

warriors confronting their enemies with raised clubs. Erotic encounters between men and women and gods making love to humans likewise represent common themes, as do grotesque images of the many Moche gods and goddesses. Much of this, of course, reflects the culture of the Moche elite. We know much less about the daily life of the farmers, fishermen, weavers, traders, construction workers, and servants whose labor made that elite culture possible.

These cultural achievements, however, rested on fragile environmental foundations, for the region was subject to drought, earthquakes, and occasional torrential rains associated with El Niño episodes (dramatic changes in weather patterns caused by periodic warming of Pacific Ocean currents). During the sixth century C.E., some combination of these forces caused extended ecological disruption, which seriously undermined Moche civilization. In these circumstances, the Moche were vulnerable to aggressive neighbors and possibly to internal social tensions as well. By the end of the eighth century C.E., that civilization had passed into history.

### *Wari and Tiwanaku: Empires of the Interior*

Far more than the Moche and other coastal civilizations, the interior empires of Wari (wah-ree) and Tiwanaku provided a measure of political integration and cultural commonality for the entire Andean region. Growing out of ancient settlements, these two states flourished between 400 and 1000 C.E., Wari in the northern highlands and Tiwanaku to the south. Both were centered in large urban capitals, marked by monumental architecture and stratified populations numbering in the tens of thousands. Both governments collected surplus food in warehouses as an insurance against times of drought and famine.

But neither state controlled a continuous band of territory. Adapting to their vertical environment, both empires established colonies at lower elevations on the eastern and western slopes of the Andes as well as throughout the highlands, seeking access to resources such as seafood, maize, chili peppers, cocoa, hallucinogenic plants, obsidian, and feathers from tropical birds. Caravans of llamas linked distant centers, allowing the exchange and redistribution of goods, while the religious prestige and ceremonial power of the capital city provided further integration. Cultural influences from the center, such as styles of pottery and textiles, spread well beyond the regions of direct political control. Similar religious symbols and images prevailed in both places, including the ancient Andean Staff God, a deity portrayed with a staff in each hand. Versions of this image have been found in Norte Chico, Chavín, and Moche sites as well, suggesting a long-term continuity in the religious culture of the Andean region.

But Wari and Tiwanaku were hardly carbon copies of each other. Wari's agriculture employed an elaborate system of hillside terracing and irrigation, using snowmelt from the Andes. A seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary thought the hillsides of the Wari region "were covered with flights of stairs." Tiwanaku's highly productive farming economy, by contrast, utilized a "raised field" system in which artificially

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#### Guided Reading Question

##### DESCRIPTION

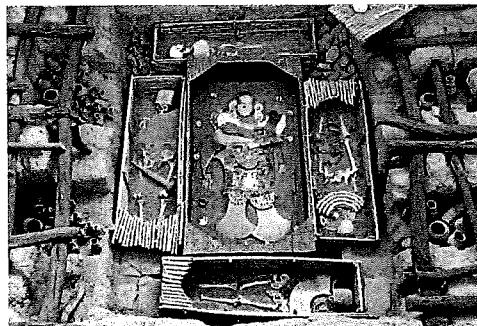
What was the significance of Wari and Tiwanaku in the history of Andean civilization?

## ZOOMING IN

### The Lord of Sipan and the Lady of Cao

In the mid- to late third century C.E., a prominent man of Moche society died in what is now Peru. We do not know his name, for a written language was not a part of Moche life. But since archeologists uncovered his final resting place in 1987, scholars have learned a great deal about him and about his culture. He was five feet four inches in height, relatively tall for his time and place, and was somewhere around forty years of age. The condition of his teeth and bones suggests that he ate a well-balanced diet and probably performed little physical labor during his life. The cause of his death is unclear, but scholars think that he may well have died of an epidemic disease during a severe famine.

Much more obvious is his high social status, for which he has been dubbed the Lord of Sipan, named for the town in Peru where the archeological site is located. Laid to rest in the official and ceremonial finery he likely donned in life, the Lord of Sipan was bedecked in gold. He wore a huge gold crescent headdress, a gold face mask, two necklaces with gold and silver beads in the shape of oversized peanuts, and gold earspools exquisitely inlaid with turquoise; he had a gold warrior's shield on



The Moche ruler in the center of the grave, dating to about 250 C.E., was about forty years old when he died and, at five feet four inches, was quite tall for the time.

his back and a golden scepter in his hand. Hundreds of pots contained food and drink, while 451 ceremonial objects also accompanied the burial. Guarding the entrance to his tomb was the skeleton of a man with his feet cut off, presumably to prevent him from leaving his post. Buried with the Lord of Sipan were six other individuals: a young child (perhaps his own?); two robust men (perhaps ritually sacrificed warriors?); and three young women (perhaps his wives?). A dog, claimed by local traditions to guide the dead into the afterworld, and two llamas also attended the lord in death. In its archeological significance and its material splendor, this burial site has been compared to that of Tutankhamen, the young pharaoh of Egypt. (See the photo of his burial site above.)

