Interdisciplinary Contributions to Archaeology

The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians

Edited by

Richard J. Chacon and David H. Dye

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The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians

Edited by

RICHARD J. CHACON
Winthrop University
Rock Hill, South Carolina, USA

and

DAVID H. DYE
University of Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee, USA

Springer

Richard J. Chacon
Department of Sociology
and Anthropology
Winthrop University
Rock Hill, South Carolina, 29733, USA
E-mail: chaconr@winthrop.edu

David H. Dye
Department of Earth Sciences
University of Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee 38152, USA
E-mail: daviddye@memphis.edu

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To the memory of the late James Petersen (1954–2005).

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RICHARD J. CHACON

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DAVID H. DYE

Contributors

Carrie Anne Berryman is a Ph.D candidate in anthropology at Vanderbilt University and a visiting instructor at the University of the South, Sewanee. She has conducted bioarchaeological research in Guatemala, Honduras, Bolivia, Jordan, Greece, and the Southeastern U.S. Her research interests include New World bioarchaeology and the rise of socio-political complexity among Pre-Columbian societies of Latin America. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, VU Station B #356050, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235, carrie.a.berryman@vanderbilt.edu

William Billeck is the Director of the Repatriation Office at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. He specializes in archaeology and ethnohistory in the Great Plains and Midwest with an emphasis on the protohistoric and historic period and glass trade bead research. *Contact information*: Repatriation Office, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, PO Box 37012, MRC 138, Washington, DC 20013-7012, billeckb@si.edu

James Brown is a Professor of Anthropology at Northwestern University with field experience in Eastern Woodlands archaeology from the Archaic to Historic Periods. Current focus is on Cahokia site archaeology and the social and religious interpretation of pre-contact material culture history with particular attention to the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. Interests also include comparative mortuary studies and the evolution of cultural complexity. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60208, jabrown@northwestern.edu

Karin Bruwelheide is a Physical Anthropologist at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. She is a practicing forensic anthropologist. Her

basic research is focused on human skeletons from the Great Plains and African and European skeletal remains from the Mid-Atlantic region. *Contact information*: National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, NMNH, MRC 112, Washington, DC 20013-7012, bruwelka@si.edu

Laurie Burgess is a historical archaeologist at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. Her research centers on the material culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a research emphasis on glass trade beads in North America. *Contact information*: National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, NMNH, MRC 112, Washington, DC 20013-7012, burgessl@si.edu.

Richard John Chacon is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Winthrop University. He has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Amazonia among the Yanomamo of Venezuela, the Yora of Peru, and the Achuar (Shiwiar) of Ecuador. He has also worked in the Andes with the Otavalo and Cotacachi Indians of Highland Ecuador. His research interests include optimal foraging theory, indigenous subsistence strategies, warfare, belief systems, the evolution of complex societies, ethnohistory, and the effects of globalization on indigenous peoples. *Contact information*: Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC 29733, chaconr@winthrop.edu

John Crock is an Assistant Professor of Authropology at the University of Vermont and the Director of the UVM Consulting Archaeology Program. He has conducted archaeological excavations in Northeastern North America and on several islands in the eastern Caribbean. His research interests include trade and exchange, maritime adaptations, and the development of chiefdoms. *Contact information:* 111 Delehanty Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405, John.Crock@uvm.edu

Arthur Demarest is a Professor of Anthropology at Vanderbilt University. He has conducted archaeological fieldwork in El Salvador and Guatemala for over 25 years. His research interests include the archaeology and cultural evolution of Mesoamerica and South America. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, VU Station # 356050, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235, arthur.a.demarest@vanderbilt.edu; arthurdemarest@hotmail.com; arthurdemarest@gmail.com; vilmaanleu@gmail.com

David H. Dye is an Associate Professor of Archaeology in the Earth Sciences Department at the University of Memphis. He has conduced archaeological research throughout the Southeastern US. His research interests include the archaeology and ethnohistory of the Midsouth. He has had a long-term interest in late prehistoric warfare, ritual, and iconography in the Eastern Woodlands. *Contact*

information: Department of Earth Sciences, 1 Johnson Hall, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152, daviddye@memphis.edu

Alberto Esquit-Choy is a Ph.D candidate at Vanderbilt University. He is a Kaqchikel Maya who has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Guatemala. His research interests include the Maya movement in Guatemala, political and social movements, and applied anthropology. *Contact information*: 2a. Calle 7-23, Zona 1 Patzicia, Depto. Chimaltenango, Guatemala. ae7420@yahoo.com

John W. Hoopes is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Kansas. He has conducted archaeological fieldwork in eastern, northwestern, and southeastern Costa Rica. His research interests include ceramic analysis, human ecology, iconography, and the evolution of Precolumbian complex societies in Latin America. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, University of Kansas, Fraser Hall, Rm. 622, 1415 Jayhawk Blvd., Lawrence KS 66049-7556, hoopes@ku.edu

Keith Jacobi is an Associate Professor of Anthropology and Curator of Human Osteology at the Alabama Museum of Natural History at The University of Alabama. He has conducted bioarchaeological research in the Midwestern, Southwestern, and Southeastern US as well as in the Caribbean, Belize, and Peru. He continues to be a forensic consultant for the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences. His research interests include the health of prehistoric and historic groups. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, P. O. Box 870210, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0210, kjacobi@tenhoor.as.ua.edu

Patricia Lambert is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Utah State University. She has conducted bioarchaeological research in several regions of North America and in north coastal Peru. Her research interests include New World bioarchaeology, prehistoric warfare, and paleopathology. *Contact information*: Anthropology Program, UMC 0730, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-0730, Plambert@hass.usu.edu

Joan Lovisek is a Consulting Anthropologist specialized in the application of ethnohistorical method to ethnographic and archaeological data. As Principal of Lovisek Research, based in British Columbia Canada, she provides Treaty and Aboriginal rights research on various ethnohistorical issues involving the First Nations of Canada. *Contact information*: Lovisek Research, 14965 25A Avenue, Surrey, BC, Canada, V4P 1N7, lovisek@telus.net

Herbert Maschner is Anthropology Research Professor at Idaho State University. He has conducted archaeological and anthropological research throughout the

North Pacific and western Arctic regions. His research interests include complex systems, Darwinian Theory, complex foragers, Geographic Information Systems, and the anthropology of war. Most recently he has been involved in the development of applied archaeology in relation to fisheries policy and management. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, Idaho State University, 921 S. 8th Ave., Stop 8005, Pocatello, ID 83209-8005, maschner@isu.edu

Marcela Mendoza is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Oregon. She has conducted ethnographic fieldwork among the Western Toba of Argentina, and her research interests include the socioeconomic organization of lowland South American indigenous peoples. *Contact information*: University of Oregon, Department of Anthropology, 372 Condon Hall, Eugene, OR 97403, mmendoza@uoregon.edu

Rubén G. Mendoza is Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences at California State University, Monterey Bay. He has conducted archaeological excavations in California, Colorado, Arizona, and in Guanajuato and Puebla, Mexico. His research interests include Mesoamerican and South American civilizations; and Hispanic, Native American, and mestizo traditional technologies; and material cultures of the US Southwest. He currently serves as the Director for the California State University, Monterey Bay's Institute for Archaeological Science, Technology, and Visualization. *Contact information*: Institute for Archaeological Science, Technology and Visualization, California State University, Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Seaside, California 93955-8001, rmendoza.csumb@gmail.com, ruben_mendoza@csumb.edu

Robert Mensforth is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Cleveland State University. He has conducted bioarchaeological research on skeletal material from eastern North America. His research interests include the Archaic Period, and human and nonhuman skeletal biology, hominid paleontology, primate behavior, forensic anthropology, paleodemography, paleoepidemiology, medical anthropology, and human gross anatomy. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, CB 119, Cleveland State University, 2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115, r.mensforth@csuohio.edu

Dennis Ogburn is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (as of Fall 2007). He has conducted archaeological excavations and surveys in Ecuador, Peru, and the western US. His research interests include the Inca Empire in Andean South America, Geographic Information Systems, geochemical sourcing, remote sensing, and ethnohistory. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001, matallama@yahoo.com

Douglas Owsley is the Division Head for Physical Anthropology at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. He has conducted bioarchaeological investigations in the Plains and the eastern US. His research interests include historic and prehistoric populations of North America, paleodemography, skeletal and dental pathology, and forensic anthropology. *Contact information*: National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, NMNH, MRC 112, Washington, DC 20013-7012, owsleyd@si.edu

The late James Petersen served as Chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Vermont. He conducted archaeological excavations in northeastern North America, the Caribbean, and Amazonia. His research interests included material culture, style and ethnicity, among various other aspects of Pre-Columbian and historic occupation of the Western Hemisphere.

