The weaving of original textiles influenced by pre-Columbian Peruvian weaving

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The weaving of original textiles influenced by pre-Columbian Peruvian weaving

by

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INTRODUCTION

Pre-Columbian Peruvian textiles have been under study since the discovery of textile artifacts in the burial grounds of ancient Peru. Because of the great abundance of textiles, a knowledge of weaving techniques was needed by the archeologists and anthropologists. Junius Bird, Lila O'Neale and Alfred Kroeber are among the prominent scholars who have investigated these textiles and have written articles and books expanding the body of knowledge on the subject (1, 2, 14, 15). The Peruvian scholar, Julio C. Tello, one of the first natives to take an interest in artifacts, discovered the gravesites at Paracas in 1925. Grace Goodell, a student of Junius Bird and a former Peace Corps volunteer, has researched contemporary weaving to show links to the past. In her article, "The Cloth of the Quechuas", she discusses the production of high-quality textiles in the altitudes which reflect the high standards of the past (9).

In contrast to the approach taken by the archeologists I am striving to focus this study of Peruvian textiles from a pragmatic and a human viewpoint. As a weaver I am interested in weaving techniques, use of color and materials used in pre-Columbian Peru. The ancient textiles with which I have come in contact have provided me with increased technical knowledge as well as sources of inspiration for my original work.

In the course of my research I reviewed the literature concerning pre-Columbian Peruvian textiles and traveled to Peru to study both ancient and contemporary textiles. Along with the study of pre-Columbian
Peruvian textiles in museums I went to villages to observe the handwoven textiles being produced today. I was seeking evidence of links to the past with the creative innovations of the present.

The first chapter is a brief survey of the history of Peruvian weaving meant to provide an overview of pre-Columbian Peruvian textiles including techniques used, types of yarn, dye sources and the uses of textiles produced. In the second chapter I will relate my research experiences in Peru. Beginning with the pre-Columbian textiles which I found in the museums in Lima I go on to discuss the contemporary handwoven textiles in terms of export items and acceptance of them by the Peruvian public. The last section of this chapter concentrates on the observations of weavers and markets selling handwoven textiles made in Huancayo and the Mantaro Valley, Cuzco and Puno. The third chapter analyzes the sources of inspiration for my original textiles and their relation to Peruvian weaving which influenced them. The last chapter is a narration of the slides which relate to the research and the original work.
Peruvian textiles have a rich history and evidence of their existence can be established as far back as 2500 B.C. This long development of weaving up to the Spanish invasion has provided almost every textile technique that is known to us today. Textile production was a concern of the whole society. Textiles served daily functions, were used for rituals, as tribute and were important in the burial of the dead. Because of this importance given textiles the author wishes to include a brief history of Peruvian weaving prior to the Spanish invasion. We have more knowledge of textiles in this area than in much of the rest of the world because of the unique climatic conditions. The coastal area has virtually no rain and is almost entirely sandy so that many pre-Columbian textiles and other artifacts buried with the dead have been well-preserved in tombs dug in the sand. However, in the rainy mountain and jungle areas little has been preserved.

The earliest known fabrics dating from 2500 B.C. were found at Huaca Prieta. Twining dominated suggesting a lack of any heddling device on the loom (8). It was stated that there were woven textiles as far back as 2000 B.C. (2). Although there are no looms from that time there are textiles which compare with later loom-woven ones. Ceramic and textile periods were once thought to coincide, but now it is known that they are not necessarily the same (16). The reasons for difficulty in conducting accurate research are due to the lack of a written language and the great mobility of the early peoples. Historians may never know
in which specific area the textiles originated. The grave robbers (huaqueros) increased the problem because they have stripped the grave-sites. Textile research makes use of other information gleaned in the same graves. From drawings of costumed figures on ceramic pieces knowledge has been gained concerning style of garments and patterns on textiles.

The difficulty in recording exact time periods in Peruvian history has led to disagreement concerning dates. While approximate dates are available most textiles are described in general time periods such as early, middle and late. Some textiles are described by the location in which they were found thus defining a definite textile style. The textiles of Nazca and Paracas are examples of those found in gravesites with which scholars have been able to record a common style. Nazca and Paracas are both regional cultures which thrived in the early period, approximately 300 B.C. until 300 A.D. (2). There were numerous other local cultures throughout history which rose and diminished in importance. These peoples were allowed individuality even when there were pan-Peruvian cultures which conquered vast areas of Peru. The Tiahuanaco culture spread across a large area of Peru in the late period while the last pre-Hispanic culture, the Incas, continued to conquer an even larger territory. The final defeat by the Spanish in the early 1500s brought the end to the last indigenous civilization.

As was stated earlier the most ancient textiles found, which date before Nazca and Paracas, come from the dry sandy coastal areas. The finds include nets and fragments of textiles made of cotton and the bast fiber, maguey. Both white and brown cotton were grown in Peru as well
as maguey. The three were blended before the first spinning or by plying. The natural colored fibers were used along with a blue dye and a red pigment which was painted on the woven fabric (2). Bird also noted that while pouches and fishnets were distinguishable, there was no textile similar to the poncho and in fact the purpose of many of the textiles is yet unknown.

The technology of weaving is believed to have been developed to a high degree at an early time. Once a specific technique was initiated it was used in a variety of ways depending on the designs and effects desired. By the early Nazca period almost all techniques ever used were known. These include kelim, interlocking, and eccentric tapestry; pattern weaves; weft scaffolding; twining; plaiting; lace; brocade; wrapped weaving and double cloth (15). In some periods certain techniques were used more frequently than others. In the Nazca and Paracas cultures ornament was usually created with embroidery covering the major part of the textile. In other periods embroidery was limited to borders and subordinate areas. The Tiahuanaco culture is known for its tapestries of highland origin depicting scenes of the area. Specific techniques and particular colors are associated with each period.

Peruvian weavers have apparently used color to full advantage. They had unlimited natural sources of dyes. Using plants, animals and minerals they were able to produce a wide range of colors. They were masters at processing the dye indigo which creates a blue color and the red dye, cochineal, which is produced from an insect living on cactus. Yellows were derived from flowers, the ochreous earth and lichens.
Brown dyes were created from a variety of tree seeds and barks. For example, seeds of the native *molle* trees were ground and used to paint textiles. By combining dyes other colors were produced. A great variety of neutral colors in both cotton and the animal wools were found in Peru. Natural cotton varied from a very clear white to a dark brown color. Animal wools have an even wider range of values from white, beige and grey to the very darkest brown and black. Some of these natural colors were also dyed. Cotton was more limited because it did not accept the dye as well as wool. However, the dye indigo proved to be the exception so that blue is found along with natural white and brown in many plain weave textiles. Wool generally took the dye very well and textiles from 3000 years ago still retain their vibrant hues. Textiles from the Nazca and Paracas cultures display deep reds and blues and the colors are still easily distinguishable.

At different times in history the predominant fiber content of textiles also varied. Cotton and wool were used in all periods. However, all wool textiles were prevalent in the early periods; a combination of wool and cotton was common in the middle periods and all cotton fabrics were most common in the late periods yet textiles containing both fibers can be found frequently in all time periods (15). Cotton was used as warp for tapestry and wool was used for the weft. Natural cotton was often used for backgrounds. The choice of fiber depended on the technique.

\footnote{The author analyzed pre-Columbian textile fragments from the Department of Textile and Clothing's Historic Textile Collection at Iowa State University. In that process she found several pieces woven from natural brown and white cotton yarns along with some dyed blue.}
used (16). The wool-bearing animals, such as alpacas and llamas, were apparently domesticated early in the pre-Columbian period because there is evidence that the wool was processed. Wool was used on the coast from that time and since the wool-bearing animals did not live there it is certain that there was trade with the highlands.

Fleece, spindles and yarn were commonly found in mummy bundles showing the importance of spinning. For spinning people used delicate spindles made of wood and pointed at both ends with small whorls usually made of terra cotta placed on the center of the shaft. The exceedingly fine yarns spun were even and strong though often overspun. Two-ply yarn was the most common.

The backstrap loom was the loom on which most textiles were produced and was used in Peru throughout the entire period prior to the Spanish invasion (15). The loom was controlled by string heddles on a heddle rod and swords, with the weight of the body creating the tension. While the loom was simple, great complexity in design was created by the extreme and total control exercised by the weaver. The loom varied in size according to the desired width of the finished product and generally the pieces were narrow. Of the 650 pre-Columbian pieces examined by O'Neale and Kroeber in 1930 only fifteen of them were more than thirty inches wide (15). Large pieces, such as blankets, were woven in two narrow strips joined at the selvedges. It is thought that some larger pieces were done on a loom fixed to the ground with four stakes (3). The textiles produced on these looms were both solid colors and patterned.

Many varied motifs were common throughout history. The puma (cat),
the bird, human figures, the fish, the snake and floral designs as well as geometric patterns of lines, boxes and steps were typical themes. The motifs were apparently selected according to the weaving technique used. Animal and human forms did not have realistic proportions. Often the heads on both human figures and pumas were large in relation to the bodies. Motifs were used to fill the space rather than portray a realistic scene. Colors had no apparent relationship to the subjects, but instead appear to be more related to the fiber (16). If a motif was repeated on a textile it was not necessarily in the same color. Many Paracas embroideries used one motif throughout the entire fabric, but the same combination of colors was never repeated. Tapestries of the later Chancay period sometimes had repeated motifs in the same colors.

