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Manteño, Geography and Culture of

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State of Knowledge and Current Debates

Introduction

From the Río Chone in the north as far as the southern shore of the Santa Elena Peninsula, 200 km away, the central Ecuadorian littoral proper is bordered to the east by an interrupted chain of rugged hills that rise to 800 m above sea level, beyond which lie the hot, more humid coastal lowlands of the Guayas Basin. While the hill peaks support cloud forest, the lower slopes and plains stretching to the waters of the Pacific Ocean are dominated by variable tropical dry forest regimes and cactus scrub, with mangroves occupying the river estuaries. From 800 AD to the Spanish invasion in 1531, this mainland territory, along with Puná Island (50 km by 30 km) in the Gulf of Guayaquil, was held by diverse and complex chiefdom polities known collectively as the Manteños. The Manteño period saw major population increase; the growth of urban centers; innovation and increased scale in architecture, engineering, and technology; increased circulation of prestige items; the development of monumental sculpture; larger and more formalized ceremonial centers and sanctuaries; more elaborate burial practices; increased specialization; and marked social differentiation.

This essay focuses on the archaeological evidence for the better known late Manteños and its implications for understanding of their three main regional divisions: the Manteños of the north, in what is now the Province of Manabí, the more southerly Guancavilcas of the drier Province of the Peninsula of Santa Elena, and beyond them, the Punaés, who occupied Puná Island and controlled the Gulf of Guayaquil (Bushnell 1951; Stothert 2013). After a review of current knowledge and thinking concerning more generally shared aspects of Manteño culture, attention is paid first to Cerro Jaboncillo, the principal north Manteño ceremonial center, then to the design and architecture of the settlements, to the tombs and cemeteries, and to the sanctuaries. Concluding remarks reflect on the nature of Manteño political power.

General Aspects of Manteño Culture

Maize agriculture, supported by different types of water catchment and storage systems (Marcos 1995), was the main basis of Manteño existence. Manteño presence is thus most widely characterized, and in the first place identified, by an easily recognizable set of pottery vessels that include both large jars and broad flat griddle plates (*comales*) of unpolished brown or brick colored coarser fabrics and fine polished and pattern-burnished black wares whose jars and tall pedestal

C. Smith (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51726-1_2581-1

plates often carry realistic and distinctive modelled human and para-human faces (Bushnell 1951; Estrada 1957a, b; Mester 1990; Stothert 2006). These were used in the preparation and serving of maize, either as *chicha* (liquid beer) or as solid food such as *tortillas* (small maize cakes), essential ingredients both of normal household diet and communal feasts.

The black ware vessels decorated with faces are also statements of identity (Stothert 2006). First, they present the mutable nature of Manteño personhood as it moves back and forth between a human guise and one more animal (bat or other mammal). Second, the *chicha* jars were presentations of the full human form – head, body, and limbs may be depicted explicitly – and as such, they emphasize the essential relation between food and human ontology: we are what we consume. Finally, the faces are often adorned with ear spools, ear studs, lip studs, nose rings, and sometimes cheek scars, and there is emphasis on a prominent nose occasionally decorated not simply with a modelled clay nose ring but a real gold ornament. These last details, above all, proclaim shared Manteño being.

Coextensive and no less diagnostic are carefully made *manos* (hand grinding stones) and *metates* (the flat stones on which the maize was ground) with which the maize was turned into flour, black polished solid mold-made pottery figurines, decorated spindle whorls, pottery whistles and stamps, small metal and shell ornaments, and metal tools such as tweezers, needles, and axes, along with axe-molds (Bushnell 1951; Currie 1995; Estrada 1957a, b). These portable artefacts, along with polished black ware vessels and carbonized maize remains, are frequently discovered in association with human burials, including secondary burials in large vessels often identical to cooking jars. They also represent some of the diversity of skilled artisanal practices that supported Manteño ritual and provided personal adornment. Thus spindle whorls, sometimes found in thousands, and copper needles reflect the widespread cultivation and use of cotton for thread and cloth, little of which has survived in the ground. Spindle whorls and stamps, moreover, carry tiny, intricate incised designs, figurative and geometric, which present an extra dimension to the study of Manteño iconography and symbolism.

But care must be taken in using such artefacts in reference to Manteño both as a chronological and as a geographical phenomenon. First, many of these objects were products of the latter half of the Manteño period and are then not representative of the development of the culture as a whole. Some idea of internal development indeed comes from early and late styles of shell bead and copper needle manufacture (Carter 2011; Hosler et al. 1990), early and late modelling techniques for portrait vessels, and changes in more general aspects of pottery manufacture (Mester 1990; Stothert 2006). There is also major change in architecture (see below). But so far the different lines of evidence have not been consolidated in a general temporal framework that covers Manteño territory as a whole; and it is still to be understood how early Manteño identity and practice were forged out of the traditions of the Bahía and Guangala chiefdoms that had previously occupied its mainland territories.

Next, while the limits of the core territories were probably well defined, by late Manteño there were outlier communities in north Manabí, up into Esmeraldas Province, and probably across the Gulf of Guayaquil from Puná Island into El Oro Province. Also, frontiers were porous, and there was, especially, continuous and intense inter-exchange with the Milagro-Quevedo neighbors of the Guayas Basin, who supplied much metalwork. And reference must also be made to the more distant Sicán and Chimú cultures of Northern Perú: Chimú pottery has been found in various Manteño offerings and burials, and both the Sicán and Chimú peoples, at least as much as the Incas, were consumers of *Spondylus* shell in large part originating in Manteño coastal waters (Carter 2011).

Third, while there was overall sharing of Manteño culture and identity, there were significant regional and more local differences in specific material traditions, economic practices, religious forms, and political structure. Thus, for example, the great late northern Manteño settlements, as well as many of smaller size, and

ceremonial centers, such as Cerro Jaboncillo, are identifiable for an innovative stone architecture; and a small number of these sites were also the settings for unprecedented throne-like U-shaped stone seats, often supported by elaborately carved figures. With rare exception, such use of stone for seats and architecture is not found in the Guancavilca or Puná territories. Equally, elite shaft and chamber tombs are found across much of the southern landscape, including the great funerary center at Loma de Cangrejitos, but so far are mostly absent from records of the north, where there is instead a tradition of large bell-shaped tombs.