Katherine Reedy-Maschner is an Affiliate Research Assistant Professor and part-time lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at Idaho State University. She has conducted ethnographic research among the Aleut of southwestern Alaska and the eastern Aleutian Islands. Her research interests include social organization, kinship, indigenous identities, fisheries, status competition, and local-global interactions. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, Idaho State University, 921 S. 8th Ave., Stop 8005, Pocatello, ID 83209-8005, reedkath@isu.edu

Nancy Ross-Stallings is a Senior Archaeologist/Biological Anthropologist at AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc., an environmental consulting firm located in Louisville, Kentucky. She also is an Affiliated Scholar in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. She has conducted excavations at prehistoric and historic sites throughout the Central, Midwestern, Eastern, and Southeastern portions of North America. Her research interests include forensic anthropology, human osteology, pathology, trauma, and faunal analysis. *Contact information*: AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc., 690 Commonwealth Center, 11003 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky 40299, Nancy.Ross-Stallings@amec.com

Polly Schaafsma is an Archaeologist at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology of the Museum of New Mexico. She has conducted excavations and surveys throughout Southwestern North America. Her research interests include rock art and belief systems along with documenting the presence of Mesoamerican influence in the Southwest. *Contact information*: 38 Bonanza Creek Road, Santa Fe, NM 87508, shingo3@AOL.com

Mark Seeman is a Professor of Anthropology at Kent State University. He has conducted archaeological excavations throughout Eastern North America. His research interests include Hopwellian society, human ecology, exchange, and style. *Contact information*: Anthropology Department, 215 Lowry Hall, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242, mseeman@kent.edu

Tiffiny Tung is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Vanderbilt University. She has conducted bioarchaeological research in the Peruvian Andes, Southeastern US, and the Eastern Mediterranean. Her primary research focuses on reconstructing patterns of morbidity and mortality among Andean populations in the Wari Empire to illuminate the biological and social effects of ancient imperialism. Her studies are particularly focused on violent trauma in all its forms. *Contact information*: Department of Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, VU Station B #356050, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235, t.tung@vanderbilt.edu

Ron Williamson is the President and Chief Archaeologist of Archaeological Services Inc., a cultural resource management firm based in Toronto, Ontario. He has directed numerous archaeological assessments, excavations, and planning projects throughout northeastern Canada, many of which have focused on Iroquoian archaeology. *Contact information*: 528 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2P9, Canada, rwilliamson@archaeologicalservices.on.ca

William Woodworth is a Mohawk Traditionalist from Six Nations of the Grand River, Canada. He has a Doctorate in Traditional Knowledge and a professional degree in architecture. His research interests include the integration of native traditions into modern cultural practices. In addition to his work as an architect, he does interpretive work and ceremonial teaching and consulting for cultural resource management projects. He is the Founder and Director of a nonprofit foundation, Beacon to the Ancestors, which is facilitating the design and construction of a sacred ceremonial site on the ancient shore of Lake Ontario in Toronto. This will be the setting for local native peoples to once again assume their traditional duties as hosts of their homeland. *Contact information*: 165 Bathrust Street, Studio 212, Toronto, Ontario M54V 3C2, Canada, thambos@rogers.com

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Part I

North America

Introduction

William Woodworth

The recovery and recounting of the visceral practices of our ancestors and my native relations on Turtle Island [North America] can inspire the same apprehension invoked among the waves of European immigrants, who often came here to escape the oppressive tactics of their own relations back home. The cultural constructs of indigenous peoples arise naturally out of an understanding that we share our environment with all things. Our bodies are no different than other bodies. This contrasts with other spiritual doctrines which hold the human body sacred. The evidence and scope of the excellent archaeological research reported in these papers could serve to reinforce this chasm unless we can find the larger context which reconciles them.

I am a Mohawk *Ganenigehageh* descended from a great warrior culture. As an indigenous researcher, I am required to speak from the culturally specific place held in my own body and mind. However I observe many similarities between our Iroquoian, or more properly *Hotinonshonni* [people who build the long house], ways and those of the other North American native cultures reported here. *Hotinonshonni* are the keepers of a great political legacy which defines our place in the indigenous cultural ecology of Turtle Island. That is the perspective from which I will reflect on what many would consider practices of atrocity.

The conduct of *Hotinonshonni* people has been continuously moderated by forces which define us in Creation, namely the birth of male twins who facilitated the realm which we continue to inhabit. Maple Sapling *Teharonhiawakhon* [holder of the sky] created expressions of order, peace, and good. His brother Flint *Tawiskeron* held a competitive and jealous bent counter-creating his twin brother with things of a darker nature. Finally, they engaged in a bloody struggle which ended in the dominance of *Teharonhiawakhon*. In our periodic recounting of these events we are reminded that this world is a navigation among counter forces which require

constant vigilance. This struggle is played out in the story of the people over time. We are living out a constant cyclic transformation among conflicted forces.

In time we *Ganenigehageh* joined in the democratic confederation of Five Nations in which the waves of refugee immigrants from Europe found us five hundred and more years ago. The great story of the founding of this confederation is embodied in the nine day recitation of what is called The Great Law *Gaianerengowah*, or the story of the coming of a spiritual messenger almost a thousand years ago. The Peacemaker *Deganawidah* [a name usually spoken only in the sacred space of ceremony] found my ancestors corrupted from the ways of the Good Mind which *Teharonhiawakhon* oversaw. At this time forms of "human trophy taking" and cannibalism were rampant practices among our men. With the assistance of Hiawatha *Aionhwathah*, *Deganawidah* facilitated our clan system, transferred authority to the women, and defined the protocols of consensus building in a circle of fifty male chiefs gathered in a circle around at the base the Great White Pine Tree *Skaronhehsegowah*. We abandoned violent practices in favor of forms peace, until the arrival of aggressive colonization, and our need to defend our people and homelands. Once again forms of "human trophy taking" dominated our reputation as warriors. As our contemporary fate has settled over us, we have assumed a relatively peaceful yet restless place in the conquest.

Among *Hotinonshonni* people, for whom I can speak, our actions have always been characterized by a certain grace and respectful conduct even in our most violent practices. The evidence of atrocity cannot begin to convey the nature of the encounters, the practices of ceremony, and sacred preparations which were often an integral part of most visceral practices. The violence the evidence presented in these papers represents should be no more unsettling, and probably less shocking, than contemporary practices which fill current media among all peoples of the Mother Earth. We understand this to be in the nature of Creation and the cyclic transformative processes which are a part of all our existences at this time.

Onen.

William Woodworth, Ph.D.
Mohawk Traditionalist

Chapter 1

Introduction to Human Trophy Taking

An Ancient and Widespread Practice

Richard J. Chacon and David H. Dye

The Amerindian practice of taking and displaying various human body parts as trophies has long held the imaginations of both the public and scholars alike. Sensationalized accounts of such practices recorded by various New World explorers frequently shocked Old World sensibilities and often served to reinforce Eurocentric notions of superiority over the indigenous "Other." Rather than following this colonialist tradition of denigrating indigenous customs and belief systems, this book seeks to respectfully and dispassionately shed light on why such behaviors occurred in the Americas.

It is remarkable that until the present volume there was only one other scholarly work that specifically addressed the topic of human trophy taking on a continent-wide basis.[1] Our collective analysis of the archaeological, ethnohistorical, osteological, and ethnographic evidence in this book clearly indicates that not only is human trophy taking of great antiquity in the western hemisphere (dating back to the Archaic Period), but it also appears to have been widespread in every major culture area of the Americas (except for Patagonia, which has not provided any evidence of human trophy taking).

It would be naïve in this context to propose a single or even primary cause or set of variables that underlie human trophy taking among indigenous peoples (Hoskins 1996). Theoretical discussions of indigenous warfare and ritual behaviors often associated with fighting (such as human trophy taking), necessarily require consideration of the region's tremendous ecological and cultural diversity. Similarly, we must acknowledge that human motivations for taking trophies in any one context may vary dramatically and or change accordingly through time.

Rather than promoting any one explanation, we collectively investigate the evidence for these practices in each of the culture areas of the New World (except for Patagonia) on a case-by-case basis. We believe that this approach illuminates the causes and consequences of human trophy taking for the case studies that are scrutinized.

Because this is an effort to provide scholars with a reference source documenting the various reported reasons for trophy taking in the hemisphere, we do not restrict ourselves to a single theory. Notwithstanding this self-imposed limitation, we nevertheless believe this effort will serve as a stimulus for further research centered on theory building and the quest for causal variables underlying the practice of trophy taking. It is important to note that this book focuses primarily on the warfare-related motivations associated with trophy taking. In this study, trophies are defined as severed body parts obtained from fallen enemies which are then curated. An in-depth analysis of the curation, exhibition, and veneration of severed body parts taken from beloved ancestors (i.e., ancestor cults) is beyond the scope of this volume.

In the course of conducting research for a manuscript entitled "Scalplocks, Forearms, and Severed Heads: War Trophy Behavior in the Mid-Continent" (n.d.), David Dye recognized the need for a synthesis of available information on Amerindian trophy taking.

This consideration was at the heart of efforts by Chacon and Dye to bring together a distinguished cohort of scholars for a symposium entitled "The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts by Amerindians" at the 2004 annual meeting of the Society of American Archaeology held in Montreal, Québec. [2] The prime objective was to document the antiquity and widespread indigenous practice of human trophy taking as well as seeking to understand why it was done. This led to organizing the present volume.

Our subsequent call for contributions to the edited volume was so successful that it became necessary to increase the number of participants to include those who (due to limited space and time) were excluded from presenting papers at the conference.

A EUROPEAN INTRODUCTION?

Deloria's (1969) claim that scalping was not a traditional Amerindian practice has been vitiated by data reported in various publications. In actuality, the earliest evidence for scalping in the Americas comes from precontact sites possibly as early as ~485 BC (Owsley and Berryman 1975; Miller 1994). This, along with other findings put forth by France (1988), Hamperi and Laughlin (1959), Hoyme and Bass (1962), Lothrop (1954), Merbs and Birkby (1985), Neiburger (1989), Neuman (1940), Owsley (1994), Snow (1941, 1942), Willey (1982, 1990), and Willey and Bass (1978), provides evidence that human trophy taking was practiced by Amerindians long before the arrival of Europeans.

