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BURIAL IN THE WARI AND THE TIWANAKU HEARTLANDS: SIMILARITIES, DIFFERENCES, AND MEANINGS

ENTIERROS EN LAS ZONAS NUCLEARES DE WARI Y TIWANAKU: SIMILITUDES, DIFERENCIAS Y SIGNIFICADO

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Excavation of burials is one of the oldest strategies in Central Andean archaeology. Gradually becoming more sophisticated, modern mortuary analyses include studies of Wari and Tiwanaku, contemporary and related archaic empires of the Middle Horizon. Summary description and comparison of their respective mortuary preferences reveals a general and similar approach to interment that disallowed the preservation of human tissue and therefore, mummies, and probably the worship of mummified ancestors as described for the Incas. Beyond this general similarity, profound differences were identified. Tiwanaku emphasized regional or ethnic variation, but otherwise treated their dead quite similarly, with only modest differences in the form, quality, and furnishings of graves. Wari engaged in a greater range of mortuary differentials, emphasizing not only socio-political status, but also aspects of age and gender. No mortuary practices were identified that seem to relate to shared Staff-God religion.

Key words: Wari, Tiwanaku, mortuary archaeology.

La excavación de contextos funerarios es una de las estrategias más antiguas utilizadas en la arqueología centro andina. Sofisticándose gradualmente, los modernos análisis de prácticas mortuorias incluyen estudios sobre Wari y Tiwanaku, dos imperios arcaicos del Horizonte Medio contemporáneos y relacionados entre sí. La descripción sumaria y comparación de sus respectivas prácticas de enterramiento revelan en general una actitud parecida en la práctica que impedía la preservación de los tejidos blandos y, por consiguiente, de las momias, siendo así improbable la adoración de ancestros momificados descrita para los Incas. Más allá de esta similitud, se identifican profundas diferencias. Por un lado, los Tiwanaku subrayaron en sus prácticas mortuorias una variación regional o étnica, pero aparte de eso trataron la gran mayoría de los difuntos de una manera similar, con relativa poca variación visible en la forma y el tamaño de las tumbas y en la calidad y cantidad de las ofrendas funerarias. Por otro lado, los Wari mostraron un rango mucho mayor de diferencias mortuorias, subrayando no solamente el estatus sociopolítico de los difuntos sino también aspectos relacionados a su edad y sexo. No se han identificado prácticas mortuorias relacionadas con la compartida religión en torno al llamado Dios de los Báculos.

Palabras claves: Wari, Tiwanaku, arqueología funeraria.

Introduction

Central Andean archaeology began as the excavation of cemeteries, with Reiss and Stübel ([1880-1887] 1998) exposing mortuary remains at Ancon in 1875. Subsequently, collections of Andean artifacts from other cemeteries were displayed at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, also called the World's Columbian Exposition in celebration of the 400th anniversary of Europeans' intrusion into the Americas. Eventually, many of these collections, named after places where they were found, were purchased and exhibited by famous museums. Soon, the poorly-documented but lovely art was stimulating the questions that shaped Andean archaeology at the dawn of the 20th century –what

were the spatial, and even more importantly, the TEMPORAL relationships among the distinctive, named styles, represented by the fascinating collections? Prehispanic textiles drew great admiration, but since they occurred in only a few collections, charmingly painted and modeled pots became the artifacts of choice as scholars puzzled over collections with exotic names like Moche, Nasca, and Recuay.

Soon, Max Uhle (1903a) formulated the first archaeological chronology for the Andes, and indeed, in the Americas. It was based primarily on stratigraphy recognized in cemeteries at Pachacamac –combined with understanding “horizon styles” spread by ethnohistorically dated Incas and archaeologically defined Tiwanaku (Uhle 1903b). Within a few decades, Philip Ainsworth Means (1931) had

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This paper seeks to take another step in exploring what Central Andean mortuary analyses can tell us about prehistory by comparing burial practices in the Wari² and Tiwanaku heartlands. A synthetic organization of Wari burial information from the core territory was proposed by Isbell (2004; and see also 2001a, 2003; Isbell and Cook 2002; Ochatoma 2007; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a; Valdez, Bettcher, Ochatoma, and Valdez 2006; Valdez, Williams, and Bettcher 2006³). Independently and more or less at the same time, Antti Korpisaari (2006; see also

The most popular and universally employed chronology for the Middle Horizon (MH), including the Wari heartland, is the seriation of pottery styles by Dorothy Menzel (1964, 1968, 1977). This work was grounded in profound knowledge of coastal

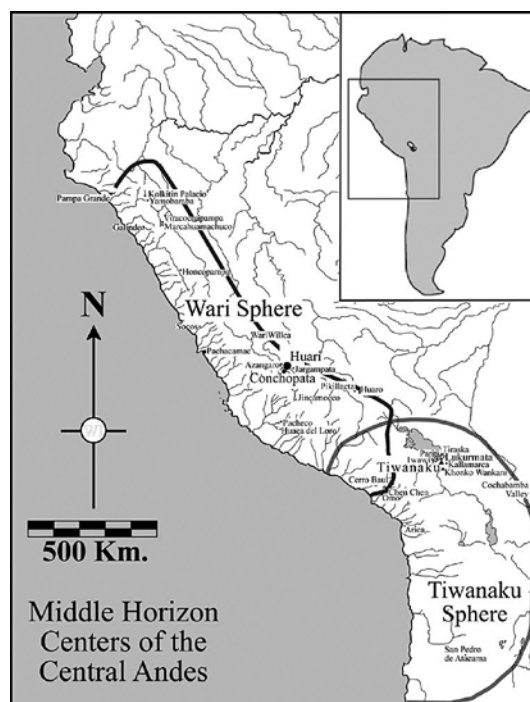


Figure 1. Map of Central Andean area during the Middle Horizon, locating principal centers and sites in the Wari and Tiwanaku spheres of influence.

ceramics, that Menzel separated into four epochs, MH 1 through MH 4. Her Epochs 1 and 2 were characterized by the appearance and integration of the new representational religious icons, while Epochs 3 and 4 involved their gradual simplification and reduction to geometric abstractions. As Menzel synchronized Ayacucho Valley ceramics with the coastal sequence she employed the four epochs (Figure 2). Since there was little or no trace of iconographic simplification at Huari and its secondary heartland settlements she concluded that the city and its hinterland were abandoned at the end of MH Epoch 2, leaving no one to make ceramics belonging to simplified styles of Epochs 3 and 4. Furthermore, her seriation dated Conchopata to the late Huarpa Culture, or end of Early Intermediate Period (EIP) times, and to Epoch 1 of the MH. The lack of Epoch 2 pottery on the site meant that at the end of Epoch 1 Conchopata was abandoned, with most of its residents probably moving to Huari, 10 km down the narrow highland valley.

Menzel (1964, 1968, 1977) concluded that Huari had been occupied through much of the EIP, becoming an urban capital and regional power under the influence of a religion newly introduced from Tiahuanaco in MH 1A. During Epochs 1B, 2A, and

2B, Huari grew as a city and extended its control or influence far beyond the Ayacucho heartland, establishing a political sphere that some scholars classify as an empire (Schreiber 1992, 2001, 2005). But at the end of MH 2 the capital was abandoned and the empire collapsed. Scholars debated absolute dates for the MH but it was generally accepted that MH 1A probably began about AD 550-600, and that Epoch 2 must have ended between AD 800 and 900.

A hint that there might be temporal problems with Menzel's scheme came with somewhat late radiocarbon dates from Azangaro, in the northern heartland (Anders 1991). More definitively, Malpass (2002) reported even later dates from a Wari center on the far south coast. Today, a suite of radiocarbon dates from Conchopata makes it clear that this small heartland city was occupied until approximately AD 1000 (Isbell 2001a; Isbell and Cook 2002; Kettelman 2002). Not only was Conchopata NOT abandoned at the end of Epoch 1, but occupation of the Huari capital, and entire heartland, almost certainly continued until the end of the millennium. Apparently, there were Epoch 3 and 4 potters in Ayacucho but they did not follow coastal trends toward simplification and geometricization, but instead continued making the Ayacucho styles formerly identified only as Epochs 1 and 2. To the degree that this is correct it means that we must revise popular chronological ideas about the Huari heartland, and probably the rest of the Wari sphere as well. These revisions are yet to be worked out, but most urgently, Conchopata's MH occupation can no longer be assigned to the early and short period of Epoch 1. The occupation must span all the centuries from terminal EIP through the end of MH 4. And apparently at present, we have no stylistic tool for effectively differentiating MH 2 from Epochs 3 and 4. Even the bases for separating Epochs 1 and 2 as nothing more than temporal periods must be reevaluated. Provisionally MH 3 and 4 probably date about AD 800 to 900 and 900 to 1000, respectively (Isbell 2001a; Isbell and Cook 2002; Isbell and Knobloch 2006, 2009; Knobloch 1983). Consequently, mortuary practices at Conchopata belong to a longer period of time than formerly recognized, probably AD 400 to 1000, with the Wari types described below popular during some 400 years, about AD 600-1000. Surely chronological changes took place over such a long period.

Chronology in Tiahuanaco's heartland is also problematic. Wendell C. Bennett (1934) laid the

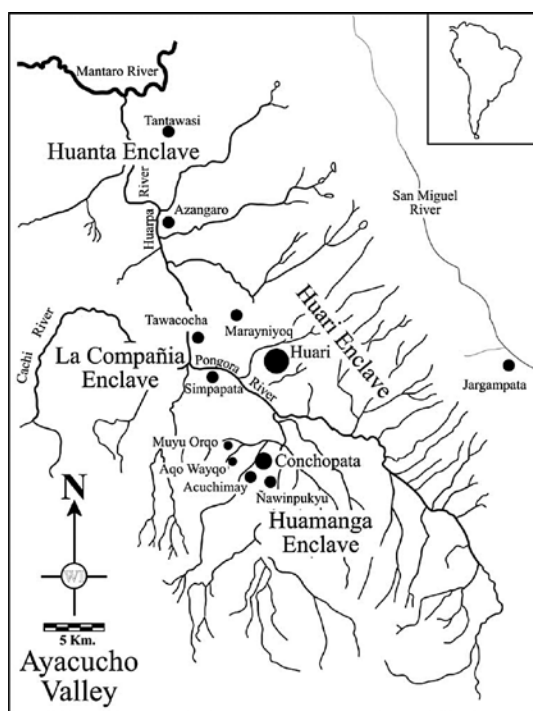


Figure 2. Map of the Ayacucho Valley locating Huari and the primary Wari sites discussed in the text.

foundations of the current Tiwanaku cultural chronology in the 1930s, distinguishing three Tiwanaku ceramic styles: Early, Classic, and Decadent. Some decades later, Carlos Ponce Sanginés developed his own five-phase-chronology (Tiwanaku I-V) on the basis of Bennett's scheme (e.g., Ponce 1981). Recently, John W. Janusek (2003, 2004) presented a revised version of this Bennett-Ponce chronology, assigning Ponce's Tiwanaku I/II and III phases to the Late Formative period (200 BC-AD 500) and subdividing Ponce's Tiwanaku IV and V phases, that correspond with the "mature" Tiwanaku culture, into Early Tiwanaku IV (AD 500-600), Late Tiwanaku IV (AD 600-800), Early Tiwanaku V (AD 800-1000), and Late Tiwanaku V (AD 1000-1150).

Even if Ponce himself may not have intended to link particular ceramic styles directly with particular phases of Tiwanaku's political and economic development (see Janusek 2003:34), in practice Bennett's Classic-style ceramics came to be associated with Ponce's phase IV, and Bennett's Decadent-style ceramics with Ponce's phase V. However, recent excavations and analyses have proven beyond any doubt that the "Classic" and "Decadent" styles were for the most part contemporaneous, and that the differences between them were mostly contextual (e.g., Alconini 1995; Burkholder 1997, 2002; Isbell 2001a; Isbell and Burkholder 2002; Janusek 2003, 2004, 2008; Knobloch 2001; Korpisaari and Pärssinen 2011; Korpisaari and Sagárnaga 2007, 2009; Korpisaari et al. 2011). Problems with the traditional Tiwanaku ceramic chronology call into question the dating of numerous Tiwanaku sites and find contexts. The difficulty of assigning particular sherds and/or vessels to particular cultural phases, of course, directly affects the present study. As ceramic vessels are often the only surviving Tiwanaku grave goods, they are the only clue to the antiquity of hundreds of burials. Since Tiwanaku IV and V styles were not temporally sequential, in his mortuary study Korpisaari (2006) had to pool "*Tiwanaku IV*" and "*Tiwanaku V*" burials and analyze them as a single Tiwanaku IV/V group.