Meanwhile, the Pacific Ocean was nowhere more than 50 km from any settlement, and its limitless resources were the second foundation of Manteño life. The offshore islands of La Plata, Salango and, reputedly, the now barely visible rocks of Santa Clara south of Puná Island were important sanctuaries. Material dependence on the sea is especially evident at various sites on the Santa Elena Peninsula where fish bones and scales accumulated in massive quantities. This relationship is, however, more famously symbolized by the balsa raft and its crew of up to 20 that so impressed a Spanish reconnaissance expedition when encountered off the coast of Esmeraldas and by the *Spondylus* shell (*Spondylus princeps*) for which the raft traders had journeyed north from their home port in the *Señorío* of Salangome, a chiefdom polity of the south coast of present-day Manabí.

Large sea-going balsa rafts seem to have been unique to the Manteño among contemporary societies. And on the basis of the Spanish reports, Jijón y Caamaño (1941) hypothesized a league of Manteño merchants engaged in long-distance maritime *Spondylus* trade. *Spondylus* exchange continues to dominate interest in things Manteño, especially in the area of Salangome (Currie 1995; Mester 1990). Moreover, *Spondylus* trade has been identified as one of the motors leading toward a hypothesized Manteño state (Marcos 1995, 2012). Balsa rafts may also have been involved in the transmission of copper technologies to west Mexico (Hosler et al. 1990), where stone diving equipment similar to that used in Manteño *Spondylus* collection is reported (Marcos 2005).

On the other hand, the wealth of stone structures of Manabí has been mostly ignored as a source of data relevant not only to settlement design and architecture, and from that to their symbolic and religious meanings, but also to wider topics such as social structure and political organization. One exception is an analysis of the architectural context of stone seats found at both the lowland settlement of Agua Blanca and the hilltop ceremonial center of Cerro Jaboncillo (McEwan 2003). However, though detailed primary studies of individual buildings and building groups are so far rare, renewed interest in Cerro Jaboncillo in particular is leading to the production of fresh information on this essential and defining aspect of northern Manteño culture.

Finally, ethnohistoric accounts, of the contact period and then of the first decades of Spanish colonial rule, provide descriptions, if at times questionable and ambiguous, of ritual practices, personal dress and appearance, lists of place names, and hints of political organization, as well as illuminating portraits of individual Manteño leaders who maintained the old ways even as their sons were adopting the new (Stothert 2013; Volland 1995). By the time of the Spanish conquest, however, the Incas were established in the Ecuadorian highlands with their northern capital at Tomebamba, modern Cuenca, and were pressing for the coast. Inca military invasion of the coast had apparently been successfully resisted, and the war of Inca succession had probably eased much of the pressure, but political alliances with local chiefs and religious state ritual, as evidenced especially by *Capac Hucha* burials on La Plata Island, suggest that Inca dominion had in part been enforced and accepted in Manteño territory (McEwan 2003; Stothert 2013). With the Spanish conquest, there was rapid and massive population loss, relocation of surviving communities, and significant cultural fragmentation. But what the Spanish reported was already in a state of change in part provoked by direct external pressures emanating from the south.

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 1 Cerro Jaboncillo seen from the east

Cerro Jaboncillo

Long established as a sanctuary of regional importance, Cerro Jaboncillo was the principal sacred mountain of the northern Manteños (Fig. 1). Its vast ceremonial center was most likely built with the ambition of unifying communities of the north, and perhaps of elsewhere too, through elaborate extended ritual conducted at a shared site of mythic origin. Several other lesser separate peaks were also invested with ceremonial architecture, stone seats, and stone sculpture, including Cerro Agua Nueva, Jupa, Agua Clara, and Junín (Estrada 1962; Saville 1907, 1910) and probably Montecristi; and collectively they bound the region through their visible presence and the processions necessary to reach them. But Jaboncillo, sited close to the northern capital settlement, Manteño Jocay, now Manta, was the greatest.

A rugged, forested massif, approximately 14 km long and up to 6 km wide, rises from west to east as a series of lower peaks culminating first with Cerro de Hojas and soon after, at 641 m above sea level, with Cerro Jaboncillo itself. The summit commands extensive views in all directions, including out to sea. The design of the center was achieved through an architectural reconfiguration of a large part of the mountain: the core alone of albeit dispersed archaeological remains occupies 3500 ha (Marcos et al. 2012; Saville 1907, 1910).

Artificial earth terraces were created first as foundations for dozens of building complexes of up to 30 houses each. This required significant manpower and organization in itself, as well as the clearing of large tracts of forest. Occasionally the terraces, though narrow, were up to 100 m long, 5 m high, and roughly faced with stone; and in some areas, they were built in tall ascending series. Effectively, they converted the mountain itself into a single, immense, multifaceted pyramid.

Construction terraces and building complexes were separated by ravines, cliffs, streams, and any other natural features that could not be surmounted or that might serve as suitable boundaries. Internally, complexes usually incorporated several construction terraces of different sizes. The complexes were sited on the peaks and upper ridge lines, steep middle slopes, and less inclined lower slopes down to more than 500 m

below the main summit and were interconnected by constructed pathways that included, toward the summit, series of steps cut into the living rock. Houses and spaces around them were the settings for stone seats, three-dimensional sculptures, low-relief stelae, and short stone columns. While some of the sculpture was designed, like the stelae, to be fixed upright in the ground and the seats, though not fixed, were extremely heavy, the columns and much of the sculpture could have been easily moved into different arrangements according to need.

The stone seats (McEwan 2003; Saville 1907, 1910) were instruments central to newly reformulated processes of north Manteño power and made overt reference to its spiritual or mythical sources. Their shared U-shaped form argues for a general consistency of essential meaning, value, and function. Above all, they were designed to identify the seated personage as a holder and conduit of power. But there were notable variations in size and specific shape from site to site; there were differences, even within sites, in the iconography of the seat bases; and the seats seem to have been distributed in variable numbers in a variety of house sizes and types. The seats, in other words, even as they embedded in relatively fixed and durable form a number of meanings, served in a multiplicity of ritualized social contexts related to the use and transmission of power.

House Design and Function on Cerro Jaboncillo

Houses were rectangular and set on their own earth platforms on top of the terraces. Complexes at the east end of the mountain suggest five basic types of structure, each distinguished by a combination of attributes readily visible today (Lunniss 2012). These include platform size, house size and shape, wall construction, house position with respect to the rest of the complex, and the nature of any associated structures. Future work will require modifications and additions, but meanwhile the classification can also be applied to houses reported for other areas of the mountain (Saville 1910; Veintimilla 2012). Thus the entire center seems to have been built according to a limited set of design possibilities. But each house has unique characteristics, and no two complexes were identical, this reflecting the availability of space, outlook, differences in complex function, and other factors. Given the uniformity of architectural style, however, and the overall coherence of the site, the time spent building was short. It will also have been late in the Manteño period.