AMERINDIAN HUMAN TROPHY TAKING

The removal of heads, scalps, eyes, ears, teeth, cheekbones, mandibles, arms, hands, fingers, legs, feet, and sometimes genitalia for use as trophies by Amerindians was an ancient and widespread practice in the New World (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005; Engel 1963; Friederici 1985a; Grinnell 1910; Krech 1979; Le Barre 1984; Métraux 1948; Nadeau 1937; Neumann 1940; Proulx 1971, 1989; Verano 1995). Some groups in Colombia (Redmond 1994) and in the Andes (Rowe 1946) kept the entire skins of dead enemies. Indeed, given the near universality of trophy taking throughout human history (see Walker 2000), it truly would have been unusual if New World peoples had not engaged in such widespread activities. Therefore, the data presented here serves to illuminate and confirm the commonality of human experience rather than to denigrate any particular group.

There were many reasons for severing, preserving, and exhibiting the body parts of enemies (see chapters 22 and 23 in this book for an overview). Therefore, we argue that only a careful analysis of the data on a case-by-case basis offers the possibility of understanding why these aboriginal practices took place.

Ethnohistorical reports of human trophy taking in the Americas date back to early contact with Europeans such as when Francisco de Garay recorded the taking of scalps during his ill-fated 1520 expedition to the Rio Pánuco region of Mexico (Friederici 1985a; Garay 2002). Jacques Cartier recorded a slightly more detailed account regarding human trophy taking in northeastern North America as he traveled along the St. Lawrence River at a time (1535) when the region was largely unaffected by Western contact (Friederici 1985a). Among the Hochelaga of Montreal, he reported seeing "the skins of five men's heads, stretched on hoops, like parchment" (Biggar 1924:177). Members of the Hernando de Soto expedition recorded scalping by the Apalachee in the summer of 1540 by noting that "scalps were what they most prized to display at the end of the bow with which they fought" (Vega 1993:252). Furthermore, this expedition experienced the practice of human trophy taking first-hand when one of its men suffered the ignominy of becoming the first recorded European to be scalped by an Amerindian (Friederici 1985a). In the early 1540s, Cabeza de Vaca also reported human trophy taking among indigenous South Americans (Friederici 1985a).

In 1560, the Luna expedition found scalps attached to a center pole in a Napochie town (Hudson 1988). In 1564, Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues described his first-hand observations of Timucua raids in northeastern Florida. On returning to the village, the warriors placed the enemies' legs, arms, and scalps "with solemn formalities . . . on tall poles set in the ground in a row" for a subsequent ritual (Le Moyne 1875:6-7). They sang praises to the sun, to which they attributed their victory (Laudonnière 2001). In 1603, Samuel de Champlain was invited to a victory feast where the Montagnais danced with the scalps taken from their Iroquois enemies, and in 1609 he personally witnessed the capture, torture, and subsequent scalping of enemies (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980; Friederici 1985a).

Lastly, in 1628, Zuni Puebloans revolted against the Spanish killing and mutilating the bodies of two Spanish friars with ceremonial dances being performed over the scalps of the clerics (Reese 1940).

NON-AMERINDIAN DISPLAY OF HUMAN BODY PARTS

The indigenous peoples of the Americas were by no means the inventors of the practice of the taking and displaying disarticulated human body parts, nor did they hold a monopoly on this custom. Modification, use, and public exhibition of severed sections of human anatomy have been longstanding traditions throughout the Old World beginning as far back as possibly the Pleistocene, through the Middle Ages, and continuing into the modern era. This chapter provides a brief overview of the display of disarticulated human body parts by non-Indians both through time and by geographical location.[3]

Possibly, the earliest known example of this practice can be found in the 600,000-year old Bodo cranium from Ethiopia (Conroy et al. 2000). This Middle Pleistocene skull exhibits signs of postmortem defleshing that are consistent with scalping (Tattersall 1995). The Paleolithic Ethiopian site of Middle Awash (160,000–154,000 years old) yielded fossilized human crania manifesting signs of some type of mortuary treatment and curation after death (Clark et al. 2003). Another ancient site is the extraordinarily rich Upper Paleolithic double child burial dating back to ~22,000 BC that was found in Asia (200 km from Moscow). Among various sumptuary goods, an adult human femur shaft had been filled with ocher and had been placed adjacent to the left side of one of the deceased (Formicola and Buzhilova 2004).

More evidence for this ancient practice comes from the Paleolithic site of Grotte du Placard in France where human skull caps were thought to have been used for drinking (Le Barre 1984). Similar skull caps dating from this same time period have been recovered at sites from northern Spain to Moravia (Le Barre 1984). There is one case of possible scalping from another Old World site yielding an Aurignacian skull (ca. 36,000–27,000 years old) which shows cut marks on the frontal portion of the crania similar to those marks found on the skulls of documented scalp victims (Keeley 1996).

Another ancient site yielding disarticulated human body parts is located at Grosse Ofnet in Germany and dates to the Mesolithic Period ca. 7000 years ago. At this location, two caches of 34 human skulls were recovered with most showing signs of violent trauma (Frayer 1997; Keeley 1996). At the Neolithic site of Jericho, Palestine (ca. 6000 BC), a human skull had a naturalistic face modeled out of clay applied to it for reasons unknown (Piggot 1965). Another possible case for the taking and exhibiting of human body parts occurs at the site of Dryholmen Bog in Denmark (ca. 4500 BC) where the remains of several individuals were recovered with signs indicative of scalping such as cut marks on the frontal bone of the cranial vault (Murphy et al. 2002). Five Neolithic crania (ca. 4000 BC) revealing cut marks

commensurate with scalping were found in the Hebei and Henan Provinces of China (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005). Another Neolithic skull (ca. 3000 BC) was recovered from the site of Alvastra in Sweden. The disarticulated cranium, possibly a trophy head, exhibited various cuts resembling scalp marks on the frontal bone (During and Nilsson 1991). Additional human skull caps that were converted into drinking cups were recovered from various French and Swiss sites from the Neolithic (Le Barre 1984).

A number of remains dating from the Bronze Age through the Iron Age have been recovered throughout Eurasia bearing cut marks that have been interpreted as evidence of scalping (Murphy et al. 2002). An Early Bronze Age (ca. 3000 BC) site called Bab-edh-Dhra in Jordan yielded a skull displaying signs of scalping with subsequent healing after the trauma.

The ancient Egyptians were also known to mutilate their enemies and to exhibit the separated body parts. Two rows of decapitated individuals, with their severed heads tucked between their legs, are depicted on the reverse side of the famous Palette of Narmer which dates back to ca. 3000 BC (Stokstad 2002). Ramses III (XX Dynasty) who lived from 1186 to 1154 BC commemorated a military victory by commissioning a carved relief depicting the piles of severed hands and phalli of his defeated enemies to be displayed at his Mortuary Temple Complex in Medinet Habu near Luxor, Egypt (Partridge 2002).

The earliest Biblical reference to a similar practice, which the Israelites conducted against their Philistine enemies, can be found in the following event recorded in the Old Testament. Sometime in the period 1085–1015 BC, "Saul commanded them to say this to David, 'The king desires no other price for the bride than the foreskins of one hundred Philistines, that he may thus take vengeance on his enemies'" (1 Samuel 18:25).[4] Consequently, "David made preparations and sallied forth with his men and slew two hundred Philistines. He brought back their foreskins and counted them out before the king, that he might thus become the king's son-in-law" (1 Samuel 18:27). Prior to these activities recorded above, a young David defeated Goliath and "... he took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem" (1 Samuel 18:54).

An Assyrian ruler named Assurnasirpal II (who ruled 883–859 BC) responded to a rebellion in the Aramean community at Bit-Kalupe on the Euphrates River, firstly, by looting the settlement, secondly, by cutting off the legs of the military leaders involved in the uprising, and thirdly, by flaying local nobles and displaying their stretched skins over a large scaffold to serve as a warning (Gilmore 1954; Stokstad 2002). Another Assyrian king named Assurbanipal who ruled 669–627 BC decorated his palace at Nineveh with artwork depicting the head of a vanquished Elamite king hanging upside down from a tree (Saggs 1984; Stokstad 2002).

During the fifth century BC, the Greek historian Herodotus graphically detailed how central Asian Scythian warriors sought and preserved human trophies. "The Scythian warrior must bring the king the heads of all those he had killed in battle.... A cut is made in the head near the ears, and then the head is taken by the hair and shaken out of the skin" (Herodotus, cited in Borodovsky and

Tabarev 2005:87). They then proceeded to remove the skin from these heads, thus creating fleshy "handkerchiefs." These handkerchiefs were then hung on the bridles of horses belonging to warriors as symbols of their victory in war. Herodotus goes on to report that drinking cups were fashioned from the remaining skulls (Burton 1864; Murphy et al. 2002). Indeed, archaeological excavations conducted in southern Siberia have confirmed that the Iron Age Scythians engaged in scalping (Murphy et al. 2002). Moreover, recent findings indicate that scalping in western Siberia was an ancient practice dating back to 780 BC (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005).

Remarkably, there is a report of the persistence of scalping by some traditional peoples of western Siberia continuing through the early 1930s. The case involved an ethnic conflict between the Khanty-Ugry people and some Soviet representatives. Several communists were killed and subsequently scalped by the tribe (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005; Golovnev 1995; Tabarev, personal communication 2005).

