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Ann H. Peters
Cornell University

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Travels of a Rayed Head: imagery, fiber, structure and connotations of early textiles from the South Central Andes

Ann H. Peters

Visiting Fellow, Latin American Studies Program, Cornell University

The "rayed head" image has long been identified as a central symbol associated with the Paracas tradition, also called the "sun face"¹ and associated with the concept of "Oculate Being" developed by the Berkeley School.² Prominently repeated on the central ground of the famous "Paracas Textile" at the Brooklyn Museum, this image has much earlier antecedents in the region. Scholars disagree on the extent to which many Paracas, Topara and early Nasca images with large round eyes, grinning mouths, and serpentlike appendages emitting from the head and body may also be manifestations of a particular "Oculate Being" or of more general concepts of natural or supernatural power. Recently, contemporary textiles found in the Sihuas valley to the south (see Haerberli in this volume) challenge us to reexamine the similarities and distinctions among rayed heads.

One of the great challenges of the history of material culture, envisioned as a history of philosophical concepts, social values and cultural practices through their inscription in material objects, is the degree to which a recurrent image, pattern or special arrangement reflects a similar idea. A number of quite different images have been associated with the concept of an "Oculate Being" proposed by John Rowe and others of the Berkeley school based on their analysis of Ica valley ceramics and Ocucaje gravelots in the 1950s. I here trace the rayed head or "sun face" image as it occurs over at least 500 years in the region of Ica and Paracas. I then briefly consider its relationship to other contemporary imagery and later imagery featuring ray-like elements emitted from the head, both in the same contexts where the "rayed head" appears, and in other cemeteries to the south in southern Peru and northern Chile.

All the imagery discussed here is associated with a period between about 450 BC and AD 450 called the Formative in the South Central Andes (Bolivia and northern Chile) and called the Early Horizon (or late Formative) and Early Intermediate (or Regional Development) Period in the Central Andes. Most of the images I discuss are created on textiles. While only recovered from burials on the desert coast, textile materials draw on relationships of production and exchange that spanned the Andean cordillera to the montane rainforest to the east, and stretched to the north and south. Either as clothing or cargo, textiles themselves traveled and were no doubt a primary source of non-local imagery.

I do consider related images on non-textile artifacts. I compare textile based imagery with contemporary imagery on engraved and painted ceramics and gourds to try to distinguish among design features specific to medium, style and iconography.

¹ Mary Elizabeth King, "Textiles and basketry of the Paracas Period, Ica Valley, Peru" (Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 1965)

² John H. Rowe, Dorothy Menzel and Lawrence Dawson, Dawson *The Paracas pottery of Ica: A study in style and time. University of California publications in American archaeology and ethnology* 50 (Berkeley:University of California, 1964)

Lawrence Dawson, "Painted cloth mummy masks of Ica, Peru," in *The Junius B. Bird Pre-Columbian Textile Conference*, eds. Ann Pollard Rowe, Elizabeth P. Benson and Anne-Louise Shaffer (Washington D.C.: Textile Museum and Dumbarton Oaks 1979), 83-104

Architectural reliefs and geoglyphs locate this imagery on the landscape and built environment. I use the concept of "roads" in the sense of networks of movement and communication among communities, societies and regions. The distinct "personalities" expressed in different rayed heads created in different technical structures on different kinds of textiles may be a product not only of local aesthetics and particular histories, but also of local materials, production traditions and ways of life.

Rayed heads and the Paracas tradition

Our earliest rayed head images date from objects that evidence contact between Paracas and the Chavín Interaction sphere to the north. The conceptual components of recurved rays and serpent images issuing from the head are prominent in Chavín imagery. For instance, the Raimondi stela is also important as an early example of symmetrical frontal figure bearing two staffs and as a figure with a dual head representation with ambiguous directionality. All of these conceptual components are important in the later history of rayed-head imagery. However, throughout this discussion we must carefully distinguish between (1) the recurrence of fundamental concepts or root metaphors expressed or recombined in different ways in different kinds of images, and (2) the recurrence of specific icons with continuity in time and space that suggests a continuity in philosophical, ritual and social reference.

