies is supported by representations of figures known as Harvesters. Mythical Harvesters first appear in Phase 5 in two main forms. The variety that I call the Mythical Harvester (HV-2) has a face painted with dots and wears a *Spondylus* shell necklace identical to that worn by the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being (fig. 5.68). The other variety, which is much more numerous, is painted like an ordinary front-facing human. He wears the distinctive conical cap with stitching up the front. In his hands are various forms of cultivated plants (fig. 5.67). Despite the distinction between the two types, both should be considered mythical.

As noted above, most of the Mythical Beings in the iconography are associated with human trophy heads. At one time I thought that these heads should be considered offerings to the Mythical Beings, much like human sacrifices in other cultures. In this scenario war captives were decapitated, and the heads were used to placate the spirits in order to ensure agricultural fertility. I now believe that this picture is too simplistic. In my current interpretation, the relationship between decapitation and agriculture remains, but the concept of regeneration and rebirth is more prominent. A number of examples depict plants growing out of the mouths of decapitated trophy heads that in turn are attached to mythical beings (fig. 5.104; pl. 1). I have argued above that decapitation took place in secular battles but that the prime purpose for taking and preparing the heads was magical — to ensure the continued abundance of the food crops. The Nasca people clearly placed great importance on the human head and on blood as sources of power. The burial of groups of trophy heads must have resulted in the concentration of a great amount of ritual power.

Carmichael (1994b) has written more on trophy heads and additionally suggests that they might be associated with ancestor worship — a trait quite important in later Inca religious beliefs. I can see no direct evidence for considering trophy heads to be ancestors. Indeed, the iconography indicates that trophy heads were taken in battle, not removed from revered family members. Yet the ultimate purpose is identical — an attempt to control the fertility of the crops.

Ancestor worship was an integral function of *ayllu*s in Inca times. Archaeological evidence for ancestor worship in the Nasca culture is unclear. Carmichael (1995) describes an elite tomb excavated by Ubbelhode-Döering at Cahuachi that showed evidence of reentry. The head and upper portion of the body were missing, and the tomb was in disarray. Carmichael suggests that this may "be part of a multistage ritual involving secondary burial and ancestor worship," especially since pottery from two phases (7 and 8) was found in the grave (Carmichael 1995: 177). Two or three unspecified additional examples may also have been products of reentry. Carmichael's argument is based on an extremely small sample and must be questioned until further data can be cited. The grave disturbance (which he described) is more likely the result of looting or the digging of later graves in the same cemetery, which subsequently caused the mixture of grave goods. Caches of trophy heads and iconographic scenes of ceremonies accompanying the burial of trophy heads seem to be related to religious activities other than ancestor worship.

If trophy heads were not connected with ancestor worship in Nasca society, do we have any other evidence for this practice? The presence of ancestor worship or ancestor cults in the Andes is closely related to their association with *ayllu*s, because it involves "veneration of at least one dead person as a source of entitlement among a group of people who shared rights or identity" (Salomon 1995: 320). As noted above, it is likely that *ayllu*s were present in Nasca society, but the archaeological and iconographic evidence is minimal. Many scholars assume that traits present among the Inca and their descendants have long traditions in the Andes, reaching back to much earlier cultures. In this regard Carmichael (1995: 182) notes:

> The central importance of ancestor worship among Andean peoples is well documented in the ethnohistoric literature. The ancestors collectively watch over the

> flocks, fields, and harvests, insuring growth and fertility. . . . Among the Laymi burial is also semantically and conceptually linked with acts of cultivation and planting. . . . Two of the major festivals held each year throughout the Central Andes are the Festival with the Dead (All Saint's Day and All Soul's Day) held at the beginning of the rainy season when planting is underway . . . and the Festival of the First Fruits (Carnival), which takes place at the end of the rainy season to celebrate the harvest. . . . The main focus of both festivals is ancestor homage and invocation. The well-being of each community rests with its dead. Although the Nasca are too far removed in time to assume direct historical continuity, the archaeological record suggests strong conceptual parallels between the ancient and contemporary traditions.