Further references to trophy taking can be found in the deuterocanonical books of the Bible. The Book of Judith relates how Nebuchadnezzar II (who reigned 605–562 BC) dispatched his general Holofernes to subdue the Jews who were besieged at Bethulia. So as to avert a surrender, and after having fasted and prayed, a beguiling Jewish widow named Judith (who was quite beautiful) ingratiated herself with the Assyrian general and subsequently decapitated the military leader. Upon hearing of the death of Holofernes, the Assyrians panicked and were easily defeated by Jewish forces. This Biblical account is as follows: "Judith was left alone in the tent with Holofernes, who lay prostrate in his bed for he was sodden with wine. She had ordered her maid to stand outside the bedroom and wait . . . . She went to the bedpost near the head of Holofernes and taking his sword from it, drew close to the bed, grasped the hair of his head and said, 'Strengthen me this day, O God of Israel!' Then with all her might she struck him twice in the neck and cut off his head . . . . Soon afterward, she came out and handed over the head to her maid, who put it in her food pouch" (Judith 13:2-3,6-7). Upon their return to Bethulia, Judith took the head out of the pouch, showed it to them and said, "Here is the head of Holofernes, general in charge of the Assyrian army" (Judith 13:15). "Then Judith said to them, 'Listen to me brothers, take this head and hang it on the parapet of your wall'" (Judith 14:1) and upon realizing what had transpired "those [Assyrians] still in their tents were amazed and overcome with fear and trembling. No one kept ranks any longer; scattered in all directions and fled along every road . . . . Then all the Israelite warriors overwhelmed them" (Judith 15:1-2).

Another deuterocanonical example of trophy taking involves second-century BC Israelites and how they avenged their Seleucid persecutors: "Then the Jews collected the spoils and booty; they cut off the head of Nicanor [a Seleucid general] and his arm, which he had lifted up so arrogantly. These they brought to Jerusalem and displayed there" (1 Maccabees 7:47). Scalping is also mentioned in the Old Testament as the following reference describes the tortures inflicted

on second-century BC Jewish captives: "At that the king [the Seleucid Antiochus Epiphanes], in a fury, gave orders to have pans and cauldrons heated . . . . He commanded his executioners to cut out the tongue of the one who had spoken for the others, to scalp him and cut off his hands and feet, while the rest of his brothers and mother looked on" (2 Maccabees 7:3-4).

It has also been reported that some Jewish and other Semitic groups were known to take and keep human heads in the belief that these body parts could prophesy (Onians 1973). However, the most infamous Biblical example of the display of a severed body part is found in the New Testament: After being delighted by a dance performed by Herodia's daughter, Herod said to the girl, "Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you" (Mark 6:22). After consulting with her mother, the girl replied, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist" (Mark 6:24). Herod then, "promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother" (Mark 6:27-28).

The Celts (~800 BC to the first century AD) had established communities from Ireland to the Middle East at the hieght of their expansion. The severed head appears to have had great significance as disarticulated crania have been recovered throughout the Celtic temporal and spatial regions. These large-scale trophy takers were known to attach the heads of vanquished foes to the necks of their horses (Le Barre 1984; Fairgrove 1997). The Celts sometimes took the heads of the slain and placed them on their houses so as to receive protection from their enemy's ghosts (Onians 1973). In 216 BC, a Roman General named Postimius met his end at the hands of the Celts who decapitated him and triumphantly carried their prize to their most sacred temple. They then fashioned the victim's crania into a sacred drinking vessel by gilding the skull, which thereafter was employed by priests and temple attendants. The Celts would embalm the heads of their most distinguished enemies using cedar oil so as to preserve them for celebratory displays (Le Barre 1984; Fairgrove 1997). Perhaps one of the best-known examples of the exhibition of human body parts by Celtic peoples is found at the great stone shrine at Roquepertuse in France. At this location, niches were built into the walls in order to display human skulls (several crania remain in place). This sanctuary was eventually destroyed by the Romans in the late second century (Le Barre 1984). Additional evidence of the Celtic trophy head cult can be found at a second-century AD hill fort at Entremont, France, where a stone pillar was found with numerous severed human heads carved into it (Piggot 1965).

At the Karlstein site in Germany, skulls dating to the time of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (AD 117–138) were found with signs of having been subjected to trauma along with telltale scalp marks on the frontal bone (Murphy et al. 2002) and Roman coins have been recovered depicting Celtic warriors brandishing severed heads (Sear 1998). Human crania were sometimes used by the Romans for drinking. One skull cap recovered at Pompeii had been mounted in precious metals with the following inscription in Greek: "Drink and you shall live for many

years" (Le Barre 1984:23). However, the most infamous act of trophy taking was committed by Emperor Nero against the Christians (as scapegoats) in response to the great fire of AD 67 at Rome: "Nero substituted as culprits, and punished with the utmost refinements of cruelty, a class of men . . . whom the crowd styled Christians . . . . First, then, the confessed members of the sect were arrested; next, on the disclosures, vast numbers were convicted . . . and derision accompanied their end; they were covered with wild beasts' skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and, when daylight failed, were burned to serve as lamps by night" (Tacitus, cited in Bennet 2002:74).

The first example of early Christians carefully preserving and publicly revering the remains of individuals who had been martyred for their faith during the various Roman persecutions dates from ca. AD 110: "Thus did the pagans cast him to the wild beasts . . . so that the desire of the holy martyr Ignatius be fulfilled. For only the harder portions of his holy remains were left, which were conveyed to Antioch and wrapped in linen, as an inestimable treasure left to the holy Church by the grace which was in the martyr" (Eusebius, quoted in Bennet 2002:149).

The Early Church practice of exhibiting the physical remains of individuals considered to be saints continues to this very day among many Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians (Bennet 2002; Cruz 1991). In fact, Ignatius' few remaining bones are venerated by pilgrims at the Basilica of St. Clement in Rome where his relics have lain since AD 637 (O'Connor 2004).

The significance associated with the physical remains of deceased individuals considered to have led holy lives can be seen in the following incident that took place in November of 2004. In a gesture of goodwill, the Vatican returned the relics of St. John Chrysostom (which had been taken to Rome by monks in the eighth century to escape destruction by iconoclasts) along with those of St. Gregory Nazianzen (whose remains probably came to Rome at the time of the Latin rule of Constantinople, ca. 1204–1258). The relics were returned to the St. George Orthodox Cathedral in Istanbul (Helicke 2004; Polk 2004; Simpson 2004).

Scalping was a "rite in the ancient Germanic code of the Visigoths (fourth and fifth centuries), where the *decalvare* of the enemy is reported as *capillos et cutem detrhere*" (Reese 1940:7). The Byzantine general Belisarius (ca. AD 505–565) reported the practice of scalping during his military campaigns against the Vandals and Ostrogoths (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005). In Flodard of Rheims' (AD 812–866) archival collections, Anglo-Saxons as well as the Francs are reported to have scalped their enemies. These documents provide the last historical references to European scalping (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980; Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005; Burton 1864; Miller 1994; Neiburger 1989; Owsley 1994).

While the practice of scalping apparently disappears from Europe at this time, the taking and displaying of human heads continued. Medieval Christians not only executed criminals. but they also set the severed heads on stakes to serve as a deterrent. Some European rulers fashioned receptacles from the crania of defeated enemies. For example, in AD 880, Prince Krom of Bulgaria commissioned

that a drinking cup be made from the skull of his former rival, the Byzantine Emperor Nicephoros II (Le Barre 1984).

There is ample documentation of trophy taking by both Christian and Muslim forces during the Crusades, as the following example illustrates: A particularly brave Frenchman belonging to the Military Order of the Knights Templar named Jakelin Mailly was killed by a Muslim raiding party in Galilee in 1187. Mailly's exceptional courage in battle was noticed by his adversaries as one chronicler wrote, "Such a great number of Turks had rushed in to attack, and this one man [Mailly] had fought for so long against so many battalions, that the [agricultural] field in which they stood was completely reduced to dust and there was not a trace of the crop to be seen. It is said that there were some who sprinkled the body of the dead man with dust and placed dust on their heads, believing that they would draw courage from the contact . . . . In fact, rumor has it that one person was moved with more fervor than the rest. He cut off the man's genitals, and kept them safe for begetting children so that even when dead the man's members—if such a thing were possible—would produce an heir with courage as great as his" (Tyerman 2004:2).

The Scottish patriot William Wallace was captured and horribly executed by the English in 1305. He was first hung, then drawn and quartered with his head eventually being placed on a spike on the London Bridge with his severed limbs being displayed separately in various localities throughout England (Wallace 2003). The practice of displaying heads on the London Bridge would continue for the next 355 years with many heads being dipped in tar so as to preserve them from the elements. The exhibition of severed heads on the London Bridge would come to an end following the restoration of King Charles II (London 2003). During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603), English military officers employed the public display of severed heads to subdue the Irish population. The paths leading to the tents of military commanders would be lined with the skulls of Irishmen (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980). In this manner did English authorities employ the display of body parts as a means of terrorizing the Irish.

Trophy taking among the English continued into the Victorian era as the following recorded incident illustrates: "A serving wench is wronged by the son of the house, then driven away pregnant as a fallen woman. Forced to work on the streets, years later she becomes the madam of a brothel. One day, who should walk in but her ex-lover. She kills him, cuts off his head, and has the skull set in silver. Every night she drinks wine out of it. It makes the taste sweeter" (Barley 1995:215) [5].

In the 1680s, Europeans traveling in the West African kingdom of Whydah reported that the great majority of prisoners taken in battle were left in the hands of their captors and the heads brought back as trophies remained in the possession of those who took them. There were also reports that thieves were punished by decapitation and by having their genitalia removed. Both the head and private parts of the criminal were brought to the king's palace where the thief's relatives could pay a fine in order to redeem the severed body parts (Law 1989, 1992).

