

Highland and Coastal Cultural Interaction: New Evidence from the Ancient City of Huari, Ayacucho, Peru

Lidio M. Valdez

MacEwan University

J. Ernesto Valdez

Universidad de Huamanga, Ayacucho, Perú

Early in the history of archaeological studies in the Ayacucho Valley of the Peruvian central highlands, archaeologists noticed the occurrence of design elements associated with the Nasca culture of the Peruvian south coast region. Such an occurrence has been interpreted as the Nasca influence. Archaeologists discussing the emergence of the Wari State in particular make frequent reference to the Nasca influence, arguing that following the south coast influence, the local ceramic style of the Ayacucho valley gained technological sophistication and resembled late Nasca ceramic shapes. In addition to innovations in ceramic technology, it has become apparent that following the Nasca influence the local cultural development in the Ayacucho Valley underwent significant transformation, including the shift from a rural to a predominantly urban life style. Recently, an archaeological excavation was carried out on a hilltop on the western side of the city of Huari which revealed evidence for a dense human occupation beginning about the middle of the Early Horizon (ca. 300 BCE – 50 CE), then continuing during the Early Intermediate Period (ca. 50 – 600 CE). However, shortly after interaction with the south coast was established, the hilltop was abandoned. This paper explores the nature of the interaction between the south coast and the central highlands and its role in the establishment of the city of Huari.

Introduction

In 1946 John Rowe, Donald Collier and Gordon Willey paid a brief visit to the partially unknown site of Huari, in the Ayacucho Valley of the Peruvian central highlands (Figure 1). In their report published in 1950, Rowe et al. (1950:122) wrote that they had “visited only the small corner of the huge site near the so-called La Capilla sector on the north side. The site is so large that it would take months to explore in its entirety and we were only there a little over an hour. As seen from the highway across the valley, the area covered by the ruins is at least two miles long

from north to south and quite possibly it cover an equal distance from east to west.”

Subsequent researchers who carried out archaeological studies at Huari have confirmed its large size (Bennett 1953; Lumbreras 1959, 1960; Menzel 1964:7; Isbell and Schreiber 1978; Isbell 1988:173; Schreiber 2001). Currently, most agree that Huari is one of the largest archaeological sites of western South America. More importantly, during the Middle Horizon (ca. 550 – 1100 C.E.) Huari was the most influential city of the entire Central Andes. Researchers argue that the establishment and growth of Huari

Valdez, Lidio M. and J. Ernesto Valdez. 2016. Highland and Coastal Cultural Interaction: New Evidence from the Ancient City of Huari, Ayacucho, Peru. In Trading Spaces: The Archaeology of Interaction, Migration and Exchange. Proceedings of the 46th Annual Chacmool Archaeology Conference, edited by Margaret Patton and Jessica Manion, pp. 91-108. Chacmool Archaeology Association, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, CA.

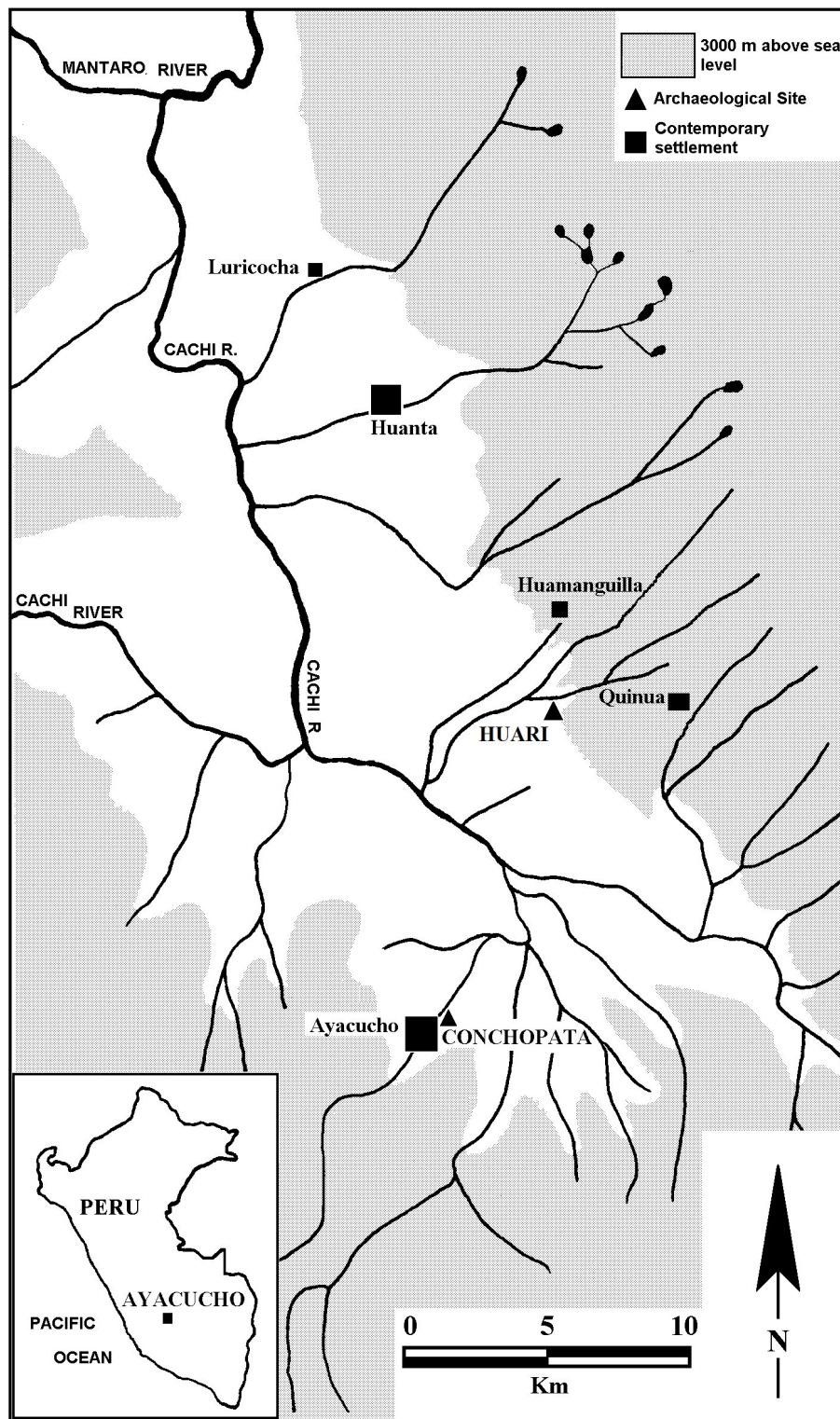


Figure 1: Location of the Middle Horizon site of Wari in relation to Conchopata in the Ayacucho Valley (drawing by L. M. Valdez).

paralleled the emergence of a new political authority named the Wari State. Scholarly research shows that early in its development the Wari State reorganized its hinterland, the Ayacucho Valley, and began one of the most ambitious and unprecedented projects the whole region had ever seen: the establishment of political and economic control over most of the Central Andes (Lumbreras 1980; Schreiber 1992). Most agree that during this period the site of Huari became the capital city of a pan-Andean state – the Wari State – that exercised political authority in the region several centuries before the rise of the Inka State.