It is also somewhat problematic to determine the temporal range of the Tiwanaku IV/V burial sample studied by Korpisaari. As pointed out above, Janusek dates the Tiwanaku IV and V phases to AD 500-1150. However, according to radiocarbon dates published by Martti Pärssinen (2002, 2005:64-79), Tiwanaku IV style ceramics only became common at Nazacara, located some 45 km south of Tiahuanaco,

around AD 550-600. Isbell and JoEllen Burkholder (2002) have argued for an even later date for the spread of Tiwanaku IV-V ceramics, stating that such material did not appear at the site of Iwawi, located 23 km west of Tiahuanaco, until AD 600-700. Concerning Tiwanaku's demise, Bruce D. Owen (2005:63) recently suggested that "around A.D. 1000 or slightly before, the Tiwanaku state collapsed, its corporate style of ceramics ceased to be produced, and Tiwanaku and Lukurmata were abandoned". On the other hand, at the site of Tiraska, located a little over 20 km north of Tiahuanaco, Korpisaari's (2006:140-142) investigations revealed that Tiwanaku IV-V style ceramic vessels continued to be placed in burials at least until the 12th century AD – and quite possibly even in the first half of the 13th century. What these conflictive dates and interpretations seem to be telling us is that even in its southern Titicaca Basin heartland, the nature and extent of Tiwanaku influence varied from region to region, and changes in political organization were not necessarily reflected right away in material culture – or vice versa. Be that as it may, the Tiwanaku burial sample studied by Korpisaari spans at least the four or five centuries of the Middle Horizon, as well as – at least in certain heartland regions – one or two additional centuries. Change almost certainly took place over this c. 500-600-year-long period, but, unfortunately, we are at present unable to formulate a more fine-grained Tiwanaku chronology for ceramics or burials.

Wari Mortuary Preferences and Site Formation Processes

Conchopata is the most extensively excavated of the large Wari settlements in the Ayacucho heartland. Not surprisingly, it has provided the largest amount of mortuary information, although burials have been found at many other sites as well. Unfortunately however, study of mortuary practices in Ayacucho is confusing, primarily because three different processes influence the archaeological record in ways that often appear similar in excavations but have extremely different meanings for understanding the past. First are actual mortuary practices, which at least sometime seem to have included activities long after initial interment. Archaeologists are increasingly aware that some heartland burials were re-opened, surely by Wari peoples themselves, in a long sequence of acts that

constituted ideal mortuary practices. Second are fortuitous processes that damage and destroy tombs, especially looting, but also construction, farming, flooding, etc. Some were ancient, and others are modern. Third are issues of preservation. Stone-lined pit-tombs so favored by Wari heartlanders were poor environments for organic conservation. In many soils they apparently allowed moisture to condense on the walls and roof of the subterranean chambers (Leoni 2004:248, footnote 47), with the result that organic remains, including bones, disappear almost entirely. Consequently, bone in some pits is so fragmentary and scarce that it cannot be aged or sexed; indeed, in some cases remains cannot be securely confirmed as human burial.

In Ayacucho prehistory site formation processes impacting what may have been graves cannot be assumed to have been evaluated consistently with rigorous criteria. A subterranean chamber at Aqo Wayqo containing pottery and poorly preserved remains of a camelid, as well as the skull of a human infant is interpreted as an offering, probably a human sacrifice (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:70-71). But chambers from a ceremonial building at Ñawinpukyo that contained only children's teeth are considered burials (Machaca 1997; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a). Isbell's (2004) decision to employ "*mortuary preferences*" sought to discount happenstances of preservation as well as fortuitous, post-interment damage, by focusing on personally well-known burials from Conchopata, using tombs judged to be intact to guide evaluations of disturbed and poorly preserved examples. Comparative information from other sites was limited to the most secure cases.⁴

Classification of Wari Mortuary Preferences⁵

Isbell (2004, see also Isbell 2001a; Isbell and Cook 2002) proposed an 8-type classification of Wari mortuary preferences, although Type 5, Mortuary Room Interment, includes three subtypes (Figures 3, 4, 5, and 6).⁶ This paper considers additional variation based on supplementary information, and further interpretations that may be proposed, especially in light of comparisons with Tiwanaku mortuary patterns. Among the earlier conclusions was the observation that formal aspects of some graves implied relations with deceased ancestors, which may have undergone significant change during the MH. Furthermore, the ideal mortuary preferences appear

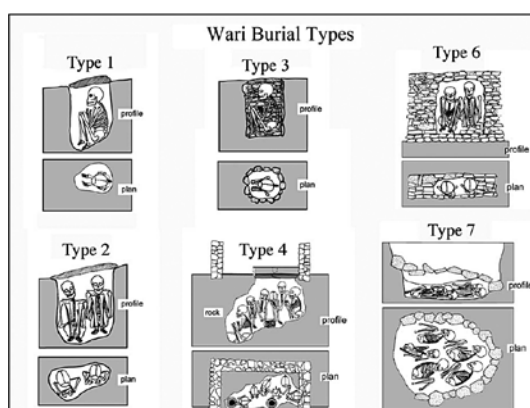


Figure 3. Wari Burial Types 1-4, 6, and 7.

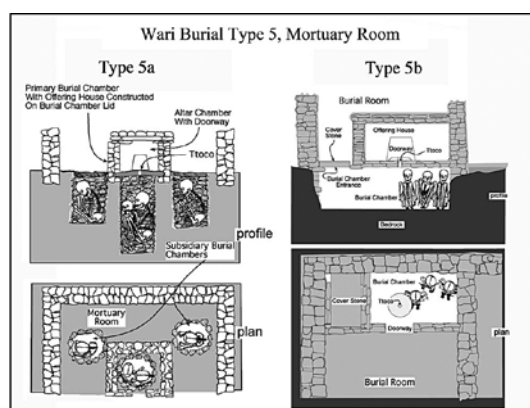


Figure 4. Wari Burial Type 5, Mortuary Room Interment, subtypes 5a and 5b.



Figure 5. Wari Mortuary Room, Burial Type 5c, at Cheqo Wasi, Huari (photo by William H. Isbell).

to define a hierarchy of social inequality consisting of as many as six social groups, or classes that may have characterized ancient Wari society. The top two levels of elites (Type 8 and Type 5c Interments, see Figures 6 and 5 respectively) were buried only at



Figure 6. Wari Royal Burial, (or Megalithic Monumental) Interment Type 8, upper cells exposed in excavation by Ismael Pérez, Monjachayuq, Huari (photo by William H. Isbell).

the Huari capital, and probably represent kings and royal courtiers.⁷ The third status (Types 5a and 5b Interments, Figure 4) seems to represent local leaders or territorial governors. The fourth class (Type 4, Figures 3 and 9) may have been composed of minor nobles, and the fifth (Types 3 and 6, Figures 3 and 8) of typical citizens. A sixth social group (Types 1 and 2 Interments, Figures 3 and 7) seems to have commanded very little labor or goods, and probably represents a servant class in Wari society. Isbell's 2004 classes are recapitulated below.

Wari Burial Type 1 – Individual Interment (Figure 3)

A single body was placed in a small pit excavated into the ground and covered with earth. Sometimes the grave was capped with a flat stone or two, and occasionally a few stones were used to line the sides of the pit. Bodies appear to have been tightly flexed and placed in the grave either seated, on the back, or on one side. Traces of textiles and cordage suggest that at least some bodies were wrapped in cloth and bound with rope. Examples appear to have been located in patios, courts, and

narrow rooms. Except when a stone slab was used to cap the pit, there is no evidence that these graves were marked. Occasionally, Type 1 graves include a ceramic vessel, a stone bead, or some other object, but typically, no imperishable grave goods are found.

Wari Burial Type 2 – Multiple Interment (Figures 3 and 7)

Two to four or five bodies of adults and sub-adult children are found in a single pit similar to those of Type 1. Some of the bodies appear to have been added to these graves as time passed, so Type 1 interments could probably turn into Type 2, although these graves show little evidence for marking of their locations. Typically, they lack imperishable furnishings, and contained tightly flexed bodies.

Wari Burial Type 3 – Cist Interment (Figures 3 and 8)

Cist tombs were often marked graves consisting of cylindrical pits fully or partially stone-lined, about 60 to 90 cm in diameter and 60 cm to a meter deep. They were usually sealed with a large, flat, circular stone or by several smaller slabs of rock. Sometimes there is a notch in one side of the cover, or a hole about 10 cm in diameter pecked through the middle of the stone lid. Occasionally there is a small niche in the wall of the cist, or a groove running down one side of the chamber. Where grooves have been found they appear to align with the notch in the lid. Isbell (2004:9-10) proposed the name “*ttoco*” for the hole or notch in lids, from old Quechua (González Holguín [1608] 1989), meaning a “*window or passage*”. Probably, the *ttoco* was intended for communication with the dead.⁸



Figure 7. Wari Burial Type 2, Multiple Interment, in EA-151, Conchopata (photo by William H. Isbell).



Figure 8. Wari Burial Type 3, Looted Cist Interment, at Posoqoypata, Huanta Enclave (photos by William H. Isbell).

Cist tombs appear to represent a more lavish version of Type 1 and Type 2 graves, and were intended to receive one or more tightly flexed burials, probably added over time. They occur in isolation or in cemetery groupings, in buildings and in open places. Many examples contain grave furnishings, but nothing of great value has been discovered in a Type 3 grave.

Wari Burial Type 4 – Bedrock Cavity Interment (Figures 3 and 9).

Bedrock cavity burial employed deep tombs excavated into bedrock. At Conchopata they were located under the floors of buildings and often marked by circular lids or raised bench-like structures that had *ttoco* holes in or near them. Examples have different shapes, probably because the shape was at least partially determined by cracks in the bedrock that facilitated excavation. All appear to have contained the remains of more than one tightly flexed individual. Offerings include a significant number of pots as well as other objects. Disturbance among the skeletal remains implies that bodies were added over time, but some bones appear to have been removed as well, implying prolonged Wari mortuary rituals that are still to be defined.

Wari Burial Type 5a, 5b, and 5c – Mortuary Room Interment (Figures 4, 5, 10, 11, and 12)

This class of burials is named “*Mortuary Room Interment*” because tombs occupy so much of the space within a room that it is difficult to imagine any other activity within the roofed enclosure. In some cases a second room, and even a third appear to have been part of the mortuary complex, although these additional rooms were probably not filled with tombs. Type 5 tombs contain many



Figure 9. Wari Burial Type 4, Bedrock Cavity Interment, in EA-105 at Conchopata. Upper left shows pristine tomb when opened. Above and to the south of the grave opening is a bench with false *ttoco* where offerings were made to the dead within the tomb. Upper right shows exotic luxury objects in, and beside, this *ttoco*. Below is the upper-most contents of the tomb – ceramic offerings, and several jars containing fetuses or newborns. The mouths of the jars were covered with bowls. Adult burials were found deeper in the tomb, two of which appear in Figure 17. (Photos by William H. Isbell).

offerings, and are the only graves from Conchopata to produce gold.

Type 5a mortuary rooms contain several circular or rectangular stone-lined cist tombs (similar to Type 3) and skeletal remains from numerous individuals, but one chamber appears to have been primary, and probably also the first in the room. Sometimes this principal tomb has two or more chambers, and it was usually sealed with a heavy capstone pierced by a *ttoco*. All examples probably contained several tightly flexed bodies, probably added sequentially. Over the capstone a small offering house somewhat less than a meter tall was built, with a small trapezoidal entrance. The floor of the offering house was the grave lid, with the *ttoco* providing a tiny passage into the burial chamber containing the bodies. It seems likely that the *ttoco* was normally sealed with a stone plug shaped much like a champagne cork (see Benavides 1984, 1991).

Since the Type 5a offering house was constructed on the heavy stone lid, once built it was impossible to re-open the burial chamber (Figure 10). Consequently, addition of burials ceased, and this may have initiated construction of secondary cists within the mortuary room. So mortuary rooms probably had both chronology as well as hierarchy in their interments.