In the Dahomian Kingdom (ca. 1720s), captured enemies were decapitated as part of a ceremonial offering designed to honor royal ancestors. The disarticulated heads resulting from these public sacrifices were regularly preserved for display. Moreover, as late as the 1840s, the bones of enemies, considered to be a source of great wealth for rulers, were sometimes incorporated into the architecture of royal palaces (Law 1989). In 1845–1846, the dried scalps of up to 700 vanquished enemies were publicly exhibited in West Africa as trophies (Burton 1864).

European powers operating in Africa committed countless atrocities against local peoples and in many cases these acts included the taking and displaying of various body parts. In 1885, Belgium's King Leopold II established the Congo Free State with the goal of extracting the region's wild natural rubber by coercing local populations to tap latex. There were severe punishments for those who did not meet their quotas, as Charles Lemaire (a former government official) would later admit after his retirement: "During my time in the Congo, I was the first commissioner of the Equatorial district . . . I wrote to the government, 'To gather rubber in the district . . . one must cut hands'" (Hochscild 1998:165). If a village refused to meet the rubber quota, intransigent individuals would be killed by Leopold's enforcers who severed the right hands of their victims and then presented them to their superiors as tangible proof that the ordered executions had taken place (Hochschild 1998).

A Catholic priest recorded the region's oral history and quotes a man from the area named Tsawambe, who spoke of one particularly cruel European enforcer: "From all the bodies killed in the field, you had to cut off the hands. He wanted to see the number of hands cut off by each soldier, who had to bring them in baskets . . . . A village which refused to provide rubber would be completely swept clean" (Hochschild 1998:166). This is why some military units had what was termed a "keeper of the hands" whose job it was to preserve (smoke) the severed hands (Hochschild 1998). In the late 1800s, a British journalist traveling through the Stanley Falls region visited the post of Captain Leon Com of the Force Publique. There he described the aftermath of a punitive military expedition against a population who had opposed Leopold's rule. "Many women and children, and twenty-one heads were brought to the falls, and have been used by Captain Rom as a decoration round a flower-bed in front of his house!" (Hochschild 1998:145).

The tradition of trophy taking in Africa continued well into the twentieth century. Every Afar tribesman sought external marks of his military prowess, and his victims were castrated to furnish the warrior with tangible proof of his valor. Some contend that warriors wore severed genitalia around their necks while others report that these items were hung within huts (Lewis 1955).

Life among the Balkan Montenegrin tribesmen of the early 1800s was marked by internal blood feuds along with the activities of raiding parties designed to take heads from the neighboring Ottoman Turks. In fact, the Eastern Orthodox Bishop of Montenegro was known to have encouraged military expeditions to take Turkish heads and also to have allowed the public display of such trophies on a

tower in the main monastery in Cetinje (Boehm 1984). The Montenegrins raided for heads, livestock, or women, and would sometimes prod their less bellicose Serbian or Albanian neighbors into rising up and casting off the Ottoman yoke which was not above carrying Christians off into slavery (Boehm 1984). However, "raiding was also pursued as a kind of sport or test of manhood; and after a raid on Moslems, many a Montenegrin youth brought home his first human head to his mother, as a proud mark of manly accomplishment" (Boehm 1984:46). Traditional blood feuding and headhunting in the Balkans continued until the establishment of a confederation in the Montenegrin region in 1841 (Boehm 1984; Otterbein 1994).

European colonials continued trophy taking in the Americas during the nineteenth century. In 1810, Padre Miguel Hidalgo called for Mexican independence and was later decapitated by the Spaniards after a failed revolutionary attempt. His severed head was publicly displayed in a cage for a decade by the colonial authorities as a warning to others who might follow in his footsteps. Today, Hidalgo is considered to be the father of the Mexican independence movement, and so this same skull is now reverently displayed (under glass on red velvet) in a burial vault under the Independence Monument in a place of honor befitting a revolutionary hero (Osmond 1998; Stevenson 1998; Walker 2001). One need look no further than modern-day Russia for similar veneration of the founding father, Vladimir Lenin, who remains on public display despite the fall of the former Soviet Union (Stevenson 1998).

In 1870, a group of Cistercian monks contracted a woodcarver to redecorate the interior of their fourteenth-century chapel (presently located in the Czech town of Sedlec). The craftsman employed over 40,000 disinterred human bones to create truly unique patterns and displays for all to see inside the sanctuary (Kutna 2005; Walker 2000).

It is important to note that Europeans continued the practice of publicly displaying human bodies (and body parts) well into the modern era by actually transporting African "trophies" for display in various museums. Perhaps the most infamous case of European trophy taking involving an African woman named Sarrtje Baartman who, in 1810, was taken to England for exhibition in various side shows. In London, she was paraded about much like an animal in a circus in front of an audience who paid to gawk at her unusual anatomy. Customers who wished to touch her buttocks were charged an additional fee. She was sold to a Parisian animal trainer who occasionally rented her out as entertainment for dinner parties. Upon her death in 1816, Baartman's body was dissected, her bones were defleshed and her skeleton was mounted and placed on display in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturalle in Paris. Her brain and external genitalia were preserved in sealed jars containing embalming fluid and were put on view. Remarkably, the exhibition of her skeletal remains and organs were continued until they were removed from public view in 1974 (Tobias 2002). On May 3, 2002, the French government returned the remains of Sarrtje Baartman to the South African government for proper burial ("Return of Hottentot 2002").

Since 1916, until recently, a dried African "Bushman" had stood holding a shield and spear behind a glass case in the Darder Museum of Banyoles, Spain. Additionally, the flayed skins of two other individuals (probably African) were stretched out, much like parchment, and attached to the walls using the same peg-holes that are often employed to display animal hides. This exhibition remained until the local authorities acquiesced to outside pressure and returned the desiccated man to Botswana for proper burial in 2000. The Museum however, retains possession of the two human hides ("Stuffed Man Going," "Stuffed Man Buried," Robertson 1993).

Elsewhere, Europeans continued this practice of taking and publicly displaying human body parts as Englishmen were photographed next to several trophy heads taken from Chinese "pirates" in Kowloon (ca. 1900), and Montenegrin soldiers fighting in World War I were known to cut off the nose and upper lip of their enemy to carry home as trophies (Durham 1928). In 1931, British forces stationed in Burma exhibited the severed heads of individuals who had participated in the Saya San Peasant Revolt (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980).

As previously reported, the taking of human heads is a practice of great antiquity in Asia. For centuries, the professional warriors of Japan, referred to as samurai, followed an elaborate military code of Bushido. Dating to the Kamakura period (AD 1185–1333) and continuing until Japan's defeat in World War II in 1945, this code emphasized unwavering loyalty, courage, and steadfast honor, as well as the utmost respect for one's worthy opponent. Those who espoused the chivalrous Bushido tradition, however, adhered to the practice of collecting the heads of their vanquished enemies (Bryant 1979; Bushido 2004). Turnbull (1977:22) relates, "This was the form of trophy, which throughout samurai history, was to furnish the best proof of a task successfully accomplished."

The longstanding acrimonious relationship between Japan and Korea is illustrated by the following report regarding human trophies: The remains of 20,000 noses that were sliced off by Japanese Samurai as war trophies during the 1597 invasion of Korea are planned to be repatriated as a goodwill gesture, nearly 400 years later, on the battlefield near the southern port city of Puan (Barley 1995; Diamond 1998).

In 1258, one of Genghis Khan's grandsons, named Hulagu, captured Baghdad, executed the Caliph, sacked the city, and proceeded to slaughter vast numbers of its inhabitants. Arab historians wrote that the Mongol conqueror ordered the construction of a large pyramid made from skulls of the city's former residents (Escobar 2003).

During the existence of the Mughal Empire in India, a Muslim ruler named Babur (1483–1530) recorded the treatment of infidels who were captured during a jihad campaign: "Those who were brought in alive were ordered beheaded, after which a tower of skulls was erected in camp" (Barbur 1996:188). Among the Bay of Bengal's Andaman Islanders, women were known to don the skull of their deceased sister on their backs as a protective amulet, and widows wore their late husbands' crania on their shoulder until they remarried (Campbell 1983).

The relationship between ancestor worship and the severing of body parts in Asia persists as Barley (1995) reports how a Buddhist anthropologist from Japan, regularly made offerings to the shrine of his deceased parents which he kept in his living room. Moreover, this individual had taken a portion of bone from his father's leg with him into the field (carefully wrapped in white cloth) for good luck.

Traditionally, headhunting was widespread in mainland Southeast Asia and in Oceania (Hoskins 1996; Le Barre 1984; Oliver 1989). Throughout the region, the acquisition of human trophies provided victors with revenge against a rival; it bestowed prestige on trophy takers; and it was believed to ensure the fertility of crops and women and these items were sometimes used in sorcery (Drake 1989; Freeman 1979; Landtman 1916; Le Barre 1984).

In 1770, Captain James Cook noted an encounter with the Maori of New Zealand by stating: "Some of the natives brought alongside in one of their canoes four of the heads of the men they had lately kill'd. Both the hairy scalps and skin of the faces were on" (Barley 1995:206). The Maori were inveterate headhunters who would sometimes conserve the heads of detested chiefs so as to revile and insult them. For example, an early missionary recorded how a Maori warrior taunted a preserved head that had belonged to an enemy chief in the following fashion: "You wanted to run away, did you? But my meri [war club] overtook you: and after you were cooked, you made food for my mouth" (Keeley 1996:100).

