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Author(s): Tamara L. Bray

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INKA POTTERY AS CULINARY EQUIPMENT: FOOD, FEASTING, AND GENDER IN IMPERIAL STATE DESIGN

Tamara L. Bray

In this paper, the imperial Inka ceramic assemblage is examined in terms of its functional and culinary significance. Information culled from ethnohistoric sources, archaeological reports, and ethnographic studies is used to draw functional inferences about Inka vessel forms and to outline the features of an imperial "haute cuisine." In the Inka empire, the relationship between rulers and subjects was largely mediated through the prestation of food and drink. The elaboration of a distinctive state vessel assemblage suggests a conscious strategy aimed at creating material symbols of class difference in the context of state-sponsored feasting events. An empire-wide analysis of the distribution of Inka vessels indicates the particular importance of the tall-necked jar form (aribalo) to state strategies in the provinces. Analyzing Inka pottery as culinary equipment highlights the links among food, politics, and gender in the processes of state formation. Such an approach also illuminates the important role of women in the negotiation and consolidation of Inka state power.

En este artículo se examina el conjunto distintivo de cerámica Inkaica imperial en términos de su significación funcional y culinaria. Se presenta información etnohistórica y etnográfica sobre la alimentación andina junto con datos arqueológicos sobre las formas de vasijas inkaicas, su distribución, y sus contextos de hallazgo. Las diferentes líneas de evidencia ayudan a esbozar los rasgos de una cocina de la élite andina, inferir la funcionalidad de las formas inkaicas, y sugerir cómo la alfarería Inkaica y las actividades de acuerdo al género de cocinar y servir podrían haber figurado en los procesos de formación estatal. Un análisis distribucional de las vasijas inkaicas de todas partes del imperio sugiere la importancia del aribalo inkaico para las estrategias estatales en las provincias. Dentro del imperio inkaico, las relaciones entre los gobernantes y los sujetos del estado fueron mediadas a través de la prestación de la comida y las bebidas (chicha). La elaboración de un conjunto distintivo de cerámica estatal sugiere una estrategia consciente con el propósito de crear símbolos materiales de clases sociales en el contexto de fiestas estatales. Cuando se analiza la cerámica inkaica como equipo culinario, se destaca las conexiones entre la comida, la política, y el género en los procesos de formación estatal. De esta manera se ilumina también el papel importante de las mujeres en la negociación y la consolidación del poder estatal Inka.

The ceramic complex associated with the Inka state has long been noted for its uniform and repetitive nature (Fernandez 1971; Morris and Thompson 1985:76; Pardo 1957; Rowe 1944; Ryden 1947; Sempé de Gómez Llanes 1986:55). Indeed, Rowe (1944:8) once suggested it was so consistent that a whole jar could confidently be reconstructed from a single sherd, while Kroeber (1952:293–294), somewhat less generously, described the Inka state assemblage as “chaste,” “limited,” and “deficient in imagination and ambitions or objectives other than technical ones.” This oft-noted adherence to strict formal and stylistic canons has been casually interpreted as evidence of mass production, in some cases (Jones 1964:8; Rowe 1944:48), and as exemplary of corporate art in others (e.g., Moseley 1992). Relatively

little systematic comparative analysis of imperial Inka pottery has been undertaken that would allow us to evaluate these and other commonly held assumptions about its significance (though see Costin and Hagstrum 1995; D’Altroy and Bishop 1990; and D’Altroy et al. 1994, for recent exceptions).

In this paper, I look at the classic polychrome vessels associated with the imperial Inka state in terms of their functional significance and consider their role in the broader context of empire building. I focus on three dimensions of the ceramic assemblage not normally discussed in studies of Inka pottery: culinary significance, material symbolic significance, and gendered associations. I suggest that viewing imperial Inka pottery as culinary equipment offers a window into the ways in which food,

Tamara L. Bray ■ Department of Anthropology, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202

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feasting, and gender figured in the negotiation of state power. To better understand how pots functioned as political tools in the Inka state, I present ethnohistoric and ethnographic information on Andean foodways, and archaeological data on Inka vessel types, their distribution around the empire, and the contexts in which they are found. These lines of evidence are used to draw functional inferences about Inka vessel forms, outline the features of an imperial Inka “haute cuisine,”¹ and consider the role of women in the development of the Inka state.

Feasting in Early States

Food and feasting are increasingly recognized as having played a prominent role in the emergence of social hierarchies and the negotiation of power (Dietler 1996; Gero 1992; Goody 1982; Gummerman 1997; Hayden 1996; Wiessner and Shieffenhovel 1996). A number of recent studies focusing on the commensal politics of early states and empires highlight the potential of such approaches. Dietler (1990, 1997, 1998), for instance, illuminates the complexities of imperial entanglement in the Mediterranean world through innovative analyses of drinking equipment, wine consumption, and local feasting practices. Pollock (2003) offers new insights into the political economic transformations occurring within early Mesopotamian states by focusing on elite banquets and the distribution of mass-produced, bevel-rimmed bowls. Nelson (2003), in a study of funerary assemblages from ancient China, demonstrates how the Shang elite endeavored to create and ingratiate ancestors through the medium of food and drink to advance the political agendas of the living. These and other recent works underscore the value of viewing pottery as culinary equipment and the ways in which such an approach can enrich, engender, and add detail to our understanding of early imperial practices.

In the Andean context, the importance of reciprocity, hospitality, and feasting as key components of Inka statecraft was first discussed by Murra (1980 [1955]). The labor services owed the state by local communities, which could range from cultivating fields to massive public works projects, were typically couched in terms of the reciprocal obligations of chiefly generosity. An important aspect of reciprocal labor obligations in the Andes was the understanding that the work party would be fully provisioned by the sponsor in terms of raw materials, tools, and food and drink (Murra 1980:97, 121–134).

These assumptions have been borne out archaeologically at Inka state administrative centers like Huánaco Pampa where immense quantities of imperial Inka jar and plate fragments, suggesting large-scale *chicha* (corn beer) consumption and food serving activities, reportedly have been found in structures associated with the central focus of the site—the main plaza (Morris 1982; Morris and Thompson 1985:83–91). These structures, which also yielded unusually high percentages of wide-mouthed jars associated with *chicha* production, were identified as the houses of the Inka’s “chosen women” (Morris and Thompson 1985:77–80). The investigators at Huánaco suggest that Inka provincial centers typically incorporated large amounts of space as the setting for “what was essentially a form of hospitality raised to the state level” (Morris and Thompson 1985:91; see also D’Altroy 1981, 2001 on Hatún Xauxa). The present study builds on Morris and Murra’s important observations regarding the role of hospitality and public feasting in Inka statecraft, offering an analysis of imperial Inka pottery that expands the geographical scope of the argument and extends it to incorporate concerns with gender, agency, and the meaning of material culture.

In developing this study, I draw heavily upon the theoretical insights of a specific genre of anthropological works that focus on food. The study of foodways has a long history in anthropology (Douglas 1966, 1975, 1984; Fortes and Fortes 1936; Lévi-Strauss 1966, 1968, 1970; Richards 1932, 1939). Food has stood at the center of so many studies precisely because it is so fundamental to the reproduction of society (see Goody 1982). Within this *oeuvre*, a number of recent works highlight the political dimensions of food preparation and distribution and the ways in which culinary practices reflect, respond to, and invoke political change (e.g., Adams 1990; Counihan 1999; Dietler 1996; Goody 1982; Hastorf 1990, 1993; Mintz 1985; Weismantel 1988). These studies serve to underscore the fact that food is one of the strongest markers of ethnicity, status, and class. They also suggest that cooking and cuisine constitute fertile ground for the material symbolization of ideological and political discourse.

Material Symbols

One of the principal contributions of post-processual approaches to archaeology has been their insistence upon the active nature of material culture in the con-

struction of social relations and identities (Hodder 1982a, 1982b, 1987; Shanks and Tilley 1987). Rather than simply reflecting social circumstances, material culture is understood as actively involved in the creation, maintenance, and transformation of social contexts. As various authors have noted (Graves-Brown 2000; Hebdige 1979; McCracken 1988), the ambiguity and inconspicuousness of material culture gives it certain advantages as a mode of communication. McCracken (1988) suggests that these features make material culture an unusually cunning device for the representation of fundamental cultural beliefs, principles, and “truths.”

The covert quality of material culture allows it to carry meanings and messages that could not be put more explicitly “without the danger of controversy, protest, or refusal” (McCracken 1988:69). This makes material culture an ideal medium for the communication of political messages, which can be projected with diminished risk of counterstatement. Hodder (1982c) suggests that material symbols, because of their multivocal, ambiguous, and value-laden nature, are particularly important in ideological and political strategies. As he puts it, “artifacts mean different things to different people and carry contradictory meanings, so they can be used to reveal social distinctions and to hide them at the same time, to simultaneously represent and misrepresent” (Hodder 1982c:214). These comments offer insight into how material culture can communicate authority in *sotto voce*, objectify social status and social relations, and subtly “fix” meaning.

Pottery as Culinary Equipment

Pottery from archaeological contexts has not often been analyzed either for its active role in the construction of social relations or as culinary equipment (though see Blitz 1993; Johannessen 1993; Pauketat and Emerson 1991; Potter 2000, for exceptions). Studies of archaeological ceramics have, instead, tended to focus on aspects of style (or appearance) construed as emblematic of ethnicity across space and time (Wright 1991). While a few scholars have underlined the importance of pots as tools (e.g., Braun 1983; Skibo and Schiffer 1995), prehistoric ceramics have received relatively little attention from either a functional or technological standpoint compared to, for instance, lithics.

