

Of Humans and *Huacas*:
Sacrifice and Ontology at Huaca de la
Luna

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I dedicate this to my parents who have unconditionally supported my endeavors. Without them this would not have been possible.

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Abstract

The subject of this thesis is the staging of ritual sacrifice among the Moche at the ceremonial complex of Huaca de la Luna, Huacas de Moche, during (Plaza 3a) and prior (Plaza 3c) to the climatic crisis of 650 AD. The aim of this thesis is to frame these sacrificial activities and the ceremonial complex itself to a historical and contemporary Andean understanding of the intimate, ontological becoming of humans and *huacas* through the mutual and ritualized provision of food and sacrifice. Further, by availing Deleuzo-Guattarian notions of the organism and the Body without Organs (BwO) and its related concepts, the chronologically distinct but related contexts of ritual, human sacrifice evident at Plaza 3c and Plaza 3a will be examined in terms of their organization or disorganization. It will be shown how the environmental crisis around 650 AD resulted in or even necessitated a ritual engagement at Plaza 3a with the *huaca* as a living being that was decidedly deterritorialized and experimental – constituting a Deleuzo-Guattarian BwO - compared with earlier evidence of sacrificial and ritual activities at Huaca de la Luna associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony and Plaza 3c. The aim is to provide novel ways of understanding and analyzing the *huacas* of Moche by turning architecture into anatomy, plazas into organs, *huacas* into bodies.

1. Introduction

Looming over the flat littoral, desert shores, countless pyramids dating to the pre-Columbian past (prior to the discovery and exploitation of the Americas in 1492 AD) dot the coastal valleys of northern Peru. Withered by centuries of episodic yet intense precipitation and pock-marked by looters seeking treasures, these monumental structures which in some instances are composed of millions of adobe-bricks, look more like slouching and eroded hills than actual structures (see *figure 1*). Furthermore, known as *huacas* by archaeologists and Andeans, the pyramids or *huacas* of North Peru were repeatedly used to perform public and large-scale rituals of human sacrifice and formed an integral part of Andean life. One of the most dramatic examples of the importance of ceremonial *huacas* and human sacrifice within pre-Columbian cultures are to be found among the Moche whose bloodied rituals and impressive material culture dominated the North Coast Peru between 100 – 800 AD. At Huacas de Moche (Pyramids of the Moche) in the eponymous Moche Valley, two pyramidal structures, Huaca del Sol (Pyramid of the Sun) and Huaca de la Luna (Pyramid of the Moon) flank the largest known urban settlement of the Moche. Huaca de la Luna, in particular, has captured the attention of archaeologists for the extensive and visceral evidence of ritualized human sacrifice and torture that during the century of profound environmental crisis between 550 – 650 AD took an unprecedented turn. This convergence of protracted and severe events of precipitation and draught eventually led to the demise of the Moche culture around 800 AD.

I will in this thesis explore Huaca de la Luna as a living and ontological being who can be considered a body replete with metabolic and digestive organs – a body whose maintenance is contingent on the provision of food and sacrificial bodies by and of humans. Moreover, I will be analyzing how this feeding and its wider relation to human bodies and the world changed prior to and during the profound climatic crisis of 550 – 650 AD through the Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of the organism and the Body without Organs.

Previous explorations human sacrifice and large-scale ritual performance at Huaca de la Luna and other *huaca* contexts have largely focused on *huacas* as manifestations of socio-political, cultural and ideological power. The laborious efforts and lives that were put into constructing Huaca de la Luna and staging violent and organized displays of human sacrifice have in these cases been framed in terms of a dominant elite consolidating and maintaining power over its

subjects in a multi-valley state often described in anachronistic terms of “corporate styles” and ‘ideology,’ **chapter 2**.

In contrast, I aim with this thesis to go beyond architectures and symbols of power and consider Huaca de la Luna in the wider and at times wily notion of *huacas* as it is described in the ethnographies and colonial chronicles of Peru and the Andes. Anthropological, archaeological and historical research on *huacas* inspired by the recent “ontological turn” within academia as a whole is increasingly describing an ontological and uniquely Andean understanding of humans and *huacas* that share anatomical features and functions pertaining to consumption and metabolism – both may be considered living, feeding bodies with organs that are in need of sustenance. Moreover, the bodies of humans and *huacas* can be conceptualized as deeply tied such that the feeding of *huacas* entails feeding humans. To this day, leaving the bodies of *huacas* unfed may cause them to “go wild” with unfettered hunger and consume the souls of people.

In **chapter 3** I account for my theoretical framework which largely will be grounded in works of Deleuze and Guattari and their concept of assemblages and becomings as it has been received in recent archaeological research. I suggest that humans and *huacas* constitute assemblages or, as I will refer to them throughout this thesis, ‘bodies’ in the Deleuzo-Guattarian sense. That is, *huacas* and humans are part of and constitute constellations or assemblages of entities that through relations are always in active *becomings* – the incessant maintenance and repetition of these relations. But the extent to which the assemblages or bodies resist or invite change of in their becoming - whether they territorialize or deterritorialize function and space - can be respectively conceptualized in the Deleuzo-Guattarian notions of the organism and the Body without Organs (BwO). These concepts will eventually provide the analytical basis of **Chapter 6** and **7**.

In **chapter 4**, I give a brief account of the site of Huacas de Moche and its location on the hyper-arid yet bountiful desert shores of North Peru. But more importantly, I describe the destructive potential of intermittent El Niño-Southern Oscillation event (ENSO-events) and how severe and protracted ENSO-events and draughts converged on an unprecedented scale and intensity in the century of 550 – 650 AD. Turning to the material culture of Moche, it will be shown how the Moche keenly observed and portrayed this episodic and violent fixture of life on the Peruvian

shores. Overall, Moche material culture seems to convey a world that occasionally could “go wild” with unbridled hunger during ENSO-events and environmental crisis.

In **chapter 5** I consider how humans have for millennia lived alongside *huacas* and shared intimate and ontological relations through mutual provision of food. At the ritually renowned and contemporary communities of Kallawaya the villagers and hamlets were considered extension of the *huaca*-body of the nearby Mount Kaata and, by ritually feeding the body of the *huaca*, the bodies of humans were fed. Moreover, leaving the *huaca* unfed raises the dangers of bodies of *huacas*, humans and the world writ large as professed by the colonial resistance movement of the Taki Onqoy in 16th century. Unfed, the hunger of the *huacas* turns rapacious, insatiable and, even to this day, threatens to consume the souls of Andeans and diggers working at archaeological sites.

In **chapter 6** I will be analyzing the large-scale performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony and the evidence of human sacrifice at Plaza 3c at Huaca de la Luna ritual and human sacrifice in the pre-crisis era. I wish to show how the iconography of the Sacrifice Ceremony intimates an understanding of *huacas* that runs deeper than ritualized monopolization of socio-political power. I claim that the central panel depicting a double-headed and eared serpent indicates a living, feeding body replete with organs but that the feeding and consumption of and by humans as traditionally understood by historical and contemporary Andeans. Building on this I relate the performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony within the architecture of Huaca de la Luna and argue that Plaza 3c, where the crucial acts of exsanguinating, defleshing and deposition of sacrificial remains were performed, could be understood as a metabolic organ within the wider *huaca*-body. Moreover, by analyzing compartmentalization, territorialization and ordering of space, functions it will be argued the Huaca de la Luna operated along the lines of the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism. To show just how territorialized and striated this becoming was in the period leading up to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD I will make a metaphorical comparison between the treatment of sacrificial remains associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony within the architecture of Huaca de la Luna and distillation processes used in modern chemistry.

In **chapter 7** As profound and protracted environmental crisis converged on Huaca de la Luna and the Moche world during the century of 550 – 650 AD, however, Plaza 3a was constructed and the ritualized feeding of *huaca* body changes dramatically. The sacrifice of human bodies

not only escalated to unprecedented levels but concomitantly saw a dramatic change in how sacrifices and ritual were performed. Killed, mutilated and deposited on the same smooth plaza floor no clear territorialization of space and functions - no organized organs could be discerned. This open-ended engagement and feeding of the *huaca* reveals an open-ended and experimental engagement and feeding that ultimately sought to reterritorialize a violently deterritorialized world.

2. The Moche: A Research History

This chapter introduces the research history of the Moche and will focus on the works and sensational discoveries which eventually led to the rise and fame of Moche archaeology within Latin-American archaeology. I will give a brief account of the site of Huaca de Luna and Huacas de Moche and its place in Moche archaeology prior to and after the sensational discovery of tombs of Sipán and the ensuing identification of the figures associated with the iconographical theme of the Sacrifice Ceremony. The general aim is to show how these discoveries and interpretations have colored the understanding of Moche archaeology. **Chapter 4** will eventually discuss the environmental challenges, chronological developments and layouts of Huacas de Moche and Huaca de la Luna in greater detail.

Past: The Pre-Sipán Era (1899 - 1987)



figure 1 Huaca de la Luna resting on the foothills of the nearby mountain of Cerro Blanco.

Situated in the dry and costal deserts of the Moche Valley, Huaca de la Luna (Pyramid of the Moon) and Huaca del Sol (Pyramid of the Sun) is a part of the urban and ceremonial complex of Huacas de Moche (Pyramids of Moche). The site of Huacas de Moche occupies a central place in both the history of the Moche Culture (100 – 800 AD) and its research history. The excavation of Huaca de la Luna in 1899-1900 by the German archaeologist Max Uhle represented the first Moche site ever to be formally excavated (Quilter and Koons 2012; Rowe 1954). Lending the name from the valley itself, Uhle dubbed the culture the Moche – also known as the Mochica (Butters and Castillo 2008). It was, however, largely through the efforts of Larco Hoyle in the

1940s and his establishment of a five-phase chronology based on Moche stirrup-vessels that the Moche became a veritable field of archaeological study (Chapdelaine 2011:192; Donnan 2011:106). With growing interest in the pre-Columbian and coastal cultures of North Peru, several large-scale archaeological investigations were eventually carried out in the Moche and neighboring Virú Valley. From the 1950s to the early 80s, the Virú Valley Project (Willey 1953) and Chan-Chan-Moche Valley Project (Moseley and Day 1982) made substantial contributions to the understanding of regional settlement patterns and the cultural development before, during and after the Moche in aforementioned valleys (Donnan and Mackey 2011:12; Renfrew and Cherry 1986:250). Through these and similar excavations at Moche contexts in other river-valleys both north and south of the Moche Valley, the extent of the Moche material culture beyond the Moche Valley was gradually becoming apparent to archaeologists.



figure 2 Map of Northern Peru and the extension of the Moche culture and important *huaca* contexts.

Yet, Moche archaeology's biggest claim to international fame and eventual rise to "one of the largest research communities in Latin American Archaeology" (Quilter et al. 2010) was largely spurred on by the sensational discovery, international coverage and scholarly implications of

Alva's watershed excavation of the unlooted tombs at the *huacas* of Sipán in the Lambayeque Valley in 1987 (Alva et al. 1993; Alva 1988, 1994). The staggering and undisturbed richness of these tombs not only revealed the importance of the individuals buried deep within the pyramids but dually offered new, tantalizing clues to the interpretation of Moche iconography. Prior to the discoveries at Sipán, the focus of Moche studies during the 70's and 80's had concentrated largely on the mythological meanings and recurrent "themes" of the many intricate, fine-line depictions as they appeared on mainly unprovenanced fine-ware ceramics (Donnan 1975; Donnan and McClelland 1979; Hocquenghem 1989; Hocquenghem and Lyon 1980; Quilter and Koons 2012:131).

One of the most prolific and recurrent of the themes identified by archaeologists was the "Sacrifice Ceremony" (see figure 3). This complex and detailed scene which eventually will be related to Huaca de la Luna in **chapter 6** depicts a number of ostentatiously dressed figures, anthropomorphized and zoomorphized objects engaged various activities related to human sacrifice. As with Moche iconography of the Moche IV Phase in general, warfare, sacrifice and drawing of blood from captured warriors occupy a central place (Bourget 2010:5). However, prior to the excavations of Sipán, whether such themes and depictions were portrayals of actual, ritual events or mythico-religious concepts had been an contested matter (Quilter 2002:162 - 163).

The rich attire and ritual paraphernalia uncovered at tomb 1 and tomb 2 at Sipán in the excavation by Alva would reveal striking similarities with the depiction of accoutrements associated with the central characters of persona A and B in the Sacrifice Ceremony (see Alva et al. 1993; Bourget 2010:11 - 13 for a detailed account). Persona A can be seen receiving goblet from Persona B while standing on top of the elongated and horizontal panel separating the activities of the theme (see figure 3) – this figure will ultimate be related to an understanding of feeding and living *huacas* in **chapter 6**. Later excavations at other *huaca* contexts across the entire geographical reach of the Moche culture (see figure 2) would eventually provide means of material identification with the remaining personas associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony. These identifications were based on equally striking similarities in the depiction of ritual attire and objects in the Sacrifice Ceremony and high-status individuals buried along with ritual artefacts in richly furnished tombs (Bourget 2010).

Persona C, who supposedly depicts a female priestess, can be seen carrying a goblet with what is generally assumed to be human blood. Two adult high-status females with similar ritual outfits uncovered at the site of San José de Moro, Jequetepeque Valley would eventually be identified with persona C (Donnan and Castillo 1992, 1994). In the register below, the female character Persona E who presumably is in the process of extracting blood drawn from a bound captive into a goblet, probably later carried by the aforementioned Persona C (see **chapter 6**), was subsequently identified in a burial at Huaca de la Cruz, Virú Valley (Arsenault 1994). In more recent times, Bourget (2009) has retrospectively and on similar grounds argued that persona D, seen standing on the panel to right next to an anthropomorphized rattle-chisel (a sharp instrument with rattle presumably used to draw blood), may be linked with an individual known as “the Old Lord of Sipán” which was uncovered in Alva’s initial excavation of Sipán.

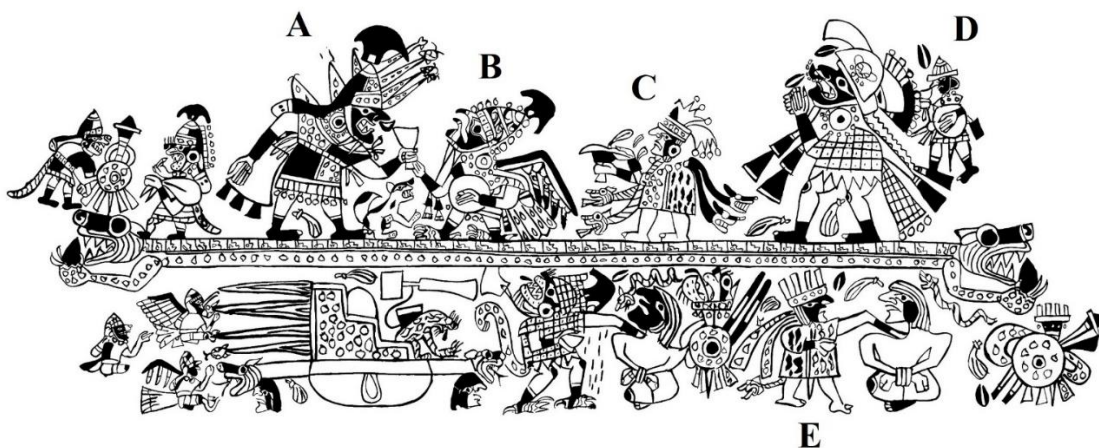


figure 3 The Sacrifice Ceremony. Persona A can be seen receiving a goblet possibly containing human blood from Persona B. These characters have strong similarities to high-status individuals found at San Jose de Moro, Jequetepeque Valley. The female Persona C and E associated with the carrying and exsanguination of blood in goblets was eventually linked with individuals uncovered at San Jose de Moro, Jequetepeque Valey and Huaca de la Cruz in the Virú Valley. Persona D supposedly shares essential features with “the Old Lord of Sipán,” Drawing by Donna McClelland. The Christopher B. Donnan and Donna McClelland Moche Archives, Images Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University. Washington, DC.

In the light of these identifications, the iconographic representations of the Sacrifice Theme and similar themes were therefore gradually understood as realistic depictions of human sacrifice and ritual sequences performed by dignitaries or rulers who eventually were lavishly interred in the *huacas*. The suggestion raised by archaeologists is not that the personas depicted in the Sacrifice Ceremony necessarily were restricted to individuals found in these different and scattered *huacas* contexts. The widespread distribution of the theme is assumed to indicate a ceremony enacted by

a stock of ritual personas or “actors” over the entire Moche continuum for at least three centuries revealing shared notions of ritual performance, mythological schemata and conceptions of socio-political power (Bourget 2010:19 - 20; Castillo 2014:262; Makowski 2010:305).

The extent to which the Sacrifice Ceremony echoed throughout the distribution of the Moche culture seemed to confirm the assumptions of earlier archaeologists that the Moche represented a multi-valley state. This Moche state was thought to have dominated coastal North Peru from Huacas de Moche in the Moche Valley through military conquest, labor-demanding construction of ceremonial centers and a religious state cult which emphasized large-scale ceremonies of human sacrifice and the development of a “corporate style” of art and architecture (Butters and Donnan 1994:12; Castillo 2014; Moseley 1992; Quilter and Koons 2012:132). Considering the accumulating of an extensive and *relatively* uniform Moche culture and the academical milieu of that time, the prominent research questions of that era in regards to culture, art, iconography and especially rituals were framed in matters of socio-politics and ideological control (Quilter and Koons 2012)

Present: The Post-Sipán Era (1987 -)

The renewed interest and considerable funding for long-term archaeological investigations of Moche sites in the decades that followed the Sipán excavation would concentrate efforts on elucidating the nature of the socio-political organization across the entire geographical extension of the Moche culture (Castillo and Quilter 2010:8 - 9). However, within the last decade or so a nuanced and decidedly more complex picture of the Moche phenomenon has emerged. The picture of a domineering ideology of power proliferated by military might and enforced through ritual indoctrination and dogma is scrutinized and Moche material culture is increasingly viewed as dynamic fulcrum for diverse and mixed expressions of social, economic, cultural, political, ritual and ontological modes by the communities of the coastal river-valleys of the Moche (Castillo and Quilter 2010; Quilter et al. 2010; Swenson 2006, 2015a; Swenson and Warner 2016). At the very heart of these numerous expressions of Moche material culture lie the adobe-brick giants of the *huacas*.

Despite these recent and laudable advances in Moche archaeology, I maintain that a fundamental aspect of the Moche and their *huacas* have been overlooked especially in the context of Huaca de la Luna. In fact, I suggest that the heavy focus on matters of socio-political organization,

religious symbolism and ideologies of power have detracted attention from the Moche as a genuine and ontological mode of understanding – especially in context of Huaca de la Luna. The uncritical use of anachronistic use of terms like ideology (Bourget 2016), propaganda (Scher 2018) and ‘corporate styles’ (see Quilter and Koons 2012) might obscure a more intimate relationship between *huacas* and humans. As will be argued later on, the *huacas* were and still are considered living, metabolic beings with which the Moche and modern Andeans have deep and sometimes problematic relations. These relations are profoundly ontological and have recursively shaped both humans and *huacas* throughout pre-Columbian, colonial and modern Andes.

3. Theory

In this chapter I introduce the ontological turn while accounting for how the Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of ‘assemblages’ and ‘becomings’ have in recent times emerged as important concepts and tools in archaeological research and academia as a whole. I will suggest that *huacas* of the Moche can be understood in terms of assemblages or, the term favored in this thesis, bodies that are in becoming through the active maintenance of their relations with their own and other assemblages or bodies. In the case of the Moche, the bodies of *huacas* and humans maintained their relations through the mutual provision of sustenance – more specifically through the ritual sacrifice by and of human bodies – as will be explored in greater detail in **chapter 5**.

Furthermore, I reveal how assemblages can be generally understood through the Deleuzo-Guattarian tendencies of the organism and the BwO. I describe how assemblages or bodies can be considered BwOs or organisms by the extent to which they incite or resist change, welcomes or suppresses deviatory lines of flight. This is mostly contingent on the way the bodies territorialize or deterritorialize space and function – whether it appeals to striated or smooth space. This will provide the theoretical basis for looking at the becoming of humans and *huacas* throughout Andean history and at Huaca de la Luna (**chapter 6 and 7**).

The Ontological Turn: Assemblages and Becomings

No longer the exclusive domain of mystics and philosophers, ontology has increasingly become a central point of research within academia as a whole. What might be alternately named as an ‘ontological’ (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017), a ‘speculative’ (Bryant et al. 2011; Olsen 2012) or a ‘material’ turn, not only entails a wholesale skepticism towards Cartesian, representational, structuralist and modernist dichotomies – nature and culture, subject and object, mind and matter, word and object - but also a willingness to engage in metaphysical and ontological discussion about the constitution of reality itself. The material turn emphasizes how the multiplicity, changeability and imbrication of a single yet heterogenous substance, the material, give rise to the qualities, substances and phenomena of an emergent world (DeLanda 2006).

This «paradigm shift» - if any orthodoxy is applicable to the diverse groups of thinkers concerned with the ontological turn - has also gained traction within archaeological research especially influenced by the works of philosophers Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze 1994, 2001,

2004b; Deleuze and Guattari 2004). In this regard, the ‘assemblage’ and its ‘becoming’ are by far the concepts most extensively imported by archaeologists from the wide-reaching and multifaceted corpus of Deleuze and Guattari (Alberti 2016; Fowler 2013, 2017; Hamilakis and Jones 2017; Harris 2017, 2018; Pauketat 2013).

Assemblages may be considered open-ended, dynamic and heterogenic constellations of animate and inanimate entities (Alberti 2016; Deleuze and Guattari 2004). Assemblages operate on multiple and often interpenetrating scales, from the assemblages of atoms in molecules to social and cultural assemblages of people and institutions (Webmoor and Witmore 2008), without privileging any one scale over the other (DeLanda 2006; Fowler 2017; Harris 2017). The emphasis is not necessarily on the entities that make up the assemblages – which may be considered assemblages in themselves (assemblages of quarks in atom, atoms in molecules, molecules in cells, cells in bodies, bodies in societies, etc) – but on the relations in between the assemblages that give rise to and sustain the wider assemblage (Jones et al. 2013). It is through dynamic practices and relations that are actively maintained and repeated that assemblages emerge or “become.” Assemblages are thus always and constantly becoming through the sustained and dynamic relations and inter-actions of their own assemblages and in relation to other assemblages (Fowler 2017). As the ‘becomings’ of the assemblages are dependent continuous interaction and maintained relations it is also susceptible to change – sometimes minimally sometimes dramatically (see below). Studies applying the Deleuzo-Guattarian notion of assemblages have been used in archaeology covering different topics from household development in pre-Columbian Mexico (Normark 2009), Bronze Age burial in Britain (Fowler 2017) to understanding archaeological praxis in itself (Lucas 2012).

The *huacas* of the Moche and Huaca de la Luna may be thought of in similar terms. They were more than assemblages composed of adobe-bricks that had to be actively repaired and periodically added on to in response to withering (see **chapter 6**), but formed assemblages with human, social and natural assemblages. The repeated performance of large-scale and public rituals such as the Sacrifice Ceremony within and around Huaca de la Luna made possible the maintenance and formation of the relatively stability of socio-political, cultural and ritual assemblages that flourished for centuries on the Peruvian coast in between 100 – 800 AD. Even Moche archaeology in and of itself may be considered an assemblage consisting of

archaeologists, research institutions, archaeological practices and tools (Lucas 2012), that through active excavation and interpretation of *huacas* also form interdependent assemblages.

This thesis shares the claims of recent ontologically defined research within archaeology and academia at large. It takes the view that assemblages emerge are in *becoming* from relational, recursive and interactive processes with constellations of other assemblages. However, I have chosen to forego the label ‘assemblage’ when discussing Huaca de la Luna and the ontological status of *huacas* and humans in general and instead opting for ‘bodies’. The Deleuzo-Guattarian usage of ‘body’ is, like ‘assemblage,’ abstracted and not limited to the biological body and extends to all types of bodies whether social, linguistic, political, literary, etc (Deleuze 1983; Deleuze and Guattari 2004), but also engenders the concepts of ‘health’ (the openness to other bodies) and ‘affect’ (see Hamilakis 2017). While these concepts will not be treated directly in this thesis, they are implicit and nonetheless important aspects of the relation between humans and *huacas* that may in the future provide further avenues of research.

