

PRE - COLUMBIAN ART

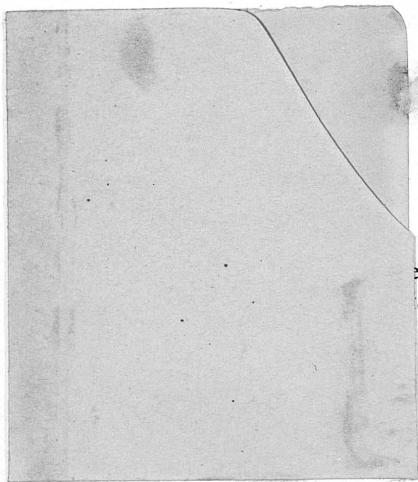


TNSDA



NATIONAL MUSEUM
NEW DELHI

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1968



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ate Ltd., New Delhi.

MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES BORDER,
FRAGMENT OF CLOAK (?)

Cotton, embroidery of dyed wool, 35 cm x
15 cm.

Paracas, central coast, Peru (68.1). •

This example, of typical design, illustrates techniques of weaving and embroidery, and use of dyes, already highly developed by cultures in this region between about 300 B.C. and 300 A.D.

NOTE: Dates are suggested only when reasonably surely established, (See Chronological Chart). Pieces are pre-Conquest, except probably for figure 40. For dimensions, height precedes width.

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PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

Collection given by
Mrs. Alice and Mr. Nasli Heeramanek
in memory of
Munchersha Heeramanek



H2C

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NATIONAL MUSEUM, NEW DELHI



I

PORTRAIT HEAD JAR

Clay, natural brown clay for features, with details of headdress and ornaments incised and painted in reddish brown and buff slips, 16.5 cm x 16 cm.

Mochica, north coast, Peru (67.246).

Vessels in the likeness of human heads, slightly less than half natural size, with a wide opening in the top of the head as in this piece, frequently have so vivid a sense of observed reality, that they appear to be portraits. Like other Mochica pots they are cast from moulds, with details added, painted and otherwise decorated, then baked. As grave offerings portrait head pots were a favourite subject of the Mochica fully developed period, about 200 to 700 A.D.

PREFACE

A few years ago, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India presented to the National Museum three terracottas, fine examples of pre-Columbian art, which she had received as presents from Mexico. It could never then be imagined that these terracottas would be the forerunners of a splendid collection of pre-Columbian art in the National Museum to be obtained soon as a gift from a distinguished Indian collector and connoisseur of art objects, in the United States.

The gift of a magnificent collection of pre-Columbian art objects presented by Mrs. Alice and Mr. Nasli Heeramanek in memory of the late Mr. Munchersha Heeramanek, the father of the donor, received in the National Museum in March, 1967, marks a great event for us as it is the first donation of this importance and magnitude for a museum in India, and is probably the richest collection of this material in Asia. It is impossible to express adequately the deep sense of gratitude of the National Museum to the Heeramaneks for their generosity.

The National Museum has very little art material from other countries to represent great art phases of the ancient world from outside India, except the magnificent Central Asian art specimens gathered by Sir Aurel Stein. The present collection of pre-Columbian art objects, representing the ancient culture of another continent, is indeed a very welcome addition. It is also an augury of acquisition in due course of other collections of art of other great countries in the not too distant future, which, as it is hoped, may be possible with the help and cooperation of UNESCO, and sister museums.

The transport of this pre-Columbian material has been possible with the cooperation and goodwill of different institutions both at home and abroad. The generosity of the J.D.R. III Fund and the utmost friendly spirit of its Director, Mr. Porter McCray, cared for the packing and insurance costs for the valuable material. It was transported at a special concessional rate by Air India. The National Museum cannot find words to thank both these institutions adequately.

Dr. Grace Morley, Adviser on Museums, Government of India, who was earlier the Director of the National Museum, and did so much to build it up, has helped, not only in the checking, studying and classifying of this pre-Columbian material, but has also personally supervised all the details of the setting up of the gallery devoted to it, and in addition has prepared an illustrated book in order to introduce these art objects both to layman and connoisseur. This type of material, so common in American museums, and sometimes in European ones, is totally new to our country, where a taste for its study and appreciation has to be built up. This is a great advantage as a study of any phase of art from anywhere in the world is a



II

HEAD

Clay, natural buff, with headdress of modelled beads in relief on incised and painted band, as well as painted eye pupils and teeth, 14.8 cm x 19.5 cm.

Vera Cruz region, coast, Gulf of Mexico, eastern Mexico (67.460).

The area, from the early highly advanced Olmec culture of the southern Gulf of Mexico coast, produced art of high standard.

fascinating experience and will be welcomed in our country which has rich aesthetic traditions and technical skill. The National Museum is indeed very grateful to Dr. Morley for all that she has done for this great collection of art. The brochure in its present form would not have been possible without her intimate knowledge of this subject and related art.

But for the profound interest evinced in this magnificent collection and its acquisition by the Education Ministry, Government of India, the National Museum would not have been able to take pride in such a possession. At every step there has been the utmost kindness and help. Dr. A. M. D'Rozario, the Joint Secretary, Mr. T.S. Krishnamurti, the Deputy Secretary and Mr. A.S. Talwar, the Under Secretary, spared no pains to consult every possible source in order to arrange the transport of this delicate art material and I do not know how to express my sense of gratitude to these great friends and staunch supporters of the National Museum whose growth and development owe so much to their personal interest and care.

This book, brought out at such short notice, has been possible only because of the cooperation of Mr. T. N. Bahel, Chief Controller of Printing and Stationery, Mr. P. Gangulee Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Education, and Dr. (Miss) Kaumudi, Deputy Financial Adviser, who have all readily understood its importance and urgency. To Dr. P. Banerjee, Keeper (Publications), who carefully and speedily got this through the press, to Mr. B.S. Bist, Layout Artist, National Museum, who drew the handsome chronological chart and the map included in this publication, and to Mr. Amarnath, Manager, Caxton Press, that has worked at top speed to produce this booklet, the National Museum offers its best thanks.

C. SIVARAMAMURTI
Director

National Museum
New Delhi
5th March, 1968



III

SEATED WOMAN

Clay figure, dark cream slip, body decoration in dark paint, ornaments and garments indicated in reddish brown, 49.5 cm x 34 cm.

Jalisco, western Mexico (67.475).

Pottery figures, as grave offerings, were produced in distinctive styles in a number of centres of western Mexico. This piece is typical of Jalisco. (See also Plate VIII :

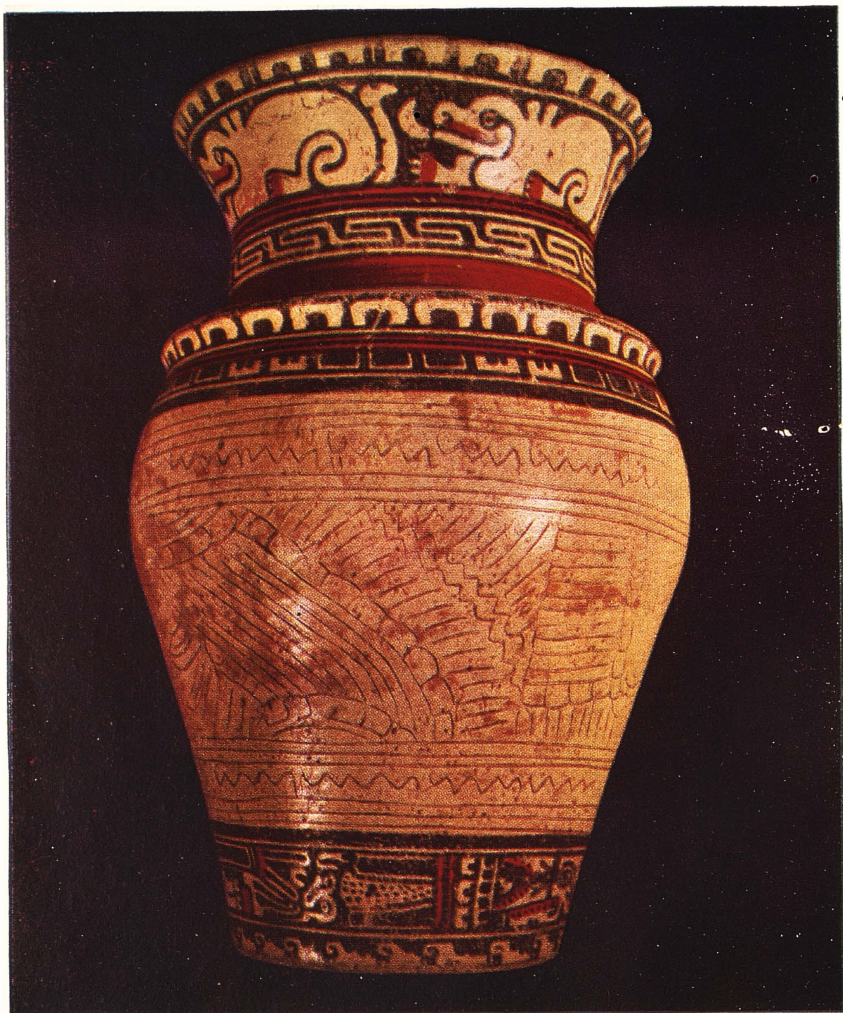
THE HEERAMANECK COLLECTION OF PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

The first opportunity in Asia for scholars and art lovers to learn about the indigenous peoples of the Americas and their civilizations is now provided at the National Museum, New Delhi, by a representative sampling of the actual objects which they made and used, thanks to Mrs. Alice and Mr. Nasli Heeramanek of New York. Their generous gift of their personal collection of pre-Columbian art opens a completely new chapter for the National Museum in its exhibition and educational programmes. It adds significantly to the Museum's resources for scholarly research and popular instruction, which, before 1968, were largely limited to India's own heritage. This new collection of distinguished art objects, vivid evidence of civilizations on the other side of the globe, approximately contemporary with the cultures of India, is sure to prove also a popular attraction for the general public.

The Heeramanek collection was assembled over some thirty years. It was started almost as soon as the aesthetic interest of indigenous American material began to be recognized, even among the pioneers in contemporary taste. This accounts for the rarity and quality of many of the items included in it, acquired before keen competition in collecting in this field started. It is the result also of thoughtful study, a sure taste and discriminating selection from pre-Columbian material that found its way into the world's art markets. It constitutes a representative and significant review of art in the New World's important centres of culture, from what is now Mexico southward, before the Spaniards conquered these regions in the early decades of the sixteenth century. These were the parts of the Americas—Mexico, Central America, the west coast and the western mountain valleys and plateaux of South America where, in great variety, the highest developments of civilization in the New World took place.

The examples of all the cultures in this collection have been carefully chosen for aesthetic quality and they illustrate a wide range of subjects and techniques. Stone sculpture is represented for cultures in which it was important. Pottery pieces are especially numerous, for clay modelling was a major art for many peoples of the New World. The examples here illustrate characteristic types and styles. Metal work and jewellery, woodcarving and textiles are all included. In each case, the examples are significant in the context of the culture; they are works of art, but are also well chosen illustrations of a way of life, of a level of skills and of creative gifts as well.

Much work still remains to be done on pre-Columbian cultures, for excavation has not always been systematic, precise provenience of objects is often not known, and publication



IV

JAR

Clay, opening at smaller end; vessel apparently intended to be reversible as borders of animals, etc are arranged to have heads at edge of each end and feet towards middle of jar; cream slip, with abstract incised "feather" pattern on body and decorative bands of stylized animals and bird and abstract motifs painted in dark brown with details added in bright orange-red.

Nicoya, Costa Rica, Central America (67.503).

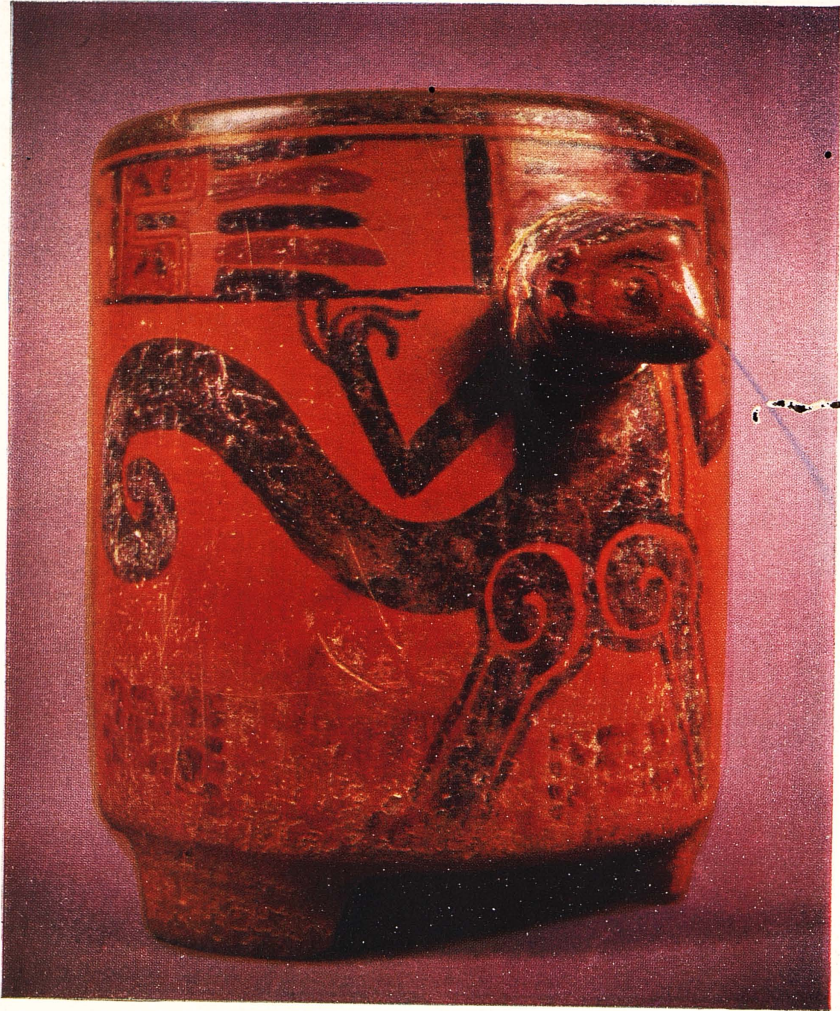
Pots in many forms, always with striking patterns, are characteristic art expressions of this culture which appears related to those of northern South America.

tends to be delayed. As often is the case for pre-Columbian material, the objects of the Heeramanek collection, with a few exceptions, have no specific documentation. Though the types of objects and their places of origin in general are sufficiently well known to allow reasonably accurate identification, additional material coming to attention, new discoveries in pre-Columbian archaeology and art, and their publication, may sometimes in future prompt revision of datings and of relationships of cultures. Fortunately several young Indian scholars are already attracted to this field and may be expected to follow closely scientific and scholarly publications on the subject. Mr. and Mrs. Heeramanek have thoughtfully assured the foundation for such study by presenting their personal library on pre-Columbian archaeology and art to the National Museum, along with their collection.