Other forms of evidence that have been used to support the presence of ancestor worship in Nasca society include the relationship between trees and ancestors in Inca and colonial times (Sherbondy 1986b: 9–10). On the south coastal desert, trees were rare except for the occasional *huarango,* which yielded posts used for structures and in grave construction. The discovery of twelve posts, apparently nonstructural, along with other evidence of ceremonial activities in a room within Unit 19 at Cahuachi led Silverman (1993a: 190 – 193) to "tenuously suggest that at least some of the activities in the Room of the Posts were connected with ancestor worship and that the posts, particularly the carved flat post (post 3), represented these ancestors." While trying to keep an open mind, I am not convinced by the evidence thus far available that ancestor worship was present as part of Nasca religion. The classic archaeological evidence for ancestor worship among the Inca was the mummification and display of the bodies of their kings and the special mortuary practices afforded the less noble but equally important leaders of the *ayllu*s. No such mortuary evidence is present in the documented grave studies by Carmichael (1995). As I have argued above, there are major differences between the religion of the Inca and that of the Nasca, and therefore we should not automatically assume that ancestor worship existed in Nasca society.

Although the iconography lacks any depictions of either puberty or marriage ceremonies, a few rare examples portray the other two main rites of passage: birth and death. Five vessels in the sample, dating between Phases 5 and 8, depict childbirth; all are three-dimensional effigy vessels rather than painted examples (pl. 35). In each case the modeled head of an infant is seen emerging from the woman's vagina. Only two vessels in the sample appear to portray the burial of mummy bundles. On the most elaborate example, from Orcona in the Nasca drainage, several mummy bundles are flanked by individuals performing some type of burial ritual that includes the playing of panpipes and rattles; one of these participants is also holding a trophy head (pl. 23). Nearly identical mummy bundles are shown on the other example, but the attending figures are merely bent over the bodies. While no actual interment is seen in any of the examples in our sample (as opposed to the case on several Moche vessels: see Donnan and McClelland 1979), three vessels show in vivid detail the ritual burial of a cache of trophy heads. The best specimen, from the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia in Lima (C-13466), illustrates an elaborate ceremony in progress (pl. 21). Three trophy heads lie side by side within a pyramidal mound; a hooded or masked dancer holding batons in his hands flanks one side, while an unmasked participant, also holding batons, flanks the other (fig. 5.117). Small cups (supposedly holding a ritual drink) and panpipes are floating above. A cup is also found in the burial chamber, perhaps included as an offering. A strange feline creature accompanied by a parrot is positioned above the burial chamber. Additional trophy heads are painted around the circumference of the vessel, as if to emphasize the function of this motif. The second vessel (illustrated in Lapiner 1976: fig. 513) is of very questionable authenticity but also portrays a cache of trophy heads associated with a figure holding a copper decapitating knife (*tumi*), similar to those used by the Moche. I have recently found a third vessel, from a private collection, also depicting a cache of trophy heads beneath a stepped mound (pl. 22).

Another aspect of Nasca religious practice is pilgrimage. Silverman (1990b; 1993a: 311 – 317) has argued convincingly that Cahuachi served as a ceremonial center and as a pilgrimage shrine. The location of the site in an area where the water table slopes up to ground level, providing a stable source of water supply, perhaps led to its designation as a *huaca* or sacred place (Silverman 1990b: 232). Some of the Nasca Lines or geoglyphs are viewed by Silverman as ritual pathways leading from distant locations across the pampa to specific mounds at Cahuachi. The form of the pilgrimage and identity of the participants are necessarily more speculative.

> I believe that the Nasca social groups or *ayllu*s that maintained the different mounds at Cahuachi constituted themselves en route to Cahuachi on the *pampas*

> and at the site itself. . . . Once periodic celebrations at the ceremonial center were ended, the macrogroups would decompose into their smaller parts, returning to their distinct home villages where other principles of social group membership would exert their claims. The transient, marked social hierarchy would thus disaggregate into a less hierarchical, more permanent day-to-day social organization. (Silverman 1993a: 317)

There is a long tradition of religious pilgrimage in the Andes. Silverman (1990b: 230) cites Pachacamac as a model of this type of activity in both Inca times and pre-Inca times, and she goes on to discuss the political aspects of pilgrimage and how social organization is reflected in this pattern of behavior. As proof that pilgrimage existed in the Nasca culture, she describes a modeled "plaque" discovered by Tello and first illustrated by him in 1931. It is unclear what function this clay object served, but it does not appear to be part of a ceramic vessel. The plaque depicts a group of five people walking together in a row (pl. 9). An adult male in the center of the group plays a panpipe, while the two women directly behind him have parrots perched on their shoulders. Two children, also playing panpipes, lead the group. Several dogs form part of the entourage. Silverman (1993a: 302) interprets this as a processional scene, a family coming or going to Cahuachi or some other ritual place. Her analysis of this scene is likely correct, but the group could just as easily be part of a local agricultural festival or some other event.