Images of the classic Paracas-associated rayed head appear in an early Paracas context on a clay frieze excavated by Sarah Massey at the site of Animas Altas in the lower Ica valley (Figure 1). While the rayed head appears in conjunction with other images and features associated with Chavín influence, the rayed head image as a whole appears to be a local phenomenon. The central head has feline or canine features, together with the concentric ring-and-dot eyes that recur in later rayed head imagery. Pairs of recurved rays alternate with knife or spearpoint images emanating from the head.

Early Chavín-related camellid fiber tapestries and painted cotton panels attributed to the Bahia de Independencia sites of Karwa and Chucho and to the lower Ica valley feature recurved rays.³ Technical evidence confirms that part of the painted cotton textiles probably came from the central coast, while others were produced on the south coast.⁴ Cordy-Collins discusses one "rayed head" image: a Chavín style profile head set into a square, from which emanate branches of the cotton plant and two serpent-like forms, possibly representing roots.⁵

A group of rayed head textiles with early, Chavín-related characteristics de-emphasize or disintegrate the facial features. In narrow headbands the absence of facial features may be influenced by design constraints. However, the abstraction of the face associated with other features characteristic of this group also occurs in large scale images.

A tapestry band, probably a headband, from the Cavernas or Arena Blanca areas (13/482, MNAAHP 3898) has a repeated motif with vertical and diagonal rays in

³ Alana Cordy-Collins, "Cotton and the Staff God: Analysis of an ancient Chavín textile" in Rowe, Benson and Shaffer, 105-128.

Dwyer, Edward, "Early Horizon Tapestry from South Coastal Peru" in Rowe, Benson and Shaffer, 61-82.

⁴ Dwight Wallace, "A technical and iconographic analysis of Carhua Painted Textiles" in *Paracas art and architecture: Object and context in south coastal Peru*, ed. Anne Paul (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press 1991), 61-109.

⁵ Cordy-Collins 52-55, figs. 3-10.

medium and dark red with the horizontal created by zigzag elements in red and cream, on tan panels separated by triple bars in various combinations of the colors. In contrast with the headband above, the diagonal rays dominate the image, while the vertical rays are shorter and vary in number (Figure 2). A full figure dominated by its large head with heavy diagonal rays is embroidered in camelid hair in reds and grays to form borders of a cotton plain weave mantle from Ocucaje (Soldi collection, TM 91.1022 a, b).⁶ The head is dominated by multiple diagonal rays and has a mouth and contiguous whiskers that combined together create a horizontal zigzag band. A close-worked looped tunic from Ocucaje constructed of brown and white camelid hair (Textile Museum 91.898), bears a large image of a rectangle which contains not a face but rather a smaller image of the rayed rectangle, in turn containing a zig-zag figure reminiscent of the double headed serpent (Figure 3). A diamond shaped design is constructed in warp-wrapped plain weave on the shoulder panels.⁷

These four images share some design features with early Sihuas, including their rectilinear design, the emphasis on diagonal elements, the proportions of rays to central rectangle, and the incorporation of zigzag elements into or instead of facial features.

The Textile Museum collection includes several bands with rayed head images woven in single faced triplecloth with Chavin-related features (Soldi collection, AMNH 5978, TM 91.878, 879). The triplecloth was woven as narrow bands.⁸ One fragment features a two color block repeat of the same rayed head image. Recurved rays emitted from top, bottom and sides and straight diagonal corner rays are flanked by another pair of recurved rays. The triangular eyes are separated by a prominent I-shaped nose, and the mouth features four fangs and a descending tongue. The second fragment features a two-block repeat of a different version in which the toothed mouth is bent into a grin, the diagonals look like a step-fret triangle, and the face is flanked by s-z "filler" designs. A third variant has ambiguous directionality: the design is rotated 90 degrees and the centered eyes and nose are flanked by mouth-and-tongue elements extending to the sides of the band, while the diagonals are expressed as recurved rays (Figure 4).

A close knotted headcloth from Ocucaje has grinning rayed heads set into diamond-shaped panels separated bands with an inset zigzag pattern (Soldi collection TM 91.935).⁹ A nearly identical knotted headcloth was archaeologically excavated in a tomb in the Cavernas cemetery area of the Paracas peninsula site.¹⁰ These headcloths are distinct in knotting structure and imagery but are gathered into a ring at one end similar to knotted hair nets found in both Paracas and Topará associated burials wrapped around the head over braided hair and under a headband or *llautu*. The image on both the Ocucaje and Cavernas knotted headcloth features a large-eyed grinning face surrounded by four pairs of recurved rays alternating with four pairs of straight rays, set within diagonals encasing pairs of zigzag lines (Figure 5).