Originally, as has been usual for all exotic material, that is art representing cultures from outside Europe, the objects from pre-Columbian sites were collected as documents on vanished peoples and cities, and were considered anthropological specimens of alien cultures. The civilizations in pre-Conquest America were only vaguely known through chronicles of the conquerors and first settlers, and their artifacts were objects of scientific curiosity. Recognition of their art value, as the creative expression of peoples of civilizations previously unknown, was slow to come. These peoples, untouched by the civilizations of Asia and Europe, forged for themselves cultures, which, in their most complete development, by the time of the first European contacts, have now been acknowledged to match, and even in one case at least to surpass, the contemporary knowledge of the Old Worlds: the accurate Mayan calendar, so frequently cited. The very differences of the American objects from the well established and admired antiquities from Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek and Roman sites, which had found an honoured place in archaeological museums of the West by the nineteenth century, provided a barrier. Their strangeness had to be overcome before there could be understanding and appreciation of them on their own terms. Indeed, recognition of pre-Columbian material as art can be taken as becoming important only from the early 1930's.

It should be remembered that the twentieth century has been a period of discovery in art. The development of contemporary art, the art movements of today, have in themselves been a series of explorations of new aesthetic effects, in the most active possible way. This attitude of discovery, of receptivity for new and previously unknown styles, techniques, subjects, emotional states and expressions, is the climate in which leaders of modern art, like Picasso and Matisse, sought stimulus, early in the century, from African Negro and other exotic art traditions, including those from pre-Columbian America. Other artists, and the collectors they inspired, have followed this lead and the sensibility of artists and collectors alike has been opened today to every possible art expression. Popular taste has lagged somewhat, but not too far, behind.

The Heeramanek collection comes to India, to Asia indeed, to represent this broadened response to art which must be considered one of the most important contemporary developments in aesthetics. Its coming to the National Museum, New Delhi, is, accordingly, an



V

JAR

Clay, buff slip, monkey head in relief on either side, stylized body and tail of monkey figures painted in dark brown; decorative border at rim, divided into panels with abstract decoration in dark brown and purplish red, resembling Maya borders, 22.2 cm x 18.4 cm, diameter.

El Salvador or Honduras, Central America (67.516).

Maya influence extended to this area and the shape and colour of the pot as well as its form recall familiar Maya styles.

event of much greater significance than the simple enrichment of the National Museum's collections, important as this is, for in money value, as well as in art value, the gift is a princely one. But its significance for India, and indeed for South Asia in general, is very great: at one stroke it breaks open the isolation from which museum collections and, as a consequence, archaeological and art studies, have suffered in this part of the world, for everywhere here they have been largely limited to national antiquities.

The Heeramanek Collection of pre-Columbian art will provide a first and a dramatic escape into a broader world of art knowledge and scholarship for India. Some time ago UNESCO, in its effort to foster worldwide cultural understanding, advocated Asian countries' studying cultural aspects of Latin American countries. This collection opens one avenue for such study, a particularly fruitful one.

Pre-Columbian art objects come from environments resembling those in which great art flourished in India. The historic periods of Indian archaeology and art correspond roughly in time to the "classic" periods of the American civilizations. There are parallels also in climate, in aspects of life, in devotion to religion, in the dedication of architecture and art to religion. It cannot be doubted that Indian scholars in their own special fields of studies will greatly benefit from the opportunities to see this new material, to seek to understand it. Their vision will be sharpened, their sensibility increased. For Indian artists the opportunity to learn about cultures new to them, highly effective in art expression, is likely to be even more valuable. For them the Heeramanek collection provides a stimulus and aesthetic adventure. For the student and intelligent member of the general public, the collection will furnish illustrations to history, to ethnology and to geography in a far distant part of the world. But above all, it will bear testimony to the creative power of the human spirit, in varied forms of art expression, in different distant lands, which yet, today, are struggling with much the same problems as India, in finding a secure place in contemporary technological society. Finally, for some countries, notably Mexico and Peru, the pre-Columbian inheritance has contributed valuable elements to twentieth century national movements in both art and literature. Pre-Columbian art, therefore, supplies a key to some aspects of contemporary culture in some Latin American countries.

Every one who examines the collection attentively, with sensitive eyes and a mind striving to understand and appreciate what gifted peoples in various physical environments had to express about themselves and their world, will feel gratitude for the generosity of the Heeramaneks.



VI

SEATED ANIMAL JAR

Clay, animal head in high relief; forelegs and claws in low relief; rear legs and looped tail furnish tripod support; cream slip, painted in red and black in abstract decorative patterns, 28.4 cm x 19 cm; 11.3 diameter of opening at top.

Nicoya, Costa Rica, Central America (67.496).

Human and animal seated figures forming jars, with strong abstract designs, especially in red and black, are favourite grave offerings from this culture.

AMERICA

It is thought, on the basis of present archaeological and anthropological evidence, that the Americas were settled by successive waves of Asian peoples migrating across the present narrow Bering Straits, or possibly over a land bridge that may have at times existed there, from as early as about 15,000 to 20,000 years ago. These peoples established themselves in various places in the continents of the New World and in each area developed over many thousands of years a culture according to their individual genius and their environment.

By the time that Christopher Columbus, who was seeking a new way to reach India and South Asia, reached the Caribbean islands in 1492, and thus opened the way to European settlement of a part of the world previously unknown to history, the copper skinned peoples living in this New World had developed a very wide range of cultures. The invading Europeans called them "Indios", in the mistaken idea that the land they had reached was an outlying part of the Indies, as they called India and South Asia.

In the various parts of the Americas, there were innumerable languages, religious systems, ways of life and stages of culture, when the Europeans arrived there. Some of the indigenous peoples had become nomads and hunters. Others were seed and fruit gatherers. Such peoples were found principally in what is today the United States, Canada, eastern South America and its extreme southern part. In contrast, from Mexico southward to the valleys of the Andean mountains of South America and along the western coast, still others had well established settlements and practised agriculture. Many regions were arid or difficult mountainous country. Irrigation and terracing had been well developed for cultivation of plants. Cotton, corn (maize), potatoes, chilli, tomatoes, beans, squashes, gourds, chocolate and tobacco were among the important crops cultivated in one or another part of the New World. Neither rice nor wheat, the staple food grains of Asia and Europe, were known to the Americans, and they did not have cattle nor horses. In some places they had domesticated animals, however. Imposing temples and palaces had been built. In many places impressive engineering feats, such as the construction of highways over difficult terrain, and of forts, designed effectively for defence, were common. Organized federations of a number of states or kingdoms, various forms of political alliances and the subjugation of weaker peoples by more warlike nations were found. Wars of conquest were waged; imposition of the religion of conquerors on their subjects occurred; struggles for succession took place.

These New World societies practised, as part of their cultures, arts and crafts of great variety, designed to pay homage to their gods, to express respect for their rulers, to honour



VII

STYLIZED CROCODILE DEITY PLATE

Clay, cream slip, painted in reddish brown, greyish brown, dark brown, 36 cm in diameter; base: 7.8 cm high x 12 cm in diameter.

Cocle, Panama, Central America (67.525).

In form and decoration this grave offering is typical.

their dead, or simply to serve daily needs and to adorn agreeably their homes, the clothes they wore, and the tools they used.

For the first Europeans invaders, the arts of New World peoples were very strange, completely different from the Greek-Roman, Western Asian and Mediterranean traditions of their own heritage. They found them different also from what they knew, through trade, of arts from the Asian countries, whose riches they aspired to draw upon and were seeking to find for the markets of Europe, when they sailed westward to the New World. But these Europeans were impressed by the obvious skills of workmanship of the American peoples and they were awed, in such places as Mexico and Peru, by the profuse use of elaborately worked gold and silver. Little except architecture and sculpture, when of enduring stone, and articles that were offerings in graves survive, even from the period of the Conquest. Most of the gold and silver ornaments were melted down and sent as bullion back to Europe; while articles of ~~luxurious~~ workmanship in perishable materials, such as featherwork, textiles and carved wood, for example, have disappeared with time, when not deliberately destroyed as idolatrous. They are described in contemporary accounts of the "conquistadores", and are depicted on sculptures or in paintings, on walls and on pottery vessels, or in the few surviving codices (manuscripts of Mexican peoples).

Fine workmanship was usual in the New World. A great variety of materials was used. Most of the American peoples, even the nomads, hunters and gatherers, made baskets of various kinds; many made decorated garments and shelters of hides. Some wove textiles, and in the case of many cultures of what is now Peru, textile techniques had achieved a variety and perfection of techniques and means of decoration unsurpassed anywhere in the world, before or since. Jewellery of precious and semi-precious stones and richly worked metals were produced. Painting on walls, hides, and textiles was done in various places. Almost everywhere, even from very early periods, figures and vessels of clay were fashioned and fired, often painted elaborately. In many places, sculpture in stone and wood was important, especially as architectural ornamentation, which, like stucco decorations, was usually painted in bright colours. A system of writing, of reckoning and of recording dates was devised at an early period by the Olmecs of the south coast of the Gulf of Mexico, to be adopted and perfected by later civilizations of the area. There was in wide use in Mexico a calendar, more nearly accurate according to astronomical observation than was employed in Europe at the time the Europeans invaded and conquered the area, in 1521. Like the ancient Indians of Asia, the peoples of Mexico discovered and used the value of zero in their highly developed numerical calculations and complicated dating systems.

But, if, among the peoples of the Americas, examples of most of the advanced achievements of human beings in thought and skills are to be found, there was one area in which they lagged behind Asians and Europeans in techniques important for material progress. When the Europeans arrived, they did not have iron and generally did not use metal for weapons and tools, and lacking draught animals, they did not use the wheel for transport,



VIII

BARKING DOG

Clay, polished red slip, eyes depicted by incised lines, 23.2 cm high at nose x 36.5 cm long x 17 cm wide.

Colima, western Mexico (67.448).

As a grave offering the Mexican hairless dog (*izcuintli*), domesticated and fattened for eating as a delicacy, is modelled in many expressive poses, usually in this polished red ware, by the potters of Colima, a principal centre of ceramics in western Mexico.

all technological knowledge dating back several thousands of years in Asia and Europe. For fabrication of things, tilling the soil and hunting and war, they made appropriate implements of wood, stone and bone. Most indigenous Americans were thus still largely stone-age people, in 1492, when Columbus first encountered them.

When the Europeans discovered the New World, and settled in it, often after violent conquest and destruction in the centres of developed cities and architecture, the indigenous peoples were pursuing the evolution of their own cultures. There were many independent peoples, each with a name and a history, a religion, a political organization, a distinctive culture, and an individual identity. Some were tribes, some truly nations. There are contemporary accounts of what the Europeans observed everywhere, but the earlier phases of the respective civilizations have had to be reconstructed from archaeological evidence, by excavation.

The most advanced centres in terms of development, of societies, of material cultures, of cities, of monuments, of the arts in the widest range, were found in what are now central Mexico and Yucatan southward, through Guatemala and the other Central American countries (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama) to the west coast of South America, and in its mountain valleys and plateaux of what are now the countries of Peru and highland Bolivia, with advanced cultures also in Ecuador and Colombia. The influence of these great centres spread widely, and was a stimulus to other peoples, whether by conquest or by example. In both of the two major groupings of pre-Columbian high cultures, that is of Mexico and Central America, on the one hand, and of South America on the other, despite the great diversity of languages and cultures that each includes, there seem to have been some basic shared characteristics and much exchange. At all events, it is convenient at the present stage of information to consider each one separately as a large general area, within which many individual cultures arose.



IX

HEAD

Clay, applied ornaments in relief and with incisions, eyes painted, 11 cm x 10 cm.

Totonac, central coast, Gulf of Mexico, eastern Mexico (67.462).

Smiling faces, such as that of this head, broken from a body. (See Plate XI), are typical of Totonac terracotta art.

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

A succession of advanced cultures flourished here. For the most part, after centuries of slow development in different parts of the area, they reached maturity at varying dates for their respective classic periods, soon after the beginning of the present era.