Mortuary rooms of Type 5b (Figures 11 and 12) are elaborations on Type 5a, that could be entered and re-entered, without disturbing the offering house, and Isbell (2004) suggested they may represent later developments in Wari's mortuary preferences. These tombs had a separate entrance at one side, sealed by a flat stone. A rectangular burial chamber was constructed below the floor of the mortuary room, and roofed with stone slabs at about the level of the floor. A *ttoco* was constructed at one end and an entrance that could be sealed with a stone slab at the other end. An offering house with altar chamber was built over the *ttoco*, covering part of the burial chamber, but leaving the entrance and covering stone exposed. This kind of mortuary unit could be re-opened repeatedly without disturbing the offering house or *ttoco*.

Mortuary rooms of Type 5c are similar to other Type 5 mortuary rooms, but they are larger and grander, being constructed at least in part of megalithic ashlar (Figure 5). For this reason they were grouped with "monumental" tombs in a forthcoming paper (Isbell and Korpisaari nd). Examples are probably limited to the Huari capital, where they are called "*cheqo wasi*" [stone house (*cheqo*



Figure 10. Wari Mortuary Room Interment, Burial Type 5a, in Room 135, Moraduchayuc, Huari. The walls of the offering house covering the tomb and heavy capstone were almost destroyed when the grave was looted by digging into the grave from its sides. This shows how construction of an offering house made it impossible to re-open Type 5a tombs. Surprisingly, this capstone has two *ttoco* (Photo by William H. Isbell).



Figure 11. Wari Mortuary Room Interment, Burial Type 5b, in EA-150, Conchopata. This tomb has a side entrance, located on the south. Although covered by an altar chamber the grave could be re-opened and re-entered. The entrance to the south, damaged by looting, was capped by a large, well-finished rectangular stone. A trapezoidal entrance provides access into the offering house over the tomb, where a *ttoco* passed through the floor into the grave itself (Photo by William H. Isbell).



Figure 12. Wari Mortuary Room Interment, Burial Type 5b, in EA-150, Conchopata. Looking through the trapezoidal entrance into the offering house appearing in Figure 11, a *ttoco* is clearly visible (Photo by William H. Isbell).

refers to hard, dense stone)]. All examples are severely looted (Benavides 1984, 1991; Bennett 1953; González Carré and Bragayrac 1996; Pérez 1999, 2001a, 2001b), but appear to have been megalithic chamber complexes within the rough stone walls of architectural compounds. Most likely all were re-openable mausoleums.

Type 5c mortuary rooms can consist of one large chamber complex or several small chambers, probably ranging from two to five. Small and simple *cheqo wasi* were probably entered by removing the lid but more complex examples consist of a subterranean room or room complex, entered from one side through a crawlway, perhaps also covered by a heavy stone. The upper level is often a room,

or complex that may have been closed except for *ttoco*. Other *ttoco* connect the upper chambers with lower chambers. Most of these chambers probably contained tightly flexed burials added over an extended period, as well as many fine offerings that attracted looters.

Wari Burial Type 6 – Wall Interment (Figure 3)

This type of interment employed a chamber cut out of, constructed within, or attached to, a thick wall. Burials from the Vegachayoq Moqo sector of Huari described by Vera Tiesler Blos (1996) were associated with a massive wall, more than 2 m thick, that had many large niches, one containing a collection of secondary burials (Bragayrac 1991), as well as numerous chambers for wall interments. These were not niches but crypts for primary burials that were probably sealed except when occasionally re-opened for a new burial. Some were probably intruded into the wall after its construction, while others appear to have been shaped as the wall was built (Pérez 1999; Tiesler Blos 1996). At Batan Urqu in Cuzco, Zapata (1998) describes a large rectangular building with parts of the perimeter wall standing almost a meter high and about 1.3 m thick. Along the interior bottom of the west wall are Type 6 wall burial chambers of various forms, from rectangular to semicircular to elongated, usually containing disturbed bones of several individuals, adults as well as infants and children.

Wari Burial Type 7 – Communal or Sacrificial Group Burial (Figure 3)

This burial type consists of numerous bodies placed in a pit and covered by a stone mound or cairn (Isbell and Cook 1987). All appear to have been buried at one moment. Furnishings may be limited to imperishable items of clothing worn by the deceased. The interment type is based on a single find at Conchopata that contained five young women.

Wari Burial Type 8 – Royal Interment⁹ (Figure 6)

Royal Interment, or more properly, Megalithic Monumental Interment, like Type 5c burial, seems limited to the Huari capital, where a single example

of a severely looted but spectacular tomb complex has been studied in the Monjachayoq sector by Ismael Pérez (1999, 2001a, 2001b). A second, also looted, can be identified tentatively in the northeast corner of Huari's civic center. With only one example described, variation is unknown, but the form, size, and impressive construction at Monjachayoq is on a par with royal burial platforms from Peru's great north coastal city of Chan Chan (see Conrad 1982). But as if in diametric opposition, Huari's royal sepulcher inverts the Chimú burial platform. It is deeply cut into the earth, consisting of three or four subterranean levels, so more of a "royal catacomb" than a pyramidal platform. Unfortunately, as at Chan Chan, regal bodies and their offerings disappeared centuries ago to looting.

Monjachayoq includes subterranean levels reaching 10 m or more under the ground. Apparently below the original ground level was a complex of four halls with massive cut-stone slabs for the roof and floor. At the south end this hall complex passed over a deeper, second subterranean level containing 21 cells constructed of ashlar combined with rough stonework. Under the cells is a third basement level, accessible only by a shaft. It is a hall whose plan resembles a llama viewed in profile. And, at the tip of the llama's tail is a deep cist similar to Type 3 burials, with stone lid, constituting a fourth underground level.

Wari Mortuary Preferences Assessed

Isbell's 2004 typology of Wari mortuary preferences is quite successful in classifying additional mortuary remains from Ayacucho's MH, including examples said to be unique or contrary to Isbell's classification. More importantly, additional graves sometimes make it possible to expand and refine the ideal typology, as Isbell (2004:29) anticipated. Significantly, the majority of the additional variation in adult burial preferences appears around mid-range in the mortuary hierarchy, which was apparently poorly represented at Conchopata. Indeed, in light of a larger sample, Conchopata seems to have been a community where many of those interred were either minor elites, or humble servants, creating a bi-modal distribution with relatively few mid-range burials. Thus, the most important new insights relate to Wari Type 3, Type 4, and Type 6 Interments, although two Type 5 mortuary complexes contribute to this discussion.

Type 3 Cist Interment (Figures 3, 8, and 16)

Wari Type 3 graves from Posoqoyyata, described by Valdez et al (2002:399-401), are the most characteristic examples of Cist Interment among all the graves reported for Ayacucho's MH. Eleven or 12 graves, apparently constituting a cemetery located in the open,¹⁰ are cylindrical, stone-lined cists, with several tending toward the large end of the Type 3 size range. Much of the site was disturbed by bulldozing and looting, but it appears that each cist had a heavy stone lid. *Ttoco* were not described except for a stone slab found inside a cist that had an 8-cm hole pecked through it, but several lids apparently disappeared during the bulldozing. One of the cist tombs had a niche in one side. At least one contained remains of a tightly flexed adult. Although preservation was very poor several cists probably held one elderly individual. Multiple burials were not apparent in any tomb containing sufficient bone for study, and one cist contained only a few deciduous teeth, suggesting that it might have held a buried child, although other explanations are certainly possible.

While no other Ayacucho burials are so definitively Type 3 as the Posoqoyyata cists, additional graves conform to the Cist Interment class. Among them are Tomb 1 from Aqo Wayqo (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:83-86), a pair of graves from the Recreo Magali (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:91, 96-97), and five graves in two rooms at Muyu Orqo, excavated by Berrocal (1991; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:86-90). Other burials from this site are also best classified as Type 3 although some cists probably contained infants or children and may have belonged to a separate set of practices. Two disturbed graves reported for Qori Huilca by Edgar Alarcón (1991; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:94-96) are also Type 3, but contained more in ceramic offerings than normal. Perhaps more detailed information would reveal them as better classified in Type 4.

Type 4 Bedrock Cavity Interment (Figures 3, 9, and 17)

Bedrock Cavity Interments were apparently more popular in MH Ayacucho than formerly realized so description of this class of burial can now be elaborated in light of new mortuary information. Certainly, the most exciting new contributions to

Wari mortuary practices come from Ñawinpukyo, where excavations by Martha Cabrera (1998; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a) and Juan Leoni (2001, 2002, 2004) add at least 23 undisturbed tombs to the Ayacucho burial record. A hilltop site a few km south of Conchopata, Ñawinpukyo's primary occupation belongs to the late EIP and the MH, especially the early portion. Consequently undisturbed burials from Ñawinpukyo may tell us about the origin and development of MH mortuary preferences in Huari's heartland.

A key revelation from Leoni's (2004) study is that Bedrock Cavity Interment includes a wider range of chamber sizes and forms, number of bodies, and offering contents than present in the Conchopata sample studied by Isbell (2004). The Conchopata graves all contained several individuals and numerous offerings. But at Ñawinpukyo, some Type 4 Bedrock Cavity Interments are very little grander than Type 3 graves. Leoni's (2004) Burial 9, sealed under the last floor of Room EA-21, is an example that could be classified as a Cist burial, or a simple Bedrock Cavity Interment. The pit penetrating into bedrock was about 40 cm in diameter, some 80 cm deep, lined with rocks, and capped with two flat stones. Inside were poorly preserved bones, probably a female between 35 and 50 years old, with fragments of textile and cord, and 31 green stone beads. In the compacted earth over the lid were two small fragments of worked *Spondylus* shell. So offerings exceed the norm for Cist Interments only slightly.

Another simple Type 4 Interment at Ñawinpukyo is Burial 1, also from below the floor of EA-21. This burial consists of an oval pit 110 cm by 70 cm, which broke through three floors to penetrate into bedrock. Inside were remains of an adult male and a child, with a painted and modeled bowl and a Black Decorated cup, the latter found near the head of the child.

More similar to Conchopata's large and elaborate Type 4 graves is Burial(s) 5, 6, 7 at Ñawinpukyo, also in Room EA-21 (Leoni 2004). This Bedrock Chamber complex consisted of a pit penetrating into bedrock, 180 cm from the top to the bottom, and mouth between 170 and 200 cm wide. From this central shaft three cavities enter horizontally into bedrock, two toward the north, that became Burial 5 (one adult male and a second, less preserved individual, with two bowls, a bottle, and several fragments of *Spondylus* shell) and Burial

6 (a child with a blackware tube bowl and a face-neck jar). Burial 7 was dug into rock to the south and contained a young adult male with three small ceramic vessels (Leoni 2004:250-253). Each of the subsidiary chambers was capped with upright slabs, rocks, and clay. Gudelia Machaca (1997; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:93) excavated a simpler shaft with cavity, or boot-shaped tomb, in another part of Ñawinpukyo, as well as an irregular, semicircular grave, that are probably also best classified as Bedrock Cavity Interments.

A more unusual Bedrock Cavity Interment at Ñawinpukyo has an entrance shaft almost like a mortuary chamber, and excavator Martha Cabrera (1998; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:93-94) describes it as a “*double chamber*” grave. The entrance was a small, stone-lined space capped by slabs, with a diminutive doorway opening horizontally into the burial chamber about 110 cm high. This cavity contained a tightly flexed adult with several ceramic offerings.

These graves from Ñawinpukyo provide new understandings of a pair of burials excavated in 1997 in Sector A of Conchopata, by José Ochatoma (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a, 2001b), that were not considered by Isbell (2004) because of site formation questions. Dubbed “*potter’s*” graves, the Ñawinpukyo data, combined with a newly published plan and profile drawing (Ochatoma 2007:260-262) make it clear that both are Type 4 Bedrock Cavity Interments, in the small and simple range of the variation.

With expanded understandings of Type 4 Bedrock Cavity Interment, it seems clear that the Seqllas burial chamber, described and illustrated by Valdez et al (2002, 2005:178, fig. 2) is another, perhaps somewhat deviant, example of Type 4 tombs. It shares similarities of form with several Type 4 Bedrock Cavity Interments, especially the capped, horizontal entrance into a larger chamber where bodies were placed, probably over considerable time. But confusion surrounds the Seqllas discovery and descriptions. The tomb was found after an irrigation canal built above it burst into the chamber and washed out much of its contents. Not only are the quantity and quality of offerings unknown, as is the presence or absence of a *ttoco*, but the excavators have not interrogated the site location for MH constructions associated with the tomb, even though they noted cultural materials above its damaged remnants. Perhaps Seqllas represents

a Bedrock Cavity Interment separated from any residential area, in which case Type 4 preferences may require more reconsideration. But the site and surrounding area must be fully evaluated before interpretations can be considered reliable.

