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Wrap the Dead : The funerary textile tradition from the Osmore Valley, South Peru, and its social-political implications

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I. Herrera (1998):**La Real in the Camaná (=Majes/Colca) valley,
Middle Horizon**

In the fertile middle range of the Camaná (=Majes/Colca) valley, farmers related to the Wari Qosqopa phase settled at La Real to cultivate maize and cotton. Herrera analysed 71 textile specimens from this site, but does not mention the original context of these specimens.

She found a variety of weaving structures and textile types. As but *camisas* make up only 9.9% of the total assemblage, versus 50.7% of *fajas*, the textiles do not appear to originate from funerary bundles. Interesting is that the *camisas* are said to be found with men only, either adult or boy, and not with women, while the *fajas* are found with men and women alike. The poorly illustrated *camisas* are either square or semi-trapezoidal shaped with vertical stripes all over, and with vertical arm and neck openings. Herrera does not say what structures had been used and if the *camisas* are made of two webs, which would be typical of Wari tapestry *camisas*.

Only one *manta* was found and two *taparrabos*, the latter associated with adult men. *Bolsas*, on the contrary, make up as many as 15.5%.

As the fabrics are made of a variety of time consuming structures, such as double cloth (40.8%) and tapestry (5.6%), versus 27.1% of faster advancing warp-faced structures, the site has been interpreted as a ceremonial precinct related to the Wari Qosqopa phase (Herrera 1998, 124, 163).

Camelid fibre is used in over half of all specimens (56%), while cotton (21%) or a mix of both (14%) are clearly less preferred, yet considerably more often used than in the Osmore and Azapa valleys (Herrera 1998, 119, 154-158).

II. Quequezana (1997):**five sites in the Sigwas valley, Middle Horizon**

The Sigwas valley is located some 40 km to the south of Camaná. In its middle range, cemeteries have been identified at San Juan, La Chimba, Santa Ana, Cornejo, and Hornillos, containing transitional Paracas/Nasca and Wari Qosqopata

phase artefacts. Quequezana analysed 90 specimens from these five sites, mainly *camisas*, *mantas*, *bolsas*, and *fajas*.

All textiles had been made of 2\ plied elements, and cotton and camelid wool had been used for both warp and weft elements in all types of fabrics. *Camisas* were made of a variety of structures and decorations. They measured between 126 x 73 cm to 117 x 95 cm, and thus formed a lying rectangular shape that is rather uncommon in the Osmore valley. *Fajas* were likewise made of various structures and designs and measured between 3.5 and 9 cm, rather narrow compared to the Osmore *fajas*. *Ch'uspas* were comparable in size to the Osmore specimens (15 x 16 cm to 30 cm square). Many of the *ch'uspas* and *fajas* from Hornillos were decorated with triple ladder or checkerboard design not unlike the two broad *fajas* from La Cruz (fig. 11.3) (Quequezana 1997, 121-135).

Quequezana (1997, 1-9, 36, 201) found that part of the individuals had been buried with high quality garments, made of labour intensive structures, such as double cloth, wrapped warps, and (slit) tapestry, whereas others had been buried with simple, crude clothes of domestic and agricultural workers. This led her to conclude that some social hierarchy had been present among the Early Intermediate and Middle Horizon populations of this region. In addition, she suggested the possibility that different textile traditions represented several ethnic groups cohabiting in the valley (Quequezana 1997, 36, 201). However, she does not specify this suggestion.