Textiles of ancient Peru were not only limited to fibers, but had other materials added during the weaving or applied later. An example of the combination of materials is the feather cloth constructed with brightly colored feathers from the exotic jungle birds. The feathers created patterns realistic and geometric in form. Textiles which had belonged to high-ranking officials have been found with gold, silver and stones applied.

Uses for all of the found textiles are not known. Many textiles were garments or parts of garments. According to Nathalie H. Zimmern (17) the dress of women was less elaborate indicating they held an inferior position to men. It is thought that some mantles were woven only for the funeral bundle because of their extremely large size. Other textiles may have been for ceremonial uses in the temples. Since the
Spanish destroyed so many textiles at the time of the invasion, studies are limited to those found in tombs, but drawings by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala at the time of the Spanish invasion provide insight into the textiles worn (17).

There are many less important but interesting textiles and fibers such as wigs of human hair, small tapestry dolls and small bags which have been found in tombs. Textiles played an important role in the life of the pre-Columbian Peruvians. Both the production of the textiles and the use of the textiles occupied a part of the life of the people. From this background the author undertook a study of Peruvian textiles today and also used the pre-Columbian textiles as inspiration for her original designs.
I proposed to my committee the study of pre-Columbian weaving in Peru and the search for evidence linking that with weaving of the present day. I also wished to gain knowledge in the field of historic textiles and to learn more about weaving in Peru today. I began by studying the major resources available locally in the field of Peruvian textiles. With the help of Peruvian friends I was able to contact some key people who would later prove to be my primary sources.

I left Iowa for Peru in June, 1975. Upon arriving in Lima I stayed with the family of a Peruvian friend, the Gamaniel Perez's, where I was included in the activities of the family. They were kind to clarify for me many things which I saw. My friend, Elva Perez, introduced me to people in the weaving field, translated for me, transported me to places of interest and was an excellent advisor. Because of their interest in me and their encouragement I was able to experience much more than I anticipated.

While conducting the study in Peru there were certain limitations that influenced my findings. It was necessary to work within limited geographic areas of Peru because of time available, expense involved and difficulty in obtaining transportation. Three areas were visited: 1) Lima and environs, 2) Huancayo and the Mantaro Valley and 3) the areas including Cuzco and Puno. Though these represent three distinct locations of Peru with different textile styles, I would like to add that other equally important areas of textile production exist. For example,
in the northern part of Peru, Chota, located near Cajamarca, is famous for high quality cotton and woolen textiles. In the jungle region much work is done with basketry and weaving with cotton. Ayacucho is known for the mass-production of woolen rugs. San Pedro de Cajas is a village of innovative weavers in the Sierras. In addition to these, there are innumerable small villages in the high altitudes where some of the most exquisite weaving of the past is still being done today.

There were other restrictions which created some difficulties in gathering the material I desired. I was somewhat limited in my knowledge of the language at the outset and because of a limited budget I could not afford an interpreter. It was also a disadvantage to be an outsider. In most areas the weavers were of Indian origin who have a justifiable distrust in European-looking people. In some places I was able to talk to people because of an acquaintance I had made. Without a special contact it was extremely difficult to meet weavers, especially in Cuzco and Puno.

My research focused on two areas of study. At the outset I sought to learn about the museum collections of pre-Columbian textiles. After achieving a degree of familiarity with those textiles I began to visit weavers in the Sierra area east of Lima. At the end of my stay in Peru I traveled to southern Peru to visit Cuzco and Puno.

Lima and Environs

National Museum of Anthropology and Archeology

The first three weeks of my stay were spent in Lima. With the help of Magdalena de Monzarz and Pedro Rojas I was able to gain permission to enter the National Museum of Anthropology and Archeology to examine the
textile collection and to observe the textile conservation section. Mr. Edourd Versteylen, Director of Conservation at the museum and also the head of the textile section, was interested in my project and encouraged me to enter the museum each day for research and observations after an initial tour of the museum grounds. There were large warehouses of ceramics, bones and mummy bundles including over 3000 unopened mummy bundles.

In the textile section the storage space and the work area were in the same large room. Mr. Versteylen was the only trained textile expert in that section. He had two workers helping him at that time and one other woman was doing the consolidation of a Chancay textile. There were no provisions for the cleaning of textiles and storage space for the consolidated pieces was limited.

On my first day of observations I was with Mrs. Estela Uriarte Company, textile conservationist. She has been working at the museum for over twenty-five years and has spent thousands of hours working with damaged textiles, making them ready for storage or exhibition. Mr. Versteylen emphasizes the consolidation of the textiles, not conservation, restoration nor preservation. He wants to keep the textiles in the condition in which the textiles were found making certain they do not deteriorate. If a textile is partially gone another textile is added for support. Since arriving at the museum about two years before, Mr. Versteylen has established goals and methods to achieve the consolidation.

Mrs. Uriarte Company was working on a piece of tapestry from the Chancay culture. The background of black weft yarns had completely
disintegrated allowing the warp yarns which connected the areas of multi-colored motifs to show (Slide 1). To consolidate this textile she was sewing down each warp yarn as well as the tapestry motifs to a black cotton fabric. She worked only in the daylight in order to match the colors of thread. She kept covered all of the areas of the textile except where she was working to prevent fading. Mrs. Uriarte Company used a very soft cotton thread that matched each color being sewn down. When she found loose threads, she carefully removed them and kept them. The tapestry on which she worked was a particularly difficult piece. She was working on the piece when I was at the museum on June 12, 1975 and she had been working on it since December, 1974. When I returned to the museum in late August I learned she had finally completed the project. When consolidation of a textile was finished it was mounted on a stretcher frame (Lima, June 13, 1975).

Another worker in the textile section, Maria Isabel Fuentealba O., was collecting yellow yarns from the textile fragments for research to be conducted on the sources of yellow dyes. Matide Cueto de Carasco was preparing large-scale models of pre-Columbian weaving techniques to use in helping students of pre-Columbian textiles to see and identify them. There was a professor from San Marcos University doing research on the quipu, the ancient knot records.

I spent one day looking through piles of textile fragments to become acquainted with examples of pre-Columbian fabrics. Mr. Versteylen had prepared a paper including the discovery of them for the Emery Roundtable (7). They had been found while changing a display in the museum.
Although the frames were soiled, the textiles were in good condition. It was noted that they had survived at least two or three floods in that storage area. Many of these textiles were from the Paracas culture and included embroidered borders of mantles and unkus (Slide 2). The major part of the fabric was brown plain weave cloth. The motifs of the embroideries, including warriors, serpents, birds and an all-over floral motif were repeated but the color varied in each. In some borders all the space was filled with designs while in others the ground cloth was dominant. There was a great variety of color, however; dark greens, blues, reds and some yellow were most common. Any combination seemed possible but red was used most frequently.

In other cases I found coca bags with delicately and tightly wrapped warps on the fringe (Slide 3), some gauze weaves, netting and plaiting. The colors were still bright. The gauze weaves were usually woven from extremely fine yarns and looked delicate (Slide 4). Especially interesting were the fragments of backstrap looms. While they were not in good condition I was able to see the string heddles and the heading yarns (Slide 5). The sticks at both ends appeared to be made of bamboo on one loom.

On one occasion the museum staff was preparing workbaskets found in mummy bundles for storage. At that time I observed the numerous variations in color of the raw cotton from white to dark brown. I asked Mr. Versteylen about the natural blue cotton but he said that it had never existed. It was only a myth because they dyed cotton blue from such early days (Lima, June 18, 1975). There were balls of finely spun yarn,
unspun cotton and yarn on spindles. The workbaskets contained swords, needles and bones used in weaving.

The catalogue cards used to record each textile in the museum collection included the size of each piece, fiber content, technique and threads per inch, as well as a black and white photograph. Mr. Versteylen instituted the cataloging when he joined the museum staff.

Inside the museum area open to the public were displays arranged by historical periods. It was a lesson in history to follow the well-organized displays. Explanations describing artifacts including textiles, pottery, metal work and stone carving were thorough. There were also some scale models of historic sites such as Machu Picchu. It was encouraging to see how much the museum was used. Every day there were long lines of grey-uniformed school boys and girls waiting to visit the museum.

While at the museum I was fortunate to discuss with Mr. Versteylen the situation of pre-Columbian textiles and the textiles of today. He felt that textiles in Peru today were stagnant because there was no innovation but only repetition of common designs. He has tried to promote creativity in the textile arts with little success. In the future he would like to have a museum where the progress of textiles from the very beginning to the present could be shown together. He presented this idea before the Emery Roundtable stating the need for such a museum (7). He felt that the weavers of Peru have the skills of the past and some specific techniques need to preserved before they disappear yet creativity needs to be encouraged. His idea for this institution would be a living tie with the past (Lima, June 12, 1975).
In late August I returned to the museum to bid farewell to the staff. At that time there was a team of anthropologists working on the opening of two Paracas mummy bundles to commemorate the first discovery of the Paracas tombs by Julio C. Tello on July 26, 1925. The team was made up of James Vreeland, Maria Isabel Fuentealba O., Dr. Tamotsu Ogata and Dr. Hilda Vidal.

