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Rituals of the Past

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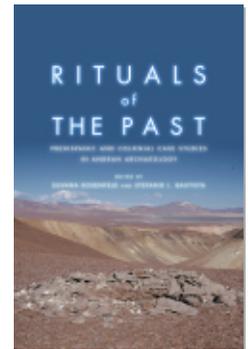
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The Formative period of Andean civilization is a complicated process of interaction among, and vicissitudes of, many local cultures that occupied different ecological niches in the coastal lowlands as well as in the highlands. Although it is true that religion, ritual, cosmology, and ideology played a very important role in this process, it has been difficult to understand their roles in a more detailed way. At many Andean centers, including the Mito Tradition phase at Kotosh and the later site of Kuntur Wasi, dismantling one ceremonial structure and building a new one on top of it was a careful and recurrent activity. Here I present a hypothesis that involves the ideology of temple renovation as a prime mover of social development in the Formative period. Such ideology was the result of a long sociocultural process starting in the late Archaic period/initial Formative period, possibly related to Amazonian mythology and the transformative power of slash-and-burn agriculture practiced in the rainforest.

KOTOSH AND OTHER SITES IN THE UPPER HUALLAGA BASIN

In the 1960s, several sites were excavated around Huánuco city located in the Upper Huallaga Basin (Peru) with the principal objective to clarify the socio-cultural process before and after the so-called Chavín culture (Izumi and Sono 1963; Izumi and Terada 1972).

From Ritual to Ideology

*Ritual Activity and Artistic
Representations in the
Northern Highlands of Peru
in the Formative Period*

YOSHIO ONUKI

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The intensive excavations were carried out in three seasons at the site of Kotosh, which produced new data for the Andean archaeology of those days. I choose three points from those results that I think are worth mentioning here. One is the establishment of a chronology of the Formative period around Huánuco, which begins with the Kotosh Mito phase, which is preceramic, and then continues through two phases of pre-Chavín pottery. The Kotosh Chavín phase follows, which gives way to the Kotosh Sajarapatac phase with the characteristics of the White-on-Red pottery style (figure 4.1). The second contribution was the discovery of two pre-Chavín phases with pottery, the Kotosh Wairajirca phase and the Kotosh Kotosh phase, and the third was the discovery of a series of preceramic constructions, the most salient of which was the Temple of the Crossed Hands. These three points were corroborated through excavations at other sites such as Shillacoto, Paucarbamba, Wairajirca, and Sajarapatac, all in the same Upper Huallaga Basin.

MITO PHASE CEREMONIAL ARCHITECTURE AT KOTOSH

Kotosh is located 1,950 meters above sea level (masl) and about 5 km west of Huánuco city on the right bank of the Higuera River, a tributary of the Huallaga River. The entire valley bottom and its immediate lower parts of the surrounding slopes belong to the *yunga* zone of Pulgar Vidal's (1967) scheme. This zone is below 2,400 masl, warm and dry throughout the year with a small amount of precipitation during the winter, and it is suited for growing many crops and fruits. This important ecological zone is located in both the coastal valleys and the highlands.

TEMPLE OF THE CROSSED HANDS

The excavations revealed that the preceramic ceremonial architecture was a three-terrace complex. The first terrace, that is, the topmost terrace, has been lost because of looting activity, probably during the colonial period. The Temple of the Crossed Hands was unearthed on the second terrace in a fairly good state of preservation (figure 4.2). Widening the excavation area for this temple, we found that another similar structure had been laid just above the temple. We named this new one the Temple of the Small Niches. So here, we distinguished two sub-phases.

Many traces of similar structures appeared on the third terrace to the north of the second one, and the excavations made clear that there was a third sub-phase, namely, the sub-phase of the White Temple, which had at least two

	Pandanche La Granja	Pacopampa	Huacaloma	Cerro Blanco	Kuntur Wasi	Jequetepeque Medio	Bajo	Huánuco Kotosh	Shillacoto	Paucarbamba	Wairajira	Sajarapatac
AD	Cajamarca		Cajamarca		Cajamarca	Moche	Moche	K. Higuera				
BC			Layzón	Sotera (Layzón)	Sotera (Layzón)	Sotera (Layzón)		K. Sajarapatac			K. Sajarapatac	K. Sajarapatac
	El Rollo		EL		Copa	Copa		K. Chavín		K. Chavín		K. Chavín
500					Kuntur Wasi	Lechuzas						
	PCP II	PCP II	Huacaloma Tardío				Limoncarró					
1000	PCP I	PCP I		Cerro Blanco	Idolo		Galera	K. Kotosh	K. Kotosh		K. Kotosh	
	Pandanche		Huacaloma Temprano	La Conga		Hamacas Montegranda		K. Wairajira	K. Wairajira		K. Wairajira	
1500												
2000								K. Mito	K. Mito		K. Mito	
3000								Piruru				