As Wright (1991) has suggested, the dearth of such techno-functional studies may relate to generic

associations of pottery with women, cooking, and the domestic sphere of activity. The unspoken assumption is that activities controlled by women are not important to the study of larger social processes (see Hastorf 1991; Skibo and Schiffer 1995; Wright 1991). Occasionally, this underlying premise is stated outright, as in the following quote: “[Inka] architecture is directly symbolic of the state and the world that it represented [while] the distribution of pottery . . . suggests its relationship to the more mundane realm of state hospitality, reciprocity, and labor management” (Morris 1995:420).

Though the notion of separate public and domestic spheres may seem entirely natural to us, this particular form of social organization has not been proven universal across either time or space (see Brumfiel 1991; Wright 1991). As a firmly embedded element of Western ideology, however, it demonstrably pervades our thinking about all other societies, past and present. Consigning culinary concerns to the realm of the domestic, which is commonly understood as outside the realm of the active and the political, obscures the significance of cooking and food prestation in Inka statecraft. This great oversight has begun to be rectified in recent years in works focusing, for instance, on the significance of plant remains and paleoethnobotanical data for tracking sociopolitical change in the Andes (Hastorf 1990, 1991, 1993; Hastorf and Johannessen 1993) and the centrality of the kitchen in modern Andean contexts (Vokral 1991; Weismantel 1988).

The present study continues this trend by approaching Inka cooking and cuisine as a key cultural domain for understanding the Cuzqueño approach to statecraft. By placing cooking, cuisine, and culinary artifacts at the center of the present study, I hope to illuminate and engender another dimension of Inka statecraft. Contrary to Morris’s (1995:422) assertion that Inka ceramics carried “relatively minor and simple meanings [vis-à-vis] the overall style repertory of the ruling group and its system of power,” I believe that the imperial assemblage was an integral component of imperial state strategies of legitimization and control. In analyzing Inka pottery as culinary equipment and material symbols of the state, I highlight the intimate links between food, politics, and gender. I develop the idea that the Inka elaborated a specific elite, or “haute,” cuisine and a distinctive, and distinguishing, ensemble of ceramic cooking, service, and storage vessels

as a conscious strategy aimed at creating visible differences between social classes. I also contend that the selection of culinary equipment as a medium for the material expression of class difference was deeply entwined with the way gender was used by the state to model social hierarchy (see Silverblatt 1987). In the next section, I outline the parameters of sixteenth-century Andean cuisine and cooking practices in order to establish a culinary and functional context for the imperial Inka assemblage.

Andean Foodways and Inka Haute Cuisine

The importance and ubiquity of ceramic containers in the Andes is attested both by the archaeological record and scattered references throughout the writings of early Spanish commentators. Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 11, Ch.6:20), for instance, wrote that the average Indian's household furnishings consisted primarily of "pots, large jars, pitchers, and cups." An earlier passage referring specifically to the northern highlands describes a typical household as follows: "In the second room of the house they [the Indians] have their storeroom full of large and small pots, some on top of the ground, others buried in the earth as vats for straining and preparing their wines"² (Atienza 1931[1575?]:52–53).

Despite such useful observations, references to specific vessel forms and associated functions are decidedly rare in ethnohistoric sources. It is likely that the very commonplace nature of these objects, as well as the gender of the chroniclers, rendered them all but invisible. Fortunately, however, the culinary habits and subsistence practices of Andean peoples were apparently of more interest. The patterns of food preparation, consumption, and storage that can be reconstructed from the documentary records offer considerable insight into ceramic vessel requirements and use in the precolumbian Andes.

One of the principal sources I have used for information on native Andean culinary practices is the Jesuit scholar Bernabé Cobo (1964 [1653]), who left one of the most detailed accounts of daily life in the Andes. Cobo arrived in Perú in 1599, moving to Cuzco in 1609 and traveling extensively in the highlands for the next several decades. He is considered by many to be among the most reliable chroniclers of Inka culture (Rowe 1946:194; Urton 1999:31). Other sources I rely upon include Fray Martín de Murúa (1946 [1590]), who provides useful information on Inka customs, Pedro de Cieza de León

(1962 [1553]), one of the earliest and most observant of all the Spanish chroniclers, and Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala (1936 [1613]), an indigenous author whose letter to the King of Spain is filled with illustrations of daily life that offer many insights into Andean culture. The ethnohistoric data are supplemented with modern ethnographic and ethnobotanical observations where these offer useful insights or clarifications (i.e., Antunéz 1985; Estrella 1988; Towle 1961; Vokral 1991; Weismantel 1988).

Below I review the ethnohistoric references relating to Andean culinary practices and habits. The information is arranged according to the major food categories comprising the indigenous diet. Each food category is considered with respect to methods of preparation, modes of serving and eating, and storage practices. The focus throughout is on habits and techniques that would have affected vessel usage.

The Native Andean Diet

The basic Andean diet is summed up in the following passage written by an anonymous source in 1573 "Their usual sustenance is wine made of maize . . . , and some herbs which they call *yuyo* and potatoes, and beans, and cooked maize; their daily bread is any of these cooked with a little salt, and what they consider as a good seasoning to put in their stewed foods, is red pepper" (Anónimo 1965 [1573]:226).

Maize. Corn was by far the most highly esteemed crop in the Andes. Virtually every account of native subsistence lists maize as one of the main items in the precolumbian diet (Acosta 1954 [1590]:109; Anónimo 1965 [1573]:226; Cobo 1964 [1653]:Bk. 11, Ch. 6:21, Bk. 4, Ch. 3:159; Garcilaso 1945 [1609]:Bk. 2:48; Rodríguez Docampo 1965 [1650]:75). After it was dried, maize could be prepared in a number of different ways, two of the most common methods being boiling and toasting. Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 14, Ch. 5:244) notes that corn kernels were toasted in "perforated clay casseroles." Toasted maize, or *cancha*, was often ground into flour that was then used in a variety of ways (Garcilaso 1945 [1609]:Bk.2:177). Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk.14, Ch. 3:160) mentions, for instance, that maize flour was used to make tortillas, which were "toasted or cooked in clay casseroles set in the fire."

One of the most important uses of maize in the Andes was for the production of *chicha* (corn beer; in Quechua, *aka*).³ The elaboration of *chicha* was seen as one of the fundamental culinary tasks of

Andean women and universally associated with the female domain (Gómez Huamán 1966:35; Sachún 2001; Silverblatt 1987:39; Vokral 1991:202). Besides being the daily beverage of the local population, *chicha* was an important element of social and ceremonial gatherings where ritual drunkenness was often obligatory (Morris 1979; Rowe 1946:292; Salomon 1986:75–79).

Native peoples reportedly had more accoutrements for making and storing *chicha* than for any other purpose. According to Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 14, Ch. 4:242), they used “clay jars, the largest being four and six *arrobas*,⁴ as well as other smaller ones . . . a large quantity of large and small jugs, and three or four types of cups and glasses” in the process. In his Aymara dictionary, Bertonio (1879 [1612]) differentiates between vessels used to hold the masticated pulp used in making *chicha*, which he described as a small, wide-mouthed olla, and the jars in which the finished product (as well as water) were stored. Tschopik (1950:202) reports that among the modern peasants of the Chucuito region, two jars are still employed for producing *chicha*, one for fermentation and one for storage. The latter has a narrower mouth and longer, more restricted neck, features that facilitate closure and reduce the rate of evaporation. Today in the central Peruvian highlands, three ceramic vessels are involved in the production process: the *hatun manca*, which holds some 45 liters, the *azuana*, in which the mash is decocted, and the *manca*, in which water to be added to the decoction is heated (Antunéz 1985:94–95). Once reduced and cooled, the liquid, known as *upi*, is decanted into narrow-mouthed jars where it ferments for several weeks (ibid).

Potatoes and Other Root Crops. Cieza (1959 [1553]:44) states that “of the native foodstuffs, there are two which, aside from maize, are the main staples of the Indian’s diet: the potato . . . and another very good food they call quinoa.” Potatoes and other tubers, including *oca*, *ulluco*, *mashua* (or *añu*), and *maca*, together with quinoa, are the only cultigens native to the high altitudes of the Andes. Without these tubers, human occupation of these zones would probably have been impossible (Murra 1975:46).

Potatoes could be eaten green, roasted, cooked, or in stews (Cobo 1964 [1653]:Bk. 4, Ch. 13:168). Those not eaten soon after harvest were preserved through a process of alternate exposure to sun and frost. The tubers dehydrated in this fashion were

known as *chuño* and could be stored for many years. *Chuño* was used for thickening soups among other things (Cieza de León 1959 [1553]:164). Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 4, Ch. 13:168) also mentions that a very fine flour could be made from rehydrated *chuño* by toasting and then grinding the bleached potatoes.

Quinoa. The other most important high-altitude crop, quinoa, provided the basic grain for the highland populations. According to Cieza de León (1959 [1553]:44, 271; also Rodríguez Docampo 1965 [1650]:75), quinoa “produces tiny seeds . . . of which they make drinks and which they also eat boiled, as we do rice.” Quinoa was often cooked with herbs and *ají* or red pepper to make a stew known as *pisqui* (Cobo 1964 [1653]:Bk. 14, Ch. 5:244), and was also used to make *chicha* (Bk. 4, Ch. 4:162). Other important high-altitude grains of the Andes include *kañiwa* and *kiwicha*, both of which added high-quality protein to the native diet in similar fashion to quinoa (National Research Council 1989:129–147).