The emergence of the Wari State was a turning point in the development of the indigenous cultures of the Central Andes. With some exceptions, notably on the coastal regions, prior to Wari settlements across the Central Andes were generally small and predominantly rural; with the establishment of Wari, there was a gradual shift toward urban life when many small and rural settlements were left vacant and replaced by fewer but larger settlements. In this process, we assert that the interaction between the inhabitants of the Ayacucho Valley and the south coast that emerged about the end of the Early Intermediate period (ca. 50 – 550 C.E.) played a key role. The focus of this discussion is to assess the nature of the interaction just noted. We also make an attempt to answer questions such as who was involved in the interaction with the south coast and how this interaction altered existing society in the Ayacucho Valley. To contextualize our discussion, first we present a brief overview of previous studies with regards to the Nasca influence in the Ayacucho Valley.

The Nasca Influence in the Ayacucho Valley

During the 1956 visit to the site of Wari, Rowe et al. (1950:127) made a small ceramic collection from the site's surface and produced the first ever ceramic classification of Huari ceramics. With this

initial classification they distinguished three main ceramic groups: *Huari Series*, *Huarpa Black on White Series* and the *Huamanguilla Series*. The *Huari Series*, comprised of more than one ceramic style, was the most representative compared to the other two series; consequently, taking into consideration wall thickness, colour combinations and design motives, the *Huari Series* was subdivided into smaller categories. One of these sub-groups was the *Huari Polychrome N* made up of “sherds which have definite and rather striking affinities to some of the more aberrant Nazca pieces which Gayton and Kroeber included in their Nazca Y class” (Rowe et al. 1950:128).¹

Another ceramic sub-group was the *Huari Polychrome T* which exhibited similarities with Coast Tiahuanaco. Assessing these two sub-groups Rowe et al. (1950:133) observed that the similarities with Coast Tiahuanaco were stronger than with Nasca, where the latter was made up only by a small number of sherds and that the resemblances was weaker and involved “only a few of Gayton and Kroeber’s Nazca Y 1-2 pieces.” Nevertheless, assuming that Coastal Tiahuanaco was more recent than Nasca and the former was more likely contemporaneous with the *Huari Series*, they stressed that despite the Nasca style being earlier, its “influences were still being felt upon it even after the disappearance of the Nazca style” on the south coast (Rowe et al. 1950:133).

When the chronological sequence of the Ayacucho Valley was still a work in progress, Lumbreras (1959) made the first attempt to organize the various ceramic styles known until then for the region. In contrast to Bennett (1953), who felt that Huarpa Black on White ceramics were later than Wari ceramics, Lumbreras identified the Huarpa Black on White as a ceramic style that preceded in time the Wari ceramic style. Lumbreras (1959:78) was able to observe resemblances in vessel shapes between the Huarpa Black on White and other styles that, in his view,

were manufactured during the Early Horizon, thus suggesting an earlier chronological placement for Huarpa Black on White. It was at this point that Lumbreras (1959:78) noted that the first Nasca designs in the Ayacucho Valley appeared about the end of the Huarpa sequence and hence before the emergence of the Wari ceramic style (Lumbreras 1959:78-79). In this stylistic sequence, the Tiahuanaco influence previously noticed by Rowe et al. (1950), was posterior to the Nasca influence.

When discussing the origins of Huari, Lumbreras (1960:200) was very cautious, largely due to the fact that the available archaeological information was fragmentary. Instead, Lumbreras discussed the cultural relationships, including the interaction between the Ayacucho Valley and the Nasca of the south coast, that in his view were already evident at Huari. As Rowe et al. (1950) previously did, Lumbreras (1960:200) also pointed out that the Nasca influence in the region was manifested in the occurrence of vessels forms and decorative designs that resembled late Nasca shapes and decorative motifs; in addition, a set of colours also associated with the late Nasca style was present in the Ayacucho Valley. Lumbreras (1960:201) argued that the Nasca influence must have been due to the geographical proximity between the south coast and the Ayacucho Valley.

Following Lumbreras' (1959, 1960) discussion, Menzel (1964) produced the most complete classification of Middle Horizon Wari ceramics from both the central highlands and the coast. In agreement with previous researchers, Menzel (1964:3-4, 8) observed that the Nasca style influenced the Ayacucho Valley beginning at the end of the Early Intermediate period and continuing during the early phases of the Middle Horizon. Indeed, Menzel noted that the Chakipampa and Okros styles, both of early Wari times (Middle Horizon 1), exhibit strong Nasca

influence. As other researchers argued previously, Menzel (1964:4, 9) also pointed out that the Nasca influence occurred during Nasca phases 7 and 8 (late Nasca).

Furthermore, Menzel (1964:66) asserted that "a local tradition of large urban settlements developed in this area in the latter part of the Early Intermediate Period, associated with pottery which reflects strong influences from Nasca." Thus, Menzel was one of the first to point out that the Nasca design elements had been incorporated into the Wari style and were part of the Ayacucho Valley influences in other regions of the Central Andes. At this point, Menzel (1964:67) wrote that "Nasca thus seems to have enjoyed a special privileged position in the new empire, sharing its prestige in the provinces, perhaps somewhat in the way in which Greece shared in the prestige of the Roman Empire."

From this overview, it is apparent that archaeological information gathered over the years has demonstrated that the Nasca influence in the Ayacucho Valley had a profound impact in the developments that occurred thereafter in the region. As will be discussed in more detail below, the interaction with the south coast did not result only in the technological sophistication of the Ayacucho Valley ceramics, but also accelerated the development of social complexity in the region. Indeed, as noted by Menzel (1964:66), following the interaction with the south coast, the local settlement pattern of the Ayacucho Valley witnessed a dramatic shift, when the previously rural oriented settlements were abandoned and replaced by fewer but larger settlements that are identified as urban centres (Lumbreras 2010:37).

In the remainder of this paper, it is our aim to further discuss the Nasca influence in the Ayacucho Valley. Our discussion is based on information recently gathered from Huaqanmarka, a small rural settlement that was