Closely related to ritual pathways is the concept of *ceque* lines (see Zuidema 1964). The Inca visualized a series of invisible lines radiating out from their main temple (the *korikancha)* in Cuzco like spokes in a wheel; these were called *ceque* lines. Located along these lines were *huaca*s in forms such as sacred rocks, springs, hills, and idols (see Rowe 1979 for a listing translated from the 1653 chronicle of Bernabé Cobo). Sets of lines were connected to specific *ayllu*s in Cuzco, who were responsible for the worship and maintenance of the *huaca*s. A number of specialists have argued that the numerous straight lines etched into the pampas of the Nasca drainage were an earlier version of the Inca *ceque* system (e.g., see Aveni 1986; Silverman 1990b, 1993a). These lines not only served as ritual pathways linking distant social groups to their shrines at Cahuachi but were also a form of ritual calendar. After their initial construction, the Nasca Lines had to be cleaned (swept) periodically to keep them bright and clear. This work, according to ethnohistoric and historic analogy, was the responsibility of the social group that owned the pathway.

The pampas on which the geoglyphs were constructed can be considered part of a sacred landscape, which included the land at the all-important junctures of rivers. Known as a *tinkuy*, this ritual area is seen as a "socially and supernaturally charged place of competition, cooperation and social balance" (Silverman and Proulx 2002: 190). Important cemeteries (like La Muña) are often located on a *tinkuy*, so that the dead were in a direct relationship with the underworld and with primordial ancestors (ibid.: 220).

Thus the religion of the Nasca people was quite complex, centering on powerful natural forces and sacred places where rituals to propitiate these spiritual forces took place, to ensure water, fertility of the crops, and a stable lifestyle.

Subsistence

Irrigation agriculture was the primary source of food for the Nasca people. In this hostile environment, power and prestige went to those political leaders and shamans with the ability to calculate the start of the planting season and the first flow of water from the mountains. Managerial skills, perhaps at the *ayllu* level, were needed to clean and maintain the canals as well as to distribute the water equitably. During Phase 5, when drought conditions occurred, an ingenious system of underground filtration galleries, today known as *puquio*s, were constructed (Schreiber and Lancho 1988, 1995, 2003). These well-like vertical shafts were excavated down to the water table and then interconnected by horizontal tunnels that followed the slope of the water table. The majority of the *puquio*s were located in the middle valley area centered near the present-day town of Nasca, but others were found in the smaller tributaries of Taruga and Las Trancas (Schreiber and Lancho 1988: 55).

Some scholars have questioned the dating of the *puquio*s (Barnes and Fleming 1991), suggesting that they were introduced by Spanish colonists in the Colonial Period, who modeled them on Old World prototypes. Schreiber and Lancho (1995) have argued for the primacy of the *puquio*s in the Nasca culture, using archaeological, geological, and ethnohistorical evidence to demonstrate the Early Intermediate Period date of the system.

Judging from the iconography, farming technology was relatively simple. Pointed wooden digging sticks appear to be the major farming implement (fig. 5.270). These do not

have a foot-rest like the later Inca *taclla;* nor was the tip augmented with a metal point. Clubs were used to break up clods of earth. Strangely, no digging sticks have been found archaeologically in any of the documented graves (Carmichael 1988: appendix 3), although Orefici (1993: fig. 110) illustrates one example found at Cahauchi. This paucity of examples could be attributed to the scarcity of wood and the more practical need of the living to use the implements of a dead relative. As mentioned elsewhere, agricultural work seems to have been performed communally, perhaps by members of an *ayllu*.

The iconography depicts a wide range of food plants. Seed plants include beans (fig. 5.230), maize (fig. 5.234), peppers (fig. 5.233), and squash (fig. 5.242); there are also many root crops, such as jíquima (fig. 5.240), achira (fig. 5.249), manioc (fig. 5.241), and peanuts (fig. 5.243). Fruits include the pepino (fig. 5.244) and the lucuma (fig. 5.235) as well as several unidentified varieties. If frequency in the iconography can be correlated with the relative importance of a plant in the diet, then beans appear to be the staple food, with peppers also playing an important role. The jíquima root is much more common in the early phases, while the achira root is depicted more frequently in the late phases. Does the iconography reflect changing preferences in diet or perhaps a change in climatic conditions that dictated greater emphasis on certain plants? Certain nonfood plants have not been identified in the ceramic iconography despite their importance in the culture. Coca leaves were used as a mild stimulant, and their presence can be inferred from the coca bags and bulging cheeks of individuals modeled on effigy vessels. *Chicha* (corn beer) was the primary alcoholic beverage, used for both ritual and recreation. Cotton, which was used in many of the textiles produced on the south coast, also is not depicted on the ceramics. The reason for this avoidance is not known. It would also appear that the potato, a highland root crop, was not important to the Nasca people at this time.