Beans. Beans (*purutus*) of various types were another important element in the precolumbian diet. They could be soaked and eaten raw, dried for storage, stewed or boiled (Cobo 1964 [1653]:Bk. 4, Ch. 27:174). They could also be toasted and ground into a flour and used medicinally in drinks or poultices. *Tarwi* (also known as *chochos* or *altramuces*) was cultivated on a small scale for its seeds. *Tarwi* seeds are very similar to beans but quite bitter and had to be soaked in water for several days prior to being eaten (Yacovleff and Herrera 1934–35:305).

Red Pepper. Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 4, Ch. 25, p. 172) states that after maize, red pepper, or *ají*, was the most widespread and highly esteemed cultigen in the Andean region. “*Ají*, prepared as a delicious salsa, is so pleasing to the indians that it makes anything edible, even wild and bitter herbs; they eat not only the fruit of this plant, but also the leaves, which they add to their stews like parsley or *yerbabuena*; they eat the *ají* raw and also preserve it in several ways: it can be pickled . . . , dried, or ground” (Cobo 1964 [1653]:Bk. 4, Ch. 25, p. 173).

Salt. Salt was a universal and indispensable component of the native diet. Atienza (1931 [1575?]:67–68) comments that “no matter how drab and humble the rest of their meal may be, they enjoy it as much as any luxury, as long as they can season it with *ají*, their principal spice, and salt to cool their body heat, and a little *chicha* to drink.” According to Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 3, Ch. 4:112), the Indians rec-

ognized three different types of salt: sea salt, mineral salt, and salt collected from springs by boiling the water in pots.

Meat. Meat was apparently consumed on a limited basis. Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 14, Ch. 5:244) states that it was eaten only rarely by the common people, implying that the elite had greater access (see also Estrella 1988:313, 319; Guaman Poma 1936 [1613]:55; Gummerman 1991; Paz Ponce de León 1965 [1582]:237; Vokral 1991:76). Modern ethnographic evidence from the southern highlands indicates that camelid meat constitutes 10 percent of the campesino diet (Antunéz 1985:63); archaeological evidence from the central sierra also indicates that commoners had some access to meat, though they apparently consumed poorer cuts than the elite (Sandefur 2001). While game animals such as deer, rabbit, partridge, and water fowl were reportedly abundant (Anónimo 1965 [1573]:220; Cobo 1964 [1653]:Bk. 9; Guaman Poma 1936 [1613]:204–207), sources suggest that hunting, and thus game consumption, was strictly regulated by the Inka (Cieza 1962 [1553]:400; Rowe 1946:217). Domesticated animals included dog, Muscovy duck, camelids, and guinea pig (*cuy*). Camelids and guinea pigs, which were by far the most common, constituted a regular component of most Indian households, but the meat of these animals was usually reserved for meals that marked special occasions. Fresh and dried fish were also a common element of the native diet among those who lived near the sea, lakes, or rivers (e.g., Estrella 1988:332–338). Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 14, Ch. 5:244) notes that dried fish was frequently used as “meat” to make *locro*.

According to Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 3, Ch. 4:113, Bk. 14, Ch. 5:244; also Acosta 1954 [1590]:136; Salazar Villasante 1965 [1565?]:132) the number of ways meat was prepared was fairly limited. Generally speaking, it was either stewed (typically in *locro* with *ají* and other vegetables), dried (as *charqui*), or barbecued. Roasting in an earthen pit oven (*pachamanca*) was also a common method of preparation.

Inka Haute Cuisine

Various chroniclers of Andean culture offer hints as to what may have constituted Inka “haute cuisine,” though none address the matter directly. Guaman Poma (1936 [1613]:332), for instance, tells us that,

the [sapa] Inca . . . ate selected maize that is *capyá utco sara*, and *papas manay* [early potatoes], . . . and llama called white *cuyro*, and *chiche* [tiny fish], white *cuy*, and much fruit and ducks, and very smooth *chicha* which took a month to mature and was called *yamor aca*. And he ate other things which the Indians were not to touch upon pain of death.

Murra (1960) notes that maize was generally accorded a much higher status by the Inka and their subjects than potatoes and other tubers, which actually formed the staples of the Andean diet. A description of the first Inka queen, Mama Ocllo’s daily repast given by Murúa (1962:29) provides further evidence of the elite connotations of maize in the Inka diet,

Her daily food was usually maize taken either as *locros anca* [seagull/hawk(?) stew] or *mote* [boiled maize kernels], mixed in diverse manners with other foods, cooked or otherwise prepared. For us these are coarse and uncouth foods, but for them they were as excellent and savory as the softest and most delicate dishes put on the tables of the monarchs of Europe. Her drink was a very delicate *chicha*, which among them was as highly esteemed as the fine vintage wines of Spain.

In general, the ethnohistoric sources convey the sense that maize was special, desirable, and even viewed as holiday food by the highland populations (Murra 1960:397).

Reports of royal gifts involving food offer further insight into the symbolic weighting of Andean dietary elements. The Inka ruler Atahualpa, for instance, is said to have sent llamas, cooked llama meat, dried ducks, maize bread, and vessels of *chicha* to Pizarro upon his landing at Tumbez (Coe 1994:214). Elsewhere it was reported that the royal food (*tupa cocau*) given by the Inka “to the people that he sent abroad,” consisted of a small bag of maize believed to be particularly nutritious because it came from the Inka himself (González Holguín 1952 [1608]:369). It is apparent from various sources that maize and meat were considered the food of the gods, and by extension, of the Inka. Ethnohistoric sources clearly state that the nobility ate more meat and maize than their subjects who dined primarily on tubers and greens (Guaman Poma 1936 [1613]:55; Garcilaso 1945 [1609]:Bk. 2:124; Paz Ponce de León 1965 [1582]:237). Though maize was apparently consumed across the social spectrum, it does not seem to have been an item of everyday fare for the com-

Table 1. Vessels Explicitly Mentioned in Ethnohistoric Sources.

Vessel Type (Spanish)	Vessel Type (English)	Culinary Activity
Olla	Pot	Stewing; Boiling
Cazuela (Quechua, chua)	Casserole	Toasting
Cazuelas de barro agujereadas	Casseroles, perforated	Toasting
Tinajas	Jars (large and small)	Chicha production
Cántaros; Cantarillos	Jugs (large and small)	Chicha production
Vasos y Tazas; Cantaricos	Glasses and cups (various sizes)	Chicha consumption
Platos (Quechua, puco)	Plates	Serving

moners (Coe 1994:220; Murra 1960), while access to meat seems to have been limited and fairly tightly controlled (Rowe 1946, 1982; Sandefur 1988). The divide between the regular consumption of meat versus vegetables has been theorized as a fundamental marker of the division between social classes by some scholars (i.e., Goody 1982) and between men and women by others (i.e., Adams 1990).

In addition to the types of foods consumed, another aspect of Andean haute cuisine seems to have revolved around the concept of “variety.” According to González Holguín (1952 [1608]:238–239), the ability to prepare and serve either a variety of different dishes in a single meal or to prepare a single meal using a variety of ingredients was key to the notion of “dining splendidly.” There are also hints that the amount of time invested in the preparation of foods, as in the case of the *yamor aca* mentioned above, the complexity of the dishes served, and the costliness of the ingredients all figured into the equation of what constituted an elite repast. In sum, Inka haute cuisine does not appear to have differed radically from the baseline Andean diet in terms of basic components. Rather, it seems to have been defined on the basis of quality, quantity, and diversity of foodstuffs, and differences in modes of preparation, consumption, and disposal.

Andean Culinary Practices

In the review of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources presented above, boiling clearly stands out as the most common method of preparing food. Boiled foods were usually eaten in the form of stews or soups. Comments referring to *guisados*, or stews, far outnumber any other references to prepared dishes. In Bertonio’s Aymara dictionary (1879 [1612]), one vessel type, *chamillku*, is specifically defined as an “olla used for cooking stews.”

Roasting was another fairly common cooking technique, and the comments indicate that foods were typically roasted directly in the coals. Parch-

ing or toasting was also an important culinary technique. Another vessel type listed in Bertonio’s dictionary is defined as an “olla for toasting something” (cited in Tschopik 1950:203). A wide-mouthed, short-walled vessel made specifically for toasting was still being manufactured by the modern Aymara population in the Chucuito region as recently as the mid-twentieth century (Tschopik 1950:206–207), as well as in the Mantaro region of the central highlands (Hagstrum 1989). Some foods were simply toasted and eaten, but in other cases, parching constituted an intermediate step in the preparation of specific staples, most notably maize flour.

Food preparation likely was a very time consuming activity. Many products required several stages of processing. Depending on the food, these steps might include drying, soaking, rinsing, mixing, parching or boiling, and reheating. Each could conceivably have required different types and sizes of vessels.

Food Preparation

Vessels explicitly named in the ethnohistoric sources in connection with cooking and food preparation are listed in Table 1. Ollas are specifically associated with stewing and boiling, casseroles are named in reference to toasting, and jugs, jars, and glasses in connection with *chicha* production and consumption. As noted earlier, the native peoples had more vessels and equipment for producing *chicha*; i.e., *chicha* production was the most elaborated culinary task in Andean cuisine.

In addition to those vessels specifically mentioned, it is possible to infer the presence or additional functions of several others from the data available on dietary habits and practices. Several foodstuffs, for instance, required soaking and washing. We may infer from this the need for both large- and medium-sized, unrestricted containers such as bowls or basins. We also could posit an additional short-term storage function for the wide-mouthed

cooking ollas. Similarly, the production of salt may have required special basins or ollas to facilitate evaporation.

Serving

With respect to the types of vessels that comprised the native Andean table service, we have this valuable description:

There are only two or three types of pieces that they use for this purpose: unglazed clay pots (ollas) on which they used to carve various figures, the same as they did on jars and other vessels; plates made from dry calabashes, that were the size of small china plates, from clay, and from wood—those of wood are called meca, and those of clay they call pucu; and medium-sized ceramic casseroles that they call chuas. The table service of the noblemen and chiefs were made of silver and gold in former times [Cobo 1964 (1653):Bk. 14, Ch. 4:243].