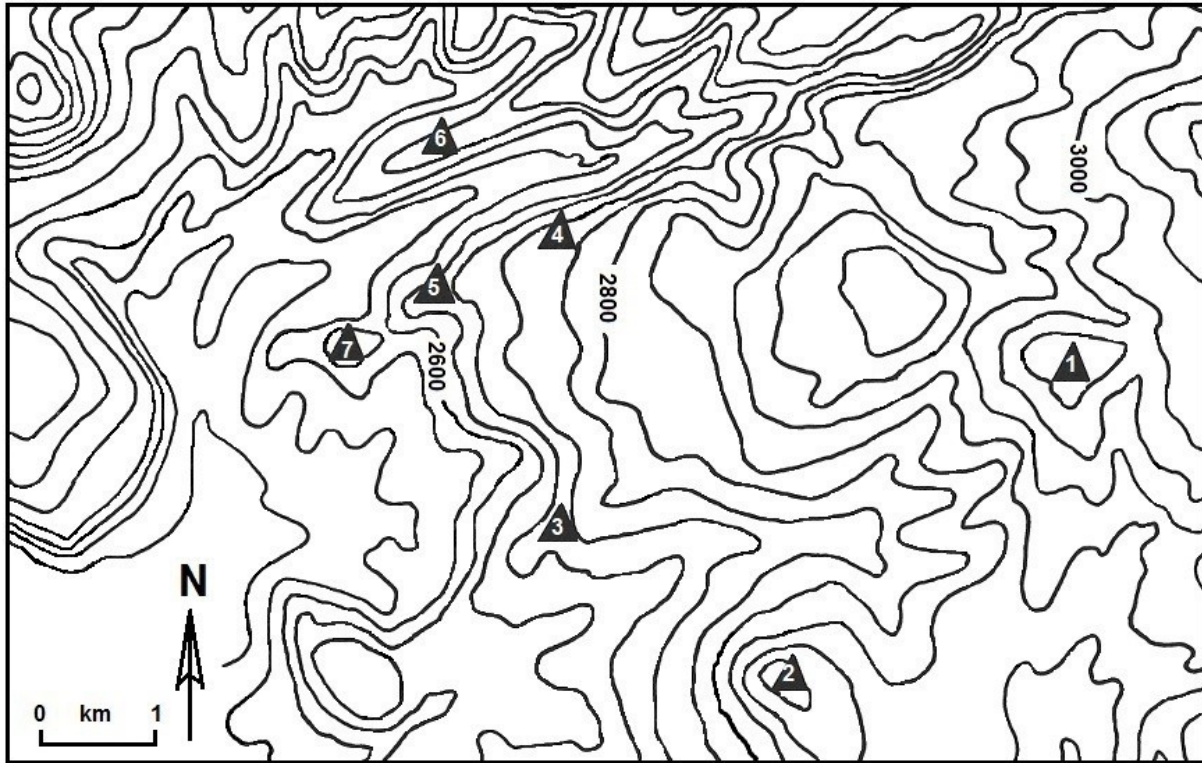


Figure 2: Location of Huarpa villages (1. Churukana, 2. Churo Orqo, 3. Vista Alegre, 4. Sullu Cruz, 5. West Huarpa Community, 6. Pacayqassa, 7. Huaqanmarka) in the area immediate to the site of Wari in the Ayacucho Valley (drawing by L. M. Valdez).

established in the area that was to become the periphery of the Huari urban centre.

Recent Archaeological Research at Huaqanmarka

Previous surface research of the area immediate to the great urban center of Huari demonstrated the presence of several small settlements (Figure 2) that, judging from surface ceramics, were occupied during the Early Intermediate period (Benavides 1976). These include the site of Churukana found on a hilltop east of Huari (Menzel 1964:5; Isbell 1997:190), Vista Alegre found about 4 km west of Churukana and south of the core area of Wari (Isbell 1997; Knobloch 2013), and Chupa Pata (also called West Huarpa community) located immediately to the west of the core area of Huari (Isbell 1997: Figure

6; Lumbreras 2010:22; Knobloch 2013). On the north edge of Huari, in the Sullu Cruz sector, Bennett (1953) excavated his pit 4 and uncovered Huarpa ceramics that indicate the presence of a pre-Middle Horizon occupation (Menzel 1964:7). In addition to these four Huarpa settlements, there were other sites that include the hilltop of Churo Orqo found south of Vista Alegre. Another Huarpa settlement also existed across the deep canyon to the north of the core area of Huari and east of the contemporary town of Pacaycasa.

One additional settlement found in the immediate periphery of Huari is Huaqanmarka located on a hilltop, only a short distance west of the core area of Huari and Chupa Pata (see Figure 2). Seen from its western side, the hilltop (Figure 3) is similar to Cerro Baúl, an important Wari center in the Moquegua Valley of southern Peru



Figure 3: The Huaqanmarka hilltop seen from its western side (Photo by L. M. Valdez).

(Williams 2001; Williams and Nash 2002; McEwan and Williams 2012). The Huaqanmarka hilltop is surrounded by cliff formations of vertical drop that make its plateau relatively inaccessible. At present, there is only a single narrow pathway reaching the top from its northern side. Considering that the place is of difficult access and without a reliable source of water, it is probable that its occupation implied overcoming significant challenges. Therefore, the possibility that the hilltop was selected for the purposes of security cannot be ruled out.

At present, the hilltop continues being exploited as agricultural land during the rainy season and as pasture land during the dry season. As a result of these activities, particularly of crop cultivation (and looting) that results in soil

disturbance and the total or partial demolition of ancient walls, archaeological remains such as ceramics are found scattered all over the surface. Because soil deposition at the hilltop is shallow, the disturbances noted here have resulted in the mixture of the archaeological contexts.

Recently, research was carried out at the Huaqanmarka hilltop in order to elucidate the concerns outlined above; fieldwork consisted of a small scale archaeological excavation carried out at the south end of the hilltop. Information gathered with this first archaeological excavation indicates that prior to the Middle Horizon a sizable population existed at this location. The earliest occupation at the site is represented by a single relatively large sized and rectangular shape structure (Figure 4), with walls constructed of

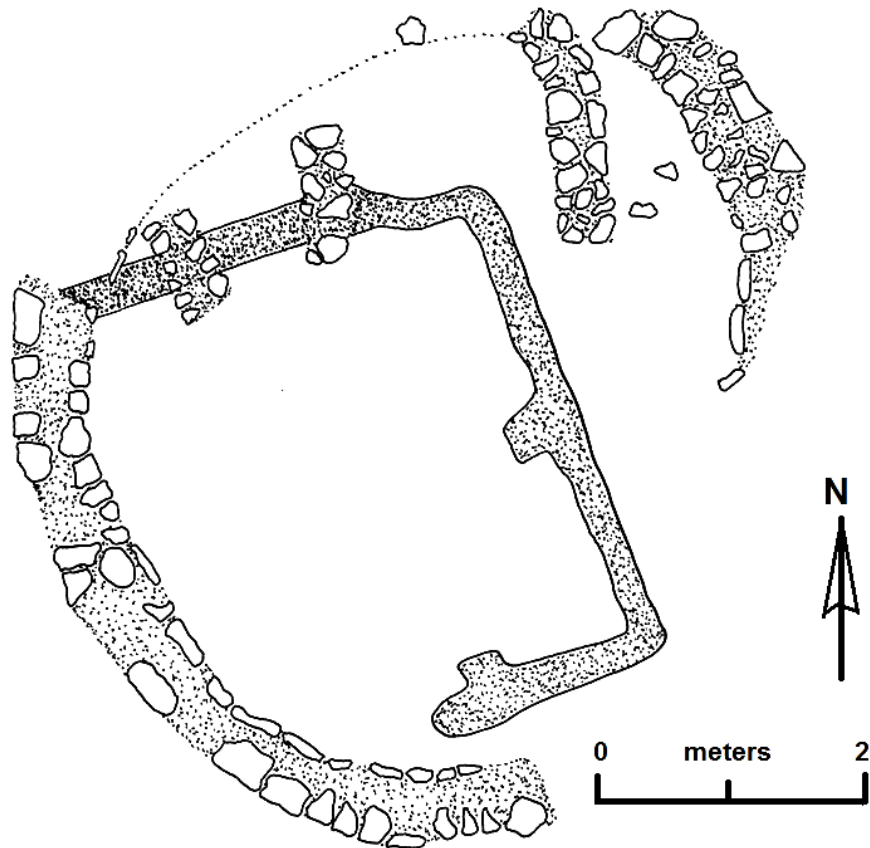


Figure 4: Earliest structure uncovered at Huaqanmarka (drawing by L. M. Valdez).

chunks of clay and stone, mortared with mud and established directly over a sterile formation. Later constructions were established immediately over the older building, unfortunately demolishing the structure as well as obscuring its cultural associations. On the basis of ceramics associated with the building, it appears that human occupation was heavy and there must have been several structures, which were destroyed as new buildings were erected.