For most intents and purposes, the Deleuzo-Guattarian ‘body’ is an assemblage subject to the same dynamic becoming as other assemblages and, without going into any detail about the finer points of Deleuzo-Guattarian ontology, my preference for ‘body’ can here be considered more a matter of style. It feels somehow artificial to speak of ‘assemblages’ when faced with a culture so profoundly obsessed with the organic body and its contents. Indeed, the preoccupation with bodies and organs within Deleuze and Guattari’s *Thousand Plateaus* (2004) must have struck a chord with the Moche. Disemboweling, exsanguinating, dismembering, defleshing and mutilating human bodies (see **chapter 6** and **7**) no doubt provided the Moche with an intimate and visceral knowledge of bodies and organs and I find it hard to imagine that its focality within Moche rituals did not influence their understanding of reality.

While assemblage theory is increasingly becoming an important tool for understanding how a wide array of assemblages emerge, become and change in archaeological contexts there have so far been minimal attempts to understand the *huacas* and ritualized sacrifice of humans among the Moche in similar terms (notable exceptions being Swenson 2015b; Weismantel and Meskell 2014) – especially in context of Huaca de la Luna. In this thesis I want to examine Huaca de la Luna as living being who can be considered a body with metabolic and digestive organs – a body whose maintenance is contingent on the provision of food and sacrificial bodies.

Moreover, I want to analyze this becoming of humans and *huacas* through provision of sacrificial, human bodies to these metabolic organs. The manner and modality of this becoming will, by **chapter 6** and **7**, take the analytical center stage as I examine how Huaca de la Luna prior to and during the climatic crisis of 550 – 650 AD in the Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of the organism and the Body without Organs (henceforth referred to as BwO).

The Organism and the Body without Organs (BwO)

These two terms – which at no point must be considered yet another structuralist dualism (!) – form the directional opposite in the ways assemblages or bodies are in becoming. To put it bluntly, the organism and the BwO refer to the extent to which assemblages or bodies try to stay the same (organism) or change (BwO) as its incessant and repetitious becoming unfolds - whether it suppresses or welcomes lines of flight. ‘Lines of flight’ refers to the potential of becomings to deviate from expectation and intention, order and organization, and the intensity and extent to which it does. The Deleuzo-Guattarian organism constrains and limits the potential for lines of flight - deviations from expected and intended results – by its organs ordering, hierarchizing and regulating the flow of becoming (Protevi 2005). This is done through territorialization and striation of space and function. By territorialization and striation, functional spaces are divided, and functions are allocated and the boundaries and membranes of the assemblage, or as referred to in this thesis, the body.

The biological body is perhaps the most intuitive and straight-forward way of conceptualizing the territorializing and striating tendencies Deleuzo-Guattarian organism. By territorializing the body, organizing or mapping what sections and functions of the body pertains to the heart, liver, intestines, the metabolic functions of the body may be efficiently entrained to absorb nutrients, fuel bodily action and ensure the continued reproduction and structural integrity of the body-organism. Without the territorialization and striation of space and function associated with the organism, the body would be little more than a primordial, amorphous soup (a BwO too full of potential, see below). I believe the complex and interconnected configuration of platforms, plazas, precincts and ramps within Huaca de la Luna can be considered in the same terms of the biological and Deleuzo-Guattarian organism prior to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD. Through this spatial configuration and territorialization of ritual functions the organs of the *huaca* are mapped out and the sequential and distinct performance of rituals defined and compartmentalized within these interconnected spaces. In fact, by **chapter 6**, I will be analyzing

the performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony in and around the architecture of Huaca de la Luna in relation to the organism and the associated tendencies of territorialization and striation and the degree to which it limits lines of flight.

On other end of the continuum is the Body without Organs or the BwO. It designates deterritorialization and smooth spaces which promote rather than limit the release of lines of flight. It is a modality of becoming that deterritorializes the order, structure, regulation and hierarchy of the organism by tearing down walls, exceeding boundaries and bursting membranes. The BwO and its deterritorialized becoming, as will be shown in **chapter 7** when dealing with the collapsing Moche world 550 – 650 AD, may be invoked in order to tear down territorializing walls, stagnant or failing organs and organisms. The BwO does so by producing smooth or rather open spaces and deterritorialized functions which invite and incite open-ended experimentation, improvisation and eventually actualization of otherwise repressed potentials (Deleuze 2004a). Rather than sequencing, structuring and ordering space and rituals, a becoming of the BwO opens up to serendipity, accidents and improvisation by removing spatial limits (walls, plazas, patios, precincts, corridors) and ritual proscription. Smooth spaces and deterritorializations are becomings where rules and imposition of order are suspended allowing for improvised, experimental and open-ended engagements. As the bodies and organs of humans, *huacas* and the world writ large were failing during the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD, the ritualized space of Plaza 3a begin to reveal a deterritorialization that was as deterritorialized as the collapsing world itself. Rather than sequencing the ritual provision of human sacrifices in distinct, striated and compartmentalized spaces, humans are sacrificed and mutilated in the same smooth and open space of Plaza 3a.

While I eventually will be arguing that the becoming of humans and *huacas* at Huaca de la Luna during the staging of the Sacrifice Ceremony and the later Plaza 3a can be understood as that of the organism and the BwO respectively, I must stress that there are no pure becomings – no pure organism nor pure BwO (Deleuze and Guattari 2004). They always dynamically appear in differing mixtures at different times and often in violent tensions - each vying with the other. They coexist as ever-present, tendencies in all becomings. But more importantly they often operate as interconnected and interdependent modalities that, when craftily employed, are mutually beneficial. To continue the biological analogy, the organism must break down

nutritional complexes – from molar concentrations to molecular compounds - through deterritorialization (digestion, decomposition) for it to maintain its territorialized and striated integrity. In these cases, deterritorialization facilitates *reterritorialization*. As will become apparent by **chapter 6** and **7**, the deterritorialization of human bodies are central steps in reterritorializing the bodies of humans, *huacas* and the world writ large. Thus, I consider the BwO and the organism tendencies of every becoming of any body or assemblage that are always and already present. However, the extent to which deterritorialization and lines of flight steer the becoming of bodies and organs serves as the definitional criterium.

4. Huacas de Moche

This chapter will detail the chronological, archaeological and environmental context of Huacas de Moche and Huaca de la Luna in the Moche Valley of coastal North Peru. The ceremonial complex will be described in relation to its urban context, the site of Huacas de Moche, and related to the abundant yet sometimes volatile climatological conditions of the coastal deserts of Northern Peru that eventually led to the demise of the Moche culture around 800AD at Huacas de Moche and elsewhere on the Peruvian north coast (Moseley et al. 2008; Sutter and Castillo 2015). It will be suggested through the works of (Bourget 2016) that the Moche observed these violent changes in their environment and explicitly portrayed the dramatic fluctuations in their material culture. Furthermore, the depiction reveals an ontology that expressed these periodic paroxysms in terms of feeding and sacrifice that invested special attention a world immersed in unhinged hunger.

Environs of Huacas de Moche

As mentioned in the introduction, Huacas de Moche is situated in the lower part of the Moche Valley just 6 km off the Pacific shore and near the modern-day city of Trujillo. Dominating and defining the western and eastern limits of the archaeological site are two pyramidal structures or *huacas* that have given the name to the site: Huaca del Sol and Huaca de la Luna (Benson 2012; Butters and Castillo 2008). Despite representing one of the largest adobe-brick structure known in the New World, the archaeological information on Huaca del Sol is painfully sparse much to the credit of a Spanish landowner who diverted the nearby Moche river through the *huaca* in order to loot it of precious objects (Benson 2012:38). And while also having to bear its share of illicit excavations, Huaca de la Luna has arguably received the most attention by tourists, archaeologists and looters in recent times.

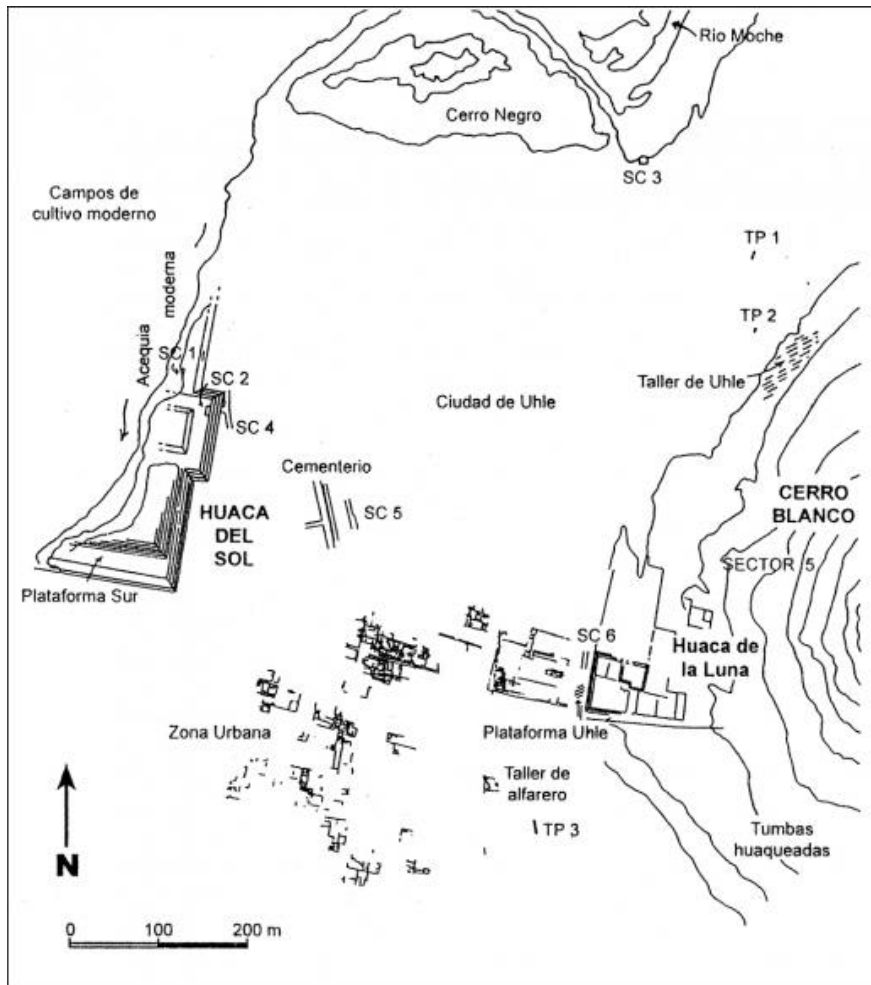


figure 4 Map of Huacas de Moche. From (Gamboa Velásquez 2005: figura 2)

The valley itself stretches out from the narrower valley neck further inland to a spacious, flat and exceptionally arid littoral zone. From the Mars-like soils of the Atacama desert (Navarro-González et al. 2003) to the unpredictable waters of the Pacific Ocean, the coastal deserts of North Peru have might seem an inhospitable and unlikely cradle for the emergence complex societies and cultures.

Despite the initially hostile conditions of the North Peruvian coastal deserts, the location of the site provides access to varied and ample sources of proteins and carbohydrates. To the west, just 5 km from Huacas de Moche (Chapdelaine 2009), the usually cold waters of the Pacific Ocean supported an abundant range of marine species such as fish, sea otters, sea lions, birds and mollusks. Further north, patchworks of wooded and foggy regions (locally known as *lomas*) offered game both large and small in the form of deer, fox, iguana and snails. All the

aforementioned species are abundantly evident in Moche art and iconography (see examples below) as well as their remains having been archaeologically documented within the many architectural compounds (Luján 2015; Uceda and Tufinio 2003).

In terms of subsistence, however, the increasing agricultural focus was becoming more important (Gagnon 2006; Pozorski 1979). Gently skirting the northern and eastern rim of Huacas de Moche, the Rio Moche (Moche River) allowed for a rich agricultural output throughout the Moche Valley by impressive feats of hydraulic engineering (Ortloff et al. 1985; Ortloff et al. 1982). The otherwise barren and inhospitable desert landscape was eventually transformed into verdant fields of maize, beans and gourds as the Cupisnique Culture (1500 – 500 BC) had begun the construction of irrigational canals siphoning off the nutrient- and mineral-rich waters of the Rio Moche. Greatly expanding upon the labors of their predecessors, however, the Moche had rendered most of the lower Moche Valley agriculturally productive by producing large-scale networks of canals the longest of which – the Mochica canal – stretched to about 31 km and ran north all the way up to Rio Seco (the Dry River) close to modern-day Huanchaco (Billman 2002).

Chronology of Huacas de Moche

The chronology of the Huacas de Moche may be divided into three phases that in turn reflect fundamental changes in socio-political, ritual and cultural structures (Uceda 2010). The first phase runs from the somewhat shrouded origins of the site, most likely somewhere around 100 AD (Chapdelaine 2009:182), to 600 or 650 AD. Generally understood as a period of theocratic centralization, many characteristics of art, ritual and social organization are seen as a continuation and development of the antecedent Cupisnique (1500 – 500 BC), Salinar (200 BC – 200 AD) and Chavín (900 – 250 BC) culture (Uceda 2010:255 - 258). Around the 600/650 AD mark, however, at the time Plaza 3a was added to Huaca de la Luna, there is considerable evidence of a far-reaching restructuring of Huacas de Moche and other societies and polities on the Peruvian coast. The extensive and protracted episodes of draught and precipitation brought on by El Niños associated with this period (Dillehay and Kolata 2004; Shimada et al. 1991) (see chapter below) seem, by all accounts, to have irrevocably altered the socio-political, cultural and ritual landscape of the Andes laying the foundation of the later emergence of the Chimú culture in the Moche Valley (Moore and Mackey 2008).

In the case of Huacas de Moche, the period from 600/650 AD to 800 AD, the second occupational phase, sees the emergence of a less centralized, urban elite along with new rituals, iconography and sacrificial programs in the wake of these cataclysmic events (Uceda 2010). The Old Temple complex (Plaza 1- 3C and Platform I – II) of Huaca de la Luna is intentionally buried with sand and its northern entrance is bricked up as it is abandoned in favor of Huaca del Sol and the later New Temple (platform III and Plaza 4 slightly north of Huaca de la Luna but equally hugging the western slopes of Cerro Blanco) (Uceda and Tufinio 2003; Velásquez 2015:95). By 800 AD the site of Huacas de Moche is abandoned in its entirety (Lockard 2009) and the subsequent phase III is defined by Chimú occupation and the eventual conquest by the Incas and the Spanish (Uceda 2010).

Urban Core

In between Huaca del Sol and Huaca de la Luna runs an urban sprawl composed of numerous architectonic compounds that conjoined habitational and ceremonial spaces with lapidarian, ceramic, textile and metallurgical production (Hélène. Bernier 2010; Chapdelaine 2002, 2009; Uceda 2010). It is this conglomeration of urban compounds which is assumed to consolidate socio-political and ritual power following the fall of Huaca de la Luna around 600/650 AD (see above). Population estimates - naturally subject to a host of vagaries - assume that the urban core (about 60 ha) could have housed a population around 6,000 to 9,000 or possibly somewhere between 16, 000 – 24,000 when allowing a periphery of 10 km (Chapdelaine 2009).

Effectively consisting of independent units with their own internal organization and hierarchy these compounds may have formed a type of nested hierarchies known from colonial accounts of north Peruvian societies as *parcialidades* (Hélène. Bernier 2010; Chapdelaine 2011:202 - 203; Uceda 2010). This type hierarchized social structure may be indicated at Huacas de Moche by high-ranking individuals found buried within the architectonic compounds. The relative richness of the tombs and the skeletal indications of injuries and wear consistent with noticeable different “professional” backgrounds (from injuries associated warriors to arthritic joints associated with potters) might suggest that some form social mobility was present within the urban elite (see above, Chapdelaine 2002). So far no palatial compounds usually associated with highly stratified societies have been found at Huacas de Moche (Chapdelaine 2011; Quilter and Koons 2012). In terms of accompanying grave goods, the top echelon of Huacas de Moche have so far only been found buried within Huaca de la Luna. The consistent discovery of high-ranking individuals in

huaca contexts might suggest that no distinctly secularized socio-political elite reigned at Huacas de Moche or similar locations, as suggest by some, political and ritual power might have been co-extensive (Quilter and Koons 2012) – ritual and politics, humans and *huacas* entwined.

Production and Workshops

Many of workshops that were attached/integrated to the urban compounds produced specialized objects and goods related to ritual performance.

So far, the two small scale metallurgical workshops uncovered at Huacas de Moche have not directly revealed evidence of producing ritual attire and paraphernalia on the scale and sumptuousness to that of the tombs of Sipán or that depicted in the “Sacrifice Ceremony” (see **chapter 2**) (Hélène. Bernier 2010; Chapdelaine 2009). However, a cache containing disk ear ornaments, platelets and a feline effigy of laminated gold was discovered deposited in the fill of building D, Huaca de la Luna (Uceda 2008). Whether made locally or imported, the contents of the cache suggest that the Moche at Huaca de la Luna had access to similar objects of precious metals as those uncovered at Sipán or any other Moche contexts. Despite this relative artefactual dearth within the Urban Core, goldsmiths’ kilns have been recorded along with copper fragments, gold residue and equipment that could indicate the making of headdresses or masks (Luján 2015; Uceda and Rengifo Chunga 2006). Interestingly, *tumi* or sacrificial knives, associated with ritual human sacrifice and are frequently depicted in Moche iconography along with severed head (see figures below and Cordy-Collins 1992; Donnan 1978) have been documented in several workshops (Bernier 2005; Hélène. Bernier 2010) and high-status burials (Donnan 1985) at Huaca de la Luna. Cut marks and penetration fractures on skeletal remains at both Plaza 3c and 3a support the extensive use of such a metallic implements in ritual sacrifice (Hamilton 2016; Verano 2008).

By far the most prolific, production at the Urban Core is attested by two large workshops seemingly dedicated to the making of fine and domestic ceramics. The former, dedicated to specialized production, revealed refuse, equipment and kilns associated with the ceramic production of decorated vessels, figurines and musical instruments (Bernier 2005; Hélène. Bernier 2010). Particularly prevalent were musical instruments such as flutes, whistles, ocarinas, rattles, drums etc (Hélène Bernier 2010; Hélène. Bernier 2010) - objects which by most accounts were integral to the performance of ritual within and around Huaca de la Luna (see below and

Scullin 2015; Scullin and Boyd 2014). At Plaza 3a, ceramic whistles were found placed in the hands of one of the initiatory child sacrifices (sand 4) and in between a sequence of sacrificial victims arrayed in a “dance macabre” (see sediment 2), see **chapter 7**.

While it is the shapely, decorated vessels, especially the characteristic stirrup-vessels bearing intricate fine-line depictions of rituals and sculpted figures that has captivated the imagination of archaeologists and inspired chronological typologies (see chapter 2), workshops dedicated to domestic vessels may have held an equally important role in ritual performance. Situated on the slope of Cerro Blanco just north of Huaca de la Luna and oddly distant from the needed clay and water sources (Chapdelaine 2009) the workshop was apparently dedicated to the production of large, domestic vessels referred to as *ollas*, *tinajas* and *cantaros* (Gamarra and Gayoso 2008; Jara 2000). These types of vessels are still used in the brewing or storage of maize beer or *chicha* (Hayashida 2008) and has been extensively indicated at nearly all the great, archaeological cultures in the Andes from Callejón de Huaylas, Chavín de Huantar to Tiwanaku, Bolivia (Gero 1990; Goldstein 2003; Hastorf and Johannessen 1993; Morris 1979). This fermented, alcoholic drink still plays an important albeit diminishing role in traditional Andean cuisine and folk rituals (Allen 2012; Jennings 2004; Weismantel 1991). In fact, not only did virtually every, excavated compound reveal vessels and kilns associated with brewing and storing *chicha* (Chapdelaine 2009; Uceda 2010), but grave goods from tombs within Huaca de la Luna often included decorated serving ware such as dippers (or *cancheros* used for pouring *chicha*) and at Plaza 3a sherds of used domestic wares (up to 458 fragments!) were found scattered among the human remains in nearly every sacrificial layer (sand 4 being the only exception).

Geography and Climate: El Niños and Draught

As mentioned earlier, the years of 600/650 AD bear evidence of a fundamental and extensive restructuring of Moche socio-politics, culture and rituals in response to a series of significant, climatic stressors. Draught and precipitation converged on a hitherto unprecedented scale which in many ways turned the Moche world upside down.

While *relatively* safe from the mercurial volcanos of the Andean highland, the deserts of the low-lying coastal zone are landscapes of extremes. The narrow coastal strip, straddled by the towering Andes to the east and the cold, Pacific waters to the west, receive little to no annual rain

(Dillehay and Kolata 2004) These hyper-arid and subtropical conditions are largely dictated by the confluence of southeastern tradewinds (anticyclonic winds), the Humboldt Current (Pacific Ocean currents) and the Walker Circulation (the circulation of air pressure ie. rain). During normal conditions these forces of nature combine to deliver cool, dry air to the Peruvian coast.

However, on a frequency of 2-10 years (Rasmusson and Carpenter 1982), this meteorological equilibrium is upended resulting in a phenomenon colloquially referred to as El Niño or, more scientifically, El Niño-Southern Oscillation event (from here on referred to as ENSO-events). During ENSO-events the Andean natural order is quite literally turned upside down. The Humboldt current, which normally drives cold waters rich in nutrients, plankton, algae and marine organisms north from the Antarctic to the Peruvian coast, turns east towards the Pacific Ocean (Benson 2012; Blanchot et al. 1992). This results in an influx of hot and decidedly less nutritious waters down south from the tropic Equator. The southeastern tradewinds begin to blow from the west towards rather than away from Peruvian coast. The Walker Circulation which usually graces the Peruvian deserts with a constant low-pressure (cool, low moisture) thus inverses as high-pressure areas descend on the coast bringing clouds, storms and rains (Power and Smith 2007).

The sudden shift in ocean temperatures, air pressure and wind direction which accompany ENSO-events have dire consequences for marine and terrestrial life. The cold waters of the Humboldt current which ensure one of the most abundant and productive fisheries of the modern world (Montecino and Lange 2009) are driven out of reach from the coast and replaced by tropical waters. More detrimental, however, are the effects on land - especially for a Moche culture increasingly dependent on agriculture and irrigation (see above and Gagnon 2006:243 - 252). The hyper-arid conditions of the coastal desert combined with the sudden appearance of torrential rains yield devastating flashfloods as the dry desert sand is oversaturated with moisture - roads, houses, people and agricultural fields become engulfed in strong currents of colluvial and alluvial sludge (Caviedes 1984). Just as recently as 2017 a severe ENSO-event claimed over 40 lives and dealt massive structural damage in and around the city of Trujillo – immediately west of Huacas de Moche. Direct evidence of flash-flooding has been archaeologically implicated at the Huaca del Sol and the urban nucleus of Huacas de Moche (Moseley and Deeds 1982).

While ENSO-events certainly constituted an intermittent and volatile fixture of Andean life, which most likely would have been a source of worry and possibly even elation (when faced with protracted draught), it would be wrong to assume that the Moche, and other pre-Columbian cultures were taken completely off guard by their environment. ENSO-events on the Peruvian coast are for the most part a recurrent feature which Andean cultures in some way or other anticipated and accommodated (Dillehay and Kolata 2004). Indeed, archaeology reveals that, like other pre-Columbian cultures, the Moche constructed systems of redundant fields and canals in anticipation of sudden increases in precipitation, dune embankment or desertification. Formerly fallow fields could also be temporarily irrigated by local or diverted sources of precipitated water. Settlements and infrastructure employed constructional techniques which allowed repair and reconstruction with relative ease and expediency (Dillehay and Kolata 2004). Smaller or less severe ENSOs would thus have been anticipated and mitigated with relative ease by a culture used to nature writhing in occasional fevered frenzies.