Occasional remarks about the customary modes of presenting and eating foods provide further insight into vessel requirements. Cobo [1964 (1653):Bk. 14, Ch. 5:245] reports that the Indians typically ate twice a day, once in the morning and once in the late afternoon. Husbands and wives would sit back to back on the ground, with the wife facing the food and serving her husband upon request. Atienza (1931[1575]:41–43) notes that “the men never eat from one plate with their women, and indeed would consider it a disgrace, and take it as such, if they were forced to do so.” At social gatherings and public feasts, Cobo reported that each family brought its own food and drink, though sharing was apparently an institutionalized practice. It was customary, for instance, when drinking *chicha* either ritually or socially to offer a toast to your companion or guest. This practice involved taking two tumblers and offering one to the person with whom you wished to share a drink (see Betanzos 1968 [1551]:55).

Storage

Besides their importance in food preparation and serving, pots and jars were also used as storage containers in Andean households. Regarding the storage of food staples, Cobo (1964 [1653]:Bk. 14, Ch. 4:242) notes that basic foods such as maize, *chuño*, and quinoa were usually stored in large ceramic jars either inside the house or in a separate area designed for storage just outside.

The need for other short- and long-term storage

vessels is implied by reference to certain culinary techniques mentioned above. Soaking beans, for instance, would have required the use of a vessel for a period of up to several days. Products made into preserves, such as *ají* and *camote*, presumably required longer term storage containers. The fermenting and aging of *chicha* required the use of storage jars from one to several weeks. Standard food preparation tasks used large quantities of water, implying the presence of water storage containers in the house compound.

The above review of ethnohistoric references to Andean foodways and culinary techniques suggests the many ways in which pottery was likely used in the precolumbian Andes. The diversity of tasks in which ceramic vessels were employed implies a corresponding diversity in the range of vessel shapes. The following passage offers valuable insights into the native classification of the domestic pottery inventory:

Nor did they make the same distinctions in earthenware that we use, but speak only of pots (ollas) and jugs (cántaros), which they differentiate in terms of size (larger and smaller) and decoration (some have been sculpted with figures and designs); small, plain plates (platillos); and small shallow plates (patenas). The rest of their vessels correspond to the types that the Spaniards usually make from clay, which they [the Indians] made from silver, gold, wood, and dried calabashes; not even in their ancient sepulchers, in which they buried their dead with all forms of food and drink, does one find vessels other than the types referred to here [Cobo 1964 (1653):Bk. 3, Ch. 6:114–115].

This passage suggests that beyond gross morphological distinctions, the ethno-classification of pottery revolved primarily around vessel size and the presence or absence of decoration. This observation on the emic organization of pottery corresponds with the definitions of vessel types provided by Bertonio (1879 [1612]) in his Aymara dictionary. His definitions also rely primarily on the criteria of size and decoration in describing and differentiating between vessels. In addition, Bertonio defines a few vessels with respect to the foods with which they were generally associated. Modern ethnographic studies of pottery production and consumption in the central Andes yield similar findings with regard to indigenous taxonomies of ceramic containers (e.g., Costin and Hagstrum 1995:631–2; Hagstrum 1989).

These observations offer useful guidelines for

interpreting the significance of ceramic variability in the archaeological record and working toward a culturally meaningful taxonomy of precolumbian pottery. Cobo's statement also argues for the conservatism of Andean culinary equipment and the patterns described above. In a sense his observations offer a justification for using the ethnohistoric record to interpret the archaeological one.

Functional Analysis of Imperial Inka Pottery

With the ethnohistoric backdrop of Andean cuisine in place, I turn to the culinary significance of the imperial Inka ceramic ensemble, offering a functional analysis of the different vessel forms comprising the state pottery assemblage that draws upon both the ethnohistoric data and general studies of the mechanical performance characteristics of pottery (e.g., Braun 1983; Hally 1986; Smith 1985). Each Inka vessel type is analyzed in terms of its morphological attributes, physical properties, and patterns of use wear. The physical features, in conjunction with the culinary information found in the ethnohistoric sources, are used to suggest possible functional roles for the different vessel forms. Based on the information presented above, it is likely that ceramic vessels were utilized in the following culinary activities: cooking, processing, fermentation, serving, eating, wet and dry storage, transportation of liquids, and washing. This task list serves as a baseline in discussing probable functions of imperial Inka vessel forms.

One of the basic assumptions is that the form of a ceramic container is strongly influenced by its intended function. The functional nature of pottery can be analyzed along several dimensions. These include shape, physical properties determined by attributes such as wall thickness and paste composition, patterns of use wear, and patterns of association or context. In Braun's (1983) discussion of "pots as tools," i.e., containers, he suggests that the mechanical performance characteristics of a pot, as with any tool, are determined to a considerable extent by its morphological and physical properties. The "performance characteristics" of a vessel, in turn, help to determine how well suited it is for a particular use (Hally 1986). Specific dimensions of vessel performance identified by Hally (1986) include vessel stability, volumetric capacity, overall size, ease of access to vessel contents, ease of removal of contents, tendency to spill, efficiency of heat absorption,

heat retention, rate of evaporation, ability to close the orifice, and thermal shock resistance.

In my discussion of the imperial state ceramic assemblage, I adopt the Inka vessel shape categories defined by Albert Meyers (1975). In contrast to Rowe's (1944) typological and taxonomic classification of Inka pottery, which accorded primacy to surface treatment and decorative style in the fashion of the day (see Colton and Hargrave 1937), Meyers's classification scheme focuses principally on vessel form. Like Rowe, Meyers utilized the ceramic assemblage from the ceremonial-fortress complex of Saqsaywaman to construct his classificatory scheme. In this, he relies primarily on the published reports of archaeological materials excavated at the site from the mid-1930s through the early 1970s (Valcárcel 1934, 1935; Valencia 1970, 1975; Yabar and Ramos 1970). These reports describe the archaeological materials recovered in detail and are well illustrated.

The collection from Saqsaywaman has the advantage of being from the imperial capital; it also contains the full range of Inka vessel forms, comes from a well-documented archaeological context, and has a secure chronological position. While it is possible that undecorated or utilitarian pottery may have been under-collected and/or under-reported by the original investigators, it is worth noting that at least three of the vessel categories in Meyers's classification scheme (Forms 9, 10, and 12) are described as cooking vessels lacking in decoration and frequently exhibiting carbon on the exterior surfaces. Together, these three vessel types comprise 18 percent of the total assemblage (Meyers 1975:23).

In Meyers's system, the Inka ceramic assemblage is divided into seven formal classes: (a) *aribalos*; (b) narrow-necked vessels; (c) wide-mouthed vessels; (d) wide-mouthed pots (ollas); (e) vessels with or without feet; (f) plates and bowls; and (g) glasses. Each category contains one to several forms to each of which Meyers assigned a specific number. In total, 14 distinct morphological types are recognized (Figure 1). I use Meyers's numerical designations throughout the remainder of this discussion. Figure 2 correlates Meyers's terminology with other names for these Inka vessel types in the literature.

Meyers's Form 1 is regularly referred to as the Inka *aribalo*, a name first used by nineteenth century scholars and later made semi-official by Bingham (1915) with his publication of the Machu Picchu materials. While the term may not be entirely appro-