Among the various archaeological remains present at the site, ceramic sherds are the most common artifacts. We must note that ceramics are very useful for the purposes of establishing the relative chronology of human occupation at the hilltop, particularly considering that no absolute dates exist yet. Sherds uncovered in association

with the earliest structure consist of pieces that exhibit, on the one hand, rough, uneven surfaces with poorly prepared grey paste, where temper inclusions, such as white particles, are visible. Sherds of uneven surfaces mainly belong to large size vessels that include neck-less utilitarian *ollas* and narrow neck jars. On the other hand, there are very hard sherds of fine paste that exhibit better surface finishing, such as polish and paint. These sherds belong to dishes, such as plates, bowls and cups. A recurrent aspect of all the sherds is the abundant presence of small bright particles on their surfaces and white quartzite particles in the paste.

Vessel shapes, decorative motifs and the overall treatment of the sherds (Figure 5) indicate that they were produced about the mid and late Early Horizon (ca. 800 BCE). Stylistically, some of



Figure 5: Aya Orqo, Wichqana and Rancha ceramics found associated with the earliest structure (Photos by L. M. Valdez).

the sherds are identifiable, following Lumbreras' classification, as incised Aya Orqo (Lumbreras 1959: lámina VI R-T) and painted Aya Orqo (Lumbreras 1959: lámina VI N-O). In addition, other sherds are identifiable as Wichqana and Rancha (Lumbreras 1959:72-73; Pérez 2012). Their occurrence at the hilltop indicates that as early as mid Early Horizon this location was settled. The occurrence of a large volume of sherds of simple manufacture is noteworthy and indicative of the domestic orientation of the occupation. Further indicating the domestic nature of the early occupation, there are grinding equipment and spinning whorls. Most of these early vessel forms (Figure 6), in particular the jars, continued being made when new buildings were established later on.

Substantial human occupation at the hilltop occurred at the time new circular, stone walled buildings were established (Figure 7) thus replacing the previous structures. Unfortunately, contemporary farming activities have demolished most of the walls, in some instances even erasing their foundations. Despite these challenges, it was possible to determine three partially destroyed circular structures. The most recurrent ceramic

styles found in association with the circular structures include the thick walled monochrome dark-red slip Kumun Senqa style and the thick walled with dense white unpolished surface named Huarpa Black on White style (Lumbreras 1974:136-137; Schreiber 1992:84) (Figure 8). These ceramic styles were manufactured during the Early Intermediate period (Menzel 1964; Lumbreras 1974, 1975; Valdez 1996, 1997).

Both of these ceramic styles noted here correspond to large sized, narrow neck, spherical body and conical base vessels (see Knobloch 2013). Due to their large size and their conical bases, it is possible that these vessels functioned to store grains. In both types, the surface of the vessels continues to be uneven, but smoothed, especially the exterior side, while the interior surface is smoothed only around the rim. Other small sized vessels, particularly the Huarpa Black on White, also occur. As noted, most of the domestic vessel forms associated with the early structure persist in association with the circular structures and continue showing little sophistication. In addition to ceramics, there are other artifacts, particularly grinding stones and spindle whorls that again indicate not only a

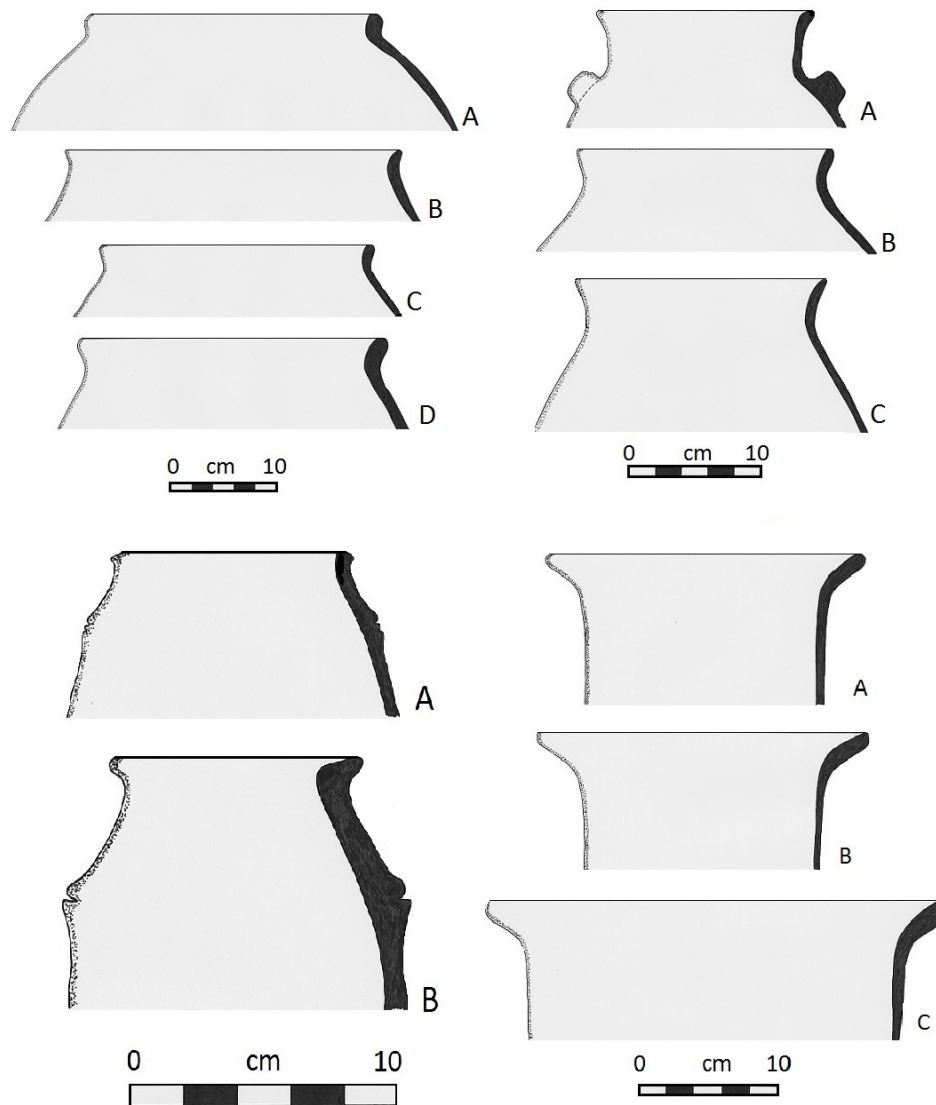


Figure 6: Vessel forms associated with the earliest structure found at Huaqanmarka (drawing by L. M. Valdez).

substantial human occupation, but also the domestic orientation of the human settlement at the hilltop.