A knotted headcloth with openwork diagonals from Ocucaje features a face with very truncated rays set into diamond-shaped panels (Soldi collection TM91.1066). The face features ringed eyes, I-shaped nose and v-shaped mouth (Figure 6).¹¹ Fragments of

⁶ King 468 and 271, fig. 53.

⁷ King 398 and 215, fig. 37.

⁸ King 388-9 and 166, fig. 22.

⁹ King 227 fig. 42.

¹⁰ Eugenio Yacovleff and Jorge C. Muelle "Una exploración en Cerro Colorado: informe y observaciones" in *Revista del Museo Nacional* 1/2 (Lima 1932), 31-59, fig. 13.

¹¹ King 1965 507-508 and 232, fig. 46

two double-cloth textiles excavated in the Cavernas tombs have rayed heads very much like those of the close knotted headcloths, though without a nose line (MNAAHP 4214, Cavernas V fragment¹²). Pairs of interlocking horizontal double-headed serpents form the boundaries of the diamond-shaped panels (Figure 7). Kajitani also illustrates a contemporary Paracas style doublecloth mantle from a private collection bearing a rayed head image set into in diamond-shaped segments.¹³

In the same Cavernas area tomb mentioned above, among a group of bodiless heads Yacovleff and Muelle found the mummified skull of an adolescent with two locks of hair braided above the forehead and folded into a frontal topknot bound with a cotton cord, and with fragmented remains of a knotted headband with a simple rayed image.¹⁴ A square emits four pairs of diagonal straight lines above and below and two pairs of recurved rays aligned with the axis of the band. This image possibly represents a version of the rayed head simplified to meet the design constraints of the narrow knotted band: the vertical recurved rays are eliminated, while the horizontal rays dominate the image (Figure 8).

King provides two more examples of nearly square heads surrounded by relatively long recurving rays, particularly on the vertical axis. One is woven in triple-cloth in a band in the Textile Museum collection (TM 91.855). The other is a simple version embroidered on a small scale together with cat figures on the narrow borders of the four corners of an Ocucaje mantle (Soldi collection, AMNH 41.6063).¹⁵ The pairs of vertical and horizontal recurved rays are featured, together with two dots for the eyes. Said to be from the same Ocucaje gravelot, a detailed, large scale version of this type of rayed head image is repeated in rows on the center panel of a fragmented mantle (Soldi collection, TM 91.906). Each image is embroidered with camellid hair in black and white, together with either maroon or yellow in alternate images. This highly symmetrical, nearly square rayed head is surrounded by four pairs of similar recurved rays, vertical and horizontal, and four pairs of straight diagonal rays.¹⁶ Both of these Ocucaje mantles also feature embroidered borders with what King calls "mask-type" figures - full figures with multiple serpent-like appendages issuing from head and body, rendered in a complex linear style.

There also exist contemporary non-textile images of this rayed head motif. A pyroengraved gourd bowl from Ocucaje (Soldi collection, TM N91.142), carries a rayed head image set in a round panel at the center of the exterior base of the bowl, surrounded by two rings of intertwined "guilloche" or "twisted strand" motifs on the curved sides.

Related Figures

There are a wide variety of figures in which ray-like elements, serpent-like elements or human heads protrude from the head, as well as from the body of full figure representations. I consider that these should be analyzed as a number of distinct figure types, each of which can be traced in time and space. Similar features such as large ringed eyes, I-shaped noses, upward curving "grinning" mouths, shield-shaped or

¹² Jane Dwyer, "The chronology and iconography of Paracas-Style textiles" in Rowe, Benson and Shaffer 105-128, fig. 11.

¹³ Nobuko Kajitani "Andesu No Senshoku (Textiles of the Andes)" in *Senshoku No Bi (Textile Art)* 20, (Autumn 1982), 9-99, fig. 13.

¹⁴ Yacovleff and Muelle 1932, 34-5.

¹⁵ King 402-3 and 331, fig. 76a,b.

¹⁶ King 401-2.

hexagonal heads, and the locations and forms of appendages emitting from head and body should be considered part of a common formal language that includes both a common style in the sense of norms and habits of design and common philosophical and metaphoric references. However, these distinct recurrent figures probably are linked to distinct mythic, ritual and social contexts.