However, when exceptionally strong ENSO-events converge with periods of severe draught, archaeologists suggest that the flexibility and resilience of Andean cultures were pushed to the extreme (Moseley and Keefer 2002; Sandweiss and Quilter 2012; Shimada et al. 1991). Not only would drought have obvious implications on agriculture and access to fresh water but it would also exacerbate flashflooding while also promoting desertification and dune migration. Meteorological studies on the Quelccaya ice core just off Cuzco, Peru indicate heavy regional precipitation and point to three exceptionally dry periods in Moche history: 524 – 540 AD, 563 – 594 AD (three decades!), 636 – 645 AD with a strong interpluvial episode between 602 – 635 AD (Dillehay and Kolata 2004; Shimada et al. 1991). These dates correspond well with the numerous archaeological and stratigraphical indicators of draught and episodes of intense precipitation (ie. ENSO-event) present at Huaca de la Luna, Plaza 3a (see **Chapter 7**) and other contemporary *huaca* and settlement contexts (Dillehay and Kolata 2004; Huckleberry and Billman 2003; Moseley et al. 2008; Sandweiss and Quilter 2008; Shimada et al. 1991). This ill-starred constellation of draught and ENSO-events is thought to produce exceptionally severe and devastating effects with long-lasting impacts which *eventually* (800 AD!) led to the demise of the Moche culture at Huacas de Moche – only the *huaca* outlived the Moche eventually being reused by the Chimu and modern healing rituals (see **chapter 6** and **7**).

ENSO-Events and Moche Material Culture

As prone and vulnerable the Peruvian coast is to the deleterious effects of ENSO-events, it is perhaps no surprise that this looming threat weighed heavily on the creative minds of the Moche. In fact, Bourget (2016) argues that many of the species of animals painted on or modeled in Moche stirrup-vessels were deeply affected by the climatic conditions related to ENSO-events.

With the influx of hot water, foreign and tropical species of marine animals such as manta rays, sea horses, swimming crabs, sharks, puffer fish and mollusks migrate down from the shores of Ecuador (Benson 2012:3). Of particular ritual importance are the shells of the thorny oyster (*Spondylus crassisquama*) and the strombus (*Strombus galeatus*) that, long before and after the Moche, served as prized, ritual objects extensively traded down to the Peruvian coast from their natural and warmer habitat of Ecuador (Staller and Stross 2013). Apart from appearing frequently in the Moche iconography, including in association with the Sacrifice Ceremony, ceramic reproductions of strombus or conch shells were often used as musical instruments (Bourget 2010:207; Cordy-Collins 2001a)



figure 5 Fanged creature emanating from Strombus shell figure. Museo Larco, Lima, Peru. Inv. no. ML003208.

Denied the usual abundance by the receding cold waters, starved sea birds intrude upon human habitats and, along with aggressive sea lions, charge the boats and nets of fishermen (Benson 2012; Bourget 2016). Bourget (2016) suggests that a painted bottle recovered from Tomb 3, Platform II, Huaca de la Luna, displays this drastic and violent change in animal behavior that, along with the appearance of tropical and usually foreign manta rays, characterize ENSO-events

(see figure 6).



figure 6 Fisherman mounting a zoomorphized reed boat surrounded by different species of charging sea birds. *borracho* fish and a manta ray, common during ENSO conditions, swim beneath the boat and waves. Drawing by Donna McClelland. The Christopher B. Donnan and Donna McClelland Moche Archives, Images Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University. Washington, DC.

The upset of the natural and bountiful equilibrium associated with ENSO-conditions has a dramatic impact on endemic fish populations which virtually disappear from the Peruvian coast (Benson 2012). However, many species benefit greatly from the decimation and destruction. The extensive death of local species of mollusks and crustaceans provide ample feeding opportunities for octopus and *borracho* fish (*Scartichthys gigas*). The latter becomes the most commonly caught fish during ENSO-conditions, and, as noted by Bourget (2016), appears along other diagnostic species (eg. manta rays, sea lions) in scenes of ritualized fishing (see figure 6 and figure 7) and are often depicted holding sacrificial *tumi*-knives – perhaps hinting at their voracity during ENSO-events.



figure 7 Two supernatural figures fishing manta rays (left) and borracho (right) in zoomorphized anthropomorphized boats with legs and fins and the heads of an eared serpent and borracho fish. Notice that both boats and the borracho fish caught in the hook are clutching *tumi*-knives. Drawing by Donna McClelland. The Christopher B. Donnan and Donna McClelland Moche Archives, Images Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University. Washington, DC.

The severe impacts of ENSO-events on the ecology of coastal North Peru in the first millennium AD may potentially be traced in both the iconography and archaeologically observable practices of the Moche. During prolonged and severe ENSO-events similar to that of 1982-83 the emaciated bodies of sea lions and sea birds wash ashore in scores and eventually become rich sources of food for scavenging condors and Andean vultures (Caviedes 1984; de Oliveira 2011). Making frequent appearances on Moche scenes related to human sacrifice, the Andean condor and vulture have been venerated for millennia in Peru and the condor even times the hatching of its young with ENSO-events. Bourget thus suggests that, as in a case of parallel treatment, the sacrificial victims of Plaza 3a were left exposed on the plaza floor, like sea lions on a desert beach, in order to allow vultures to feed the carcasses. Bourget further observes that a crude, wooden club that tested positive for human blood was found in a tomb within Platform II overlooking Plaza 3a and that it is similar to the weapons depicted in scenes of sea lion hunting (Bourget 2001, 2016; Bourget and Newman 1998).

The many instances and centrality of the anthropomorphized “Spider Decapitator” in Moche iconography and material culture also suggest long traditions of depicting ENSO-related species in terms of ritualized sacrifice. The Spider Decapitator is usually seen clutching severed human heads and a *tumi*-knife and has been linked to a specie of spiders known as the *Argiope argentata* (Bourget 2016:266; Meneses and Ignacio 2008). This orb-weaving and insectivorous spider flourishes as insects proliferate during hot and humid conditions of ENSO-events. Its

menacing form in Moche iconography has often been reproduced on regalia of precious metals, stirrup-vessels and can most notably be appreciated at the polychrome façade of Platform I, Huaca de la Luna (see figure 8). The figure is prominent within the iconography of the antecedent Cupisnique (1500 – 500 BC) and Salinar culture (200 BC – 200 AD) and likely points to surviving and most likely shared sacrificial, traditions (if not ontologies) on the North Peruvian Coast (Cordy-Collins 1992).



figure 8 depiction of the "Spider Decapitator" as seen from the facade of platform I, Huaca de la Luna (left) and an illustrative reconstruction (right). From Meneses and Ignacio (2008:249). This anthropomorphized figure can be seen holding a severed head in right arm and in sacrificial tumi-knife of the left arm.

It should be noted that I am here presenting an arbitrary selection from Bourget's already somewhat arbitrary list of species affected by ENSO-events and evident in Moche material culture (see Bourget 2016 for a more comprehensive exposition). Nevertheless, I believe that the arguments of Bourget (2010, 2016) are sound and that the Moche and their material culture were especially attuned to the observable changes in their bountiful yet unpredictable and often violent environment. Indeed, it seems very likely that the Moche keenly observed and ritually emulated changes to their environs and the behavior of animals in order to anticipate, prevent and comprehend such dangerous yet opportunistic fluctuations.

However, Bourget (2016:310 - 311) interprets the depiction and ultimate use of these ENSO-related referents as part of a "metaphorical system" geared towards the legitimization of rulership and power among the Moche (see **chapter 2**). While political and ideological aspects

certainly were at play to different extents at different times, I find this interpretation somewhat narrow when consider the interdependent and comprehensive character of Andean ontology and concepts (see **chapter 4**). Moreover, I find it especially difficult to envision purely political causalities when considering the climatic crisis and societal restructuring surrounding the later ritual context of Plaza 3a (see **chapter 7**).

Moche material culture associated with ENSO-related phenomena intimates something more than symbolic monopolization and control as initially suggested by Bourget (2016). As I argue in this thesis, the Moche material culture reflects a comprehensive, Andean ontology wherein *humans* and *huacas* maintain their intimate relationship through the mutual provision of sustenance (see **chapter 5, 6 and 7**). In these terms, when humans and *huacas* are fed, the north coast of Peru is grazed with teeming fisheries and surplus agriculture supporting prolific and artistic material production. Yet, on scale of 2 – 10 years, this world is turned upside down or “goes wild” as ENSO-events upends the natural order turning the Mochican world into destructive and excessively violent displays of feeding and dying and so upsets the *status quo*. This is a volatile fixture of life on the Peruvian desert shores which undoubtedly would have dictated keen and attentive observance, preparation and likely creative preoccupation. The material impacts this conception had at Huaca de la Luna and Plaza 3a during the protracted and severe convergence of draughts and ENSO-events during 550 – 650 AD will be explored in greater detail by **chapter 7**.

I believe that this world gone wild and driven by sacrificial appetite is viscerally portrayed and easily identified in Moche material culture. The unbridled hunger appears to resonate in the snarling, sharp-toothed grins, wide-open eyes, dilated pupils that emerge from strombus shells (see figure 5), orb-weaving spiders (see figure 8), *borracho* fish, boats (see figure 7) and other inanimate objects (see figure 3). The species of animals that benefit from and feed on the death and destruction acquire arms clutching sacrificial *tumi*-knives and engage in sacrificial activities. All these traits seem to convey a fundamental and ontological understanding of feeding and sacrifice as the inherent ontological powers of the world writ large; one where sacrifice and feeding may equally grip humans, *huacas*, animals and inanimate objects. A hunger which lingers on even in modern-day Peru where *huacas* still occasionally consume the souls of Andeans.

In the next chapter I will explore historically and ethnographically documented cases of the relationship and engagements between humans and *huacas* in the Andes. The point is to show how concepts of sacrifice and feeding have been and still are in certain areas integral notions shaping the intimate relationship between humans *huacas*.

5. Huacas in Ethnographic and Historical Sources

The ultimate aim of this chapter is to explore the wider and at times unwieldy notion of ‘*huaca*’ through ethnographical and historical sources, and its central role not only in socio-political, cultural and ritual expressions in the past and present Andes but also its emerging focality within archaeological and ethnographic research.

There is a plethora of ethnographic and colonial accounts detailing both contemporary and historical Andean ritual practices and beliefs from the colonial conquest in 1572 AD up to present day. Many archaeologists and anthropologists have fruitfully applied these in their interpretation of the archaeological record (eg. Alva 2000; Bray 2015b; Glass-Coffin 2010; Glass-Coffin et al. 2004; Hocquenghem 2009; Vega 2015b). Doing so, however, inevitably raises the thorny issue of applicability and reliability of these sources. The point is not to assess the individual validity and complexity of these sources in any detail as that has been extensively examined and commented by researchers elsewhere (eg. Brosseder 2014; De Betanzos et al. 1996; MacCormack 1991). Instead, my aim is to give a generalized account of the interpretive issues surrounding these sources and, in the process, bring to light historical threats and challenges to traditional, Andean ways of life.

Building on this, I show how colonial chroniclers described *huacas* materially in terms of wildly disparate referents - from pebbles, oddly-shaped potatoes to mountains - and how archaeologists and anthropologists are beginning to realize the shortcomings of classical and Cartesian models and are instead couching ‘*huaca*’ in non-representational and relational ontologies which take their cue from the ‘ontological turn’ as described in **chapter 3**.

By looking at the contemporary communities of Kallawaya, Mount Kaata, modern excavations and the colonial resistance movement of the Taki Onqoy in the 16th century I wish to highlight central tenets of traditional Andean beliefs and ontology concerning the intimate relation between humans and *huacas*. Firstly, as expressed by the Kallawaya communities, *huacas*, like humans, are considered as having bodies replete with organs. Secondly, feeding *huacas* entails feeding humans as demonstrated by the colonial resistance movement of the Taki Onqoy in the 16th century. Finally, that leaving *huacas* unfed cause significant instability of human bodies and

the world writ large. In fact, *huacas* still retain the metabolic ability to eat the souls of Andeans (*comida de huaca*) as a consequence of their malnourished state.

Historic and Ethnographic Sources

Like many other researchers working with Andean cultures (eg. Allen 2015; Bray 2015a; Brosseder 2014; Hocquenghem 2009; Salomon and Urioste 1991) I will in part rely on historical documents and chronicles in order to elucidate the nature of *huacas* and their describe relationship with Andeans. The historical sources that I will be using mainly stem from colonial documents and chronicles which can be dated to 16th and 17th century - closely following the Spanish conquest of the Incan Empire in 1572. Paying special attention to the relationship between humans and *huacas*, I will focus more on the chronicles of the Augustinian missionaries Cristobal de Molina (1529 – 1585) and Cristobál de Albornoz (1530 - ?) and part Incan nobility and part Spanish chroniclers Guaman Poma (1534 – 1615) and Garcilaso de la Vega (1539 – 1616).

Even before the Spanish conquest of the Inca empire in the 16th century, the Moche cultures of North Peru had long been replaced by the more secularly organized and expansionist empires of the Chimú (900 – 1470 AD) and the Inca1s (1470 – 1533 AD) (Moore and Mackey 2008). Archaeological excavations at Cerro Cerrillos and Chotuna-Chornancap, Lambayeque, suggest that at least some of the Moche coastal communities of Northern Peru were at liberty to conduct human sacrifices according to local custom during these two phases of occupation. Yet, it was not without foreign elements or reinventions (Klaus et al. 2010; Turner et al. 2016). Other archaeologists note strong iconographic and sacrificial continuities between the Moche and the formative Cupisnique (1500 – 500 BC), Chavín (900 – 200 BC) and Salinar culture (200 BC – 200 AD) – see for instance “the Spider Decapitator” in **chapter 4**. These commonalities, spanning almost two millennia of cultural and material development, transcend mere stylistic copying and attest to shared sacrificial traditions of impressive *longue durée* (Burger 1992; Cordy-Collins 1992, 2001b). Similarly, architectural structures such as gabled roofs (evident at Plaza 3C, Huaca de la Luna, see **chapter 6**) and the ceramic technology that yielded the famous stirrup-spout vessels have also been credited to this formative past (Bernier 2005:65; Wiersema 2010). Thus, within the pre-Columbian past right up to the time of the Incan Empire and the subsequent conquest by the Spanish, there are indeed durable and long-lived traditions or continuities which held sway for millennia on coastal Peru and the Andes in general. This supports, at least to some extent, the use

of historical sources dating from this period of troubled contact between the Old and New World in interpreting Moche material culture.

However, the most serious threat to these Andean traditions was undeniably posed by colonial rule and the centuries of religious and cultural extirpation that followed the Spanish conquest of Peru (see Galeano 1997 for a harrowing account of colonialism in Latin America). Until researchers are able to decipher the elusive knots of the Incan *quipus* (an enigmatic notational system involving a series of knotted, multi-colored strings), all historical documents available to researchers were necessarily written during the ensuing centuries of contact and oppression. In effect, whether we are considering the chronicles of Spanish missionaries such as Cristobal de Molina and Cristobál de Albornoz (who wrote of the Taki Onkoy in the 16th century) or those of native Incan or *mestizo* descent like Guaman Poma and Garcilaso de la Vega (who wrote of the Peruvian *huacas* in the 16th century), their reasons for committing these traditions to paper were not necessarily out of fealty to scientific objectivity. The former group, charged with the divine task of eradicating idolatry and converting the natives (*la extirpación de la idolatria*), were quick to see heresy and the devil in the many cults, oracles and idols (ie. *huacas*) that had sustained the cultural, ritual and political landscape of Peru for millennia (Dean and Leibsohn 2017; MacCormack 1991). Most of these historical documents were nothing short of instructional manuals on eliminating local idols and beliefs. The latter group of chroniclers, often tracing their lineages to both Incan nobility and Spanish Conquistadores, were perhaps less hostile in their description of local customs and beliefs. However, like the missionaries, they wrote in Spanish as devout Catholics while making use of European semiotics, symbolism, sensibilities and epistemologies/ontologies (see MacCormack 1991 for a more detailed account on the historical records). Thus, when considering the reliability of these sources, we must take into account that the chroniclers were products of their particular and historical circumstances and that the surviving beliefs and practice are expressive of the socio-political, cultural and religious conditions that defined Spanish Colonialism and modern-day Peru.

Despite the threats of firebrand missionaries, socio-economic marginalization, cultural reinventions and waves of epidemics (see MacCormack 1991), the general consensus holds that a surprisingly large amount of Andean practices and beliefs actually endured the colonial era (see mesa below and Larco 2008; Polia 1990:199). There is even significant evidence to suggest that many of these traditions, especially in context of ritual activities around *huacas*, may have been as

old as the Moche or even the Cupisnique/Chavín culture (Cordy-Collins 1992; Glass-Coffin 2010; Glass-Coffin et al. 2004; Hocquenghem 2009; Wiersema 2012). In this sense I maintain that we are correct in assuming that the historical records are at least to some degree applicable to the archaeological record in relation to the Moche at Huacas de Moche. In terms of reliability I advise caution.

Huacas - From Pebbles to Mountains

Archaeological research on Moche material culture has up until recently had a tendency to leave unaddressed the wider ontological implications of the admittedly slippery term ‘*huaca*’ (also referred to as ‘*wak’a*’ or ‘*guaca*’) and its pivotal role in the religious and political discourse of colonial Peru (Bray 2015a; Brosseder 2014). For most intents and purposes *huacas* are often equated with the numerous ceremonial, adobe-brick structures or ‘pyramids’ that dominated most if not all instances of Moche and Andean culture along the north coast (see **chapter 2**). This may shift archaeological interpretation of *huacas* to architectural backdrops or ceremonial stages for human experience and socio-political and cultural expression. However, that is not to say that such use is unwarranted. Indeed, from the smaller *huacas* of the hinterlands to the ostentatious Huacas de Moche, archaeological studies of *huacas* as architectural and ceremonial spaces do provide invaluable glimpses to the social organization, ritual performances and cultural expressions of the Moche (Moore 1996; Swenson 2006, 2012, 2015b; Swenson and Warner 2012; Tufinio 2008; Uceda and Tufinio 2003).

However, not limited to ceremonial structures, *huacas* appear in many different guises throughout the chronicles and ethnographies of Peru and points at a deeper and more ontological constitution and potential source of confusion. The chronicler Garcilaso de la Vega (1539 – 1616) lists “rocks, great stones or trees,” peculiarly shaped potatoes, double-yoked eggs, man-made “figures of men, birds and animals” in addition to “any temple, large or small, ... sepulchers set up in the fields ... and corners of houses” (Garcilaso de la Vega 1943 [1609]:72 - 73 cited in Bray 2015b:7; see also Salomon and Urioste 1991:16 - 19).

Whatever form these *huacas* assumed, from the minuscule pebble to the raging volcano, they were considered integral to human life and had been venerated throughout the Andes for centuries. However, foreshadowing centuries of religious conflict and academic perplexity, de la Vega goes on to note that this Andean notion of the ‘sacred’ differed substantially from any

Western or Christian understanding of the concept (MacCormack 1991:337). Inclined to see the worship of objects as idolatry, Augustinian and Jesuit missionaries worked fervidly towards extirpating or, more precisely, destroying what they perceived to be demonic manifestations of false idols (MacCormack 1991; Mannheim and Carreño 2015). Conditioned by our own ontological framework which traditionally has favored Cartesian and representational dichotomies (see **chapter 3**), we might be equally predisposed to look for ideological and socio-political causalities behind the symbolic veneer of '*huaca*' (see **chapter 2**)

What de la Vega's list of *huacas* and their variegated appearances show is the futility of asking what '*huaca*' refers to, denotes, represents, symbolizes and so on. Doing so only reiterates the representational and Cartesian dualities and I believe it is instructive to consider C. J. Allen, who after having conducted ethnographic field work in the Andes for decades, concluded: "Indeed, I had to learn that representation was not the operative relationship" (Allen 2016:431).

In fact, with novel publications (Allen 2015, 2016; Bray 2009, 2015b; Brosseder 2014; Chase 2015; Vega 2015a) the ontological *huaca* as it figures throughout the histories and ethnographies of Andes have come to the fore in archaeological and ethnographic research on pre-Columbian and contemporary Andean cultures. Taking cue from the 'ontological turn' (see chapter 2) Andean archaeological and anthropological research is thus beginning to appreciate what the extirpators had failed to see, namely, that *huacas* "were worshiped for their own sake" and that "the people never thought to search or use their own imaginations in order to find what such idols *represented*" (emphasis my own, Cobo (1653) cited in Bray 2015b:7 - 8). However, so far, ontological consideration of *huacas* and their deeper and wider relationship with humans has had minimal impact on Moche research (notable exceptions being Swenson 2012, 2015a, 2015b; Weismantel 2004; Weismantel and Meskell 2014).

In short, archaeologists and anthropologists are beginning to take serious what Andeans have insisted upon for centuries, namely that *huacas* are more than symbols, representations, architectural backdrops or even devils. In what follows I will attempt to convey how, mainly within historical and ethnographical sources mainly outside of Moche research, *huacas* are considered beings or rather bodies with which Andeans share deep and ontological relationships.

Huacas as Bodies *with* Organs

In his seminal ethnographic study, Bastien (1985a) documented the embodied and intimate relationship between the soaring Mount Kaata (5200 m!) and the nearby villages of Kallawaya famous and feared since the time of the Incas for its powerful ritual practitioners (Wilson 2018). Not only did his informants on no uncertain terms express that “the mountain is like us, and we’re like it... If we don’t feed the mountain, it won’t feed us” (Bastien 1985: xix cited in Classen 1990; see also Allen 2002 and Janusek 2015) but, from the peak to the base, Mount Kaata was also understood as a human body composed of a head, eyes, nipples, legs, toenails and so on. But more pertinently, the communities and hamlets that clung to the slanting side of the mountain are equally understood as an extension of *huaca*-body with the lower village of Niñokorin comprising the feet and the higher village of Apacheta yielding the head. The ritual center itself, the village of Kaata, which furnishes the Kallawaya community with their ritual notoriety and where the actual offerings of blood and fat to the mountain are made, is said to be the liver, heart and stomach of Mount Kaata (Bastien 1985a). Like their understanding of the human body, it is believed that the ability of the stomach to absorb food and the heart’s role in circulating blood (ie. water) are responsible for sustaining the fields of potatoes, quinoa, and wheat and fattening the grazing alpacas and by extension the communities which in turn feed the mountain and so on (Bastien 1985a, 1985b; Wilson 2018). Thus, not only are *huacas* conceived as having organs dedicated to metabolic functions like human bodies, but the maintenance and sustenance of these bodies are believed to be intimately connected.

Based on this I find it convincing that *huacas* are considered bodies replete with organs whose bodily constitution is deeply tied with the human body. Moreover, the ritual acts of providing food directly to the metabolic organs of the *huaca* constitute integral aspects of maintaining the worldly order. Leaving the *huacas* starved could in fact have fatal consequences.

Taki Onqoy

The chronicles of Augustinian missionaries that were responsible for converting the natives shortly after the Spanish conquest also speak of an indigenous movement referred to as *Taki Onqoy* (alternate spellings including Taqui Onkoy, Taki Ongoy and Taki Unkuy) which during the latter half of the 16th century openly and intrepidly opposed the Christian faith and sought to, in a very literal sense, revitalize the *huacas* which the extirpators at the time had already destroy en masse. The name of the “movement” itself can be roughly translated from Quechua into

“sickness of song and dance” (de Hurtado 1997:114) or “a certain dance of sickness” (Brosseder 2014:75) and doubly alludes to the fits of relentless dancing and singing that supposedly fell upon its members, as well as a particularly Andean understanding of the special relation between *huacas* and human health, fortune and well-being. The religious specialists of the Taki Onkoy were in fact claiming that the colonial masters and their new and imposed faith were making them both physically and spiritually sick (Brosseder 2014:76 - 77; MacCormack 1991:181 - 182). This was not at all an absurd accusation considering that about 9/10ths of the indigenous population in Peru and elsewhere in Latin America died in raging epidemics caused by diseases introduced from the Old World (Cook 1998; Galeano 1997).