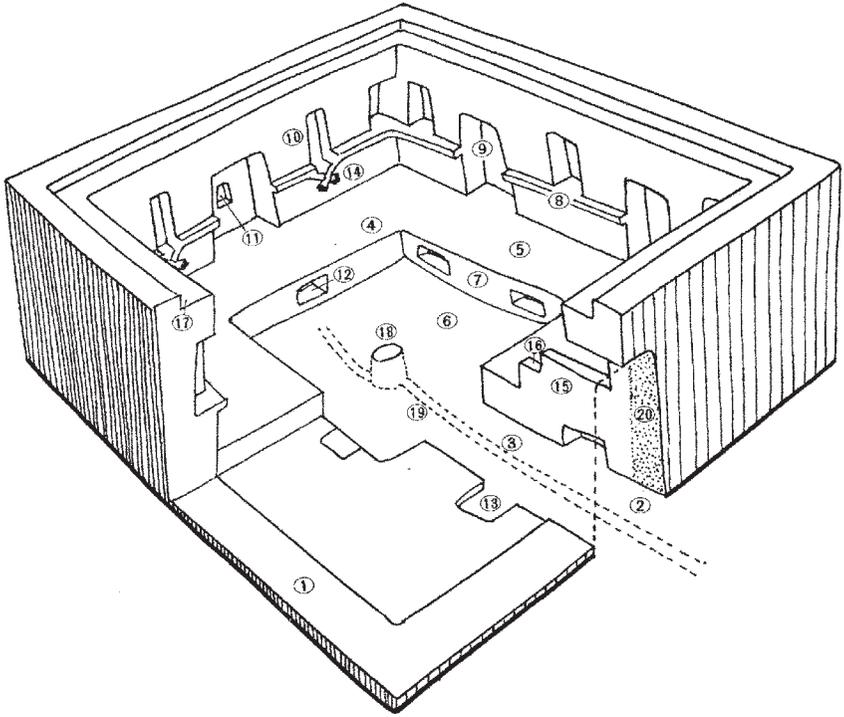
FIGURE 4.1. Chronological chart for some excavated sites in the northern highlands

contiguous rooms. Consequently, the Mito phase is divided into three sub-phases (figure 4.3).

In the first sub-phase the White Temple was constructed on the third, or lowest, terrace. At least two rooms form this temple: one, ER-28, is 4 m × 4 m with a narrow entrance in the center of the north wall, and only half of the other room, ER-27, was excavated. The wall thickness is 60–70 cm, and every face and the surface of the floor are thickly coated with fine clay finished in white. A two-level floor with a circular hearth in the center and small niches on the interior faces are characteristic of the walls. In one niche, several unbaked clay objects were found: two figurines, a gourd-like object, a discoidal one, and a tiny bowl.

If this temple complex was built on the three-tier massive platform, then there must have been some structure on the second terrace that was buried under the Temple of the Crossed Hands. A small test pit was dug from the floor of this temple, and a well-coated floor was detected under the layers of ash and soil. This means the Temple of the Crossed Hands was built after another, previous structure built on the second terrace and contemporaneous with the White Temple was buried.

The Temple of the Crossed Hands (UR-22) was found in an excellent condition of preservation (see figure 4.3). The outer dimension is 9.50 m × 9.30 m, and the walls are 2.39–2.85 m high. The wall is about 1 m thick. In the interior, large and small niches are arranged symmetrically; the largest on the



- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| (1) main wall | (11) niche-within-a-niche |
| (2) entrance | (12) small niche at the perimeter wall |
| (3) entryway | (13) niche in the flanking wall of the entryway |
| (4) split-level construction | (14) relief depicting crossed hands |
| (5) upper-level floor | (15) flanking wall |
| (6) lower-level floor | (16) in-cut of the flanking wall |
| (7) perimeter wall | (17) in-cut margin of the main wall |
| (8) stringcourse | (18) hearth |
| (9) large niche | (19) flue |
| (10) niche | (20) red pigment applied to the outer half of the end of the wall at the entrance |

FIGURE 4.2. *Temple of the Crossed Hands at Kotosh*

north wall is impressive, with a small niche on each side, and the high reliefs of crossed hands were attached on the wall face below these two niches. The whole interior from the floor to the walls was plastered in creamy white. It seems that the outside was painted red.



FIGURE 4.3. Several temples of the Kotosh Mito phase, showing the trace of renovation

The floor is a split-level structure, *pericaust* (lower floor) and *epicaust* (upper floor) according to the terminology used by Bonnier (1997), and a hearth 40 cm in diameter was found in the center of the lower floor. The difference between the two floor levels is 40–50 cm. Beneath the floor, two ventilating ducts were prepared, running from the hearth to the north and south.

When observing the overlapping of these buildings, it is clear that after some time passed, this temple together with the rooms on the third terrace were buried or destroyed. A new temple, the Temple of the Small Niches, was built just above the fill of the Temple of the Crossed Hands.