The unwrapping of the mummy was conducted in the open patio so that the public could view the process. It was an educational experience and the people watching were quite interested in it. But there were problems because the humid air had caused the mummy to turn from light brown to black. After thousands of years of entombment it was amazing to see it deteriorate so quickly.

The bundle which I viewed had been x-rayed before opening to establish the body’s position. Then the work proceeded with great excitement. The body had already been uncovered and they had found a beautiful embroidered cloth as well as a tightly braided wig with yellow feathers. The body was covered with a plain weave white and brown varigated cotton cloth. This varigation probably was achieved by mixing white and brown cotton during the spinning process.

La Huaca de la Florida

On June 19, 1975 I went with Dr. Hilda Vidal to the excavation in the Rimac section of Lima. Rimac is the oldest part of Lima where there were other huacas in the area. The site was on the grounds of a sporting club and the gravesites were found while digging for a new building.
Though it had been excavated by the national team of archeologists, Dr. Vidal was conducting the last diggings while the rest of the team moved to Puno to start a new project. She had been working in three tombs where only bones and ceramics, but no textiles had been found. Among them were the bones of a child, approximately two years of age. That skeleton and all the others had had the heads cut off. Dr. Vidal found an adult near the small skeleton and another worker found an adult human pelvis on the site. The people buried in these graves were certainly not rich or important, but it is theorized that they were punished and buried there. Around the site were other places of interest. One room looked like a depository of pottery. There also appeared to be aqueducts for water. Even though this dig had no textiles, it was a valuable experience for me to visit the site and to see how the work of removing and cataloguing the bones, rocks and ceramics is accomplished.

Other museums in Lima

In Lima I was able to visit several other museums with textile collections. They varied in size, emphasis and care in handling of the collection. The most impressive and educational private museum was the Amano Museum, a private collection which is open to the public. Because of my acquaintance with some Japanese people in Lima I was able to learn about the history of the collection. Mr. Amano had a fishing company north of Lima near the ruins of the Chancay gravesites. Over a period of many years he has slowly assembled a collection of predominantly Chancay culture artifacts. The textile collection was the best that I
saw in Lima.

The textiles in his museum were kept in a properly controlled atmosphere where they were all very carefully mounted and stored. All visitors were taken by a guide who explained the items on display and opened drawers to show other textiles being stored. Here I saw many kinds of textiles about which I had read but had not seen including a shaped bag technique described by Junius Bird (1), delicate lace weaves, cloth mummy dolls, weaving samplers and weft scaffolding. Because of my previous study I thoroughly enjoyed the textile room which was a treasure house of primary sources.

The Larco Herrara Museum has an especially large collection of huacos, primarily from the Mochica culture. Mr. Larco was a large landowner in the northern part of Peru where the Mochica once thrived and most of the artifacts in the museum were found on his land. He, too, put the artifacts in a museum and opened it to the public. The textiles in this museum were not particularly well cared for because there was no humidity control. I was especially fascinated by the mummies and the objects found in the tombs such as cloth dolls, spindles, yarn and baskets. The huacos portrayed many humans depicting the type of clothing worn.

The National Museum of Peruvian Culture is near the center of Lima. Especially impressive was a display of carved gourds and an overview of designs used on them. There was also a good display of folk craft from the jungle regions. Among the textiles were black and white striped ponchos which had delicately painted lines in the white areas. The rest of the museum contained a combination of current folk craft and a few
pre-Columbian artifacts including costumes, paintings and textiles.

The Gold Museum is another private collection which had been opened to the public. The number and the variety of items made of gold was astounding. Several examples showed gold and silver used as a part of textiles. One of these was a headdress made for the top of a mummy bundle. There was considerable jewelry made of gold and precious stones.

**Historic sites**

While I stayed in Lima I visited two historic sites, Pachacamac and Paracas. Pachacamac is the site of the remains of a temple to the sun and what appeared to have been a religious community. The temple was built on a very high point overlooking the ocean. One interesting section was the home of the Mamakuna. The Mamakuna were the virgins used for the temple rituals. Sometimes they were sacrificed, but their usual task was to spin and weave textiles for official use in their quarters which were near a large open terrace facing the baths and the woods. A small museum on the grounds housed the artifacts found in the immediate area. The textiles were numerous and in good condition (Slide 6). One of the most interesting objects was a tiny backstrap loom on which a piece of pattern double weave had been woven. There was also a large plain weave textile to which large shells had been sewn. It was thought to have been used on the temple door.

In late July I visited the Paracas gravesites. Since I had read so much about Paracas I was determined to see it for myself. One of my friends decided to drive me to the location near a small bay. I did not
realize how desolate the area would be. The small museum was surrounded by sand, rocks and shells, but mostly sand. The building was being remodeled so that we could not enter it, but we did walk around the grave-sites. It was exciting to discover the small textile fragments in the sand (Slide 7). The area was covered with sand because there was not enough money to guard it or to preserve the open graves. For me it was a fabulous experience at least to see the area in which the exquisite textiles were found.

Textiles in commerce

In Lima I was fortunate to know a woman working in the Ministry of Industry and Tourism. Magdalena de Monzarz had been with the folk craft division for several years although she is presently working with the textile industries. She introduced me to Mr. Pedro Rojas who is the director of the artisan division of the Ministry of Industry and Tourism. He works with the people who produce folk craft. He was attempting to do a survey of handmade folk craft in Peru and since it was International Women's Year he was especially interested in women's role in folk craft production. The weavers I met at a later time in the villages were familiar with Mr. Rojas and I sensed the solid relationship he had established with them.

Ms. de Monzarz also arranged an appointment with James W. Plunkett, Director and Manager of Exportadores del Inca S. A. Mr. Plunkett is primarily an exporter of Peruvian folk craft. While I was visiting him his goods, ready for export, were being inspected by the Ministry of
Industry before being taken to the dock. The government controls what leaves the country. Of the items he exports, most are textiles and carved gourds. He has worked to establish a good relationship with the craftsmen in the provinces. They ship him goods by bus and he sends the payment to their banks.

He sells his goods primarily to boutiques and wholesalers in the United States and Europe. The recession in these countries has deeply affected the hand production of textiles in Peru. Many shops and department stores have cut back on luxury items. He said that most weavers could sell all that they made in the past, but sales have recently decreased. He has had to cut his stockpile of textiles and only gives the weavers special orders. Mr. Plunkett feels that handmade items, including textiles, have always been regarded as something for the tourists. The general feeling is that the Indians have made them therefore such articles are considered inferior. The upper-class in Peru wants goods from abroad but when the wealthy Peruvians go abroad they see foreigners wearing Peruvian ponchos, sweaters and caps.

Exporters like Mr. Plunkett are trying to help make handwoven items easier to sell at home and abroad. They sometimes advise craftsmen. Mr. Plunkett has tried to get the knitters to use only 100% alpaca, but he found that the addition of 20% polyester helped the garments to hold shape and the dyes were more permanent. He showed me some large wall hangings with realistic scenes which were priced at about $500.00. He believed that if weavers were willing to put so much time and effort into a large piece that it should be well-designed in order to have a
chance of being sold (Lima, June 9, 1975).

On June 11, 1975 I spoke with Mr. Roberto Vizurraga, manager and advisor of the Cooperativa Artesanos de Puno, a cooperative that has been in existence for three years in the city of Puno. In the beginning it was organized as a child care center aided by CARE and the Catholic Church. Later the community decided to make it a business to produce and sell hand-crafted scarves, sweaters, gloves, caps and various other knit items. The Ministry of Education has become involved and provides a teacher. Two banks provide loans to buy materials and to pay the workers for their labor until the products are sold. Mr. Vizurraga was impressed because the people saw a need and organized themselves. They have hired experts to train themselves to create products of good quality that will sell and are trying to maximize all the resources, both human and material. They evaluate each other's work before it is sold. The markets abroad do influence what the people make and the taste of the customers guide the production. The cooperative sells to the United States, Italy, France and West Germany. He prefers to sell to wholesalers for boutiques because he feels that to sell to a department store lowers the esteem of handmade items.

I met Bernardo Luck, exporter and owner of a quality folk craft shop. He has established a good reputation with the crafts people. Mr. Luck primarily carries textiles in his shop with a wide variety available. Some very special pieces were jungle textiles. When I spoke with him he explained that he did not really like some of the textiles because of the low quality of design and craftsmanship. He carried them;
however, because the price was lower therefore more of them would sell. His favorite textiles came from San Pedro de Cajas. They were more expensive, but were technically better and had more interesting designs. Some of the designs are based on Picasso paintings. Mr. Luck has an art gallery near his shop where he exhibits folk art from all parts of Peru. He is one of the people in Lima who is seriously trying to maintain respect for the crafts in Peru and takes an active role in that concern (Lima, July 23, 1975).