Two classes of large structure are interpreted, respectively, as nonresidential ceremonial houses (Fig. 2) or temples and elite residential houses (Fig. 3). Both are found in central or dominant positions within their complexes, but the nonresidential structures tend to be more remote or difficult to access and were built with more care. Then there are medium-sized residential houses, small nonresidential houses, and another type of small, auxiliary structure. The latter two classes are each found in quite different dependent relationships with residential houses.

The temples and the residential houses have patios in front, some bordered by stone curbs. Occasionally, the house and its own platform, together with the patio, are set together on a larger platform. While house and patio constitute the basic functional unit, residential houses commonly share their patios with a small house placed on one or other side (Fig. 4). Central patios, however, or courtyards surrounded by houses on all sides, are not a feature of planning at this site. Instead, especially on the steeper slopes and ridges, complexes tend to be linear arrangements that follow the horizontal contour or run up and down the slope.

Ceremonial and residential houses have low walls along both sides and usually also the back end, but not at the front. Each wall consists of a main row of stones standing in a trench so as to create an approximately flat if discontinuous vertical surface along the inside. Immediately against the more irregular outside, a second row of smaller stones was set so as to support the main row. The inside surface was then plastered with the same clay as was used to make the floor. Some house interiors had permanent narrow benches along one or more of the walls. These consisted of a supporting structure of small stones set in a row 20 or 30 cm from the wall (or in two rows if the bench crossed the interior) and then a fill and covering of clay.

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 2 The remains of a large ceremonial house (13.75 m) at the east end of Cerro Jaboncillo, seen from its patio. Access is via a stone-edged ramp with two stone steps at the top of the 2-m-high platform

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 3 View from the rear of a large residential house (15.30 m) that oversees the eastern approach to Cerro Jaboncillo

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 4 A medium-sized residential house (8.80 m) and a small house (2.80 m) on the west side of the patio, situated at the center of an 80-m-long construction terrace

The walls stood up to a meter high for larger houses, less for the others. Occasionally there was a secondary doorway through a side or end wall. The roofs were supported by wooden posts set in rows along the inside of the houses. They would probably not have rested on the side walls but rather have been raised above them. The back end, as well as the front, would perhaps have been open or protected by a cloth curtain.

The ceremonial houses are mostly up to 20 m long, though given space they can reach 30, 40, or, on Cerro de Hojas, around 50 m. Set close to falling ground, they command magnificent views, usually to the east. They also sit on platforms 2–3 m tall, with impressive earth ramps leading to a pair of stone steps at the entrance: for this added elevation, the immediate foreground lies out of view, and a direct connection is established with the more distant landscape. Occasionally, they were built as an adjoining pair or set of three, all raised together on a single enormous shared platform. Commonly also, at a short distance from the ramp, the patio in front of a ceremonial house was marked by a small rectangular arrangement of stones.

Elite residential houses may be as large as or larger than some more purely ceremonial structures and may also be fronted by stone arrangements similar to those found with ceremonial houses; but they have lower platforms and shorter ramps, and the stone arrangements are perhaps simpler. They are associated with medium-sized residential houses and with small houses and small auxiliary structures. With their different terraces and architectural components, elite residential complexes, which can extend up to a hectare or more, would have been occupied by large extended families, and their separate structures may be read as dispersed elements of a single large house. The main structure would have served for certain important ceremonial as well as residential purposes.

The medium-sized houses, while often associated with elite houses, are also found at the centers of their own complexes or sub-complexes (Lunniss 2012). They were then reduced versions of the elite houses and were occupied by families of lesser standing. The small houses, of less than 5 m length, had walls of vertically set stones made

in the same general manner as those of the large and medium-sized houses. They are always associated with residences, at one side or other of the front patio, and probably had some ritual or ritual-related function. Structures of the fifth type are of a slightly larger rectangular form defined not so much by walls as by simple curbs of stones set on long edge around all four sides or just along two ends. They may be found singly or in aligned sets and are always associated with residential houses, though they do not share the front patios: in other words, they are different conceptually, as well as structurally and functionally, to what can be called houses.

Site Design and the Function of Cerro Jaboncillo

A primary processional way is indicated by a series of single, double, and triple ceremonial houses along a twisting route of 8 km that traverses the main west-east ridge, with lateral routes ranging north and south from this central axis. The path culminates with the summit structures of Cerro Jaboncillo itself but then continues beyond and down the east slope of the mountain. Its central eastern terminal is a rather simple raised earth platform set on a high eminence overlooking the wide valleys to the northeast, though other ceremonial complexes lie to either side.

One such and rather small eastern complex is governed by a medium-sized house of trapezoidal design (Lunniss 2011). Sitting on a 14-m-high terrace, it looks southeast (c118° E). This is the general direction of sunrise at the December solstice, marker for the beginning of the rains on which the maize agriculture depended. The orientation is matched, and so emphasized, by a rectangular house, lacking earth platform, set directly below and on the same alignment, at the foot of the terrace. Meanwhile, 2 km away, on the summit of Cerro Jaboncillo, a pair of larger trapezoidal structures faced northwest (Saville 1910). The sharing of a ground plan so far not found elsewhere on the mountain points to a special joint and complementary purpose for these widely separated complexes. Since the small structure most likely was designed for observation of the December solstice sunrise, we can surmise then that the summit houses were probably oriented to the June solstice sunset. This would in turn not only confirm McEwan's (2003) prediction of solstice ritual on Cerro Jaboncillo but also suggest that the other house orientations may also have been selected for quite specific purposes of observation and visual linkage.

While ceremonial components dominate the site, there are also highly organized residential sectors. So far, however, no large quantities of household or other rubbish have been found. This fact and the formalized nature of the architectural design as a whole point to occupation that was temporary and highly ritualized, rather than permanent and quotidian. In other words, while there was likely to have been some permanent population of priests, assistants, and retainers, the residential complexes were probably used discontinuously by families or other social groups who came from their various home communities to participate in celebrations at different moments of the religious calendar.

Three further categories of structure include, first, what are identified as agricultural terraces (Estrada 1962; Lunniss 2011; Marcos et al. 2012). These, unlike those used to accommodate houses, are usually sited in descending linear series along valley bottoms, where they catch the water runoff. Fronted by earth walls, they are distinguished by a low but definite and broad elevation of the leading edge, perhaps designed to aid water retention. One major system was around 1 km long. For their location, they can also be rather wide, with dimensions of 50 by 50 m or more. Overall, however, the agricultural terraces occupy a very small area in comparison with those occupied by houses.