However, the Taki Onqoy primarily believed these decimating outbreaks to be the consequence of the failure of Andeans to uphold the social and ritual obligations to the *huacas* that had ensured health of human bodies and the grace and good fortune of the *huacas* for centuries. The most sacrosanct of these obligations as seen at Mount Kaata and the communities of Kallawayá was for Andeans to provide the *huacas* with sustenance through sacrifice, offerings and ritual consumption of food and *chicha* behalf of the *huaca* (Bastien 1985a; Gose 1994). Acts of ritualized feeding which in contemporary ethnographies are referred to as ‘pagapu’ or ‘pago’ (also known as *despacho*, *hayarwisqa*, *alcanzo* see Mannheim and Carreño 2015:61). As missionaries and extirpators effectively suppressed such ritual practices, the members of Taki Onkoy maintained that as a consequence “the huacas were walking about in the air, dried out and starving, because the Indians were not feeding them or pouring chicha” (Molina [1573] translated and cited by MacCormack 1991:182).

By the *huacas* not being provided sustenance in accordance with custom, the *huacas* ultimately vacated their former materiality and entered the bodies of humans. The Augustinian missionary Cristobal de Molina (1529 – 1585) recounts that the that the *huacas* no longer entered “rocks or clouds or springs” but began “walking about in the air” and eventually “embodied themselves in the Indians and made them speak” (Molina [1573] cited in MacCormack 1991:183). Cristobál de Albornoz (1530 - ?) describe how the *huacas* were identifying themselves through their human hosts and how the adherents of the Taki Onqoy would gather around the *huaca-become-human* dancing and drinking day and night (Albornoz [1581 - 1585] cited in MacCormack 1991). Incidentally, the ritual importance dance may also be indicated at Huaca de la Luna. Friezes of

dancing figures were colorfully wrought on the polychrome façade of the towering Platform I of Huacade la Luna. Furthermore, the use of skeletal human remains in relation to the Sacrifice Ceremony (see **chapter 6**) and a sequence of human sacrifices at Sand 2, Plaza 3a were arrayed on the plaza floor in a *dance macabre* (see **chapter 7**). The missionary chroniclers perhaps unsurprisingly described the members of the Taki Onqoy as possessed by demonic forces as they frenetically trembled, danced, made faces and threw rocks about them (Classen 1990). In fact, this becoming unstable, undomesticated or “going wild” is part of the wider, semantic range of *huaca* as a verb (Mannheim and Carreño 2015:55).

In sum, what the Taki Onqoy underscores, like contemporary Mount Kaata, is the ritual importance of providing sustenance to *huacas*. Also apparent is the danger posed to human bodies by leaving the bodies of *huacas* unfed. Starved, the *huacas* can in fact embody humans making them to “go wild” and cause widespread outbreaks of decimating diseases. As will be seen the *huacas* still retain this ability.

Eaten by Huacas

The Taki Onqoy revealed an understanding of human health and social and cultural order that was inextricably linked to living *huacas* whose metabolic needs had to be met through ritual provision of food. And while this bold resistance eventually petered out as the Spanish crown and church consolidated its power over Peru and Latin America in general, the continued and clandestine practice of ritual healers mediated and sustained the inevitably changing relations between Andeans and their *huacas*. In fact, contemporary ritual healers, known as *curanderos* (healer in Spanish), still form an integral part of indigenous communities throughout the Andes, and have been the subject of much ethnographic and historical research in recent times (Allen 2012, 2015, 2016; eg. Bastien 1985a; Polia 1990, 1997; Sax 2014). Both in terms of regular Andeans’ everyday understanding of the causes for disease and misfortune and the ritual practices of the *curanderos*, *huacas* are still very much a central feature.

In fact, there are many cases of disease, misfortune and even deaths reported throughout the ethnographic literature which revolve around direct “supernatural” encounters with *huacas* (Larco 1997; Polia 1990, 1996, 1997). And while contemporary *curanderos* or healers may invoke the powers of the *huacas* in order to perform their healing and curing rituals, Andeans commonly hold them in a kind of fearful reverence. It is believed that disrespectful or careless

interaction with *huacas* in the form of lakes, lagoons, mountains, oddly shaped rocks and especially archaeological remains of ‘*los gentiles*’ (directly translated as ‘the heathens’ the term refers to the remains of the pre-colonial and pre-Christian past) can be fraught with danger (Polia 1990:207). In many of these cases it is believed by modern Andeans that hungry and vengeful *huacas* have eaten the souls of the afflicted causing debilitating soul loss (known as ‘*susto*’) and in certain cases even death (Larco 1997:42 - 43; Sax 2014:192). This disease is known as *comida de huaca* – literally “being eaten by the huaca” (Larco 1997:42)

Modern legend has it that the ravenous appetite of Huaca Cufufana, Lambayeque Valley, required the aid of seven *curanderos* in order to “turn the mouth of the *huaca* away” from the town of Morrope (Wiersema 2010:205). Even local diggers working in modern, archaeological excavations have reported illnesses consistent with *comida de huaca*. At an excavation at Huaca Colorada in the Jequetepeque Valley workers began complaining of troubled nightmares and somatic ailments after uncovering altars for human sacrifice. Archaeologists eventually solicited the aid of a *curandero* in order to perform pagapu rituals (feeding rituals, see above) and continue the excavation (Swenson 2015a; Swenson and Warner 2012). Thus, even long dead *huacas* are still able to consume human beings on the Peruvian coast.

Andean Ontology

From my brief exposition on *huacas* and their intimate relationship with humans as they have been described by chroniclers in the colonial era and anthropologists and archaeologists working in modern Andes, I identify at least three important tenets of what I would like to call an Andean ontology. This is an ontology wherein:

- i) *huacas*, like humans, have bodies with organs expressed through the ritual and ontological understanding of the Kallawayaya communities of Mount Kaata.
- ii) feeding *huacas* entails feeding humans which was professed at Kaata and by the Taki Onqoy.
- iii) unfed *huacas* may cause bodily and worldly instability that was indicated by the Taki Onqoy and still affects people in modern day Peru – even at archaeological excavations.

Thus, from the colonial resistance movement of the Taki Onqoy in the 16th century to the present-day Kallawayaya communities, it is possible to trace a deeper and sometimes problematic

relation between *huacas* and humans that to a significant extent was mediated by the mutual provision of food – feeding *huacas* entailed feeding humans. This is an ontology which reaches deep into Andean history and, despite the concerted efforts of extirpators, still to some extent holds sway in many parts of traditional Andes. Given these intimate and important ties I do not think it is far-fetched to consider the relationship between *huacas* and humans in line with a Deleuzo-Guattarian becoming of two intimately tied bodies responsive to the organism and BwO. Whether Huaca de le Luna prior to and during the climatic crisis of 550 – 650 AD can be understood in these Deleuzo-Guattarian terms and in what way it benefits archaeological research of Moche cultures, terms will be addressed in the following chapters.

6. Huaca de la Luna: The Organism of the pre-Crisis Era

In this chapter I present one of the two analyses of Huaca de la Luna which will concern this and the following **chapter 7**. The shared aim of these chapters is to explore Huaca de la Luna as something more than symbolic, ideological or architectural expressions of power. Both chapters will ultimately claim that Huaca de la Luna and its associated ritual and sacrificial activities can be understood in terms of an intimate and ontological relationship between living, feeding beings or bodies replete with metabolic organs – be it that of *huacas* or humans. Yet, whether the feeding of the *huacas* can be accounted for in terms of the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism or BwO will form the central, analytical criterium in both chapters.

In this first part I will show how Huaca de la Luna can be understood as a living *huaca* as described in historical, ethnographic and archaeological sources (see **chapter 4** and **5**). By looking at the iconographical theme of the Sacrifice Ceremony and its continued performance within and around the architecture of Huaca de la Luna prior to the climatic crisis of 550 – 650 AD. I argue that the double-headed and eared serpent separating the central acts of this iconographical theme depicts a living and feeding *huaca* nourished by sacrificial rituals comparable to the understanding of *huacas* in historical and ethnographic sources. Building on this, I want to consider Huaca de la Luna as a body with metabolic organs that is deeply connected with human bodies through the sacrificial provision of sustenance. By understanding Huaca de la Luna in anatomical as well as architectural terms I argue that Plaza 3c can be conceived as the principal, metabolic organ in relation to the crucial acts of exsanguination, defleshing and subsequent deposition of sacrificial bodies as per the Sacrifice Ceremony. I examine this feeding and digestion through the organized and complex ritual sequence associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony within the territorialized and striated space of Huaca de la Luna's many plazas, patios, precincts and ramps. I claim that throughout the 270 – 320 years of living and ritualized feeding, the *huaca* grew and reterritorialized triumphantly and thus successfully reconstituted these mutually defined, territorialized bodies and the worldly order writ large.

But before doing so I will offer a generalized account of Huaca de la Luna's general layout and its internal chronology. The different plazas and platforms that made up the Old Temple of

Huaca de la Luna (Plaza 1- 3C and Platform I – II) will be chronologically related to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD.

General Layout

Abutting the north-western slope of the mountain of Cerro Blanco, the ceremonial and pyramidal complex of Huaca de la Luna rises above the urban sprawl of Huacas de Moche at a maximal height of 30 meters (Gamboa Velásquez 2005:167). Covering an area of 290 m x 210 m, the structure or complex yields a series of interconnected plazas, patios and platforms at different elevations and sizes accessible through a network of ramps, baffled entries and winding corridors (Bourget 2016:15). The primary access to the ceremonial complex, situated to the north, opens up to a spacious main plaza (Plaza 1) measuring 180 m x 90 m and is enclosed by perimeter walls (Benson 2012; Uceda 2001b). To the south of the Main Plaza the terraced sides of Platform I rises steeply creating a precipitous stage which could be easily viewed from the Main Plaza. In contrast to its present and drab state, the *huaca* would have been vibrantly painted in red, white and yellow colors and on the northern façade of Platform I, ie. facing Main Plaza, large polychrome friezes depict mythological entities and denuded prisoners being paraded by warriors. Access from Plaza 1 to Plaza 2a, b and 3a, b, c, would have been gained from the ramp located on eastern side of the plaza through a network of ramps (Uceda and Tufinio 2003). The complex also includes Platform Uhle directly west of Platform 1 (Chauchat and Gutierrez 2013) and Platform III or “the New Temple” slightly to the north and also hugging the foot of Cerro Blanco. The construction and use of this latter platform postdates the infilling and discontinued use of Platform I and II and plaza 3a, c, b which is commonly referred to as the Old Temple by contemporary researchers (Uceda and Tufinio 2003) and possibly alludes to a new ritual order that emerged after 650 AD.

Gamboa Velásquez (2005) suggests that the Main Plaza could have hosted anything from 550 – 26 500 individuals depending on the space required by the spectacle. The population of Huacas de Moche was estimated at 6,000 – 24,000 (see **chapter 4**) and it would therefore seem that spectator capacity at Huaca de la Luna exceeded the number of urban inhabitants. Pushing the bare figures *in extremis*, the Main Plaza could potentially have hosted the entire urban population. Yet, most likely, the range of activities which potentially took place within the plaza – dancing, singing, parading of captives, feasting, etc – would have required more m² per person. However, if the different ritual activities spanned several days it is not unlikely that most of the

able population of Huacas de Moche could at some time or other have participated in the spectacle (see Moore 1996; Warner 2010 for consideration of plaza area utilization). This accommodation reveals that the spectacles such as the Sacrifice Ceremony was intended for a wide audience possibly encompassing the entire population of Huacas de Moche.

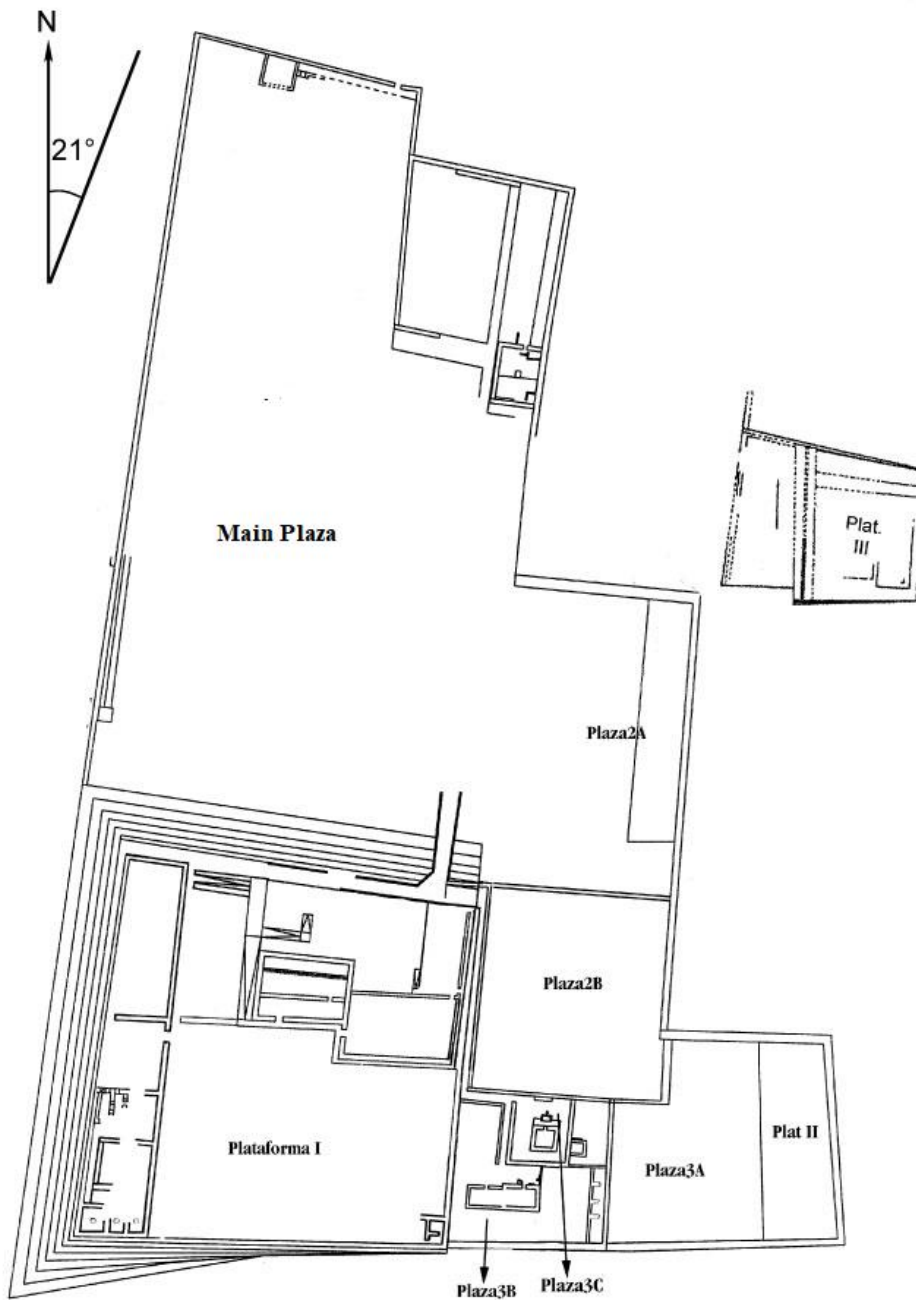


figure 9 The layout of the Old Temple of Huaca de la Luna adapted from (Tufinio 2008)

The general layout and architecture of Huaca de la Luna, with a spacious Main Plaza and ramps leading up to a tall platform, may be found repeated, though with subtle variations, throughout the polities of the Southern Moche and may reflect a shared sacrificial, ritual and ontological understanding of *huacas* (see figure 9). The *huacas* of El Brujo in the Chicama Valley for example (Franco et al. 2001; Jordán et al. 2003) largely conform to the layout Huaca de la Luna with spacious Main Plaza and elevated platform with internal structures. At Licapa II, El Brujo, an urban core is straddled by an elongated *huaca A* and an opposing rectangular *huaca B* in similar juxtaposition as Huaca de la Luna and Huaca del Sol (Koons 2015). However, there is no evidence at El Brujo of a structure similar in function and architecture to that of Plaza 3a and Platform II. Shared notions aside, the Moche at Huacas de Moche and El Brujo apparently made different material choices in response to the significant environmental stressors of 600/650 AD.

Chronology

Simply looking at the architectural drawings, one might get the impression that the construction of Huaca de la Luna represented a single, planned and coordinated event (Wiersema 2012). However, Huaca de la Luna consists of periodic additions, expansions and agglutinations (Bourget 2016; Uceda and Canziani 1993) – each potentially relating to different socio-political, cultural, ritual and/or climatic events in the history of the site.

Archaeologists propose that Platform I – the oldest and largest structure of Huaca de la Luna - consists of five – six edifices that were sequentially layered on top of each other: A, B/C, D, E, F (from earliest to oldest, see figure 10) (Bourget 2016:16 - 17; Uceda and Tufinio 2003:202 - 205). Each phase of construction was preceded by the complete burial (with sand and adobe bricks) of the previous building (Uceda 2001b). Thus, the size and stature of Platform I would have augmented for each successive building (see Uceda and Tufinio 2003 table 20.1 for exact number of volumes and adobes for each building phase). The exception to this is building B, which more recently has been argued to represent a less extensive renovation of building C rather than a new edifice (Bourget 2016; Uceda 2001b).

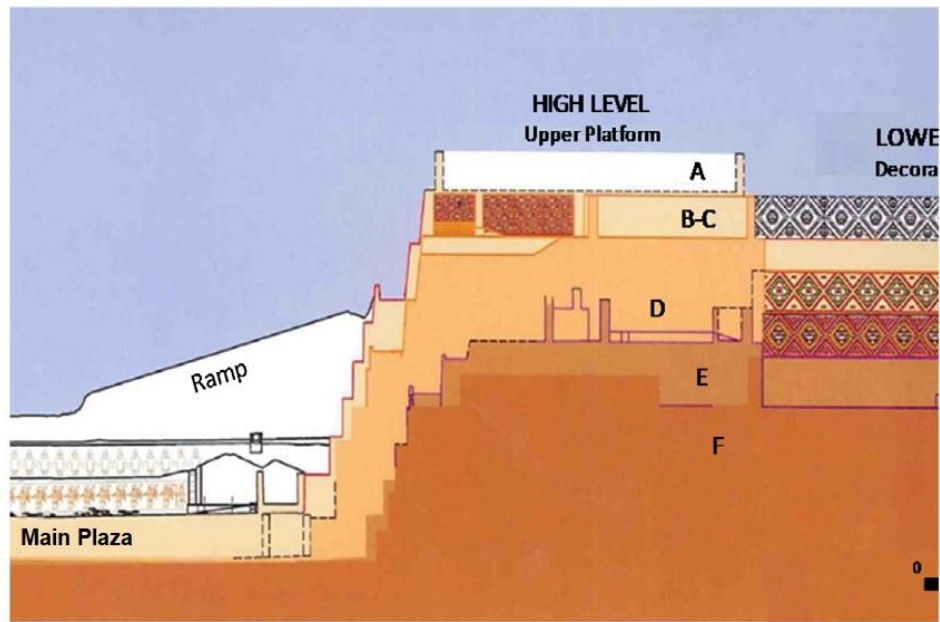


figure 10 The development phases (A - F) of Platform I, Huaca de la Luna shown in relation to the Main Plaza (adapted from Aguilar et al. 2017:17)

Buried deeply within the many layers of later buildings, E and F has so far not been archaeologically excavated save for test-pits and pre-existing looter's tunnels (Bourget 2016; Uceda 2001b). Interestingly, each new construction phase seems to have been initiated after episodes of intense rainfall (Uceda and Canziani 1993). There is also evidence that the expansions were accompanied by ritual offerings or dedication rituals. For instance, caches consisting of ritual and metallic regalia, organic remains, guinea pigs and ceramics were located inside the infilling of both building B/C and D (Bourget 2016:352; Velásquez 2015:92). This pattern of renovation and ritual deposition in response to precipitation is also repeated at *huaca* El Brujo, Chicama (Jordán et al. 2003) and Dos Cabezas, Jequetepeque (Moseley et al. 2008). For the most part, each building phase would have conserved the general layout of the former. Murals on the northern façade of Platform I (ie. facing the main plaza), successively covered by the adobes and infill of the earlier building, have even been faithfully preserved with little change throughout phases D to A. Thus, what alteration may have occurred in the general understanding and performance of rituals in and around Platform I's lofty stage left little by way of material evidence.

With the aid of radiocarbon dates, ceramics sequences and stratigraphy, it has been possible to chronologically relate each edifice or building with the construction, use and burial of additional

structures or plazas. The evidence suggests that Plaza 3b and -c were added to the complex during the construction of edifice B/C (Bourget 2016:19; Uceda 2001b:61). Radiocarbon dating of human and cultural remains suggests that the rituals of sacrifice associated with Plaza 3c were performed between 230 – 550 AD (Hamilton 2016). Recent archaeological investigations further propose that Platform II and the corresponding Plaza 3a, directly east of Plaza 3b and -c, were built as a single project sometime during the sixth or seventh centuries after or during which time Plaza 3c was filled with sand (Bourget 2016:19). The large concentrations of human remains embedded in muddy sedimentation layers separated layers of wind-blown sand suggest that the sacrificial events within Plaza 3a were performed during alternating periods of profuse precipitation and hyperaridity (Bourget and Millaire 2000; Uceda and Tufinio 2003:201; Verano 2008). The evidence thus suggests that the construction and use of Platform II and Plaza 3a coincide with the climatic crisis leading up to 600/650 AD and the construction and use of Building A (see above). Moreover, the radiocarbon dating human and cultural remains suggest the sacrificial activities were performed for at least three centuries.

Sometime during the seventh century, Huaca de la Luna is abandoned and the plazas are ceremoniously filled with sand. Following the final abandonment of the settlement at Huacas de Moche around 800 AD the Chimu, the Inca and eventually the Spanish took dominion over the area. While the pre-Columbian cultures flourished and eventually disappeared from the coastal deserts around Cerro Blanco, Huaca de la Luna arguably remained an important and potent *huaca* long after the Moche and even into modern times (see Glass-Coffin et al. 2004).

Coprolites found within Plaza 3a and -c indicate that the Chimu (900 – 1470 AD) may have performed llama sacrifices and buried mummies of former rulers within Platform I centuries after the Moche abandonment (Bourget 2016; Uceda 1995). Moreover, as work began with the excavation of Plaza 3a in 1995 the very first layer revealed remains of guinea pigs sacrificed during contemporary healing rituals (Bourget 2016). In this sense sacrifice never really ceased at Plaza 3a, Huaca de la Luna, despite the fall of the Moche culture.

Table 1 reveals the relative chronology of Huaca de la Luna as accounted for above in relation to the ENSO-events that eventually lead to the abandonment of the Old Temple in favor of Huaca del Sol and the significantly smaller New Temple (Platform III and Plaza 4 which is outside the scope of this thesis) (Uceda 2010).