Imposing stone architecture, highly developed arts in a wide variety of materials, elaborately organized societies, complex religions, depending to some degree on ritual human sacrifice, and, in most parts of the region, a system of writing, numerical reckoning and accurate dating were found by the Spanish invaders who conquered the most powerful nation of the time, the Aztecs, in their capital of Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City), in 1521. In technical literature, the region, comprehending Mexico and the countries immediately south of it, on the land connecting the two continents of North and South America, is usually referred to as Meso-America. It extends roughly from what today are northern Mexico, from about the 23rd parallel of latitude to Panama, though the cultures of both this country and Costa Rica, north of it, are probably more logically to be grouped with those of Colombia and of parts of Ecuador to which they seem related.

Meso-America has a great range of topography and correspondingly varied climates, including mountains, like the eternally snow-capped Orizaba in Mexico, to arid plains, high plateaux and low lying humid coastal areas of dense tropical jungle. A corresponding diversity of peoples, languages and cultures developed, though there appears to have been some basic cultural and religious unity. It is here, in what are today Mexico and Guatemala, that the earliest as well as the highest forms of indigenous civilizations in the Americas took form.

The Valley of Mexico is at a height of about 7500 feet above sea-level. At the time of European conquest, the Aztecs ruled here their own population and the nations tributary to them, from their capital of Tenochtitlan. Earlier, the Valley was the setting in which Teotihuacan, among the greatest of the classic cultures of Meso-America, flourished from approximately 300 to 650 A.D. It is here in the Valley of Mexico also that the first evidence of human occupation, the most ancient as yet found in Meso-America, dating from about 1500 B.C., has been discovered in a number of places that have been systematically excavated. Today the Valley is the site of modern Mexico's capital; its cathedral and administrative buildings, erected during the Colonial period, stand on the ruins of the Aztecs' Tenochtitlan.

This earliest Meso-American culture so far known through archaeological excavation, in the Valley of Mexico, dating from approximately 1500 B.C., is usually called the archaic or

pre-classic period. Agriculture, based on the cultivation of corn (maize), was practised. This plant had already been domesticated and improved for human use, obviously over a long period of time. Pottery was well developed, for vessels and for figurines, that may have had religious significance.

From agricultural societies, urban groupings began to develop between about 1100 and 600 B.C. and techniques of all kinds progressed greatly. Stone carving was practised; new materials—jade, quartz, and turquoise—began to be worked; celestial observations guided religious rites. A new culture emerged toward the end of this period on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, the civilization of La Venta, the pre-classic Olmec. Its influence spread widely along the east coast, into the interior and to the Valley of Mexico.

Between about 600 and 100 B.C. the centres of culture in the Valley of Mexico continued to multiply and the beginnings of the later complex societies there appeared. But throughout the whole of Meso-America the later important civilizations were taking form, at approxi-



1

STANDING MAN

Mottled dark green stone, 15.4 cm x 6.8 cm.

Guerrero, western Mexico (67.451).



2

SEATED MAN, WITH NOSE ORNAMENT AND SHAWL

Clay, ochre slip, details painted in white, 22.7 cm x 11.5 cm.

Nayarit, western Mexico (67.451).

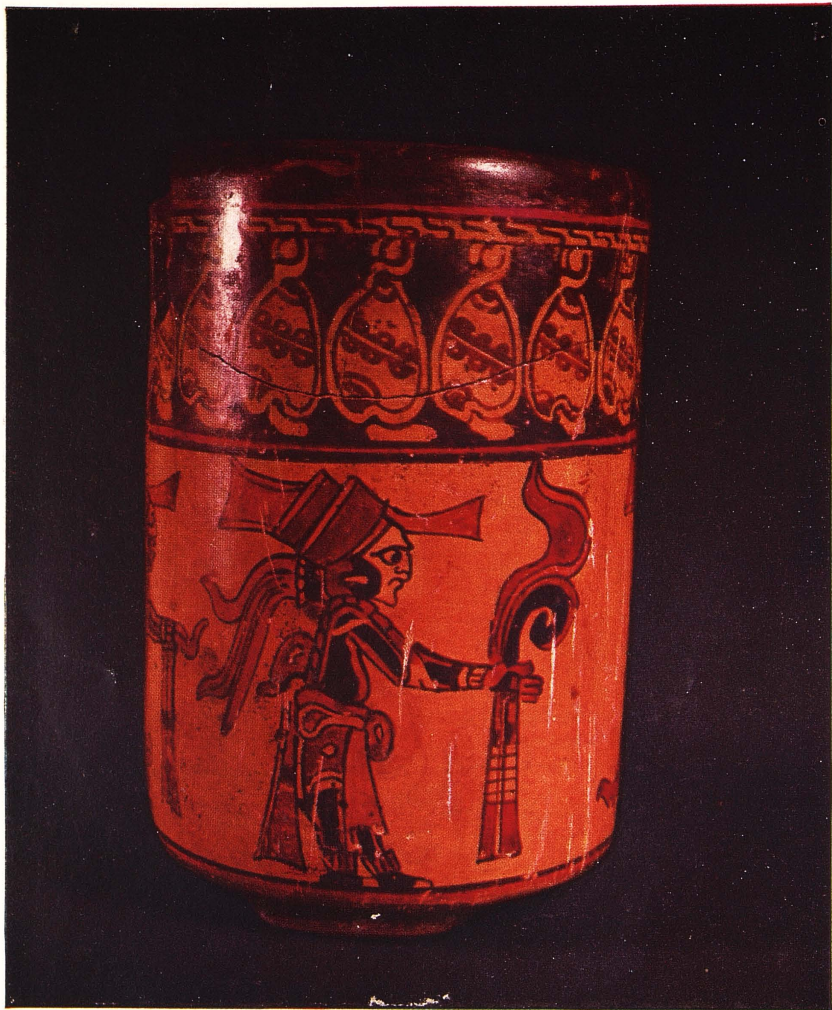
mately this time. Monumental architecture began, polychrome pottery was produced, and in general, the characteristics of the various well developed cultures of the present era started in most parts of Meso-America. Each one had its special character, but the theocratic pattern of society was general everywhere, though the particular forms that religion and political rule assumed differed. With rare exceptions, the prevailing religious beliefs in spirits, gods and demons resident in all things, animate and inanimate, and in magic control over those inimical by means of conjuration, was reflected in the arts by symbolic, in preference to realistic, representations. The artist strove to depict what an object meant in spirit terms as a "power" rather than what it looked like. This accounts for the elaborate symbolic forms used, which had significance far beyond their obvious decorative interest.

Because of destructive climates in Meso-American areas, small objects in stone, pottery, gold and similar durable substances only are preserved. Textiles, feather work, leather, wood, basketry and other perishable materials disappeared, and can be imagined as used in costumes and daily life only by reference to sculpture and to paintings on walls and pots.

Among the numerous different nations of Meso-America which rose to prominence early in the era, each with its own contributions to make to civilizations in the New World, a few reached a special importance and were widely influential. All, however, produced art objects of distinction, usually from the fourth to the tenth centuries, the fully developed "classic" period of most Meso-American civilizations.

The most important and most influential of the very early civilizations is that of the Olmecs, already mentioned as having had influence on other cultures of Central Mexico in the late pre-classic period. They represent an exception to the general fact that major art expressions of Meso-America usually may be dated to the classic period after the fourth century A.D., for their culture appears highly developed from about 800 B.C. It originated in the area of Vera Cruz, that is on the south-east coast, on the Gulf of Mexico, and their monumental sculpture, first discovered at their important centre, La Venta, was notable for colossal human heads of stone. They made, as well, small stylized figurines and masks in jade and other hard stones. These are the outstanding art objects of the period up to 100 A.D.

- The Olmecs had writing and a calendar, and their dated objects, of the first century B.C. or before, are the earliest known in America. The later civilizations seem to have learned the arts of writing and of reckoning dates from them. The Olmec influence penetrated to the Valley of Mexico, to Oaxaca and to Puebla on the central plateau, and to Guerrero on the west coast. There figurines, undoubtedly of later date, in jade and other hard stones, have been found that seem to continue the Olmec tradition (fig. 1). On the Gulf coast the Olmec influence continued to the Aztec conquest, and many outstanding art objects are attributed to the region of Vera Cruz.



x

CYLINDRICAL JAR, ON LOW TRIPOD BASE

MAYA CULTURE

* Terracotta figurines in great variety and elegant form and finish are especially characteristic of grave offerings in the cemetery of the Island of Jaina off the west coast of Yucatan.

PRIEST(?), IN CEREMONIAL MASK AND DRESS

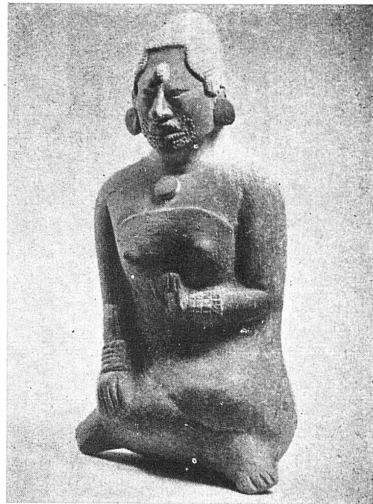
Clay, greyish natural surface, traces of blue paint on shoulder scarf, sash and neck pendant, 22 cm x 8 cm (67.404).

SEATED WOMAN, WITH SCARIFICATION DECORATION AROUND MOUTH AND HIGH COIFFURE

Clay, natural grey finish, 16.5 cm x 9 cm. (67.403).



3



4

Among the many peoples of advanced cultures, the two nations that are best known are the Mayas and the Aztecs. The former are famous because of their achievements in constructing great architectural monuments, in painting murals, in producing pottery vessels and figures in various styles, in having writing, in perfecting mathematical notations and calculations, in devising complicated dating systems and in working out the extraordinarily accurate calendar which amazed the Spaniards. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their long abandoned temples in southern Mexico and Guatemala and those centres that they and the Toltecs built in Yucatan impressed the foreign explorers who soon began writing about them and excavating their sites. The Aztecs owe their prominence to their not very ancient but magnificent capital, Tenochtitlan, in the Valley of Mexico, to their monumental architecture and powerful sculpture, to their success as conquerors and organizers of subject peoples, as well as to being the first great power in the New World to be overthrown by the Spaniards. This victory, in 1521, opened the way to the conquest of all of Spanish America.

The beginnings of Mayan civilization went back to about the seventh century B.C., though their great period was approximately the fourth to the ninth century A.D. in what is today southern Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras, where city-states with fine religious architecture erected monumental sculptured slabs, or steles, in commemoration of important dates, with figures, decorations, and inscriptions (Copan, Tikal, Palenque, etc.). From approximately the mid-tenth to the twelfth century, the Mayas, after their abandonment of the southern cities, and their retreat to earlier settlements in Yucatan, were joined by the Toltecs from the central plateau, who had gained cultural and religious influence among them, and constructed major new Yucatecan cities, such as Chichen-Itza. The Mayas' civilization, their monumental

buildings, the exuberance of their architectural ornamentation, their sensitive small scale terracotta sculptures and their refined polychrome and carved pottery vessels of elegant shapes, that have survived, as well as the theocratic form of their society, regulated by complicated date cycles, show a continuous evolution on a high level. It would seem that the Mayas perfected and elaborated many of the skills they shared with their neighbours, developing writing, producing quantities of codices (manuscripts) on astronomy and religion, carrying out astronomical observations, calculating long date sequences, and perfecting the calendar invented by the Olmecs. Their influence was strong, especially on the cultures south of Guatemala which seem often to have borrowed details of their products from them (Plates X, XIV; figs. 3, 4, 5).

The Maya population remains large today, principally in Yucatan, but also in southern Mexico and Guatemala, where dialects of the language are still spoken, but the cultural and religious links with their past were destroyed. Their manuscripts (the codices), with a few exceptions, were burned and, except for dates, most of their writing has not yet been deciphered.

By contrast, the Aztecs, a nomad tribe invading the Valley of Mexico from the north in the fourteenth century, were a people who attained power and developed civilization late,



5

MAYA CULTURE

Pottery in a wide range of forms of vessels and of decoration, modelled, carved, and painted in a number of colours, is an important art form. Carved ornamentation in relief recalls similar low relief stone architectural decoration. (See also Plates X, XIV; figs. 3, 4).

CYLINDRICAL JAR ON LEGS OF ANIMAL HEADS

Clay, carved decorative band in low relief, buff slip, 16.5 cm x 13.8 cm (67.388).

only after assimilating the cultural achievements of those they dominated, whether by alliance or conquest, and thus became heirs to all the attainments of this part of Meso-America, as the great political power among all others. They excelled in architecture and monumental sculpture, powerful in style, even in small scale examples (fig. 14).

The Mayan civilization was by no means, however, the only one to extend far back into the pre-classic period and to have reached a high level of development soon after the beginning of the present era. Many others, approximately contemporary, had distinctive cultures and art expressions. They present a complex and rich panorama, and can perhaps be best understood by reviewing them according to regional groupings in roughly chronological order.

The coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico, where the Olmecs in the south had originated so early many skills later adopted by others, were inhabited by still other peoples, with distinctive cultures, evolved from the pre-classic period. It was a fertile country, allowing, as in the case of the Olmecs, an ample margin of time and energy for activity beyond what was required for subsistence. Religion was an important element in the civilizations of the region and was the reason for much of their art. This creative activity was not always, nor solely, expressed in monumental architecture or sculpture, however, but took the form, among the Huastecs of the northern part of the Gulf region, for example, of elaborate festivals, celebrated with ritual dances and music. They also were noted for the richness of their ornaments and body decoration. They produced no architecture of importance according to present knowledge, but extensive as yet unexcavated sites are known. They excelled in stone sculpture and carved religious steles in great numbers. They also made fine pottery through a series of styles from about 600 B.C., found in numerous excavated sites. Their religion appears to have influenced other civilizations of the classic period of Mexico.