Next, hundreds of bell-shaped pits, with chambers 2–4 m wide and deep, accessed by short cylindrical shafts, are the most numerous of all structures (Lunniss 2011; Saville 1910; Marcos et al. 2012). Cut into the rock or earth, and varying in details of construction, they occur at all levels of the mountain occupied by stone-walled houses. Up to 50 or more are found in groups in their own separate sites on ridges or exposed slopes. When in more direct association with buildings, the groups are of smaller numbers and tend to be situated toward the lower ends of the complexes.

So far, there is no direct evidence to explain function, though they have been interpreted alternatively as tombs and subterranean maize silos. Since the chambers were large and dry, however, with shafts sometimes stone-lined and capped by removable stone lids, it is clear that long-term storage, significant holding capacity, and easy, repeated access were all important aspects of use.

Finally, there are wells, some of them stone-lined and some still in use to this day, with shafts around 1.30 m wide and more than 3 m deep. Construction of wells and bell-shaped pits could involve identical techniques for strengthening the mouth with a stone collar (Lunniss 2011; Veintimilla 2012). Wells, however, are not only infrequent but perhaps the least common structures on the mountain.

Previous evaluations of Cerro Jaboncillo have suggested that it was both a capital city and a center for maize agriculture, where the bell-shaped pits were designed to hold the surplus produced on the agricultural terraces (Estrada 1962; Marcos 2012). The importance of maize consumption is indeed indicated by ubiquitous *metates* and *manos*, including small, unfinished, and probably nonfunctional *manos* perhaps made for purely symbolic use, and by fragments of pottery vessels, both on the surface and in buried pits (Lunniss 2012; Saville 1910). But though there may have been maize cultivation around the mountain's lower reaches, as well as some opportunistic horticulture around the house complexes, the purpose-built agricultural terraces seem too limited in number and area to have made a significant volumetric contribution to the supplies needed. An alternative explanation is that these were designed for the production of special maize imbued with the sacred value of the mountain. Second, then, pits used for grain storage were probably mostly filled not with maize produced on the mountain but with maize brought in, perhaps as tribute, from elsewhere. The visitors would have been fed principally with this imported maize.

Meanwhile, the ceremonial activities carried out on the mountain were likely many and varied. The architectural complexes, the stone seats and sculptures, the wells, and the ways that link the complexes would all have been used for different specific rituals and ritualized purposes. And the summit complexes were doubtless the settings for some of the most sacred events. At the same time, the inter-connectedness and coherence of the center as a whole, and in particular the shared iconography, suggests that the complexes were all linked by a core set of myths and rituals.

First, the observation of the solstices from two widely separated locations points to a ritual calendar architecturally built onto and into the mountain. Second, maize was of central concern, and maize agriculture may have been symbolically directed from the mountain in accordance with that calendar. Third, the wells were probably part of ritual related to the mountain as a sacred water source. Fourth, and minimally, the seats allowed elite representatives of communities or other social groups to act as intermediaries with the beings of the spirit world (McEwan 2003). Fifth, the complex imagery of the stelae presented the principal figures of Manteño cosmogony as witnessed on the mountain. Of these, the main deity, with the head of a great feline and the body of a caiman or crocodile (Saville 1907, 1910), has been identified as an ancestral being linked with primordial time and earth power (McEwan 2003). The creature is also embodied in two massive stone heads at the base of the northern lateral route to the summit (Saville 1910). In short, the mountain as a whole was conceived of in relation to, and perhaps even configured as, this paramount being.

Among the wealth of seats, sculptures, and pottery figures collected by Saville over a hundred years ago, two stelae fragments in particular present direct images of the pomp and power of the ceremonies carried out there (Saville 1910). On one, a leader stands in a doorway, helmeted and dressed in a long quartered tunic. On the other, a yet more magnificent personage, attended by a retainer carrying a tall bannered staff in one hand and a smaller banner or shield in the other, wears massive feathered wings, while on his head rests an intricate crown. It is of special interest, then, that two crowns of beaten silver in the collections of the Museum of Anthropology and Contemporary Art, Guayaquil, present the great reptile of Cerro

Jaboncillo (McEwan 2003), along with two silver pectorals (the second is in the National Museum, Quito) that carry similar imagery made with a similar metallurgical technique. These four pieces can be nothing other than sets of regalia for the high priest, or two high priests, of the main mountain cult. They also suggest that a significant aspect of political power was based on the authority of the spirit for whom the mountain was its house.

Manteño Settlement Design and Architecture

It is both convenient to use Cerro Jaboncillo as a standard of comparison for much late northern Manteño architecture and also likely that this was one of its original purposes. Not that Jaboncillo came first and was then imitated by houses with stone walls at other sites. Indeed, the specific forms and combinations of houses at Jaboncillo are not found replicated elsewhere. Rather, its architecture incorporated, refined, and, from the perspective of Manteño aesthetics, consolidated certain ideas of what a house might represent and how, accordingly, it should be built. Stone walls, however, were a late though not universal addition to the Manteño architectural repertoire that enhanced the house in different material and symbolic ways yet to be fully recognized, though durability was surely an aspect of primary importance. Meanwhile, earlier houses also present a wide variety of ingenious designs and construction techniques, depending on locality and resources.

Early Manteño

Up in the north, by the mangrove estuary of the Río Portoviejo, Japoto is a mostly early Manteño site represented by 30 residential and ceremonial tolas or raised earth platforms in a core area of 29 ha and by a further 60 tolas around that (Bouchard 2010). The largest platforms are up to 80 m long, 20 m wide, and 5 m high. Some incorporate layers of volcanic ash. There is no stone architecture. One medium-sized house of 8 by 4 m was identified for its three rows of wooden roof supports, the main central row running parallel rows of smaller posts to either side. Of special interest is a ceremonial structure made with earth, *adobes* (bricks of mixed clay and organic matter), *adobes* of volcanic ash, daub of different types, bamboo (*Caña guadua*) poles, and bamboo panels (Guinea 2008). Its unique design centered on a raised roofed floor of 21 by 7 m, flanked on just the east side by a low stepped wall and bench and, on the outside, a sloping panel or talud. The west side was left open. Beneath, there were dedicatory offerings. Termination rituals saw the partial destruction of the platform, feasting and the burial of offerings, the burning, and, finally, the complete burial of the structure.

In south Manabí, the Los Frailes site has raised earth platforms surmounted by rectangular clay-walled structures, other simpler levelled house platforms, walk-in wells, and water catchment systems, or albarradas, spread over an area of 7.5 ha (Mester 1990). Four groups of earth platforms were set around a clean central space of about 2.5 ha. The platforms, up to 50 m long, have clay walls that retain soil fills: similar early Manteño earth platforms with adobe clay-walled structures have been recorded at Agua Blanca. In one main platform, however, a dried up well, 4 m wide and deep, accommodated a semi-subterranean circular house that went through five phases of construction and use. The house served as a specialized shell workshop for the making of small ornamental plaques of mother-of-pearl (*Pteria sterna*).