The ocean provided another valuable source of food for the Nasca people. Although Kennedy and Carmichael (1991) found few Nasca coastal sites in their survey of that region and claimed minimal usage of maritime products, the iconography argues differently. Large numbers of marine creatures — fish, mollusks and other shellfish, mammals, and sea birds — along with painted and modeled vessels of fishermen all point to a strong relationship between humans and the sea. One of the principal mythical beings in Nasca religion was the Killer Whale, whose image dominates the pottery of the late phases (figs. 5.44 to 5.56). Small figurines carved from the teeth of this creature, such as those on exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, attest to the sacredness and availability of this animal. Fisherman bottles portraying single individuals straddling some type of floating device while attempting to fish with a net are common in the ceramic repertoire (fig. 5.135; pl. 32). Fish and shellfish remains have been uncovered at inland sites such as Cahuachi, indicating the importance of this supplemental protein. No representations of reed boats, balsa rafts, or other watercraft are known either archaeologically or in the iconography, except for two Phase 7 vessels (pl. 33). Raw materials for fashioning watercraft are absent on the south coast, unlike the north, where the Moche had seaworthy craft to carry them to nearby islands and to explore the littoral. Nets were the primary means of capturing fish, while shellfish could be collected by hand along the coast. Sea mammals, including the occasional beached whale and seals, were eaten as well.

Today few game animals are left along the borders of the coastal valleys in southern Peru. This was not always the case, as can be seen in the iconography on many Nasca vessels. Camelids such as llamas (or more likely the wild guanaco) and foxes (fig. 5.180) seem to have been hunted regularly with spears and bolas. Along the coast, seals and perhaps nutrias were hunted as well. Other animals may have been included, but the archaeological and iconographic evidence is lacking. Domesticated guinea pigs were raised and eaten, perhaps on special ritual occasions, as they are today in Peru (fig. 5.191). Camelid hooves, perhaps from a sacrifice, are included in some Nasca graves, as are guinea pigs and an occasional parrot (Carmichael 1988: 485). Monkeys (fig. 5.181), dogs (pl. 28), and parrots (fig. 5.165) were kept as pets (monkeys being imported from more tropical areas). Parrots seem to have been viewed as a type of mascot. Warriors as well as hunters are often depicted with this bird perched on their weapons or shoulders in the ceramic iconography (fig. 5.122).

Domesticated llamas were present in the Nasca culture, as evidenced by the representations of tethered animals on many of the ceramic vessels (fig. 5.184). Llamas were probably first domesticated in the highlands of southern Peru or adjacent Bolivia or Chile, perhaps as early as the Preceramic Period (prior to 1800 B.C.), for Edward Lanning (1967: 89) reports that "llama bones are commonly found in Initial Period refuse deposits on the central coast and ceremonial llama burials were found in an Initial period shrine in the

Virú Valley." These llamas could have been used for a variety of purposes — as pack animals, for meat and wool, or for ceremonial purposes. Whether or not herds of llamas were maintained in coastal sites has not yet been established. It is unlikely that large caravans of llamas were used to transport goods between distant locations, as was the case in the succeeding Middle Horizon.

Daily Life

At the family and individual level, Nasca ceramic iconography provides far less information about daily life than do Egyptian, Sumerian, Mayan, and even Moche iconography. Nor has the archaeological record been very revealing thus far, due to the paucity of excavations in habitation sites. Most prior studies have concentrated on ancient cemeteries or ceremonial sites like Cahuachi; indeed, only in the past two decades have significant numbers of habitation sites been located and recorded.

On the basis of ethnographic analogy and the meager archaeological record, we can speculate that children were born into small communities of kin-related individuals (*ayllus*). Several effigy vessels graphically portray childbirth (pl. 35). Soon after birth, many children had their heads bound in order to produce artificial deformation. It is unclear at this time whether status or rank was the primary motivation for this procedure. Rituals following the birth of a child are not seen in the art. A few examples, including one late Nasca effigy vessel, depict a woman carrying a small child on her back, probably wrapped in a mantle much like that used by Quechua women today (pl. 38). The famous Tello procession scene also portrays a family group of a father, mother, a young adult, and two children (pl. 9). It would seem that children were less important in the Nasca artistic tradition than other sacred or secular motifs.