Along with the above ceramic styles, there are other ceramic sherds also manufactured in the Huarpa Black on White style, but that exhibit a much more sophisticated surface treatment. The vessels are thin walled, with fine paste, and smooth surfaces that exhibit dense dark brown slip and white slip. These better finished vessels consist of tall drinking cups and deep bowls. The most

interesting aspect of the vessels is that these are the first of the Ayacucho Valley ceramics to depict foreign design elements, in this case late Nasca designs (Figure 9). It must be noted that previously, some Nasca trade pieces had already arrived to the region and indicate that contact with the south coast had been established. The incorporation of south coast designs in the local ceramics of the Ayacucho Valley is indicative of a more intense interaction and acceptance of foreign concepts.

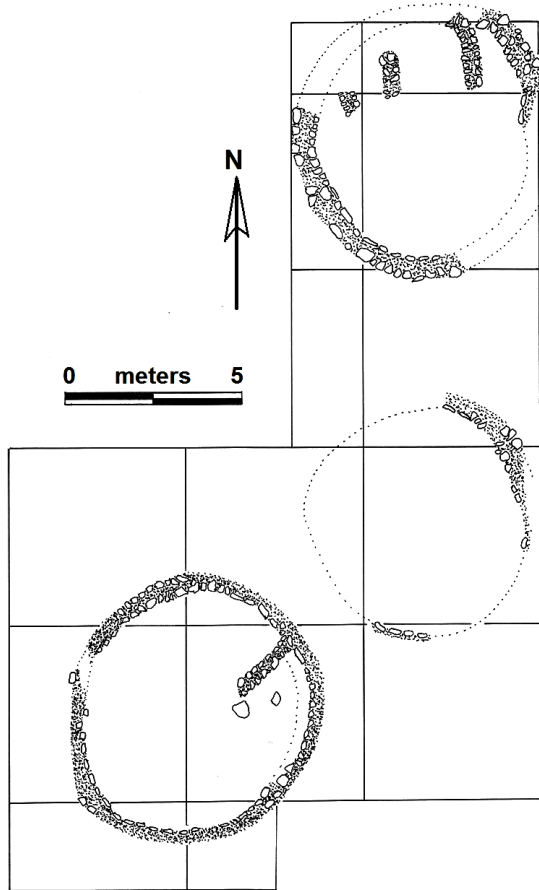


Figure 7: Vessel forms associated with the earliest structure found at Huaqanmarka (drawing by L. M. Valdez).

The late Nasca motifs depicted in the Ayacucho Valley include one that appears to be the stylized versions of Nasca bean pods (Proulx 2006:164), in addition to what Donald Proulx (2006:186) identifies as the ‘flowering staff’, also recognized as the “black line spirals attached to bars” (Menzel 1964:9; Bennett 1953:Plate 12; see also Knobloch 2012: Figure 93). Both of these decorative motifs appear on the south coast in Nasca phase 7 ceramics (Proulx 1994:95). In addition, the shape of these vessels (Figure 10) resembles late Nasca forms (Menzel 1964:7) and exhibit obvious technological sophistication (Lumbreras 1975:116; Knobloch 2012:125; Schreiber 2012:38), in some instances as if Nasca

hands were involved in the manufacturing process. Future research may demonstrate that by late Huarpa and late Nasca times, peoples of these two regions had been moving, perhaps due to intermarriage. In such a context, the movement of knowledge as well as other cultural practices from one region to another would be expected.

Nasca pottery is widely recognized for its technological refinement, often used to argue that it must have been produced by full time specialists. However, Carmichael (1989) has shown the lack of conclusive archaeological evidence for the presence of full time Nasca potters, leaving open the possibility that the fine Nasca ceramics may have been produced at the household level and possibly by women. If this interpretation is correct, there is also the possibility that intermarriage between the inhabitants of the Ayacucho Valley and the south coast region allowed the spread of ceramic technology from the south coast to highland Ayacucho Valley. Hence, the technological sophistication of the Ayacucho Valley ceramics late during the Early Intermediate Period perhaps signals the presence of south coast women in the highlands, who carried their ceramic making knowledge to the Ayacucho Valley.

It is important to mention that most recent research on the valleys such as Palpa and Ingenio of the south coast of Peru indicate that late Nasca settlements decreased significantly in numbers and in size. It is suggested that these changes may be because a good number of the south coast population migrated elsewhere, perhaps to the Ayacucho Valley, in midst of a severe drought (Eitel and Mächtle 2009:27; Conlee 2014:245; Sossna 2014:184, 230-231). Interestingly, Lumbreras (1980:30) asserts that at the time the ceramics of the Ayacucho Valley gained technological sophistication, the population had also increased in the region. Was this as a result of immigration from the south coast? Thus, it is



Figure 8: Kumunsenqa and Huarpa Black on White ceramics associated with the circular buildings (Photos by L. M. Valdez).



Figure 9: Local ceramics from Huaqanmarka depicting late Nasca designs (Photos by L. M. Valdez).

tempting to argue that the changes observed in the Ayacucho Valley ceramics as well as the population increase perhaps were linked to south coast immigrants. By means of bioarchaeological and biochemical analysis, future researchers may be able to determine whether immigrants from the south coast had actually arrived to the Ayacucho Valley.

Another custom that appeared around this time in the Ayacucho Valley is the use of coca leaves. Recently, coca leaves have been found at the site of Convento, just north of the Ayacucho Valley (Valdez and Taboada 2013). The coca leaves, the first and earliest finding for the region, were uncovered in association with a ceramic vessel decorated in the Cruz Pata style that dates to the late Early Intermediate period and the early Middle Horizon. Coca leaves are unknown from early Nasca contexts (Piacenza 2002:9; Valdez 2009:264); however, it is noteworthy to mention that by late Nasca, Nasca artisans produced for the first time modeled effigy vessels with bulging cheeks (Silverman and Proulx 2002:55; Proulx 2006:174, Plate 37) that is indicative of coca chewing. Thus, it is possible that by late Nasca the inhabitants of the south coast already knew coca chewing, which following the interaction with the central highlands was introduced to the Ayacucho Valley.

Since there is not archaeological evidence for the use of coca leaves in the Ayacucho Valley prior to interaction with the south coast, the more likely scenario is that by late Nasca times coca leaves were already known on the south coast and subsequently were introduced to the highland valley of Ayacucho, perhaps by Nasca immigrants. The recently found coca leaves are morphologically thinner (lanceolate) and small, features that match the main characteristics of *E. novogranatense* var. *truxillense* (coca Trujillo), species adapted to the Pacific coast (Plowman 1979:113; Mortimer 1901:258; Towle 2007:60).

The archaeological excavation carried out at Huaqanmarka is still limited; nevertheless, it already provides needed information to discuss the developments that took in the region about the time Nasca influence occurred. This is particularly important considering that no other rural settlement from the immediate periphery of the Huari urban centre has been excavated. When comparative information becomes available, we will be in a better position to assess some of the observations put forward here. What has become apparent from this study is that the interaction with the south coast was not restricted to specific members (such as elites) of society; rather, available evidence indicates that residents of small settlements, such as Huaqanmarka, equally participated. Therefore, it appears that interaction resulted in the flow of ideas and knowledge in both directions and as part of that flow, late Nasca designs appeared in the Ayacucho Valley.