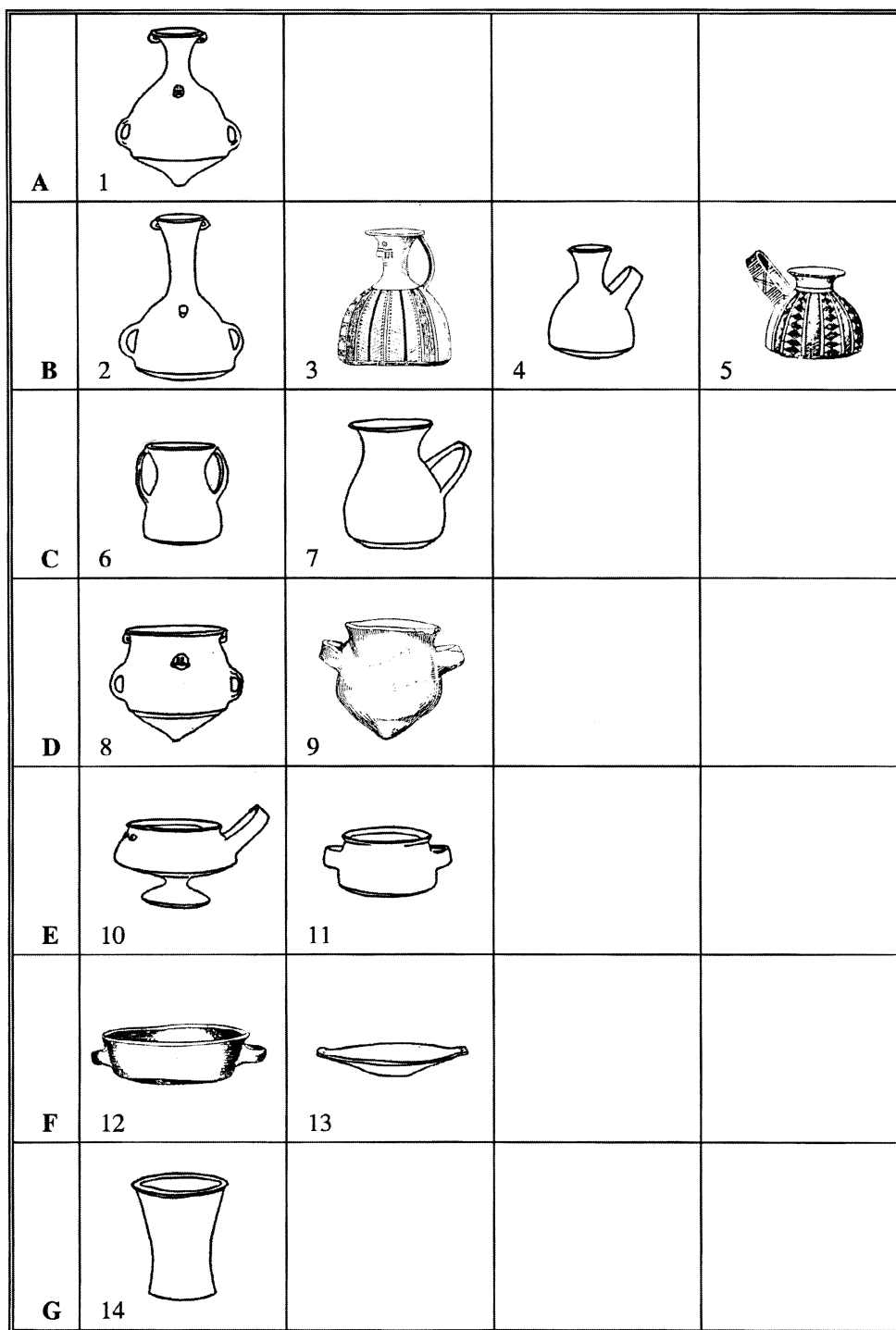









Figure 1. Inka vessel form categories used in this study (after Meyers 1975).

Source	1 	2 	3 	4 	5 	6 	7 
Meyers (1976)	Inca jar	Long-necked vase	Face neck jar	Long-necked bottle	Short-necked bottle	Two-handled vessel	One-handled vessel
Bingham (1915)	Type 1 Aryballus	----	Type 13b, d Jug	Type 13h Jug	Type 13a Jug	Type 6 Pelike jug	---
Fernandez (1971)	Makas	Florero	---	Deposito	Deposito	Jarron	---
Pardo (1957)	Makas	Florero Tticachuranas	Puina	Aisana Puchuela	Aisana Puchuela	Rajchi	Rajchi
Rowe (1944)	Shape A	Shape H	---	Shape D	---	Shape B	Shape C








Source	8 	9 	10 	11 	12 	13 	14 
Meyers (1976)	Conical-based olla	Round-based olla	One-footed olla	Two-handled bowl	Two-handled plate	Shallow plate/bowl	Cup
Bingham (1915)	Wide-mouth aryballus	Types 7-10	Type 2 Beaker olla	Type 4 Deep dish	Type 4d	Types 11 & 12 Drinking ladle	Type 15b
Fernandez (1971)	Raqui	Ollas cylindricos	Olla caliz	Qocha	---	Chua ppucu	Q'ero
Pardo (1957)	Urpu	Manca	Chullanchaqui manca	Manca	---	Pucu	Q'ero
Rowe (1944)	Shape E	----	Shape J	Shape F	---	Shape G Pucu	Shape I

Figure 2. Cross-correlation of terms used to describe Inka vessel forms.

pritate with respect to its historical and descriptive connotations, it is nonetheless widely used and recognized. The *aribalo*, with its tall flaring neck, high pronounced shoulders, and conical base is the best known and most characteristic of the Inka vessel forms.

Most investigators assume that it was used as a container for *chicha*, the ubiquitous and socially indispensable corn beer of the Andes. This interpretation is supported by various morphological features of the vessel. The elongated shape indicates a concern with the efficient utilization of space characteristic of storage vessels. The tall, flared neck and restricted vessel orifice emphasize containment of vessel contents at the expense of accessibility. The flared rim and conical base would facilitate the pouring of liquids. The characteristic side handles and lug also suggest a carrying function. Direct evidence in the form of representational art on pottery and modern usage indicates how these features functioned for the transport liquids (e.g., Kauffmann Doig 1983:726). The proposed function of the *aribalo* as a storage container is further supported by contextual information from sev-

eral highland sites (D'Altroy and Hastorf 1984; Morris 1967).

The four vessel types included in Meyers's second category (B), the narrow-necked jar forms, are not nearly as common in the overall Inka assemblage as the *aribalo* and several other forms. The morphological features of these vessels suggest that they probably served as containers for liquids. Their low centers of gravity and flat bases may indicate their use in more heavily trafficked areas and/or their regular placement on prepared (i.e., hard, flat) surfaces (Lischka 1978:227; Smith 1985:267, 277). Given the relative scarcity of the tall-necked vessels in this class (the short-necked, flat-bottomed jar [Form 5] being considerably more common than the other three types), it can be assumed that their function was restricted and their use perhaps limited to more uncommon events.

The third class of vessels, the wide-necked jars with flat bases and one or two strap handles, are also relatively rare, though Form 6 is more common than Form 7. Bingham (1979:162) recovered a fairly large number of ($n = 78$) two-handled pitchers (Form 6)



Figure 3. Map indicating locations of Inka sites included in distributional analysis of Inka pottery.

from Machu Picchu. One-third of these were reportedly associated with burials while the remainder came from the vicinity of the city. He notes that in general this vessel category was “not as elaborately decorated as the dishes” (Bingham 1979:162). Examples of these wide-necked Inka jar forms have also been recorded at Ollantaytambo, Saqsaywaman, Isla del Sol, and Quito (Figure 3).

These vessels also likely served as containers for liquids, but the morphological differences between this class and the two previously mentioned suggest at least some difference in function. The larger rim diameters of the Class C as compared to the Class A

and B vessels may reflect a greater concern with ease of access to vessel contents, often associated with a higher frequency of access events (Braun 1980; Smith 1985). The flat base could again be interpreted as evidence for intended use on prepared surfaces. The morphological attributes of the wide-mouthed jars suggest a possible decanting or serving function.

Meyers's Form 8 is another relatively rare type known primarily from the Cuzco area, though several examples have also been reported from Ecuador (Meyers 1976). Pardo (1939) refers to these vessels by the Quechua term *urpu*, which, according to a

modern Quechua dictionary, denotes a large earthenware vessel used for the fermenting of *chicha* (Guardia 1980). The form is essentially that of a large, conical-based olla. In many ways it recalls a truncated, wide-mouthed version of the *aribalo*, as it frequently carries the same types of polychrome decoration and likewise comes equipped with two side handles and a stylized lug.

Most authors attribute a food processing function to this vessel, acknowledging its probable role as a container for *upi*, or unfermented *chicha*, during the process of *chicha* production (Fernández 1971; Meyers 1975; Pardo 1939). The morphological traits of this form, which include the large rim diameter, high, slightly converging vessel walls, and side handles, do not contradict this interpretation, but could also suggest use for transporting dry foodstuffs such as maize or tubers. The transport of liquids also is possible because the everted angle of the rim hints at some provision for closing or covering the vessel.

Meyers's Form 9 vessels are likely to have been Inka utilitarian wares. These round-bottomed ollas lack both decorative treatment and standardization of form, uncommon characteristics for the imperial state pottery assemblage. This vessel type is also frequently found with remnant carbon on its exterior surface. While this vessel category is recorded by both Bingham and Valcárcel at Machu Picchu and Saqsaywaman, respectively, it is not likely that the sherds of these vessels would be readily recognizable as Inka pottery outside of the Cuzco area (see Costin 1986 for detailed discussion of local utilitarian wares from the Inka period at Wanka sites in the central highlands). The various reports of miscellaneous or unidentified cooking wares from provincial Inka sites could refer to either this Inka utilitarian type or local varieties of cooking vessels. The morphological features of this type of pot reflect a concern with containment (slightly restricted neck) and the suitability of the pot for suspension above a fire for cooking purposes (rounded base, presence of handles) (Linton 1944; Smith 1985).

In contrast to the nondescript character of these pots, the pedestal-base olla (Form 10), which is also considered a cooking vessel, is a common and highly diagnostic Inka form. This vessel is known in the literature by a variety of names including "chalice" (Pardo 1939) and "beaker-shaped olla" (Bingham 1915). Diagnostic features include a flared pedestal base, a large strap handle obliquely attached to the

vessel shoulder, and a simple appliqué design located on the shoulder opposite the handle that typically consists of a serpent figure or a pair of small protuberances. The pedestal-base olla is often equipped with a lid and frequently exhibits carbon residue on its exterior surface. These vessels are reported in relatively high frequencies at nearly every site with an Inka component. These percentages could be skewed by the fact this form may be more readily identifiable in a fragmented state than others, though the same caveat would apply to several other Inka vessel types as well. The footed ollas are found in grave lots as well as residential sectors, though those from burials sometimes lack evidence of use wear (Bray 1991:361–392). Morphologically, the slightly restricted form suggests a concern with containment. The relative flatness of the bottom portion of the bowl makes the form suitable for long periods of heating in the fire (Linton 1944). The strongly everted rim and the commonly associated potlids could indicate a concern with spillage or the use of these vessels as short-term storage containers for perishables (Smith 1985).

The contrasts between this vessel and the preceding one suggest that these two types of cooking pots were either used for preparing different kinds of foods or in different methods of food preparation. Mean differences in the volumetric capacity of these two vessel forms is also significant and likely relates to who the intended consumers were, i.e., a group or an individual (Bray 2003). Given that cooking vessels probably are among the most conservative elements of any ceramic complex (Linton 1944), the ubiquity and uniqueness of the footed olla are highly significant. Its distribution is suggestive of the importance attached to a particular food category and/or food preparation technique vis-à-vis Inka or elite identity, and the extent to which the state had succeeded in exporting or imposing its culinary practices.