Table 1 The relative chronology of edifices, platforms, plazas in relation to climatic and cultural events (relative chronologies collated and adapted from Bourget 2016:19, table 12.12; Chapdelaine 2011:196, fig. 192; Uceda 2001b:61, fig. 20; 2010:256, fig. 259)

The Old Temple Complex							
Years AD	Moche Phase	Edifice	3A and Platform II	3B	3C	2B	ENSOs and Draught
800 ~							
700	V						
600	IV	A					
500					infilling		
400	III	B/C					
300		D					
200	II	E, F (not excavated)					
100 -	I						

The Sacrifice Ceremony

The main tenets of the iconography leading up to the formative years of AD 650 were firmly anchored in warfare and human sacrifice (Bourget 2016:329), and the theme that dominated and defined the iconography of the penultimate Moche IV phase was by far the Sacrifice Ceremony. From fine-line depictions on stirrup-vessels to the murals of Pañamarca, Nepeña and El Brujo, Chicama (Bonavia 1961; Trever 2017) this ubiquitous theme the transformation of warriors into captives and captives into sacrificial “victims” by a stock of ritual male and female characters or actors (charmingly named persona A, B, C, D and E, see figure 11). Alternately dubbed the Presentation Theme, the central act surmounting the scene is the presentation of a cup or goblet (upper register) containing the drawn blood of a bound captive (lower register) (Bourget 2001; Castillo 2000; Hocquenghem 1980). Moche goblets similar to that presented to Persona A have been found at other *huaca* contexts while also testing positive for human blood (Benson 2012:74; Bourget and Newman 1998). A single fragment of a stem of a goblet assumed to be similar to that in the Sacrifice Ceremony was also recovered from a nearby ceramics workshop (Bernier 2005)

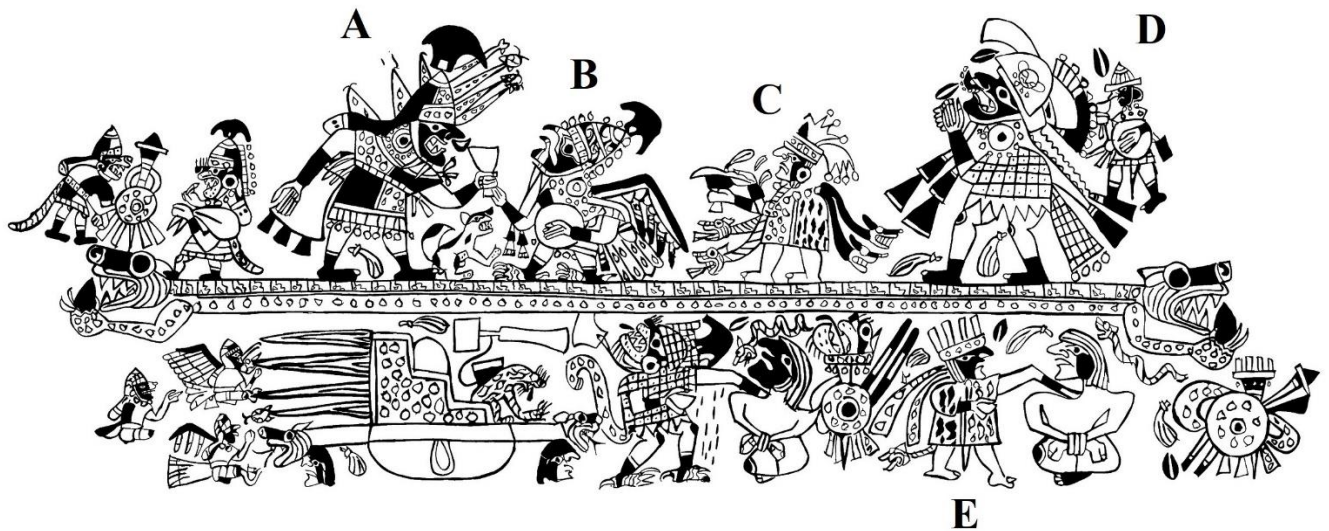


figure 11 The Sacrifice Ceremony also known as the Presentations Theme showing Persona A receiving a goblet presumably containing human blood that has been drawn from a bound captive by persona E. Separating the scene, an elongated, double-headed and eared serpent can be seen clutching and consuming what is believed to be human hearts. Drawing by Donna McClelland. The Christopher B. Donnan and Donna McClelland Moche Archives, Images Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University. Washington, DC.

As mentioned in **Chapter 2**, the watershed discovery of the tombs at Sipán ushered in a new era for the interpretation of Moche iconography. As the personas in the Sacrifice Ceremony were

identified with high-ranking individuals buried at Sipán and other *huaca* contexts, the iconography was moved out of the realm of mythological fiction and proved a rich source for identification of Moche rituals in and around *huacas*. The extent to which the Sacrifice Ceremony and its associated personas echoed throughout the distribution of the Moche culture seemed to confirm the assumptions of archaeologists that the Moche represented a multi-valley state that reigned through a religious state cult and large-scale and public display of human sacrifice as per the Sacrifice Ceremony (Butters and Donnan 1994:12; Castillo 2014; Moseley 1992; Quilter and Koons 2012:132). In what follows, I will take closer look at the performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony and the associated sacrifice of human bodies within the architecture of Huaca de la Luna and how this might indicate an underlying ontology that went deeper than religious and political smokescreens. I will be looking at architecture of Huaca de la Luna as the body of a living and feeding *huaca* composed of organs dedicated to different metabolic functions. Finally, I argue that the feeding of the *huaca* and by extension that of the bodies of humans, *huacas* and the world writ associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony and Huaca de Luna constituted a precise, ordered and territorialized becoming in line with the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism that seemingly successfully and efficiently allowed for growth of the *huaca* and the Moche culture.

The Sacrifice Ceremony and Platform I and the Main Plaza

It is generally accepted that the Sacrifice Ceremony represented the culmination of a highly organized and lengthy series of ritual events which transformed warriors into sacrificial bodies, dismembered and mutilated limbs before the crowning and sanguineous *piece de resistance*.

1. The battle: warriors into captives (outside the huaca)
2. processions of warriors and captives (to and within the *huaca*)
3. preparation of offerings (victims/torture) (Main Plaza)
4. Sacrifice (extraction of blood) (plaza 3c)
5. Presentation of blood (platform I)

(Tufinio 2008; Uceda 2008; Uceda and Tufinio 2003: Table 20.22; Wiersema 2010)

It has been widely suggested that Huaca de la Luna and *huaca* contexts with similar configurations were intended to accommodate the activities and characters portrayed in and associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony (Morales 2003; Tufinio 2008; Uceda 2001a, 2001b; Uceda and Tufinio 2003; Wiersema 2010).

Platform I and Main Plaza provide ample and amphitheatrical space for the staging of large, ritual displays (Tufinio 2008:456; Uceda and Tufinio 2003; Wiersema 2010:152). Processional routes within the complex as implied by murals of paraded captives and winding ramps from the Main Plaza are directed towards an elevated terrace on top of Platform I's eastern and tallest side (towards Cerro Blanco, figure 12). From this overlooking terrace the more insular and visually restricted parts of the *huaca* – plaza 3a, 3c and the lower and enwalled level of Platform I's southern portion - are easily accessed through baffled entries (entries with a wall concealing or baffling the interior space) and narrow ramps and passages that maintain the secluded, restricted and compartmentalized integrity of the interconnected spaces of the interior. The elevated terrace itself, however, is clearly and prominently in view from the Main Plaza and at least partially from the Urban Nucleus and Huaca del Sol to the west (Wiersema 2010, 2016). An altar or dais covered by an open and gabled structure perks conspicuously on the terrace's eastern edge (figure 12) - essentially ensuring that the activities associated with the structure are visible from the Main Plaza. This structure formed part of the ritual architecture at least as far back as the construction of building C around 400 AD (Morales 2003; Uceda and Tufinio 2003).

These features of the ceremonial complex lead researchers to the suggestion that the presentation of the goblet of human blood as per the Sacrifice Ceremony most likely was performed on top of Platform I's elevated terrace – prominently in view of spectators assembled at the Main Plaza.

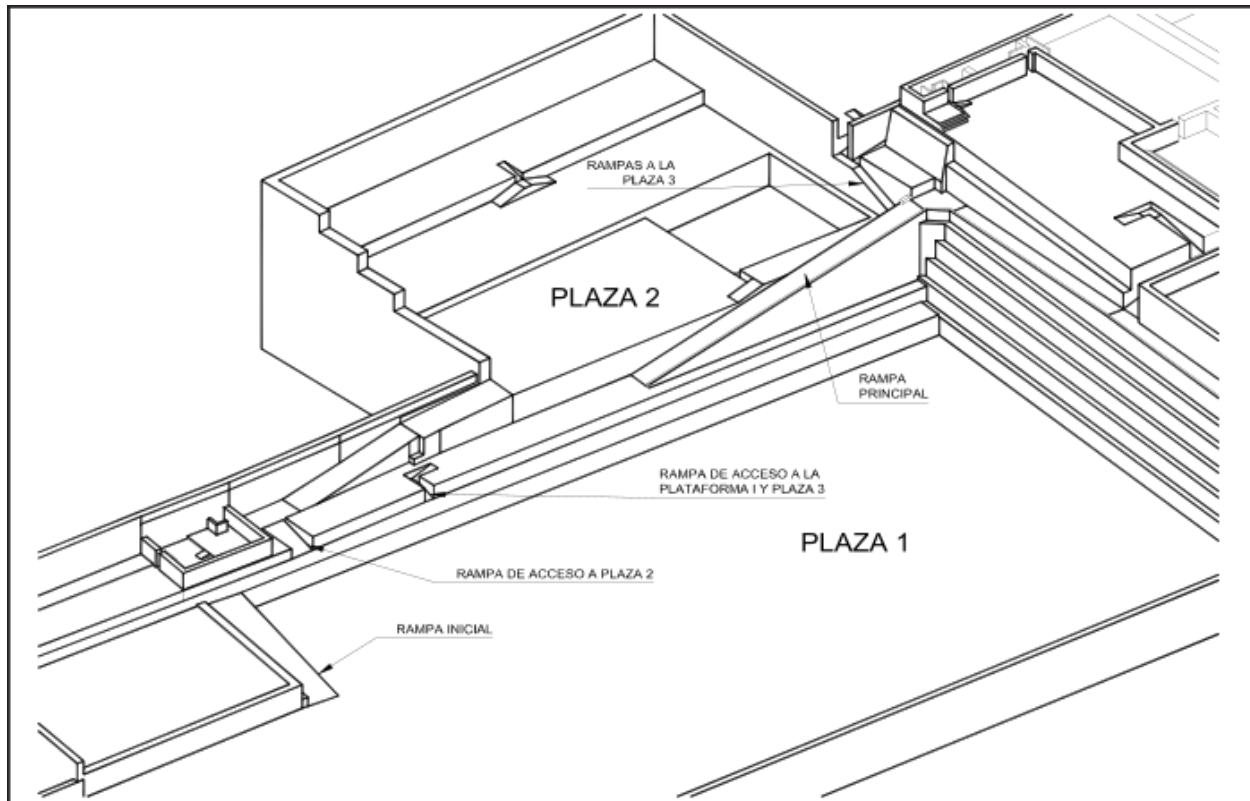


figure 12 Ramps leading up to Platform I, Plaza 3 and 2. In the top right corner, the elevated terraces looms conspicuously over the Main Plaza (Plaza 1).

With the close association between the Sacrifice Ceremony and the ritual architectonics of Huaca de la Luna in mind it is tempting to equate the serpent-like panel separating the two registers with the elevated and conspicuous position of Platform I. Indeed, an eared undulating serpent shaped in relief runs across the façade of the wide ramp leading directly to the “stage” of Platform I (see figure 13 and Jordán 2016; Uceda 2001b:60) and the stepped figures repeated on the dorsal half of the serpent in the Sacrifice Ceremony may have served as an iconographical shorthand for important ritual architecture (Chicoine 2003). In fact, the ramp connecting the Main Plaza with Platform I (and Plaza 3c) was probably lined with such stepped architectural ‘embellishments’ (Wiersema 2010). But I think there is more going on than simply iconographic *representation* of sacred architecture, something echoing the Andean ontologies of hungry *huacas* (see previous chapter).

A Living and Feeding Huaca de la Luna

Variably referred to as the ‘bicephalous arch’ or the ‘eared serpent,’ this double-headed serpent which is seen separating the registers of the Sacrifice Ceremony is a recurring and enigmatic

figure in the iconography of the Moche (see figure 11). So much so that it has been differentially suggested the insignia of a Moche state religion centered at Huacas de Moche (Donnan 2010) or as a part of a strongly hierarchized, Mochican pantheon (Makowski 2003). Alternately, Bourget (2016:28-29) links the elongated and snake-like form to a dark vein of andesite running horizontally across Cerro Blanco. Others see this prominent figure in relation to the starry river of the Milky Way and the arching rainbow which emerges from the drizzling rains (Hocquenghem 1989; Lavallée 1970).

However, I do not think we need not consider it a question of competing or incommensurable interpretations (see Uceda 2008 for similar sentiments). The myriad of forms attributed to the eared serpent are in keeping with the variegated embodiment of *huacas* in colonial and contemporary accounts (see **chapter 5**). In fact, when considering the Sacrifice Ceremony in relation to Huaca de la Luna, I believe that it is not only the material architecture, ie. the elevated stage of Platform I, which these ostentatiously dressed actors are standing on, but the feeding and living *huaca* consuming its alimentary and sacrificial offerings. Indeed, this sentiment seems to be evocatively expressed by the cephalous ends of the eared serpent clutching and consuming what appears to be human hearts (Zighelboim 1995).

Moreover, I do not think it is a mere coincidence that the consumption of human hearts by the eared serpent or *huaca* is synchronous with Persona A's imbibement of human blood in the Sacrifice Ceremony. In fact, it is very much in line with the notion of the mutual feeding of humans and *huacas* which has been and still is central to the ontological understanding of the relationship between humans and *huacas* by Andeans (see chapter 5).

Thus, I suggest that the crowning event (sequence 5) depicted in the Sacrifice Ceremony and performed on top of Platform I reiterates central and ontological notions that are still present in contemporary Kallawayá communities and were expressed by the adherents of the colonial resistance movement of the Taki Onqoy (**chapter 5**). In short, I maintain that Huaca de la Luna may on comparable terms be understood as a living and embodied being who had to be sustained

A Metabolic Organ: Plaza 3c

If my suggestion above holds water and Huaca de la Luna during the ritual performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony might be understood as a living and feeding *huaca* in the act of consuming human sacrifices, we might also be dealing with *huaca* that traditionally has been understood as a body composed of organs (See Mount Kaata and Kallawaya, **chapter 5**).

In this section I will look closer at how the sacrificial treatment of human bodies was organized within the architecture of Huaca de la Luna. The ultimate aim is to show how the organized sequence of sacrificial events and transformations of human bodies (sequence 1 - 5, see above) related to the Sacrifice Ceremony was performed in distinct and discrete yet interconnected spaces. More specifically I will be relating the evidence of humans sacrifice within Plaza 3c to the performance of human sacrifice and the Sacrifice Ceremony. I will be taking a closer look at the significant evidence of exsanguination, dismemberment and defleshing at Plaza 3c and how these the treatment of sacrificial bodies related to the Sacrifice Ceremony. It will eventually be argued that the compartmentalization and striation of space and function in relation to Plaza 3c and the sacrificial treatment of human bodies may be understood in terms of the metabolic organs of a living Huaca de la Luna digesting and consuming it offerings of human bodies in a territorialized fashion. Moreover, the available evidence of human sacrifice at Plaza 3c suggests that this sacrificial treatment or feeding was performed in a consistent manner for almost three centuries (270 – 320 years).

By most accounts, the first sequence (1) of the Sacrifice Ceremony would have been performed by warriors armed with maces and shields battling in wild terrain outside of the *huaca* in combat that emphasized the taking of captives for sacrifice (Alva et al. 1993; Benson 2012; Castillo 2000; Quilter 2002; Uceda and Tufinio 2003). Thereafter, the vanquished warriors would have been led in processions to the *huaca* and, once inside, most likely paraded in the same direction as the bound captives decorating the friezes of the northern and eastern Main Plaza walls (see figure 13) before eventually scaling the ramps up from the Main Plaza (Wiersema 2010, 2016) (**sequence 2**). From their entering the *huaca* and moving up the ramp, the captives would possibly have passed through a precinct situated in the north-western corner of the Main Plaza where the captives could have been fed hallucinogens and other psychotropic substances in preparation for sacrifice (**sequence 3**) (Uceda 2008:175). At the top, the principal ramp diverges in two separate directions at the eastern corner just beneath Platform I (see figure 12). In the

westward direction already covered above, the ramp decorated with the frieze of the eared serpent ascends towards Platform I. Another, much smaller and less conspicuous ramp turns east before heading into the interior of the *huaca*. I find it likely that the central characters of the Sacrifice Ceremony would have climbed the westward and much wider and prominent ramp prior to the culminating event (**sequence 5**) either in private preparation or as a public ceremonious event as there are no side- or back-entrances to platform I or Huaca de la Luna in general (Chapdelaine 2011; Uceda and Tufinio 2003). The captives, on the other hand, would plausibly have entered the *huaca* interior in the eastward direction towards Plaza 3c where preparatory and sacrificial treatment of their bodies would have taken place (**sequence 4**).

Upon accessing the *huaca* through the eastern ramp, the prisoners would have been directed through a winding, narrow and surely ominous L-shaped corridor flanked by high walls before arriving at Plaza 3c (see figure 14 and figure 14). These architectural features provide the interior with a sonic (see Scullin 2015 for sonic analysis of Plaza 3c in relation to the Main Plaza) and visual seclusion from the boisterous flurry of activities associated with the Main Plaza and Platform I all the while concealing the actual sacrificial events taking part at Plaza 3c (**sequence 4 and possibly 3**). The foreboding effects this would have had on bound and denuded captives possibly under the influence of hallucinogenic psychotropic who were destined to sacrifice and mutilation can only be guessed at. But from the perspective of onlookers, who as argued possibly understood the *huaca* as living and feeding, it could also have given the impression of the *huaca* devouring the captives one-by-one as they funnel into the narrow ramp and vanish into the long corridor (see figure 14).

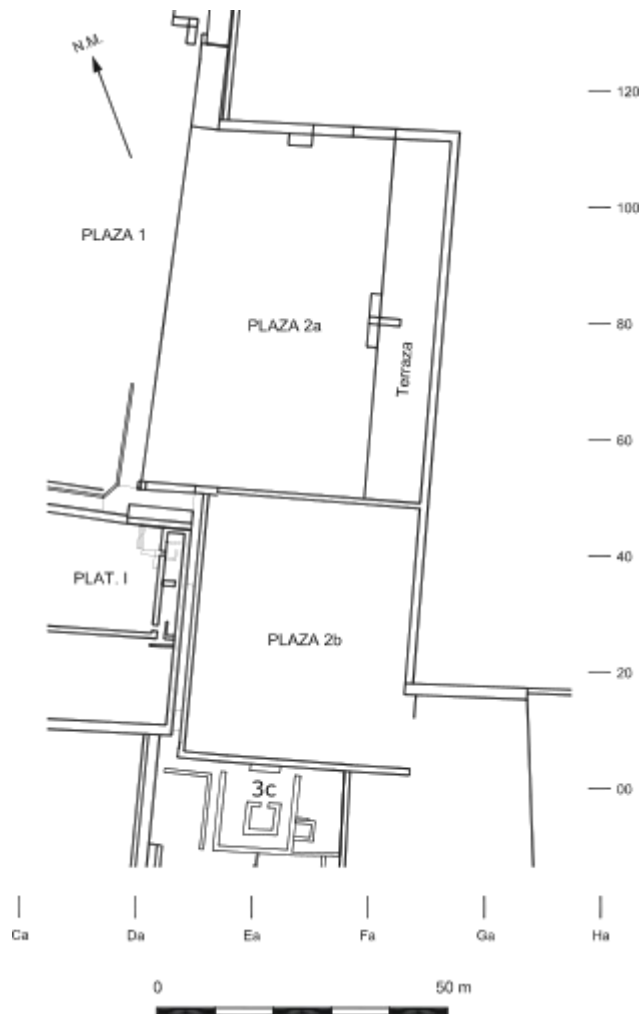


figure 14 ramp and corridor leading to Plaza 3C (adapted from Uceda and Tufinio 2003:190)

Plaza 3c itself encompasses two internal rooms or patios separated by a south-north running wall with an access or opening situated at the north end (Uceda and Tufinio 2003). In the center of the westmost room stood a gabled and enclosed structure (recinto 1, Plaza 3c) with exterior walls decorated in motifs of sacrifice and blood-letting (Uceda 2008). Facing the centrally placed opening, a low wall constricts visual access from the opposing banquet that runs along the northern wall of the patio. In front of this wall an altar and a small ramp would presumably facilitate sacrifice of and drawing of blood from captives (see figure 15 and Tufinio 2008).

The easternmost patio of Plaza 3c, i.e. towards Cerro Blanco, is where most of the sacrificial remains from 3c were excavated. Around 25 complete or nearly complete skeletons, 46 partial skeletons and hundreds of isolated and co-mingled bone elements along with numerous scattered ceramic fragments were recovered from under the plaza floor and the above fill (Verano et al.

2001). A minimum number of individuals (MNI) count based on left femora suggests that some 33 individuals were deposited above and below the plaza floor (Hamilton 2016) – however, based on the left ilium the MNI reached 37 (Phillips 2009:46). Radiocarbon dating of human and cultural remains suggests that the rituals of sacrifice associated with Plaza 3c most likely were performed between 230 – 550 AD (Hamilton 2016) – around three centuries!

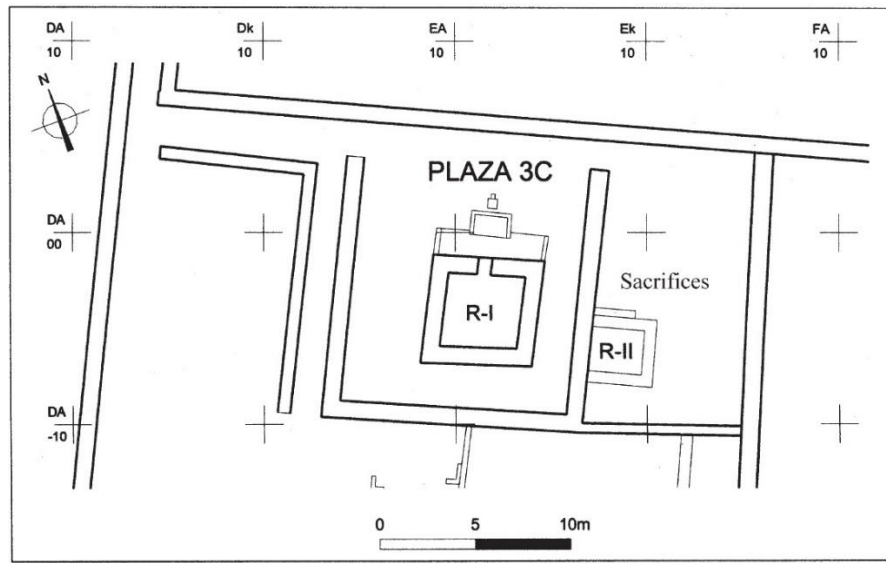


figure 15 Map showing Plaza 3c and with its two internal sections or patios. R-I refers to the gabled struture or recinto in front of which a low wall and altar can be seen. The human remains of Plaza 3c were located in the eastern (from Verano 2008)

Despite the wide temporal span, there are several important continuities among the sacrificial remains. The demography appears to be exclusively well-fed and muscular males between 15 – 40 years old (Verano 2000, 2008). Their role as combat-hardened warriors is attested by the numerous fractures on different skeletal elements consistent with interpersonal conflict. Perhaps most convincingly in this regard are “parry fractures” on the left ulna of several individuals (Verano 2000, 2001). Several individuals also appeared to have fractures in early stages of healing at the time of their sacrifice and death. This suggests that several weeks up to a month had passed from their capture to their ultimate sacrifice and gives testament to the temporal length of the associated rituals (ie. **sequence 1 - 4**, Verano 2001, 2008). This pattern of injury and demography is also observable in the later context of Plaza 3a and points to the centrality of (ritualized) combat in Moche rituals no matter the external circumstances (**see next chapter**).

But the most prevalent of injuries is represented by transverse cuts on the cervical vertebrae indicating that the principal focus of the sacrificial program at Plaza 3c was the slitting of throats

and to a lesser degree decapitation (Hamilton 2016; Verano 2008) – both features depicted in the Sacrifice Ceremony. The lower register of the Sacrifice Ceremony clearly depicts bound, nude and seated or kneeling captives having their throats slit and the spurting blood collected by ritual officiants in a cup (**sequence 4**). Indeed, the crowning event of the ritual sequence, at least in terms of the public spectacles, would have been the presentation of blood collected in goblets (**sequence 5**). Given these the injuries and the altar placed in front of the gabled structure, it is generally assumed that the crucial and central act of exsanguination was performed in the western patio of Plaza 3c (Morales 2003; Tufinio 2008).

Persona C would then most likely have carried the goblet containing human blood back the corridor and, using the northern side of principal ramp adorned with the frieze of the eared serpent, ceremoniously ascended the ritual stage on top of Platform I in full view of spectators for the crowning event of imbibement by Persona A.

However, the ritual process of transformation of the sacrificial bodies is not finalized with exsanguination. Cut marks towards muscle attachment areas of the bones indicate that the bodies were stripped of their flesh prior to being deposited in Plaza 3c's easternmost patio (Verano 2005, 2008). By leaving in place the connective tissue around the joints, the skeletons and dismembered limbs were kept intact even after defleshing. This explains the highly articulated state of the skeletal remains encountered during excavation of the easternmost patio of Plaza 3c (Verano et al. 2001). It is suggested that the skeletonized bodies were hung by ropes from important ceremonial structures or used as marionettes in a skeletal *dance of the dead* (Benson 2012:91; Verano 2008) – similar yet decidedly less mobile displays of dancing human remains are to be found in sediment 2, Plaza 3a (see **next chapter**).