It is, however, the Totonacs of the central Gulf region, who, much later than their neighbours to the south, the Olmecs, developed a monumental architecture and an impressive variety of art objects. Their civilization flourished at numerous places during their classic period, but El Tajín, their major religious centre, a large architectural complex, with a special form of pyramid as a temple base, was the leading centre and its name is often applied to the whole culture. The Totonacs' origins go back to pre-classic times, but El Tajín was important especially from the seventh century to the Aztec conquest. They appear to have derived elements of their culture from neighbouring La Venta, from their contemporaries of Teotihuacan, on the high central plateau, and of the Maya region in southern Mexico and Guatemala. Their characteristic ritual objects of finely sculptured hard stones, the "yokes", "palms" and "axes" ("hachas") have given them a high place in Meso-American art. The use of these ritual objects is not fully understood; their names indicate their forms. The "yokes" are thought to be representations in stone of belt ornaments that the players of the ceremonial ball game wore. (This game, played in a special court with a hard rubber ball, appears to have been a religious ritual in most Meso-American cultures, and courts for the game are found at many important Mexican sites). The "yokes" are carved with stylized designs, usually of animals



XI

STANDING FIGURE, IN LONG GARMENT

Clay, cream slip on face and whiter slip on garments, headdress and ornaments modelled in low relief and incised, 24.6 cm. x 13.5 cm.

Totonac, central coast, Gulf of Mexico, eastern Mexico (67.563).

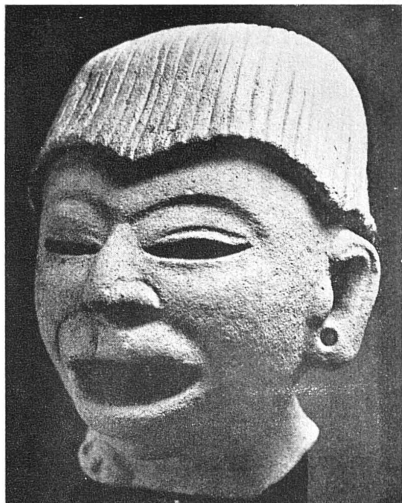
Figures with expressive faces, in wide variety, and especially the childlike faces with smiling lips, are characteristic of Totonac art.



6

HEAD, WITH HEADDRESS AND CHIN STRAP

Clay, greyish natural surface smoothed, with traces of paint around mouth and on eyes, 23 cm x 17.5 cm (67.466).



7

HEAD, WITH CAP, OR HAIR IN BANGS

Clay, natural buff surface, with incised detail and traces of paint, 16 cm x 11.5 cm (67.459).

Vera Cruz, central coast, Gulf of Mexico, eastern Mexico.

or birds, undoubtedly religious symbols, with the head at the front of the U, the body extended along the sides. The "palms", upright carvings of figures or symbols, also perhaps associated with the ball game, are thought to have been used in funerary ceremonies. The "axes" are thin slabs of stone carved on either side with the likeness of a face in profile, often with an elaborate headdress. They seem to have been representations of gods, or of deified leaders, perhaps, and were possibly commemorative pieces. They were used sometimes apparently as architectural ornaments. The stone sculptures are usually attributed to the classic period, from about 650 to about 1000 A.D. (Plate XII; fig. 10).

The Totonacs made fine pottery also. The small "smiling heads", of terracotta figurines cast from moulds, and delicately finished, providing a great range of smiling and laughing faces, both young and old, are especially charming and distinctive of their art. They are as personal and fanciful in their expression as the stone ceremonial objects are remote and severe. The "smiling head" figurines are also from the classic period, dated on archaeological evidence, from about 300 to 800 (Plates IX, XI; fig. 8). Expressive terracotta heads, sometimes with painted details, are attributed to the same region (Plate II; figs. 6, 7, 9).



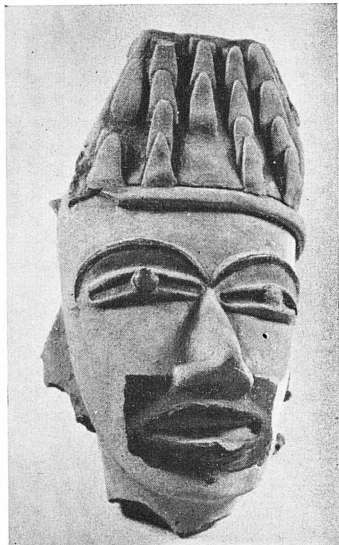
8

LAUGHING HEAD

Clay, natural buff smoothed surface,
18 cm x 20 cm (67.465).

HEAD WITH HIGH HEADDRESS

Clay, ochre slip, pattern around mouth,
as well as brows and eyes painted in
black, 25.7 cm x 14 cm (67.469).



9

VERA CRUZ AREA

The peoples of the Gulf of Mexico region continued into historic times the high level of art expression which characterized the early La Venta culture. The Totonacs of the central coast of the Gulf of Mexico, in their terracotta "Laughing Heads" and in the finely carved stone "Yokes", "Palms" and "Axes", of ceremonial significance, are notable for outstanding and distinctive art works in both clay and stone.

MOUSE TEMPLE "PALM"

Grey stone, carved in form of palm
leaf, 40.2 cm x 18.5 cm (67.412).

10



The western part of Mexico, along the Pacific Coast, provided a considerable range of cultures from what are the present States of Guerrero, in the south, and of Jalisco, in the north. Some excavation has been carried out in this extensive area, but the cultures are known rather by their handsome and distinctive art objects than by systematic archaeological work. They all appear to extend back into pre-classic periods, and to have produced fine pottery from the earliest times. In the State of Guerrero (Mezcala) small figurines and ceremonial "axes", in the form of figures in green serpentine and in green and grey porphyry, extremely hard stones resembling jade, have been found in some abundance. They are produced by abrasion and polishing and are very greatly stylized, recalling similar stone objects of the La Venta culture, and possibly are to be attributed to the influence of this early civilization which is believed to have extended as far as Guerrero. They are ascribed to the period of approximately 300 B.C. to 300 A.D. (fig. 1). The fine pottery, the best known examples of art from the other cultures of the area, date from the classic period. They are principally figures of the most varied types, in many poses and occupations, and are an inexhaustible source of information on how the people lived, what they wore and what they were like. Religion was obviously of great importance. Most of the pottery comes from graves. Two centres are especially known because of their distinctive pottery products: Colima and Nayarit. In addition to human figures in polished red or ochre pottery, sometimes with painted or incised details of ornaments, dated about 300 to 900, Colima is especially noted for its clay sculptures of the small Mexican dog, called "izcuintli", hairless and usually fat, represented in many poses and sizes. Very familiar is the howling or barking dog, but sleeping and seated dogs, dogs scratching themselves, and in many other poses are found. They are usually represented in the highly polished red pottery, sometimes with incised details of wrinkles and creases, but generally quite smooth. Normally the dogs are depicted realistically and expressively, with sensitive modelling and well observed poses. Obviously they were much esteemed. They were raised for eating and were considered a great delicacy. Other animals and also birds are found, but the dogs are the most common animals included in the Colima burials (Plate VIII). During the historic period, 1250 to 1521, this civilization built some structures in stone, in a style related to the Aztec (Mexican) period of the high central plateau, but with local decorative detail.

Though sharing many of Colima's cultural traits, Jalisco's typical pottery is quite different, being smoothly finished, and glazed in a creamy white colour and it usually depicts figures with painted garments and body decoration (Plate III).

The culture of Nayarit produced pottery figures, stylized and very expressionistic in type, often with painted details of garments and ornaments, as well as of the decorations on face and body (fig. 2). Originally, when these pottery types from the western regions first came to attention they were attributed to the Tarascans, still very numerous in the area. However, these people, the Tarascans, whose origin has not been discovered and whose language is considered unrelated to any other in Meso-America, are now known to have come to



XII

JAGUAR YOKE

Greenish stone, carved in the form of a jaguar, with nostrils, mouth, and eyes on front part, holding human head in its jaws, stylized body and legs and feet extending on either side, 10.2 cm x 27.5 cm carved front; 39.5 cm long on sides.

Totonac, Vera Cruz, central coast, Gulf of Mexico, eastern Mexico (67.435).

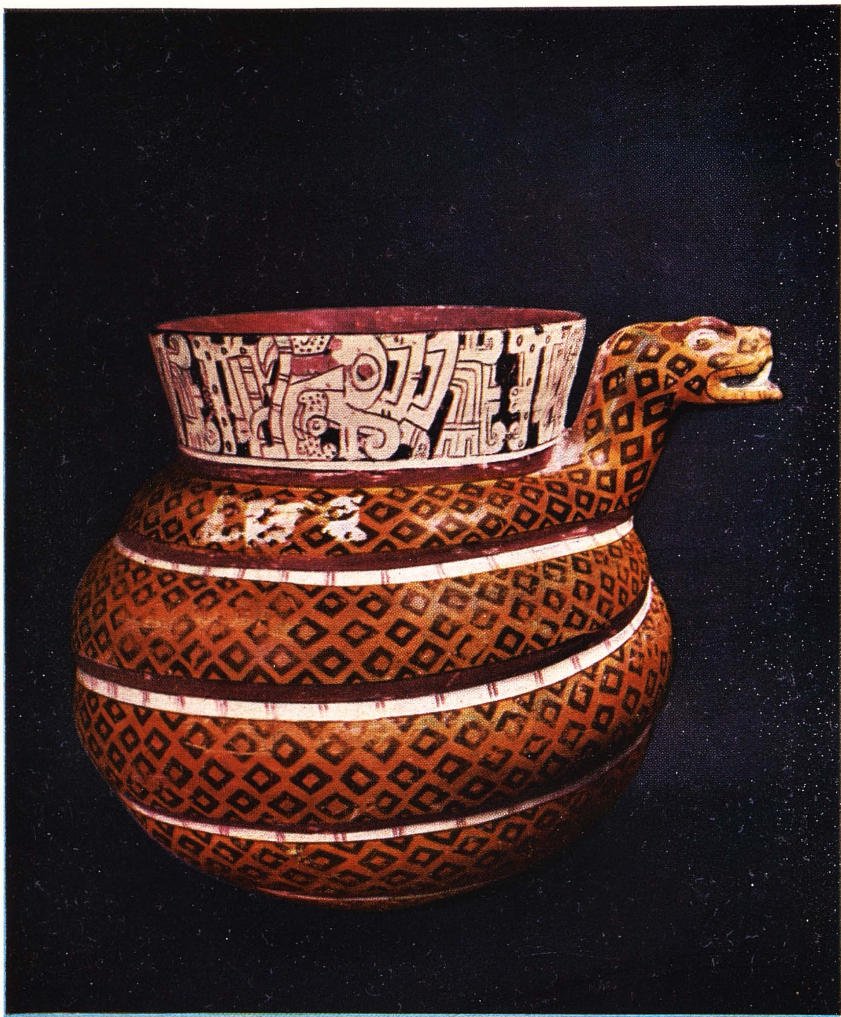
These U-shaped stone sculptures, carved with stylized animal and bird forms, resemble a yoke, hence the name. Their purpose is not definitely known, but it is generally supposed that they represent the belts worn by the players of the ceremonial ball game. They are characteristic of this culture.

prominence in this region only in the thirteenth century. They established a capital at Tzintzuntzan in the State of Michoacan and added their own ceramic styles to the pottery production for which the west had long been famous. They were also accomplished craftsmen in metals, hard stones and feather mosaic. Their descendants today, near Patzcuaro for example, continue to make the region a centre for fine folk arts.

Two other major civilizations of what is today Mexico, those of Teotihuacan and of Monte Alban, having pre-classic antecedents, and a long and influential history from early in the present era, were on the high central plateau. They, like the Maya and Olmec civilizations, left imposing remains in architecture and art and have been the subject of extensive excavation and fruitful study.

Successor to the very early pre-classic cultures of the Valley of Mexico and of other parts of the central plateau region was the civilization of Teotihuacan. By the end of the pre-classic period it had become a major culture of Meso-America. In the early centuries of the present era, its people had laid out an imposing, well planned city and had constructed its dominant monuments of the great Pyramids of the Sun and of the Moon, at the vast site of Teotihuacan which gives the civilization its name. It is often cited as the most perfect example of the classic civilizations of Meso-America. It was a vast architectural complex of temples and open spaces for ceremonial use, a large city as well as a dominant religious centre. It reached its height from about 300 to 650 and its influence then extended widely over the greater part of Meso-America, for which it appears to have represented religious leadership. Toward the end of the seventh century it was conquered by barbarian invaders, its temples were destroyed, and though it was rebuilt and continued to exist, it did not regain its earlier importance. At the end of the ninth century a fresh invasion completed its destruction, the civilization disappeared and the city remained in ruins. In addition to its outstanding architectural achievement, which makes the site today a major example of Meso-American cultural history, the civilization was rich in art expression. Fine murals in several styles, monumental sculpture, architectural decoration, excellent pottery, a high craftsmanship in all aspects of personal adornment and objects of use, are characteristic of Teotihuacan. Religious symbolism was highly developed and the Teotihuacan style had great sobriety and restraint. In its dignity and grandeur it contrasts with the more exuberant and decorative styles of the Mayas, the other major civilization of high development that was contemporary to it, in the lowlands of southern Mexico and Guatemala. The people of Teotihuacan, like most of the cultures of Meso-America, had a system of writing, of reckoning and recording dates, and they made astronomical observations and had a calendar.

