

## **The Early Intermediate Period: The Moche**

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- The End of the Early Horizon
  - around 300-200 cal BC
  - Chavín de Huántar and the large coastal temple sites had long since been abandoned
  - some Initial Period/Early Horizon Chavín-like ideas and practices may have continued for a while longer, for example if the Karwa textiles really are from late in the Early Horizon
  - local styles of pottery developed, now much more varied than before
  - apparent rise of inter-group conflict and violence
    - widespread construction of hilltop fortresses
      - in both the highlands and the coast
    - an immediately post-Chavín (Salinar) cemetery on the coast has many burials lacking limbs or heads, a pattern not seen before
  - some decline in interregional exchange of cinnabar and obsidian
    - presumably due to interregional tensions, unsafe travel, etc.
  - Burger argues that the emergence of social stratification (presence of marked elites) during the Early Horizon meant that local societies could not just go back to their former ways as Chavín influence declined
    - The social rules had changed from the relatively egalitarian model of the Initial Period
    - now there were elites who would work to advance their own interests
    - group conflict was probably encouraged by competing elites and made more possible by their power
- General overview of the Early Intermediate Period (EIP)
  - *not* the "early part of the Intermediate period"
    - There were *two* Intermediate periods, called the Early Intermediate Period and the Late Intermediate Period, with the Middle Horizon in between
  - about 200 cal BC - 550 cal AD
    - Mosley says 600 AD, others say 500 AD, not an important difference
    - recently, the Moche culture, one of the important EIP cultures, has been shown to have lasted to 700 to 800 cal AD
    - so drawing precise boundaries around the EIP is somewhat arbitrary
  - lots of regional variation
  - notable for the emergence of highly elaborated ceramics, metalwork, and other crafts in many wildly different styles in different regions
    - generally quite different from the Chavín styles that preceded them
    - for the next couple of classes, we will focus on just one of these regions, the North Coast, where the Moche culture developed
  - general shift in iconography from supernatural to more (apparently) human-oriented themes
    - maybe indicating shift from religion-centered to elite-centered corporate art and architecture
  - emergence of complex chiefdoms and states

- with obvious very high status elites
- also administrators, various craft specialists, farmers and fishers...
- ceramic, metal, and other production in formal workshops, some virtually factory-scale
- very large-scale labor mobilization for big monuments
- this happened in several distinct regions, with different traditions
  - North coast: Moche, our topic today
  - South coast: Nazca
  - Southern highlands: Chiripa and Pucara, leading up to Tiwanaku
  - and others...
- Moseley attributes EIP developments to conflicts arising from the filling up of easily farmed land by growing populations
  - many residential settlements were located on hillslopes or high ridges
  - access routes typically defended by walls or ditches
  - associated with walled hilltop fortresses
    - EIP fortresses, unlike earlier examples, were clearly related to real defense
    - often with piles of sling stones found inside the walls
    - but without water sources or much storage
      - apparently meant to deter raids, not sieges
      - short-term, small-scale conflict, not protracted conquest warfare
- Moseley also reminds us that most people still lived in undefended settlements
  - or maybe there were sub-periods that we cannot distinguish during which people lived in defensible settlements, and others in which they didn't
- Leading up to the Moche:
  - Salinar, immediately post-Chavín on north coast (~200 - 100 cal BC or later)
    - iconography derived from Chavín
    - may have been a period of conflict
      - most of the population shifted into the steeper, upper parts of the valleys
        - possibly seeking more defensible places to live
        - possibly to defend the intakes of their canals
    - many larger, defensible sites and fortresses
      - Bawden suggests that concentration of people and response to military threats led to increasing social complexity
  - in the Virú valley:
    - villages of 20-30 houses
    - many scattered, isolated houses
    - a few hilltop forts
    - rectangular compounds of around a dozen rooms
    - adobe compounds with courts, corridors, and rooms
      - apparently residences of high-status people
        - presumably local leaders
        - and also of metallurgists
        - "attached specialists"

- lived in the same compounds as the elite
- presumably producing goods to enhance the status of the elite
- presumably supplied with materials, fed, housed, and compensated by surplus mobilized from local food producers by the elite
- beginning of a pattern that became very marked among the Moche
- in the Moche valley
  - Cerro Arena
    - big residential site, 2.5 square km (is this all Salinar??)
    - stone houses of ordinary farmers on a defensible rocky ridge
- Gallinazo culture (by 100 cal BC in the Moche valley)
  - Moseley suggests that a state was first developed by people using Gallinazo style pottery
    - and that the corporate Moche style was developed after the state was established
      - by elites who wanted to mark and legitimize their status
      - and who had the power to support experts and craftspeople to do so
  - Bawden suggests that Gallinazo style art was in itself created by elites to “proclaim their identity” and status
- relatively uniform Gallinazo pottery style (resist painted) in five neighboring major north coastal valleys
  - Santa - Chao - Viru - Moche - Chicama
    - suggests contact, shared culture, maybe alliances?
    - plus some Gallinazo monuments and pots all the way north to the Ecuadorian border
- marked population growth (reaching all-time highs in Viru and Santa valleys)
- more people lived in the lower parts of the valleys again
- they irrigated large areas for farming in the fans at the valley mouths
  - using long canals starting at the valley necks
  - Bawden says the fact that Gallinazo sites were located closer to the sea indicates less need to stay in the steeper parts of the valleys for defense - that is, regional pacification
  - Moseley would say that it indicates technological development, maybe forced by population growth, that allowed them to build the longer, flatter canals needed to irrigate the wide valley mouths
- shift in site size pattern
  - settlements became less defensible, suggesting regional unification
    - lower, more dispersed settlements
  - the pattern changed from relatively uniform-sized
    - presumably similar activities carried out at each
    - and presumably roughly equal in power
  - to a range of sizes
    - many small, rural settlements
    - some larger towns (“tertiary” or 3rd-level)
    - a few larger towns (“secondary centers)
    - one huge main site in each valley (several square km, although population estimates are still only in the “several thousands”)
- suggests a single, valley-wide organization in each valley

