Introduction

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The Moche became known as a distinct cultural entity at the turn of the last century as a result of Max Uhle's excavations at the Huacas de Moche site in the Moche Valley. Since that time, Moche monumental architecture and visual culture have fascinated scholars and laypeople alike. For more than a century, Moche art, consisting of thousands of ceramic and metallic objects extracted from archaeological contexts, has been collected and disseminated throughout the world. As a result, Moche art objects currently grace the display cases of countless museums and private collections. Such objects continue to garner ever-increasing interest in and fascination with this complex culture from the Early Intermediate Period (AD 100–800) of Prehispanic Peru.

Some of the first knowledge of Moche culture, in fact, derived from increasing interest in the outstanding artistic tradition made visible by such marketed objects. Investigators approached the striking realism and visual complexity of the sculptures and paintings on Moche fineware ceramics in order to explore the information they provided with regard to religion, way of life, rituals, political institutions, and craft activities of this ancient north coast civilization. Such efforts at visual reading and interpretation continue, supplemented by continued archaeology by which to contextualize the material.

Following Max Uhle's departure from the north coast of Peru in 1899, illicit excavations, archaeological research, and iconographic analyses in the region continued throughout the twentieth century at a fairly consistent pace—that is, until the late 1980s. In 1987, the world of Andean archaeology was taken by surprise by the chance discovery of elite tombs at Sipán. The succeeding excavations at the site revealed the most elaborate and undisturbed Moche funerary contexts ever found. Their discovery and excavation have since marked the beginning of a new era of research in Moche studies. Following

the work at Sipán, Moche scholars began initiating long-term archaeological projects at numerous other Moche sites, including San José de Moro, Dos Cabezas, El Brujo, and Huacas de Moche. Also, valley-wide surveys have been undertaken in the Jequetepeque, Chicama, Moche, Chao, and Santa valleys to further define the extent of Moche occupation and influence.

This book is a reflection of the present state of Moche research, its advances, and problematics. The chapters in this volume touch upon not only the major sites and regions currently under investigation, but also the major methodologies being explored in the study of Moche culture. They demonstrate an authentic range of multidisciplinary approaches. While the authors in this volume often combine archaeological research with iconographic studies in their investigations, they incorporate additional analyses and varied methodological concerns to provide for a rich tableau of scholarly explorations.

Elizabeth P. Benson appropriately sets the stage for the remaining volume in the opening chapter. She presents a complex reflection on the nature of objects depicted in Moche iconography and their material counterparts recovered from archaeological contexts. Her overriding concern is to delimit the rules of object depiction—to examine what she terms Moche visual “shorthand.” Benson discusses the presence of such iconographic shorthand in the nature of sacrificial scenes, depictions of architecture, and representations of clubs and maces, among other visual themes and motifs. By surveying the current expanse of research in Moche studies and the dimensions such research continues to add to analyses of Moche ceramic iconography, Benson exhibits her impressive work in the field of Moche studies, to which the 2003 Fourth D. J. Sibley Family Conference was dedicated.

In Chapter 2, Anne Marie Hocquenghem develops more fully her long-term approach to Moche iconog-

raphy, which she founds on the structuralist theory of Claude Lévi-Strauss. Hocquenghem explores how religious attitudes and ritual practices recorded for a later period—post-conquest ethnohistoric and modern ethnographic studies—may elucidate the role of Moche rituals and religion as identified in the material record. Over the past thirty years, her work has inspired many investigators, especially Spanish- and French-speaking scholars, through the establishment and elaboration of this methodological approach. This volume presents for the first time a detailed publication of her research and methodology in English.