Near the historic city of Oaxaca, also on the central plateau, the ancient site of Monte Alban arose about 650 B.C. It developed through many periods, traced with some thoroughness in extensive excavations and long study and flourished as a major focus of culture until about 1000 A.D. All the details of its history are not clear, however. The Zapotecs repre-



XIII

COILED SERPENT JAR

Clay, serpent head modelled in high relief, coils of body in low relief, yellowish brown slip, painted in black, white, dark brown in abstract patterns; interior painted reddish brown, 19.5 cm x 14.5 cm diameter of opening; 6.3 cm projection of head.

Mixtec (?), Oaxaca, Mexico (67.421).

The decorative adaptation of the coiled serpent to form a jar, has a stylized abstract pattern recalling the stone mosaic patterns of Mitla. (Illustrated by Pal Kelemen in *Medieval America*)

OAXACA

On a height near this city was Monte Alban, a large site of long history, associated with the Zapotec culture and, in the plain, Mitla, associated with the Mixtecs, who came into prominence in the region about 1000 A.D. The effigy vessels are typical of Zapotec pottery.



11

sent the earlier phases of the city's growth and under them Monte Alban became a great religious centre of a theocratic state, distinguished for many art expressions as well as for its architecture. The city itself was laid out on a lofty site according to a majestic plan, with temples, open spaces and ball courts. It had mural painting, and was especially known for



12

ZAPOTEC, MONTE ALBAN, OAXACA, CENTRAL MEXICO

Above, 11 :

RICHLY DRESSED SEATED MALE FIGURE INCENSE URN

Clay, natural dark grey surface, ornaments and elaborate headdress in relief, 19.7 cm x 18 cm (67.423).

Left, 12 :

STANDING ANIMAL JAR

Clay, natural grey, garland in relief, 31 cm x 17.8 cm (67.425).

TOLTEC CULTURE

About the tenth century the Toltecs arrived on the central high plateau, founded Tula, absorbed the cultures of their neighbours and influenced them. They are notable for their bold carving in stone, and their brief contribution to Mayan architecture in Yucatan.

HUMAN MASK

Greenish stone, 10 cm x 18.5 cm (67.453).



13

its pottery, modelled baked clay grave offerings, figures and vessels of complex symbolism, including the funerary urns so characteristic of the culture (figs. 11,12).

The stone structures of Mitla, on the plain nearby, with facade ornamentation in a sort of geometric mosaic relief, in a great variety of abstract patterns, made of precisely worked

14



AZTEC PERIOD

Aztec stone sculpture is powerful, often almost brutal in its strength of expression, as this typical figure, though so small in scale, indicates. (15th century to Spanish conquest, 1521).

SEATED MAN CLASPING HIS KNEES

Grey stone, 22.5 cm x 14 cm (67.459).

stones set into the walls in panels, is thought to have been a centre dedicated to the dead. Another people of somewhat mysterious origin, the Mixtecs, began to encroach on the civilization of Monte Alban about 1000 A.D. They were especially skilled at the making of jewellery, had fine pottery and produced manuscripts on deer-skin, folded between wooden covers, recording their history and legends, in the coloured glyphs of their system of writing. They appropriated often the earlier tombs of the Zapotecs and used them for the burial of their own important leaders. In these tombs they provided offerings of elaborate jewellery, in gold and stones, worked with outstanding skill in a great range of techniques. Their influence is recognized in the geometric inset stone mural decoration of Mitla, for abstract patterns, that resemble that decorative stone mosaic, are found on their pottery (Plate XIII). Their culture included a number of important sites, extending to Cholula in the State of Puebla on the high central plateau. The Mixtec dominance of the Oaxaca and Puebla regions gave place to that of the Aztecs in the fourteenth century.

The next people to come to power on the high central plateau, and to extend widely their influence over their neighbours, were the Toltecs, who appeared as a less civilized warrior nation by the beginning of the tenth century, A.D. They absorbed rapidly the knowledge and much of the culture of the peoples they encountered, secured dominance over them and founded their capital of Tula toward the end of the century. They seem to have adopted cults already existing in Meso-America, and assimilated the god-hero, Quetzalcoatl, the "White God", symbolized by the Plumed Serpent, to a legendary king-prophet of their own mythology. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when they gained dominion over the Mayan settlements at Chichen-Itza and Uxmal in Yucatan, this symbol of the Plumed Serpent was introduced. It represented, like many other elements, a new motif in Mayan architecture and art. Though they made distinctive pottery, figurines of gods and animals, as well as vessels, they are known especially for their colossal simplified sculptures in stone, usually warriors, intended to serve as columns to support ceilings, or to stand at either side of a doorway, or, in reduced size, to serve as pedestals for table or altar tops. Their strong, simplified style is found even on small scale pieces (fig. 13).

In Yucatan, the Mayas threw off the Toltec rule in the early thirteenth century, the Maya tradition was resumed and the Maya cities united under the tyrannical leadership of Mayapan in a brief federation. During the early sixteenth century a series of rebellions occurred and when the Spaniards arrived in Yucatan in 1541, their conquest was made easy by political disunity and a weakened cultural vigour.

This summary review of the more important of the many peoples and cultures that succeeded one another, exchanged influences, struggled for power and either conquered their rivals or succumbed to them, with brief references to the character of their culture, its architecture as well as its art, of a scale to find a way into museum collections, can be considered a brief history of the area, as background for an exhibition of its art. It should be remembered that dates are still often approximate, that for many cultures not all known sites have been examined, nor is it certain that all significant sites have been discovered, while not enough



XIV

JAR, TRIPOD OF ANIMAL LEGS, CONTAINING RATTLES

Clay, yellow-brown slip, heads with elaborate headdresses and symbols and band on upper edge, painted in black and reddish brown; interior, narrow reddish band and yellowish ground, 23 cm x 12.14 cm; legs 9 cm.
Maya, Mexico (67.395).

The decoration and form are typical of Maya pottery.

as yet has been learned from systematic excavation to make the account of civilizations in Meso-America entirely clear.

The principal cultures briefly described here are almost without exception represented in the Heeramanek collection by typical and fine quality examples. In some cases, cultures especially notable for their art and the special interest that it has in relation to contemporary taste, are represented by numerous examples. The abstract polished stones from Guerrero (fig. 1), like the expressionistic clay figures from Nayarit, appealing greatly to contemporary taste (fig. 2), the Vera Cruz cultures, including the Totonac ceremonial stones, the "smiling" faces, and other heads, (Plates II, IX, XI, XII; figs. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) and Maya art, with its wide range of decorative architectural ornament in stone, fine polychrome pots and those with relief ornamentation, and especially of sensitively modelled terracotta figures, (Plates X, XIV; figs. 3, 4) are all represented by distinguished and typical examples. Similarly the Zapotec civilization is represented by most characteristic pieces, the striking grave figure pottery and the intricately modelled funerary urns (figs. 11, 12). The Colima *Barking Dog* (Plate VIII) and the Aztec *Man clasping his Knees* (fig. 14) are both typical of the art of these peoples.



XV

STANDING FIGURE JAR

Clay, reddish brown slip, with shawl, breech clout, painted in cream; upper garments indicated by incision at neck and border, painted cream, 21.5 cm x 12 cm; 6 cm diameter of mouth of jar formed by flat cylindrical cap.

Mochica, north coast, Peru (67.248).

The squat form of the figure and the peculiar features may represent a deformity rather than distortion, for it is thought that the Mochica attributed religious or magical significance to some physical deformities.

SOUTH AMERICA

The pre-Columbian civilizations of South America are not yet as fully explored as those of Meso-America. Though systematic excavation has been carried out on some known sites, they lie in several countries and national archaeological work differs from country to country, and publication often lags behind discoveries.

Provenience of objects is not always recorded and dating is often approximate, despite the very large amount of material from South America that has come to the museums of the world. Some of it is the result of systematic excavation, but most has no history, for it has been impossible to prevent treasure hunting and smuggling, despite earnest government effort. However, the most important examples of pre-Columbian South American art are so distinctive, in the types of the best known cultures, that identification and labelling can be reasonably accurate.

The most important pre-Columbian civilizations of this part of the Americas took form on the west coast and in mountain valleys, between the southern frontier of modern Colombia and the northern part of Chile, including the mountain regions of Peru and the highlands of Bolivia. For convenience these civilizations are usually referred to as the Central Andean cultures. There seem to have been considerable inter-communication and cultural exchange among them, and, at several periods, they appear to have had a common religion and cultural, if not political, leadership. Beyond, to the east, were the tropical Amazonian forests, with less highly developed tribal cultures. The peoples to the south of the Central Andean area were likewise less advanced. To the north, the cultures of present-day Ecuador, in the highlands near Quito, were included in the Central Andean developments by the time of the Incas, but the coastal cultures there, like those still further north in highland valleys of Colombia, seem to have been largely independent. The arts of the adjacent areas of Central America, in what are today Panama and Costa Rica, appear to have been related to these northern cultures. However, not enough is as yet known about these areas. At most, certain cultures, which have produced striking archaeological and art objects, are recognized but without precise knowledge of their chronology and inter-relationships.

The beginnings of the advanced civilizations of South America seem to go back to about 1200 B.C. Earlier pre-ceramic cultures, that had elementary agriculture, but seem not to have cultivated maize, are thought to extend into the past almost another 2000 years. Their remains have been found on the northern coast of this Central Andean area. It will interest Indians to learn that fragments of decorated cotton fabrics have been reliably reported from

a stratified pre-ceramic site near the mouth of the Chicama River, which has been dated to about 2500 to 2000 B.C. In the Indian sub-continent, evidence of woven cotton was found in the roughly contemporary Harappan sites. However, the Harappans had developed pottery by this time, and had copper and bronze for weapons and tools. The South Americans apparently had at this date only decorated gourds as containers. Metal, for ornament and ceremonial use, began to be worked more than a thousand years later in South America. Cotton in the two regions is of different species.

That much less is known in detail about the archaeology of South America than of that of Meso-America is not surprising. The southern continent comprehends a vast territory of difficult topography. Much more careful excavation is needed. Moreover, the peoples of South America had no system of writing and dating. Knowledge about them must depend, therefore, solely on archaeological evidence, or, for late periods, on Spanish chronicles and on traditions. Few of the ancient peoples of South America built in stone, and this testimony to their way of life, expressed in religious and public structures, is lacking. The early coastal civilizations of the area of highest development, of what is now Peru, seem to have built temples and other public buildings, and houses too, probably, principally of adobe, that is sun-baked mud, strengthened by a mixture of grass or other fibre, usually moulded into bricks before use. Such structures disintegrate with time into heaps of earth and therefore little of detailed evidence has survived as compared with that from the monuments in Meso-America, where the more enduring stone was the common building material throughout most of the region. The important exceptions in the Central Andes, the civilizations that built competently in stone as well as carved it, are the Chavín culture in the north to central coast, from about 1000 to 400 B.C., and the two much later cultures originating in the high Andes, of the people of Tiahuanaco (about 1000 to 1300), and of the Incas (1438 to 1532).

The Spaniards began their conquest of South America by subduing the Incas, the dominant power in the region, in 1532. These people, from a high valley of the Andes, had established an empire from approximately 1438, when they began to extend their rule from the highlands and gradually to subdue the populations of the coastal regions, where advanced cultures had flourished for more than a thousand years. The Incas finally included in their domain all the Central Andean highland and coastal cultures, ruling from their mountain home and capital, Cuzco, with Quito as their northern capital. Their talents seem to have been expressed especially in engineering and the effective organization of their state from every point of view, including production of articles they and their subject peoples used. They forged a strong political state, bound together by a tightly knit system of authority and a network of well built highways, guarded by sophisticated fortifications in magnificently cut stone, accurately fitted without the use of mortar.

Though before the Incas there had probably never been such a highly organized political unity, the Central Andean cultures appear to have had throughout their history much in common. Cultural similarities can be attributed in part, no doubt, to environmental condi-

tions shared, to a very large extent, throughout the area. Settlements on the coast were along the rivers that descended from the Andes and crossed the arid plains to the sea, territory almost without rainfall, where agriculture had to depend on irrigation, which was everywhere well developed. The high altitude and the cold limited the food crops possible in the mountain lands, though rainfall and damp mists, condensed from the warm sea winds reaching the mountains, assured moisture. Mountain sides were terraced, and by Inca times had retaining walls of precisely fitted stones. Everywhere maize (corn), squash, and beans were grown as staple crops in the lowlands, while potatoes and other less well known high altitude food plants were cultivated in the elevated valleys and on the terraced slopes of the mountains. Hunting provided meat, but perhaps was a privilege of rank. Fish of every kind was abundant and an important food along the coast.

In the early Central Andean cultures, dating from probably about 1200 to about 400 B.C., pottery making was practised everywhere, textile techniques were already highly developed, skilful and varied, and a settled agricultural life had begun. The first most important art expression is associated with the Chavín culture, which developed in a narrow valley of the northern highlands at the site of Chavín de Huántar. It has given its name to a style, identified with a type of ornament depicting stylized snakes, birds, and especially the head of a feline creature, with prominent fangs. All were presumably religious symbols, and they seem to have been widely used throughout the entire Central Andean area. The Chavín culture is dated approximately from 1000 or 800 to 400 B.C. It had architecture with stone facing, carving for architectural ornament and monumental stone sculpture, marked by highly stylized linear designs, used also on the small stone objects (fig. 15). Gold was made into ornaments by the end of the period at least. It is thought that Chavín de Huántar may have been a religious centre to which pilgrims came from distant places. This might account for the wide distribution of the Chavín style.