TEMPLE OF THE SMALL NICHES

The excavation of this temple revealed the details of its ritualized construction process. In the beginning fine black sand was piled to cover the two reliefs of crossed hands; the sand ultimately formed a cone. Slightly later, the entrance was filled with cobblestones and clay mortar. The logs used for the roof were removed. A huge amount of cobblestone filled the inner space of the temple as well as the outside in the space between the walls and newly built retaining walls that surrounded the west and north sides of the temple. These stones were fairly large, able to be carried two or three at a time by one person, and they had smooth and clean surfaces without any dirt or stains.

Reddish-brown clay was piled thick to prepare the floor of a new temple (the Small Niches). A stone-lined hearth was turned into this reddish-brown soil, and two flues (ducts) were set and connected to the hearth. All of these were covered with soil, and then a row of stones was laid around the area to form the perimeter walls that were to divide the pericaust from the epicaust. A fairly large amount of ash and small pieces of charcoal were spread in the area defined for the pericaust. Again, a sufficient quantity of soil was brought and carefully piled to prepare the split-level floor, together with the construction of perimeter walls with small niches, as well as the four outer, thick walls. The creamy-white plaster was put all over the surface and floor, and the Temple of the Small Niches was complete. Bonnier (1997) suggested that the red soil on the floor was important to this process of demolishing an old temple and rebuilding a new one, but I posit instead that the scattering of ash below the pericaust was much more significant, since the ash scattering appeared to have been limited to the area surrounded by the stone alignment for the pericaust.

This phenomenon of scattered ash below the pericaust floor is repeated in every room of the Kotosh Mito phase. Although we did not excavate below the Temple of the Crossed Hands, a small test pit showed a layer of ash below the floor (we found a deer antler in the ash), and there was a well-plastered floor at a deeper level.

INTERPRETING THE MITO TEMPLES AT KOTOSH

We do not know how to interpret the meaning of the crossed hands. Viewed from the entrance, the left one is thicker than the right-side one. We can only suggest that perhaps the pair may represent the masculine and the feminine, a kind of dualism, but we cannot go further yet. In contrast, the ash below the floor, together with the act of renovation, tells us much more. Two characteristics of the ceremonial architecture of the Kotosh Mito phase

are worth emphasizing. One is what I once called “renovation of temple” (Onuki 1993, 1994b). The overlapping of temple structures during the Mito phase can be divided into three sub-phases, and, as Bonnier (1997) pointed out, there were minor renovations during these sub-phases. Through renovation, some structures were buried completely and the other ones destroyed; only the floors were left. The careful covering of the reliefs of the hands led Izumi and Matsuzawa (1967) to coin the term *temple entombment* for this act of burying the temples. This term has become popular in various archaeological publications.

I would rather emphasize the aim of the burying, however. The question is, why did the temples have to be buried? Since there is no regularity in the manner of burying—with many destroyed and some buried without damage—and since the new ones were built in a uniform and ritual manner, it is obvious that old temples were destroyed and buried so new ones might be built on the newly prepared platforms. The basic concept is the temple renovation. We do not know what cosmology was behind this temple renovation, but similar activities are found in the preceramic public architectures at Caral (Shady Solís 2005; Shady Solís and Leyva 2003) and in much later sites such as Huacaloma of the Formative period in Cajamarca (Terada and Onuki 1982, 1985) and Huaca de la Luna of Moche culture. Beyond the Central Andes we see many other cases in Mesoamerica, such as Teotihuacan and Copan.

The second characteristic is also related to renovation: the preparation of a hearth and spread of ash at the beginning of construction of a temple. The old temple was abandoned, and the new temple emerges on the surface of ash. The renovation means the rebirth of the temple, and it comes out of ash. The process is reminiscent of slash-and-burn agriculture, a common agricultural technique in the tropical rainforest in which a new field is opened and the fallen trees are burned to ash. New plants come out of the soil that contains the ash. After some time, the field is abandoned and a new field is prepared; thus, the same process is repeated.

Not only the ash and hearth but also the subterranean flues are reminiscent of myths told in northwestern Amazonia.

M5 *HE* ANACONDA

Then he [*He* Anaconda] told his son to light a fire and burn him on it so that there would be more *He*. His son lit a fire, dragged *He* Anaconda round and round the house and then out of the front door on to the plaza. There he put him on a big fire till he burned to ashes.

In the place where the fire had been, tobacco, caraiuru, fish-poison, calaloo, and a paxiuba palm grew up, first tobacco and then the palm.

From the place where *He Anaconda* was burned, the people came and obtained all kinds of magic substance used in shamanism.

M6 B MANIOC-STICK ANACONDA BURNS HIMSELF

Manioc-stick Anaconda was angry with himself. He put snuff in his mouth and then took it out and put it in a little heap on the ground. It began to burn and a spark landed on his neck.

Manioc-stick Anaconda burned and everything round him caught fire. The whole land was white from the ash of the fire.

His soul left his body and became another man, also Manioc-stick Anaconda. He was a man like us.