Use of textiles in Lima

While in Lima I attempted to seek evidence of continued interest in handwoven textiles today. I visited some public buildings and shops to see the extent to which textiles were used. One of the most impressive modern structures decorated with quality textiles was the Lima Sheraton Hotel. In the lobby there were many large woven wall coverings from the village of San Pedro de Cajas. Although they appeared to be woven using the tapestry technique, the weave used was a secret known only to the weavers. The motifs were inspired from ancient textiles. One very large hanging showed a view of Machu Picchu. The commission by the Lima Sheraton Hotel provided work for the village of weavers and created a new interest in textiles for the people of Lima.

Textiles, both handmade and machine-made, were for sale in shops throughout the city. One had to have a discerning eye to find a quality item in some places. All textiles were presented as handmade because they knew that was what tourists desired.

Motifs from pre-Columbian textiles were used in printed fabrics
by the firm Silvania Prints. The woman who began this business has based her designs on historic motifs yet creates contemporary fabrics by use of different colors and arrangements. The textiles and garments made from the fabrics were expensive so that tourists and foreign residents were the main clients.

In discussions with my host family and from my own observations I have concluded that there has been an increased interest in textiles making use of pre-Columbian motifs. In the past such garments were only for the tourists. Natives have begun placing handwoven wall hangings in their homes and offices. Moths present a problem with wool textiles in Lima because they thrive in the humid climate. Nothing was free from their damage except a polyester blend with wool or alpaca. The introduction of these blends has helped make wool and its products practical for those people.

Huancayo and the Mantaro Valley

After becoming familiar with the textiles seen in Lima I traveled to Huancayo to observe the contemporary weaving done in the villages. I was very fortunate to have Francisca Mayer of Huancayo as a resource person as well as an advisor in this undertaking. I stayed with Ms. Mayer for three weeks to study her workshop, the weavers in the area and the famous feria of Huancayo.

Taller F. Mayer

The Taller (workshop) F. Mayer is located in a section of Huancayo called Barrio San Carlos which has dirt and stone streets. When I
arrived at the street, Hiron Brasilia, there was the sign for her workshop and turning the corner I came upon a typical mud wall surrounding the house and yard. Once I had entered the gate I felt I was in another world. There was a neatly kept, but vast vegetable garden, a quaint German-style house and a modern brightly lit workshop. This was one of the neatest, best organized workshops I had seen (Slide 8).

Francisca Mayer has been in Peru since the late 1940s. In 1950 she trained her first native Peruvian worker to weave. Since that time she has trained workers and built the weaving workshop until by the summer 1975 she was employing seventeen women. In addition to the workshop there was a museum, storeroom and salesroom. Ms. Mayer was one of the first persons in Peru to draw upon pre-Columbian techniques and motifs for contemporary textiles. At the outset the weavers wove many samples of techniques and kept records of ones suitable for specific products. As a result the workshop now has developed a reputation in Peru and abroad for the fine quality products.

Functional textiles such as table cloths, napkins, towels, garments and ties are specialties of the Mayer workshop. The pre-Columbian motifs including the cat, the bird and the fish are generally woven in the laid-in technique but the weavers are also constantly experimenting. Those with special artistic talent are encouraged to weave wall hangings using new techniques and designs (Slide 9).

Adjoining the workshop is a small room where the products are displayed for sale. There is a museum above the storeroom where many textiles are exhibited. Ms. Mayer has an extensive personal collection of
textiles dating from pre-Columbian Peru to the present which are kept in the museum. The weavers often use them as inspiration for their own work. She encourages them to duplicate ancient techniques as an exercise in order for them to understand the ancient fabrics and processes.

Ms. Mayer's success as an owner and director of a weaving workshop she attributes in part to keeping the clock and keeping the books. The women work from 8:00 a.m. to noon and from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Since they are paid by the piece the more they weave the more money they can earn. Some women who are not trained as weavers or are unable to weave do jobs such as sewing, winding the warps, finishing pieces and ironing. Almost all women who join the workshop begin working at those jobs and advance to weaving when there is an opening.

At the workshop I was able to make many observations and to learn techniques. The first day I learned how to pick and to spin alpaca. Teodora, one of the workers, was my teacher who showed me all the steps in the process. Teodora expertly picked the wool and arranged the fleece in coil shapes ready to be stored. She wound the fleece around the callapa to hold it in place while spinning (Slide 10). The spindle in Hyancayo consisted simply of a long stick with a weight at the bottom. Teodora and other spinners in the area always spun with a Z-twist and were unhappy if I chose to spin an S-twist. While spinning the alpaca we had picked together I could easily see which was my picking and which Teodora had prepared.

I spent several days learning to prepare natural dyes and to dye yarn. The art of natural dyeing is virtually dead in Peru because of
the prevalent use of aniline dyes. An English woman, Barbara Mullins, has helped preserve what is now known about the natural dyes of Peru and has taught weavers near Huancayo how to use them. In collaboration with Ms. Mayer she wrote the book *Recetas de Tintes Naturales* (12). This book, used in teaching weavers about natural dyes, was a reference when we prepared the dyes. Some weavers in the area are continuing to use the dyes which they had learned to make. They have found a good market for their work and are pleased with the results.

The first day of dyeing I observed and assisted Beatriz Arroyo Aquino and Livia Miguel Perez who were in charge of dyeing warp yarns for ties and some weft yarns for Beatriz's wall hanging (Slide 9). They were to use walnut tree bark, cochineal and indigo. We prepared walnut tree bark by pounding it into small pieces with rocks before soaking it. Beatriz ground the cochineal into a fine powder but the indigo was already prepared. Rather than using the liquor the yarn was put in with the walnut bark. All the yarn that we dyed had been mordanted with alum. I followed the entire process: weighing the dye stuff, weighing the yarn, simmering the dye and washing and rinsing the yarn. All the yarns were simmered for one hour over a wood stove (Slide 11).

I was able to contribute a new method to the dyeing process. As I prepared yarns for the walnut dye bath I decided to bind some skeins for weft ikat. I prepared enough skeins for Livia to use in her ties. There were also some tie-dyed woolen textiles which needed to be brightened. I set out to fold and tie those shawls and scarves for tie-dyeing. In preparing the ikat yarns and the tie-dyed cloths I was careful to show
Livia how I did them so that she could carry out the process again. I was pleased to see the results and to have them prepared for sale in the shop. Later I was able to prepare my own dyes using lichens and tree bark.

The workshop had more than one purpose for its existence. Ms. Mayer has a great social as well as an artistic concern. She provides educational experiences for the children of her workers by establishing a kindergarten. A teacher came every morning to teach these children as well as others from the neighborhood. This served as a babysitting service too because the children had toys, space and playground equipment to occupy them while their mothers worked. Inside the workshop there were cribs for the babies. Ms. Mayer also gave counsel to the women having problems and considers the social aspect as important as the business. She found it a satisfying way to serve society while using her knowledge of weaving.

During the time I stayed at the Mayer house I was fortunate to share hours of conversation with Ms. Mayer. From her rich and intense interest in weaving and other crafts I was able to learn much about the conditions of the textile arts in Peru. For the past twenty-five years she has been living and working with people concerned with the preservation of the Peruvian arts. From these conversations I was made more aware of the rich heritage and what some individuals were doing to preserve it. From Ms. Mayer I learned that the word *artesania* was not reserved for the handmade items. Therefore, when people saw this label they mistakenly assumed that it was handmade when it may not have been. The Mayer
workshop has been hurt by the lack of honest interpretation of that word. Because handmade items were more costly customers preferred to purchase the less expensive machine-made textiles. She felt that some legislation was necessary because there was too much ambiguity surrounding the word *artesania*, but it was important to the consumer, especially the foreigners. Ms. Mayer was very concerned about government protection for the craftsmen. Those who were conscientious and kept books were heavily taxed while those who operated secretly did not pay taxes and there was no protection for them. She felt the need for some special laws to promote craftsmen and help them maintain their work without treating them as an industry.

Familiar with crafts people throughout Peru, Ms. Mayer was able to inform me of projects which had been developed to promote the crafts as a steady form of income for the highland villagers. The Peace Corps had begun some projects with crafts and succeeded to some extent. Most of the Peace Corps volunteers came with little or no artistic or organizational background and when a project was progressing well the volunteers were often replaced by people who were not familiar with the work to be done. However, the awareness created in a village several years before might result in a feasible community effort at a later time. For example, the work done in Hualhuas several years ago had finally taken root in 1975. Ms. Mayer indicated that not all of the work was positive. In the city of Ayacucho Peace Corps workers, insensitive to the rich weaving tradition, designed patterns which the weavers were to duplicate for export and for sales to tourists. These textiles may have been
popular but the quality of design and craftsmanship was poor. They were able to sell more of these textiles because the price was lower, but at the same time the products were not a fair representation of what the weavers could really do.

There is a growing number of Peruvians working hard to preserve the life of the crafts in their country. The exporters I mentioned earlier are involved in this movement as is John Davis, Director of the Art Center (Instituto Centro de Arte) in Lima. He and his wife, Isabel, have been promoting the use and the production of folk crafts. At the Art Center they sponsor classes in the arts and have exhibitions of art. They also have a folk craft shop with quality items from all parts of Peru. There are many more people involved than I can mention here who have formed a network of concern across the country. It was exciting to hear about their interests and how they have helped to keep folk craft alive.