- based at the largest site in each valley
- drastic variation in residential architecture, suggesting marked status differences
  - commoner architecture
    - stone footings with cane walls
  - elite architecture
    - same in some places
    - but elsewhere (and for public buildings), adobe
- monumental platforms built on the slopes of and on top of natural hills
  - mold-made adobe bricks
  - “segmented” construction
    - columns or layers of bricks
    - bonded and mortared within the layer
    - but just resting against adjacent ones
    - taken to suggest labor groups, maybe organized by village, ayllu, etc.
  - monuments were surrounded by settlements of up to 3,000 people
- the immense “Gallinazo group” in the Viru valley may have been the center of a polity that united multiple valleys
  - because no other valley has any comparably large site
  - covers over 8 square kilometers with platform mounds, plazas, and dense areas of residences
  - some rich burials
  - probably the center of a pan-valley polity; some have suggested a multi-valley polity
  - but probably most valleys were separate political units or sets of units
- The Moche (also called Mochica) (about 1 to around 800 cal AD)
  - chronology is debated, variable in different valleys... (are you surprised?)
  - Famous for extraordinary crafts
    - ceramics: sculptural and/or with fineline paintings on them
    - spectacular copper, silver, and gold jewelry and other metalwork
    - less well preserved, but also wood carving, stone inlay, beadwork, textiles
    - architecture in mud brick decorated with murals and painted reliefs
  - Moche art and architecture arose in what was otherwise just the continuing Gallinazo society
    - Moseley and Bawden suggest that Moche art and architecture express an ideology and corporate style created and used by elites of certain Gallinazo groups
      - that is, a form of propaganda or supernatural justification of their special position and their demands on the rest of the society
      - in response to unknown pressures, maybe having to do with a drastic, destructive flooding episode in some valleys
    - this ideology and associated iconography was adopted in various forms by some Gallinazo elite groups in other valleys, and not by others
    - the new Moche groups apparently conquered Gallinazo groups in some places, and coexisted with them in others
  - May have started, or been most successful, at Cerro Blanco (aka "Moche", "Huacas of Moche") in the Moche valley

- initially a Gallinazo center
  - rose to prominence as the largest Moche center
  - Site of Cerro Blanco (aka Moche)
    - Huaca del Sol and Huaca de la Luna
      - two huge adobe brick platforms with buildings on top
    - separated by a large space filled with courts, residences, workshops, and cemeteries
    - still over a square kilometer in area, originally more before Spanish destroyed an unknown fraction by diverting the Moche river to hydraulically mine the Huaca del Sol
  - Huaca del Sol
    - originally the largest structure of solid adobes ever built in the New World
      - and among the biggest three mounds of any type in the New World
    - only a part remains, because in 1602 the Moche river was diverted to hydraulic mine it
    - scant records indicate that they found royal burials with lots of gold
    - recent work also finds high-status burials with decorated ceramics and occasional small amounts of gold and copper
    - 380 m long, 160 m wide, 40 m high (1,235 feet x 520 feet x 130 feet)
    - estimated over 143 million adobe bricks
    - built in the columns mentioned above, bricks in each column have a distinctive mark
    - over 100 such marks known, suggests over 100 communities helped build it
    - had complexes of rooms on top
      - including courts, corridors, rooms that accumulated refuse
        - that is, not kept ritually clean like earlier monuments
        - probably relatively ordinary activities by lots of people
      - built with adobe walls and wooden poles that probably held up thatched roofs
      - often with ceramic architectural ornaments (birds, war clubs, etc.) along the ridges or eaves
        - known both from artistic representations and pieces that have been found in excavations
      - some were small, elevated, and contained a “throne”
    - conclusion: Huaca del Sol probably served some high-status but not mainly ritual function(s)
      - administration, taxation, land and water distribution, labor management, conflict resolution...?
  - rebuilt and enlarged over most of the span of Moche culture
- Huaca de la Luna
  - Numerous painted relief murals
  - Unlike Huaca del Sol, kept clean
    - i.e. maybe more ritual use?
  - indications that a small number of high-status people lived in one area of the monument
  - Contained (at least) two high-status burials
    - with copper cups like those illustrated in the hands of “sacrificer” figures on pots
    - that is, these burials contain the exact paraphernalia that is shown in what might otherwise be taken to be purely mythological scenes on the ceramics

- an even richer burial was looted in nineteenth century, with numerous gilt copper masks, etc.
- And an area with layers of 35-40 sacrificed bodies
  - indicated by neck cutting trauma, random body positions
  - left out on the surface in open air when it was raining
    - that is, during a rare, disastrous El Niño event
  - This happened on a number of separate occasions
  - possibly the result of rituals shown on pottery, performed by the people in the high-status burials
- Moseley suggests that the two huacas indicate dual organization
  - Huaca del Sol being the administrative and mortuary place for elites (“huaca sepultura”)
  - and Huaca de la Luna being the ceremonial place (“huaca adoratorio”)
  - but this is actually a functional difference, not the same as "dual organization", in which each monument would have a similar function for each of two ranked subdivisions of the population
- between them, a large (500 m wide) space full of residences and craft shops
  - an urban center: completely different concept from earlier monumental centers that featured huge empty plazas
  - more on this next time...