Manta and Cabo San Lorenzo

The port of Jocay, destroyed to make way for modern Manta, was the largest of all Manteño settlements and extended over several square kilometers of the shore and hinterland (Estrada 1962; Jijón y Caamaño [1952] 1997; Saville 1907). Great earth platforms, and houses up to around 60 m long, once rose in splendor above the surrounding low ground and its thick layers of broken pottery and other rubbish. While houses usually had walls with rows of upright stones as on Cerro Jaboncillo, designs were more varied and often more complex; and similar considerations apply to nearby Jaramijó. One structure supported by multiple revetments was accessed by two separate ramps at the east end. Wider walls had double stone rows containing rubble fill. There were also houses made of clay *adobe*

blocks. Some houses had several interior divisions. Notably, one unusual structure of two rooms with stone-faced *adobe* walls contained Inca pottery. The main temple dominated the city from high ground overlooking the shore and ocean, though there were also other houses for a number of different god, spirit, and ancestor images.

Stone-walled houses and often elaborate bell-shaped storage pits are found across much of the area west of Cerro Jaboncillo to Cabo San Lorenzo. Stone architecture reaches the shore's edge at Liguiqui, where the walls consist of mortar-bonded courses of river and beach stones. The settlement of about 1.5 km^2 was dominated by a small central group of large houses set on a high bluff overlooking the ocean to one side and, on the other, lesser houses and small agricultural terraces on slopes rising from the river valley (Ortiz 2012). The tombs of the head family of this well-delimited estate are indicated by rich grave offerings taken from the hill crest. Liguiqui is of special interest as the intertidal zone of its beach is occupied by a string of semicircular stone fish traps, still used to this day. Others are reported for bays to the east. Probably based on the design of traps made of perishable materials, they show that the new stone architecture was ultimately used for a wide range of purposes, from the summits of the mountains all the way down into the waters of the sea.

Salangome

The Señorío de Salangome was the first Manteño polity to be reported in the early sixteenth century, a few years before the Spanish conquest. While most famous for its balsa raft, its four principal settlements of Salangome, Cercapez, Tuzco, and Salango are also of interest for suggestions of an Andean model of quadripartite political organization perhaps shared by at least a few other settlement clusters of the northern Manteños (McEwan 2003). The sites of the Manteño towns are currently identified with modern Agua Blanca, Puerto López, Machalilla, and Salango.

Agua Blanca was a residential town with a ceremonial core, surrounded by farmsteads with agricultural terraces on the hill slopes (McEwan 2003). It controlled passage through the valley of the Río Buena Vista, which connected coastal settlements with the upper reaches of the Guayas Basin. Manteño occupation is found along 9 km of the lower valley, with a particularly dense 2 km^2 clustering of elaborate complexes opposite the modern village. Groups of stone-walled houses up to 40 in number, made with horizontal courses of rounded river stones, are set on modified terraces sometimes fronted by retaining walls of yellow clay adobes bonded with ashy mortar. The largest houses are of 50 m. Interior walls and floors were clay lined; but in addition some excavated houses had remnants of decorated clay friezes on front exteriors and on interior walls (Piana and Marotzke 1997). The center of the site is a modestly sized north-facing house set on a ramped 10 m prominence with dependent houses around the base of the platform, some in radial arrangement.

Site design within the ceremonial core suggests complex reference, direct and indirect, to the December solstice sunrise and the June solstice sunset. Lines of sight also link to other points of the surrounding horizon and beyond and bind the site internally. The central house is a special focus. Certain of the main complexes repeat a pattern whereby individual houses, or pairs of houses, are placed at right angles to each other on two sides of a shared patio. Inside many houses were elaborate large stone seats and seat fragments and stone columns similar to those found at the more northerly hill sanctuaries. One house contained a row of probably eight seats along one side, indicating that this was built as a formal meeting place or council chamber. Overall size, complex design, and the presence of the seats suggest that Agua Blanca was the paramount civic and ceremonial center for the region.

Manteño Puerto López was a dual settlement, reflecting an ancient socioeconomic division into farmers and fishermen. Overlooking the ocean from the 20 m marine terrace and bounded on either side by two river courses, the flat 20 ha upper settlement shares the building technique of Agua Blanca and also has large houses exceeding 50 m. There is no sign of such sophisticated planning as applied to Cerro Jaboncillo and Agua Blanca, and no seats, columns, or sculptures are

recorded. A map of the site (Holm 1982), however, suggests division into several groups of 20–30 houses of various sizes, each arranged around an irregular plaza, with an overall shared preference of house alignment to north northeast.

For the second, smaller, lower settlement next to the sea at the south end of the bay, no stone houses are reported. Location alone suggests that here lived the fishermen and others who worked at the sea, as they do to this day. That the upper settlement was entirely directed to agriculture, however, seems unlikely. Artefacts recovered from middle Manteño contexts, including ornaments of mother-of-pearl shell (mainly *Pinctada mazatlanica*) and the tools necessary to make them, point to specialized craft production comparable to that at Los Frailes (Currie 1995). And while no ceremonial core is indicated, the large elite residences would have been the setting for much political and ritual interaction.

Neither Los Frailes nor Salango have indications of stone structures. Salango, though a perhaps a smaller port than López, was important in part for the value of its island as a sanctuary. The mainland settlement centered on a core of about 6 ha at the sheltered south end of the bay but extended up the river valley and onto the surrounding hilltops. Opposite the island, a pair of artificial terraces ran more than 300 m along the base of the headland. Secondary urn and other human burials; dog burials; pottery ovens; kilns for converting *Spondylus* (*S. calcifer*) into lime; clay floors and postholes; the tools, products, and by-products of shell bead manufacture; and abundant other artefacts of shell, stone, bone, pottery, and metal, all point to intense mixed activity of different sorts (Norton et al. 1983), some perhaps related to the functioning of the island.

The Señorío de Salangome, however, was more than the simple union of four settlements implied by the chronicles. The main towns suggest enormous differences in design and function. In addition, many other sites are found by estuaries along the shoreline and through the valleys of the hinterland, and though most may not have had houses with stone walls, some did (Graber 2010). And at Casas Viejas, at the center of the floodplain close to the headwaters of the Río Ayampe, two parallel earth platforms of 80 m are as large as those of Japoto and greatly exceed any structures at Agua Blanca and Puerto López. This territory had a complex internal structure whose dynamics still await definition and explanation.