Ms. Mayer stated that recently they have begun protecting pre-Columbian textiles in Peru. The government is in the process of cataloguing all those fabrics. The law requires that all private collections must be inspected by government workers. For each piece catalogued there is a charge of approximately fifty cents. The government numbers each textile for a complete record and forbids its exportation. It is illegal to dig at gravesites, to sell illegally acquired textiles or to have them in possession (From conversations with Francisca Mayer, Huancayo, June 29 - July 15, 1975).

Through Ms. Mayer, who is known to weavers throughout the Mantaro
Valley, I was able to visit several village craftsmen. With her introduction, a map and my dictionary I made my way to several villages near Huancayo. Transportation to the villages was frequent, but not regularly scheduled. I had learned by that time how to wait yet how to get back before the sun set. Although my Spanish was poor and I was a bit scared, I took my first trip to Huayucachi to visit a weaver I had met in the market.

Huayucachi

On July 3, 1975 I found my way to the bus stop and boarded the old creaking bus to Huayucachi. I was pushed into the bus along with the women in full skirts, the animals and the sacks full of dried corn. The bus went no further than my destination so I easily found the house of Fortunato Urcu Huaranca, a backstrap weaver. I was sure that he was a little surprised when I kept my appointment, but once I arrived he was more than generous with his time and showed me his work. I was fascinated by this young energetic man who is revolutionizing the weaving process in his own home.

He has developed two mechanical devices which allow him to weave more quickly. His first invention was designed to respin the commercial yarn in order to increase the tightness of the twist. This respinning process is done by most craftsmen with a hand spindle. The machine was made with bicycle wheels and ran on a kerosene engine. His wife operated the machine which could retwist two spools at once. The other invention was used to increase the speed of warping the yarn to be used on his backstrap loom. Commonly two stakes are placed in the ground at a
distance which equals the desired length of the warp. Two people sit on the ground behind each stake and roll a ball of yarn back and forth to each other to make the warp. This process takes two persons a day to complete the warping. With his system Mr. Urcu Huaranca could prepare enough warp for two mantas in one day. While he has lost the social aspect of sharing that task with another person, he has faced the reality that faster production will bring greater income.

I was further delighted when he took me upstairs to his work room. There with his loom attached to the ceiling he began the weaving process. For the first time I witnessed the great skill and strength that is required to weave on that kind of loom. With speed and dexterity he manipulated the heddles, swords and warp yarns to weave the traditional gusano pattern. It was a warp-faced wool fabric with colorful stripes. The weft was a very fine cotton which was barely seen at the selvedges (Slide 12). After the demonstration he told that it took nearly two weeks to weave the manta. It was woven in one long piece, cut in two and sewn together at the selvedges. He hopes to receive $40.00 for the finished piece. His wife weaves belts on a narrower loom. She can weave a belt in about four days for which she receives $10.00.

I later found from visiting other weavers that the income they received from their production of textiles is only supplemental. Most weavers have a farm or a small shop. Weaving is done when the crops are in and while they are tending the shops. It is not a full-time profession for most persons which is similar to textile production in the Inca culture. In the Inca state every housewife wove the needed cloth for her
family, however, there were specially trained weavers who produced the elaborate textiles. These specialists included both male weavers and young women who were taken from their families at an early age and trained to produce cloth. In contrast to the weavers in Peru today these people were provided for by the communal state in return for their skilled labor (13).

Each village has a specialty in the crafts and Huayucachi is no exception. It is most famous for its embroiderers. I was able to visit the parents of a worker in the Mayer Workshop. Their embroiderings are famous in Peru and are represented in private collections in the United States. One such collection has been incorporated in the decor of La Fonda del Sol designed by Alexander Girard, architect and interior designer. He personally selected embroiderings done by Santa Cruz Capacyachi and his wife. They have been making embroidered costumes for local festivals for over fifty years (Slide 13). The older embroiderings were done with metallic threads on velvet cloth. Since they can no longer buy velvet, the new costumes are made primarily from synthetic fabrics. The designs of the embroiderings range from delicate floral patterns to patriotic scenes to tigers in the forest. Since the costumes they make are too expensive for villagers to purchase, celebrants rent them each year for the appropriate festivals.

Viques

Later that day I found a colectivo to take me to Viques, the village famous for intricately woven belts. I was always amazed to find such
beautiful textiles being woven behind mud walls. In Viques the women weave the narrow belts for daily use and for festivals. The belts are all wool and warp-faced with stylized motifs particular to the village. I was able to visit Blanca Huaman de Laureano. Though she and her mother were not weaving when I arrived because they were still harvesting the crops she did show me her latest belt woven in February 1975 (Slide 14). It was made of commercial yarn that had been retwisted. The motifs she used included a train, ducks, peacocks, the river, a lion, the seal of Peru and a boat. I was interested to see how she used the ancient techniques to create a contemporary textile. However, it was a little sad to learn that she could not weave another belt until she sold the one she showed me because she had no money to buy yarn. After I bought it from her I wondered how long it would be before she could sell the next one. That day was the beginning of many fascinating experiences to come. I began to learn the human side of the superb textiles which were sold in the villages and resold abroad. As popular as the handwoven Peruvian textiles are, I was able to see that the weavers still live in poverty. What amazed me was that they still produce colorful, gayly patterned pieces for others to enjoy. They live on a subsistence level and yet the people I met extended a welcome to me and helped me with my research. Their strength and kindness was a true inspiration to me.

Hualhuas

A stay in Huancayo would not be complete without a visit to Hualhuas. It is easily reached from Huancayo, therefore the influx of travelers had caused the village to cater to the tourist. For this
reason the weavers here are famous and quite productive. They are best known for their alpaca blankets and rugs of natural colors woven on two or four harness foot looms (Slide 15). Unfortunately many poorly designed textiles are woven for the tourists and for export. Yet this demand has helped the village to prosper. Even in Hualhuas there is some experimentation taking place. Two weavers I visited had studied vegetable dyeing with Francisca Mayer and Barbara Mullins and had begun to use these dyes in their work. Oscar Salome was weaving a tapestry on his blue loom when I arrived at his shop (Slide 16). The loom was in the open courtyard and was covered with a huge piece of plastic. Beside him his wife was spinning the white alpaca which he later dyed (Slide 17). He was very proud of his mastery of the natural colors and told me the source of each color. In the spring of 1975 he had sold many of his textiles at the La Molina Fair in Lima. From that exposure he had become known and when I visited him he was preparing weavings for an exhibition. As a customer entered the dark unlit shop Oscar jumped up from his loom to serve the man (July 1, 1975).

Eleodora Medina also uses natural dyes to weave large tapestries (Slide 18). Her best designs are geometric as she balances the gayly colored sheep's wool with the natural shades of alpaca. She spins all of her own yarn sometimes using the spinning wheel, but she believes that yarn spun on a spindle is essential for a warp. Having woven for many years Eleodora has established her reputation so she has regular customers. She knows how to succeed and has definite opinions about her profession. Her entire family helps in the preparation of the yarn for
weaving though only she weaves. Most of her work is for commissions. She never sells through a middleman. Her prices are comparatively high, but yet her work is in great demand. A sign of her wealth is her ability to send her daughters to school in Lima; therefore they are not continuing the tradition of fine weaving which their mother has begun (July 11, 1975).

In Hualhuas there are many people weaving yardage combining cotton warp and alpaca weft which they make into jackets and vests. They sell the ready-made garments in the market and take orders for tailor-made items too. One man weaves brightly colored tapestries which present flat colored designs reminiscent of Matisse (Slide 19). All these people appear to be good businessmen and I was impressed with their enterprising natures. I encountered a man who was having difficulty with the exportation of his products. He had several angry letters from an importer in New York City. The letters, written in English, expressed how upset the business woman was that the rugs which she had ordered had not arrived. The weaver refused to send the rugs because the exporter in Lima would not pay him even after he had delivered the goods. Consequently he returned home with the textiles. Many weavers were taking a great loss and this man said that he wanted to stop exporting because of the risk (Nicolas Rojas Caceres, weaver, Hualhuas, July 7, 1975).

The other weavers I met in Hualhuas were not doing such unusual work, but I enjoyed my visits with them because I could see many phases of the weaving process. People seemed to weave in almost every home and I simply knocked on gates to gain entrance. Many were disappointed because
I was only looking; some were even unkind and asked me to leave. Most people asked for money before I took pictures and I became very familiar with the request for a propina. I found the village to be alive with all activities of weaving. Women were walking down the street while spinning, yarn was hanging on the clothesline and the sound of the looms was heard from the streets. As a handweaver from a highly industrialized nation I was very impressed by the prevalence of hand weaving in Peru. It was a real part of village life. Although Hualhuas appeared to be very tourist oriented I later realized that it was easier to meet weavers there because they were not afraid of strangers.

Cochas Chico

The next village I visited was Cochas Chico. With a friend I got on the bus which took us away from Huancayo toward the Sierras to the east. Cochas Chico is built on a higher elevation. We got off the bus at the wrong stop and so we walked the rest of the way. We met interesting people along the way. A man was chewing his coca leaves, the young children were chasing the chickens and several men with metal buckets and huge bundles of sheep's wool were waiting for a truck which would take them to the jungle on the other side of the mountains to sell their produce.