If we are dealing with a living and feeding *huaca* as expressed by the Taki Onkoy and the communities of Kallawayaya as argued in **chapter 5**, this rendering of sacrificial bodies into skeletal remains could be interpreted in terms of the *huaca* having consumed its offering. As the spectators gathered at the Main Plaza would see complete, even if profusely mangled and tortured, bodies entering the *huaca* and eventually exiting as stripped skeleton the spectacle could have conveyed the impression of the *huaca* “spitting out” the undigested remains. All the while, the consumption or digestion itself churns hidden and silently along in the background,

the organs working the way as expected and never needing to be called into question – in contrast to the later Plaza 3a (see **next chapter**).

But, more importantly to my mind, the fact that the sacrificial event (**sequence 4**) itself was sequestered and hidden esoterically within the *huaca* (Chapdelaine 2011), reveals that it was not simply background mechanics in a show designed to dazzle and inculcate spectators and inhabitants of Huaca de Moche (cf. Bourget 2014, 2016). As I see it, the layout and interdependent function of the plazas, patios and platforms reveal an ontological engagement that runs deeper than «stagecrafts» (cf. Swenson 2011) and points to a living and feeding *huaca* replete with metabolic and digestive organs.

Deleuzo-Guattarian Organism

Here I will relate how the consumption of sacrificial bodies by the *huaca* at Plaza 3c and in the Sacrifice Ceremony can be understood in terms of a territorialized, striated and Deleuzo-Guattarian organism. I ultimately argue that by organizing and territorializing the sacrifice and feeding and digestion of sacrificial victims of Huaca de la Luna, controlled and consistent results were expected and most likely delivered during the centuries of human sacrifice and flourishing of Moche culture.

Perhaps the most obvious Deleuzo-Guattarian feature of Plaza 3c is its striated, territorialized compartmentalization of space and function. Measuring 23 m x 14 m it is not only the smallest plaza at Huaca de la Luna but is further subdivided into the eastern and western areas with their own respective *recintos* or precincts (see *figure 15*). Still, Plaza 3c along with its recursive subdivisions, defines and structures sacrificial space and function. The meat is excised (consumed or digested) to the point of skeletonization and the remains are deposited in the eastern patio closest to the *cerro*. The exsanguinated blood is “pumped” from Plaza 3c sacrifices to the Platform I and the Sacrifice Ceremony by the female Persona C ceremoniously carrying the goblet. Thus Plaza 3c, like the other spaces and functions of Huaca de la Luna associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony (see above), could be compared a biological and Deleuzo-Guattarian organ that is defined by a striated and territorialized organization (**see chapter 3**).

The transformations of warriors into sacrificial remains associated with the performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony were seemingly compartmentalized and formalized within the territorialized, striated and interconnected spaces of Huaca de la Luna. From battles outside of Huaca de la

Luna (outside of the *huaca*) to the exsanguination at Plaza 3c (**sequence 4**) and the presentation and imbibement of the goblet (**sequence 5**), the sequential performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony (sequences 1- 5) and the associated sacrificial transformation of human bodies reveals an organized and territorialized understanding and becoming of the *huaca*. Understanding the different spaces and functions of Huaca de la Luna as a Deleuzo-Guattarian organism – a body with interlinked and striated organs.

To get a sense of just how territorialized and striated this becoming was, the performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony within the distinct architectural spaces of Huaca de la Luna can fruitfully even if metaphorically compared with distillation processes used in contexts of modern chemistry. In fact, I argue that one can neatly transpose the different spaces and sequences associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony over a laboratory diagram of a distillation process (figure 16). The different spaces of Huaca de la Luna relating to the steps involved in transforming warriors into sacrificial bodies were to a significant extent compartmentalized and organized. Warriors were sequentially transformed into sacrificial bodies and blood was ultimately collected in goblets through the ordered series of events associated with Sacrifice Ceremony and spaces of Huaca de la Luna. Like the laboratory setup of an distillation process (figure 16), the open spaces of the Main Plaza and Platform II work like wide containers heating up and transforming the molar compounds through intensive transformation. The prisoners are then pushed through winding ramps similar to how condensation is passed through tubes during distillation. The captives who were eventually sacrificed in the striated and secluded space of Plaza 3c had their blood exsanguinated and extracted into goblets as pure, molecular and vital fluid. Finally, for the crowning event of imbibement of blood by the main characters or actors of the Sacrifice Ceremony, the blood is extracted as into goblets as pure, molecular and vital fluid: human blood. It is, in the Deleuzo-Guattarian sense, a breakdown from the molar (the compounded body) to the molecular (the component blood): a territorialized deterritorialization of human bodies into sustenance.

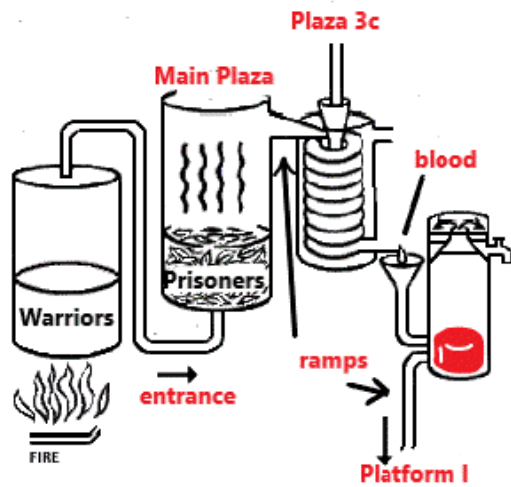


figure 16 The territorialized and structured performance of the sacrificial sequences of the Sacrifice Ceremony within the architecture of Huaca de la Luna transposed over a laboratory diagram of a distillation process.

While this comparison is purely analogical it is yet a highly instructive and heuristic way of conceiving the becoming of humans and *huacas* in centuries leading up to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD. It points to a type of becoming that embraces the territorialized and striated tendencies of the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism (see **chapter 3**).

From the imbibement of blood at Platform I in view of the Main Plaza (sequence 5) and the exsanguination (sequence 4) and deposition of human bodies within Plaza 3c, the *huaca* of Huaca de la Luna is ritually nourished through and in territorialized striated space that is characteristic of the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism. The feeding of Huaca de la Luna and the internal organization of its organs are clearly defined and compartmentalized in the different spaces and functions of the plazas, platforms, precincts interconnected through winding corridors and ramps. The human sacrifices are also performed in a consistent and uniform manner possible for as long as three centuries leading up to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD (Hamilton 2016).

This, in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, possibly suggests a material suppression or inhibiting of the lines of flight (**chapter 3**). Unfettering lines of flight of the world and opening up to change and its propensity for instability potentially poses grave dangers - something which modern *curanderos* and Andeans are well aware of in their careful and often fearful engagement with the *huacas* of *los gentiles* (the heathens of the past, see **chapter 5**). Thus, the striation, containment

sequestering of the sacrificial and metabolic activities within the interior of the *huaca* at Plaza 3a could be understood in terms of a fearful engagement with ontological forces of *huacas* and by extension the world – a need to constrain, limit the potentially contagious and destructive forces with which the Mochican specialists were working.

Considering Huaca de la Luna in terms of the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism also reveals how through organizing and territorializing the sequences and spaces of ritual performance, controlled and consistent results could be expected. In fact, the living and feeding *huaca* effectively grows as new edifices (B/C - A) are added to Huaca de la Luna. The territorialized sacrifice and feeding of human bodies within the organized spaces or organs of Huaca de la Luna could have sustained impression of an “metabolizing and pupating *organism*” (emphasis my own, Swenson 2015b:692) that only grew in response periodic ENSO-events. I thus suggest that the ritualized and large-scale sacrifice of humans and feeding of Huaca de la Luna were in effect controlled and territorialized reterritorializations of the bodies of humans, huacas and the world writ large!

If feeding huacas entails feeding humans as expressed by the Kallawayá communities and the Taki Onqoy, the controlled, organized and uniform feeding of Huaca de la Luna thus reveals the precise manner in which space and rituals are entrained in order to maintain the stability of bodies humans, huacas and the world writ large. By carefully feeding the *huaca* with the bodies of humans worldly sequentially and precisely digested or metabolized within the *huaca*-body a worldly stability that lasted for three centuries and fueled the staggering and artistic proliferation of Moche culture on the Peruvian coast. “[S]taying stratified – organized, signified, subjected – is not the worst that can happen,” indeed (Deleuze and Guattari 2004:161).

This possibly vindicated and confirmed the successful provision of sustenance ritual and sacrificial activities associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony. In the three centuries in which the Sacrifice Ceremony, the organs of the *huaca* was exceedingly organized and highly effective with little need for fundamental changes to architecture Huaca de la Luna. However

In effect this demonstrates that, in years leading up to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD, Huaca de la Luna could have been considered a living organism that consumed and digested its human offerings in a territorialized and organized manner within the striated and interconnected spaces or organs.

Conclusion

In this chapter it was maintained that the performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony in and around the decorated and multi-spaced Huaca de la Luna conformed to an Andean ontology (see **chapter 5**) of living and feeding *huacas*. The iconography of the Sacrifice Ceremony seemingly emphasized warfare, ritual sacrifice of humans and the consumption of human blood during large-scale and ostentatious rituals on and around Huaca de la Luna. It was argued that the feeding eared-serpent on which the central characters or actors of the Sacrifice Ceremony stand potentially indicates notions of living and feeding *huacas* which may still be found expressed among the communities at Kallawaya at Mount Kaata.

The lengthy and interconnected ritual sequences pertaining to the Sacrifice Ceremony were then related to different and dedicated spaces of Huaca de la Luna's architecture. Considered in terms of a body composed of metabolic organs, it was argued ritual transformation of warriors into sacrificial bodies and blood could be understood as consumption and digestion. Plaza 3c, where captives were sacrificed and their blood was drawn in preparation for the crowning event of the Sacrifice Ceremony, was in light of this suggested to constitute one of the metabolic organs from where exsanguinated blood eventually "pumped" and where the defleshed and digested remains of human sacrifices were deposited. Humans would enter the interior of the *huaca* as compounded bodies and exit as component blood and skeletal remains conforming to Andean notion of *huacas* as living and feeding beings.

Moreover, the manner in which this ritual sacrifice or consumption was performed within architecture or anatomy of Huaca de la Luna was characterized as territorialized and striated. The organs of the *huaca*, especially Plaza 3c, and their role in transforming human warriors into sacrificial bodies as per the Sacrifice Ceremony were clearly defined and ordered within the striated, territorialized and compartmentalized distribution of function and space. Thus, the body of the *huaca* and its metabolic organs could be said to operate in line with Deleuzo-Guattarian organism: organized, territorialized and striated. The potential for creative and/or disruptive lines of flight was inhibited through the imposition of organization and the controlled feeding of the body of Huaca de la Luna - which only grew for every added edifice. Finally, it was argued that the flow of becoming shared analogical features with distillation processes in modern chemistry. It was a precise, efficient and, considering the growth of the Huaca from building (F, E,) D – A, successful reterritorialization of bodies of humans and *huacas*.

In sum, in the three centuries in which the Sacrifice Ceremony was performed in and around Huaca de la Luna the feeding of the *huaca* was exceedingly organized and highly effective as there was little need for fundamental changes to Huaca de la Luna. However, this territorialized becoming of humans and *huacas* would in the following century of climatic upheaval become as disorganized and deterritorialized as the world itself.

7. Crisis and Plaza 3a: The Body without Organism

In this chapter the later construction of the adjoining Plaza 3a and Platform II the many layers human sacrifice which accumulated over the century of use (550 – 650 AD) will be explored in detail. Built and used in a time of profound and protracted environmental pressures - prolonged periods of draught and severe ENSO-events (see **chapter 4**) – the archaeological remains and phases of use will be linked to significant and dramatic changes in the Moche world. As with the Sacrifice Ceremony and Plaza 3c accounted for and analyzed in **chapter 6**, the treatment of human and cultural remains will be linked to a becoming of humans and *huacas* that was mediated by the mutual provision of food. However, in stark contrast to ritual engagements with Huaca de la Luna leading up to the disruptive century of 550 – 650 AD, this becoming would eventually become as deterritorialized and disorganized as the climatic conditions that framed its use. In fact, it will be argued that this deterritorialization and its associated release of lines of flight was intentionally invoked to find creative and experimental ways to reterritorialize the failing body and organs of humans, *huacas* and the world writ large.

Construction Phase

Perhaps one of the most dramatic examples of human sacrifices known from Moche contexts, Plaza 3a and the overlooking Platform II temporally correlate to the final building phase (edificio/building A) in the history of the Old Temple complex of Huaca de la Luna (Bourget and Millaire 2000; Uceda and Tufinio 2003) – see **Chronology, chapter 6**.

While the construction of Platform II would have necessitated a staggering amount of 980,000 adobes, not counting the bricks composing the 6 -7 meter tall north and south perimeter walls of the plaza – the tallest freestanding walls at Huaca de la Luna - Bourget (2016:23) has calculated that ten groups of builders could have constructed this addition to Huaca de la Luna over a relatively short span of time (196 days). Naturally, these numbers are only estimates by the author, but the efficient manner in which the platform and plaza was constructed underscores how Plaza 3a might have been the “outcome of a sudden decision made under very specific circumstances” (Bourget 2016:23) – a type of spontaneous formation one could say.

While the assembly could have been hastily performed, Plaza 3a and the overlooking Platform II temporally correlate to the final and most laborious building phase (edificio/building A) in the history of the Old Temple complex of Huaca de la Luna (Bourget and Millaire 2000; Uceda and Tufinio 2003).¹ Thus, is correlated with the addition of a new plaza-platform complex – which in of itself is a curious and arduous addition - during a time of profound climatic and social upheaval.

Extending towards Cerro Blanco, Plaza 3a and the adjoining Platform II lies directly east of Plaza 3b and 3c and has a length of 48m and a width of 20m to 33m resulting in a combined area of 1,930 m² (Backo 2016:68; Bourget 1998:47; 2016:19). In line with many other Andean *huacas* Plaza 3a and platform II is constructed around a rocky outcrop protruding from plaza floor and platform – which had been deliberately elaborated with boulders and rocks (Bourget 1998:46 - 47; Topic 2015; Uceda and Tufinio 2003:201).

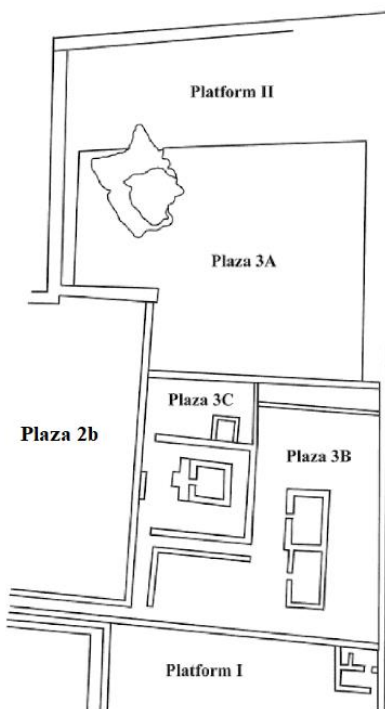


figure 17 Overview if Plaza 3a, 3b, 3c and 2b. Adapted from Bourget (2016)

¹ Uceda and Tufinio (2003: 217, table 20.1) have calculated that building phase A alone would have necessitated 166 240 man-days in order to construct, transport and place the 4 299 300 adobe bricks.

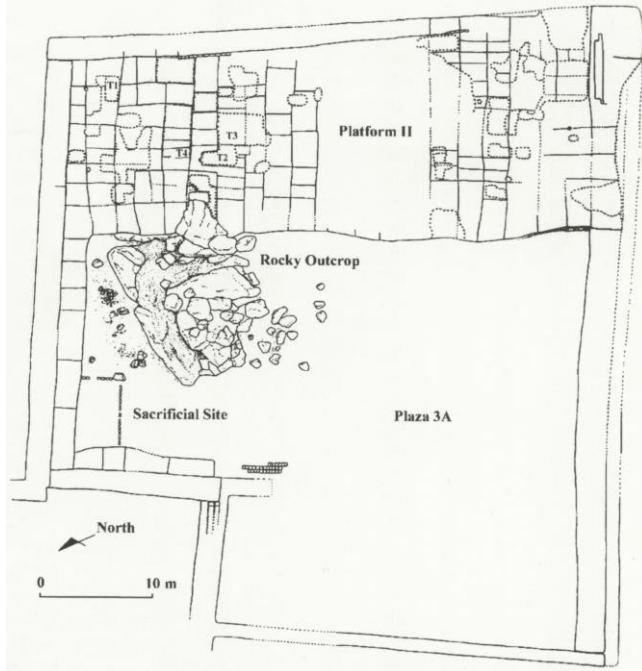


figure 18 Layout of of Plaza 3a and platform II, Huaca de la Luna. from Bourget (2001:92)

The Sacrificial Layers

Following the 1995 excavation directed under Bourget (1997); (2000) and subsequent publications (Bourget 1998, 2001, 2010, 2016), nine stratigraphically distinct layers of sand and sediment were discerned at Plaza 3a (see Table 1). This is including the bedrock on which plaza 3a and platform II rest, but not the remaining layers (Sand 2.1 to 2.3.9) which were arbitrarily defined. From the earliest depositional layer of Sand 4, ie. around the construction of plaza 3a and platform II, alternating layers of sand and sedimentation continue right up until the final, post-occupational layer Sediment 1. These intermittent layers of muddy and thick sedimentation layers are, in the hyperarid deserts of coastal Peru highly indicative of periods of profuse precipitation – ie. most likely strong ENSO-events - interspersed with dry periods (see **chapter 4**). The human sacrifices encapsulated in matrices of windblown sand are closely linked to the sacrifices performed directly in the dried mud (see **Sand 2**) and would have been performed sometime shortly after the muddy sedimentation layers had dried from the scorching sun (Bourget 2005:74 - 76).

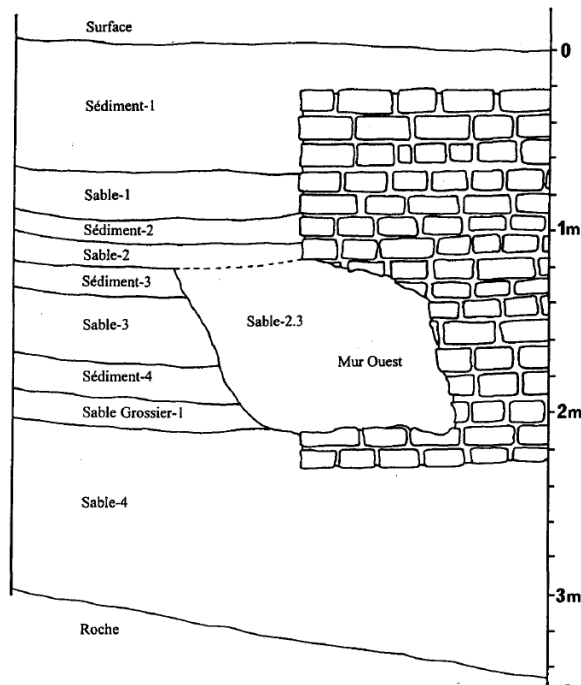


figure 19 the stratigraphy Plaza 3a showing the opening cut into the west wall (right) of the Huaca de la Luna (Bourget 1998: fig. 4).

Sand 4

Prior to the construction of the walls and platform, the first, deep and naturally deposited layer Sand 4, directly resting on top of the bedrock, had most likely been leveled to accommodate for the steep incline of the underlying bedrock (see figure 3 and Bourget 2016:34 - 35).

Once the walls and platform of the plaza had been raised, three children in the ages between 12 months to 3 years were wrapped in textiles (Backo 2012:174) and buried in the matrix of Sand 4 (Bourget 2016; Bourget and Millaire 2000). Two children had their heads missing which were likely detached from body following extensive decomposition rather than forcible decapitation as is the case of many adult sacrifices. No cut marks or injuries indicative of decapitation or perimortem trauma were present on any of the remains (Backo 2012:175). However, the skull of child Sa-4.1 bore evidence of periostitis (porotic hyperostosis) with severe deformation of the cranium. While Bourget (2016:35; 415, 1998:56) suggests that the deformations resulted from a congenital case of periostitis or osteomyelitis, I argue that there are considerations which preclude this explanation and point to a backdrop of environmental and societal disruption (see below)

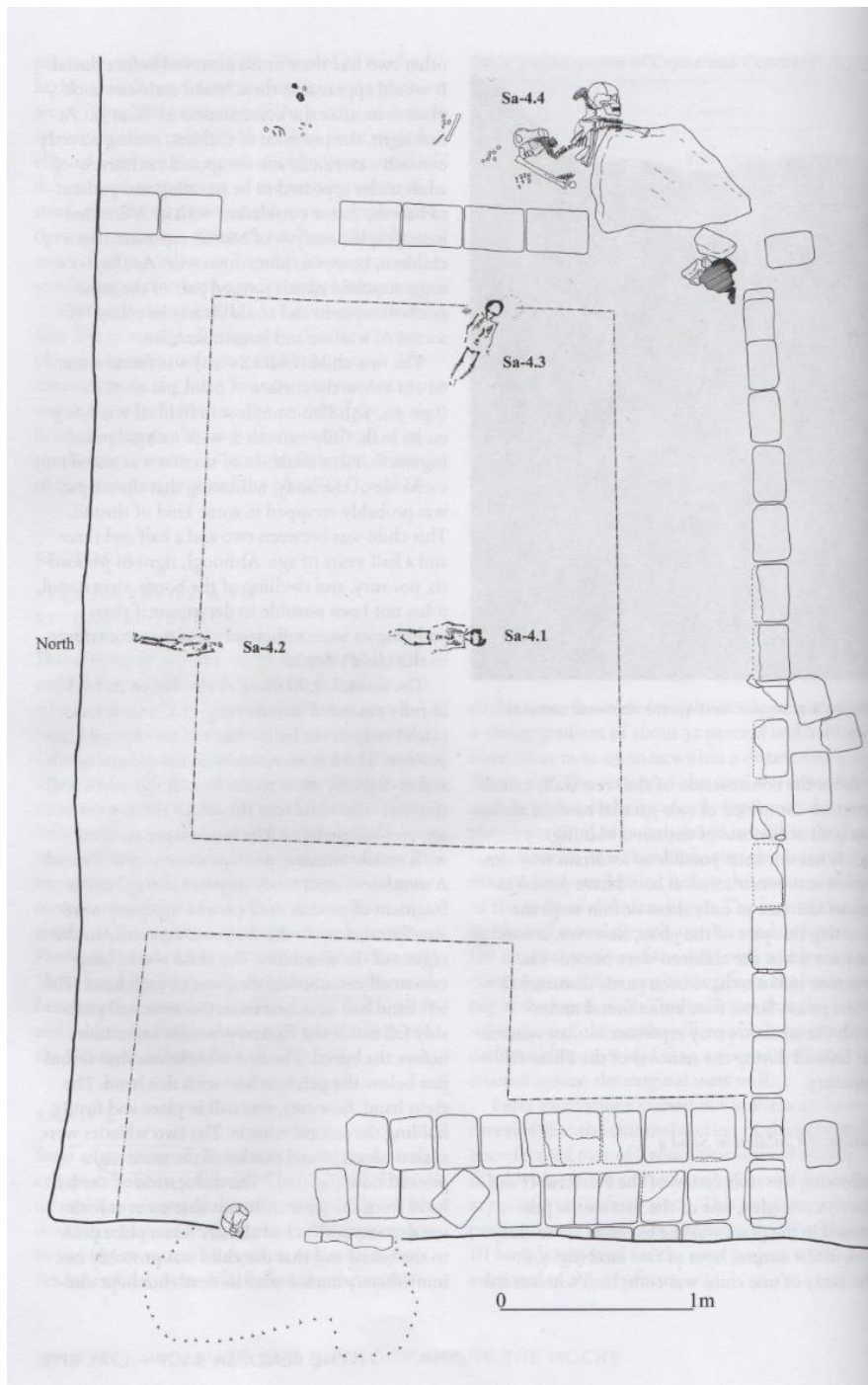


figure 20 Overview of Sand 4 and the three children buried within sandy matrix. The dotted lines which cuts into the west wall of huaca (bottom) represents an opening cut into the huaca and is associated with the chronologically later layer of Sand 2 (see below). Drawing by Jorge Sachun from (Bourget 2016:36)

Sediment 4

Following the burial of the children a short but intense precipitation event ensued creating the first sedimentation layer in the sequence, Sediment 4. The rain and slight declivity of the plaza

floor collected the runoff from the surrounding adobe walls into a pool of mud concentrated above the buried children (buried in the underlying Sand 4) in the northwestern corner (Bourget 1998:55). Around this muddy layer and the child burials a walled, rectangular precinct measuring 20.2 m² was constructed with a boulder composing the south-eastern corner of the precinct (Bourget 2016:42).