Manioc-stick Anaconda's shadow lay on the ground burned to ash. From the charcoal on the ground grew up manioc, all the manioc there is today[:] green calaloo (*Phytolacca* sp.), red calaloo (*Phyto.* Sp.), various fungi, fish-poison. (Hugh-Jones 1979:284, 293-94)

These myths make it tempting to interpret the flues in the ash layer under the floor as references to the anaconda or serpent.

Anthropologists commonly conceptualize the cosmology of a given society through analysis of ritual, myth, and exogenic explanations made by local people. Many societies have no theory or philosophy about human existence in the universe, explicitly and "logically" told. We must abstract it from ritual performances on various occasions and from what the people say. Archaeologists do the same through analysis of what remains in a site.

Temple renovation is observed not only at Kotosh but also at Caral, La Galgada, and other sites, as well as at Huacaloma in the Cajamarca Basin and many Formative sites. Although we do not know much about subsistence at these sites, a few known cultigens (e.g., manioc) originate from the tropical environment. Given the potential links outlined above, the relation of the temple renovation with cultigens from the tropical forest may prove a fruitful topic for further research.

ANOTHER STYLE OF RENOVATION: EXCAVATIONS AT KUNTUR WASI

In 1979 we began excavations at the large and complex site of Huacaloma in the Cajamarca Basin (figure 4.4). The chronology for the Formative period



FIGURE 4.4. Location of some Formative sites in the Jequetepeque and Cajamarca Valleys

has four phases, beginning with the Early Huacaloma and continuing through the Late Huacaloma and EL before ending with the Layzón phase (see figure 4.1).¹ It was during the excavations at Huacaloma that the idea of temple renovation began to take shape, since the repetition of construction of large-scale retaining walls was noticed for the Late Huacaloma phase. While the pottery from that phase shares some traits with the so-called Cupisnique-style pottery, we have not been able to define a phase as definitely Cupisnique, which is different from the Kotosh Chavín phase in Huánuco (Onuki 1994a; Onuki and Inokuchi 2011).

The absence of a definite phase of Cupisnique-related culture in the Cajamarca Basin but its presence at Kuntur Wasi, which lies just on the other side of the mountains from Cajamarca, eventually led us to initiate the Kuntur Wasi project in 1988. Prior to Kuntur Wasi, a small-scale excavation had been carried out at the site of Cerro Blanco, about 1 km northeast of Kuntur Wasi. A comparison of stratigraphy among these three sites revealed a very interesting fact.

As mentioned, the chronology for the Formative period at Huacaloma is the Early Huacaloma, Late Huacaloma, EL, and Layzón. At Cerro Blanco, the first two phases shared almost the same characteristics with Huacaloma, but then there was a lapse in occupation; reoccupation began in the Sotera phase, equivalent to the Layzón phase in Cajamarca. The first occupation at Kuntur Wasi began in the Idolo phase, equivalent to the Cerro Blanco and Late Huacaloma phases, and the next occupation was the Kuntur Wasi phase, which was accompanied by a drastic change in ceremonial architecture as a whole. In the subsequent Copa phase the same pattern of ceremonial architecture continued, but there was a noticeable change in pottery style. After the Copa phase, the ceremonial structures of the Sotera phase completely destroyed those of the previous phase. The Kuntur Wasi phase pottery had many characteristics of the Cupisnique style, which had been observed rather

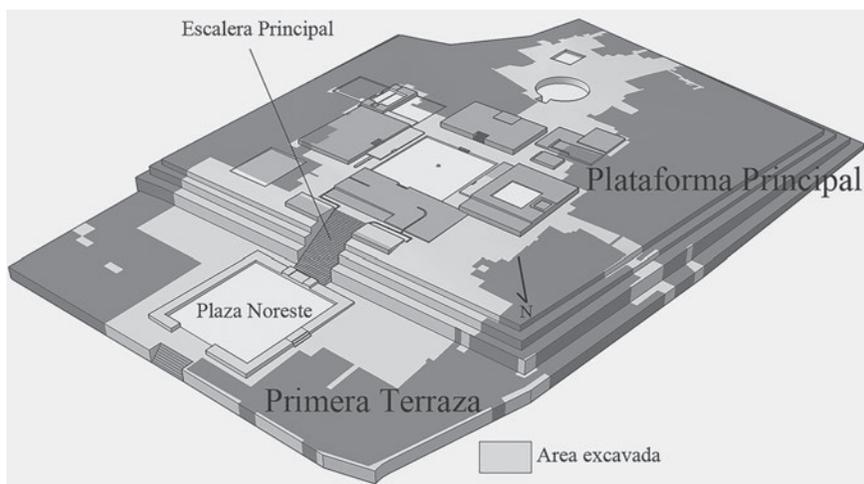


FIGURE 4.5. *Plan of the temple of the Kuntur Wasi phase*

sporadically in the Cerro Blanco and Late Huacaloma phases. The EL phase shares the principal characteristics of pottery with the Copa phase, but both the Kuntur Wasi phase and the Copa phase were definitely absent at Cerro Blanco, a neighboring site very close to Kuntur Wasi.