Settlement Relocation and the Emergence of Urban Life

At the time the interaction with the south coast appears to have been well established, the Huaqanmarka hilltop was abandoned. Corroborating this observation, the orange and white slipped Cruz Pata style as well as the distinctive orange slipped and fine Okros ceramic style (Lumbreras 1960:177; Knobloch 2012: Figure 94; Menzel 1964:17; Schreiber 1992:86), which according to Lumbreras (1974:138) are “closely related,” are absent at the hilltop; such an absence indicates that human settlement at this location had come to an end.

Additional archaeological information coming from the area around the Wari urban centre indicates that other Huarpa settlements were also deserted about the same time. For instance, on the basis of surface ceramic collections from Churukana, Menzel (1964:5) observed an abundant occurrence of Huarpa

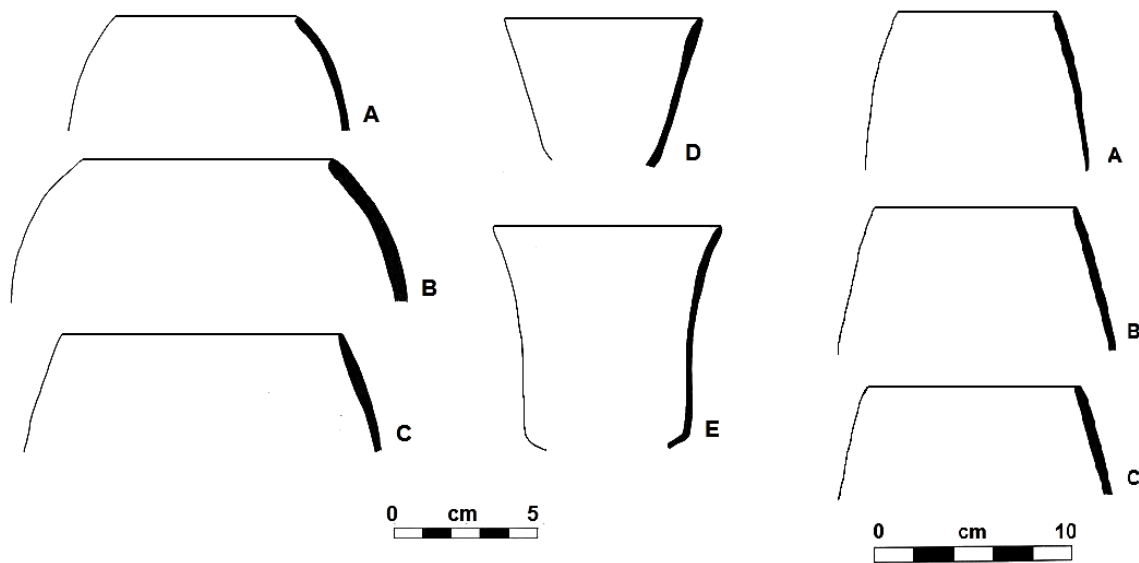


Figure 10: Vessel shapes from Huaqanmarka exhibiting late Nasca vessel forms (drawing by L. M. Valdez).

period ceramics and the rare presence of Middle Horizon ceramics, suggesting that the site was likely deserted. Test excavation conducted at the site further showed evidence for dense occupation during the Early Intermediate period (Isbell 1997:193). More recently, Lumbreras (2010:37) pointed out that the abandonment of Churukana intensified the occupation of Huari, implying that the site was left vacant.

Likewise, our recent inspection of Churo Orqo, a second Huarpa site found on the hilltop immediately south of Huari, reveals the presence of some Huarpa sherds, but no Middle Horizon pottery. In light of the information coming from Huaqanmarka, it is possible that Churo Orqo was also deserted around the same time as Churukana and Huaqanmarka. At Vista Alegre, a third Huarpa site found between the core area of Huari and Churo Orqo, there is an abundant surface occurrence of Huarpa ceramics (Isbell 1997:192; Knobloch 1991:248; Menzel 1964:5-7; Schreiber 2001:81), while Middle Horizon ceramics are less recurrent. Isbell (1997) suggests that Vista Alegre was depopulated, perhaps about the same time as the other Huarpa villages mentioned here.

Therefore, current archaeological information strongly indicates that the growth of Huari is related to the desertion of several settlements from the area that became Wari's periphery.

In contrast to the apparent simultaneous abandonment of the above four Huarpa settlements, Chupa Pata never underwent a similar process. Instead, the settlement continued to grow; according to Isbell (1997:194), Huari developed over that foundation. Considering that Sullu Cruz and the West Huarpa community were only a short distance from each other, it is possible that the former also remained occupied and it is also possible that these Huarpa towns had joined, thus becoming a single settlement that gave origin to Huari.

The possible union of two previously separate Huarpa settlements probably created a power imbalance in the region; indeed, once joined, and perhaps under a single leadership, the new settlement probably was larger and likely more powerful than its neighbouring villages that in contrast remained small. Although tangible archaeological evidence to explain the conditions under which the local settlement pattern changed

is still fragmentary, it is already apparent that several Huarpa sites located in the area that was to become the city of Huari were abandoned about the same time. Parallel to such a drastic change in the local settlement patterns, Huari experienced rapid population growth, more than likely due to the arrival of new residents coming from the recently deserted towns, such as Huaqanmarka.

Therefore, available archaeological information suggests that settlements such as Huaqanmarka were abandoned when the residents of the previously separated villages clustered in a single location – the area where the urban centre of Huari is found. Whether settlement nucleation was done voluntarily or forcefully remains to be determined. Considering that several villages were left vacant about the same time, the possibility that relocation and subsequent nucleation in a single location was perhaps due to a threat coming from elsewhere in the valley cannot be ruled out.

Indeed, only about 25 km south from Huari, at Conchopata, seemingly a similar process to the one briefly discussed here also took place about the same time. Lumbreras (2010:37) asserts that several smaller Huarpa settlements that existed around Conchopata were abandoned as their inhabitants likely moved (or were relocated) towards Conchopata. Future research may provide similar evidence for other sections (north) of the Ayacucho Valley, but at present it is apparent that in two sections of the valley the residents aggregated themselves in two main centers about the same time, leaving deserted their former rural settings. Therefore, it appears that centers such as Huari and Conchopata emerged from such a nucleation and thereafter both played key roles in reshaping the settlement pattern of at least the southern half of the Ayacucho Valley early during the Middle Horizon.

Since nucleation into fewer but larger settlements took place late in the Early Intermediate period, it is also feasible that the competition between these two sections of the valley started before the Middle Horizon, but had become accentuated around the time the residents of the Ayacucho Valley began depicting late Nasca design elements. Although the necessary archaeological evidence is still lacking, it is plausible that the competition between these two sections of the valley resulted in fear and the imminent need for the establishment of defensive measures at both ends. One such defensive response appears to be the aggregation of the residents of the formerly small and dispersed Huarpa villages into fewer, but larger settlements such as Huari and Conchopata. In other words, these two settlements likely constitute the outcome of the possible tensions that existed between these two sections of the Ayacucho Valley. All the changes noted here occurred following the contact with the south coast.