We finally reached the village which sits at the bottom of the steep hill. This village is most famous for the gourd carvers who live there and signs outside the houses advertise the gourds which are for sale. We encountered an elderly man who took us to his son's home. The
son, whose name I had heard in Lima, is one of the most famous gourd carvers of Peru. Pedro Veli was very kind as he showed us his work area and the huge sacks of his work. The entire family carved gourds but his were the most intricate. There were two groups of carved gourds. I was amused when he showed the gourds intended for export to the United States. Though these gourds were less expensive they were of poorer quality. Then he led us to the smaller sack of gourds carved in great detail and of superb quality. He said that those were for people who appreciated art (Cochas Chico, July 8, 1975). Other artists we visited had much the same attitude. Some people in the village had become rich because of the popularity of the carved gourds. The rich folks had moved to the foot of the hills where they lived in painted houses with glass windows. The less fortunate, usually weavers, still lived in the hillside in the mud houses. These people lived in a more natural setting without the unnecessary complications of wealth.

I was able to visit a friend of the Mayer family who lived in the hillside. Teodora Canturin de Vasquez, already an expert spinner, was learning to carve gourds. The entire Vasquez family was involved in some sort of craft production. While they had a small farm to support them, they also produced carved gourds and mantas to sell in the market. They spent hours working at their crafts in large groups. Often relatives would come to join them as they worked. Her husband, Juan, and his father, Esteban, were both weavers using the backstrap loom. The day I spent with them was one of the most wonderful experiences I had. Juan was not weaving at that time because he had just returned from harvesting
and storing the crops. Esteban did have his loom assembled in his house so we walked there to see it. Esteban was fascinated with my camera. He had never had his photograph taken so I had the pleasure of taking photographs of the whole family. In return they were most generous to me and gave me much useful information. Esteban demonstrated the use of his backstrap loom which was fastened to the ceiling of a covered portion of the courtyard (Slide 20). He was weaving a manta with the gusano pattern. Esteban was quite old consequently he had difficulty concentrating for long periods of time. I am sure that it took him many days to complete the work.

Juan Vasquez had learned weaving from his father who also uses commercial yarns for his mantas. He bought commercially-dyed yarns or he dyed the white yarns with aniline dyes. Teodora respun the commercial yarn before weaving. Juan stated that it required 650 grams of wool for one manta. Teodora could have spun the wool from the fiber, but Juan preferred the commercial respun yarn. I learned later that it is a sign of wealth to weave with commercial yarn. Handspun yarn meant that the weaver had no money with which to buy yarn.

Juan's mother was spinning sheep's wool to be taken to the foot loom man. He would weave the yardage which in turn would be dyed and made into skirts. After the skirts were sewn they would be trimmed with embroidery around the hem. Often the yarn was never washed throughout the weaving process. This was really village assembly-line production common to most communities in this area. The foot loom man produced fabrics to be worn by the spinners.
Before we returned to the bus, Teodora took us to visit a cooperative in the village. There we saw women weaving on foot looms in a windowless room. The work was of poor quality compared with the weaving which I had seen done in the homes. It was sad to see what this effort is doing to an ancient tradition of excellence. As a parting gift Teodora gave me her spindle and some alpaca yarn she was spinning (Slide 21). It was a touching expression of friendship. The weight on the spindle was a small potato though I had thought it was a stone until I realized it was rotting. From the bus window while returning to Huancayo I had my first close look at a herd of llamas. They were all carrying on their backs loads which were in woven sacks.

**Aco**

In an attempt to learn more about the hand crafts in the Mantaro Valley I traveled to the village of Aco, which means mud in Quechua. Aco is famous for ceramics but there are no weavers in the village. The car in which I was riding seemed to go on and on into treeless, brown country. Occasionally I could see foot paths leaving the road leading toward unseen destinations. We continued to an even higher elevation where only the eucalyptus trees grew by the river. When we reached the village I was in a plaza rapidly filling with people. There were tents by the street and there was a festive feeling in the air. From the plaza I was treated to another sight. Looking to the Sierras in the east I could see the magnificent snowcapped peaks behind the foothills.

Aco is an Indian town where the people had a much more relaxed
attitude toward me. They spoke primarily in Quechua. When my Spanish was poor they only laughed because they did not speak Spanish well either. I had learned enough Quechua words to be accepted by them. The women I met in the plaza invited me into their homes. No one was making ceramics that day because of the festival, but they showed me their tools, the kiln and some of their pots in use. Since there was no weaver in Aco, they had recently traded some potatoes for woven potato sacks with people from the high altitudes where potatoes cannot grow. These sacks are woven on the backstrap loom from handspun alpaca using a wide range of natural colors. The weavers from the altitudes compete with each other to see who can create the most complicated pattern. The people in Aco used the sacks to carry potatoes and dried corn on the backs of the burros and the llamas. After viewing the ceramic workshops we headed back to the festival.

This was the last day of the festival which had been in progress for eight days. By this time the people were tired and many of the men were drunk. It was fascinating to see women arriving at the plaza in their best clothing. They wore brightly colored full skirts, light blouses and darker pullos or mantas. Their hats were white and black in the style of Huancayo (Slide 22). Two orchestras played and the dancers wound their way around the plaza. Although I could not see any weaving or ceramics being made it was an unforgettable experience to see the festival in Aco.
La Feria de Huancayo

Every Sunday brings a crowd of people to Huancayo. People come from Lima and many foreign tourists are there to go to the famous feria. This open market is known in all parts of Peru and well-attended by the local people as well as tourists. It seemed to stretch over a mile with two rows of stalls on either side. I was able to visit it on three Sundays so that I became familiar with the market and what people brought to sell.

One Sunday morning a group of us left for the market at 7:00 a.m. hoping to see the people arriving and wishing to get a first chance to look at the items for sale. The morning was so cold we could see our breath in the air. The sun had not yet risen from behind the mountains. We looked around and huddled together. Very few people were there when we arrived, a real contrast to a few hours later when the street was jammed with folk. I met many of the weavers from Hualhuas. It was good to see a familiar face in such a huge crowd. Handwoven textiles were sold primarily in a section for tourists (Slide 23). There were available textiles of all types and qualities; however, I had to look very carefully to find the textiles of good quality. I was searching for a poncho made with alpaca in both warp and weft. That proved difficult to find because most ponchos had cotton warp. I learned later that cotton warp was valued more because it must be purchased and because it did not stretch. I finally did find one at a reasonable price. It was my first experience in bargaining and I was relieved when it was over.

The local people shopped mainly around the stalls that sold
functional items such as clothing, pots and pans, food and tools. In those areas I could see some of the beautiful handwoven clothing being worn. It appeared that the finely woven textiles are kept for use by the weavers themselves or sold to their neighbors. The textiles I saw in the villages are rarely for sale in the market. The weavers cannot afford to keep a stockpile of weaving on hand because they need to sell one textile to buy yarn for the next.

At the very end of the market there were people selling fleeces of sheep and alpaca. The fleeces were sold by the pound, according to the color and the grade. Some weavers I met in Hualhuas said that they bought their alpaca in this market. Alpaca cannot live in Huancayo even though it has an altitude of 10,000 feet. Instead the alpaca live in the higher altitudes and their fleeces are brought from there to be sold.

The feria in Huancayo is an experience all its own. There one can see a cross section of the commercial life of a mountain city. It is also a social event where friends meet and have fun together. It provides an excellent array of textiles of every kind either for sale or worn by the local people.

Southern Peru

Cuzco

At the end of July I traveled to Cuzco, the old capital of the Incas. It is a picturesque city combining the ancient walls of the Incas with the Spanish architecture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While Cuzco is an important historic center it was not easy to
find information about textiles. Because I had no contacts I was left to search for weavers on my own. My research here is based on observations of the markets, a visit to Chincero and from stories told by the Peruvians.

Before I arrived in Cuzco I had seen both pre-Columbian textiles and those produced today in that region. The contemporary ones are some of the most intricate and most colorful textiles I saw in all of Peru. I was told by many people that the finest textiles were woven by Indians living in the high altitudes. They have maintained the fine tradition of weaving isolating themselves from outsiders. Few outsiders, Peruvians or foreigners, make the effort to reach the distant villages which may require several days journey on a mule. In her article, "The Cloth of the Quechuas," Grace Goodell describes such a search into the mountains of Bolivia where she found exquisite textiles rarely seen elsewhere (8).

After visiting several historic sites near Cuzco I set out to search the markets for information. Each time I returned I observed more and talked with some of the people. I noted the textiles being sold but more than that I was impressed with how different Cuzco was from Huancayo. Although Huancayo had seemed full of tourists Cuzco was even more crowded with them. The shopkeepers in the market had learned to be shrewd and had set prices high. It was fascinating to eavesdrop on the conversations between the shopkeepers and the tourists now that my Spanish was much improved. The unknowing tourist often paid dearly for something of poor quality. I was able to find some quality textiles and I learned where they were woven. However, the people selling textiles
in the major market in Cuzco were not the weavers and when I asked about
the textiles they seemed to know little concerning them.