Another long-term study by Donna McClelland (Chapter 3) provides a review and elaboration of her extended project to identify a particular fruit species commonly represented in Moche iconography, known as the *ulluchu*. This final contribution exemplifies the manner in which an investigation may actively combine iconographic and archaeological material toward species identification. In this case, McClelland seeks out the still elusive fruit, the *ulluchu*, as it is depicted and encountered in the Moche visual and material record. The chapter presented here undoubtedly provides the most detailed analysis of this plant to date, as well as its multitudinous relations in Moche iconography with images of blood sacrifice, ritual warfare, and rulership. McClelland's chapter reflects her dedication to the details of such a focused investigation, the same dedication that she devoted to her invaluable reproductions of Moche fineline paintings. Sadly, Donna McClelland passed away before this final publication. The present volume is dedicated to her memory and her overwhelming contribution to the field of Moche studies.

The remaining twelve chapters complement the preceding long-term investigations by contributing further to methodological advancements and innovative multidisciplinary techniques in the field of Moche studies. The authors and their contributions center roughly around the major sites of Dos Cabezas in the Jequetepeque Valley, Huacas de Moche in the Moche Valley, and Sipán in the Lambeyque Valley, as well as the Santa Valley region. Studies that are more site specific interperse with chapters of greater regional concern. In this respect, recent explorations and recently introduced technical and scientific studies find equal placement with the flow of advancing archaeological and icono-

graphic investigations, localized and regionalized. The contributions reflect prevalent themes in Moche studies such as the influence of El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) on this north coast polity, the nature of Moche warfare and sacrifice, and the role of Moche visual culture in decoding social and political frameworks. The studies further demonstrate the continued interests and diverse pursuits of the individual scholars, thus substantiating a volume of increasingly specialized approaches and their relative application to the various research problems at hand in Moche studies.

Innovative and controversial, Michael E. Moseley, Christopher B. Donnan, and David K. Keefer (Chapter 5) utilize the site of Dos Cabezas in the Jequetepeque Valley as a case study for the investigation of social change on the north coast of Peru based on the detection of extreme ecological conditions. Among other factors, they suggest that the end of Moche occupation at Dos Cabezas coincided with a series of severe environmental conditions, such as massive floods and successive aeolian sand encroachments, brought about by a mega El Niño event. Moseley and his colleagues propose that such ecological disruptions noted at Dos Cabezas may eventually be detected at other Moche sites. Their model, which reflects in part the application of ecological determinism, may thus have far-reaching implications for future Moche investigations.

The role of El Niño in Moche studies has received ever-increasing attention over the past thirty years. This geoclimatic phenomenon, which occurs every four to seven years, brings torrential rains and flooding to the north coast of Peru, with warm Pacific waters temporarily replacing the cold Humboldt Current and its ecosystem, which run along the western coastline. Recent excavations in Plaza 3a at Huaca de la Luna strongly suggest the coordination of Moche sacrificial events with the occurrence of at least two such El Niño episodes. Moche iconographic studies may further lend increasing weight to the social or political emphasis placed on the El Niño phenomenon (see the chapters by Alva and Bourget, this volume). Therefore, research into the various effects and dating of El Niño and mega El Niño events on this north coast culture may provide critical insight into Moche identity and site interaction, as proposed by Moseley, Donnan, and Keefer for the site of Dos Cabezas.

In Chapter 6, Alana Cordy-Collins and Charles F. Merbs offer a detailed and extensive analysis regarding the health, pathologies, and social roles of five Moche giants buried together at the site of Dos Cabezas. These high-ranking individuals are perhaps some of the most intriguing Moche persons excavated to date. Following a meticulous forensic analysis, Cordy-Collins and Merbs suggest not only that the individual pathologies of the five giants reflect habitual practices such as kneeling or sitting, but also that such practices correspond to their prescribed rank in burial. The giants thus reinforce a link between a recognized physical practice and its representation in both the iconography and archaeological record. Following upon comparative forensic research of Moche human sacrificial victims (see Verano, this volume), this study evinces the range of disciplinary approaches that may serve to elucidate cultural practices, social roles, and hierarchies in Moche society. That such a detailed forensic study fits well within the theme of this volume testifies to the open and innovative state of Moche research.