The fact that the footed olla is the only cooking vessel elaborated in a distinctive state style suggests that the viand prepared in it would have been highly esteemed. Given the importance the Inka attached to maize, it is possible that this vessel was associated with the preparation of a maize-based dish. Its typically small-to-medium size, together with certain diagnostic features, such as the large oblique strap handle and associated lid, suggest individually sized portions and a concern with portability. The sum of

its features suggest that the pedestal-base olla may have figured in state obligations to provide *corveé* laborers with a fitting cooked (reheated?) repast.

The two-handled deep dish or *cazuela* (Form 11) is another common component of the Inka assemblage. This form usually carries polychrome painting, though a few undecorated examples were found at Saqsaywaman. This was the third most common vessel form recovered at Machu Picchu and half of those found were associated with burials. Bingham (1979:156) suggests that they were likely used as serving containers for soups and porridges. Fernández (1971:18) believes these vessels were manufactured for ceremonial drinking purposes. He notes that modern Quechua herdsman in the Cuzco area buy authentic reproductions of these forms and use them at certain festivals for *chicha* consumption.

As an unrestricted form, the morphological features of the two-handled deep dish reflect concerns with access, visibility of contents, portability, and stability. These characteristics imply a high frequency of access, the manipulation of the contents with hands or utensils, frequent movement or transference of the vessel, and use in heavily trafficked areas and/or locations with prepared surfaces (Smith 1985). The form suggests that the vessel may have been used as a serving container, or possibly in food-processing tasks, though the presence of polychrome decoration makes the latter suggestion less likely. The directness of the rim seems to indicate a lack of concern with pouring properties or vessel closure.

Meyers's sixth class of vessel types includes both shallow bowls and plates. The flat-bottomed plate with short everted walls and two horizontal strap handles (Form 12) is a relatively uncommon form known primarily from the imperial heartland, though examples from the Titicaca region and southern Ecuador have been documented. This vessel category typically lacks decoration and probably belongs to the local domestic Inka assemblage. The unrestricted form and low walls suggest a toasting or parching function, or possibly heating for evaporation (Smith 1985:276).

In contrast, the other unrestricted vessel in this class, the shallow plate (Form 13), is one of the most frequently occurring components of the Inka ceramic assemblage. These plates probably exhibit the greatest freedom of stylistic expression seen on any Inka vessel form. Decorative designs employ both painted and plastic techniques. Meyers (1975:15) divides

this form into five subcategories based on the type of handle. The most common variety has a stylized zoomorphic head (typically a bird) as a handle with a pair of protuberances located on the rim opposite. Almost as common are plates that have simple opposing sets of double nubbins on the rim. Vertical and horizontal loop handles are also found, though this variety is not as common.

The largest sample of these plates comes from Machu Picchu where they were the second most common vessel form recovered (Bingham 1979:132). Bingham reports that 60 percent of the approximately 300 specimens came from burial contexts in which they were frequently found in matched pairs. He refers to these vessels as "drinking ladles" and suggests they were probably used for consuming soups and stews. The morphological features of this form emphasize ease of access and handling, and reflect a lack of concern with spilling or spoilage. Additionally, the height of the vessel, which averages 2.6 cm (Bray 2003), and the low angle of the walls indicate a lack of suitability for containing liquids. The morphology and decorative treatment suggest that they may represent individual serving platters for solid or semi-solid foods, possibly meats.

The last vessel form in Meyers's classification scheme is the tall cup with flaring walls commonly known by the Quechua name *kero*. This shape is reminiscent of earlier Tiwanaku forms and may represent the conscious use of anachronism by the Inka elite. The form was not limited to the ceramic medium and was probably more commonly produced in wood and metal. While it appears to us a natural form for drinking, its relative rarity and restriction to specific contexts suggest that it may have had a more specialized or limited function.

Based on morphological considerations, the presence or absence of decoration, and the evidence for use wear (i.e., carbon and food residues), different functions have been posited for the different Inka vessel forms discussed above. These functional interpretations are summarized in Table 2. Briefly, Inka Forms 9, 10, and possibly 12 are believed to represent cooking vessels. Form 8 fits the criteria for vessels used in food-processing tasks, specifically fermentation, and may have also been used for transporting dry goods. Forms 1–4, 6, and 7 all exhibit characteristics typical of containers designed to hold liquids. Form 1 exhibits features that are also well adapted for the transport of liquids, as well as either

Table 2. Functional Interpretation of the Inka Vessel Assemblage.

Vessel Form	Cooking		Process	Ferment	Serving/Eating		Storage		Transport (Liquid)
	Boiling	Toasting			Solids	Liquid	Wet	Dry	
1						X	X		X
2							X		
3							X		
4							X		
5							X		
6						X			
7						X			
8			X	X				X	
9	X								
10	X								
11					X	X			
12		X							
13					X				
14						X			

dry or wet storage. Forms 6, 7, and 11 (depending on size) may represent serving vessels. Forms 13, 14, and possibly Forms 5 and 11, are likely to have been used as individual eating or drinking vessels. While the imperial Inka assemblage does appear to contain several vessel types related to cooking and food-processing activities, it is clear that the bulk of the distinctive state repertoire was dedicated to vessels intended to be used in serving and consumption contexts. This emphasis highlights the significance of commensal events in the eyes of the state and the contribution of the vessels themselves to the materialization of the idea of an Inka haute cuisine.

Distribution of Imperial Inka Vessel Forms

The patterned distribution of specific forms in the imperial core (the Cuzco region and Urubamba Valley) versus the provincial sectors provides added insight into the role of Inka pottery in imperial expansion. For this component of the study, I utilized published reports containing quantitative or quantifiable data on Inka pottery as well as information derived from the firsthand study of several archaeological collections. The data set, while neither complete nor fully random, encompasses information on imperial Inka pottery from the length and breadth of the empire. The sites included are listed in Table 3 together with the associated references; their locations are indicated in Figure 3. The assembled data are adequate to ascertain whether differences could be discerned in the distribution of imperial vessel forms at the gross geopolitical level of Inka heartland versus provinces.

The publications examined span many years and vary greatly with respect to the types and amount of information imparted. They reflect changes in acceptable standards of archaeological research, different disciplinary emphases, and the diverse backgrounds of the various investigators. All the reports, however, contained sufficient detail in either the text, illustrations, or appendices to assign the Inka pottery to one of the 14 formal categories discussed above. Generally speaking, only complete or nearly complete vessels were included in this study.

Table 4 presents available information on the frequencies of different state vessel forms recovered from Inka sites around the empire. All systematically excavated sites with adequately reported ceramic data were included. The counts may be taken as approximate representations of the total assemblage at each site. As it was impossible to extract quantitative data from the published reports for many sites, a presence/absence chart of vessel forms was also constructed to check suggested patterns (Table 5). Figure 4 shows the distribution of the different vessel types comprising the composite, empire-wide assemblage. The graph indicates that the *aribalo* (Form 1) accounts for nearly half of the total vessels in the sample. The shallow plate, the single footed olla, and the two-handled casserole, Forms 10, 13, and 11, respectively, are the next most common vessel types. Overall, these four vessel forms account for 92 percent of the tabulated pots.

Significant differences are noted in the relative proportions of vessel types among the most common forms in the imperial core versus the provinces

Table 3. List of Sites and Published References Used in Distributional Analysis.

Sector	Site Name	References
Heartland	Saqsaywaman	Franco and Llanos 1940; Valcárcel 1934–35; Valencia 1970
	Cuzco (general)	Pardo 1939, 1959 (gravelot); Sawyer 1966 (1 gravelot); Schmidt 1929
	Ollantaytambo	Llanos 1936
	Chinchero	Rivera 1976
	Machu Picchu	Bingham 1915, 1979; Eaton 1916
Cuntisuyu	Choquepukio	McEwan Collection, Museo Inka, Cuzco
	Maucallacta	Bauer 1990
	Mt. Ampato	Perea Chavez 2001; Ampato Collection, Museo Santuarios Andinos, UCSM
	Chincha	Menzel 1966, 1971; Sandweiss 1992; Uhle 1924b
	Ica	Menzel 1971, 1976; Uhle 1924a
	La Centinela	Menzel 1966
	Inkawasi	Hyslop 1985
Collasuyu	Pachacamac	Uhle 1903; Uhle Collection, UMPAA
	Hatunqolla	Hyslop 1976, 1979; Julien 1983
	Titicaca	Bandelier Collection, AMNH
	Pallimarca	Ryden 1947
	Puno	Tschopik 1946
	Tiquischullpa, so. Titicaca region	Parssinen and Siirainen 1997
	Mt. Llullaillaco	Reinhard and Ceruti 2000
	NW Argentina (NOA)	Bennett et al. 1948; Bregante 1926; Calderari and Williams 1991; Debenedetti 1917; Fock 1961; Outes 1907; von Rosen 1924
	Pucara de Lerme, Prov. de Tucuman	Boman 1908
	Chicoana, Valle de Lerme, Prov. de Tucuman	Fock 1961
Chinchaysuyu	La Paya, Valle Calchaqui, NOA	Ambrosetti 1902, 1907–08; Boman 1908; Bennett et al. 1948
	El Plomo	Figuerola 1958; Medina 1958
	La Reina	Mostny 1955
	Pucara Chena	Stehberg 1976
	Huánaco Pampa	Morris 1967; Morris and Thompson 1985
	Hatún Xauxa	D'Altroy 1981, 2001
	La Plata	Dorsey 1901; McEwan and Silva 1989
	Quito	Jijón y Caamaño and Larrea 1918; Jijón y Caamaño 1914; Meyers 1976; Stubel and Reiss 1889
	El Quinche	Jijón y Caamaño 1914; Meyers 1976
	Rumicucho	Almeida and Jara 1984; Almeida 1999
	Tomebamba	Bamps 1879; Bray 1996; Idrovo 2000; Meyers 1976
	Ingapirca	Meyers 1976

(Figure 5). The *aribalo*, for instance, comprises 52 percent of the total number of identifiable Inka vessels in the provincial districts and only 29 percent in the core region. The only vessels besides the *aribalo* that occur with any frequency in the provinces are the shallow plate (Form 13) and the pedestal-base cooking pot (Form 10). These three forms appear to constitute the minimal assemblage for any Inka-affiliated group or individual residing in the hinterlands.