Clearly, the Lord of Sipan was a very high-ranking member of Moche's highly stratified society. Such lords received food from their subjects, some of which they passed on to lesser lords, and they had access to the rare and prestigious objects created for them by Moche's

photo: © Karl Heinz Ranch/laiif/Redux

#### AP® EXAM TIP

You should know the general effects of the fall of empires in the classical era, like political fragmentation, discussed here.

elevated planting surfaces in swampy areas were separated by small irrigation canals. Tiwanaku, furthermore, has become famous for its elaborately fitted stone walls and buildings, while Wari's tombs and temples were built of fieldstone set in mud mortar and covered with smooth plaster. Cities in the Wari region seemed built to a common plan and linked to the capital by a network of highways, which suggests a political system more tightly controlled from the center than in Tiwanaku.<sup>10</sup>

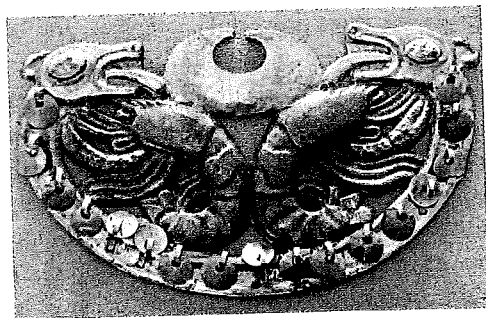
Despite these differences and a 300-mile common border, little overt conflict or warfare occurred between Wari and Tiwanaku. In areas where the two peoples lived near one another, they apparently did not mingle much. They each spoke their own language, wore different clothing, furnished their homes with distinctive

immensely skillful artisans. Various objects in the tombs correspond closely to items on Moche pottery and to reports of prisoners being slaughtered and a warrior-priest collared and drinking their blood. Perhaps the Lord of Sipan was such a warrior-priest.

At the time the Lord of Sipan came to light, it was widely assumed that the elite of Moche society was male. Then in 2005, an excavation uncovered a tomb containing a woman who had died in childbearing her twenties. Now known, she had been carefully wrapped in strips of gold, wore long braids of snakes, crabs, and spiders, and accompanying her was a huge quantity of goods indicating great wealth and power. Her nose was pierced with a gold ring, and she wielded war clubs and spears. Two copper and wood vessels were entombed with her, a

In the several centuries following the fall of the impressive cities of the Wari and Tiwanaku kingdoms, one of the final and spectacular empires was swallowed. The Incas themselves adopted the Tiwanaku, adopting their terms of statecraft, utilizing similar styles of architecture, and the prestige of Tiwanaku.

immensely skillful artisans. Various objects in the tomb correspond closely to images on Moche pottery and temples of prisoners being slaughtered and a warrior-priest collecting and drinking their blood. Perhaps the Lord of Sipan was one such warrior-priest.



Object found in the tomb of the Lady of Cao.

At the time the Lord of Sipan came to light, it was widely assumed that the ruling elite of Moche society was all male. Then in 2005, another remarkable burial site was uncovered, containing the intact body of a young woman who had died in childbirth around 450 C.E. while still in her twenties. Now known as the Lady of Cao, she had been carefully wrapped in hundreds of yards of cotton strips, wore long braided hair, and bore numerous tattoos of snakes, crabs, and spiders on her arms and legs. Accompanying her was a huge collection of elaborate grave goods indicating great wealth: fifteen elaborate necklaces, gold sewing needles, weaving tools, beautiful jewelry, and a vessel depicting a nursing mother. But beyond these feminine objects were more surprising signs of real power. Her nose rings featured designs of men wielding war clubs and heads being pecked by condors. Two copper and wood staffs, symbols of authority, were entombed with her, as well as many weapons, including

two massive war clubs and twenty-three spear throwers. "The war clubs are clear symbols not only of combat but of power," declared one member of the archeological team.<sup>11</sup>

So was the Lady of Cao a local ruler in her own right or simply a woman from an elite family? The case for her political and religious role has been strengthened by the subsequent discovery of eight more burials

of prominent Moche women. One of them contained a tall silver goblet, very similar to those depicted in Moche artistic scenes of ritual sacrifice and the consumption of blood. Some scholars suggest that Moche society was highly decentralized, with men in positions of authority in some communities and women in others. Thus the Lord of Sipan and the Lady of Cao, though living several hundred years apart, may have played equivalent roles in Moche society.

Questions: What do we learn about Moche society from these two figures? If you could interview these individuals, what would you want to ask them? What might be inferred from these burials about Moche understandings of the afterlife?

photo: © EFE/Zuma Press

In the several centuries following 1000 C.E., both civilizations collapsed, their impressive cities permanently abandoned. What followed was a series of smaller kingdoms, one of which evolved into the Inca Empire that gave to Andean civilization a final and spectacular expression before all of the Americas was swallowed up in European empires from across the sea. The Incas themselves clearly drew on the legacy of Wari and Tiwanaku, adopting aspects of their imperial models and systems of statecraft, building on the Wari highway system, and utilizing similar styles of dress and artistic expression. Such was the prestige of Tiwanaku centuries after its collapse that the

#### PRACTICING AP® HISTORY

What features common to all civilizations can you identify in the civilizations of Africa and the Americas? What distinguishing features give each of them a distinctive identity?