King proposes many subcategories of Linear Style figures associated with Ocucaje textiles.¹⁷ For the moment I limit myself to commenting on a few figures which recur in both textiles and other media.

A circular version of the serpent-exuding face is found in the famous Chongos ceramic masks, which have double-headed serpents crossing the face and exuding from deep ringed eye sockets and an I-shaped nose that protrudes like a flange, with the forehead topped by a small standing figure. The serpent heads extending beyond the edges of the mask create a serrated outline which is diagnostic of this figure type in abbreviated or variant versions.¹⁸ Figurine jars exist showing the ringed eye face on the back of the head of a "normal" Paracas 9 figure representation, as if worn on the back of the head or alternative to a living face (Soldi collection TM N91.163). These figures share disklike heads with protruding serpentine heads, concentric ringed and sometimes hollowed eyes, I-shaped, sometimes flangelike noses, and grinning mouths often with a protruding, sometimes serpentine tongue. The concept of two-faced or alternating figures is recurrent.

Ocucaje funerary bundles are typically topped by false heads formed of wadded cotton beneath a funerary mask of relatively coarse cotton plain weave painted in earth tones. While a few masks are painted like a human face, most depict a standing frontal figure with head appendages. The most frequent version has a head flat on top with a short central inverted head or serpent-like motif, flanked by other longer serpentine "appendages." A horizontal serpent-headed band may extend across the top of the head. Appendages issue from each side of the head by the eyes, and a set of whisker-like lines or serpentine appendage from the curved sides of the lower face by the mouth. Many variations of this figure appear on the painted masks, and similar figures are embroidered or constructed in supplementary warp patterning on the borders of mantles or other garments.

Several doublecloth textiles feature this figure, including one from Ocucaje (AMNH 1960.12.1) and another from Cavernas (MNAAHP 1987), which includes a classic rayed head image included as a "filler" motif in one of the six variants of the main figure (Figure 9).¹⁹ The complex linear figures each stand beneath an arch lined by heads and ending in cat figures.

Two Paracas-Ocucaje phase 10 bowls have paired round-headed human figures with cleft forehead, one of which sports a headdress of radiating feathers and one of which is depicted under an arch (Rubini gravelot M-1;²⁰ Soldi collection TM N91.163).

King's "mask" figure type VIII is distinctive, as the outline of the face is broken by the horizontal serpentine appendages issuing to the sides from the eyes or elsewhere

¹⁷ King 346-53.

¹⁸ Dawson figs. 19, 20, 21.

¹⁹ This textile is published by Jane Dwyer, 108, fig. 2. She illustrates a different example of the six figures, which are each somewhat distinct.

²⁰ Aldo Rubini and Lawrence Dawson, unpublished fieldnotes, tomb lot descriptions and object photographs by Lawrence Dawson

(Soldi collection AMNH 41,2/6130, TM 91.966, TM 91.975).²¹ Variants of this figure recur in embroidered textile borders (TM 91.1033)²² and on ceramics. This figure appears to be closely related to the Chongos masks.

The same head and headdress type can occur in tailed "monkey" figures such as a doublecloth textile that was placed in a Necropolis burial 2 (2-53, MNAAHP cat. 1226).²³ The tail is typically also represented as a serpent-like appendage. Both human-like figures and tailed figures with features linking them to cats or monkeys are frequently depicted with tongues or serpentlike appendages emerging from mouth or chin. Textile elements like waist ties, hand-held objects like spears, and headdress elements like headbands, hair or feathers also may be represented as serpent-like appendages.

Paracas Necropolis and Early Nasca images

All of these conventions or metaphoric associations I describe for linear style textile images and ceramic images at Ocucaje and Cavernas are also expressed in Linear, Broad Line and Block Color style textile images in the Topará-associated burials at the Paracas Necropolis.