The overall ratio of the four most common vessel types (*aribalos*, shallow plates, pedestal pots, and the two-handled casserole) in the provinces is roughly 100:33:48:7. In the core area of the empire,

the ratios between these four vessel types is generally more balanced (100:81:46:61). The biggest difference between the two regions is in the relative proportion of *aribalos* to other vessels and the significantly higher frequencies of shallow plates (Form 13) and two-handled deep dishes (Form 11) in the heartland.

The fact that the *aribalo* is found in higher proportions in the outlying sectors of the empire suggests that it was of particular importance to some aspect of the imperial expansion process. As mentioned earlier, this vessel form is generally associated with storage and the transport of *chicha*, a product elaborated by women. The Inka, following

Table 4. Frequency of Inka Vessel Forms at Different Sites.

Sector	Site Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Central	Saqsaywaman	20	3	1	6	4	3	5	4	7	15	22	6	59	10	165
	Ollantaytambo	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	1	-	29	1	47
	Machu Picchu	450	-	2	73	5	78	-	9	30	204	271	7	300	12	1,441
	Choquepukio	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	6	7	22
<i>Heartland Sub-Total</i>		483	3	3	79	9	81	6	14	39	224	296	14	394	30	1,674
Cuntisuyu (west/SW)	Maucallacta	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	5	-	-	8	-	19
	Mt. Ampato	8	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	18	-	34
	La Centinela	8	-	1	6	-	-	4	-	-	1	1	-	6	-	27
	Old Ica	7	-	2	1	2	1	1	-	-	4	3	-	13	1	35
Collasuyu (south)	Pachacamac	24	-	1	-	3	3	-	2	-	8	15	-	34	-	90
	Hatunqolla	50	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	1	40	3	107
	Pallimarca	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	-	25	-	96
	Llullaillaco	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	10	-	19
Chinchasuyu (north)	Chicoana, Lerma Valley	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	42	1	55
	El Plomo	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	8
	La Reina	30	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	50	-	88
	Huánaco Pampa	376	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	-	-	26	-	419
Chinchasuyu (north)	Hatún Xauxa	237	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55	-	-	111	17	420
	La Plata	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	6	-	10
	El Quinche	5	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	12
	Rumicucho	577	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	557	69	-	67	-	1,270
<i>Provincial Sub-Total</i>		1,398	5	5	8	13	4	5	4	-	679	104	1	461	22	2,709
Total		1,882	8	8	87	21	85	11	18	39	903	400	15	855	52	4,383

Note: Vessel counts obtained from following sources: Heartland: Saqsaywaman (Meyers 1975:23); Ollantaytambo (Llanos 1936); Machu Picchu (Bingham 1979:117-179); Choquepukio (photo-documentation by T. Bray of G. McEwan Collection, Museo Inka, Cuzco, 2000); Cuntisuyu: Maucallacta (Bauer 1990); Mt. Ampato (Perea Chavez 2001; photo-documentation by T. Bray of Ampato Collection, Museo Santuarios Andinos, UCSM, Arequipa, 2002); La Centinela (Menzel 1966); Old Ica (Menzel 1971, 1976; Uhle 1924a); Pachacamac (Uhle 1903:94; photo-documentation by T. Bray of Uhle Collection, UPMAA, Philadelphia, 2001); Collasuyu: Hatunqolla (Julien 1983); Mt. Llullaillaco (Reinhard and Ceruti 2001); Pallimarca (Ryden 1947); Chicoana (Fock 1961); El Plomo (Figuerola 1958; Medina 1958); La Reina (Mostny 1955); Chinchasuyu: Huánaco Pampa (Morris 1967, App. 3); Hatún Xauxa (D'Altroy 1981:454); La Plata (Dorsey 1901); El Quinche (Jijón y Caamaño 1914); Rumicucho (Almeida and Jara 1984; Almeida 1999).

ancient Andean norms, assumed the responsibility of providing food and drink for *corvée* laborers (e.g., Morris 1982; Murra 1975, 1980; Rowe 1982). The disproportionate number of *aríbalos* found in the provinces might indicate that state prestations of *chicha* was of greater importance in the outlying regions than in the core of the empire (see also Bray 2000). Given that the production of *chicha* was one of the principal tasks of Andean women, it links them to imperial strategies of organization and control in a fundamental way.

The two-handled casserole (Form 11), while a common element in the collections from Cuzco and its vicinity, is relatively rare in the provincial assemblages. Outside of the Inka heartland, examples of this form have been reported at Hatunqolla, Hatún Xauxa, Pachacamac, Old Ica, La Centinela, Pallimarca, El Quinche, and Rumicucho (Figure 3). All of these sites were administrative and/or religious in nature and

likely housed individuals of some rank within the Inka political hierarchy. At Machu Picchu, the two-handled deep dish was equally common in both burial caves and residential middens, and was often found in association with the pedestal-based olla (Form 10) in the former context (Bingham 1979:156). This fact, together with the range of sizes in which this vessel was made and its fairly limited distribution, suggest that it may have constituted an element of a higher-status individual's personal dinner service.

The above information suggests that three vessel types in particular comprised the core of the Inka pottery assemblage. These are Forms 1, 10, and 13, the *aríballo*, the pedestal-base pot, and the shallow plate. These three vessel forms are minimally present at all Late Horizon sites with evidence of Inka occupation. Functionally, this basic set likely represents the activities of *chicha* storage and transport, cooking (boiling), and eating (solid foods). The ensemble suggests

Table 5. Presence/Absence Chart of Inka Vessel Forms at Different Sites.

Sector	Site Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Central	Saqsaywaman	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Cuzco	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
	Ollantaytambo	X								X	X	X		X	X
	Choquepukio	X						X	X	X		X	X	X	X
	Chinero	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cuntisuyu	Machu Picchu	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Maucallacta	X				X			X		X			X	
	Mt. Ampato	X				X					X			X	
	Chincha Valley	X		X		X					X			X	
	Ica Valley	X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
Collasuyu	La Centinela	X		X	X			X			X	X		X	
	Pachacamac	X		X		X	X		X		X	X		X	
	Inkawasi	X									X			X	
	Hatunqolla	X	X		X				X		X	X	X	X	X
	Titicaca	X						X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Chinchasyu	(Islas del Sol, Luna)														
	Tiquischullpa													X	X
	Pallimarca	X								X	X	X		X	
	Puno	X	X			X					X				
	Mt. Llullaillaco	X				X					X	X		X	
	NW Argentina	X													
	La Reina	X				X					X			X	
	Pucara Chena	X			X						X			X	
	Huánaco Pampa	X									X			X	
	HatúnXauxa	X									X	X		X	X
	La Plata	X									X			X	
	Quito	X		X		X	X				X		X		X
	El Quinche	X	X	X		X					X	X		X	
	Rumicucho	X									X	X		X	
	Ingapirca	X				X									
	Tomebamba	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

that two, and possibly three, different food categories were involved as components of an elite repast. We also note that this basic Inka ceramic suite contains both communal and individual service elements. The archaeological evidence, thus, appears to correlate well with the ethnohistoric information on Inka haute cuisine insofar as the core suite of Inka vessels may be interpreted as functionally adapted to the distribution of *chicha* (Form 1), the consumption of meat (Form 13), and the cooking or reheating of maize kernels or a maize-based stew (Form 10).

Discussion

The intent of this paper has been to offer a better understanding of Inka pottery and its role in the dynamic processes of imperial state design. To this end, the Inka ceramic assemblage was examined in terms of its functional and culinary significance. Information culled primarily from ethnohistoric sources and ethnographic reports was used to draw

functional inferences about Inka vessel forms and to outline the features of an imperial haute cuisine. Meat and maize were, by all accounts, the most highly esteemed foodstuffs in the Inka diet and likely comprised the basic elements of Andean haute cuisine in the fifteenth century. The sum of the evidence, however, indicates that elite cuisine did not radically differ from the baseline Andean diet in terms of basic elements. Rather, it seems to have been defined on the basis of quality, quantity, and diversity of foodstuffs, and differences in modes of preparation, serving, consumption, and disposal.