Concluding Remarks

Recent research at Huaqanmarka revealed a dense and continuous human occupation at the hilltop, from about the middle Early Horizon until the end of the Early Intermediate Period. Judging from the material remains uncovered by the excavation, it is apparent that the human occupation at the hilltop was rural and domestic in nature, as the occurrence of a considerable number of plain ware vessels suggests.

During the Early Horizon, the inhabitants of the hilltop appear to have had little or no contact with peoples from other regions beyond the Ayacucho Valley. At present there is nothing that would indicate otherwise. This pattern continued during the Early Intermediate Period, when again a large number of vessels were plain wares. Ceramic technology had improved, since better finished vessels occur around this time. However,

it was not until the end of the period that the ceramic technology witnessed significant improvement. As previous researchers have pointed out, vessels were thin walled and exhibited better surface finishing. Furthermore, colours previously unknown in the region began to be used. Information coming from other Huarpa period settlements indicates that this occurred all over the Ayacucho Valley, suggesting that Ayacucho Valley settlements maintained close relationships.

From one Huarpa settlement to another ceramics occur homogeneously, indicating that Huarpa settlements co-existed in close contact and shared the basic skills of ceramic manufacturing. In the absence of specialized centers of pottery production, it appears that ceramics were produced at the household level and perhaps by women. As women married and moved to new households, more likely they carried their ceramic making knowledge, resulting in the establishment of stylistic homogeneity across the valley. Ethnographic research has shown that within small scale societies, ceramic production is in the hands of women (DeBoer 1990:90; Dietler and Herbich 1989:148; Stern 1989:450), and knowledge is passed from mother to daughter. Thus, as women married, they carried their ceramic making knowledge. If this assessment is correct, Huarpa may have been a patrilocal society.

In addition to the change in surface finishing and wall thickness just noted, late Early Intermediate Period ceramics from the Ayacucho Valley began depicting foreign design elements for the first time, in this case those from the south coast. As mentioned in the previous sections, this is recognized as the Nasca influence. At Huaqanmarka there are sherds exhibiting late Nasca designs and indicate that in the process of interaction with the south coast their inhabitants also participated. Whether the residents of

Huaqanmarka walked all the way to the south coast and/or directly welcomed south coast residents to Huaqanmarka is difficult to determine. Nevertheless, the available evidence indicates that the residents of small settlements such as Huaqanmarka were at least aware about the contact established with peoples from distant lands and eventually produced or acquired vessels depicting foreign designs.

Interaction with distant lands, such as the south coast, likely brought new ideas to the Ayacucho Valley. One such concept appears to be conflict related and in particular the desire to obtain human body parts as trophies. Procuring human heads in particular has a long history on the south coast (Proulx 2001). For instance, Finucane (2008:82-83) interprets as trophies the body parts found at the site of Ñawimpukyo, a settlement found a short distance to the south of Conchopata. Likewise, Tung (2012:103) mentions the occurrence of skeletal trauma likely representing face-to-face combat at Conchopata that took place during the Huarpa period. If future archaeological research can demonstrate that violence in the Ayacucho Valley emerged following the interaction with the south coast, it can be argued that this was one of the concepts that the inhabitants of the Ayacucho Valley had learned from their south coast neighbors.

Perhaps, contact with distant lands enabled the emergence of individuals of prestige in the Ayacucho Valley, who in virtue of their links with other high rank leaders from elsewhere enhanced their status. It may be, as in the Burmese cases discussed by Leach (1990:222), that highland Ayacucho Valley high rank individuals raised their prestige by marrying lowland south coast elite women. Although archaeologically difficult to demonstrate, this may be the manner by which prestigious leaders emerged in the Ayacucho Valley, who likely competed to gain more followers, and thus

became rivals. Although archaeological information remains limited, it is becoming apparent that violence in the Ayacucho Valley during the late Early Intermediate Period was on the rise, which may be linked to the presence of high rank competing individuals.

What is evident from this discussion is that following the interaction with the south coast, the small rural Huarpa settlements, such as Huaqanmarka, were left deserted. As discussed in the previous sections, there is evidence indicating that a considerable number of Huarpa settlements were left vacant about the same time. As the small rural settlements were abandoned, a few other Huarpa towns not only continued being occupied, but also began to grow. One such settlement was Huari itself, the other being Conchopata. What appears to have occurred around this time in the Ayacucho Valley is site nucleation. Following Flannery and Marcus (2012:472), it can be argued that violence that emerged about the end of the Early Intermediate Period pushed the residents of the former rural small settlements out of their villages to move elsewhere, into places with larger populations and therefore more defensible political units. Thus, interaction brought profound change to the Ayacucho Valley. Ultimately, it appears that at the core of site nucleation and the eventual emergence of cities such as Huari itself, there was the need for security. In this process, existing leaders of the towns that welcomed the new arrivals likely increased their prestige, establishing their authority over the immigrants. Thus, the origins of state authority may also ultimately lie within this critical period of site nucleation that culminated in the emergence of cities.

Acknowledgements. Archaeological research at Huaqanmarka was carried out with authorization from the Peruvian Ministerio de la Cultura

(Resolución Directoral No. 289-DGPC-VMPCIC/MC of October 17, 2011). We would like to express our gratitude to Fernando P. Vaquerizo, Yoni Llimpe, Roberto C. Tello, Edwin Guerrero and Eloy Espinoza for their participation in the research process at Huaqanmarka. Likewise, we extend our gratitude to Katrina J. Bettcher for reading several earlier drafts of this paper and provided valuable comments and suggestions that allowed us to improve the paper. Finally we would like to thank the organizers of the 2013 Chacmool Archaeological Conference organizers for inviting us to participate in the South American Session.

NOTE

¹ Huari (with **H**) refers to the ancient city and Wari (with **W**) refers to the pre-Inka Wari State. Likewise, we write Nasca (with **S**) to the ancient Early Intermediate period culture of the south coast; however, when citing we maintain the original spelling such as Nazca.

References

- Benavides, Mario
1976 *Yacimientos arqueológicos de Ayacucho*.
Universidad de Huamanga, Ayacucho.
- Bennett, Wendell C.
1953 *Excavations at Wari, Ayacucho, Peru*. Yale
University Publications in Anthropology 49,
New Haven.
- Carmichael, Patrick H.
1998 Nasca ceramics: production and social
context. In, *Andean Ceramics: Technology,
Organization, and Approaches*, edited by I.
Shimada, pp. 213-231. University of
Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and
Anthropology, Pennsylvania.
- Conlee, Christina A.
2014 Nasca culture integration and complexity: a
perspective from the site of La Tiza. *Journal of
Anthropological Archaeology* 35:234-247.
- DeBoer, Warren R.
1990 Interaction, imitation, and communication as
expressed in style: the Ucayali experience, In