Type 5 Mortuary Room Interment (Figures 4, 5, 10, 11, and 12)

Two examples of Type 5 Mortuary Room Interments expand knowledge of this important class of Wari burial. One is a very early MH example from Ñawinpukyo while the second is a mortuary chamber accompanying Type 3 cists at Posoqoykata.

Room EA-21, in Leoni’s (2004:242-250) Southeast Architectural Group at Ñawinpukyo was built with a peculiar above-ground funerary structure in its southeast corner. Had the space not become a mortuary room by the interment of numerous burials, this grave could be classified as a Type 6 Wall Interment, so perhaps developmentally the types have a common origin.

Although not bonded into the walls, the chamber rests on the same bedrock as the room’s walls, and none of the room’s three superimposed floors was broken for its construction, so it apparently was built at about the same time as the room itself—an event placed at the onset of MH Epoch 1. The chamber is a flat-topped, quarter-circle of stones carefully laid in mud mortar with false vault, about 90 cm across and equally as tall. It contained very poorly preserved human remains surrounded by upright flat stones. The bones are too poorly preserved to determine sex, age, or body position, although they are human, and probably adult.

Room EA-21 was eventually filled with burials, and the final floor was littered with remains from feasting, so the space functioned as a Mortuary Room during at least its late occupation. Indeed, the above-ground funerary structure may have initiated the process that turned EA-21 into a dedicated mortuary space. This tomb is early in the room’s history and it was respected throughout the occupation, to be discovered intact by Leoni’s (2004) excavations. In view of the early Epoch 1 date for the room and tomb, EA-21 probably furnishes the best record currently available for understanding the origins of Wari mortuary preferences. Consequently, it is important to note that the above-ground funerary structure had no *ttoco*, or other apparent means for communicating with the deceased inside. It

seems to have been designed to remain closed, but prominently visible in the room. Its flat top could have been used to display ritual objects, perhaps during ceremonies. Imperishable grave furniture was limited to a *tupu*, which may have been the most indestructible item of a woman's clothing.

Given the current uniqueness of this early MH 1 mortuary structure there seems no need to assign it a Type 5 subcategory. It is probably best described as an early, above-ground, but non-re-openable prototype for Type 5 Mortuary Room Interment.

A second example of a Wari Type 5 Mortuary Room Interment is the chamber at Posoqoyyata, described by Valdez et al (2002). Confusion surrounds some of the descriptions but the chamber was apparently located among a dozen or more Type 3 Cist Interments, under a multi-room building of rough stone walls (Valdez et al. 2005:185, fig. 5). The burial complex is consistent with Isbell's (2004) description of Type 5b interments, except that it does not have a separate "*altar chamber*" above the "*rectangular subterranean burial chamber*". Instead the mortuary room building was divided into several small enclosures, with the one directly over the burial chamber probably functioning in the way that the altar chamber did in Conchopata's Type 5b burial complexes. Indeed, the "*separate entrance to one side, sealed by a flat stone*" (Isbell 2004:15) opens into the adjacent room just east of the false altar room, in front of its doorway. A *ttoco* is not reported by the excavators but "*inside the chamber were found two stone slabs, each with a hole in the central part and one of which was still sealed to the floor*" (Valdez et al. 2002:398). These certainly resemble *ttoco*, and it seems likely that one fell from the ceiling of the chamber, where it was originally accessible from the room above.

Type 6 Wall Interment (Figure 3)

Two Type 6 Wall Interments are reported by Valdez et al (2005:179-183, fig. 3; 2006:117-119, figs. 2 and 3) for Marayniyoq. Both are chambers constructed in one corner of a "*T*"-shaped intersection of two thick walls. Unfortunately the published data do not locate these chambers within the larger site plan, or determine whether they represent constructions at, or about, the time the walls were built, as opposed to later additions. However, they fit Isbell's definition of "*a chamber cut out of, constructed within, or attached to, a thick wall*" (Isbell

2004:15). The larger grave, termed "*Camara*" is most likely a late addition to its wall corner, which was roofed with ashlar extracted from megalithic buildings at the site, now reduced to wall stubs. Its looted condition makes it difficult to say more than that the grave probably contained primary burials, added over a period of time, including men, women, and children. Little can be said about offerings, as modest finds among the bones cannot be securely associated with the era of interments. Even what Valdez et al (2005:fig. 3) label the chamber's entrance may be no more than a space opened by removing an ashlar when the site was looted.

The second Wall Interment found by Valdez et al (2006:118-119, fig. 3), called "*Fosa*," appears to have contained secondary burials, but its roofless and disturbed condition makes any interpretation speculative. In fact, it is premature to assign this collection of human remains a MH date, and assert that it represents the first cases of skull deformation known for the MH Wari heartland. Skull deformation is documented later in the Ayacucho area (Isbell 1977) so the human remains from Marayniyoq are best left as undated until secure information becomes available, such as a suite of radiocarbon dates from the bones themselves.

Another Wari Mortuary Preference? – Type 9 Under-Wall Pit Interment (Figure 13)

Leoni's (2004) excavations at Ñawinpukyo revealed what may be an additional type of Wari burial preference in Ayacucho. It is given special attention because it appears very early, and could be prototypic to several of the mortuary preferences defined by Isbell (2004) at Conchopata. Provisionally this type will be called "*Wari Burial Type 9 – Under-Wall Pit Interment*". If the type is confirmed, and established as early by more research, it may demonstrate that Wari Burial Types 3, 4, and 6 are closely related to Under-Wall Pit Interments, and that an historical perspective might prefer reclassification of all to reflect chronological development.

Under-Wall Pit Interments occur twice at Ñawinpukyo. One is an excavation cut 57 cm into bedrock under the west wall of EA-17, an elongated room probably dating to the end of the EIP. At least three large Kumunsenqa-style sherds cap the tomb, probably closing the opening below the wall base that was strengthened by pouring wet clay over the sherds. Human remains include four



Figure 13. New Wari Burial Type 9, Under-Wall Pit Interment, in EA-11, Ñawinpukyo. Left shows room EA-11 with the under-wall pit visible below the foundation at the left, near the center of the photo. Upper right shows the grave as initially excavated with second-phase interment remains visible, especially the jar containing remains of two infants. Lower right shows deeper remains of first phase interments, two adults and one child, all severely disturbed (Photos by Juan B. Leoni).

individuals, an old female, an adult male, an adult of undetermined sex, and a 6-year-old child. The bones were disarticulated and tightly packed in the small cavity so Leoni (2004:285) suggests secondary burial. Perhaps they were moved from another location when construction was being planned, although addition of burials over time could also account for disturbance.

The other Under-Wall Pit Interment at Ñawinpukyo is Burial 2 in Room EA-11 (Figure 13). The pit measures roughly 85 cm in diameter, and has a depth of about 70 cm. Stratigraphy does not reveal whether the grave was dug before or after wall construction, although Leoni (2004:270) suspects its later intrusion. Six individuals were placed in the tomb, in two phases – two adults and a child in phase 1, and in the second phase, two infants in a flat-based jar, and then a third infant above all.

Burial of Infants and Children (Figures 9, 13, 14, 15, and 16)

Burials of infants and children were not included in Isbell's (2004) study of Wari mortuary preferences. Graves of the young are highly varied – including examples that seem exactly like adult tombs, as well as others that are very different. They deserve an analysis of their own, that is beyond the scope of this paper, but on a preliminary basis a few generalizations can be offered.

Wari mourners frequently placed fetuses and infants in ceramic vessels. Subsequently the jars could be buried with adults, with other children, or

even alone (Figures 9 and 13). Although exceptions may occur it seems likely that burial in jars or urns was appropriate only for children, not for adults. Frequently, the neck of a large jar was broken off above the shoulder so the child's remains would fit inside. But there are also cases in which the child seems to have been surrounded with, or covered by large sherds. At Ñawinpukyo, Leoni (2004) found several burials where a child's body, face, or head had been covered by the base of a large sooted jar.

Children were also buried in Type 1 and Type 2 Interments and if remains as inconclusive as a few deciduous teeth mean that a deceased child's body was buried in a feature, then Type 3 and Type 4 Interments of children can be added as well (Figures 14, 15, and 16). In these larger tombs it seems that a child can appear alone, or accompanying one or more adults – although insertion of the body into a jar placed beside the adult(s) is common, especially in large tombs. Infants and children also appear in Type 5 and Type 6 Interments, along with adults, and surely in Type 8 Royal Interments (or Megalithic Monumental Interments) as well, although specific information is not available, as all the most spectacular Wari tombs have been severely disturbed. Nonetheless, preferences for the interment of children were apparently flexible, and there is probably temporal variation yet to be recognized.

A Gender-Specific Wari Mortuary Preference? (Figures 14, 15, 16, and 17)

A distinctive practice observed first among some graves at Conchopata is burial in flexed, seated position with an inverted ceramic bowl



Figure 14. Interments of children at Conchopata. Children of intermediate age were sometimes buried with a ceramic bowl over the head. Since adults similarly buried, in tightly flexed, seated posture, with a bowl over the head, are all females, it is likely that these children are females as well. Left, EA-88, right, EA-6, at Conchopata (Photos by William H. Isbell).



Figure 15. Child burial in EA-147/163 at Conchopata. The bowl, found covering the head of the burial, has been placed to one side so the interior Huamanga-style design is visible (Photo by William H. Isbell).

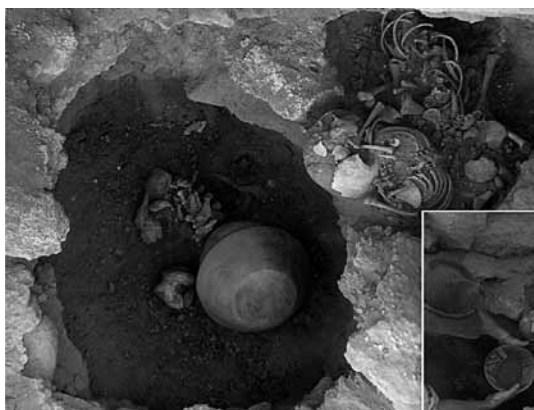


Figure 16. Wari Burial Type 3, Cist Interment, in EA-205, Conchopata. This grave contains one adult female with a Huamanga-style bowl on her head. To the north is a grave containing the remains of two children, that intersects the adult woman's grave. Lower right corner, the Huamanga bowl covering the head of the adult woman, turned over as it was removed from the grave (Photos by William H. Isbell).

placed on, or over, the head of the deceased. A flaring sided bowl with painted interior decoration of geometric Huamanga style is most common, but other kinds of bowls occur. Initially it seemed that this preference was specific to children (Figures 14 and 15), but subsequently, the practice was observed for some adults at Conchopata, including a single-individual Type 3 Interment (Figure 16), and several adults in a multi-individual Type 4 Interment (Figure 17). A Type 3 Interment from Muyu Orqo also had a bowl over its head (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:photos by Walter Lopez, between pp. 96-97) and it is likely that more examples will be added to this list.

Adults buried with a bowl over the head at Conchopata were all females and although the sex



Figure 17. Wari Burial Type 4, Bedrock Cavity Interment, in EA-105 at Conchopata, the opening and upper contents of which were shown in Figure 9. Deep within the tomb a single adult male was found, as well as numerous adult females. This photo shows at least two of the women. In the lower right is a Huamanga-style bowl that had been placed on the head of one of the adult females, whose skull was broken, probably when bodies were added to the tomb after her burial (Photo by William H. Isbell).

of the Muyu Orqo example is unknown, it seems likely that this preference was appropriate for women, and not for men. Probably the several child burials with a bowl over the head were girls. Be that as it may, other burials have been reported with an inverted bowl associated with the skull, which Isbell believes was probably on the head before the body deteriorated. An example is a burial that included ceramic-making tools, and was called the tomb of a “*potter*,” excavated in 1997 by Ochatoma (2007:260-262).¹¹ Consequently, although these remains could not be sexed, they are probably those of a woman.