A Maori stated that, "The heads of slain chiefs were cut off and piled in a heap, and the head of the principal chief was placed on the top of that heap. Then we took other heads and threw them at the pile of heads. The one head at the top of the pile made a fine target to throw at. This is an ancient game; it was practiced by our ancestors although stones were often used instead of human heads to throw at the pile of heads. We continue our game until all the heads were quite crushed" (Vayda 1960:97). The Maori tell of a young warrior who upon finding himself hard pressed in battle, urged his kinsman to sever his head and to depart with it from the battle scene so as to prevent the trophy from falling into the hands of the enemy. The tattooed heads of high-ranking chiefs were particularly sought after by warriors. Such trophies were steamed, smoked, dried, and were quickly converted by Europeans into exotic souvenirs that provided "evidence" of Maori savagery (Barley 1995). Some enterprising Europeans forcibly tattooed slaves or prisoners and would then sever the heads that would be sold to unsuspecting collectors (Barley 1995).

Victorious Maori warriors would degrade their enemies by fashioning various utilitarian items from their bones. Some examples include flutes, spear points, fish hooks, pins for eating periwinkles, pins for holding dress-mats together, needles for sewing dog-skin mats, and the rings used for tying the legs of captive parrots. Skulls might suffer the indignity of being converted into canoe bailers (Vayda 1960).

During an attack, a bold Fijian warrior might loudly shout out the name of an enemy chief and threaten him by declaring his intention "to cut out his tongue,

eat his brain, and make a cup of his skull" (Williams 1870:40). What's more, the penis of a fallen warrior was placed in a shrine (a sacred tree) and was venerated as an "ancestral friend" of his descendents (Sahlins 1983:90). A successful Tahitian warrior would pound an enemy's corpse with his war club and proceed to cut a slit along the body of the thoroughly crushed foe. He would then triumphantly wear his victim's body much like a poncho (Keeley 1996).

Only after an Iban male had taken a head was he considered to be marriageable. Traditionally, a man who successfully returned with the most highly prized of all trophies, a human head, "could have his pick of the most desirable young women, and was much sought after as a husband" (Freeman 1979:238). Also, in Borneo, the Iban's practice of headhunting (which persisted until 1949) was associated with general fertility. They believed in an association between the sprouting of the many heads of rice with the heads of Iban enemies. Both must be harvested and subsequently dried for the tribe to flourish (Barley 1995; Freeman 1970). A Borneo chief said of headhunting, "It brings us blessings, plentiful harvests, and keeps off sickness and pain; and those who were once our enemies, hereby become our guardians, our friends, our benefactors (Furness 1902:59).

One of the reasons why the Marind-Anim of New Guinea engaged in headhunting was due to a shortage of personal names. Each child would receive the name of the headhunter's victim (van Baal 1966). The heads of Japanese soldiers were being taken by New Guinea tribesmen during the latter part of World War II. For example, the Asmat of Papua New Guinea continued headhunting until about 1954 because they believed that trophy heads supernaturally caused young boys to mature into adult men (Hoskins 1996; Le Barre 1984; Zegwaard 1959). Among the Kiwai of New Guinea, the skulls along with dried male and female genitalia taken from enemies were preserved for use in sorcery directed against rivals (Landtman 1916).

Various fertility rites involving ritual headhunts that employ surrogate heads (i.e., coconuts) instead of actual human skulls are conducted in Southeast Asia to this very day (George 1991).

After a Trobriand Islander's death, his sons suck the putrefaction from his exhumed body so as to facilitate their father's reincarnation. The bones of the deceased are then distributed to affines who may fashion them into ornaments to be worn along with his hair, nails, and personal possessions. A man's bones will be decorated and passed from one relative to another for years with the jawbones frequently being made into a necklace. A cranium may be converted into a lime-pot for the widow with the deceased's long bones being transformed into lime spatulas that are licked when chewing betel nut (Barley 1995).

The warring chiefdom societies of Hawaii humiliated their defeated enemies by transforming them into common food and utensils: "Ka-hekili [paramount chief of Maui and Molokai] sought to avenge upon the chiefs of Oahu their slaying of the chiefs and commoners of Maui [and Molokai]. They had taken Ka-hui-a-Kama prisoner to Oahu and roasted him in an oven, and they used his skull as a filth pot" (Kamkau 1961:232).

The collection of enemy ears as trophies by American military forces is known to have occurred against the British during the Revolutionary War, against the Germans during World War I, and by U.S. Marines against the Japanese during World War II when soldiers were known to fashion Japanese "ear necklaces." There is also a report of an American GI who, having noticed the Japanese penchant for gold fillings, went methodically among the enemy dead removing any gold teeth he encountered. He kept them in a tobacco pouch that he wore around his neck as a type of amulet (Bryant 1979). During the Viet Nam War, there also were numerous reports of American troops wearing necklaces made from dried-out Viet Cong ears (Bryant 1979). Several Viet Cong skulls (many covered with graffiti) were confiscated in the early 1970s from U.S. serviceman retuning from duty, and one of these war trophies shows signs of elaborate post-mortem modification. "The anterior portion of the skull is painted in vertical stripes with alternating Day-Glo reddish pink and yellow, simulating the American flag. Both orbits and the nasal cavity are painted Day-Glo orange. A large black candle, placed at the top of the skull has been burned, and wax drippings cover nearly the entire calvaria. Traces of a multicolored five-pointed star can be seen beneath the wax. Endocranial investigation revealed a drilled hole at the base of the bregma, which may have been used for suspending the skull" (Sledzik and Ousley 1991:528) See also (McCarthy 1994).

The practice of trophy taking and keeping was by no means unique to American forces as it has been reported that Stalin retained a portion of Hitler's skull cap recovered from the German command bunker where the Nazi leader had committed suicide. It is also reported that Stalin used the skull fragment as an ashtray on his desk (Bryant 1979).

No overview of human trophy taking would be complete without mentioning the lynching of African Americans in the United States. Vigilantes throughout North America had been known to administer "frontier justice" since the colonial era, but by the late antebellum period, mob violence had become an integral part of southern culture. In fact, lynching had become so commonplace that Mark Twain acerbically renamed the country "the United States of Lyncherdom" (Brundage 1993:13). Indeed, in 1911, one Black newspaper editorial referred to lynching as the "national pastime" (Anonymous 1911:18). For the period beginning at the termination of the Civil War to when the last documented lynching took place in 1981 in Mobile, Alabama, it is estimated that 3,000–5,000 African Americans were lynched in the American Deep South (Anonymous 1997; Fitzhugh Brundage, personal communication 2004; Harris 1981; Strout 1982). The victims were sometimes savagely beaten and tortured before being hung, with their corpses being burned on occasion. Souvenir taking of body parts frequently followed these events.

These horrific proceedings were clearly considered by many southerners to be a form of wholesome entertainment, like a carnival. Many townspeople (including prominent citizens such as the local sheriff, mayor, and pastors) organized family outings around these events and were careful to position their children at locations

where they would enjoy an unobstructed view of the lynching. Newspapers provided advertising by informing the general public when and where the execution would occur; railroads offered special "excursion trains" to transport spectators to the location; employers were known to permit employees to take time off work in order to attend; and parents sometimes requested that their children be excused from school in order to witness the killing (Allen et al. 2000; Brundage 1993; Dray 2002). One entrepreneur organized a lynching in a theatre and charged admission: "One nickel bought you a seat and a shot at the victim" (Allen et al. 2000:198).

Moreover, countless photographic images of these atrocities were reproduced and mailed as postcards to friends and family across the nation. One postcard depicting a 1930 lynching was actually kept for display behind a glass picture frame. Flattened between the glass and the picture matting was a lock of the dead man's hair (Allen et al. 2000). Victims were often mutilated with their scalps, teeth, ears, fingers, toes, and especially penises removed and sometimes dried or preserved in formaldehyde and displayed in glass jars kept in store windows. W. E. B. Dubois reported seeing the knuckles of an African-American man who had been lynched in 1899 on display in a jar at a grocery store in Atlanta, Georgia (1940). These severed body parts were kept by individuals as souvenirs that would be passed on from generation to generation as cherished family heirlooms (Allen et al. 2000; Brundage 1993; Dray 2002).

One such "keepsake," a portion of the skull of James Irwin, a black man who was lynched in Irwin County, Georgia, in 1930, was kept on the desk of the former Fire Chief in his City Hall office in Ocilla, Georgia, and used as an ashtray until his retirement in the 1960s. Local residents have reported seeing the ashtray on the desk of other officials in the city as late as the 1990s (Anonymous, personal communication 2005)[6]. There is no way of estimating the actual number of similar human trophy "heirlooms" still in existence in the United States.

In the United States, outlaws were also often subjected to "vigilante justice" with subsequent mutilation and trophy taking. As recently as 1955, the skull cap from a train robber who was lynched in 1881 was on public display in the Union Pacific Railroad's Museum at Omaha, Nebraska, and a pair of two-toned shoes fashioned from the skin of the victim's thighs were in the possession of the Rawlings National Bank, Wyoming. The whereabouts of a medicine bag made from the skin of the victim is unknown (Anonymous 1955).

A similar example is the case of Elmer McCurdy who was killed by a posse in 1911 after having held up a train in Oklahoma. A local mortician proceeded to embalm the body and when no next of kin claimed the remains, the undertaker began charging the public 5 cents to gawk at the deceased outlaw. The nickels were dropped into the corpse's open mouth and later collected by the mortician. McCurdy's preserved body traveled across the United States as part of a carnival sideshow only to end up at an amusement park in Long Beach, California, where he was exhibited in a darkened "fun house" until 1976 (Svenvold 2002).