Only a few activities of daily life are reflected in the iconography. Subsistence activities such as hunting, fishing, and farming are well represented; these are primarily male activities, judging from the art. Planting was undertaken in groups of individuals, probably members of the kin group. Harvesting was also a group enterprise, and the produce was collected into baskets or bags. Heavy burdens were supported by tumplines stretched across the forehead, just as they are used in the Andes today (pl. 36). Coca leaves, stored in small cotton bags, were chewed for stimulation (pl. 37), and corn beer (*chicha*) was drunk on special occasions for relaxation (fig. 5.118). Nothing in the archaeological record or in the art suggests the use of tobacco or snuff in any form. Fishing and hunting activities have been described in the subsistence section above. In addition to individual fishing from floats, groups of fishermen with larger nets snared schools of fish in the shallow waters near shore. It is likely that hunting was also accomplished by groups of men rather than individually.

Weaving was a major activity of the Nasca, as witnessed by the beautiful fabrics preserved in their tombs. Cloth was made from both cotton and wool, using a wide variety of techniques and a broad range of dyes derived from vegetable, mineral, and insect sources. The art includes no representations of weavers, and weaving may have been done by both sexes, although historically women are the weavers in the Andes. Sewing kits (consisting of thorn needles, balls of yarn, and spindle whorls) have been found in tombs. Young girls were probably taught weaving skills at an early age, just as boys were taught farming and herding techniques.

Another daily activity was the production of pottery, a technology in which the Nasca excelled. Again, it is unclear whether the potters were male, female, or both. It is more certain that pottery was produced by a large number of people, not by a class of specialists. The quality of the ceramics is quite variable, indicating that very skilled potters were producing side by side with less skilled artisans. Virtually all the pottery, from simple utilitarian ware to highly decorated ceremonial pieces, was used in everyday life; no ceramics were made specifically for burials. The iconography on the pottery was the primary means of symbolic communications among the Nasca, and all members of the society were able to communicate in this visual fashion.

Among adult males, warfare was a major activity. The iconography is replete with images of warriors, weapons, and trophy heads. Beginning in Phase 5 military themes increase dramatically. Warriors soon become dressed in elaborate costumes and carry feather staffs. Battle scenes occur in the art, and trophy heads are predominantly displayed. Shamans and musicians, representing other specialists in the society, are also seen in the art.

As for visual representations of "rites of passage" in Nasca society, the iconography is largely silent. It includes no scenes of puberty ceremonies, marriage rites, or other initiation rituals. It would appear that marriage was monogamous, for there is no archaeological or iconographic evidence to suggest multiple wives. Even scenes of burials, which were of vital religious importance to the Nasca, are

practically nonexistent in the art. As noted above, only two vessels portraying mummy bundles are present in my extensive sample.

Several rare but highly informative vessels provide a deeper look into community life. A vessel in the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología e Historia in Lima is in the form of a house with stepped roof combs. Six women sit on top of the structure in a semicircle, flanking a male with an elaborate headdress or turban (fig. 5.118). On the ground, in front of the group, are three modeled clay storage jars (for *chicha*?); one of the women is holding a large ceramic drum. All of the individuals have deformed skulls, perhaps a sign of rank.

Another interesting vessel with a ritual scene is in the Paul Clifford Collection, now in the Duke University Museum of Art. Because of its uniqueness, its authenticity is uncertain, but many of the artistic conventions appear to be genuine (Clifford 1969: fig. 88). The scene has a modeled rectangular structure at one end, consisting of a series of posts over which beams have been placed. In front of the structure is a walled courtyard containing a group of twelve people. Four individuals stand in profile under the eaves of the main building. In front of them appear to be one or two hearths with raised edges. These four individuals have modeled breasts that identify them as women, while the people in the courtyard all seem to be men. The figures have sloping deformed heads similar to those on other Nasca figurines, and their aquiline noses are typical of Nasca facial types. Their turbans, in this case represented by modeled ropes of clay, are unusual but not atypical. Along two of the three walls of the courtyard are sitting or standing three individuals, while the third wall has only two; all are facing toward the center of the courtyard. One of the males is playing a panpipe. Slightly off-center is a large storage jar, presumable containing *chicha*. Small dishes or plates lie on the surface of the courtyard. This scene could be interpreted as a ritual taking place within an early form of a *kancha* (or walled enclosure) by members of an *ayllu*.