Food and feasting in the Andes has been considered critical to the consolidation of power (see Costin and Earle 1989; Gero 1990, 1992; Moore 1989; Morris 1982; Murra 1960; Rostworowski 1977:240–244). During the Late Horizon, the relationship between food and politics was manifest in the Inka elaboration of a distinctive ensemble of ceramic service, storage, and, to a lesser extent, cooking vessels. While

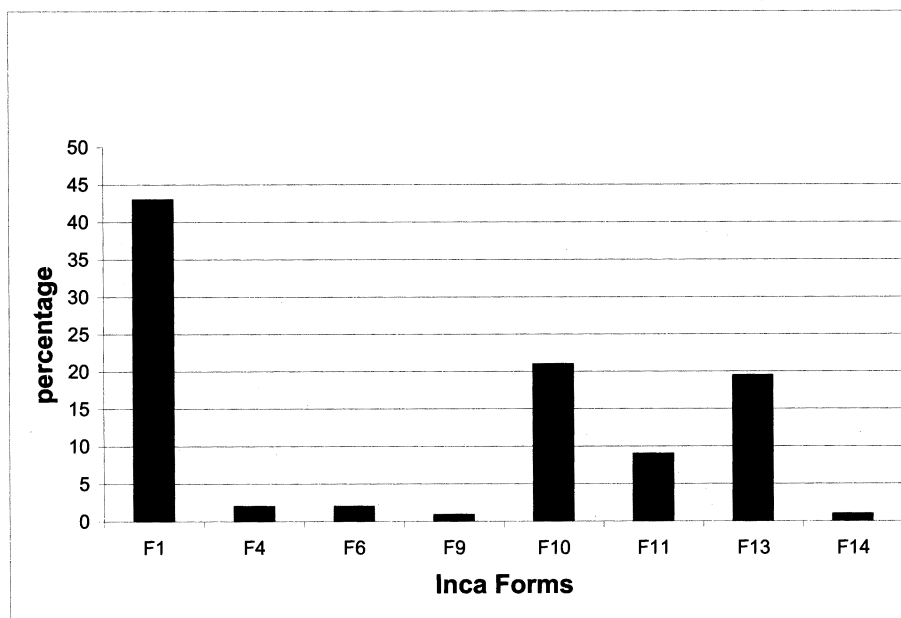


Figure 4. Distribution of Inka vessel forms comprising a composite, empire-wide assemblage ($n = 4383$). *Note: Vessel categories representing less than one percent of the entire assemblage are omitted from graph (these include Forms 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 12).*

stylistically distinct, Inka pottery conformed functionally to widespread Andean culinary and subsistence patterns. The production and distribution of a highly recognizable state pottery ensemble suggests a conscious strategy aimed at creating material symbols of social hierarchy and class difference.

The decision to encode such difference in culinary equipment is probably not accidental. The relationship between the rulers and the people who served them was to an important extent both mediated and materialized through the prestation of food and drink within the context of ritual commensality. In traditional Andean society, cooking and the production of *chicha*, both for everyday consumption and for offerings to the *huacas* and ancestors, was the primary responsibility of women.

In a groundbreaking work on gender systems in the Andes, Silverblatt (1987) argued that women were integral to the construction of empire and the creation of social classes in the Inka state. As an Andean people, the Inka well understood the principles of sexual complementarity and gender parallelism that structured traditional social organization. In her study, Silverblatt (1987:40–108) demonstrates how the Inka, through the shrewd manipulation of Andean orthodoxy, transformed ancestral under-

standings of complementary difference into new systems of social hierarchy through the idiom of gender. Costin (1996) builds on these insights into the relation between Inka state policies and gender in her analysis of the gendered division of labor in the late precolumbian Andes. Focusing on the organization of textile production, she also demonstrates how specific state practices reinforced a developing gender ideology based on hierarchy rather than complementarity.

By dividing the universe into separate gendered spheres, the Cuzqueños remained faithful to traditional Andean concepts while simultaneously incorporating the new reality of power (as opposed to prestige) differences and social classes. The gender parallelism of Inka ideology constructed the queen (*coya*) as the royal daughter of the Moon and placed her at the head of the empire's female subjects, mirroring the role of the *sapa* Inka, who as the Sun's son, reigned over the male citizenry (see Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram of Inka cosmology, 1968 [1613]:158). Given the ideology of sexual complementarity, the Inka queen was as essential as the king in the social and political configuration of Tawantinsuyu. According to historic sources, the queen paralleled her husband the *sapa* Inka in nearly every

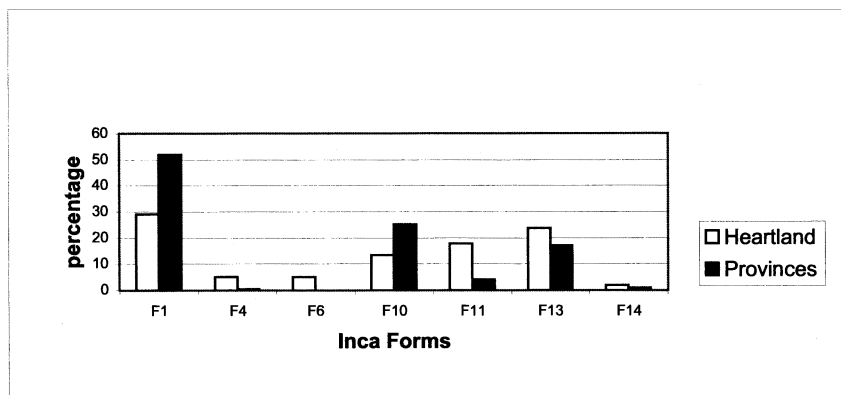


Figure 5. Relative proportion of Inka vessel forms in imperial heartland versus provinces.

regard, from the size and beauty of her palaces and temples, to the rituals she performed for specifically female deities, to the feasting of imperial subjects, to the veneration of her mummified remains after death (Silverblatt 1987:40–66).

But women were also essential to the imperial project in another way that involved their simultaneous veneration and imprisonment within the state institution of “chosen women” (*aclla*). Girls from throughout the empire were collected as tribute and housed in specially constructed buildings known as *acllawasi* wherein they performed labor for the state until such time as they might be chosen for sacrifice or given by the king as wives to imperial subjects. As Silverblatt (1987:91–92; see also Cieza 1959:160) notes, the construction of an *acllawasi* to house the locally appropriated women was one of the first tasks undertaken by the state upon conquest of a new territory.

According to the chroniclers, the work performed by the *acllakuna* included spinning, weaving, and the preparation of *chicha* and special foods (Cieza 1959 [1553]:95, 192, 213; Guaman Poma 1936 [1613]:298–300; Murúa 1946 [1590]:248–255; Silverblatt 1987:81–108). It was the products of these women’s labor, specifically cloth and corn beer, that underwrote the imperial project. In bestowing these most highly valued products of the chosen women’s hands, the Inka obligated and ritually subordinated state subjects through the complex web of social relations engendered by the gift (see Mauss 1990 [1950]).

But the role of the *aclla*, in particular, and women, more generally, in Inka statecraft went beyond simple exploitation. Gose (2000) argues that within the boundaries of the state, Inka domination was actu-

ally articulated through the female activities of cooking and brewing. This is most evident in the context of labor tribute and the reciprocal obligations of state hospitality. “When the Inka state presented itself as a benevolent proprietor towards its conquered subjects, offering them food and drink in return for tributary labor, it exercised power in a specifically female form “following the gendered logic of *mink’a*”⁵ (Gose 2000:86). It accomplished this through the medium of the chosen women, who often served as the state’s hosts (Murra 1980:164). In the ideological construction of state reciprocity, authority was communicated in the feminine register. This is not to suggest that women and men necessarily shared equally in the material benefits of state largesse, as indicated in Hastorf’s (1991) important study on shifts in consumption patterns following imperial incorporation. Rather it underscores the fact that gendered roles and ideology were critically important in the calculation of state strategies and policy.

By placing cooking, cuisine, and culinary artifacts at the center of this study, we illuminate and engender another dimension of Inka statecraft. While warfare and conquest were clearly important (and stereotypically masculine) elements of Inka imperialism, so too were the female-controlled domains of cooking, serving, and feasting. Analyzing Inka state pottery as culinary equipment forces us to consider the ways in which gender systems, gendered tasks, and gendered objects were implicated in the imperial process. Such an approach necessarily complicates monolithic evolutionary explanations of the emergence of the state and social classes, and promises more nuanced and contextual understandings of the workings of precapitalist states and empires.

Viewing the imperial Inka ceramic assemblage as an instrument for the propagation of state ideology also takes us beyond the standard dichotomy of public versus domestic spheres of activities and their relative ranking. In the use of state pottery for culinary qua political purposes, the lords and ladies of the Inka nobility appear to have been drawing upon Andean ideologies of gendered activities, materially referencing the complementarity and power of both men and women in the construction of empire. The feminine activities of cooking and serving that our society consigns to the realm of the domestic was clearly a central and essential component of the Inka political economy. The household and the state were intrinsically and indivisibly linked, while the power of the state was both expressed and obscured through the dynamics of gender.

As Conkey and Gero (1991) note, there is potentially much to be gained from inquiring into the cultural and ideological meanings embedded in gendered activities such as cooking. Considering the political significance of cuisine brings the activities of food collection, preparation, processing, distribution, and consumption into the broader arenas of public and political life. As the Inka case suggests, the domestic and political realms are not necessarily everywhere and always divided, distinguished, and differentially valued. It may actually be that the principles, behaviors, and ideologies associated with the domestic sphere were integrally and inextricably linked with the public and political realms of society throughout much of human history.

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Notes

1. The use of the term “haute cuisine” here is not intended in the technical French sense but rather in the more generalized one suggested by Goody (1982:98), who uses the label to refer to “the development of a differentiated cuisine.”

2. Unless otherwise noted, this translation from the original Spanish and all following ones are by the author of the present work.

3. Other plants known to have been used for the production of *chicha* during the period of Inka rule include grains such as quinoa and *cañihua*; tubers such as *oca*, *apichu*, and *yucca*; and fruits such as *molle*, *guaba*, and *algarrobo* (Antunéz de Mayolo 1981:90).

4. One *arroba* equals approximately four gallons.

5. *Mink'a* is one of the primary ways of obtaining extra-familial labor in the Andes. It typically involves individuals of unequal social status and often takes the form of a patron-client relationship in which services are rendered for payment in kind and no obligation to reciprocate is incurred.

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