Framing these studies at Dos Cabezas are two more chapters by Christopher B. Donnan and colleagues discussing the creation, design, and possible significance of particular sets of Moche ceramic and metal artifacts. In a groundbreaking study, Christopher B. Donnan (Chapter 4) explores the masking traditions of the Moche. He provides a detailed examination of the composition and design of assorted mask types created and used by the Moche. Donnan compares the masks uncovered in the archaeological record with those represented in Moche iconography in order to evince their variable functions. Such a comprehensive analysis provides the material necessary to better define the specified ritual practices of this ancient north coast society.

The contribution by Christopher B. Donnan, David A. Scott, and Todd Bracken (Chapter 7) was not presented at the 2003 Sibley conference. Nevertheless, the chapter presents invaluable research on the metallurgical techniques employed by the Moche. The authors' approach is thoroughly technical and experimental. By illuminating the manner of Moche metallurgy, the study will undoubtedly facilitate future interpretations of the use and value of particular Moche metal objects. Such technical investigations are crucial for a better understanding of the inherent value and symbolism of

Moche material culture, including the items used in ritual practice.

In Chapter 8, Claude Chapdelaine shifts the regional attention briefly to the extreme south of the Moche sphere of influence. Chapdelaine explores the identification of Moche in the Santa Valley, where he has worked continuously since 2000. He examines the relationship that may have existed between the Santa Valley populations and those living in the center of the Southern Moche state, presumably in the Moche Valley, based on their comparative material culture (ceramics). Following a comprehensive discussion of the ceramic forms and their distribution, Chapdelaine suggests the presence of a more localized Santa style as expressive perhaps of the emergence of a regional identity. Chapdelaine thus addresses the nature of Moche cultural distribution, state establishment, and social identity in the southern sphere.

The Huacas de Moche site in the Moche Valley is generally considered the regional capital of this Southern Moche sphere and has witnessed considerable excavations since the time of Max Uhle at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1991, the University of Trujillo began a long-term project at Huaca de la Luna, directed by Santiago Uceda. In Chapter 9, Uceda presents a provocative analysis regarding the social identity of one class of specialized individuals buried in the site's main platform (Platform I). Uceda explores the specific social roles of this class of buried individuals based on his identification, examination, and interpretation of corresponding figures and their implements represented in certain iconographic scenes. An effigy pelt worn or carried by these individuals was uncovered in a buried cache in Platform I. As Benson references in Chapter 1, the effigy presents a one-to-one correspondence between the iconography and the archaeological record. Uceda's investigation of the burials and cached objects thus considers not only the identification of the particular class of individuals associated with such emblematic implements. He further explores their placement and role in a proposed Moche social or ritual framework, in ritual battles and human sacrifice.

Between 1995 and 2001, two key deposits of human sacrificial victims were excavated by Steve Bourget, and by John Verano and Moises Tufinio within Plazas 3a and 3c, respectively, adjacent to Platform I of Huaca de

la Luna. The excavations, analyses, and forensic studies of these two arenas and their human remains have since spawned increasing interest in and debate on the nature of Moche warfare and human sacrifice. The succeeding two chapters, focusing on Huaca de la Luna, thus appropriately address the nature of Moche human sacrifice. Venturing a relatively novel form of scientific research, Izumi Shimada and his colleagues (Chapter 10) explore the social and political organization of the Moche through a genetic study of the sacrificial victims at Huaca de la Luna. Different in intent and scale than previous studies performed at the Sicán site of Huaca Loro in the La Leche Valley, Shimada and colleagues investigate and evaluate what mitochondrial DNA analyses may reveal about the biodiversity of Moche participants in sacrificial practices at the Southern Moche capital. While understandably controversial in its application, this relatively new research technique provides for an increasingly more complex and comprehensive profile of Moche rulers, sacrificial victims, and general population.

John Verano follows in Chapter 11 with an updated discussion of his forensic analyses of the sacrificial victims from both Plazas 3a and 3c at Huaca de la Luna. Verano compares the human remains found in the two plazas in order to examine the nature and sequence of sacrificial practices at the site. Based on his inspections of the skeletal material, Verano posits a series of complex Moche ritual practices and suggests their variation across time. In this contribution, Verano thus continues his investigations into and interpretations of the nature of Moche human sacrifice, as well as Moche warfare, based on the relevant forensic data.