Placing an inverted ceramic bowl over the head of a (probable) woman or girl as she was interred appears to have become popular at Conchopata, especially for children, probably during the later portion of the MH. This preference promises greater resolution and insights into Wari social and culture issues in the future, especially social gender concepts and ideas about womanhood. If the “*potter*” excavated by Ochatoma was female, her ceramic manufacturing tools may have been gender-specific artifacts.

Tiwanaku Mortuary Preferences

The Tiwanaku IV/V burial sample analyzed by Korpisaari (2006) consists of somewhat over a hundred burials excavated at the site of Tiahuanaco,

as well as more than two hundred tombs investigated at 18 additional sites situated in the Tiwanaku heartland (see Korpisaari 2006:fig. 6.9 and table 6.1) (Figure 18). Of these sites, Korpisaari personally excavated at Tiraska, Qiwaya, and Pariti (see Korpisaari 2004, 2006; Korpisaari and Sagárnaga 2007; Korpisaari et al. 2003; Sagárnaga and Korpisaari 2009), while Isbell excavated at Iwawi (Isbell and Burkholder 2002; see also Burkholder 1997). The treatment of the remaining sites is based on an exhaustive review of published monographs and papers and unpublished dissertations, research reports, and manuscripts.¹² In addition to this sample of more than three hundred Tiwanaku heartland burials, Korpisaari (2006) considers the huge sample of more than 4,500 Tiwanaku burials documented in the Moquegua Middle Valley. Recent bioarchaeological research has shown quite convincingly that the burials of the Omo and Chen Chen phases were actual *altiplano* colonists (e.g., Blom 1999; Goldstein 2005; Knudson 2008; Knudson et al. 2004). As organic preservation in *altiplano* Tiwanaku burials is generally poor, the tombs of the Tiwanaku colonists of the Moquegua Valley can help fill gaps in Tiwanaku heartland mortuary data.

Considerable variation occurs in the form and size of investigated Tiwanaku tombs. Archaeologically known burial types include stone-lined cists, stone-collared tombs, simple pit burials, and shaft-and-side chamber tombs. Some Tiwanaku deceased were placed in fairly shallow pits, while the largest shaft and bell-shaped tombs located below Tiahuanaco's Putuni platform were c. 2.5-3 m deep (Couture 2002:197; Couture and Sampeck 2003:238). The burials placed under the



Figure 19. Upper left shows the cap of Tiraska's cist 13. Lower left is a view inside this same cist, whose diameter was c. 60 cm, following the removal of the capstones and some of the soil which had filtered into the tomb. Note the human remains and the broken *tazon* or serving bowl to the north of the skull. Right shows Qiwaya's cist 1, which had been literally cut in half and looted of its possible grave goods prior to documentation. The grave chamber's depth was 90 cm (Photos by Antti Korpisaari.)

walls of the Putuni Palace of the Multicolored Rooms (Couture 2002:265-271; Couture and Sampeck 2003:252-254; Kolata 1993:156-159) as well as the tombs located in Lukurmata's central platform (Janusek 2004:174-176) often included a small chamber adjacent to the main shaft or a circular bench near the base. Concerning the stone-lined cists, there was less variation in size, but the elaboration of construction details differed from tomb to tomb and cemetery to cemetery (Figure 19).¹³ The greatest variation in burial practices is observed in the city of Tiahuanaco. This probably represents groups of people from the different regions and/or ethnicities under Tiwanaku control/influence who lived (and died) there. Of course, the number of "social classes" living and working in Tiahuanaco was probably also greater than in other centers and villages throughout the realm.

For various reasons, Korpisaari (2006) could not develop such a detailed typology for Tiwanaku burial contexts as Isbell has done for Wari tombs. First of all, variation among the tombs of the principal valleys and islands making up the Tiwanaku heartland seems to be regional, and probably more equivalent in status but distinct in ethnic identity than the Wari burial sets. Additionally, whereas Isbell's classification of Wari burial types benefits greatly from the fact that he has personally overseen excavation of a number of different kinds of tombs at the sites of Conchopata and Huari, the sites at which Korpisaari has personally studied Tiwanaku

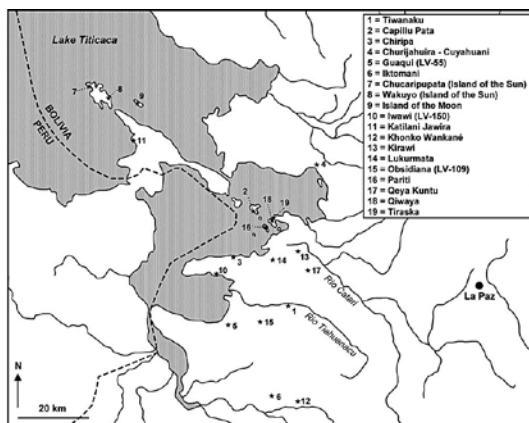


Figure 18. Map of the Tiwanaku heartland, showing the location of the burial sites analyzed by Korpisaari (2006).

burials are all located within a small sub-region of the Tiwanaku heartland, the present-day canton of Cascachi, in which burial in stone-lined cists seems to have been the norm. Finally, the available data concerning the dimensions, structural features, and grave goods of tombs investigated at other Tiwanaku sites is often sketchy, making it premature to develop a definitive typology.

Even though a detailed typology of Tiwanaku burials cannot be sustained at this time, some patterns do emerge. On islands of Lake Titicaca, burial in stone-lined cists seems to have been the rule. On the Island of the Sun, 14 of the 15 tombs (93 percent) located by Seddon (1998) at Chucaripupata and all 8 burials studied by Perrin (1957) at Wakuyo were cists (see also Bandelier 1910). Likewise, all 9 tombs Bauer and colleagues (2004) encountered in their excavations on the Island of the Moon were cists. On Cumana Island, 24 of the 31 burials (77 percent) investigated by Korpisaari at Tiraska were cists, in addition to which a further 4 were somewhat larger stone-lined tombs. Korpisaari and colleagues also documented 5 cists on the neighboring Cohani Island and 1 cist on the nearby Pariti Island, where, earlier, Bennett (1936:446-456) had excavated 3 Tiwanaku burials: 2 stone-lined cists and 1 simple pit burial. Of the Tiwanaku cemetery sites of Titicaca's islands, only Capillu Pata of Suriqui deviates somewhat from the norm: its 4 investigated burials were not "true" cists, as the stones covering and surrounding them had been rather carelessly arranged to form a space into which the deceased had been placed (Estévez and Escalante 1994).

Cist burial was not limited to Lake Titicaca's islands, however: It has been observed at Katilani Jawira, Churijahuira-Cuyahuani, and Guaqui; sites situated on or near the lakeshore that were possibly once inhabited by the same lake-based (ethnic?) group(s) as the island sites.¹⁴ At Qeya Kuntu in the Katari Valley, Janusek and Kolata (2003:150) excavated four stone-lined (and -collared) cists. However, at the other Tiwanaku and Katari Valley inland sites on which we have data, cist burial was either not practiced at all or was rather unpopular.¹⁵ Somewhat surprisingly, the cist burial tradition was not very popular among the Tiwanaku-period inhabitants of the Taraco Peninsula either.¹⁶ The inhabitants of the Desaguadero/Machaca Valley, on the other hand, did practice cist burial, although the mortuary samples available from Iktomani and Khonko Wankané are very small (Rydén 1947).

In the Moquegua Middle Valley, Tiwanaku burials form a rather homogeneous set (see Blom 1999:98). A noteworthy fact is that stone-lined cists – quite like those found on Cumana and other islands, as well as, to a certain extent, those from the south-eastern shore of Lake Titicaca – make up an important part of excavated Moquegua Tiwanaku burials (Blom 1999:80-81; Goldstein 2005:245-246). This may mean that a significant portion of the highlanders who colonized the Moquegua Middle Valley came – or were sent – from the immediate Lake Titicaca region.

Korpisaari (2006) found it difficult to assign individual Tiwanaku burials to fine-grained status classes. However, he suggests that we can, with relative certainty, classify most studied burials into three broad categories – "*simple*," "*elaborate*," and "*ritual*".

Simple Tiwanaku Burial

Simple Tiwanaku graves include the great majority of archaeologically documented Tiwanaku burials. Most often, these tombs were stone-lined cists or simple pit burials a meter or less deep, containing one primary internment accompanied by zero to two ceramic vessels (Figure 19). In areas of better organic preservation, several other grave good categories may be present (see below). However, in many cases ceramic vessels and tomb architecture are the only clues concerning the relative richness of any particular burial. Korpisaari does not consider it meaningful to divide simple burials into subgroups on the basis of the number of ceramic vessels per grave (cf. Owen 1993:461). In this regard, it must be kept in mind that we do not know exactly what purpose the ceramic vessels served in the grave (and/or the afterlife).

Elaborate Tiwanaku Burial

Reported elaborate Tiwanaku burials include a group of ten looted shaft and bell-shaped tombs in the mortuary complex located below Tiahuanaco's Putuni platform extension (Couture 2002:197-214; Couture and Sampeck 2003:238-243). Furthermore, 14 elaborate burials, many of which were either double-chambered or had a bench near the base, were found in the platform at the center of Lukurmata (Janusek 2004:174-176; see also Bermann 1994:204). Beyond the heartland, a large, looted oval cist (Tomb

15), originally containing impressive grave goods, was discovered at the M16D cemetery site in the Moquegua Valley (Goldstein 2005:261-264).¹⁷

The Putuni shaft and bell-shaped tombs, the Lukurmata platform burials, and Tomb 15 of the Moquegua M16D site can be identified as elaborate burials both because they contained (the remains of) high-quality grave goods and because the burial facilities were relatively deep and/or sizable. The six tombs located under the paved patio of a residential compound on the summit of Tiahuanaco's Akapana pyramid (Manzanilla 1992:61-62; Manzanilla and Woodard 1990:136-137; see also Kolata 1993:117-118), on the other hand, apparently were neither particularly deep nor contained impressive offerings – even though one of the six adults was accompanied by a puma-shaped *incensario* or censer. However, the facts that these six burials were located on the top of the most imposing temple in Tiahuanaco and associated with a residential (high-status) compound make Korpisaari argue that they belong in the elaborate category as well.¹⁸

If the above-mentioned Akapana, Putuni, Lukurmata, and M16D graves represent “normal” elaborate Tiwanaku burials, were there more spectacular interments? In the light of grave goods, Tiahuanaco's Kalasasaya temple platform's three gold diadem-containing secondary burials (Sagárnaga 1995:270-271; see also Ponce 2004:322-323) and at least one of the tombs placed under the walls of the Putuni Palace of the Multicolored Rooms (Couture 2002:265-271; Couture and Sampeck 2003:252-254; Kolata 1993:156-159) rank as the richest Tiwanaku burials known to date. However, in their case the line between “normal” tombs and ritual burials is especially hard to draw.¹⁹

Recently, Janusek (2008:126-127, fig. 4.11b; see also Korpisaari 2006:88, fig. 6.4; Posnansky 1945:vol. II:113-117, figs. 39-41) suggested that a smallish subterranean ashlar-lined room²⁰ situated some meters north of the Kalasasaya would have housed elite Tiwanaku deceased. This structure was accessed by an ashlar stairway and had a small *ttoco*-like perforation in its ceiling slabs (Figure 20). It seems to be the only example to have survived, but at the turn of the century several of the buildings were excavated in the same general vicinity by the French Mission of Count Créqui-Montfort (Posnansky 1945:vol. II:114, figs. 37 and 38). Unfortunately, all were looted long before they were exposed by the “archaeologists”.

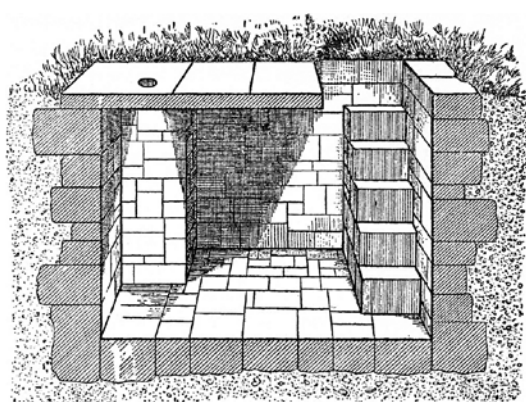


Figure 20. Arthur Posnansky's (1945:vol. II:fig. 40) drawing of a subterranean stone-lined chamber situated close to the Kalasasaya, which may possibly have served as an elite Tiwanaku tomb equipped with a Wari-like *ttoco*.