Material Culture

Iconography and archaeology can be used in a complementary manner to produce a valuable picture of the material culture of the Nasca people. The art portrays male warriors and hunters with a variety of weapons, the most important of which appear to be long spears (figs. 5.253, 5.257) thrown with the aid of a spear-thrower or atlatl (figs. 5.257, 5.258). Both of these items are clearly seen in the iconography, and both have been found in archaeological contexts. Farabee discovered eight to ten spears with obsidian points on top of the *barbacoa* covering of a Phase 3 grave at Las Cañas (Carmichael 1988: 484). Five spear-throwers were found associated in two Phase 7 graves at Chaviña by Samuel Lothrop and Joy Mahler (ibid.). Atlatls of this type often have bone hooks on the upper surface to engage the spear (fig. 4.4). Anthropomorphic Mythical Beings are frequently portrayed with clubs, sometimes covered with blood (figs. 5.2, 5.7, 5.9, among others). Clubs of this type were used in hand-to-hand combat, but virtually none have been found at Nasca sites. Slings woven of cotton or wool were used to hurl stone missiles both in warfare and in hunting animals (fig. 4.6). Many human effigy vessels illustrate the manner in which these slings were transported — wound around the warrior/hunter's turban, where they were easily accessible when needed (fig. 5.140). Small stones used in conjunction with these slings are likely to have been picked up in the field rather than carried by individuals. Bolas were also used for the hunting of camelids, and a number of vessels portray this weapon in the form of a series of linked balls (figs. 5.268, 5.122). Knives, made with obsidian blades imported from distant locations, were used for decapitation and trephination as well as for more utilitarian purposes. A unique double spout bottle displaying a battle scene, now in the Amano Museum, clearly shows warriors using obsidian knives for decapitation (pl. 18). Actual specimens of this instrument have been found in archaeological contexts (fig. 4.7). In the late Nasca period warriors are depicted carrying feather staffs into battle (fig. 5.123). A few rare vessels portray banners that may also be part of a military complex (Rickenbach 1999: fig. 165). No archaeological examples of these items have yet been discovered.

Clothing and other textiles are well preserved in the dry climate of the south coast, and Carmichael (1988: 495) reports the presence of cloth in sixty-two of the graves he studied. A visit to any looted cemetery on the south coast will quickly convince the traveler of the importance of cotton and wool fabrics to the Nasca. Yarn, *huarango* thorn needles, spindles, and spindle whorls have been discovered in a number of graves, sometimes in basketry "sewing kits." These items have been found in both male and female interments of people of differing ages, suggesting that weaving may not have been gender specific. Braids of human hair (up to more than 1 meter in length) were found in some

tombs, apparently used for adornment (Carmichael 1988: 488). The most elaborately dressed individuals seen in the iconography are warriors, who must have been accorded a high level of prestige in the society. They are depicted in a rather uniform manner in painted versions on the pottery, but effigy vessels are more explicit in portraying the variety of clothing and paraphernalia associated with these combatants. Males often carried coca bags, and some wore leather sandals.

Closely related to textiles are fishnets, which have a long history extending back to the Preceramic Period. Both knotted and unknotted nets were used on the south coast, although the chronology of the various types is uncertain. Fishnets are clearly depicted on most of the fisherman bottle which date from Phase 1 through Phase 7 (figs. 5.135, 5.265; pl. 32).

Brightly colored feathers were used to ornament headdresses, staffs, fans, and clothing, Many undoubtedly were obtained from local species of birds, such as the four varieties of parakeets native to the south coast. The mummified remains of a mealy parrot discovered in a grave at Cahuachi, however, suggest that parrots were imported from the tropical forests as pets, much like monkeys, and their feathers were utilized for decoration. The Nasca people produced feather-covered textiles with intricate designs and color patterns (for examples, see Lavalle 1986: 94–114). Each feather was laboriously sewn onto a textile base and overlapped to form solid areas of design to produce tunics, mantles, and headdresses. Plumes are often seen decorating the front of turbans on early Nasca head jars. Some of the conical caps worn by warriors in the later phases may also have been adorned with feathers. Baskets and net bags were used as containers; both appear in the iconography in the early phases (fig. 5.271). Clay pots may have been suspended from house poles using nets, judging from the art. Basketry sewing kits, fans, and other items found in graves are some of the motifs not found in the iconography.

Gourd containers were also important, many of which were decorated with pyro-engraved designs. While some of this artwork was geometric in form, many of the motifs duplicated the supernatural iconography found on pottery vessels. The Anthropomorphic Mythical Being, trophy heads, and birds were common themes. Although rare, pottery drinking cups and storage vessels were sometimes depicted in the iconography, especially in ritual scenes (fig. 1.6). Other containers include small cloth or leather bags, often seen on the pottery of the earlier phases; their contents are unknown. In the later phases, when humans were painted and modeled with increasing frequency, cloth bags containing coca leaves are depicted with increasing regularity (pl. 37).