In the following chapter, Jeffrey Quilter (Chapter 12) pursues this perhaps most elusive and actively debated topic in Moche studies—the nature of Moche warfare and militarism—through a comparatively different approach. Quilter investigates the objects of Moche militarism and the identity of warriors in the iconography and archaeological record, advancing upon previous research by Larco Hoyle. In order to tease out the meaning of Moche warfare and its representation, Quilter adopts a comparative method, referencing similar activities performed or represented by the Japanese samurai, the French and English during the Hundred Years' War, and the painted Attic vases of Ancient Greece, among

others. The controversial topic of Moche warfare and the comparative approach taken provide weight to this particular contribution, which incites discussion of the proper manner for interpreting Moche militarism through the iconographic and archaeological records.

With a comparable critical eye to methodology, Jean-François Millaire (Chapter 13) turns his gaze to the assessment of Moche social practices—in this case, Moche textile production. Millaire examines the representation of this craft production in Moche iconography, particularly in the example known as the Weaver's Scene, a fineline drawing from a Moche Phase IV *florero* currently housed in the British Museum. Based on his analysis, Millaire challenges the notion of large-scale, organized textile production proposed in recent studies. He suggests rather a revision of the methodological approach that led to the identification of such a specialized mode of production in Moche society. Notably at odds, then, in Millaire's discussion are comparative interpretations of the archaeological and iconographic data, and the methodologies taken to align these two fields properly.

The volume naturally concludes by returning to the site of Sipán in the Lambayeque Valley. As mentioned above, the tombs discovered at this site in 1987 launched the recent age and success of intensive research and investigation. At the 2003 Sibley symposium, Walter Alva, director of the Sipán excavations, presented a paper by his son Néstor, which is translated here from the original Spanish (Chapter 14). In this contribution, Néstor Alva ventures a species identification of the spider representations most common in Moche iconography. As a point of departure, Alva addresses the objects found within the high-status burial of Tomb 3 at Sipán. Rather than focus on the identity of the Tomb 3 occupant, Alva directs his attention to the biological indicators of the spider motif, which appears extensively in this funerary assemblage. His investigation examines both preceding Cupisnique representations and various contemporary Moche forms. It thus contributes to an ever-increasing body of publications exploring the concept of a ritual ecology among the Prehispanic cultures of the Peruvian north coast.

In the final chapter, Steve Bourget (Chapter 15) returns to the site of Sipán, and the occupant of Tomb 3 in particular. Bourget suggests that the social and ritual

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identity of the main individual buried in the third tomb may have eluded the scrutiny of previous investigators. He proposes that this tomb, in fact, may have been the resting place of an individual depicted in the Sacrifice Ceremony. As such, the proposed identification follows a series of relatively recent archaeological discoveries that have recognized Sacrifice Ceremony individuals buried at sites such as San José de Moro, Huaca de La Cruz and Sipán. Bourget's analysis of this early Sipán ruler, through a thorough evaluation of his funerary assemblage and context, contributes to a greater understanding not only of the identified persona within, but also of the overall nature of Moche rulership.

The Fourth D. J. Sibley Conference at the University of Texas at Austin in 2003 sought to bring together some of the most distinguished and innovative scholarship on Moche art, arts, and archaeology. The contributions

presented in this volume reflect this goal, presenting long-standing methodologies alongside the diversity and innovation of disciplinary approaches and techniques available to Moche scholars. The contributions range from the most detailed and comprehensive evaluations of material and visual culture to the broadest interpretations of Moche social and ritual practice and identity. Following the theme of the symposium, most authors readily address and investigate the critical interpretive value at the conjunction of the archaeological and artistic records. The present volume thus offers but one of many past, and no doubt future, compiled bodies of research that are needed to eventually bring to life the Moche art of museum and private collections, as well as the vast array of archaeological contexts slowly but surely being unearthed from the sands of the Peruvian north coast.

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