A distinctive image with a head with serpentine projections expressed as part of the head itself occurs on garments in several closely related Necropolis burials, particularly on set of garments in funerary bundles 310 and 378. This figure has been discussed by Anne Paul, who points out visual parallels with the Chongos mask imagery.²⁴ This figure carries a net bag, usually depicted as containing a human head. Its peculiar tunic or body shape is reminiscent of folded wings. I have proposed spider (*Macrocantha* sp.) and insect associations for this figure.²⁵ A tapestry head band from bundle 217, found still on the head of the cadaver, was wrapped over several knotted hair nets and head cloths and tied into a tassel over the forehead. On this band appears a full figure with straight vertical and horizontal bars emitting from its head. As well as holding a banded staff and two spears, it carries what may be a net bag over one shoulder, linking it to the rayed head figures of bundles 310 and 378.²⁶

While sheet gold diadems and mouthmasks occur in Paracas-associated burials in the Cavernas tombs and at Ocucaje, their representation is characteristic of Block Color imagery in Topará-associated textiles of the Necropolis tombs and in both ceramics and textiles of Early Nasca style. Both on the ornaments themselves and in their representation, linear projecting elements are depicted in serpentine form. Where they extend beyond the outline of the head, diadem and mouthmask representations create serpent-headed extensions in the same locations noted above for various types of rayed heads. Feathered headdress representation can create either a row of vertical or an arch of radiating serpent-like motifs.

Rayed head images are common in Necropolis Block Color style embroideries as heads of appendages. In some cases the "rays" are created by diadem, mouthmask or

²¹ Also see Dawson figs. 9, 10, 11

²² Dawson fig. 24

²³ Anne Paul, *Anne Paracas ritual attire*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press 1990), plate 4

²⁴ Paul 1990 p. 89

²⁵ Ann H. Peters, "Ecology and society in embroidered images from the Paracas Necropolis" in Paul 1991, 240-314.

²⁶ Eugenio Yacovleff and Jorge C. Muelle "Un fardo funerario de Paracas" in *Revista del Museo Nacional* 3/1-2 (Lima 1934), 62-138, fig. 16.

whisker elements, while in other cases they appear to be part of the outline of the appendage head. Such rayed-type appendage terminals occur in both Block Color style and Linear style embroideries.

In Linear style images, heads surrounded by pairs of recurving rays also occur as terminals of double-headed serpents creating "twisted strands" in the classic Linear style embroideries and knotted or cross-looped headbands of the Necropolis. Some versions are extremely similar to the classic rayed head images, like that chosen by Yacovleff and Muelle as a symbol of "Paracas" on their title page.²⁷ At the same time, other versions have only two head appendages and two whiskerlike side appendages, suggesting that the more elaborate heads may be playing with the rayed head reference but at the same time be more profoundly part of a genre of double-ended serpentine images which is common to embroideries from both the Paracas and Topará-associated gravelots.

All of these Necropolis style images do not appear to be directly associated to the classic rayed head motif, but rather are part of the broad spectrum of related images that use serpent-like rays or appendages as metaphors. The serpentine appendages issuing from the head or elsewhere appear to be linked to both physical and metaphysical concepts.

A few unambiguous rayed head representations are known from the EIP 1 and 2 Necropolis burials. One of two similar tapestry headbands from Necropolis burial 89 (89-7, MNAHP 183) includes a rayed head image that repeats together with a condor, spotted cat, serpent and step-fret motifs. This striking polychrome version of the horizontal type of rayed head is similar in proportions to the Cavernas headband image, but includes facial features and both horizontal and vertical recurved rays, without diagonals (Figure 10).²⁸

One EIP 2 embroidered mantle has the Rayed Head image repeated over the central cloth panel; in EIP 2 style at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH 41.0/1501). Paul illustrates and describes the color block repeat of these figures, which is a classic variant of the Necropolis mantle patterns that she has analyzed.²⁹ The figure is highly simplified, featuring a face filled by two eyes and a grin, and large pairs of vertical recurved rays that spread to the sides to fill the design square, together with only one recurved ray on each side, extending from beside the mouth and curving upwards (Figure 11). The central band and border figures are a complex figure in horizontal position with appendages and falcon features. Both the embroidery style and other features like its fringe of embroidered tabs place this textile very late in the Necropolis sequence in EIP2. The combination of different ground and border figures is a feature more common in Ocucaje, but which also occurs in some later Necropolis embroidered mantles.