The Santa Elena Peninsula and Puná Island

The ethnohistoric evidence for Guancavilca territories and Puná Island suggests that the settlements were run by chiefs who each occupied a different position in a sequence of ascending authority (Stothert 2013; Volland 1995). Thus, for Puná Island a paramount leader stood above six lesser chiefs. But though populations could be large, there is little clear idea of settlement plan. The general if not complete absence of stone architecture is one factor in this. On Puná Island, paved ways and stone buildings are mentioned but not described (Estrada 1957a). However, excavation on the mainland at La Libertad and Mar Bravo (Bushnell 1951) have identified types, densities, and combinations of features very similar to those mentioned for Salango and also described for Japoto, suggesting that working and living habits were shared across the territories and governed by similar social conventions. In this context, close interdependency of humans and dogs is indicated not only by the widespread presence of carefully arranged dog burials but also by their frequent close proximity to and even direct association with the human dead.

Cemeteries, Tomb Architecture, and Burial Configuration

Manteño territory was inhabited by the dead as much as by the living. Tomb and burial configuration, burial location, and cemetery structure and location are highly diverse. Human body parts were also deployed in contexts other than dedicated burials. Chronicle accounts, for example, describe how the skins of sacrificed prisoners were cured with aromatic essence of the palo santo tree (*Bursera graveolens*) and then stuffed with ashes before being hung in temples. And Jijón y Caamaño ([1952] 1997) reports a large house at Manta with separate piles of different human bones.

There was then a background of continuing movement of human remains in various and variable states. Nevertheless, though much of their detail probably reflects highly localized tastes and accidents that will forever escape analysis, the tombs and cemeteries were important then and can be usefully read now, as differentially structured points of physical and spiritual connection between community and territory.

Commoner Burials

Secondary burials of single or multiple individuals in large pottery jars are reported through both mainland regions and Puná Island (Bushnell 1951; Delabarde 2015; Estrada 1957a, b, 1962; Graber and Jastremski 2009; Jijón y Caamaño [1952] 1997; Mester 1990; Norton et al. 1983; Saville 1910; Ubelaker 1981, 1988). All age groups are included. They are found within settlements or in separate cemeteries, singly, in clusters, or in very large numbers. For abundance and ubiquity, as well as the general absence of grave goods beyond a few personal ornaments, they are interpretable as burials of commoners. While the urns usually contain defleshed bones, there may also or instead be cremated remains. Most urns were in simple pits, though at Salango one tomb with multiple urns had a lateral chamber accessed by a short vertical shaft at one end (Graber and Jastremski 2009). While jars used for holding defleshed bones are often identical to cooking and storage jars, comales were used at Salango as lids (Graber and Jastremski 2009; Norton et al. 1983). In the use of cooking jars and plates for the containment of the body, there is another apparent explicit correspondence between humans, in this case the treated corpse, and cooked maize.

At the Ayalán cemetery on the Santa Elena Peninsula (Ubelaker 1981), Manteño pottery goods were associated with burials in large Milagro-Quevedo funerary urns. Similarly, at Providencia in the upper Guayas Basin (Piana and Marotzke 1997), urns stacked Milagro-Quevedo fashion (Meggers 1966; Zevallos 1995) were also accompanied by Manteño vessels. These are interesting specific cases of cultural and social merger in the context of cemeteries either side of the geographic borders of Manteño territory. Meanwhile, at both Ayalán and Agua Blanca (Ubelaker 1981, 1988), urn burials included individuals with asymmetrical flattening of the head, suggesting a further instance of cultural practice linking communities across Manteño landscape.

Another form of secondary burial, often associated with urn burials, involved wrapping the bones in cloth before interment. These bundle burials are equally widespread, if less frequently reported (Bushnell 1951; Delabarde 2015; Piana and Marotzke 1997; Ubelaker 1988). Similar initial treatment of the cadaver, shared burial locations, and similarity of accompanying goods argue for similarity of social status of these dead with those of urn burials. A third treatment for commoners even more rarely recorded, but widely distributed, is found in simple primary burials with no, or minimal, surviving goods (Bushnell 1951, Delabarde 2015; Mester 1990; Piana and Marotzke 1997).

Non-commoner and Elite Burials

Some elaborately endowed Manteño burials were set in pits up to 2 m deep cut into two originally Bahía II period funerary platforms on the summit of Cerro Jaboncillo (Saville 1910), though pit shape and body position are not detailed. The few non-commoner burials described elsewhere for the northern Manteños are found in large bell-shaped pits. An early example came from close to the shell workshop at Los Frailes, where an adult male lying flexed on his side was accompanied by feasting residues, as well as the materials of his trade and bird bone flutes (Mester 1990).

A 4-m-deep middle phase pit at the upper settlement of Puerto López presented the most complex of tomb narratives reported for the Manteño culture as a whole, with six main moments of burial (Currie 2001). Collections of skulls and other bones were first set around the base, to be followed by incomplete and disarticulated remains, and then groups of partially cremated bones and un-cremated bones and skulls. The main burial was of a young female partially cremated on a pyre of *algarrobo* wood (*Prosopis* sp.), though the head had been removed. An adult female guardian lay near the mouth of the tomb and, just outside, an adult male. Close by,

15 dogs were buried in bell-shaped pits, one accompanied by small artefacts and broken pottery similar to those in the fills of the main tomb. At Agua Blanca, tombs up to 6 m deep are found both inside and outside houses of the ceremonial core (Piana and Marotzke 1997). Some had double burials, and guardian burials were an important feature as at Puerto López.

Meanwhile, several elite cemeteries are reported for the Guancavilca region. Overlooked by Cerro Chanduy, next to the estuary of the Río Chanduy, and surrounded by various habitation sites and smaller local cemeteries, Loma de Cangrejitos was the greatest and most complex of Guancavilca ceremonial centers (Marcos 1981; Zevallos 1995). Three extensive burial zones probably represent different phases of use. Close by, on a modified natural mound, four large square platforms sat around a central plaza, each supporting a wooden structure. Also nearby was a fourth burial zone, Loma de Guasango Torcido, of late Guangala date. For its long history of use as an elite burial ground, this site, though there are significant differences, might be usefully compared with the summit of Cerro Jaboncillo.

The wooden structure of the largest platform consisted of four rows of six posts at regular spaces of less than 2 m. Given that architects were capable of spanning far larger intervals, this arrangement of 24 posts had some purpose other than supporting a roof, perhaps relating to re-creation of a mythical forest. By one post there was an offering of a Muscovy duck (*Cairina moschata*) accompanied by a lapis lazuli necklace. Similarly, in one area of the middle phase cemetery, a truly massive post, its base alone 4 m deep and 60 cm wide, was accompanied by offerings of bowls with carbonized maize to either side and a child, buried with head on a grinding stone, in front (Marcos 1995).