During the Early Intermediate Period, the Moche culture on the north coast excelled in metallurgical technology, as seen in the exquisite objects recently discovered in the tombs at Sipán (Alva and Donnan 1993). The Nasca people were much more limited in their use of metals. Native gold was obtained from alluvial sources and cold-hammered into thin sheets, which in turn were embossed with designs and shaped into mouth masks, forehead ornaments, and other adornments worn by shamans in ritual dances (fig. 5.13). Few of these ornaments have been discovered in scientifically excavated tombs, but various museum collections include a moderate sample of items apparently obtained from looted graves. Although the contexts are missing, they can be identified as Nasca through iconographic analysis. The only other metal used by the Nasca was copper. Spear-throwers with copper hooks and copper bands have been found, including an example found by Farabee in a burial at Las Cañas (Carmichael 1988: 498). Heather Lechtman (personal communication, 2000), a leading expert on Precolumbian metallurgy, disputes this claim, stating that she "has never seen any copper artifacts with Nasca provenience." Further research is needed to settle this point.

Objects made of *Spondylus* shell have been found in Nasca sites and graves. Several Nasca necklaces composed of rectangular plaques of *Spondylus* are found in museum collections. These correspond to identically shaped necklaces worn by the Anthropomorphic Mythical Being and his impersonators in Nasca iconography. A beautiful *Spondylus* shell pendant, capped with a hammered gold band displaying the face of an AMB, can be seen in the Robert Bliss Woods Collection at Dumbarton Oaks (specimen B-439). Based on the iconography of the gold-work, it dates to Phase 6 or 7. The presence of *Spondylus* shell on the south coast of Peru is indicative of long-range trade, either direct or indirect.

Music was an essential part of ritual activities, and a number of different musical instruments are present in the archaeological record as well as in the iconography. The panpipe is present from the beginning of the sequence (having first appeared on the south coast in the latter part of the Early Horizon) and continues through the entire span of the Nasca sequence. Nasca panpipes are composed of individual thin clay tubes, each precisely made using the rare technique of slip casting (Dawson 1964). The number of tubes ranges from six to ten, arranged in a row according

to their pitch and held together in a clay matrix (fig. 5.130). Most panpipes have straight tubes, but in several examples the tubes are bent. The former are called simple panpipes; the latter, complex panpipes. Studies of the acoustical properties of panpipes have been described above (under MI-1).

Ceramic drums, some painted with elaborate mythical iconography, are also found throughout the Nasca sequence (fig. 5.131). Silva, Morales, and Yamunaque (1982) describe a very elaborate example dating to Phase 2 or early Phase 3 (pl. 11). Another outstanding example from the same period is the Guggenheim/Bernstein drum (pl. 12). Judging from a few preserved examples, skin heads were stretched over the orifices of the drums and tied securely with sinew. Modeled and painted musicians in the ceramic iconography are almost always associated with drums that are positioned between their legs (fig. 5.129; pl. 13). Drums played an integral role in Nasca ceremonies, along with panpipes and other instruments.

Clay trumpets were yet another musical instrument used in Nasca rituals. A good sample of actual specimens is present in museum collections (fig. 5.132; also see Purin 1990: fig. 134), and representations of this instrument are seen in ceremonies painted on the pottery (fig. 1.6). No studies have yet been undertaken on the capabilities and range of these trumpets.

Clay whistles and ocarinas have been found in Nasca graves, but their functions are only speculative. They do not seem to be part of the ceremonial complex of instruments used on ritual occasions, such as the panpipe, drum, and trumpet. These small, easily transportable devices were for more personal use, much like a harmonica in modern times. They could have had a secular use for signaling someone at a distance or a more sacred use to summon or communicate with spirits (Olsen 2002).

Finally, gourd rattles may have been present in the musical repertoire. Rattle-shaped objects are held in the hands of some of the shamans and mythical beings in the earliest phases (fig. 1.7). No archaeological examples have been found, to my knowledge.

Dwellings

My sample contains more than ten ceramic representations of structures. We can attempt to reconstruct the type of dwellings used by the Nasca, based on these examples as well as the archaeological remains. Most dwellings appear to be only one story in height and have either a flat or slightly sloping roof. One or more of the upper edges of the walls are often stepped at the juncture with the roof, giving the structure a gabled appearance (pl. 26). Archaeological excavations at sites like Cahuachi indicate that simple structures were constructed of a series of upright poles interconnected by weaving a network of cane or other vegetable material. Over this lattice work was smeared a clay plaster to form more solid walls — a technique known as wattle-and-daub (see Silverman 1993a: figs. 6.1 to 6.3). Cane or thatched roofs were then used for protection against the sun. These need not be watertight, since virtually no rainfall occurs on the south coast.