- The Uses of Style in Archaeology*, edited by M. W. Conkey and C. A. Hastorf, pp. 82-104. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Dietler, Michael and Ingrid Herbich
1989 *Tich Matek*: the technology of Luo pottery production and the definition of ceramic style. *World Archaeology* 21 (1): 148-164.
- Eitel, Bernhard and Bertil Mäthel
2009 Man and environment in the eastern Atacama Desert (southern Peru): Holocene climate changes and their impact on pre-Columbian cultures, in *New Technologies for Archaeology: Multidisciplinary Investigations in Palpa and Nasca, Peru*, edited by M. Reindel and G. A. Wagner, pp. 17-37. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg.
- Flannery, Kent and Joyce Marcus
2012 *The Creation of Inequality: how our prehistoric ancestors set the stage for monarchy, slavery, and empire*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London.
- Finucane, Brain C.
2008 Trophy heads from Nawimpukio, Peru: physical and chemical analysis of Huarpa-era modified human remains. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 135:75-84.
- Isbell, William H.
1988 City and state in Middle Horizon Peru. In, *Peruvian Prehistory*, edited by R. Keatinge, pp. 164-189. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- 1997 Reconstructing Huari: a cultural chronology for the capital city. In, *Emergence and Change in Early Urban Societies*, edited by L. Manzanilla, pp. 181-227. Plenum Press, New York & London.
- Isbell, William H. and Katharina J. Schreiber
1978 Was Huari a state? *American Antiquity* 43 (3): 372-389.
- Knobloch, Patricia J.
1991 Stylistic date of ceramics from the Huari centers. In, *Huari Administrative Structure: prehistoric monumental architecture and state government*, edited by W. H. Isbell and G. F. MacEwan, pp. 247-258. *Dumbarton Oaks*, Washington, D.C.
- 2012 Archives in clay the styles and stories of Wari ceramic artists. In, *Wari, Lords of the Ancient Andes*, edited by L. E. Oscar, pp.122-142. The Cleveland Museum of Art and Thames and Hudson, New York.
- 2013 An Early Intermediate period deposit of Huarpa style ceramics from the site of Huari, department of Ayacucho, Peru. *Arqueo Ayacucho Peru*.
- Leach, Edmund R.
1990 *Political Systems of Highland Burma: a Study of Kachin Social Structure*. London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology No. 44. The Athlone Press, London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ.
- Lumbreras, Luis G.
1959 Esquema arqueológico de la sierra central del Perú. *Revista del Museo Nacional* XXVIII: 63-116.
- 1960 La cultura de Wari, Ayacucho. In, *Etnología y Arqueología* 1 (1):130-227.
- 1974 *The Peoples and Cultures of Ancient Peru*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- 1975 *Las Fundaciones de Huamanga*. Club de Huamanga Editores, Lima.
- 1980 El Imperio Wari. In, *Historiad el Perú*, vol. 2, pp. 9 - 91. Editorial J. Mejia Baca, Lima.
- 2010 *Plan de manejo del complejo arqueológico Wari, Ayacucho*. Gobierno Regional de Ayacucho, Plan Copesco Nacional, Ayacucho.
- McEwan, Gordon F. and Patrick R. Williams
2012 The Wari built environment: landscape and architecture of empire. In, *Wari, Lords of the Ancient Andes*, edited by L. E. Oscar, pp.65-81. The Cleveland Museum of Art and Thames and Hudson, New York.
- Menzel, Dorothy
1964 Style and Time in the Middle Horizon. *Ñawpa Pacha* 2:1-106.
- Mortimer, W. Golden.
1901 *Peru History of Coca: the Divine Plant of the Incas*. New York: J. H. Vail and Company.
- Pérez, Ismael
2012 Asentamientos periféricos del centro urbano de Conchopata, Ayacucho. *Arqueología y Sociedad* 25:143-168.
- Piacenza, Luigi
2002 Evidencias botánicas de asentamientos Nasca.

- Boletín del Museo de Arqueología y Antropología* 5 (1): 3-13. Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima.
- Plowman, Timothy
1979 Botanical perspectives on coca. *Journal of Psychedelic Drugs* 11 (1-2):103-117.
- Proulx, Donald A.
1994 Stylistic variation in proliferous Nasca pottery. *Andean Past* 4:91-107.
2001 Ritual uses of trophy heads in ancient Nasca society. In, *Ritual Sacrifice in Ancient Peru*, edited by E. Benson and A. Cook, pp. 119-36. University of Texas Press, Austin.
2006 *A source book of Nasca iconography*. University of Iowa Press, Iowa City.
- Rowe, John H.
1956 Archaeological explorations in southern Peru. *American Antiquity* 22:135-51.
- Rowe, John H., Donald Collier and Gordon R. Willey
1950 Reconnaissance notes on the site of Huari, near Ayacucho, Peru. *American Antiquity* 16 (2):120-137.
- Schreiber, Katharina J.
1992 *Wari imperialism in Middle Horizon Peru*. Museum of Anthropology, Anthropological Papers 87. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
2001 The Wari Empire of Middle Horizon Peru: the epistemological challenge of documenting an empire without documentary evidence. In, *Empires*, edited by S. E. Alcock, T. N. D'Altroy, K. D. Morrison & C. M. Sinopoli, pp. 70-92. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
2012 The rise of an Andean empire. In, *Wari, Lords of the Ancient Andes*, edited by L. E. Oscar, pp.31-45. The Cleveland Museum of Art and Thames and Hudson, New York.
- Silverman, Helaine and Donald A. Proulx
2002 *The Nasca*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden and Oxford.
- Sossna, Volker.
2014 *Impacts of Climate Variability on Prehispanic Settlement Behavior in South Peru: the northern Rio Grande drainage between 15000 BCE and 1532 CE*. Unpublished Ph.D dissertation der Mathematisch-Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel
- vorgelegt von, Bonn.
- Towle, Margaret A.
2007 *The Ethnobotany of Pre-Columbian Peru*. Aldine Transaction, New Brunswick and London.
- Tung, Tiffany A.
2012 *Violence, ritual and the Wari Empire: a social bioarchaeology of imperialism in the ancient Andes*. University of Florida Press, Gainesville.
- Valdez, Lidio M.
1996 The Early Intermediate Period beyond the Ayacucho Valley, Peru. In, *Debating Complexity*, edited by D. Meyer, P. Dawson and D. Hannan, pp. 600 - 606. Proceedings of the 26th Annual Chacmool Archaeological Conference. University of Calgary, Calgary.
1997 Ecology and ceramic production in an Andean community: a reconsideration of the evidence. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 53:65-85.
2009 La investigación arqueológica en el valle de Acari y la contribución de Francis A. Riddell. In, *Arqueología del Área Centro Sur Andina*, edited by M. S. Ziolkowski et al., pp. 255-279. Boletín del Centro de Estudios Precolombinos de la Universidad de Varsovia and Institut Français d'Études Andines, Varsovia and Lima.
- Valdez, Lidio M. and Juan Taboada
2013 Coca leaves in the context of the central Andean Wari State. Paper presented at the 46th. *Annual Chacmool Archaeological Conference*. University of Calgary, Calgary, November 07 – 11, 2013.
- Williams, R. Patrick
2001 Cerro Baúl: a Wari center in the Tiwanaku frontier. *Latin American Antiquity* 12 (1): 67-83.
- Williams R. Patrick and Donna Nash
2002 Imperial interactions in the Andes: Wari and Tiwanaku at Cerro Baúl. In, *Andean Archaeology I: Variation and Sociopolitical Organization*, edited by W. H. Isbell & H. Silverman, pp. 243-265. Kluwer Academic/Plenum, New York.