The three Guancavilca zones at Cangrejitos are characterized, respectively, by primary burials in rectangular pits, primary burials in shaft and chamber tombs, and cremation burials in shallow pits cut into an ever-rising mound of bone, ash, earth, and offerings. They present, then, very different approaches to the treatment of the dead and the configuration of the space in which the dead could be accommodated. Notably, the shaft tombs were associated with the massive tall post, which suggests much concern with the vertical axis. Grave goods also varied. In the rectangular tombs, there were *Spondylus* (*S. princeps*) containers for the lime used in coca consumption, metal money axes of probable Milagro-Quevedo manufacture, and tiny *Spondylus* (*S. princeps*) beads in conch (*Malea ringens*) containers, along with pottery bowls holding the stone tools and copper drill handles, used for making the beads. *Spondylus* bead manufacture, then, was here identified and elevated through ritualization, as a specialized craft. The cremation burials, meanwhile, despite all the consequent loss of body form and lack of clear definition of the grave, were accompanied by the most elaborate pottery vessels, including several iconic polished black ware jars and bottles.

Shaft tomb complexes, each with their own variations of tomb design and burial configuration, are then known for various high ridges of the Cordillera Chongón Colonche. On these hills, from which the rivers run south and west to feed the agricultural lands of the Santa Elena Peninsula, the cemeteries were placed as statements of community, family, or lineage rights. At Cerro Bellavista, of 76 tombs aligned north-south on an east-west ridge, 5 were excavated (Holm [1962] 2001; Zevallos 1995). Entrances were marked by pairs of standing stones. The chambers, unlike those of Cangrejitos, were rectangular rather than rounded but like them had doors of wooden stakes. The burials were secondary, in cloth bundles, and goods were few. On Cerro Paco, overlooking a tributary of the Río Daule and the Milagro-Quevedo territory of the lower Guayas Basin, the sole tomb recovered archaeologically contained four adults flexed on their left sides, with elaborate Manteño and Milagro-Quevedo pottery vessels (Estrada 1957a; Zevallos 1995). On Cerro de las Brujas, looking across the Estero Salado to Puná Island, one 9-m-deep tomb contained an elite adult family group (Zevallos 1995). The guardian attendant had a silver plaque in the mouth, and a group of five, probably wives, had shell bead necklaces and four silver earrings in each ear. The principal individual, however,

had, folded over the stomach, a narrow skirt of thousands of tiny silver beads such as were described by the Spanish for the Punaés.

Finally, narrow rectangular tombs with adult individuals stacked alternatingly head to toe on top of each other are reported for El Manantial de Guangala (Zevallos 1995) and, in detail, for nearby San Marcos, in the valley of the Río Colonche (Stothert 2013; Stothert and Cruz 2001). Up to nine bodies could be placed in a single pit. Goods, including money axes and other Milagro-Quevedo metalwork, and bird-shaped *Spondylus* spear-thrower hooks, were generally similar to those at Loma de Cangrejitos. Two sets of artefacts, however, were not. First were small polished plaques of iron pyrites, set in copper-silver alloy mounts, worn around the wrist and used in order to enhance spiritual vision. The importance of vision in ritual contexts is elsewhere suggested by large polished obsidian mirrors (Bushnell 1951; Saville 1910). Second were small wooden tubes carved out of *guasango* (*Loxopterygium huasango*) and used as hallucinogenic snuff inhalers. Central paraphernalia of local ritual practice, these tubes were in the form of mythic figures similar to those on monumental Guancavilca sculptures.

Puná Island has neither shaft and chamber nor bell-shaped tombs. At Pozo Amargo, however, a mixed cemetery included collective tombs of separate burials of different types (Piana and Marotzke 1997). One large multiple pit burial with nine individuals lain out in extended supine position had a central group of five, with one individual and a pair on one side and the principal on the other. This is notably similar in composition, though the goods were of different and of less extravagant order, to the shaft tomb burial of Cerro de las Brujas, on the other side of the straits that separate the island from the mainland. Together these two tombs support ethnohistoric claims not only of polygamy as elite marriage practice but also of simultaneous interment of the entire adult family group upon the death of the head.

Sanctuaries

Parallel with the elite cemeteries, and sometimes combined with them, shrines housing the spirits and the ancestors were maintained in all Manteño regions, anchoring communities to their lands through ties of mythic descent and proclaiming ownership over them. Spread right across 70 km of upland Guancavilca territory, hilltop sites including Cerro Los Santos, Cerro las Negritas, Cerro Camarona, Cerro El Azúcar, and Cerro Paco were guarded by at least 16 recorded stone ancestors, some of monumental size (up to 2.45 m) with their bases sunk into the ground and some at least shown to be seated on small stools, all evidently associated with regeneration and fertility (Álvarez and García 1995; Bushnell 1951; Estrada 1957b). At Cerro Los Santos, tall wooden posts were similarly carved, and the great column at Loma de Cangrejitos may also have been so configured. At Chongón de Colonche, there is a large stone monkey (Bushnell 1951).

The paramount supernatural, however, was the mythical caiman. While its largest sanctuary was at Cerro Jaboncillo, the Guancavilcas and Punaés also venerated this creature. And although the physical presentation, spatial context, and associated ritual were in each site different, the two mainland Manteño regions were centered on places of its worship, permitting speculation that political power in all three regions was closely related to the cult of this being.

Three carved wooden posts of *guasango* were placed at one side of a 40 m diameter floor on the top of Cerro Los Santos (Álvarez and García 1995; Bushnell 1951; Stothert and Cruz 2001; Zevallos 1995). This hill, not far from the tombs of Cerro Bellavista, lay at the heart of the watersheds of the rivers irrigating Guancavilca lands. While two collapsed smaller posts to either side were badly deteriorated, the still-standing 8.5 m central column carried up and around its shaft 32 male and female human ancestors. With them, toward the top, were two caimans, one ascending and larger (2.15 m) and the other descending and smaller (1.35 m). The relation of the caiman cult to human origins is further indicated by the copresence of three large stone ancestor sculptures and its ties with maize by seven massive grinding stones.