Bourget (2016:42) opines that the decision to construct the precinct might have been *ex tempore* as the south wall of the precinct closely matches the extent of sediment 4. Thus, as with Plaza 3a itself, the construction of the precinct could have been a “sudden decision made under very specific circumstances.” (Bourget 2016:23)

Sand 3

In any event, a layer containing sand, gravel, clay and ceramic sherds (Sand 3) was intentionally deposited (ie. not naturally formed by the accumulation of aeolian sands as the later sand layers) over Sediment 4 possibly evening out any remaining declivity in the area towards the western wall (Bourget 2016:42). Finally, the remains of a wrapped adult was placed against a boulder which formed part of the southeast corner of the precinct (Bourget 1998; 2016:41). This final act might have constituted the conclusion to a sequence of ritual events necessary for the preparation of the sacrificial arena which began with the child burials, pooling of mud and the construction of a precinct.

Sediment 3

Shortly thereafter an episode of downpour formed the first proper sacrificial sedimentation layer (Sediment 3). Measuring about 22m² and contained by the precinct this layer of mud which, as the with previous Sediment 4, was formed by the pluvial erosion of the surrounding adobe walls reaching a depth of 5 – 10 cm (Bourget 1998:58; 2016:44). At least four extensively dismembered individuals were arranged within the precinct although exact determination of individuals was made difficult by the subsequent digging of an opening in the west wall, over individual Se-3.1, and the subsequent displacement of human remains pertaining to the sediment layer (see sand 2 below). All individuals were embedded within the clay matrix and the imprints of the dismembered arms of Se-3.2 eerily reveal how flesh was still attached to the bones as they were deposited in the soft mud (Bourget 1998:52). Individual Se-3.3 was placed immediately west of the boulder in southeast corner of the precinct. Fragments of domestic ceramics were

placed on and around Se-3.3. A large sherd, identified as originating from a “big jar” (Bourget 2016:46) was resting precariously on the left leg of Se-3.3 (see figure 22). The size and thickness of the fragment leads me to believe that it is a sherd of so-called *tinaja* or *olla* type. These large vessels frequently found at Huacas de Moche (see **chapter 4**) and other Moche sites were used to for storing and preparing food and liquids such as water and *chicha* and would normally have been set in ground to stabilize the rounded bottom (Chapdelaine et al. 1997; Gamarra and Gayoso 2008:193; Johnson 2010:283). Further, as with all successive layers of the Moche sequence, fragments from several other indeterminate types of domestic ceramics (458 fragments in total) had been scattered among the human remains (Bourget 2016:48, 130)

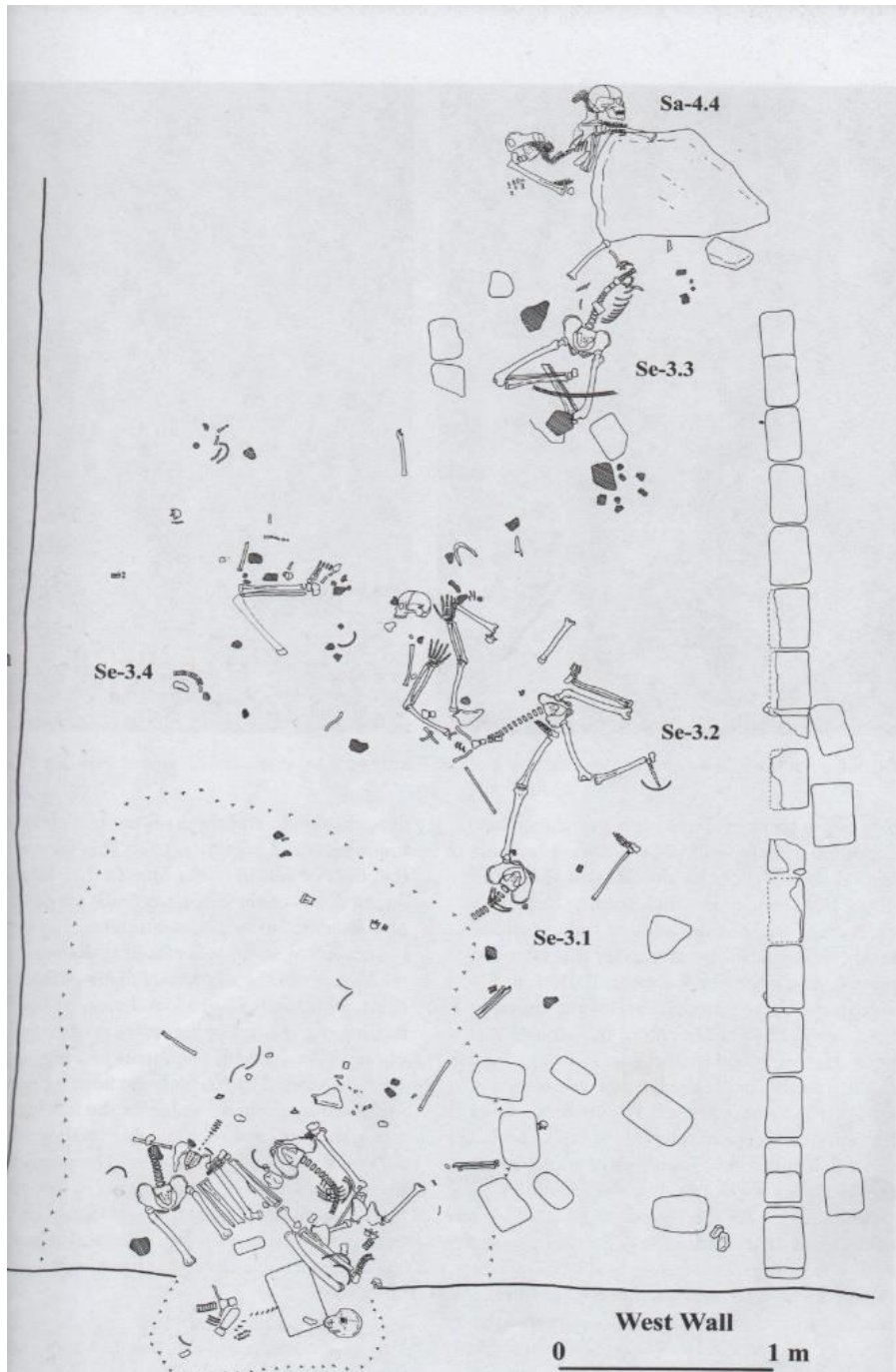


figure 21 Overview of Sediment 3. the dotted lines which cuts into the west wall of *huaca* (bottom) and collection of human remains (not included are the arbitrary layers Sand 2.3.9 to 2.3.1 as defined by Bourget and their associated human remains) represents an opening cut into the *huaca* and is associated with the chronologically later layer of Sand 2 (see below). Drawing by Jorge Sachun from (Bourget 2016:45)



figure 22 Individual Se-3.3 with a large domestic sherd resting on his legs found in Sediment 3 (Bourget 2016:figure 3.15)

Sand 2

Sometime after the sacrifices in sediment 3 a pit roughly 5m² was dug into west wall on the by then hardened clay floor of sediment 3 (Bourget 1998:52). Crammed within the cave-like aperture about 105 cm deep were the comingled remnants of «two complete skeletons, five heads, seven pelvises, part of a trunk, four lower jaws, numerous legs, arms, and other body parts» (Bourget 2016:48) along with the remains of clay statuettes (see below) and adobe fragments (Bourget 1998:59). Given the intensity of the activities and numerous limbs within the opening the excavators saw it necessary to divide the sequence into nine arbitrary levels which will not be described in detail here (Sand 2.3.1 – 2.3.9) (Bourget 1998:52; 2016:48). These human remains were likely extracted from the sacrifices associated with the preceding Sediment 3 and must have been deposited while flesh was still attached to the limbs as judged by their degree of articulation (Bourget 2016:48). This would link the sacrifices performed in the Sediment 3, the subsequent hardening of Sediment 3, the creation of the opening and the deposit of human remains within a relative short but intense sequence of ritual events. As argued by Bourget, this is corroborated by the virtual absence of sand between the remains. The sacrificial rituals in sandy layers would therefore have been performed within a year or even earlier as

climatological conditions on the north coast are favorable to rapid skeletonization (Janaway, Percival, et al. 2009). Among the remains were also fragments of clay statuettes, displaced adobe bricks and four skeletons of guinea pigs (*Cavia porcellus*) – the mainstay in Andean diets and modern healing rituals (Morales 1995; Rosenfeld 2008) (Bourget 2016:60 - 61).



figure 23 individual Sa-2.13 in front of the west wall with a rock shoved into his abdomen.

The subsequent layer of windblown sand (Sand 2.3, 2.2 ad 2.1) was nearly 38 cm thick, and contained at least 12 individuals some of which had been sacrificed on top of the dried mud floor (sediment 3) in two separate but related sequences (Sa-2.1, Sa-2.2, Sa-2.3, Sa-2.4, Sa-2.5, Sa-2.6, Sa-2.7, Sa-2.8 and Sa-2.9, Sa-2.10). Many of these individuals had been decked out in pairs and articulated skeletal elements (jaw, rib, hand bone, rib bone) forced into their thoracic cages or abdomen after the internal organs had been removed – probably at some stage during advanced decomposition (Bourget 2016:62). Sa-2.12 represent the first individual deposited outside of the precinct and Sa-2.11 rested against the north wall among a pile of rocks.

The shattered remains of large and *unfired* clay statuettes of seated, nude and bound captives were also recovered from this layer (Bourget 1998). These effigies which measured up to 60 cm were apparently placed on the plaza floor among the human remains and broken *in situ* by hurled

rocks or fragments of adobe bricks sometime shortly *after* the human sacrifices (Bourget 2001, 2010, 2016). In addition, a total of 289 domestic sherds were uncovered in this layer representing 51 % of the total number of domestic sherds collected from Plaza 3a en total (Bourget 2016:130).

Sediment 2

Sometime after the natural deposit of windblown sand in Sand 2, a series of intense pluvial episodes yielded the largest recorded sedimentation layers at Plaza 3a encompassing at least 60m², 3 to 10 cm in depth and reaching east as far as the base of the rocky outcrop (Bourget 1998, 2016). At this level the sacrificial focus moves beyond the precinct as a sequence of nine individuals are positioned on their backs south of the precinct and west of the rocky outcrop. Their limbs akimbo in unnatural and forced positions superimpose and link the individuals in a near-theatric dance or, in the words of Bourget (2016:78), a *tableau* or *dance macabre* (see figure 24). Among the remains were found a sherd depicting the Dance of Death motif and a small whistle shaped like a bird.

It is also worth noting that they seemingly face the west wall as if *dancing* for an audience looking down on the plaza from plaza 2b above. Thus, the directionality of the bodies further reinforces Bourget's suggestion that Plaza 2b (see above) served as the intended vantage point of the sacrificial scene of Plaza 3a. North of this sequence and inside of the precinct, numerous, articulated skeletal elements were strewn. As with previous sedimentation layers the remains had been embedded within the clay matrix leeching from the adobe walls in response to torrential downpour (Bourget 1998:50).

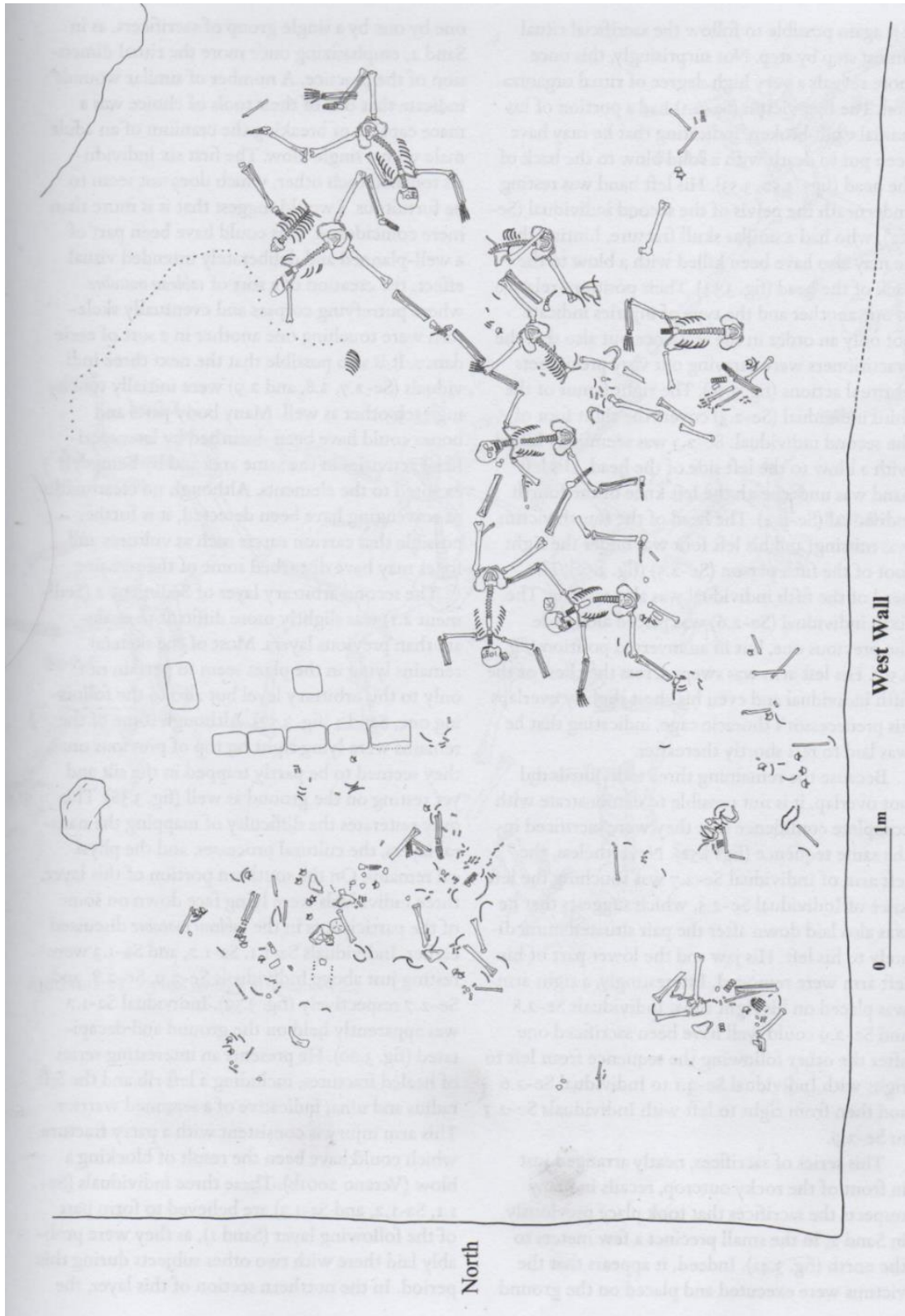


figure 24 Plan of sediment 2 from (Bourget 2016: figure 3.51)

Sand 1

Sand 1 is the penultimate layer in the stratigraphy of Plaza 3a and the last to contain human sacrifices and ritual activities attributed to the Moche. This layer of windblown sand layer was, due to wind directions, the declivity of the floor and obstructing internal walls very uneven with depths ranging from 5 to 20 cm (Bourget 1998:50). Representing the most extensive layer in terms of size and the most fragmented in terms of disarticulation of Plaza 3a (Backo 2012:141), twenty-two severed or isolated skulls along with ten individuals (nine out of which had their heads severed) in varying degrees of completeness and numerous skeletal elements were deposited in the area of the west wall to the rocky outcrop. Five individuals (Sa-1.1 – 5) were propped directly on top of the dancing sequence (see above). Another two individuals (Sa-1.9 and Sa-1.10) lay by the side of the boulder which formed the southeastern corner of the precinct (see above). Given the large number of comingled and scattered skeletal elements it is difficult to assess the number of individuals pertaining to this layer with exactitude as some of the crania may have been drawn from the previous sacrificial layer (sediment 2). However, based on intact pelvises a minimal number of 18 was suggest (Bourget 2016:103).

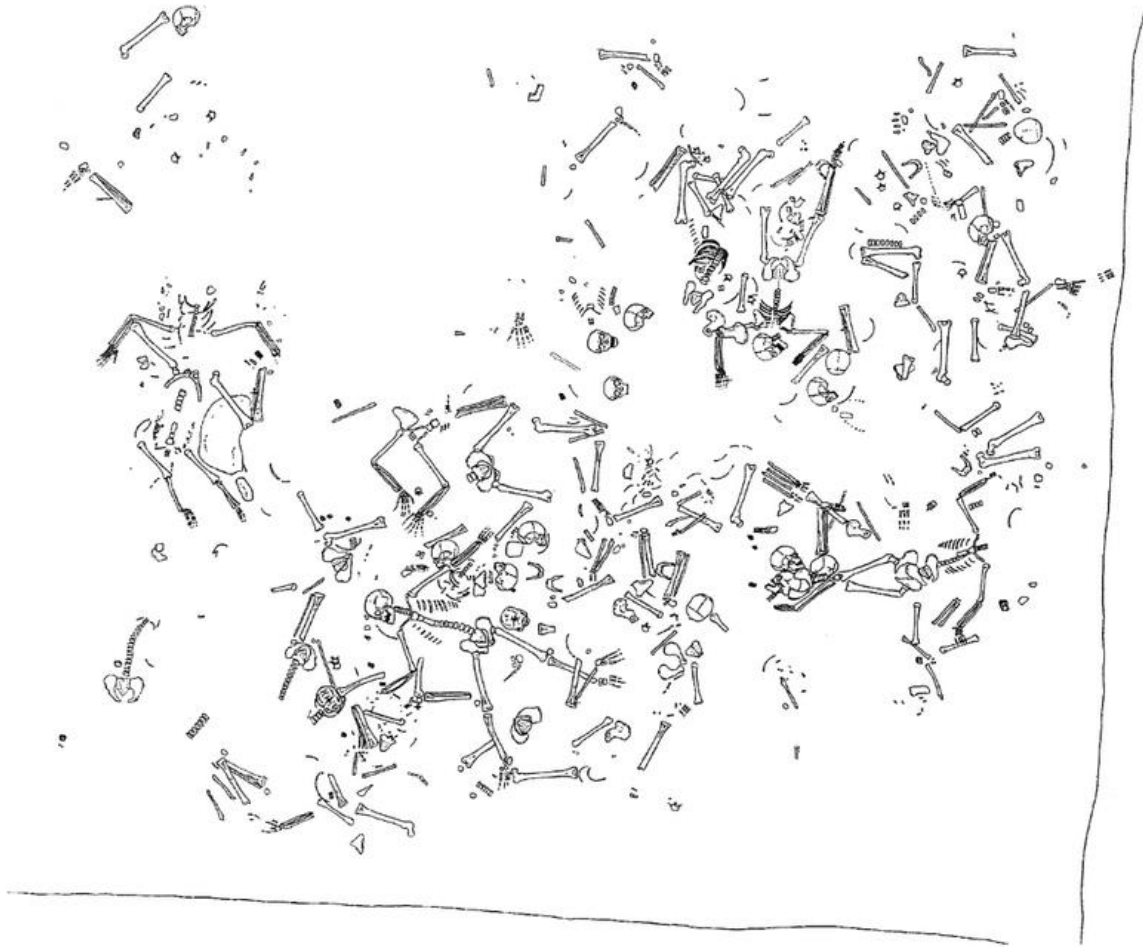


figure 25 Plan of Sand 1. From Backo (2016).

Sediment 1

The final layer in the sequence of Plaza 3a, Sediment 1, is a thick, hardened postoccupational layer which consisted of 80 cm of intermixed aeolian sands and pluvial erosions and episodes naturally accumulated over the span of 1,400 years (Bourget 1997, 1998, 2016). As mentioned, it is in this layer that the remains of modern folk-rituals dating to sometime before 1990.

Interestingly, the ingredients of said ritual were marine and terrestrial shells and guinea pigs. The latter was also recovered within the smashed clay statuettes found in Sand 2. Excavators suggest these remains were deposited as part of modern folk-rituals conducted sometime before the excavation of the plaza commenced (ie. prior to 1995). The south-eastern corner, directly below platform II, revealed coprolites of camelids mixed with Chimú ceramic sherds attesting to the reuse of plaza 3a. The Chimu also buried individuals *maquetas* and mummies within Platform I

indicative their veneration for the by then supposedly “defunct” *huaca* (see **chronology, chapter 6**).

Accessing Plaza 3a

Peculiarly, there were no obvious signs of formal entrances, ramps or passages leading directly to Plaza 3a or Platform II as was the case of Plaza 3c. Still, one could access platform II by moving along the top of the adobe-brick walls surrounding the platform-plaza complex and from the then buried plaza-cum-platform of Plaza 3c and 2b. In fact, it is only after Plaza 3c and the adjoining 2b had been filled with sand and occupational refuse that work began on Plaza 3a and platform II (Uceda and Tufinio 2003:201).

This could imply that plaza 2b and conjoining structures had been intended as the principal vantage point and possibly point of entry to Plaza 3a. In fact, most domestic (a rare occurrence within Moche ceremonial contexts) and fine-ware ceramic fragments found around and on top of human remains at Plaza 3a were located in the north-western corner (just beneath the south-eastern corner of Plaza 2b) of Plaza 3a. Bourget (2016:108) further proposes that these ceramics had been used and broken prior to their throwing down on the human remains on plaza 3a’s floor as part of the complex sequences of ritual activities possibly involving urban dweller as well as ritual attendants. However, moving up and down Plaza 3a from this point or even from Platform II would still have required ropes or ladders unless victims and ritual specialists scaled down the rocky outcrop jutting out of Platform II (Bourget 2016). In fact, most sacrificial and ritual activities appear to concentrate around the proportionally much smaller area, measuring at the largest extent some 60m², in between the suggested vantage point in the L-shaped northwestern corner and the rocky outcrop, leaving only scant evidence of ritual and cultural remains (most of which are from the later reuse by the Chimú culture) in the southern parts of the plaza (Bourget 2005:74; 2016:108). Compared to the Sacrifice Ceremony, it is a curious inversion. Spectator are looking down on the sacrificial events not the other way around. As if the natural order of Moche rituals had inverted or revolted against the *status quo*.

If, as per the suggestion of Bourget (2016), the plaza-cum-platform of Plaza 3c served as the intended auditorium for the ritual spectacle of Plaza 3a interesting comparisons can be made with regards to the previous staging of the Sacrifice Ceremony and plaza 3c. Plaza 2b obviously

afforded considerably less space for spectators than Main Plaza (see **chapter 6**), especially as visual access would be limited to those at the very southeastern edge of the plaza. However, as suggested by Bourget (2016) the inclusion of used domestic ware could suggest that a broader spectrum of the urban populace was granted access to the interior of the *huaca* – especially compared to secluded, confined and esoteric space of plaza 3c.

Treatment of Sacrificial Bodies

Like the Plaza 3c sacrifices, many of the individuals from Plaza 3a would have had their throats slit as evidenced by cut marks on the cervical vertebrae (Hamilton 2016). In stark contrast to Plaza 3c, however, only a single individual from Plaza 3a had cut marks that potentially could have been attempts at defleshing – these cut marks were also limited to a single long bone (Hamilton 2016:59). Other cut marks on the cervical vertebrae occurred in relation to decapitation of which at least nine or ten instances were indicated (Hamilton 2005, 2016). The numerous other cases of separated crania found throughout the sacrificial layers might have been due to extensive decomposition or scavenger activity (Verano 2008).