The "Paracas Textile" (BM 38.121) was reported to have come from a tomb on the peninsula. D'Harcourt states that Jean Levillier reported that this textile was part of the funerary regalia of a male burial also buried with gold ornaments and other "valuable textiles," found surrounded by five infant burials.³⁰ It is reasonable to designate this

²⁷ Yacovleff and Muelle 1934, 62

²⁸ See Anne Paul, "Paracas Necropolis Bundle 89: A description and discussion of its contents" in Paul 1991, 172-221. Paul illustrates the tapestry band 89-6, similar in color and technique but distinct in iconography.

²⁹ Anne Paul, "Rank and File: Colour block patterning on Paracas Necropolis Textiles" in Hali 109 (March-April 2000), 112-120, fig. 1.

³⁰ Raoul D' Harcourt, *Textiles of ancient Peru and their Techniques*, eds. Grace G. Denny and Carolyn M. Osborne, trans. Sadie Brown (Seattle: University of Washington Press 1962), 169

textile as 'early Nasca' based on the technical features of the cross looping both on and off plain weave panels, which creates a three dimensional figurative fringe. At the same time, it is important to note the syncretic and transitional nature of the Paracas Textile. The fringe includes iconographic elements and figure types common in late Topará-associated Block Color embroideries, as well as figures, elements and combinations distinct from those of the Necropolis burials.³¹

The "rayed head" figures created with warp wrapping in camelid hair yarns in the cotton plain weave central panel are distinct from the fringe in both iconography and aesthetic quality (Figure 12). The facial design is like those associated with the Broad Line style, with outlining extending to create a nose and chin line, creating a heart-shaped face and dangling side elements. Large ringed eyes and a v-shaped mouth fill the face. Large pairs of vertical rays hook outward from above the eyes and the sides of the chin, while the pairs of horizontal rays extend from the top and bottom of the face and hook inward. This innovative rayed head design is related to the late Necropolis examples in its emphasis on vertical and horizontal elements and suppression of diagonals.

Characteristics of the Paracas-based rayed head motifs

With the exception of the small group characterized by dominant diagonal rays and abstracted or suppressed facial features, most rayed head images from Ocucaje, Paracas Cavernas, Paracas Necropolis and the Paracas and Ica regions share similar characteristics. Facial structure is oval or rectangular and dominated by large ringed eyes and a grinning mouth, as well as usually including a linear or I-shaped nose. A mouth appendage opening rarely occurs. While horizontally oriented images occur on headbands, most examples in my sample are vertically oriented images repeated over the central panel of a visually prominent textile, either depicted in diamond panels within a zigzag serpent motif on a headcloth or repeated over the central panel of a mantle. The iconographically dense, labor-intensive "Paracas Textile" is a small textile with unusual features that may be comparable to a mantle in its public nature and social significance. However, its scale and fabric density suggest that it may have been a headcloth.

The rayed head image recurs in Paracas-Ocucaje, Paracas-Cavernas, Topará-Paracas Necropolis, and Early Nasca at the Paracas site, four different material culture "traditions" characterized by distinct burial rituals creating different tomb forms as well as differences in some textile and other artifact types and techniques. The image also changes over time and in different types of textiles, but features such as the dominance of the recurved vertical and horizontal pairs of rays, the large eyes and "grinning" mouth are conserved and in fact accentuated over time. These features distinguish this rayed head image from those of other traditions to the south.

The facial characteristics of the rayed head are shared with many other figures with serpentine appendages extending from the head found in both Paracas-associated and Topará-associated textiles and other artifacts. While these are different motifs, it is likely that the classic rayed head and its particular mythic, ritual and social connotations are among the conceptual or metaphoric referents of these other images.

In some cases, the recurrence of a specific motif can be traced over a long period of time in different places amid evidence for distinct social and cultural communities reflected in artifact styles and ritual practice - as in the case of the classic Paracas based

³¹ See Alan R. Sawyer, *Early Nasca Needlework*. (London: Lawrence King and Alan Marcuson 1997).

rayed head. I believe we can posit a connection between that motif and a concept, ritual, and social role of continuing importance in communities associated with hundreds of years of burials at Ocucaje and on the Paracas peninsula. Instances of strong visual similarity in rayed elements of other Paracas, Topará and Nasca imagery suggest other forms of reference to the rayed head as a concept or mythic theme.