The architectural plan of the Kuntur Wasi phase is summarized in figure 4.5:

1. The entire complex is composed of terraced platforms, with the highest terrace the topmost platform (the Principal Platform) upon which the most important architecture was built.
2. On the Principal Platform are arranged a U-shaped complex with three platforms and a sunken square court. This occupies the northern half of the top of the platform where several stone sculptures were unearthed.
3. The square sunken court has four staircases, one each in the center of each side, and each has a stone sculpture set firmly on the fourth, highest step. Two of these were excavated in 1946 and had been considered to be lintels.
4. Five special tombs were found below the floor of the Central Platform of the U-shape. Four were associated with cinnabar, Cupisnique-style pottery, and gold objects such as crowns, nose ornaments, ear ornaments, and pendants.
5. There was a circular sunken court and a series of platforms on the southern half of the Principal Platform. Special tombs with gold objects were found below the floor of the platforms outside the circular court.

6. Subterranean canals ran below the platforms and sunken courts, with outlets in the retaining walls of the four sides of the Principal Platform.

The most unexpected discovery in the excavations at Kuntur Wasi was a series of exceptionally well-prepared tombs associated with elaborate gold objects. The tombs with gold were found in both the Kuntur Wasi and Copa phases. Some gold pieces have very figurative designs, tempting us to conjecture about their meanings or the underlying cosmology. Although we observe the renovation of buildings or temples during the Idolo phase, the phase of the first occupation at the hill of Kuntur Wasi, the new temples of the second phase (the Kuntur Wasi phase) were the result of a rather violent destruction and building with a completely distinct idea of what constituted a ceremonial center.

RITUAL AT KUNTUR WASI

THE SERPENT-COILED EYE AND THE SQUARE EYE

One notable trait in the figurative representations at Kuntur Wasi is manifested in the eyes observed in stone sculptures and a gold object (figure 4.6). One eye is round, and a serpent coils it with its tail; the other one is square or rectangular with the pupil looking up. This set of eyes is represented on the face of the stone sculpture discovered in 1946 (figure 4.7). It was found by accident during agricultural cultivation, and we do not know its original position. One side represents a standing figure with a large feline face that has that set of eyes. The figure grabs a small human head with sharp claws and stands upright with crossed legs. The other side also represents a standing figure, but it has two round eyes, and the face lacks a jaw. It holds a long lance or stick with a triangular sharp point. Two serpents emanate from its two round eyes toward both sides of the face.

The set of two eyes is represented in a peculiar manner in the four stone sculptures set in the staircases of the Central Plaza (the square sunken court). Here, coming from the main stairway of the Principal Platform, one faces the Plaza and the Central Platform beyond, and then one sees the stone set on the southern staircase of the Central Plaza. This stone represents a feline face or two feline profiles facing each other, and the eyes are square. The other three stones have the feline face first, but all of them have serpent-coiled eyes. It is obvious that these four stones represent the dualism of eyes as opposition. The standing figure can therefore be considered the representation of the integration of two opposite principles into one.



FIGURE 4.6. *Gold nose ornament of the monster face with two different eyes*

In 1989, when we found one stone on the stairway on the east side of the Central Plaza, we thought there would be another stone on the opposite side with the representation of square eyes. In 1990, however, the excavation revealed the stairway and the stone on it, but the stone had round eyes coiled by a serpent tail. This set of four stone sculptures in the Central Plaza, then, is not symmetrically arranged. The arrangement is of one stone with square eyes opposed to three stones with round eyes.

The four sculptures with two distinctive eyes share a characteristic form of mouth that is rhomboidal and seems to be an outlet for a canal. A very interesting stirrup-spout bottle, said to be from the North Coast Cupisnique culture, is exhibited in the National Museum of Anthropology, Archaeology, and History in Lima. It is polished black, representing in its body a feline face with an eye coiled by a serpent tail and another square eye, and the feline face



FIGURE 4.7. *Stone sculpture with two different eyes*

has a mouth that consists of a short, square tube. This representation has the same characteristics as the four stones in the Central Plaza of Kuntur Wasi. This pottery and the four stones apparently had some meaning related to water.

Another sculpture found in the fill of the Central Plaza was present during the Copa phase in some structure on the eastern platform of the U-shape. It represents a human face without any mythical elements except a serpent design hanging below the jaw. The noticeable trait is that the mouth has a hole cut deep into the interior. Although the original position is unknown, this sculpture also must have had some meaning related to water.