There followed a period, from approximately 400 B.C. to 400 A.D., of the multiplication of cultural centres, each with its own distinctive style, but with some exchange of influences. All improved rapidly during this time the variety and quality of their techniques. Paracas cultures of the south coast region (as revealed in grave sites of Paracas Cavernas and Paracas Necropolis) were especially important. They appear not only to have held leadership for the perfection of their textile techniques, which included every possible form of weaving, and knotting, embroidery and painted examples, in highly complex multi-coloured symbolic designs obviously produced in great quantity, but seem to have been a source for designs and techniques of later south coast civilizations. Embroidery was an especially favoured mode of decoration, which appears not to have been popular to the same extent in other cultures (cover). The textiles were used as funerary offerings, along with pottery, ornaments and food products, like beans and corn, in cemeteries of tombs made of rough stone or of adobe bricks. The textiles were also employed for mummy wrappings of many layers, in which decorated and plain cloth alternated, usually. Paracas Cavernas pottery sometimes has decorations in rather



15

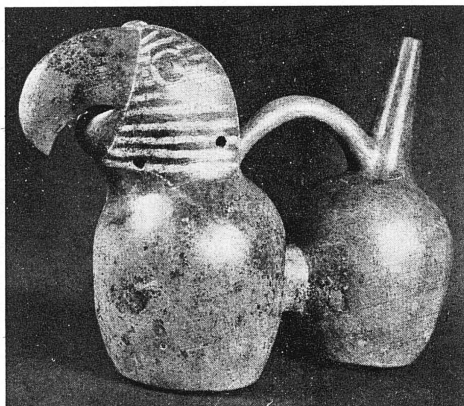
STYLIZED CROUCHING PUMA

Greenish stone, details incised in abstract patterns, 7 cm x 11.3 cm.

Chavin, north coast, Peru (67.382).

EARLY NORTHERN PERUVIAN CULTURES, c. 900—100 B.C.

Chavin stylized decoration had wide influence throughout the region: it was the first Andean culture to carve extensively in stone. Many local pottery centres, each with a distinctive style, developed in the area following it, from about 650 B.C.



16

PARROT HEAD VESSEL, WITH CONNECTED POT, SPOUT AND TUBULAR ARCHED HANDLE

Clay, brownish slip, head painted with deep cream stripes, eye incised, 18.5 cm x 26.5 cm.

Ayabaca, north highlands, Peru (67.354).



POT, WITH FLARING RIM, STRAP HANDLE, HEADS IN HIGH RELIEF

Clay, cream slip, abstract designs painted in black, reddish brown, 19 cm x 18.4 cm. diameter of lip.

Recuay, north coast, Peru (67.354).

MOCHICA CULTURE — NORTH COAST, PERU

A great variety in forms and decorations developed but with a general tendency toward realism. These illustrations following, (figs. 18-27) give some idea of the evolution and range of techniques used in Mochica grave offerings. The stirrup spout was characteristic.



18

FLARING BOWL, ON HIGH BASE WITH RATTLE, SILHOUETTE OF BIRDS AND FLOWERS, OUTSIDE; BORDER OF WARRIORS(?) CARRYING INSIGNIA AND CACTUS INSIDE BOWL

Clay, cream slip, painted in reddish brown, 18 cm x 13.5 cm diameter of base and 36.8 cm diameter of rim (67.346).

dull colour, applied after firing, in resin paints within the incised outlines of the decoration (fig. 28). Both textiles (cover and fig. 29) and pottery seem in their design motifs to have been a source for the Nazca patterns of later periods on the south coast.

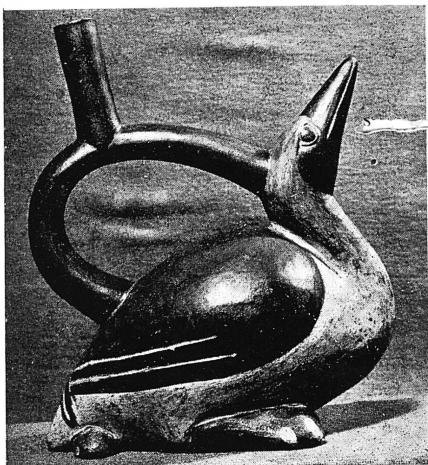
It is, however, the next period, from about 400 to 1000, that may be taken as equivalent in South America to the "classic" period in Meso-America, to which it corresponds approximately in date, and in vigour and perfection of cultural attainment. It presents outstanding achievements in pottery - making, a high point of the artistic expression of the South American cultures, used as funerary offerings and preserved in graves. It includes the fully matured stages of Mochica and Nazca pottery, respectively in the north and south coast regions, to mention the outstanding examples.

There was some architectural activity, during this period, especially associated with the Mochica culture. In this north coast region some large monuments, in the form of mounds, with terraces and ramps, and of pyramids, were constructed. Sometimes rough stone foundations were used, but these buildings were principally made of sun-baked, rectangular, adobe bricks. The surfaces of terraces, walls and ramps were faced with a clay coating, painted and sometimes cut into relief designs. Mochica graves are lined and topped with these adobe bricks.



19

20



Above

SEATED FIGURE, STIRRUP SPOUT—Clay, polished black reduction ware, incised and modelled detail, 22.5 cm x 13.5 cm (67.280).

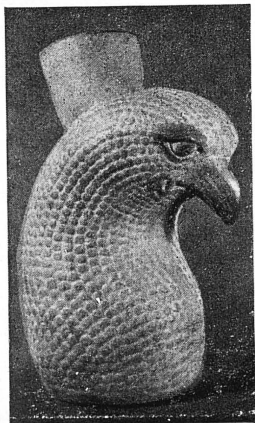
SEATED BIRD VESSEL STIRRUP SPOUT—Clay, 23.5 cm x 15.5 cm at base; body cream slip; wings, beak and spout painted in reddish brown; stripes on wings painted in cream; feet dark brown; details incised (67.283).

Below

BIRD HEAD JAR—Clay, brownish slip; modelled and incised detail, 30 cm x 14.5 cm diameter at base (67.278);

GLOBULAR VESSEL, STIRRUP SPOUT, RUNNING MESSENGERS (?), CARRYING BAGS, IN A SYMBOLIC LANDSCAPE—Clay, cream; slip, linear design painted in reddish brown, 14.5 cm x 16 cm; 29.5 cm with spout (67.264).

GLOBULAR VESSEL, STIRRUP SPOUT, RELIEF OF ZOOMORPHIC DEITY CARRIED IN LITTER BY ANIMAL AND LIZARD—Clay, dark cream slip, relief and spout painted in reddish brown, 13 cm x 13 cm; with spout 25 cm (67.279).



21



22 23



Architecture of a monumental kind was not elsewhere developed during this period as far as is known, though at Recuay, in the northern highlands, where a distinctive pottery (fig. 17) is found, rough stone slab houses and temples were constructed.

All Central Andean centres put great emphasis on burial of the dead, usually in large cemeteries, and provided quantities of funeral offerings. Often, in the case of important persons, the offerings were of obvious outstanding value, workmanship and beauty. The particular form interment took differed somewhat from culture to culture, but everywhere pottery and textiles, as well as food offerings, were placed with the dead. Quantities of textiles have survived in the burial sites of the south coast regions, where scanty moisture and other favourable conditions allowed their preservation, often in an almost perfect state. Elsewhere, though probably originally as abundant, they have largely disappeared.

The funerary fire-baked clay vassels made by the Mochicas of the north coast and by the Nazcas of the south coast are an impressive art expression of the Central Andean cultures, and are by far the best known, partly, no doubt, because of the numerous examples that have been found and are in collections. The techniques used by both peoples are equally accomplished at their maturity, though they differ, and the forms and decorations each used represent two quite distinct traditions, despite the common purpose of the pieces as grave offerings. These traditions evolved over many hundreds of years from regional cultures, which appear to have felt some Chavín influence even in the south. The development of their respective styles can be traced with some assurance. Other ceramic pieces, also made for burials, not so readily identifiable in type and style, were produced in other places, and can be recognized as roughly their contemporaries, though in no case do vessels of other centres challenge in quantity and variety nor surpass in quality, the Mochica and Nazca pieces so far known.

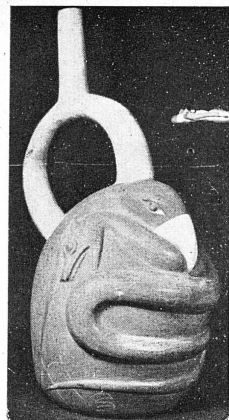
Mochica vessels, over the long period of their evolution, show several distinctive types. At their beginnings, perhaps from about 400 B.C., they seem to have obvious relationship with the Chavín culture and, likewise, with probably slightly later ceramic developments, like those of Recuay and of Vicus. (Pieces reported from this latter area are believed to have come from clandestine digging in prehistoric cemeteries near the northern highland town of Ayabaca. They have come to attention within the past few years (fig. 16) and no scientific excavation has yet been done according to report, in this area.) In all Mochica periods effigy pots, that is vessels in the form of figures, mostly human beings in various poses, were popular. In the earlier periods they were executed in highly polished black reduction ware (fig. 19). Later they were decorated with coloured paints baked on (Plate XV). Relief decoration was much used (figs. 23, 26). Vessels were normally cast from moulds and the parts were then joined together. Sculptured pots in general, such as effigy vessels (figs. 24, 25, 27), and those in the form of portrait heads (Plate I) were in part mould-cast, with details and spouts added. The portrait head pots are especially remarkable for the impression they give of individual likenesses. They are about half life size, and in the mature period are obviously carefully studied realistic portraits of individuals, often very expressive.



24



25



26

SEATED FIGURE POT, STIRRUP SPOUT — Clay, cream slip, painted in reddish brown, details of owl like face or mask incised and painted, 23 cm x 13 cm (67.217);

SEATED MAN JAR — Clay, reddish brown slip, details of ornaments and bag modelled, incised and painted in cream, 232.5 cm x 20.5 cm (67.276);

GLOBULAR JAR, RELIEF OF BIRD HOLDING SERPENT IN ITS BEAK, STIRRUP SPOUT — Clay, dark reddish orange slip, dark reddish brown and dark cream detail on serpent, 17 cm x 13.5 cm; 28.8 cm with spout (67.250).

27



KNEELING MAN POT, STIRRUP SPOUT

Clay, buff slip, face and hands, and lower garment painted reddish brown, incised lines on face, rampant animal design incised at either side of mouth, 25.5 cm x 14 cm (67.285).

Mochica vessels of all types usually have spouts. The most usual type is the "stirrup" spout, consisting of two moulded tubes rising from the upper part of the pot and joining in the middle to form a single spout (fig. 22). Frequently found on the portrait head pots, the "stirrup" spout has a variation, often used on sculptural forms, whether effigies or groups of figures. For it one of the tubes is attached to the back of the head or of the upper part of the pot, and a longer tube joins the pot lower down, the spout being set at the joining of the tubes at the rear of the figure, sometimes almost concealed from a frontal view (fig. 24). Bowls, jars, and dishes, sometimes on a base, also occur as well as the more familiar form of vessel with spout. A base is sometimes hollow with a loose pellet inside to form a rattle (fig. 18).

Painted decoration was at first geometric, then usually consisted of flat silhouettes (fig. 18), in dark reddish brown on a cream slip. In the period of full maturity, from about the fourth century, animated scenes of running figures, probably messengers or warriors, in elaborate costumes (fig. 22), and sometimes of animals, with a symbolic indication of landscape, are depicted in a lively flowing linear style by the dark reddish brown on the cream slip. These painted pieces, full of a sense of movement, are contemporary with the static portrait and effigy pots of human beings and animals, moulded and decorated in colour. The effigy pots as well as the portrait head vessels strive for scrupulous realism by the fully developed period. Deformities and diseases, depicted so exactly as to be easily recognized, are often found. Various kinds of painted and patterned facial decoration are often indicated (fig. 27). Some subjects are certainly mythological or religious (figs. 22, 23, 24). The grouping of animals and of human figures, merged to form a satisfactory vessel of the accepted general shape and size, results in striking and effective sculptural compositions (fig. 26). Because of the usually realistic subject matter Mochica ware supplies much information on ethnic types, costumes and customs of people of various classes and occupations. Some gold, silver and cast copper have been found in Mochica excavations of grave sites. Textiles, when preserved, are fine, but, because of conditions of soil and climate, rarer than in the central and south coast areas.

Nazca pottery from the south coast seems to have developed in part from the Paracas cultures. Its stylized decoration in many colours recalls some of the motifs found on Paracas textiles, and its forms seem to carry on those evolved during the Paracas and related contemporary cultures of the region. However, where the Paracas Cavernas culture used pigments, in some sort of gum or resin, applied after firing, to fill in colour areas indicated by incised lines on its vessels (fig. 28), and Paracas Necropolis had similar forms, but undecorated, the Nazcas made high-fired pots, smooth and well polished, on which many different colours were applied before firing and baked on. These designs are rich in colour harmonies. They are simplified pictures of animals, fish and birds in the early periods, and they take anthropomorphic symbolic forms, and become increasingly complex as the style evolves. They are abstract, highly stylized and very intricate representations and are clearly religious symbols (fig. 31). The "trophy" head motif, composed of heads with flowing hair, used in

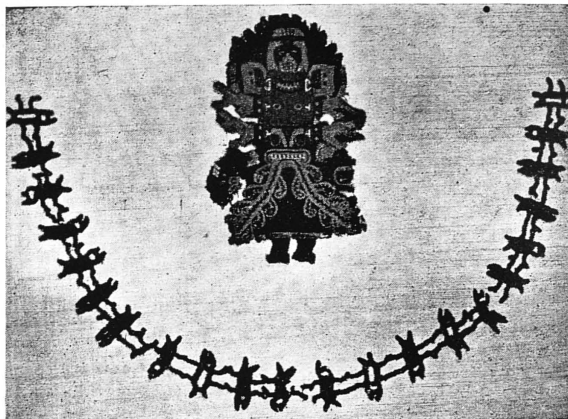
PARACAS, SOUTH COAST, PERU (c. 300 B.C.—300 A.D.)