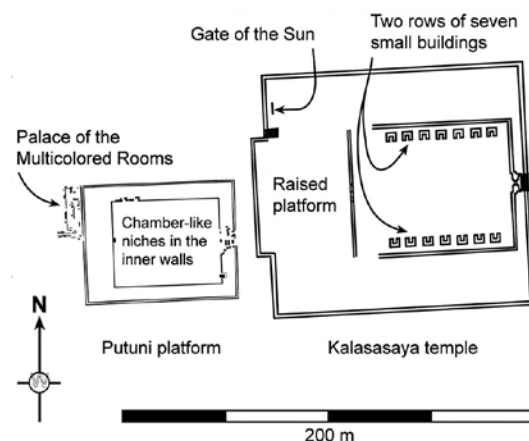


Figure 21. Map of a part of the monumental center of Tiahuanaco, showing the Kalasasaya and the Putuni, and indicating the location of the hypothesized mausoleums within each complex.

In addition to the tombs mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, some scholars have suggested that the smallish stone rooms or chambers which flanked the sunken temple/interior courtyard of Tiahuanaco's Kalasasaya temple platform and the small stone rooms or niches set in the inner fill of the Putuni platform might once have housed the mummies or ancestor bundles of important Tiwanaku deceased, i.e., functioned as elite mausoleums (Figure 21). For the sake of the arguments we advance in this article, it is necessary to discuss these Kalasasaya and Putuni “mausoleums” in some detail.

The north and south sides of Kalasasaya's interior courtyard were flanked by a line of seven small stone structures each, which according to Escalante (1997:187-188) measure 2.66 m x 2.13 m in size

and were originally subterranean (Figures 21 and 22). Apparently, at least six of these rooms – of which nowadays little more than some of their cut-stone foundations remain – were excavated under Ponce’s direction in 1957–1958 (Ponce 2001:29, fig. 2.3). Despite the lack of (published) archaeological data, Kolata (1993:145–148, 2003:198), drawing on ethnohistorical accounts, suggests that these rooms might have been “*designed as mausoleums to hold the mummified remains of deceased rulers*” or ancestor bundles.

At least seven or eight chamber-like niches were set into the inner fill of the 1.2-m-high Putuni platform (Figure 21). Three of these were excavated in 1988. They were built of cut stone blocks recycled from earlier constructions (Kolata 1993:161) – a fact which probably accounts for the two curious notches in the roof slab of the niche illustrated in Figure 23 (see also Couture and Sampeck 2003:figs. 9.36 and 9.37; Escalante 1997:figs. 192a and 193). According to Couture and Sampeck (2003:250), the Putuni niches averaged 3 m² in area. However, the one investigated by Escalante (1997:236) was only 1.7 m x 1.0 m in size. It is also noteworthy that this niche was 0.8 m high, i.e., that the spaces in question were very small and had an extremely low ceiling. All niches were completely looted. Excavations inside “*encountered large amounts of charcoal, faunal remains, and other cultural materials-including Colonial period refuse-over a brown clay floor*” (Couture and Sampeck 2003:250). However, no human teeth or bone or other evidence for keeping human remains in the Putuni niches was found. Still, Couture and Sampeck (2003:250; see also Escalante 1997:242; Kolata 1993:161–162) write



Figure 22. Two views of the Kalasasaya courtyard buildings. Very little of these small structures survives, and published information concerning their excavation is scarce, but some scholars have wanted to interpret them as ruined and thoroughly looted Tiwanaku elite mausoleums (Photos by Antti Korpisaari.)

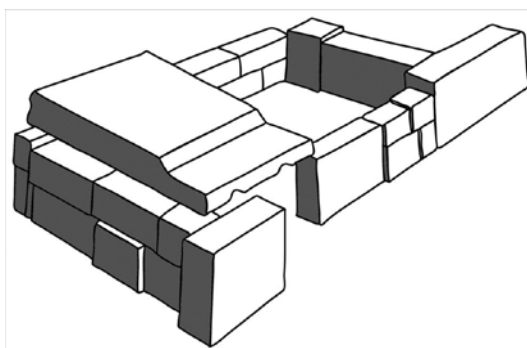


Figure 23. One of the chamber-like niches set into the inner fill of Tiahuanaco’s Putuni platform. This particular niche’s interior measurements are 1.7 m x 1.0 m x 0.8 m. According to Escalante (1997:236), the niche was accessed through a sliding stone door. Redrawn from Escalante (1997:fig. 193).

that “(t)hese small enclosures may have served a *chullpa-like function, storing the bodies of ancestors (or their effigies) and other ritual paraphernalia in areas of easy access during important ceremonies*”. Below, we will return to the topic of Middle Horizon ancestor mummies.

Ritual Tiwanaku Burial

Ritual sacrificial burials seem to have been quite exclusively associated with major temples and building projects in Tiahuanaco: the Akapana pyramid (Manzanilla 1992; Manzanilla and Woodard 1990; see also Blom and Janusek 2004:127–132; Blom et al. 2003:435–440; Kolata 1993:121–129, 2003:190–192), the Mollo Kontu Mound (Couture 2003), and the Putuni complex (Couture 2002; Couture and Sampeck 2003). The great majority of sacrificial victims seem either to have been mutilated and exposed to the elements or to have been secondary burials. Whether the bodies themselves represent “*low-class*” Tiwanaku, prisoners of war, or even ancestor bundles taken from conquered peoples is yet to be convincingly established (however, see Knudson 2008:17; Knudson et al. 2004:11–12).

Some General Characteristics of Tiwanaku Mortuary Preferences

At least in the city of Tiahuanaco, the dead were present everywhere: people were buried below and/or close to dwellings and apparently left to rot and/or to be eaten by scavengers on the terraces of the temples. In addition to Tiahuanaco, tombs were

placed close to dwellings at a number of other sites. At Lukurmata, Bermann (1994) observed periodic changes in the placement of burials, and at many sites Tiwanaku tombs were placed on (former) residential and/or agricultural terraces. In the Moquegua Middle Valley a number of spatially distinct cemeteries line the edges of many settlement sites, perhaps testifying to the ancient co-existence of various *ayllus* and/or other smaller organizational units at these sites (Goldstein 2005). It is highly likely that numerous cemeteries are also situated within and on the outskirts of Tiahuanaco, for example in Mollo Kontu (Ponce 1961:23; see also Couture 2003:202-203; Ponce 2001:39).

As a rule, “normal” Tiwanaku burials were individual primary burials. Ritual burials differ remarkably from this norm as they are often found in collective contexts and seem at least sometimes to have been of a secondary nature. “Normal” Tiwanaku deceased of all ages and both sexes apparently received rather similar burial treatment. As children’s bodies were smaller, they were often interred in smaller burial facilities. Almost all “normal” Tiwanaku deceased were buried in a flexed –and mostly seated– position.

At many sites the most popular orientation for the deceased seems to have been facing east. At Chen Chen M1 in the Moquegua Valley, the deceased of 68.5 percent of 334 intact tombs (for which direction could be determined) faced east (Blom 1999:80). East-facing orientation was popular also in Lukurmata (Bermann 1994; see also Goldstein 2005:245). However, other orientations are frequently documented too. To give just a couple of examples, 77 percent of the Tiraska deceased whose burial position is known were oriented toward southern or western directions, and all six burials found under the patio of the residential compound on the summit of the Akapana faced north (Manzanilla 1992:61-62).

On the basis of Moquegua Valley tombs – and some traces preserved in *altiplano* burials – Tiwanaku deceased were interred clothed and/or wrapped in textiles. In addition to textiles, ceramic vessels – most often a *kero*, a *tazon*, or both (Figure 24) – and other kinds of receptacles were the most common grave goods. Of the 27 ceramic vessels placed in 24 stone-lined cists investigated at Tiraska, 41 percent are *tazones* and 22 percent *keros*. Of the sample of 37 vessels from the Omo M10 tombs (Moquegua Middle Valley), 38 percent are *keros* and 30 percent *tazones* (Goldstein 2005:251). At both these sites,

keros and *tazones* are the two commonest grave good vessel forms (at Tiraska, *vasijas* tie *keros* for second place). In addition to ceramic vessels, sandals, stone beads (from necklaces, bracelets, and/or anklets), basketry, gourds, musical instruments, and smallish wood, bone, and stone artifacts also appear in some tombs (Blom 1999:Appendix A; see also Owen 1993:Appendix D).

An interesting question is whether ceramic vessels (and other receptacles) were given to the deceased empty (i.e., as items *per se* necessary in the afterlife) or only (or at least in part) as containers of food meant to sustain the dead on their journey to the hereafter. According to Goldstein (2005:251), very few Moquegua Middle Valley grave good vessels seem to have contained food and/or drink, for which reason he thinks that it was the vessels *per se* which were offered to the deceased. However, ethnographic sources tell us that departing souls have to be fed in order for them to be able to reach their place of rest (see Korpisaari 2006:39-52). This – along with the camelid, fish, and guinea pig bones found at times in *altiplano* Tiwanaku burials – suggests that food was also placed in tombs. Many ceramic grave goods were worn or even broken at the time of deposition. This might indicate that they were vessels the deceased – or in the case of young children, some member of the family – would have used in life and would continue to do so in death. Alternatively, for many Tiwanaku people it may simply have been impossible to acquire unused ceramic vessels as grave goods.



Figure 24. Tiwanaku ceramic vessels recovered in cist tombs at Tiraska: (a) 14.8-cm-high *kero* from cist 3; (b) 14.3-cm-high *kero* from cist 7; (c) 12.4-cm-high *vasija* from cist 24; (d) 8.1-cm-high *tazon* from cist 11; and (e) 7.7-cm-high *tazon* from cist 21 (photos by Antti Korpisaari, except b by Risto Kesseli).

Evidence for grave markers of Tiwanaku-affiliated tombs has been uncovered in the Moquegua and Azapa Valleys (Goldstein 2005:246), which points to the fact that at least in some cemeteries the placement of individual burials was marked. However, “new” deceased were seldom, if ever, added to Tiwanaku tombs, and apparently Tiwanaku people did not engage in protracted mortuary activities involving periodic re-opening of graves in order to take the deceased (or their body parts and/or bones) out and/or to place new offerings into the tombs (see Korpisaari 2006:154-155). Furthermore, in the *altiplano* the burial of the deceased in subterranean cists and pits surely led to the rather rapid decomposition of the soft tissues (and grave goods of organic nature), for which reason Korpisaari emphatically argues against the idea that the Tiwanaku would have curated and venerated ancestor mummies.

Comparisons

The nature of the relationship between the Tiwanaku and Wari States is a complex and debated topic. Key mythical icons of Tiwanaku and Wari art are so similar that they imply a single religion shared by the two. As Tiahuanaco figured importantly in Colonial times, and was one of the first sites investigated and described by early archaeologists, it was originally thought that Tiahuanaco had conquered – or spread its influence to – a large part of present-day Peru in the second half of the first millennium AD. However, with the discovery of the huge site of Huari, in the central Peruvian Ayacucho Valley during the 1930s, it was eventually realized that a distinct culture – Wari – had been responsible for spreading Middle Horizon styles, and Tiwanakoid²¹ icons, in the north. Nowadays, most scholars regard the Tiwanaku and Wari cultures as two distinct – but intimately linked – phenomena. The great question is, of course, the nature of the link. Obviously mortuary preferences provide important insights into this issue.

Motifs featured centrally on Tiwanaku stone sculptures – Staff Gods, Profile Attendants, and Rayed Heads – are common themes in Wari ceramics and textiles.²² Staff Gods and Goddesses as well as possible “*prototypes*” for Middle Horizon Profile Attendants appeared already in Late Chavín iconography of the last half millennium BC (e.g., Burger 1988, 1992). Consequently, some scholars have

suggested that the Formative Yaya-Mama Tradition and Pukara culture of the Titicaca Basin could have functioned as intermediaries between the Early and Middle Horizons, keeping the Chavín legacy alive (see Rowe 1971). So Wari and Tiwanaku might have adopted their respective iconographies from the earlier sources more or less independently of each other (Isbell 1988, 2001a). However, recent studies of Staff God images, and especially comparisons of a representation carved on the back of Tiahuanaco’s Ponce Monolith with another painted on offering urns discovered at Conchopata in 1977 reveal such similarities that these two Staff Gods must have been drawn from a single, shared model (Isbell and Knobloch 2006, 2009). Without doubt, the two centers had more or less direct contacts in the past.