A GOLD ORNAMENT WITH THE MOTIF OF TWINS AND A MONSTER

One tomb under the Central Platform was for an old man buried with a gold crown, a pair of ear ornaments of rectangular plates, and two nose

ornaments (the term *mouth mask* can also be used). At first these objects, except the crown, were considered to be pectorals, but the similarity to the nose ornaments attached to the gold masks of the Calima culture of Colombia changed our interpretation to that of a nose ornament and led us to interpret the two rectangular objects as ear ornaments. These and the Calima nose pendants share the same structural characteristics. The form is the shape of the letter H. The horizontal bar of the H is wide, and a feline-like face is expressed in *repoussé*. The four extremities of the H end in the shape of a human or animal face; while the lower two are in a normal position, the upper two are in the reverse position, looking up.

We do not know why this similarity occurs. Except for one H-shaped gold object possessed by Enrico Poli, which is apparently a nose ornament, there are no other examples of this type of nose pendant reported in Peru or outside Calima. Furthermore, there is a time lag of at least 500 years between Kuntur Wasi and the Calima culture.

This *repoussé* design represents a fierce monster in the center (figure 4.8). Two arms and legs come out of the monster and end in sharp claws. Two small human figures with feline profiles sit on the monster's knees, and the two claws grab the small figures on the back. The figures are small and naked, and they lack teeth, which leads us to posit that they are either two children, brothers, or twins and to consider myths about the twins and a monster, jaguar, toad, and so on. The theme is about the twins as culture heroes. There is a tale from the Canta province in the Peruvian highlands about Pachamama's son and daughter, the twins, and a savage Wacon, and it is a variant of the twins and monster theme. A legend from the Marañon River in the highlands is about a monstrous old woman named Achucay and twins, and a legend from Huamachuco tells a story of the Wachemines tribe; a girl of the tribe bore twins who acted as culture heroes when they grew up (Agustinos 1952).

The wide distribution of this theme in the tropical lowlands from Venezuela through Colombia and Ecuador to Peru on the east side of the Andean mountains, as presented by Carrión Cachot (1959), may lead us to suppose that the prototype of this theme may have been among the incipient agriculturalists in the tropical lowlands of northwestern South America.

THE GOLD CROWN OF TWELVE HANGING FACES

The crown has the design of two rows of hexagonal frames, like windows, with human faces hanging in them. The style of hexagonal meshes apparently



FIGURE 4.8. *Gold nose ornament of the monster and twins*

represents a woven basket. If this motif is one of heads in a basket, we are reminded of a stone plate introduced by Burger and Salazar-Burger (1982), which depicts in relief a feline-face spider carrying a bag with heads. A spider grabs a head by the hair. Apparently, this design refers to a headhunting, probably for sacrifice and offerings, and the executioner is identified with a spider. Later examples of this spider as headhunter are well-known to us in the wall decorations at Huaca de la Luna and El Brujo, as well as from the gold bells found on Sipán and Chimú pottery from the Casma Valley (Carrión Cachot 1959).

While there is no evidence related to a spider, the motif of heads in a basket or bag is found in Cupisnique pottery. It seems probable that many of those bottles came from the Cupisnique culture of the Jequetepeque Valley. The head in the hexagonal frame is a motif found in the incised designs on the pottery vessels of the Late Huacaloma phase in the Cajamarca Basin and in the Pacopampa I phase (1200–800 BC) at Pacopampa. This motif is fairly common in the pottery of the early Formative period in the northern highlands, especially in the pottery of, so to speak, the Pacopampa-Huacaloma

style. This style was found at Cerro Blanco and also at Kuntur Wasi, called the Cerro Blanco phase and the Idolo phase, respectively; at Kuntur Wasi it preceded the occupation by the Cupisnique-related Kuntur Wasi phase. There is a group of pottery found in the middle Jequetepeque Valley, sometimes called Tembladera style, which features the frequent use of post-fire painting that is much more common in the Pacopampa-Huacaloma style and less common, even rare, in the Cupisnique style of the North Coast.

With respect to the relationship of Kuntur Wasi with the Cupisnique style, a human figure with a feline face is worth noting. Its form, size, and appearance made the local people working in the excavations call it "Idolo" (idol), which in turn made us denominate the associated architectural phase the Idolo phase. This idol was made of unbaked clay, to be attached to the wall of a room; therefore, it was part of a wall decoration. It represents a feline-faced standing figure, about 73.5 cm high, 21 cm wide, and 10 cm thick. All of the surface is painted: the top of the head is pink, the head and body are red with cinnabar, a narrow headband and a waist belt are yellow, the eyes are black, and a big necklace is green with pulverized malachite. The square eyes are eccentric with upturned pupils, and the mouth shows the teeth and fangs with squared, not pointed, tips (figure 4.9). Stylistically, it can be called Cupisnique, and Bischoff points out the similarity to the decorative relief at Huaca de los Reyes (Bischof 1998:66).

Nevertheless, Kuntur Wasi was a recipient of Cupisnique traits, as was Chavín de Huántar, as Pozorski pointed out more than thirty years ago: "The type site of Chavin de Huantar cannot be viewed as a purely 'Chavin' site, and certainly not as the source for all related architectural, iconographic, and ceramic elements. Instead, Chavin de Huantar is a blending of elements from the coast, the highlands, and the tropical forest and was apparently a receiver, not a sender, of what have come to be called 'Chavin' traits" (Pozorski 1983:36).