In the marketplace textiles were the principal tourist item. There
were ponchos, pullos, sweaters, mantas, belts, bags, rugs and blankets.
Textiles were sold not only at this market, but at every ruin near the
city. The shopkeepers tried to impress me with how old the textiles were.
Many of them were obviously faded and old looking (Slide 24). Knowing
how precious the ancient textiles had become I found it difficult to be-
lieve that so many old textiles would be for sale. The clerk at my
hotel assured me that indeed they were not old. He explained that they
wash five- or ten-year-old ponchos in strong detergents then dry them
in the sun for five days or more to cause the dyes to bleed or fade in
order that they will appear to be old treasures.

As I passed one shop near the market I looked inside and saw a
basket filled with spindles. I was quite delighted to find the shop
which was full from floor to ceiling with baskets of all varieties. The
spindles were of two sizes, one for spinning and the larger one for re-
twisting the commercial yarn. Because I was interested in the spindles
I was able to start a conversation with the women.

I enjoyed just sitting in a cafe or in a park where I could observe
the handwoven textiles worn by the Indians. It was enlightening to see
the Indian men in their ponchos, handknit chullos under their hats with
woven belts and bags. Their clothing appeared old and well-worn. Their
faces reflected timeless expressions caused by hard work and their
ability to survive. The women wore full skirts, jackets or blouses, hats
and pullos. The hats worn by the women had wide brims and high crowns. Most men's and women's costumes were red and black.

In Cuzco the museums had few textiles. I recalled I was told at the University Archeological Museum (Cuzco, August 1, 1975) that the Spanish had destroyed most of the pre-Columbian textiles when they conquered Cuzco. That museum had a few fragments of textiles. I found the transition textiles woven after the Spanish invasion especially interesting. They appeared to have been woven on backstrap looms, but designed with motifs introduced by the Spanish. Gold and silver threads were combined with the wool yarns.

Pisac and Chincero

While staying in Cuzco I visited two small villages, Pisac and Chincero. Pisac is a lovely town in a river valley with a small square in front of the church. It is famous for its Sunday market where textiles from all over Peru are sold. In the square were crowded hundreds of Indians buying their foodstuffs and tourists buying their souvenirs, but there were also beautiful textiles for sale. The mayor of Pisac paraded through the streets in his official poncho, hat and staff for the sake of those of us visiting (Slide 25).

I arrived in Chincero, the other village, at a time when no other visitors were there. I knew that Chincero was famous for its weaving so I hoped that I could see some weavers. The village women did not disappoint me. Before long four or five women were in front of me trying to sell their textiles. They were very aware of tourists' desires and had little backstrap looms for sale (Slide 26). The looms were prepared
for weaving belts which were partially completed. One woman was winding her warp for a belt (Slide 27). When I began to take photographs the women asked for money. When I explained that I, too, was a weaver I realized that they did not understand Spanish. At that point my taxi driver explained in Quechua that I was studying weaving. One woman agreed to let me take her picture; then, the others followed her lead. I knew some weaving terms in Quechua which surprised the women when I used them.

Puno

After spending a week in Cuzco, I took the train to Puno located to the south on Lake Titicaca. The train wound higher and higher until it reached the high plateau on which Puno rests. It was a monotonous journey through treeless country. Occasionally we passed walled farm houses and herds of alpaca, llama and sheep. At each village the train stopped and vendors jumped on to sell their wares. I knew we were near Puno when ten or twenty women boarded the train to sell their handknit clothing characteristic of that area.

In Puno I did not visit any weavers. I made observations at the market and talked with people. Perhaps my most memorable experience here was witnessing the candlelight parade celebrating the one-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the school, San Carlos. Children of all ages paraded holding paper lanterns in shapes of fish, animals and people. Some groups of children were in uniforms while others wore their native costumes. Lining the streets were adults in all types of dress. Some
wore the native dress including men in their ponchos, cowboy hats, chaps and spurs.

The next day I observed more people in the plaza who had come for the day's festivities. The women wore bowler-type hats and long braids. Knit items dominated the goods in the market. The knit sweaters and caps were for the foreign tourists, I presume, since I saw few women wearing any of the articles which they had knit (Slide 28). Women were knitting while tending the stalls. The cooperative I had expected to visit, which I had learned about in Lima, was closed for the school's celebration. Although I was not able to visit it I did learn of the island Taquila in Lake Titicaca. On that island some of the most intricate knitting and weaving are done. The men knit and the women weave. They all use very finely spun yarns to create extremely delicate patterns. I remembered having seen their products for sale in the Cuzco market. I found it interesting to learn that they traded fish for alpaca fleece or yarn.

I visited the floating island of the Uros. I was told by my guide that it had been in existence since the time of the Incas. The island itself is a wonder since it is constructed wholly of reed. Three times a year the inhabitants pile more reed on the surface to rebuild it. While weaving is not done there they do construct boats with the reeds which resemble large-scale textile constructions (Slide 29). A missionary taught the people to embroider items to sell to the tourists. Unfortunately the quality of the wool fabric and the synthetic yarn is poor. While the motifs of the ancient sun god, Inti, are individual inspirations of the embroiderers, the materials used destroyed the
attractiveness of the design.

Since the high plateau is conducive to the breeding of alpaca most of the textile products are made of alpaca yarn. The quality of the yarn varies greatly. The handwoven ponchos for the local men are made of tightly spun yarns which are water repellent. On the other hand the more loosely spun yarns are used for textiles, especially sweaters, popular with the tourists. It is amazing to see so many handknit items for sale. Knitting provides a supplemental income for the farmers' wives during the winter. Even though they receive little money for their time, they do earn a bit extra for their families.

Summary

Puno was the last city I visited in search of information about textiles. After returning to Lima I was able to look back on experiences I had had and have a greater appreciation for the textiles. I became much more aware of the extreme contrasts between the country and the city.

As more and more people leave the country to go to Lima to find work, there will be fewer people left in the villages to maintain the crafts. The crafts seem alive and thriving now, but I feel that their existence is on an extremely delicate edge. The weavers are all alone and suffering the consequences of disorganization. One can hope efforts to join forces in cooperatives will make it easier and cheaper to buy yarn and to organize sales for the finished products.

The experience of conducting textile research in Peru was indeed a
difficult, but rewarding task. It was thrilling to be in an environment
where handweaving is commonly done. Striving to meet people and gain-
ing their trust took time. Observing the history of textiles from pre-
Columbian times to the present was more than a study of weaving for
political and cultural changes have influenced the direction it has taken. 
This study has become a human and socially revealing project.
Inspirations for my original work came from pre-Columbian textiles as well as from experiences I had in Peru. Some of these textiles I had studied at Iowa State University before I went to Peru. While several ideas for my projects were the result of influences from the present day I used techniques characteristic of pre-Columbian Peru. Since there were unlimited possibilities I was left to my own imagination and curiosity in developing designs for my woven pieces.

At the start I was interested in functional handwoven textiles. I had been impressed by the items such as bags, belts, unkus and mantas which I had viewed in museums in Japan, the United States and in Peru. They were extremely pleasing to me both in design and function.

My first major project was a tunic woven with wool yarn. In the process of designing this garment I decided to experiment with color using relationships which were new to me in an original overshot pattern (Slide 30).

Both that tunic and the jacket I made later remind me of the unkus worn in pre-Columbian Peru. Because all three are loom-shaped garments they present much the same appearance. However, most unkus which I saw in museums had sleeves and so relate more to my jacket which was woven using an undulating twill pattern (Slide 31).

The two rugs I wove were influenced by other aspects of ancient and present day textiles of Peru. In pre-Columbian times many finished pieces were actually woven in sections and later sewn together. The
rugs which I made were done in that manner. The first rug was woven in three strips using a twill pattern. The strips were then sewn together into one large piece (Slide 32). The second rug was woven using tapestry technique in eight similar units and sewn together in an overall arrangement (Slide 33). Both rugs employed natural fibers.

At this point I decided to attempt my first large-scale wall hanging. I had previously worked on a small scale so this was a great challenge for me. I found the solution by weaving a number of narrow strips which I later interwove to create one large textile. This resembles much of the recent weaving of Olga de Amaral. I chose colors derived from Peruvian textiles to weave in brocade and tabby (Slide 34).

After my trip to Peru I had an even greater abundance of ideas for textiles. The problem was where to begin. While in Peru Francisca Mayer showed me some of her experiments in dyeing sheep's wool and alpaca revealing the fact that sheep's wool takes the dye more readily than alpaca allowing differences in value to be achieved from the same dye bath. To extend this further I dyed wool and alpaca yarn for a large-scale wall hanging using colors characteristic of the Paracas textiles I had seen. I finished the textile and became aware of the draping qualities it had reminiscent of the mummy cloths. It had an encircling quality and seemed to hover its resting place. As it hung viewers gave it numerous titles and reasons for its existence including the title I chose, "Shawl on the Wall" (Slide 36).

Continuing to work on an even larger scale I began a project which I had thought about since I was in Peru. I had become fascinated with
the quipu, the Peruvian knot records. At museums in Peru I had been able to view several and decided to study them further. Using Leland L. Locke's book (11) as a resource I was able to learn specific knots and their significance which I then used in the hanging. I created a piece which can be viewed from all sides using both wrapped warps and woven strips. I gave it a Quechua name, "Imataj kay?" which means "What Is It?" (Slide 35).