On Puná Island, by contrast, a caiman pair was carved across the top of a roughly circular, flattish 3-m-wide rock (Estrada 1957a). The larger animal

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 5 Part of the petroglyph site at Pedro Pablo Gómez. One face and a humming bird beneath it are visible on the vertical rock to the right, with another larger face more indistinct below

lay straight across the rock and had a circular basin in its back, feeding a narrow duct which leads to the head. The smaller creature was curved, and perpendicular to the first, but also had a narrow channel cut into the head. Both animals, then, received offerings of blood or chicha. Clearly, at Cerro Los Santos and Puná Island, these were male-female pairs. It seems likely then that the two massive heads on Cerro Jaboncillo were also the two halves of a founder couple.

In parallel, there was a widespread cult of a water spirit. Various Manteño and Milagro-Quevedo artefacts of pottery and copper carry images of a heart-shaped face associated with more natural animals and birds of freshwater habitats (Meggers 1966). At a petroglyph site near Pedro Pablo Gómez, this same face was carved on multiple occasions on the sandstone rocks either side of a waterfall only meters from the source of the Río Ayampe, southern boundary of the territory of Salangome (Figs. 5 and 6). A large part of the rock had first been modified, making its vertical surfaces in particular more regular, giving the formation an overall appearance suggestive of the doorway to a house. Thus the water emerged from the underworld via a portal protected by its guardian spirit.

At Manta, one important sanctuary reputedly housed a large emerald. Inside other buildings, mythic beings took the form of monumental stone sculptures. Three images of a variable but indeterminate composite supernatural with a tall neck and crested head possibly present a marine counterpart to the terrestrial caiman of Cerro Jaboncillo (Saville 1907, 1910). Next, there is a set of ancestors (Figs. 7 and 8). Like the composite being, they are of thin blocks of marine conglomerate. The massive faces and bodies, the gestures, and the carving style are of a tradition quite different to that of the columnar Guancavilca figures. Three of those known show seated or perhaps standing figures, their elbows to the sides and hands forward holding the stomach. Another shows the upper bodies of two individuals locked face to face, one rising over the other,

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 6 A face (50 cm) carved on a loose boulder at the Pedro Pablo Gómez petroglyph site

grasping each other's left shoulder with the right hand. A final work has a face similar to those of the others and a small libation pit on a shelf at the back of the head (Fig. 9). While this sculpture, seen from the front, might appear to present a seated human figure, the forward-sweeping profile suggests a different but enigmatic image and perhaps echoes that of another Manta sculpture identified tentatively as a monkey (Saville 1910).

Conclusion

Manteño lords and great chiefs were able, if needed, to mobilize effective armies and could count in normal times on skilled, inventive, and large work forces, as well as the support of subordinate leaders. But late north Manteño political power, embodied in massive stone seats and the stone-walled houses that were their formalized settings, attained a scale and a degree of institutionalization not apparent in the other two regions. And, with some oversimplification, we can identify Cerro Jaboncillo and Manta as twin poles of that power. For while one, rising high above sea and land, was the house of the creator caiman, god or spirit of the earth, the other, capital city with its own gods and ancestors, stood by and for the ocean.

This polarity is also suggested by the relation between the hilltop sanctuaries and elite cemeteries of the Guancavilca and their ceremonial center close to the shore at Loma de Cangrejitos. And we can follow the pattern down a descending scale: thus, within the territory of Salangome, Agua Blanca and Puerto López, and then Puerto López itself with its dual settlement, expressed identical ordering. Farming and fishing, the main socioeconomic division of Manteño life, emerging from its natural geography, were codified by its ritual forms.

Balsa raft trade and exchange up and down the coast ran perpendicular to this axis. We have still to estimate properly its economic worth and political significance. Our awareness of it in the first place depends on the manuscript transmission of a

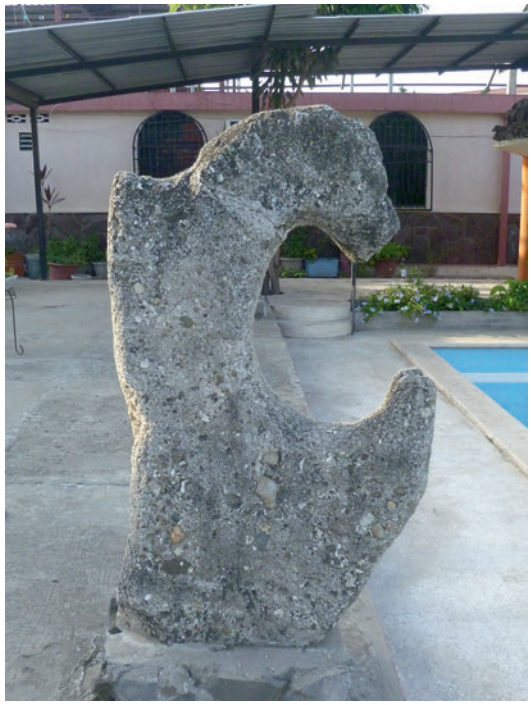
Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 7 Side view of an ancestor figure (1.15 m) from Manta

Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 8 Head of an ancestor figure from Manta

single observation of a single craft. The cargo was valuable and the enterprise significant as an aspect of elite capacities and aspirations. And the rafts required specialized knowledge and skills, not least of ritual magic, for their construction, navigation, and success. But like contemporary traders among the Andean chiefdoms to the east, they operated outside normal structures and crossed normal boundaries.

Meanwhile the house, materially, socially, and symbolically, was the fundamental unit of Manteño society. Its importance is at times reflected by building dimensions as great as those of any other contemporary roofed structures on the continent. And Cerro Jaboncillo, ramifying downward from the summit into its multiple complexes, each centered on its own main house and then, via paths across the land first to the surrounding communities and then to those more distant, was a mighty, visible presentation of the primordial house from which all others sprang.

Nevertheless, the specific relations and processes of Manteño power still largely remain to be defined. Over the course of the centuries, there will have been constant adjustments to the mechanisms by which society was organized. And in spite of the sharing of essential aspects of culture and cosmology, the dynamics of political organization will have varied from one region to the other, each with their different territorial holdings, population sizes and densities, and social traditions. Multiple power structures also perhaps operated simultaneously. We should not then try to impose either an essential unitary model for Manteño as a whole or any too simple a scheme for each of the separate regions. On the other hand, Cerro Jaboncillo can be taken as strong evidence for ambition to achieve, through massive ritual, a wider integration at least of the northern territory, perhaps even with an eye to the south as well. How successful that aim was is another question still to be answered.



Manteño, Geography and Culture of, Fig. 9 Side view of an enigmatic sculpture (1.45 m) from Manta. A small libation pit sits in the shelf at the back of the head

Cross-References

- ▶ South American Geography and Chronology
- ▶ South American Prehistoric Art
- ▶ South American Prehistoric Period

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