Also unlike the Plaza 3c sacrifices, several of the individuals, especially those implicated in the Dance of Death sequence, had profound and massive skull fractures which most likely were inflicted by extensive blunt force trauma from a rock or a large club (Verano 2008). In fact, from a tomb in the overlooking Platform II the excavator located a large, crude-looking wooden club which tested positive for human blood serum (Bourget 2016; Bourget and Newman 1998). Bourget has argued that this type of execution was imitating the way sea lions were hunted in Moche iconography while emphasizing their visceral and deathly connection with ENSO-events (see **chapter 4**). This connection seems strengthened by sea lion remains being found on top of individual Sa-2.13 and in one of the tombs located in the adjacent Platform II.

There has also been some speculation as to the hyperextended positioning of the extremities observed in many of the sacrificial victims of Plaza 3a. In some cases, articulated legs have been pushed into unnatural positions impossible without dislocating the legs from the hip joints (see eg. Se-3.3 in figure 22), while in other cases the arms and legs lie extended as if held down during sacrifice as proposed by Bourget (2016). Backo (2012:173), however, interprets these postures as the result of forcible dislocation and dismemberment during active decomposition. As the soft tissue around the joints decompose at a faster rate the limbs could have been torn off from the

torso given the appropriate amount of time. This treatment is possibly corroborated by the dismembered yet articulated pair of arms that included the scapulae from individual Se-3.2 (see figure 21) and similar instances of dislocation and dismemberment at Plaza 3a. As noted by Bourget (2016:110), this would suggest that the ritual practitioners at Plaza 3a carefully observed the putrefaction awaiting opportune moments.

Indeed, the putrefactive focus of the Plaza 3a sacrifices is readily attestable throughout the entire sequence. Large numbers of empty pupa cases were recovered from all the sacrificial layers (Bourget 1998:50; 2016:110) and sun-bleached state of the bones suggest the human remains were left exposed on the plaza floor for an extended amount time. For reference, complete skeletonization of the remains would have been up to in year or less in the favorable conditions of coastal Peru (Janaway, Percival, et al. 2009; Janaway, Wilson, et al. 2009). Further, Bourget observes that several of the clay effigies of sacrificial victims were decorated with what could be pupating flies emerging from their pupal cases. It is thus likely that the mass-emergence of flies from the festering remains may have held special significance in the ritual sequence and was highly anticipated (Bourget 2001, 2010; Huchet and Greenberg 2010). Foot prints in sedimentation layers and pit damage on skeletal elements from rocks and pebbles pressing on the remains suggest that ritual practitioners would have frequently walked around on the plaza floor and, most likely at critical moments of decomposition, rearranged the remains and tore off limbs (Backo 2016:92; Bourget 2016:110).

Crisis at Plaza 3a and the Moche World

As mentioned in the **previous chapter**, little by way of significant change to the main formula of Main Plaza and Platform I occurs throughout the excavated phases A, B/C , D and most likely the unexcavated E and F (Uceda 2001b:61) – i.e. from the early emergence of Huacas de Moche around 100 AD to the final days of the Old Temple at Huaca de la Luna around 650 AD. The *huaca* nourished and satiated by human blood seemingly grew as it triumphantly thwarted the destructive rains, scorching droughts and ravaging storms of periodic ENSOs (see timing of ENSO-events and rebuilding and expansion of *huacas* **chapter 6**). With each added edifice and increasing size it allowed the old socio-political, cultural, natural and ontological order to reestablish and life to resume. No doubt, the large-scale and relatively stable and successful performance of the Sacrifice Ceremony effectively shaped the reciprocal becoming of humans and *huacas* while affirming its own efficacy in the centuries leading up to 650 AD.

However, as described in **chapter 4**, trouble is on the horizon. The century leading up to 650 AD and the final abandonment of the Old Temple of Huaca de la Luna is characterized by significant, environmental perturbation and major socio-political, cultural and ritual restructuring. Regional droughts and severe ENSO-events are recorded at Huacas de Moche and other Moche sites during four exceptionally dry periods in Moche history: 524 – 540 AD, 563 – 594 AD (three decades!), 636 – 645 AD with a strong interpluvial episode between 602 – 635 AD.

Perhaps the most salient indication of these climatic fluctuations come from the alternating layers of aeolian sand and sediment of dried mud. The layers of mud were most likely created by heavy precipitation dissolving the adobe-bricks of the *huaca* walls into muddy run-off that collected along the west wall of Plaza 3a. This is similar to the ENSO-events of 1982 – 83 and 1972 where adobe walls of local houses withstood the heavy rains poorly creating ephemeral puddles of mud along the walls and foundations (Caviedes 1984; Caviedes 1975). It is also likely that the layers of aeolian sand accumulated with increased intensity during exceptionally dry conditions conducive to dune migration similar to the case of Dos Cabezas, Jequetepeque Valley around the exact same time period - 550 – 650 AD (Moseley et al. 2008).

The human remains themselves also reflect significant changes in Moche society and ritual praxis. The sacrificial layers contained, according to the most recent tally, 76 individuals (Backo 2012, 2016). However, due to intrusive and illicit digging into the plaza floor the original number may have surpassed 90 or even 100 individuals (Bourget 2016:135). Compared to the 33 (or 37!) sacrificed individual accumulated over three centuries at Plaza 3c, Plaza 3a markedly expresses an intensification of ritualized sacrifice.

Similar to Plaza 3c (see **chapter 6**) we are dealing with robust and healthy males aged 13 - 45 showing evidence of healed and healing fractures consistent with interpersonal conflict (Phillips 2009; Verano 1996, 2001, 2008). However, paired isotopic analysis of the osseous (where the admittedly limited preservation allowed for it) and dentine remains revealed a substantial shift in population histories from Plaza 3c to 3a. While Plaza 3c was mainly characterized by individuals who were born and lived under shadow of the looming Huaca de Luna, plaza 3a sacrifices included *both* local warriors and individuals who, only later in life, had moved to Huacas de Moche (Toyne et al. 2014). In the cited study, one individual possibly hailed as far north as the

Piura valley (the extreme north of the Moche cultural sphere, see **chapter 2**) while another individual revealed values consistent with a childhood spent in more southern river valleys (possibly the Santa Valley). What brought these seasoned warriors to Huaca de la Luna and made them partake in hazardous and violent displays of warfare and sacrifice during a time of regional environmental collapse is up for speculation. But it is my belief that, whether out of fear, environmental displacement, lust for gladiatorial fame or, in my opinion less likely, expansionist warfare (cf. Sutter and Verano 2007), these new arrivals signal an upset in the societal *status quo*. Something which whatever the underlying reason could have been a source of worry, tension and most likely uncertainty.

As mentioned, child Sa-4.1 and Sa-4.3 buried in Sand 4 displayed skeletal anomalies which were suspected to result from a congenital case of periostitis or osteomyelitis (Bourget 2016:35 - 37, 415; Bourget and Millaire 2000). The porous and sponge-like deformation of the osteological tissue is consistent with periostitis usually arise in severe and chronic cases of childhood anemia (Blom et al. 2005). The causal factors of anemia resulting in periostitis have not been conclusively established and may be subject to a synergistic welter of insufficient diet, congenital deficiencies, blood loss, gastrointestinal infections or pathogenic load (Klaus and Tam 2009; Larsen 2015). Interestingly, however, congenital anemia only appeared after contact with the Old World (Blom et al. 2005; Moseley and Jarcho 1966; Rucknagel 1966) which thus runs counter to Bourget's initial suggestion. In addition to the devastating effects on infrastructure and agriculture, the severe ENSO-event of 1982 – 83 induced relentless rains, festering pools and flooding events which fed broods of swarming insects causing widespread outbreaks of malaria, typhoid and skin disease. While the primary agent responsible for the deformation of child Sa-4.1 and Sa-4.3 has, as of yet, not been determinable (Backo 2012:176) and requires further, qualified investigation, infectious disease or anemia appear likely candidates. Thus, whether food shortage or epidemics, I argue that the very first, initiatory layer already at the outset bespoke worsening, climatic conditions and social upheaval characteristic of ENSO-events.

My point is that even within the enwalled and compressed space and multi-layered stratigraphy of Plaza 3a a palpably human and climatic drama is unfolding. Huge efforts are made to construct both Plaza 3a and the associated Building A, the largest expansion to Platform I. Over a relatively short time, compared to the relative slow accumulation (digestion) of sacrificial

victims at Plaza 3c, human sacrifices are performed on an unprecedented scale and manner. Non-local warriors appear in the sacrificial context possibly as indicators of important and wide-reaching societal shifts and children are dying due to disease or malnourishment all under the pouring rains, parching heat and shifting sands of ENSO conditions – extreme conditions which eventually lead up to the abandonment of Huaca de la Luna around 650 AD and demise of the Moche culture 800 AD.

In sum, it could be argued that Mochican world had revolted, turned upside down, “gone wild” (see meaning of *huaca* as verb **chapter 5**). Severe, protracted and disruptive periods of ENSO-conditions and punishing draughts had cast the world of the Moche into violent paroxysms of pervasive destruction, death and unhinged feeding frenzies (see **chapter 4**). In Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, the organs and bodies of humans, *huacas* and the world writ large were failing and thus giving rise to a desperate need for reterritorialization and restoration of order. This need can be indicated from the intensity, inventiveness and improvisation of the construction and use of Plaza 3a.

A New Organ

As argued in **Chapter 5**, the interdependent becoming of humans and *huacas* was intimately linked through mutual provision of sustenance - feeding *huacas* entailed feeding humans. Moreover, the village of Kaata, the ceremonial center where blood and fat were offered to Mount Kaata, was understood as the ritual crux and “gastrointestinal” extension of the mountain *huaca*. Apart from the obvious parallels between the village of Kaata and Huaca de la Luna in terms of their placement on the slopes of their nearby mountain-*huacas* there are multiple lines of evidence supporting that similar ontological conceptions were operative in the ritual performance at Plaza 3a.

Perhaps the most direct expression of the becoming between humans and *huacas* mediated in terms of feeding are to be found in the type of deposits at Plaza 3a. A total of 458 fragments of various types of domestic pottery were encountered intermingled with human remains in all layers from Sediment 3 to Sand 1 and displayed use wear consistent with cooking and preparation of food (Bourget 2016:130). The careful and intentional manner in which these deposits were linked is exemplified most instructively in the case of individual Se-3.3 atop of whom a sizeable fragment of a “big jar” (cursorily identified as a *tinaja* or *olla* used in storing or

preparing *chicha* see Sediment 3) was found balanced on his left femur (see figure 22). These ceramic and human remains were either embedded in or laid on top of the clay matrix which had leached off the *huaca* walls and closely followed the extent of the mud layer. Understanding the muddy run-off from the *huaca* in terms of its flesh (see **chapter 6**), this directly highlights both the coextension of the flesh of both human and *huacas* and, through the inclusion of remains from used, domestic pottery, its connection with preparation of food.

Moreover, there are important parallelisms in the treatment of *huacas*, humans and effigies of nude and bound warriors that evoke notions of feeding and consumption. Bourget (2016:61) notes that guinea pigs were stuffed inside the large and smashed clay statuettes recovered from Sand 2 through pre-made openings in the back of the figurines. It is as if the statuettes were, like their muscular and well-fed human counterparts (Verano 2000:66), given highly-prized foods prior to their shattering or, rather, sacrifice. Conversely, the human individual Sa-2.13 had his entrails removed and a boulder shoved into the gaping cavity of the abdomen. The boulder itself most likely originated from the rocky outcrop or the *cerro* itself. In the same layer (Sand 2), an opening into the *huaca* through the west wall of Plaza 3a had been dug out and stuffed with dismembered human remains, guinea pigs and adobe-bricks. The parallel treatment of the remains of humans, domestic ware, food stuff (guinea pigs) and adobe-bricks suggest an interchangeability of these types of remains that respects similarities in functional anatomies. That is, whether humans, *huacas* or statuettes they were all forcibly and directly provided food which intimates the shared consumptive capabilities of their seemingly different bodies. In fact, ritual force feeding is by no means uncommon in contemporary ritual practices of the Andes (Allen 1982).

But more importantly, even without all the recursive and internal references to feeding mentioned above, it is not difficult to envision how Plaza 3a as a whole could have been conceived of in terms of bodily consumption. The decomposition of human remains intentionally left exposed on the plaza floor and the eventual accumulation of wind-blown sand could have conferred the impression of the *huaca* gradually digesting its offerings.

Thus, with the interment of Plaza 3c it would thus seem that its metabolic role had largely been replaced by the proximal construction and use of Plaza 3a which in turn further underscores the ritual indispensability of feeding *huacas* at Huaca de la Luna. In other words, the internal,

digestive organ of Huaca de la Luna had been preserved yet, as will be argued, fundamentally rearranged in the terms of Deleuzo-Guattarian becoming.

Bodies without Organs and Organs without Bodies

While the basic, organic function and the underlying ontology – one where humans and *huacas* become through mutual provision of food – is shared by Plaza 3a and 3c, the Deleuzo-Guattarian flow of becoming, the extent to which their tendencies are that of the organism or the BwO, is vastly different but equally informative.

While reterritorialization of the failing organisms of *huacas*, humans and the world writ large through provision of food most likely was the overarching and ultimately constraining concern running through all the sacrificial layers there is significant inter-layer differences revealing, in my eyes, an open-ended or improvised engagement with the *huaca*. An improvisation possibly necessitated by the distress and uncertainty of a collapsing world and ultimately guided by attentive experimentation. In fact, I contend that the increasing area of the mud pools from Sediment 4 to Sediment 2 (see **table 1**) and the escalating number of human sacrifices and ritual deposits are not only indices of worsening climatic conditions but also increasing exasperation which necessitated inventive interventions and creative sacrifice and open-ended ritual communication with the *huaca*. This open-ended engagement suggests that the Moche more than ever before were closely monitoring minute changes in and around Huaca de la Luna – possibly the same kind of keen observance that inspired to the prolific and detailed depiction of natural phenomena in their material culture (see **chapter 4**).

It is possible that the pooling of mud on eastern side of Huaca de la Luna, towards the rocky outcrop, was conceived as the *huaca* communicating its consumptive wishes and thus necessitated the spontaneous construction of Plaza 3a and the ensuing sacrifices – perhaps something akin to the reactions and venerations inspired by modern instances of weeping statues. As noted by the lead excavator, the construction of Plaza 3a appeared to be the “outcome of a sudden decision made under very specific circumstances” (Bourget 2016:23). Similar instances have been observed at Dos Cabezas, Jequetepeque, where the eroded sections of the *huaca* walls caused by ENSO-related precipitation seemingly prompted the creation of burial chambers before these sections were eventually repaired (Moseley et al. 2008).

This trend of open-ended and reciprocal engagement is also evident in the subsequent, sacrificial layers. In Sediment 4, the extension of the precinct was apparently conditioned by the accumulation of muddy run-off from the sweltering *huaca* walls as per Bourget (2016). Then, in Sand 2, sacrificed individuals were decked out in opposing pairs and inserted with different anatomical elements before an opening was cut into the *huaca* and stuffed with cultural, human and animal remains. With the pooling mud exceeding the confines of the precinct in Sediment 2 the sacrifices move out of the precinct with the Dance of Death sequence. In the final sacrificial layer Sand 1, the severely dismembered, human remains were scattered indiscriminately all over the extent of the dried mud surface. The progression, in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, from molar to molecular, the breakdown from compounded body to component element, escalating for each new layer of sacrifice.

Compared to the Sacrifice Ceremony that dominated during the pre-crisis era, the staging of ritual sacrifice is not predetermined by the creation of architectural space as is the case in the Sacrifice Ceremony – the plaza floor is deterritorialized and smooth unlike the striated and compartmentalized space of Plaza 3c – but is delimited only by the natural and spontaneous formation of mud. While the construction of the precinct could have been attempts at territorialization and thus possibly intended similarly striated functions to the precincts of Plaza 3c, the expanding layers of muddy run-offs would eventually deterritorialize the striation. From a Deleuzo-Guattarian perspective, the successive layers thus constituted *attempts* at novel reterritorializations necessitated by pandemic disorganization (convergent crisis of strong ENSO-events and draught) each ultimately aiming at new striated, organizations: organs beating and secreting anew.

The general picture that emerges is one of experimentation or, to borrow one of Ingold's (2009) terms, "following the material" - the material in this sense being the layers of mud formed by heavy precipitation eroding the adobe-brick walls during ENSO-events. But equally it is also one of exceeding and pushing the limits of territorialized convention and stratified expectation – the inventiveness increasing along with the creeping extent of the mud layers. Perhaps paradoxically, considering the turbulent and disorganized ENSO-conditions that framed the construction and use of Plaza 3a, the imposition of stratification and order was less prominent compared to rituals and sacrifices associated with pre-crisis era of the Sacrifice Ceremony and Plaza 3c. Rather, it

seems like the flow of becoming was significantly deterritorialized and experimental and thus more in line with the key-characteristics of the BwO as opposed to the territorializing tendencies of the organism (**chapter 3**).

I do not think this is mere chance but rather that it represents an important break with the ontological modality associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony and Plaza 3c. The open-ended and deterritorialized engagement between *huacas* and humans is also reflected in the treatment of human bodies at Plaza 3a. Rather than passing through several different spaces with dedicated and distinct functions relating to the transformation from warrior to sacrificed captive (see sequence 1 – 5, **chapter 6**), the sacrificial victims at Plaza 3a are killed, deposited, dismembered and manipulated within the same, deterritorialized and smooth container (Plaza 3a). Furthermore, in contrast to Plaza 3c, the flesh is not excised from the bodies but are left to rot and only later and mostly unaided by the intervention of cutting implements are the limbs torn from bodies. Ritual specialists moved among the remains, closely observing the putrefaction of human remains and pupation of flies, awaiting the appropriate level of decomposition in order to tear the limbs from the softened and tenderized flesh.

Interestingly and certainly in line with Deleuzo-Guattarian thought, the inherent BwO of the natural world, ie. its periodic propensity for ENSO-events of varying intensity, was called upon by the Moche in these deterritorialized attempts at reterritorialization. Not only did the intensity and inventiveness of the sacrifices and rituals match the timing and profundity of deteriorating, climatic conditions during the construction and use of Plaza 3a (550 – 650 AD), but the rituals themselves imitated the death and destruction associated with strong ENSO-conditions. Humans were clubbed to death like beached sea lions, flies were allowed to fester and the bodies to decompose naturally rather than forcibly excised. In short, the destructive forces of the Mochican world, the ENSO-events, were emulated.

Sorcery at Plaza 3a

Unlike the model of the distiller associated with Sacrifice Ceremony and Plaza 3c who carefully engages with the ontological forces of the world by straitening and territorializing the flow of becoming (see chapter 6), the metaphor of this becoming could be likened to Deleuzo-Guattarian sorcerer (Deleuze and Guattari 2004) who dissolves and mixes volatile substances (rotting bodies, mud and ceramics) into the same, smooth container. In fact, plaza 3a itself, with its

largest free-standing walls at the site, assumes the shape of a large cauldron or rather, *tinaja* or *olla*, where cultural remains, cooking ware, guinea pigs, putrescent human bodies, pouring rains and pooling mud form a deterritorialized, smooth concoction – a primordial soup brimming with potentiality. By listening intently to the *huaca* (carefully observing the expansion of muddy layers, the pouring rains, the parching heat, the pupation and emergence of flies, the gradual decomposition of human remains), experimental and novel ways of performing sacrifice and rituals were invoked to unfetter the lines of becoming. A becoming between *huacas* and humans that emphasized the BwO rather than the territorialized imposition of organization associated with the Sacrifice Ceremony and Plaza 3c. A becoming that is, as argued above, open-ended, high in its potential for lines of flight as *huacas* are allowed to speak through the relatively unimpeded decomposition of cultural and human remains and the formation of mud.

However, the futility of these attempts as observed by the ever-increasing size of sedimentation layers, human sacrifices and by extension the increasing intensity of ENSO-events, prompted continued ingenuity in the intra-layer recipe.

8. Conclusion

While I have heavily relied on the theories of Deleuze and Guattari in this thesis – especially the organism and the BwO and their associated concepts – it must be emphasized that the Moche obviously were not themselves staunch Deleuzo-Guattarians even if they shared a fascination with bodies and organs. The underlying aim of this thesis has been to show how the archaeological, ceremonial and monumental *huacas* of the Moche can be considered living and feeding bodies through a uniquely Andean ontology as accounted for in recent historical and ethnographic research. Further, I argued that the ontological feeding and mutual constitution between the bodies and organs of *huacas*, humans and the world writ large can be analyzed through the Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of the organism and the BwO and extended to Huaca de la Luna.

But, perhaps more importantly, by attending to the mutual becoming between humans and *huacas* we may also understand the shifting dynamics and concerns that framed the large-scale sacrifice of human beings. Rather than the modern notion of ritualized smokescreens intended to monopolize political power and inculcate deferent subjects, we might see a larger, perhaps universal concern with maintaining stability, health and order. While the Moche turned the barren desert shores into verdant fields of maize, beans and gourds and managed to produce an impressive material culture that still attracts archaeologists and looters alike, the threat of episodic and occasionally violent ENSO-events seemingly weighed heavily on their creative and anticipatory minds. Natural phenomena and species of animals deeply connected to these destructive paroxysms were depicted as engaging in sacrifice while sporting frenzied sharp-toothed grins, wide-open eyes and dilated pupils. Understood on this basis, the construction and ritualized use or feeding of *huaca*, intimates a preoccupation with maintaining order, structure and integrity in an inherently unstable and occasionally violent world. Indeed, this inherent instability of the world is not exclusive to the ontology of Deleuze and Guattari nor the Moche but arguably one of the most important aspects if not truisms of reality and life.

In fact, in **chapter 6** I argued that the manner in which human sacrifice was conducted in the Sacrifice Ceremony and its enactment within and around Huaca de la Luna leading up to the environmental crisis of 550 – 650 AD suggested a relatively uniform and ordered ontological

engagement or feeding of the *huaca*. By compartmentalizing and territorializing ritual space, function and sacrifice in line with the Deleuzo-Guattarian organism, consistent and controlled results were expected and eventually delivered as the *huaca* grew triumphantly with each added edifice (F – A). I argued that sacrificial effort during these centuries were effective and reliable means of maintaining the stability and integrity of the Moche world.

But, as argued in **chapter 7**, the bodies and organs of *huacas*, humans and the world writ large would eventually begin to fail disastrously during the climatic crisis of 550 – 650 AD. At the time of Plaza 3a, the associated rituals and treatment of sacrificial bodies turned experimental, open-ended and as deterritorialized as world itself. With the world as the Moche knew it collapsing under strong ENSO-events and severe draughts around the time of the construction and use of Plaza 3a, the inner workings of Huaca de la Luna and the associated ontology was called into question. Their previously successful attempts at reterritorializing the world were failing and new and experimental cures were necessitated. The increasing instability prompted escalating numbers and increased inventiveness in the feeding of the *huaca* through sacrifice of and by humans. These attempts were eventually unsuccessful. With the creation of the final and most expansive sacrificial layer containing the largest number of sacrificed individuals, Huaca de la Luna was abruptly abandoned and interred in sand around 650 AD.

In the end, I believe I have shown how the *huacas* of Moche may be considered more than symbols or architecture of power and ideology and that they constitute living and feeding bodies intimately tied to human bodies through the mutual provision of sustenance. I also presented a Deleuzo-Guattarian framework for analyzing the changing and dynamic relation of becoming of the bodies of *huacas*, humans and the world writ large- Approaching the Moche and other pre-Columbian cultures of the Andes and their many different *huacas* in these ontological terms, archaeological research may breathe new life into the withering, adobe-bricks monuments and provide further avenues of research by turning architecture into anatomy, plazas into organs, *huacas* into bodies. And there is no shortage of *huacas* on the Peruvian coast and elsewhere in the Andes awaiting reanimation - at least so long as global warming does not triggers a new series of cataclysmic ENSO-events and unprecedented levels of precipitation wash away the adobe-brick *huacas* of the Moche. In this sense the inherent instability of reality still looms ominously.

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