The practice of displaying severed human body parts has continued into the twenty-first century. In May 2004, the Arabic language television channel

Al-Jazeera, broadcasted video images depicting two masked Islamic Jihad activists triumphantly taking responsibility for the killing of an Israeli soldier whose decapitated head lay on a table in front of them. Israeli officials promised military reprisals if all body parts were not immediately returned to the proper authorities (Barzak 2004).[7]

This cursory overview of the myriad of forms of displaying of severed human body parts by non-Amerindians is not meant to be exhaustive as there are countless other examples and numerous other reasons for engaging in these behaviors. Our goal is simply to demonstrate how ubiquitous (both temporally and spatially) the exhibition of disarticulated human body parts was and is. Indeed, some have characterized it as being a nearly universal cultural practice (Walker 2000). In conclusion, we wish to reiterate that Amerindians were in no way unique in practicing the severing and displaying of human body parts as trophies.

HUMAN TROPHY TAKING BY NON-AMERINDIANS IN THE NEW WORLD

There can be no question that European colonials and their American descendents adopted, encouraged, and stimulated the taking of scalps in the New World by providing indigenous peoples with efficient warfare technology and economic incentives for securing these items (Abler 1992; Axtell 1981; Cushman 1999; Friederici 1985a; Owsley 1994; Owsley and Berryman 1975; Reese 1940).

In order to intimidate the indigenous peoples of Massachusetts who were threatening the then vulnerable Plymouth Colony (founded in 1620), Captain Miles Standish killed chief Wituwamat and had his severed head prominently displayed on the top of the colony's fort (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980). Starting in 1688, French-Canadians offered Native Americans payment in exchange for enemy scalps, whether White or Red. Upon learning of the French-Canadian policy, the English, who previously only paid for enemy Indian scalps, extended the offer to include French scalps in 1693 (Reese 1940). In 1779, some West Virginian farmers killed an Indian in a skirmish and then proceeded to scalp and skin the body. The skin was tanned and from it, a saddle, some belts and bags for carrying lead shot were fashioned (Friederici 1985a). Until its demolition in 1785, the town officials of Salem, Massachusetts, proudly displayed a collection of Native American scalps on the wall of the local courthouse for all to see (Axtell 1981).

In the final battle of the Creek War of 1813–1814, General Andrew Jackson led a force (comprised of U.S. regulars and Tennessee militia along various Native American allies) that defeated the Upper Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, Alabama, killing hundreds of warriors who died defending their homeland. Five hundred and fifty-seven fallen warriors had their noses removed by Jackson's forces to make easier the tally of the dead. Jackson's men then proceeded to skin the bodies and tan the hides of the deceased Indians in order to convert them

into trinkets and other "souvenirs" such as bridle reins (Horseshoe Bend 2004; Weatherford 1988).

Undoubtedly, the most infamous example of Euro-American trophy taking in the hemisphere involved a Methodist minister named John Chivington who led an attack on a peaceful band of Cheyenne and their Arapaho allies at Sand Creek, Colorado, in 1864. His troops indiscriminately killed hundreds of men, women, and children and then proceeded to mutilate (sexually in many instances) the bodies of the dead. In addition to removing scalps and severing ears of the dead, one soldier cut the scrotum off one of the corpses declaring that he was in need of a new tobacco pouch. Chivington would later appear on a Denver Opera House stage where he regaled theatre audiences during an intermission with his account of the battle and his display of over 100 Indian scalps, including the pubic hairs of Indian women which evoked the cheers of throngs (Hoig 1961; Sand 2004; Smith 1865; Thomas 2000; Weatherford 1988). When considering these actions, one is compelled to ask: Who were the true "savages" in this instance?

The legacy of these atrocities has been kept alive by some of the descendents of the soldiers who participated in the massacre. During the 1980s, it is reported that a member of the Colorado state legislature boastfully displayed to his fellow elected officials a "tobacco pouch" made from the scrotum of one of the Cheyenne men that had been mutilated at Sand Creek. The legislator employed the "pouch" as a candy container. The legislator's relatives have proudly passed this family "heirloom" down through the years from one generation to another (Mendoza 1993)[8].

During the late 1910s in Amazonia, a Brazilian telegraph agent organized a raid against the Ka'apor and impaled the severed heads of men, women, and children on stakes on the telegraph posts near the site of Alto Turi as a warning to other Indians (Balée 1988; Ribeiro 1986). See Harner (1972) and Steel (1999) for how the trade in firearms for shrunken heads trade, which occurred in Amazonia during the twentieth century, led to an increase in Jivaroan headhunting raids.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

In subsequent chapters of this book, the following case-by-case contexts are discussed.

In chapter 2, Maschner and Reedy-Maschner document the archaeological, ethnohistoric and ethnographic record for arctic and subarctic trophy taking (dating back to ~1500 BC) and analyze its relationship to violence, status, and the acquisition of prestige. Their research indicates that warfare in the North was motivated by the need of males to acquire and maintain social status with trophies serving as symbols of successful outcomes against rivals. These findings counter the functional–ecological arguments posited for northern warfare by Ferguson (1983).

In chapter 3, Lovisek explains the practice of human trophy taking by the indigenous people of the Northwest Coast by examining the region's archaeological,

ethnohistorical, and ethnographic evidence. Although there is evidence of trophy taking back to ca. 1850 BC, much of the findings presented here derive from ethnohistorical sources. Lovisek notes that trophy heads were also used for ritual purposes such as supernaturally attracting whales, preventing the soul of the enemy from being reincarnated, or, for the Kwakiutl, appeasing the "man eater" spirit during the winter ceremonial period.

In chapter 4, Lambert analyzes ethnographic evidence of human trophy taking in California. Her findings indicate that the majority (77%) of the indigenous societies sampled engaged in the taking of these trophies in one form or another. She also finds a correlation between trophy taking and sociolinguistic affiliation that suggests the practice was introduced into California by Penutian groups from the north and probably somewhat later by Hokan groups from the south, although the practice may have already existed in some form among the earliest Californians.

In chapter 5, Shaafsma documents the taking of human trophies in the southwestern United States by analyzing the iconography depicted in rock art and various artifacts in the light of ethnohistorical and ethnographic information. Possibly from its first appearance in Ancestral Pueblo rock art ca. 400 BC, and certainly after AD 1300 through the historic period, the taking of human trophies is reported to be associated with fertility and rain-bringing ritual activities.

In chapter 6, Owsley et al. report on how trophy taking in the Plains and Great Basin dates back to AD 650, and also on how the motivation for taking such items shifted through time. The authors provide ethnohistorical information on the little-known practice of making trophy necklaces out of human fingers and hand bones. Through consultation, the authors learn that the preservation of such trophies serves to honor both the tribe and the warrior who made the item.

In chapter 7, Seeman examines Hopewell trophy taking in the Woodland societies of eastern North America ca. AD 1–400. Emphasis is placed on fitting this practice into a broader framework of Hopewell relations, especially those pertaining to the Ohio Valley. Specific attention is given to the place of competition in Woodland society, the implications of age and sex identifications, and the metaphorical linkage between humans and animals as they relate to trophy taking.

In chapter 8, Williamson documents how the appearance of human trophy taking among Iroquoians coincided with the intensification of regional warfare, population growth, and the advent of village amalgamation beginning around the year 1300 AD. He states that human trophies were collected and displayed in order to terrorize an enemy. They also served as cherished reminders of victorious battles. Lastly, the author provides the cultural context for trophy taking by linking the taking of heads to the mythological figure named Oscotarach.

In chapter 9, Mensforth traces the taking of human trophies in Eastern North America to the Late Archaic period. He documents the presence of scalping, decapitation, the removal of mandibles, limbs, and the making of various adornments such as necklaces (fashioned from human teeth) and utensils such as bowls (made from skull caps). Mensforth also links the appearance of human trophies in Eastern North America to the rapid demographic changes that the region experienced

during this time period. Lastly, the author suggests that this trophy-taking behavior indicates that some hunter and gatherers of the Late Archaic had developed rudimentary segmented societies.

In chapter 10, Brown and Dye examine the iconography of Mississippian human trophies. The images of decapitation and scalping that are frequently found in a wide range of Southeastern Ceremonial Complex media are linked to an ideology that associates death with the regeneration of life. The authors argue that these trophy-taking motifs are symbolic representations of various struggles in which mythological beings such as Morning Star or Red Horn were victorious over their enemies. These great supernatural achievements served as a template for devotees to emulate.

In chapter 11, Jacobi documents the evidence for the modification of various body parts into trophies along with utilitarian objects throughout southeastern North America dating from the Archaic into the ethnohistoric period. He reports that trophies may have served to denigrate a fallen rival, and an enemy who had been mutilated in this world would be handicapped in the afterlife. Jacobi also cogently states that the mere fact that a body part has been severed from a corpse for display say little about whether or not this act was conducted out of veneration or out of spite for the deceased.

In chapter 12, Ross-Stallings provides a valuable review of the criterion useful for evaluating whether or not human remains recovered in archaeological contexts should be considered human trophies. She then analyzes the archaeological record for evidence of trophy taking dating back to the Late Archaic in southeastern Tennessee and also of trophy taking along with cannibalism in the Mississippi Delta region. The author examines data indicating both trophy taking and cannibalism, including its possible temporal and spatial origins in the continent.