The pottery of the Idolo phase, as stated before, is almost identical to that of the Cerro Blanco phase as well as to the Pacopampa-Huacaloma style. However, the representation of feline-man is not found in the pottery. The relationship between Tembladera and Cupisnique must be clarified to resolve the dynamic process between the highlands and the coast during the early Formative period.

FROM RITUAL TO IDEOLOGY

In the area of Huánuco from Kotosh down to Wairajirca, we detected at least five sites located about 5 km from one another. From west to east these sites are Kotosh, Shillacoto, Jancao, Warampayloma, and Wairajirca. The sites



FIGURE 4.9. *“Idol” figure of earth
for a wall relief of the Idolo phase*

of Kotosh, Shillacoto, and Wairajirca were excavated, and all of them have three stratigraphic phases: the Kotosh Mito, Kotosh Wairajirca, and Kotosh Kotosh phases. All of them also had ceremonial architecture during the Kotosh Mito phase. It seems possible that the other two sites, unexcavated as of yet, have the same kind of buildings in the Kotosh Mito phase strata. It is clear, therefore, that each settlement had a similar kind of ceremonial or public building, sharing with each other the same ritual tradition. Burger and Salazar-Burger (1980) call this the Kotosh Religious Tradition, and Bonnier (1997) terms it the Mito Tradition.

The small size of the architecture at Wairajirca suggests that the building was constructed with a small amount of labor. If there was a small village of about twenty or thirty households, the labor of the inhabitants may have been enough to construct the building on the stone-faced platform. It can be

said, consequently, that the ritual was of a smaller scale than that at Kotosh or Shillacoto. The sizes of the building were different according to population size or some other factors in each settlement or village.

The renovation of temples may have begun as ritual. The cosmology behind the ritual may have been parallel to slash-and-burn agriculture, as stated above, but the ritual was practiced within the village. The importance of the ritual, whatever the scale of participants, is that the place where the ritual was performed had to be renewed periodically. This ritual was deeply set in the society as custom. Nobody asked why or for what purpose the ritual was performed, but all the people knew well what to do.

With the passage of time, however, social conditions can change. For example, we might consider an increase or decrease in the population or changes in agricultural production or in the relationship with neighboring villages. Such changes in the society influence the ritual performance, and the change in ritual creates a need for explanation. This interactive process between society and cosmology causes ritual to become more complicated and sophisticated over time. The relationship or competition with neighboring villages also reinforces this process of sophistication. Thus, it may have begun as a somewhat simple ritual. A small place was prepared for the ritual, with the idea that the place would be renewed after some time. The next renovation was elaborated on a slightly larger scale, or better, than the previous place. The social and cultural effects of this renovation can be summarized as follows.

This renovation had an important effect, setting in train a series of other activities, although the residents may have been unaware of this at the time. Temple construction required the accumulation of food and drink, which stimulated the search for more productive cultigens and technologies. Enlarging a temple required a greater labor force, accelerating population growth. A larger population required increased food production and more efficient systems of social control. To justify the renovation, the temple had to provide its congregation with a more refined and sophisticated cosmology and rituals, together with their material representations. Thus, temple renovation, even though it began on a small scale, triggered a series of technological, social, and cultural innovations. As a result, communities that practiced it became more open to innovation, more productive, and more efficient (Onuki 2002:65).

So far as this ritual activity can be performed within a village or in a much smaller social group, it is justified by custom, but when the renovation demands a concentration and control of labor because of the enhanced scale of building, the ritual performance needs to be reinforced by explicative cosmology. By then,

the justification must have been refined on the basis of sophistication of the cosmology. In response to the complicated procedure of ritual, there must have been a growing group of people specialized in ritual, cosmology, and social control, at least in labor allocation. When this group justifies itself, its ritual activity, and its control of labor with cosmology in a convincingly explanatory form, such a cosmologically justified explanation can be called ideology. Temple renovation was possible without ideology in the Upper Huallaga Basin, at least during the Kotosh Mito phase, but I am not sure if it was possible to continue the work of renovating much larger temples, such as those at Caral, without ideology.

There are few visible representations of a cosmological or mythical concept among the preceramic public constructions. The figurative representations in relief or mural painting are abundant in the large-scale architecture from the earliest ceramic phase. Although the renovation continued on a larger scale, it had already surpassed the limit a village-sized community could support. It is highly possible that some elite group directed the construction by organizing the laborers and sustaining them on food produced within a well-planned economic system.

At Huacaloma, the earliest settled life with pottery began in the Early Huacaloma phase, and almost identical pottery is found at Pandanche near Pacopampa, Cerro Blanco near Kuntur Wasi, and the middle valley of Jequetepeque in such sites as Montegrande, La Bomba, and Las Huacas, excavated by Tellenbach (1986), Seki (1997), and Tsurumi (2008), respectively. Although elevated platforms with niches and courts were found at Montegrande, and they are considered to have had some public function, no visual or figurative representation of symbolic meaning such as wall painting or relief was found.