The cultures responsible for the sites called Paracas Necropolis and Paracas Cavernas, of the south coast region of Peru, made elaborate grave offerings of vessels and textiles. They excelled in weaving and textile decoration techniques, known from the well preserved pieces used to wrap mummies and as grave offerings.



28

SEATED ANIMAL(?) FIGURE HOLDING TROPHY HEAD, SPOUT—Clay, facial ornament and details of body indicated by incised lines, painted in cream, reddish and dark brown in dull resin paint, 22.5 cm x 16 cm (67.381).



29

EMBROIDERED TEXTILE FRAGMENTS

Figure Medallion—Cotton, embroidered in wool, various stitches, in beige, black, blue, rose and brown, 17 cm x 10.5 cm.

Border of Fishes—Wool stitches fastened on themselves in a fashion resembling knitting, called knit stem or needle knitting, in black, dark brown, reddish brown and beige, 63 cm long x 4 cm wide (67.599).



30

NAZCA, SOUTH COAST, PERU

VESSEL, WITH DOUBLE SPOUTS, JOINED BY TUBULAR HANDLE

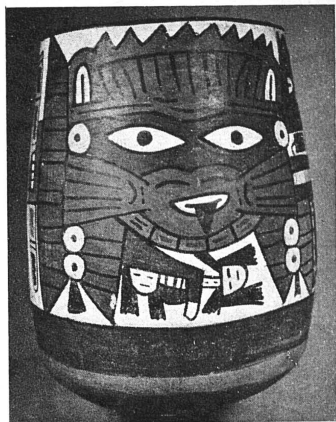
Clay, cream slip, painted with fish in grey, black, reddish brown and beige, 16 cm x 15.5 cm; 19.5 cm with spouts (67.337).

NAZCA CULTURE, SOUTH COAST, PERU

These examples (fig. 30—33) show to some extent the evolution of styles over a considerable period of time. They range from somewhat naturalistic designs of fish, animals and even human figures to complex stylized depictions of what are clearly deities and symbolic figures. Forms are diverse, including bowls, wide mouthed jars and pots with spouts. Double spouts, joined by a tubular or strap handle, are favoured. The slips employed for decoration give a great variety of colours; the pots are fired at a relatively high temperature and have a smooth polished finish. In design and in colour the Nazca ware seems related to the earlier Paracas textile patterns; the "trophy head" motif, which appears on Paracas pots, is used frequently by the Nazca potters. Effigy vessels are apparently produced in the late period and are expressive and decorative, but not realistic.

JAR

Clay, cream slip, with stylized mythological creature holding trophy heads on one side with bands of trophy heads, masks, etc. on other, painted in light reddish brown, dark reddish brown, grey, black, deep yellow, 24.5 cm x 16.3 cm diameter (67.327).



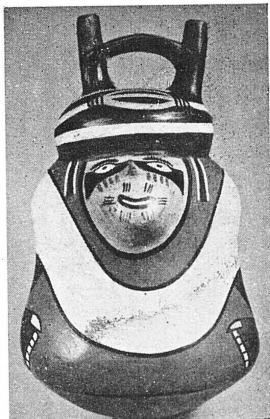
31

Paracas, occurs in Nazca examples (fig. 31). Toward the end of the period some effigy pots are found, but they too are stylized, and though decorative and expressive sometimes they do not seek realism (figs. 32, 33). Spouts are important, as in Mochica pottery, and as in some of the other cultures, where "blind" spouts and "whistle" spouts had been developed. But for the Nazcas spouts generally are double spouts joined by a modelled flat or rounded "bridge" type of handle. Wide mouthed bowls and jars of various types and proportions are found as well (fig. 31). Nazca achieves great artistic and technical excellence in its pottery with its high temperature firing, its large range of rich colours, its fine polish and its skilled fitting of the decorative designs into the space and form of the vessels (figs. 30, 31). Textiles,

32

SEATED FIGURE POT, WITH DOUBLE SPOUTS, JOINED BY TUBULAR ARCHED HANDLE

Clay, facial decoration, hands, garment details painted in light reddish brown, dark reddish brown, black, yellow, cream, white (for shawl), 23.5 cm x 16 cm; 28.5 cm with spout (67.294).



33

SEATED MONKEY POT, WITH SPOUT AND HANDLE

Clay, low relief modelling, incised and painted detail in black, cream white, face dark beige, spout reddish brown, 17.5 cm x 10.5 cm; 18 cm with spout (67.296).



TIAHUANACO CULTURE, PERU

Its influence from near Lake Titicaca in the high Andes spread (c. 1000-1300) over the entire region, altering greatly or replacing styles of the earlier cultures, like the Mochica and the Nazca. The familiar Nazca bridged double spouts now have an outward flare and the forms of decoration are distinctive.



34

HEAD POT, WITH FLARING DOUBLE SPOUTS, JOINED BY ARCHED HANDLE

Clay, buff slip, abstract decoration, incised and painted in reddish brown, white, black, 12.5 cm x 10 cm; 15.2 cm with spout (67.360).



35

STYLIZED HEAD JAR, WITH PROMINENT FANGS

Clay, reddish slip, features and facial ornament painted in cream, black and grey, 15.5 cm x 13 cm (67.358).



36

CHANCAY

In the south, in this culture and other local pottery centres, a variety of forms and styles of decoration followed the disappearance of Tiahuanaco domination.

DOG SITTING UPRIGHT ON HAUNCHES, WITH JAR ATTACHED

Clay, natural buff, dog with incised detail; abstract pattern jar painted in black; dog 25.5 cm x 9.5 cm; jar 26 cm x 10 cm diameter.

also with rich ornamentation, are important Nazca products, here too appearing to continue Paracas traditions.

Between about 1000 and 1300 a culture from the mountain valleys, with its centre at Tiahuanaco, beside Lake Titicaca (at an elevation of about 12,500 feet in what is modern Bolivia, adjacent to the Andean territories of Peru), apparently extended its cultural influence over the entire area of these advanced coastal cultures which had preceded it. It was distinguished at Tiahuanaco itself by an architecture in stone, decorated by low relief carved slabs and lintels, and by monumental sculptures, which were somewhat abstract, and emphasized incised and low-relief design. Its stone work does not seem to have inspired others, however, probably because stone was lacking or not a tradition elsewhere. It had a distinctive style in the form and ornamentation of its pottery, which is striking, and seems less refined than either Mochica or Nazca wares (figs. 34, 35). Weaving techniques and designs were, likewise, highly developed.

The Tiahuanaco influence spread rapidly, perhaps through religion, for it is thought that Tiahuanaco must have been a religious centre. Perhaps there was military conquest as well. At any rate, its influence, especially in pottery, merged with all the former local styles, such as those of the Mochicas and the Nazcas, and altered them profoundly. The Nazca culture appears to have been eventually completely absorbed by the Tiahuanaco influence. The Mochica style was submerged for a time, but reappeared in modified form in the Chimu civilization when the dominance of Tiahuanaco was relaxed.

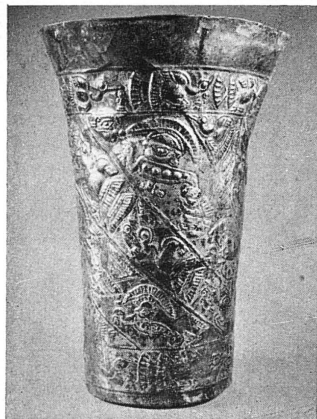
Following 1300 A.D. the power of Tiahuanaco appears to have disappeared and everywhere the regional cultures resumed their courses. The major change in these cultures seems to be a tendency toward more highly developed political organization than existed earlier, the formation of larger urban centres, the construction of forts to provide for garrisons, probably intended to repel invaders and to assure protection. The arts and crafts continued, at a competent level, and in some variety.

The more important places are Ica, a south coast site, which carried on extensive building in adobe, and Chancay, on the central coast, which was a flourishing centre for ceramics (fig. 36).

The former Mochica region developed from its own past and from Tiahuanaco elements, a new culture, the Chimu civilization. This produced large urban agglomerations, religious centres and garrisoned cities. Chanchan is the best known of them and has remains of temples, houses, stone-walled reservoirs, gardens and cemeteries, covering more than eight square miles. Construction is principally in adobe bricks, with relief decorations in clay of human figures, of animals and birds. Irrigation for intensive agriculture was well developed. Chimu pottery continues some of the older Mochica forms and adapts others from the Tiahuanaco intrusion. Textile weaving flourished. Gold, silver, copper and bronze were worked extensively for ornament, and ritual and luxury objects in these metals were made in a considerable range of techniques (figs. 37, 38). Implements of metal were produced.

CHIMU AND INCA CULTURES

In the northern coast area, after the Tiahuanaco influence waned, earlier Mochica styles reappeared in new forms in the Chimu culture. They seem to anticipate and then to merge with forms of the Inca civilization which, by conquest, ruled the entire area of the Andean high cultures by 1532. The Chimu excelled in working copper, for ornaments and implements, and gold and silver for ornaments and luxurious vessels.



37

BEAKER

Silver, responsee ornament of diagonal bands of birdlike motifs and human figures with elaborate head-dress; 24 cm x 16.6 cm diameter at top (67.563).



38

DEITY (?) WITH HEADDRESS, WITH SMALL SEATED ANIMALS WITH HEAD DRESS ON EITHER SIDE, PLAQUE

Silver, 16 cm x 16.2 cm (67.580).

Chimu, north coast, Peru.



39

Left :

ALPACA

Black stone, highly polished, abstractly carved, with deep depression in back characteristic of such small sculptures, presumably intended as offerings, 8.6 cm x 12.5 cm

Inca, Peru (67.529).

The final period of history in the Central Andes, terminated by the arrival of the Spaniards in 1532, brought the development of the Inca empire. From about 1438, the Incas established political domination over all the high cultures of the coast and mountain areas, from southern Columbia to Chile. Primarily the result of military conquest, its strength was based on a genius for political organization. This was supported by the construction of well-engineered roads, in order to assure rapid communication between Cuzco, the capital, and all parts of the empire. It resulted in imposing urban centres and well-planned, ably engineered, strong forts to protect the Incas' conquests. Their architecture was straightforward and utilitarian, but remarkable in the precision of the stone-cutting and the fitting together smoothly of the stone blocks, often of colossal size, without mortar. The Spaniards were deeply impressed by the perfection of Inca stonework and taking Cuzco, the Inca capital, as their own headquarters, they incorporated large portions of walls of Inca temples, palaces, and public buildings, which they had otherwise destroyed, into the cathedral and other structures which they constructed there. The Incas used little architectural ornament, depending rather on the massive effect of their well polished stones. Their fortresses were particularly accomplished, embodying sophisticated principles of defensive architecture.

A small Inca city, unknown to the Spaniards, discovered on a lofty ridge under a mountain peak only in 1911, gives an idea of Inca settlements. The stone buildings were thatched and, when found, stood roofless, but were otherwise in good condition. The mountain sides are terraced for cultivation. Temples, open spaces, streets, stairways connecting them, channels for running water, and houses compose the city. It is now called Machu Picchu, and is

40

KERO (BEAKER)

Wood, decorative band painted with human and animal figures, flowers, etc. in cream, orange, red, green, black buff, 14 cm x 13 cm diameter at top (67.527).

Inca, Peru

This kero may be considered post-Conquest as it is believed that before the arrival of the Spaniards the ornament on the kero was geometric.



high above the Urubamba River, overlooking its deep canyon, not far from Cuzco. Recently cracks appearing in some buildings caused anxiety for the preservation of the site. Unesco has arranged for experts to study and arrest the deterioration with expectation of success.

The Incas profited by all the skills of their subject peoples, including the highly perfected methods of agriculture attained in the entire region, continuing to develop intensively irrigation systems in the coastal areas and terracing in the highlands. The llama, an animal of the camel family, had been domesticated, and had long served as beast of burden in the highlands. Its cousin, the alpaca, had likewise been tamed and was raised for its wool, while still another cousin, the wild vicuña was hunted and captured for its wool of an especially fine quality which was sheared and the animal then released. By trade, highland wool had been known on the coast for many centuries. The Incas' garments were of wool, as well as of cotton, for the regions of cold climate. Complicated patterns were introduced in the weaving or were added by embroidery. They favoured bold geometric patterns, but figurative motifs were sometimes used. The arts and crafts, that had been perfected over a long period of time in many different centres over which the Incas ruled, flourished. For example, Chimú styles seem to anticipate and merge with those of the Incas. The Incas themselves seem to have added little new but appear to have imposed a tendency to clarity, order and simplicity in what they used. The Spanish chronicles report that craftsmen were employed by the state and that there was a deliberate effort to spread a common culture throughout the empire. Some scholars have suggested that there was a sort of organized mass production under the Incas. Small abstractly treated stone sculptures, especially of llamas, and alpacas are found (fig. 39). They have small depressions on the back and were presumably religious offerings. Animals and small human figures in silver also occur. The figurines were probably dressed realistically and had some religious significance. The aryballos type of jar, with its conical base, small or large in size, used for carrying liquids and as a container, is distinctive and seems peculiar to them.