Contemporary rayed head images of Sihuas and Alto Ramirez to the south differ in aesthetic and associated iconography, as well as in the types of textiles on which they are constructed. However, they probably reflect parallel concepts, myths, practices and social institutions that existed among different societies of the south central Andes during the Formative period. The similarities in these motifs is only part of the evidence for ongoing contact and communication over great distances in these regions. The textile fibers, mordants, dyes and other artifact components embody circuits of long distance travel and social relationships, as may the artifacts deposited together in a single burial. However, the specific myths, rituals, and social roles and institutions associated with rayed head images in each region were no doubt as distinct as are the images themselves, the textile structures in which they are created, the form and uses of those textiles, and the ways of life of the communities in each place.

I thank the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología y Historia del Peru (MNAAHP), the Textile Museum (TM), the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), and the Brooklyn Museum (BM), who have given me permission to include drawings of rayed head images from textiles in their collections.

Textile images cited from the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Arqueología y Historia del Perú (MNAAHP) can be located by technique and catalogue number on the Paracas page of the Museum website: <http://textiles.perucultural.org.pe/paracas.htm>

I thank Mary Frame for generously providing me with better quality images of many textiles of the Soldi collection, several of which were important in the development of this paper. Joerg Haerberli kindly provided me with images of Sihuas textiles for comparative purposes. Above all, I thank Anne Paul for encouragement, key information, and inspiring my participation in this Symposium.

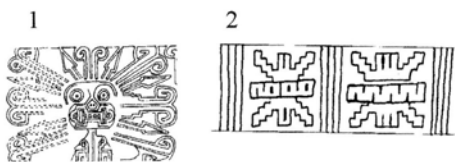


Figure 1 Clay frieze. Drawing by A. H. Peters from Sarah Massey, "Antiguo centro Paracas 'Animas Altas'" in *Culturas Precolombinas: Paracas*, eds. José Antonio de Lavalley y Werner Lang (Lima: Banco de Crédito, 1993), 136.

Figure 2 Tapestry band. Drawing by A. H. Peters. Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú, MNAAHP 3898.

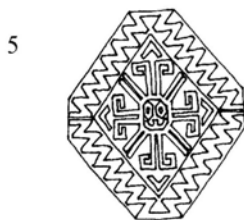


Figure 5 Close knotted headcloth gathered at one end. Drawing by A. H. Peters. Textile Museum, TM 91.935.



Figure 8 Close knotted headband. Drawing by A. H. Peters. Based on Yacovleff and Muelle 1932 fig. 8; MNAA accession number 13/8425b.

Figure 9 "Filler figure" within one of six "mask-type" images on two doublecloth panels. Drawing by A. H. Peters. Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú, MNAAHP 1987.



Figure 11 Image embroidered on central panels of Paracas Necropolis mantle with late Block Color style embroidered central band and tabbed borders. Drawing by A. H. Peters. American Museum of Natural History, AMNH 41.0/1501.

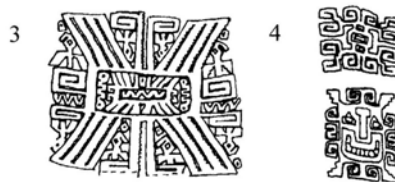


Figure 3 Close-worked looped tunic. Drawing by A. H. Peters. The Textile Museum, TM 91.898.

Figure 4 Triplecloth band. Drawing by A. H. Peters. American Museum of Natural History, AMNH 5978.

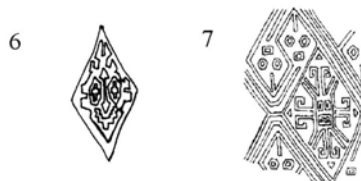


Figure 6 Openwork knotted headcloth. Drawing by A. H. Peters. The Textile Museum, TM 91.1066.

Figure 7 Doublecloth fragment. Drawing by A. H. Peters. Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú, MNAAHP 4214.

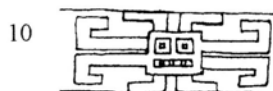


Figure 10 Necropolis funerary bundle 89, object 7: Tapestry headband. Drawing by A. H. Peters. Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú, MNAAHP 183.

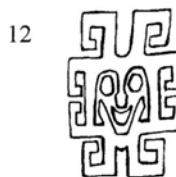


Figure 12 Image created in warp wrapped plain weave on central panel surrounded by borders with partially free-standing cross-knit looped figures constructed over cotton plain weave panels. Drawing by A. H. Peters. The "Paracas Textile" is in the permanent collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art, BM 38.121.