At Huacaloma, it is during the Late Huacaloma phase that the colorful wall painting and reliefs were abundant in the buildings on a large platform 130 m × 115 m and 8 m high. Although there were some contemporaneous sites in the Cajamarca Basin, Huacaloma surpassed others in the scale of construction, gorgeousness of decoration, and rich variety of pottery. Furthermore, a new site was chosen for a new ceremonial center of a completely new building plan. It is at Layzón where the wide extension of bedrock was cut and modified into six terraces. The presence of powerful control can be supposed behind this scene of construction, together with active and persuasive force elaborated on the base of traditional cosmology. It can be said that ideology played an important driving role in the construction of such a huge center.

During the Early Huacaloma phase, each village seems to have had its own ritual building, and there is no marked difference among the contemporaneous

sites. In the Late Huacaloma phase, however, no other site is comparable to Huacaloma in size except the bedrock terraces of Layzón. This means that one or a few centers began to concentrate the power of influence over other, smaller settlements, and the polychromatic mural painting and reliefs led the people to convince themselves that the task demanded by the center had been fulfilled. It can be said, therefore, that the magnificence of “temples” and visual representation became the main means of ideological expression.

The same trend from ritual to ideology can be observed at Kuntur Wasi. The hill of Kuntur Wasi, left unoccupied during the La Conga phase, shared the same pottery style with Montegrande in the Jequetepeque Valley and the Early Huacaloma phase in the Cajamarca Basin. At the Cerro Blanco site itself, no trace of large ceremonial building was detected through excavations.

Kuntur Wasi was exploited for the first time during the Idolo phase. Platforms and courts, thickly plastered in white, were built on the summit area. One room was decorated with a relief of mud/clay representing a standing human figure with feline characteristics such as a fanged mouth and eccentric eyes. Then, the next Kuntur Wasi phase brought about profound change in the entire plan and structure of the center. Beside the decoration of the architecture, stone sculptures were placed in various positions so that each sculpture, together with its representation, might have had a special meaning by itself as well as in relation to others. It is highly possible that the stone sculpture led to consolidation of the ideological image. While wall paintings and clay reliefs are easily perishable and destroyed at every moment of renovation, stone sculpture continues to exist in a concrete form, fixing the image and its meaning.

CONCLUSION

Since the time of Julio C. Tello, the Tello Obelisk from Chavín de Huántar has been interpreted as a representation of caimans that did not live in the nearby river or even in the upper Marañón. Lathrap (1973) identified tropical plants on the obelisk: manioc, achira, gourd, and *ají*. Cordy-Collins (1977) saw hallucinogenic plants, also of origin in the tropical environment. If the linkage with the tropical environment existed during the late Archaic period, as seemingly suggested at Kotosh and Caral, the representation of tropical plants on the Tello Obelisk had roots in much earlier times.

After observing the distribution of stone mortars and taking into consideration the use of hallucinogenic plants, Zeidler (1988) proposed the “pre-Chavín Tropical Forest/Highland sphere” or simply “pre-Chavín interaction sphere.” In the last two decades, little attention has been paid to this idea, but

new data from Kuntur Wasi and the Cajamarca region suggest that it is time to reconsider it.

This long-term continuity in the Central Andes may be founded, at least in part, on shared ideas about the importance of temple renovation, which in turn may be related to broadly distributed cosmology related to slash-and-burn cultivation in tropical forest environments. Somewhere and sometime, when an idea of renovation of ritual places was firmly set, the construction of a small building began. The ritual was carried out as a public but modest activity within a small settlement or community. However, the requirement of renovation after a certain time generated accelerating change in various aspects of culture, such as technology, social organization, and religion or cosmology. Competition among the settlements or villages, or among certain social groups responsible for taking charge of the ritual, may have played a role in accelerating the process of enlargement and sophistication, and eventually a kind of massive public building worth calling a temple was constructed. The renovation of the temple, together with competition for prestige, ignited a process of ever-increasing activities, such as population growth, technological improvement of food production, planning of architecture and labor investment, and sophistication of religious concepts and ritual itself, together with ritual paraphernalia. In this process ideology was formed on the basis of cosmology, and elites began to manipulate it to lead society (Onuki 2008). Together with ideological refinement, the artistic representation accelerated its elaboration not only in architecture and its decoration but also in pottery, gold, and other materials. In some cases this ritual of temple renovation resembles the slash-and-burn agriculture practiced in the tropical lowlands. The question of whether the idea that a new temple must be constructed above the ash layer is ubiquitous and still needs to be investigated.

NOTE

1. EL is the name of a phase between the Late Huacaloma and the Layzón phases. At first it temporally meant Enigmatic Layers as well as Early Layzón because we could not define its own special characteristics as an independent phase. Now it is clear that it is an independent phase, but the name EL remains.

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