Drinking vessels, of beaker form, had been used by earlier peoples, but the wooden type called a kero (fig. 40), as well as a silver beaker form, in the likeness of a sharp-nosed head, were favourites. The Incas worked gold, silver and copper, made bronze ornaments, and they and their immediate predecessors had begun to use simple metal tools. Wooden posts or staves, with carved tops, undoubtedly of religious significance, are also found. In general, their design seems orderly and inclined to abstraction, and is vigorous and effective.

Whether the Incas could have maintained their efficient rule over so vast a territory of so many peoples, for an extended period of time, if the Spaniards had not arrived, it is hard to say. There was a struggle for succession just before the Spaniards' invasion, with some weakening of the political structure. On the other hand, once the Spaniards had captured the Head of State, the capstone as it were of the system of political organization, there was no very serious opposition to the invaders, for lack of a substitute leadership. The Incas' conquest and their subjugation of the people of the Central Andes no doubt facilitated the Spanish conquest.

The Heeramanek collection is rich in representative examples of the Central Andean cultures. Chavín linear style and blocky form are well illustrated by the small greenish stone puma (fig. 15). Paracas textiles (cover and fig. 29), and a typical effigy pot, with incised outlines and resin paint (fig. 28), in effective design, suggest the extent to which there seems to be some continuity in tradition on the southcoast.

• The early ceramic forms, following the Chavín period in the highlands, which begin to be known especially through pieces from Vicus (fig. 16), recently come to attention, provide the transition to Mochica ware from that first important north coast civilization of Chavín. The Mochica examples are numerous, represent, in vivid variety, the principal types and periods, as for example, an effigy in polished black reduction ware (fig. 19), and painted pieces, from silhouette decoration (fig. 18) to linear design (fig. 22), from early generalized effigies to the accomplished sculptured figures and portrait heads (plate I ; figs. 20, 21, 24, 25, 27), and the pieces moulded in relief (figs. 23, 26). The late periods are represented by Tiahuanaco pottery (figs. 34, & 35), Chimu metal work (figs. 37, & 38), and typical Inca workmanship in stone and wood (figs. 39, 40). The Nazca pieces likewise constitute a large group in the collection. They range from early realistic decoration (fig. 30), through a rich variety of the forms and decorations of the developed period of symbolic designs (fig. 31), to the effigy pots (figs. 32, 33).

For all periods and cultures the examples are highly selective as far as quality goes, and they are likewise representative for types, in each period and important culture. However, the collection contains many more examples of the characteristic pieces than could be illustrated here and also additional examples of work in many media, that provide a still broader report on the cultures of South America. Invariably, aesthetic quality has clearly prompted the selection of the pieces, and the collection, therefore, has value far beyond its archaeological and anthropological interest, important as this is.



XVI

DISH, ON TRIPOD OF ANIMAL HEAD RATTLE LEGS

Clay, cream slip, with abstract patterns painted in red, orange, greyish brown, brown, black; interior also painted with abstract patterns, 15 cm x 18.5 cm diameter, 11 cm legs' length.

Nicoya, Costa Rica, Central America (67.505).

The stylized decorative patterns and animal-head legs are a usual form for grave offering pottery from this culture.



OTHER CENTRES—OTHER CULTURES

The regions of the highly developed civilizations, Meso-America and the Central Andes, however much remains to be learned about them, are so well recorded in publications and so abundantly represented in museums and collections by a wide range of objects of their various periods, in a variety of techniques, that the main features, at least, of the societies that produced them are relatively clear. Dating may not be exact, but chronological sequence is usually established, and the objects themselves often are an index to relationships and influences in an area.

Beyond these major centres, distant from them, and largely independent, flourished other cultures characterised by distinguished art objects, though little in detail is known about those who made them. The Heeramanek collection includes some outstanding examples.

The Manabi culture of the central coast of what is now Ecuador seems to have developed independently. It was one of a few cultures in South America north of Peru to build in stone and to carve stone. It is represented by stone pillars, surmounted by animals and birds, and in the collection by such an example and by a very characteristic stone seat with animal support (fig. 42). These seats are reported to have been found in the ruins of houses of stone in settlements of some size, long abandoned, but there is no knowledge of the culture or its dating.

Panama and Costa Rica, on the narrow link of land connecting South America with Meso-America, both developed distinctive cultures, which seem related to South America, rather than to Meso-America to the north. The handsomely designed painted pottery plates of Coclé, found in graves, represent this culture of Panama (Plate VII); while a typical Chiriqui tripod pot is also included in the collection. A similarly distinctive culture, in what is now Costa Rica, at Nicoya, is known for its large grinding stones, carved often in animal forms, and especially for its very striking and handsome pottery vessels, expertly modelled and decorated in polychrome, with animal and abstract motifs, as well as in the form of stylized seated men and animals, with details partly modelled in relief (Plates IV, • VI). There seem sometimes to be faint echoes of Mayan influence in the form of the jars, but their general feeling is quite distinctive. Neighbouring cultures in what are now El Salvador and Honduras likewise produced distinctive pottery styles (Plate V; fig. 41). A "three pointed stone" animal represents Porto Rico.

The emphasis that the Heeramaneks put in their collecting on aesthetic interest and on quality and on the attraction that pottery has for them is indicated by the number of very fine examples from these lesser known cultures included in their collection. Their preference is emphasized by the colour plates in this booklet. They have been made from colour trans-

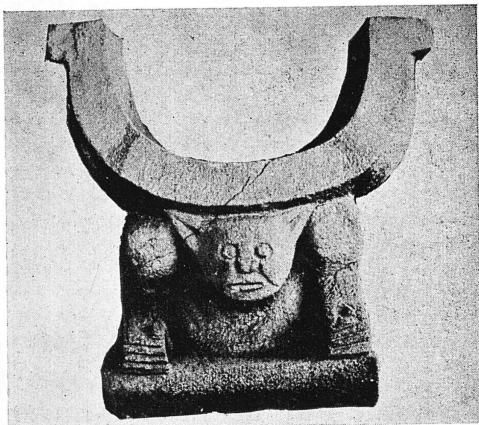
parencies furnished by the donors, and so provide a report in colour of unusual pieces, alongside a few of those more familiar, which would otherwise have been impossible here at a time when colour film is scarce. Their interest as art, as well as their being new to India, makes this emphasis valuable.

Not illustrated, but equally revealing of the Heeramaneck's appreciation of fine pottery, are a few outstanding pieces from the periphery of the greater cultures of South America: a large typical painted jar from the burials of the Marajão site on an island at the mouth of the Amazon, in Brazil, and examples from what are today Chile and Argentina. The latter are comparatively simple in decoration, but they show expert use of the clay medium and are distinguished in form.

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CULTURES OF SOUTHERN CENTRAL AMERICA AND OF NORTHERN SOUTH AMERICA.

The areas of Central America adjacent to the Mayan region seem to have been influenced to some extent in their pottery forms and styles, but they developed much individuality and distinctive character. Cultures north of the Central Andean region of what is now Peru also had distinctive art expressions. The Manabi on the coast of present Ecuador carved stone sculptures of animals and such distinctive seats as that illustrated at the right.



SEAT, ON CROUCHING ANIMAL

Stone, 62.5 cm x 66 cm.

Manabi, Ecuador, South America (67.607).



41

SEATED MAN

Clay, cream slip, face buff, abstract decoration painted in red and black, 22.8 cm x 15 cm

Honduras or Nicaragua, Central America. (67.504).

IN CONCLUSION

After this review of the Heeramanek collection and the regions which it represents so well, there seems no need of insisting further on the importance of its exhibition.

The present hand-book, with its map, giving location of the principal cultures represented in the collection; with the chronological chart, intended to aid the Indian student in correlating periods of New World cultures with those familiar to him in the history of his own and neighbouring lands; and with its illustration of some typical and outstanding pieces, is planned to give, as clearly and simply as possible, guidance and a framework for understanding and enjoying the exhibition.

For Indians familiar with the recent development of archaeological work in prehistory and protohistory of their own country, the problems of archaeology in Meso-America and in the Central Andean regions, to which references occur in the foregoing pages, will seem familiar. They will understand the tentative dating and the need for more scientifically controlled excavation, especially in South America; they will appreciate the importance of the study of pottery and of other products surviving from each culture, the evidence of cultural growth that the progress of techniques, marking the development of mankind, provide as an index of the evolution of civilizations.

India itself holds a prominent place among the earliest advanced civilizations of man (Mohenjodaro, c. 2500 to 1500 B.C., as compared to roughly contemporary Sumer, in West Asia, from about 2500 B.C.; Egypt from before 3000; Babylon and China, from about 2000 B.C.). The development of pottery forms and their decoration, the domestication of plants and animals, the growth of skills of weaving, of building and of the arts, especially in sculpture of carved stone and modelled clay, the mastery of metallurgical processes and the gradual substitution of metal tools and weapons for those of stone and bone, the invention of writing are all recognized steps traced in the evolution of the cultures of the ancient Old World, that find their counterparts as comparable marks of progress in one or more of the high cultures of the New World. The chronological sequence roughly corresponds, though it begins about a thousand years later. For a final review the major steps in the Americas can be restated: domestication of plants as soon as settlements developed of which evidence survives; carving in stone several centuries preceding the beginning of the present era in both Meso-America and the Central Andes (respectively the Olmecs at La Venta and the Chavín culture at Chavín de Huántar); skilled weaving in many techniques—the outstanding contribution of Central Andean cultures—by the middle of the first millennium, B.C.; making vessels and figurines in fired clay from about 1500 to 1200 B.C., at latest, in many centres in both areas; writing and

dating—the outstanding achievement of Meso-America—from about the beginning of the era or slightly earlier; use of metal in early Central Andean cultures (Chavín, Mochica), developing into complex metallurgy of numerous processes for gold, silver and copper, by about 1000 A.D., in both regions, with dates varying somewhat for different places, and bronze in the Andes by about the fifteenth century. However, the Americans had no iron. The peoples who developed corn (maize) as a domesticated food crop very early in both Meso-America and the Central Andean region, cultivated in different places many other plants indigenous to the New World, some being important everywhere today, such as chocolate, tobacco, potatoes, tomatoes, some varieties of chillis, squashes, beans and cotton. They did not know wheat and rice. They domesticated dogs in Mexico and guinea pigs in South America for food. Llamas for pack animals and for coarse wool, and the related small-sized member of the camel family of the high Andes, the alpaca, for fine wool, were tamed, probably by about 1000 A.D. This is a conquest of varied environments, often far from favourable, and a forging of well adapted civilizations of an impressive kind, the more instructive because of their differences from progress in the ancient Old World, as well as because of their similarities.

It should be added, that, in the Americas, as in the Old World, there was extensive trade and the resulting exchanges of products and influences within the respective two major areas of advanced cultures. To what extent there was trade between them or beyond them is not yet clear. Corn seems not to have been known to the pre-ceramic rudimentary agricultural people knotting cotton into fabrics, and using bottle gourds as containers, who lived about 2500 B.C. on the north coast of the Central Andean region. However, it was cultivated as a crop, obviously after long domestication, by all the cultures of this Central Andean region that emerged after about 1200 B.C., just as it was in Meso-America. Was this a case of transmission of seed and of knowledge by early migrating groups from the north? Suggestions of influences of any significance from outside the New World seem untenable now that the antiquity of the beginnings of the cultures there and their continuity in evolution and inter-relationships have begun to be known and understood.

Earlier the National Museum had rejoiced in Mrs. Indira Gandhi's donation of three Mexican pieces: a Colima *Barking Dog* and two Maya terracotta figurines, which she had received some time before as gifts on an official visit to Mexico. They seemed welcome cultural ambassadors from ancient America, and stimulated great interest when exhibited. Their extension of the National Museum's scope was valued. The Heeramaneck collection demonstrates how much broader is the panorama of New World cultures than they hinted, and within which they now too take their places. For those, therefore, who responded to that first exhibition of New World art, and of the books on Mexican arts presented to the National Museum's Library by the Mexican Government in 1965, the collection and the reference publications given by the Heeramanecks seem a logical and greatly appreciated sequel to an auspicious beginning. It now remains for the National Museum to plan the benefits that the general public as well as scholars of art and history may gain from these greatly expanded resources.

BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mrs. Alice and Mr. Nasli Heeramaneck presented their personal reference library on pre-Columbian art and cultures to the National Museum along with their collection of art objects. Books pertinent to the Exhibition of pre-Columbian art are available for reference in the Library of the National Museum. As an introduction to enjoyment and understanding of the Exhibition the books below are recommended :

- BENNETT, WENDELL C. : *Ancient Arts of the Andes*, New York, 1954
- BUSHELL, G.H.S. : *Peru*, New York, 1957.
- COVARRUBIAS, MIGUEL : *Indian Art of Mexico and Central America*, New York, 1957.
- KELEMEN, PAL : *Medieval American Art*, New York, 1956.
- MEANS, PHILIP A. : *Ancient Civilizations of the Andes*, New York, 1942.
- MORLEY, SYLVANUS G. : *The Ancient Maya*, New York, 1956.
- VAILLANT, GEORGE C. : *The Aztecs of Mexico*, New York, 1941.