Although Staff God iconography now documents direct relations between Tiwanaku and Wari it is equally clear that these two cultures differed in many respects. For example, their built environments and use of space differ greatly (Conklin 1991; Isbell 1991:302-306, 2001b, 2008; Isbell and Vranich 2004). Nonetheless, a couple of constructions at Huari feature surprisingly Tiwanaku-like stonework, and a semisubterranean temple in Huari’s Moraduchayuq sector is Tiwanaku-affiliated in form as well (Isbell et al. 1991:27-32). These building anomalies led Isbell (1991, 2001a) to suggest that in the 6th or 7th century AD, *altiplano* war captives might have been brought to Huari as skilled laborers for monument construction. But conversely, recent research in the Moquegua Valley – the only region in which Tiwanaku and Wari had contemporary, adjacent occupations – does not reveal very hostile relations between the two states. Tiwanaku settlements in the Moquegua Middle Valley were not fortified, and even the hilltop location of the valley’s most important Wari site – Cerro Baúl – may have been chosen more for religious than military considerations (Goldstein 2005; Owen and Goldstein 2002; Williams 2001, 2009; Williams et al. 2002; see also Janusek 2008:281-286).²³ Perhaps most significantly, research at both Tiwanaku and Wari sites in Moquegua reveals astonishingly little interaction between the two groups – at least as documented in material culture. Consequently, even if relations were not particularly hostile, isolationist politics seem to have been preferred. In this confusing domain of Wari and Tiwanaku relations, what new insights does the comparison of mortuary preferences bring to the discussion?

Probably the most salient fact that jumps out when comparing Wari and Tiwanaku burials is that at the most basic level, they are very similar. But beyond that, differences abound. Variation in Tiwanaku mortuary practices in the heartland seems to have been regional, perhaps expressing ethnic difference. But little attention was given to other aspects of identity, such as age, gender, and social status. On the other hand, Wari observed these kinds of social differences in death, while apparently attending less to regional/ethnic differences, at least in the heartland.

The essence of both Wari and Tiwanaku burial seems to have been interment of a tightly flexed corpse, more or less sitting, in a subterranean pit or stone chamber, with relatively few imperishable offerings. This probably represents a widespread and ancient Andean pattern too basic to be attributed to religious ideology spread with the mythical icons shared by the two cultures. But very significantly, and as pointed out above for the heartland areas of both cultures, subterranean burial in pits and chambers is inconsistent with the preservation of flesh in their alternating wet/dry climates. We believe that neither Wari nor Tiwanaku could have emphasized the veneration of mummies. Simply stated, flesh would not preserve in the kinds of tombs preferred by both Wari and Tiwanaku. This important issue is discussed below.

Second, it appears that both Wari and Tiwanaku mourners preferred to bury their dead in or near community buildings. In many cases burials were placed under the floors of houses, in patios or courtyards, or in space bordering the settlement. Apparently, even though the dead never turned into desiccated mummies, it was desirable to keep them nearby. Particularly, Wari constructed special mortuary rooms within residential complexes that seem to have been devoted to the dead, and dedicational activities for them. However, it should be remembered that these may not be the only preferred places of interment for either culture. Both Wari and Tiwanaku mortuary information is largely a byproduct of excavation in residential and ceremonial buildings, so different research strategies might reveal currently little-known mortuary practices.

Third and finally, some more or less specific features of Tiwanaku and Wari burial pits may have been shared in the two heartlands. For example, stone-lined cists were popular in both traditions. Furthermore, Wari Type 4 Bedrock Cavity Interments

include boot-shaped graves that recall Tiwanaku's shaft-and-side chamber tombs and possibly even some bell-shaped tombs. A question for the future is what meaning these mortuary preferences had, and whether they were so basic as to be more or less universally Andean, or whether they correlate with religious ideology exchanged between Wari and Tiwanaku during the Middle Horizon. However, even these similar grave forms seem to include significant differences – for example, benches sometimes found at the bottom of Tiwanaku shaft-and-side chamber graves have never been described for Wari, while a shaft with multiple interment chambers present in the Wari heartland appears to be rare in Tiwanaku. Collar tombs also seem to be specific to Tiwanaku, so perhaps the similarities observed here are so general that they have little relevance in regard to specific culture contact. However, they do signal the need for more investigation of mortuary preferences, at Wari and Tiwanaku, as well as their heartland antecedents, and the more distantly related highland traditions of interment, so broader comparisons can be made in the future.

Beyond these modest similarities it is apparent that the mortuary preferences of Wari and Tiwanaku differed greatly from one another. Of course new information will emerge with future research, and new discoveries often bring unanticipated surprises, but on the basis of current data, Wari practiced a much more varied set of mortuary preferences than Tiwanaku. While Tiwanaku seems to have given all the dead a very similar burial regardless of age, gender, or other aspects of identity, Wari appears to have emphasized social differences at least for some deceased. Infants and/or fetuses were preferentially interred in jars, broken-off vessel bases, or under a covering of large sherds. Often vessels with infant remains were placed in the graves of adults. But sometimes children were buried alone, with other children, or occasionally, in simple pits much like adults. Such diversity requires a study of its own.

Wari burial preferences appear to have included a practice reserved for women, and probably for girls as well. These burials are distinguished by a bowl placed over the head of the deceased. Additional distinctions will probably emerge now that gender-specific preferences have been identified.

One of the most notable differences between Wari and Tiwanaku mortuary preferences relates to the individuality vs. collectivity of tombs. With the exception of ritual sacrificial contexts, the great

majority of Tiwanaku deceased were buried in individual graves into which “new” deceased were very seldom – if ever – added. Most Wari tombs also probably started out as individual burials, but in many cases several “new” deceased were subsequently added to the same pit/cist/burial complex, apparently over an extended period of time. Many “higher-class” Wari interments (Types 4, 5, and 8) may have contained a principal deceased whose family members, descendants, and/or retainers were probably later laid to rest alongside their family head. In the case of at least the Type 5c and 8 Wari interments, human sacrifices may have been buried in the tomb complexes. Even if the identity of the principal deceased of any particular “high-status” Wari tomb complex remained in living memory for several generations, in practice the bones of the various bodies would surely become more and more mixed with every re-entry and re-opening of the burial facility, quite concretely incorporating Wari deceased into a more or less homogenous pool of ancestors. Tiwanaku deceased, on the other hand, concretely retained their individuality in their smallish cists or burial pits. While it is very probable that the Tiwanaku also emphasized familial and lineal ties through grouping tombs of related dead, or perhaps with symbolic techniques, mortuary data suggest significant differences in the way the Wari and the Tiwanaku conceived the construction of ancestry and kinship.

Differences are also apparent in the way the Wari and the Tiwanaku maintained contact with deceased ancestors. Some Wari interment types include a *ttoco*, a small orifice into the tomb – although some *ttoco* were only mock orifices. It is not completely clear how the *ttoco* functioned, although at times they were apparently plugged with stone stoppers shaped like large champagne corks. Perhaps the *ttoco* were used for orations directed to (or from?) ancestors inside. Liquids and/or foods could have been introduced through the small openings, although one tomb had several fragments of shell and semiprecious stone on the floor below the *ttoco*, and another had similar objects in its false *ttoco* (Figure 9). Another false *ttoco* had remains of a small animal in its rather shallow depression, perhaps providing direct evidence of actual offering activities. How was this small animal used – as food for the dead or as a medium for divination?

The only hole or notch resembling Wari *ttoco* reported in connection with Tiwanaku burials is

that pecked in the ceiling slabs of the hypothetical subterranean elite tomb situated a little to the north of the Kalasasaya at Tiahuanaco (see Janusek 2008:126-127, fig. 4.11b) (Figure 20). Additionally, Couture and Sampeck (2003:240) recovered “a large faced stone with holes along its sides” in the fill of one of the elite tombs situated under the extension of Tiahuanaco’s Putuni platform. However, they interpret these holes as evidence for removable capstones, not of the presence of *ttoco*-like “avenues of communication”. Furthermore, it may be that ceramic vessels in Tiwanaku graves did not contain food for the dead, and if that was the case, “feeding the dead,” the essence of Inca obligations to their ancestors, may not have characterized Tiwanaku relations with the deceased.

In addition to communication through *ttoco*, Isbell (2004) has observed that some individual bones were at times removed during the re-opening of Wari tombs. Probably, these bones became some sort of cult objects. Conversely, as discussed above, Tiwanaku tombs were not customarily re-opened so it comes as no great surprise that removals of particular bones have not been reported. However, it is interesting to note that Blom and Janusek (2004; Blom et al. 2003) recently suggested that the remains of the five or more individuals located above the last floor of Tiahuanaco’s Akapana East mound were defleshed and curated as fetishes or ancestral bundles. If this was indeed the case, some ethnic or social group residing in the Tiwanaku heartland may have physically revered ancestral bones in a manner resembling that of the residents of the Wari heartland.

Finally, Wari tombs seem to express much more social inequality than the graves of Tiwanaku. Isbell (2004, and see above) suggests that as many as 6 social ranks or classes may be represented among the 8-type (and possibly more) Wari interment preferences. By contrast, Korpisaari (2006) proposes only two social distinctions for Tiwanaku mortuary preferences, “commoners” and “elite/priestly,” with a possible third, “sacrificial interments,” that seem not to have been mortuary but offering contexts. Of course, looting of so many of the archaeologically documented Wari burials, plus poor organic preservation in the Ayacucho Valley and the Bolivian *altiplano* makes it quite hard to compare the “richness” of particular types of Wari and Tiwanaku burials on the basis of surviving grave good assemblages alone. Furthermore, the collective

nature of many Wari burial contexts means that even in the case of unlooted tombs, it is seldom possible to assign particular sets of (surviving) grave goods to particular deceased. Fortunately, however, we *can* compare the size and architectural attributes of the burial facilities themselves.

When we contrast the 6-tier social structure proposed for Wari (Isbell 2004, and see above) with Korpisaari's (2006) two- or three-way division of Tiwanaku burials, we quickly notice that in the Wari case much greater differences are apparent in the labor expended in the construction of mortuary facilities. Wari Type 1, 2, and 3 interments resemble Tiwanaku pit burials and cists. Wari Type 4, and probably modest examples of Type 5a and 5b compare in general magnitude with Tiwanaku's shaft-and-side chamber or bell-shaped tombs, and probably even the sacrificial burials. Both Wari and Tiwanaku graves of this general magnitude are known to contain objects of gold, although usually small and of little weight.

Wari Type 5c and 8 tombs remain poorly-known, and are probably limited to the Huari city, but they are truly monumental in scale. With respect to labor expenditure, nothing comparable exists in the Tiwanaku realm. Since it incorporated superterranean features, the large oval cist (Tomb 15) at the M16D site in the Moquegua Valley, c. 3 m x 2 m in size and 2 m in depth (Goldstein 2005:261-264), is probably the only Tiwanaku grave justifying comparisons with even Conchopata's larger Wari Type 5a and 5b mortuary rooms – in labor expenditure and expression of status. However, not one spectacular burial facility has been definitively documented in the city of Tiahuanaco, where we would expect the maximal Tiwanaku potentates to have resided in life and death. Indeed, if lavish burial facilities ever existed at Tiahuanaco, convincing evidence of them should have appeared in the archaeological record by now. Consequently, current mortuary data imply significantly greater social hierarchy and political centralization in the Wari State than in the less differentiated – and more segmentary(?) – Tiwanaku State. Perhaps this segmentary structure is implied by Tiwanaku's greater regional/ethnic variability in mortuary preferences, pointed out above.

Some scholars argue that powerful kings ruled Tiahuanaco (Kolata 1993; Ponce 1985). However, this is not supported by the currently-known mortuary record. We suggest a different understanding of Tiwanaku political organization is required, one that

will surely stretch traditional ideas about archaic states (see Yoffee 2005). On the other hand, Wari may well have been ruled by a king or emperor.