"A Day at Machu Picchu" was inspired by just such a day. While I was at Machu Picchu I was fascinated by the sophisticated stone carvings and constructions and spent time photographing and sketching. One area of Machu Picchu, The Temple of the Three Windows, gave me the idea for this textile executed in pattern double weave. From a distance I viewed the trapezoid-shaped windows and became aware of their stark simplicity. I wove this textile as a remembrance of that day (Slide 37).

Machu Picchu provided the title for another textile which I had woven before going to Peru. This handspun, vegetable-dyed tapestry took on new meaning after I viewed Intihuatana or Hitching Post to the Sun. There in the altitudes this stone carving reminded me of the textile I had woven earlier (Slide 41).

The pre-Columbian textiles I had seen in museums gave me many ideas with which to work. In the Amano Museum in Lima I saw several delicately woven lace weaves which had been carefully preserved. Using d'Harcourt's book, Textiles of Ancient Peru and Their Techniques (4), as a resource I developed my own design. It provided a stimulating experience as I worked with white cotton yarns varying in size and tightness of twist.
"Wallpa" (Chicken) was designed using a bird motif which I found in an ancient textile. I used the backstrap loom to weave my own motif. All the weft yarns in this piece are handspun, plied and dyed with vegetable dyes which is typical of weaving in Peru. From this experience I gained appreciation for the great skill achieved by the weavers of pre-Columbian Peru (Slide 40).

Another small tapestry was woven with natural shades of alpaca and wool as well as vegetable dyed yarn. Part of this yarn I had spun and part of it was purchased from spinners in Hualhuas. I dyed the yarn while I was at the Mayer workshop. Therefore I wanted to weave a tapestry that would represent the beautiful Mantaro Valley. I decided to experiment with shaped tapestry reminiscent of some shaped tapestry fish I had seen in Peru (Slide 39).

While in Peru I also saw numerous workbaskets found in the ancient tombs. Most of these had contained yarn, spindles, needles and fleece. Although I did not use the same technique I did create a basket inspired by the typical shape I had seen in Peru. My larger "Work Basket" is intended to be used by the weaver for storage of yarn and supplies. The smaller "Textile Vessel" was influenced by ceramic artifacts found in tombs (Slide 42).

At the Larco Herrera Museum and the Amano Museum I saw textile dolls which had been placed in the graves. I was impressed by both the colors and the patterning used. In creating the "Atahualpa Family" I focused on color relationships and varied techniques. With each doll I wove I
learned more about simplifying the process. I enjoyed watching each
doll develop its own personality because of the color and pattern it had.
While I gave each one an individual name they are grouped as a family,
named after the last Inca emperor, for this presentation (Slide 43).

This creative work is the culmination of my research project. Because of my study of pre-Columbian Peruvian textiles and my research project in Peru I was provided with unlimited sources of inspiration. Some ideas became realities as I had conceived them while others took on new dimensions as the weaving progressed. Each textile was a learning process as well as a personal expression of the experiences which I had had. These textiles are a lasting expression of what I had learned and felt.
The Search


Slide 27. Chincero, August 5, 1975. Woman winding the warp for a belt.


Slide 29. Isla de los Uros, August 8, 1975. Reed boat made on the island in Lake Titicaca.
The Original Woven Textiles

Slide 30.  Tunic for the Rye Farmers of Finland
commercially dyed wool
33 x 22", 84 x 56 cm

Slide 31.  Unku 1974
commercially dyed linen and wool
52 x 24", 132 x 61 cm

Slide 32.  Form Follows Function
chemically dyed cotton and jute
55 x 40", 140 x 101½ cm

Slide 33.  Eight Piece Repeat
natural linen and commercially dyed wool
53½ x 37½", 135½ x 95 cm

Slide 34.  Plain Weave Brocade
commercially dyed linen and wool, wool dyed with
natural dyes
65 x 65", 166 x 166 cm

Slide 35.  Quipu I, Imataj kay? (What is it?)
commercially dyed linen and wool, jute
70 x 58", 178 x 147½ cm

Slide 36.  Mummy Cloth I, Shawl on the Wall
wool and alpaca dyed with chemical and natural dyes
65 x 30", 165 x 76 cm

Slide 37.  A Day at Machu Picchu
wool dyed with chemical dyes
31½ x 14½", 79 x 36½ cm

Slide 38.  Chancay Lace
bleached cotton
45 x 29", 114 x 73½ cm

Slide 39.  The Great Mantaro Valley
commercially dyed cotton, natural wool and alpaca, wool and
alpaca dyed with chemical and natural dyes
18 x 11", 46 x 28 cm

Slide 40.  Wallpa (Chicken)
unbleached linen and handspun wool dyed with vegetable
dyes
11 x 9½", 28½ x 23 cm
Slide 41. Intihuatana (Hitching Post to the Sun)
unbleached linen and wool, handspun wool dyed with vegetable dyes
19½ x 13½", 49 x 34 cm

Slide 42. Work Basket
jute and commercially dyed wool
14 x 10 x 6", 35½ x 25½ x 15 cm

Textile Vessel
cotton and acrylic
5 x 4 x 4", 12½ x 10 x 10 cm

Slide 43. The Atahualpa Family
commercially dyed cotton and wool, wool and alpaca
dyed with chemical and natural dyes
each doll body 11 x 6", 28 x 15 cm
The results of this investigation have made the study of Peruvian textiles more relevant to me. Although I was aware that history and art are part of the whole society this fact became more evident as the study progressed. I observed the current social conditions which have a great impact on the weavers who are the original inhabitants of Peru. Viewing their poverty I was deeply impressed by the weavers' relentless creative efforts. While there is a developing awareness by the Peruvian government of its national treasures the weavers live near a starvation level. Protection is reserved for the pre-Columbian textiles but little is done for the present day textile artist.

Links to the past are evident in all areas of the folk arts. Some weavers produce exact copies of past textiles while others create fabrics inspired by pre-Columbian motifs. Some weaving techniques have not changed greatly in over one-thousand years. Weavers today develop designs on the backstrap loom much as their predecessors must have done.

Certain aspects of the arts have changed since the time of the Incas. The weavers of today are no longer subsidized nor protected by the government. Since the ancient religion was abolished by the Spanish few textiles are now needed for religious rituals. Commercialism has become important. Only those few artists with a sound business background are able to survive.

Inspiration for my work came from both the study of historic textiles and my experiences in Peru. I was able to experiment with
techniques of the past as a part of my research. In the course of this investigation I have been deeply affected by the Peru of the past and the present.

Through this project I hope I have been able to demonstrate the importance of traditional textiles and their relevance to weavers of today. There is a vast amount of knowledge about ancient Peruvian textiles which can enrich contemporary weavers. The textile history of Peru in addition to the Peruvian weaving of today have been a true inspiration to me.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Artesania: Spanish word for handicrafts (5).

Callapa: Quechua word for wooden tool used to hold the fleece in place while spinning. Used in the Huancayo area.

Chullo: Knit cap worn by Indian men in Peru. Characterized by flaps covering the ears.

Colectivo: Spanish word for passenger vehicle smaller than a bus (5).

Eccentric tapestry: Tapestry having wefts that deviate from the horizontal and from their normal right-angled relation to the warps (6).

Feria: Spanish word for market or fair (5).

Foot loom: Foot treadle floor loom.

Guaco or huaco: Spanish word for ceramic vessel found in Indian burial grounds (5).

Gusano: Spanish word for worm or caterpillar. Name of a weaving pattern.

Huaca: Spanish word for Indian Burial grounds (5).

Ikat: The process of resist dyeing portions of a warp or weft (or both) before weaving to create a pattern (10).

Kelim: Slit tapestry. Found in tapestry weaving where two bands of colors meet but do not join creating a slit in the fabric (6).

Manta: Spanish word for a large shawl.

Propina: Spanish word for a voluntary gift of money for service (5).

Pullo: Small square-shaped shawl worn by women in Peru.

Quechua: Language spoken by the Quechua people in Peru.

Quipu: Ancient Peruvian system used to keep records by tying knots.

Scaffold weft: Used in constructing fabrics of discontinuous warp and weft. The scaffolding yarns were withdrawn and the pieces of fabric later joined by replacing the withdrawn wefts to create a solid fabric (6).
Taller: Spanish word for workshop or atelier (5).

Twining: The turning of groups of two or more elements of the same set about each other to enclose successive elements of the opposite set (6).

Unku: Loom-shaped garment worn on the upper half of the body in pre-Columbian Peru.
APPENDIX B: PERSONS INTERVIEWED


Magdalena de Monzarz: The Ministry of Industry and Tourism, Lima.

Bernardo Luck: Folk craft shop owner and exporter, Lima.

Francisca Mayer: Weaver, owner and director of the Taller F. Mayer, Huancayo.

James Plunkett: Exporter of folk craft, Lima.

Pedro Rojas: Director of the artisan division, Ministry of Industry and Tourism, Lima.

Edourd Versteylen: Director of Conservation, National Museum of Anthropology and Archeology, Lima.


Roberto Vizurraga: Representative of the Artisan Cooperative of Puno, Lima.

James Vreeland: Director of the Julio C. Tello Project, Lima.