More substantial structures were constructed of sun-dried adobes of various sizes and shapes, from conical to loaf-shaped. Silverman (1993a: 94) observed tall wedge-shaped adobes in Units 2, 19, and 24 at Cahauchi, among other locations. Large, conical adobes with grooves were characteristic of Cahuachi's massive retaining walls (ibid.). Adobes make up less than half the volume of many walls, with the rest being clay mortar inserted in gobs and chunks (ibid.). The large *huaca*s or mounds at Cahuachi were built on top of natural hills and projections that were modified by leveling and by the addition of adobe terraces and walls. In areas adjacent to the pampa, where fieldstones and river cobbles were available, this material was used for construction of houses. Descriptions of such structures are found in Vaughn (2000) and Silverman (2002b).

When structures are represented in the iconography, they are always modeled or semimodeled; none are portrayed in two-dimensional painted form. No large buildings that can be identified as a temple, palace, or ritual structure are seen in the art, with the possible exception of pyramidal mounds like those found at Cahuachi. A few modeled effigy bottles in the form of terraced pyramids are known (pl. 27).

Conclusion

Nasca iconography will never be fully comprehensible to those of us living in modern industrial societies. Preliterate societies with a world view quite different from ours express themselves through oral tradition, which cannot be retrieved, and artistic symbolism, which is difficult to decipher. This book has attempted to identify the main themes found on Nasca ceramics, to explain their meaning to the extent possible, and to use the iconography to reconstruct the lifeway of this complex society. The imagery does not inform us about many things in Nasca society. It presents

no narratives, only fleeting snapshots of limited events — a musician playing the panpipes at a ritual, a row of farmers holding their digging sticks, or a warrior in a costume holding weapons or carrying a trophy head. We learn little about daily life, the role of children, or interpersonal relationships. We have no portraits of leaders and only minimal evidence of status differences. While the natural world is well represented in the depictions of many varieties of birds, fish, and plants, celestial entities are rare or unidentifiable. It is impossible to ascertain why emphasis was placed on some phenomena and not on others.

What are we really dealing with? Terence Grieder (personal communication, 2004) sums it up nicely in the following words:

> [Nasca iconography consists of] emblems — symbolic images encoded with attributes. An emblem is like a poem, not like a story; like a flag, not like history; like a stiff drink, not a dinner. Somehow this very condensed, intricate system tells us everything the Nasca artists thought we needed to know. It is [a] system of building a powerful design, as precise and controlled as an engine.

Grieder is alluding to the fact that Nasca art lacks the interaction seen in Moche iconography and the narrative seen in Egyptian tomb paintings or Greek vases. Each of the cultures of ancient Peru had its own distinctive iconography, and different approaches are needed to analyze them.

Much more can be done with Nasca iconography in the future. A detailed seriation of the motifs must be presented, not only to confirm the chronological sequence but also to trace the evolution of the motifs through time. Much of this work has already been accomplished; it only needs to be consolidated and coherently presented using adequate illustrations. Another aspect that requires much more attention is the study of local diversity in the art. If we are correct in assuming that the Nasca polity consisted of a number of independent chiefdoms, it is logical to assume that variation in the iconography is likely, despite the sharing of a common culture and religious tradition. Much of this local diversity has already been recognized, beginning with my own study of variation in contemporary Nasca pottery from the Ica and Nasca Valleys (Proulx 1968). Wegner (1976b), in an unpublished seminar paper, undertook a preliminary study of local differences in Nasca Phases 6 through 9. A more complete study of local variation not only will provide important new insights into political boundaries within the Nasca realm but may indicate how and when certain outside traits entered the drainage. Finally, the iconography found on Nasca ceramics needs to be compared and coordinated with the iconography present on Nasca and Paracas textiles. The recent discovery of Nasca-style textiles on the far south coast, especially in the Sihuas and Vitor Valleys of the Department of Arequipa, has raised new questions about the origins of the "Proliferous Strain" that appears on late Nasca pottery (Haeberli 2000, 2001).

Although the ancient Nasca remain a somewhat mysterious society, new fieldwork and advanced technology are revealing information not thought possible only a few years ago. An exciting future for Nasca studies lies before us. I can't wait!

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