Before concluding this essay we must to return to the issue of ancestor mummies. Several scholars studying pre-Inca Andean cultures impute Inca-like *ayllu* organization, and the veneration of *ayllu* founders in the form of ancestor mummies, to earlier Andean societies, including Wari and Tiwanaku (Kolata 1993; McEwan 2005) (Figure 25). We repeat our conviction that both Wari and Tiwanaku pit and cist burials in the ground are inconsistent with the production and conservation of mummies. Since these were the basic forms of interment in both heartlands we find the inference that either Wari or Tiwanaku worshipped desiccated ancestor mummies, that either focused its political control through ancestor mummies, or that either constructed kin groups in the same way the Incas



Figure 25. A mummy is paraded on a litter during the celebrations of November's "feast of the dead". Even though the Incas apparently turned many of their higher-status deceased into mummy bundles, we emphatically argue that neither the Wari nor the Tiwanaku practised such a custom. Drawing adapted from Guaman Poma ([1615] 1987).

conceptualized and constituted the *ayllu* around a mummified founder (see Isbell 1997), to be very unlikely. While there can be little doubt that Wari and Tiwanaku people were attached to their dead, and that some kind of ancestor worship was practiced, it simply was not the same as Inca relations with, and manipulation of, the dead.

At present there is more information for Wari interaction with the dead than for Tiwanaku. However, what exists in both heartlands implies dynamic change, not long-term continuity in the treatment of ancestors, even during the Middle Horizon itself. First, rather than Inca-like mummies, it is apparent that Wari people removed selected bones from re-opened tombs, probably to become objects of power and veneration. Second, *ttoco* openings into higher-status tombs imply on-going interaction with the dead that probably involved offerings of tiny luxury objects and perhaps food through the small holes. Furthermore, both the re-opening of tombs, and *ttoco* offering apertures seem to have originated, or been adopted, well into Middle Horizon times, for they have not been documented in pre- or proto-Wari burials (although the mortuary preferences of the Early Intermediate Period Huarpa culture remain little-studied). While there is much more to investigate and learn about Wari and Tiwanaku mortuary preferences, it seems that Wari and Tiwanaku practices differed in many ways, and that both were dynamic and changing even during the half-millennium of the Middle Horizon itself. Consequently, analogies with Inca mummy veneration are unsatisfactory for Tiwanaku and Wari.

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Notes

- ¹ Many prehistorians prefer "severed head" instead of "trophy head," precisely because the latter implies warfare and competition rather than, for example the more neutral term that could also describe practices associated with ancestor veneration.
- ² Isbell supports an orthographic convention in which "Huari" refers to the urban site and its artifacts, while "Wari" refers to the wide-spread culture and polity of which Huari was the capital. Similarly, he suggests using "Tiahuanaco" for the urban capital in the altiplano, and "Tiwanaku" for the wide-spread culture.
- ³ In recent years Lidio Valdez and associates have published at least nine highly overlapping articles on mortuary materials from Middle Horizon Ayacucho (see "Valdez" entries in bibliography). Because these articles overlap so much, only the most recent will be cited in the text of this paper. Since 2003, when Isbell gave a Valdez manuscript a negative referee's review for misrepresenting site formation processes, and then sent Lidio a copy in hopes that he might improve his professionalism, Valdez, his wife K. Bettcher, brother E.J. Valdez, and an occasional associate, have engaged in belligerent, personal attacks on Isbell thinly disguised as academic criticism. Unfortunately, rather than add to, subtract from, or modify Isbell's Wari mortuary classification, the Valdez family negates order in Wari burial practices almost entirely, describing any and all variation as contradicting classification. Isbell refuses to respond to the endless exaggerations and false accusations, or to stoop to an exchange of insults. More productively, the absurdity of the Valdez criticisms is best revealed in this paper by showing that the graves described as contradicting Isbell's system actually fit quite nicely within it.
- ⁴ Valdez et al. (2005) and Valdez, Bettcher, Ochotoma, and Valdez (2006) assert that Conchopata interments include secondary burials, cremations, and others ignored by Isbell. But site formation processes associated with these finds have not been systematically evaluated so it is unclear whether the remains spring from intended mortuary practices or from events such clearing and sanctifying space for building/rebuilding during the MH, and later. Similarly, José

- Ochatoma (2007) mixes intended and fortuitous processes in his approach to burial. Defining secondary burial, he states “Se trata de sepulturas alteradas debido a un proceso antes de haber sido colocado en la fosa de modo definitivo. Los cambios o alteraciones están reflejados en la estructura ósea, ya que no presentan una relación anatómica natural.” However, he overturns his methodological rigor in the following sentence, “Se identificaron solo partes del cuerpo sueltos y desmembrados, producto de prácticas mortuorias vinculadas posiblemente a cierto tipo de rituales o simplemente como resultado de saqueos posteriores.” (Ochatoma 2007:268, emphasis added). Isbell (2004) considers it best to initiate his classification of Wari mortuary practices with the most securely documented preferences. Indeed, it is better to add preferences later, as they become adequately documented than to begin with erroneous types.
- 5 Isbell did not include children and infants in his 2004 classification. He also excluded severed skulls (frequently called “trophy heads”) and comparable amputated human parts found in what appear to be ceremonial contexts and precincts. These practices may not be mortuary, and definitely require their own treatments.
 - 6 In a forthcoming publication (Isbell and Korpisaari nd) these same types are employed, although grouped into categories “Simple” (Types 1 and 2), “Intermediate” (Types 3 and 6), “Elaborate” (Types 4, 5a and 5b), and “Monumental” (Types 5c and 8). Type 7 is represented by a single find that are probably sacrificial victims.
 - 7 Schreiber (1992:154-155) reported megalithic remains in a MH settlement about 100 km south of Huari, that may represent examples of the second grandest, Type 5c Wari tombs. None has been investigated so their interpretation remains tentative, but if they are (currently) unique examples of very high-status Huari burials outside the capital, it seems likely that a Wari royal estate has been discovered.
 - 8 In the archaeology of Ayacucho, popular terms are used for many prehistoric objects by excavation crews. A hole of the kind described is usually called a “respiradero” (breathing hole). Since functionally based names, even popular ones, are likely to influence thinking about prehistory, Isbell sought to counteract the implication of a “breathing hole” by applying an old Quechua term that is not totally arbitrary, but is more or less neutral in terms of function.
 - 9 “Royal Burial” is an interpretation based on the monumentality of the type of tomb, and is therefore inappropriate as a name. In a forthcoming publication (Isbell and Korpisaari nd) this type, as well as Wari Burial Type 5c tombs are classified together as: Wari “Monumental” tombs. In fact, the best name for these spectacular Wari tombs may be “Megalithic Monumental.”
 - 10 Confusion surrounds the Posoqoypata site because of paradoxical descriptions in different articles published by Valdez and family. For example, one map (Valdez et al. 2002:fig. 5) shows the Type 3 cists more or less randomly distributed to the east side of a larger chamber tomb of Type 5, apparently constituting an open cemetery. But figure 5 of Valdez et al. 2005 shows walls of a building OVER the Type 5 tomb. Furthermore, Valdez, Bettcher, Ochatoma, and Valdez (2006:680, plate 3) refer to this Type 5 chamber as “untouched,” but elsewhere Valdez et al. (2002:399) affirm that the surrounding cist tombs were bulldozed and looted.
- Finally, in footnote 4 of Valdez et al. 2002, discovery of two more “mortuary chambers” is reported for Posoqoypata, one to the west of the Type 5 complex, the other to the east. But no more description is provided in this or subsequent articles. Consequently, questions surround Posoqoypata for the published descriptions do not coincide.
- 11 Ochatoma (2007:260-262) states “A la misma altura del rostro apareció una escudilla invertida del estilo Huamanga que cubría semillas de frijol y material orgánica descompuesta. La deficiente conservación de los restos óseos del individuo dificultó realizar el decapado, no obstante, se pudo determinar que estaba en posición flexionada, o sedante con los brazos y piernas cruzadas frente al tronco y mirando hacia el sur.” It seems very likely that the bowl was on top of the head before the cadaver deteriorated. This burial also included a camelid skeleton on a ledge-like feature just inside the mouth of the tomb (Ochatoma 2007:260-262). An unusual inclusion in Ayacucho’s MH graves, camelid remains were also found in “Offering B” at Aqo Wayqo, that contained the skull of a human infant, and was placed under a wall (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2001a:70-71). Like a bowl over the head, presence and location of camelid parts should be tracked as possible criteria for refining Wari mortuary classification in the future, as should under-wall location.
 - 12 See Korpisaari 2006 for a complete list of references, many of which will also be cited below.
 - 13 At Tiraska, cist size apparently correlated roughly with the physical size of the cadaver, with the average cist diameter and chamber depth for adults being 52 cm and 61 cm, respectively (see Korpisaari 2006:144).
 - 14 All 67 tombs documented by Faldín (1992) at Katilani Jawira and all 5 burials excavated by Albarracín-Jordan (1996:178) at Guaqui were cists, as were 3 of the 4 tombs found by Liendo (1957) at Churijahuira-Cuyahuani. Casanova (1942:351-352) writes that the cist was the most common tomb type in the Mocachi region too; personally, he excavated 3 Tiwanaku cists and 1 Tiwanaku simple pit burial at Mocachi.
 - 15 As astonishing as it seems, we are unaware of any stone-lined Tiwanaku IV/V cists scientifically excavated (and reported) in Tiahuanaco. Some adobe-lined tombs have been found, however. At Lukumata, of the 39 Tiwanaku IV/V burials and 65 tombs tentatively dated to the post-Tiwanaku period, only 8 (21 percent) and 9 (14 percent), respectively, were “proper” cists (Bermann 1994). At Kirawi, Janusek and Kolata (2003) located 11 pit burials and no cists.
 - 16 Bennett (1936:413-446) and Blom and Bandy (1999) report on a total of 21 Tiwanaku IV/V burials excavated at Chiripa, of which only 5 were stone-lined cists. At Iwawi, Isbell and colleagues found only pit burials.
 - 17 Some years ago, Goldstein (2005:264) argued that an irregular 34 m x 22 m concentration of piled stone at the M70B site in the Moquegua Valley “indicates a massive aboveground mausoleum structure.” However, excavations in 2006-2007 revealed this rock feature to actually cover a more or less typical Tiwanaku-affiliated cemetery containing 73 tombs (Baitzel 2008). The San Sebastián burial of Cochabamba containing numerous gold artifacts (Money 1993; Sagárnaga 1995:272; see also Berenguer 2000:72-73; Korpisaari 2006:106-107) and rich tombs found in North Chile (e.g., Stovel 2002) are not considered here. They

probably represent the burials of local leaders having ties with Tiwanaku elites, rather than Tiwanaku burials per se.

¹⁸ Recently, the Dirección Nacional de Arqueología of Bolivia carried out large-scale excavations of the Akapana pyramid under the direction of Javier Escalante. The results of this fieldwork are yet to be comprehensively reported, but according to a newspaper article, a tomb containing two small gold artifacts was found on the Akapana in April 2007 (*El Diario*, 3 May 2007). Although still difficult to evaluate it surely represents another elaborate Tiwanaku grave.

¹⁹ It is important to keep in mind that rich grave goods contained in ritual burials should be related more to the sacred nature of the offerings than to the social nature of buried individuals, many of whom were probably sacrifices.

²⁰ According to Posnansky (1945:vol. II:115), this room measures 1.77 m x 1.36 m and is 1.83 m deep.

²¹ Isbell and Knobloch (2006, 2009) have argued that these shared icons, and their pre-Middle Horizon antecedents,

should be better called “SAIS” (Southern Andean Iconographic Series) rather than Tiwanaku, or Tiwanakoid, for naming them after one site tends to imply an origin at that place or heartland.

²² In Tiwanaku ceramics, these diagnostic motifs are quite rare (e.g., Bennett 1934:403–404, 479). However, several ceramic vessels with “Wari-like” Staff God imagery were found in two Tiwanaku offering contexts Korpisaari and his colleagues excavated on the island of Pariti in 2004–2005 (see Korpisaari and Pärssinen 2005:figs. 32 and 33, 2011:plates 3a and 30; Korpisaari et al. 2011:fig. 11; Sagárnaga 2007:figs. 42 and 43).

²³ Wari occupations in Moquegua are higher in the valley than Tiwanaku settlements, so the two peoples may have coexisted in relative peace. But on the basis of his visit to Cerro Baúl, Isbell believes that the hill has traces of architecture difficult to interpret as anything but defensive.