In chapter 13, Berryman analyzes archaeological, osteological, iconographic, and ethnohistorical evidence for the practice of human sacrifice and trophy taking among the ancient Maya dating back to the Middle Formative Period and continuing well into the Postclassic Period. The author sheds light on the use of human beings as offerings and the public display of certain body parts by providing the ideological basis that justified such actions. As is recorded in the Mayan creation myth of *Popul Vuh*, the Hero Twins were able to resurrect their father by outwitting and eventually decapitating, the lords of the underworld. Throughout Mesoamerica, this event would be dramatically reenacted in public ceremonies involving the beheading of victims. Rulers would carry out this institutionalized homicide not only to appease various deities but also as a way to intimidate their rivals and to reassure their followers as well.

In chapter 14, Ruben Mendoza provides the mythological framework critical to understanding why Mesoamerican peoples displayed human trophies on *tzompantli* skull racks. The author identifies this activity with the mythological Tree of Gourds and the plight of the Hero Twins documented in the Quiche Maya *Popul Vuh*. Blood sacrifice was conducted publicly in order to reenact the mythological events, thereby ensuring the rebirth and regeneration of the cosmos.

In chapter 15, Hoopes cites archaeological evidence documenting how the taking and displaying of human trophies in Costa Rica and Panama first appeared about AD 300 as the region experienced the development of complex societies possessing organized priesthoods (*usékars*). Hoopes states that these acts may not only have been for the purpose of settling land or resource conflicts but also as acts of self-defense in response to outbreaks of disease. He asserts that *usékars* played key roles in these head-hunting raids as both the organizers and as the targets of these attacks (as great powers of sorcery were attributed to these individuals). Hoopes also suggests that the possession of the heads of such powerful individuals may have granted supernatural protection to those in possession of said body parts.

In chapter 16, Tung documents both the antiquity (dating back to the Late Preceramic Period) as well as the continuity of human trophy taking in Andean South America up to the pre-Inca period. Summarizing previous studies, the author notes the longstanding debate that human trophies could have been made from the remains of enemies or from revered ancestors and suggests that the application of strontium isotope analysis can aid in addressing the question of trophy head origins. The author argues that various body parts from Andean individuals were ritually transformed from corporeal entities into sacred trophies—a process, she suggests, that may have also imbued the preparers with a sacred status.

In chapter 17, Ogburn documents the existence of Andean human trophy taking from the late pre-Inca to the Inca period. Employing primarily ethnohistorical data, he reports that various body parts (including entire torsos) were transformed into status-enhancing objects employed by Andean elites to reinforce both their personal as well as imperial power. Significantly, Ogburn points out that some of the most detailed descriptions of how human beings were fashioned into trophies were authored by individuals of Indian ancestry such as Guaman Poma (1936). His findings call into question the wisdom of dismissing all ethnohistorical documents as mere propaganda designed by Europeans to denigrate indigenous cultures.

In chapter 18, Chacon describes how the supernatural force of *arutam* is believed by the Achuar Jivaro (Shiwiar) people to confer many forms of power to those individuals who possess it (especially the power to headhunt). He documents the actual ritual that initiates undergo in an effort to obtain this supernatural force. Additionally, the effect that *arutam* has on individuals as well as its functions and effects on society is analyzed. Lastly, the relationship between supernatural forces such as *arutam*, military leadership, and the development of ranked societies is also addressed.

In chapter 19, Petersen and Crock address the relationship between the public display of human body parts, cannibalism, and perceived cannibalism. The authors note that the mere exhibition of human remains may not necessarily indicate the practice of anthrophagy, as has been reported for several Amerindian groups in the Caribbean region, most notably the Island Caribs. They point out that these reported displays could have been forms of ancestor worship and thus the presence of cannibalism has not been demonstrated there. Conversely, they state that human trophy taking and exo-cannibalism did indeed occur among various

Amazonian Amerindian groups within variable contexts, quite obviously among the Tupinamba and others.

In chapter 20, Marcela Mendoza documents the relationship between success in battle, the taking of human trophies, and political leadership among hunter-gatherers of the Gran Chaco. She describes how warriors would ritually transform hostile spirits believed to reside in human trophies into supernatural allies who would render aid both in war and while on the hunt. Mendoza also records the important roles that women played in the victory celebrations that were conducted to mark the taking of human trophies. Lastly, she points out how the concept of "social substitution" (Kelly 2000) was operative in the Chaco region.

In chapter 21, Demarest addresses the various ethical concerns raised by the publishing of findings on the emotionally charged topic of Amerindian trophy taking. He holds that much of the Western world's attitude towards trophy taking stems from a denial that death is an inevitable fact of life.

In chapter 22, Chacon and Dye provide a synopsis of the various other reasons for Amerindian trophy taking that were not documented or highlighted in any of the previous chapters. Additionally, they briefly address why the recovery of disarticulated human remains may be explained by motivations other than the desire to take trophies.

In chapter 23, Chacon and Dye summarize the findings put forth in this book along with pointing out some of the similarities between Mesoamerican ideology and North American trophy-taking practices and beliefs.

NOTES

1. "Scalping and Torture: Warfare Practices Among North American Indians" by Georg Friederici (1985b). However, this work was limited to discussing Amerindian scalping in North America and did not address the myriad of other forms of indigenous trophy taking either in North or Latin America.
2. In addition to the papers presented at the session, we have invited additional scholars to contribute to this volume so as to secure a more comprehensive coverage of trophy taking in the New World.
3. This section includes examples of the display of severed human body parts which may or may not meet our definition of the term "trophy."
4. All Biblical references in this section are taken from The New American Bible. 1987. Wichita: Fireside Publishing.
5. The well-patinated half-skull set in silver is on display at the Crime Museum at New Scotland Yard in London, England (Barley 1995).
6. The name of the source has been withheld in order to preserve his safety because this individual has received numerous death threats as a result of his research on lynching in the American Deep South.
7. See (Lassila and Alden Branch 2006) for reports concerning a certain prestigious Yale society that allegedly possesses skeletal remains of Geronimo for use in rituals.
8. Upon the death of a Tasmanian aborigine named William Lanne (King Billy) in 1869, his head was removed from the corpse and sent to the Royal College of Surgeons in London for study and his scrotum was fashioned into a tobacco pouch. To this day, the whereabouts of either body part is unknown (Ellis 1981, Crowther Papers—unpublished manuscript; Tasmania 2004).

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Chapter 2

Heads, Women, and the Baubles of Prestige

Trophies of War in the Arctic and Subarctic

Herbert D. G. Maschner and Katherine L. Reedy-Maschner

ABSTRACT

Trophies are symbols of successes in interpersonal violence and warfare. Their visibility is critical to their power to give the holder greater access to the rewards of increased status. Thus, the acquisition of trophies is synonymous with striving for status and prestige. There are three types of highly visible trophies in the arctic and subarctic: body parts of victims, women, and material items of the victims. These three categories are perhaps interchangeable in relation to the status they confer on the victor, and the priority of any of these three appears to be related to individual social categories and the social nearness or distance of the combatants. Trophies of war and violence are reviewed for a suite of northern societies in the context of their relationship to the status of the victors and we find that the collection of body parts is common when there is great social distance between the combatants.

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous violence and warfare in the northern regions of North America have been demonstrated to be products of the competition that arises from the acquisition and maintenance of status and prestige (Ames and Maschner 1999; Burch 1998; Maschner 1991, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2004; Maschner and Patton 1996; Maschner and Reedy-Maschner 1998; Mason 1998; Reedy-Maschner and Maschner 1999). This is so well documented that the foundation for this assumption will not be reiterated here, and the reader is encouraged to review these earlier works. Instead, this chapter will use this background for investigating some of the

by-products of striving for status among northern foragers, particularly in relation to symbols of prestige that are acquired during acts of violence or war.

Trophies of war are material symbols demonstrating the success of a violent encounter. Trophies in the northern world come in three forms. The classic example consists of collected body parts, clearly demonstrating one's ability as a successful warrior. Archaeological and anthropological data for northern examples parallel those found throughout the world from Mesolithic Germany (Frayer 1997) to ancient Egypt to Vietnam, which include heads, but also soft body parts such as scalps, ears, and penises that would not be visible in the archaeological record.

The second most common trophies of war are women, who are either captured as slaves, wives, or, if from a high-status family, for ransom. This again is a general trait, and examples ranging from the Yanomamö (Chagnon 1988) to the Greeks (Herodotus 1992) to the Medieval Scots (Magnusson 2000) demonstrate that this has been a routine aspect of warfare in many societies.

The third form of trophies involves material items of status and prestige. This is a more common trait in societies where certain material goods are used as symbols for individual and clan prestige and are captured because they display the status of the vanquished, such as coppers on the Northwest Coast (Maschner 1997), or where material goods are captured to demonstrate the prowess of the warrior, such as American WWII soldiers collecting Samurai swords.

The relevance of these three categories to any individual case will depend on the social complexities of the groups involved. Material goods are only relevant among the complex societies of the north Pacific Rim and Bering Straits where large sedentary villages and resident nobles acquired material symbols of power and prestige. But examples of both women and body parts as trophies of war have been found throughout the entire northern world, where materiality has played a lesser role but symbols of status are equally important.

This chapter reviews archaeological and anthropological examples of trophy taking in the far north couched in a theory of prestige competition. While at least one author has attempted to explain northern warfare from a materialist perspective where all trophies of war should have a functional (i.e., survival) use (Ferguson 1983, 1984), this perspective has been soundly rejected based on the fact that in the north, land or food were rarely, if ever, trophies of war (Burch 1974, 1998; de Laguna 1983, 1990; Maschner and Reedy-Maschner 1998; Reedy-Maschner and Maschner 1999).

Here we discuss trophy taking in the social context of status competition between both individuals and small social groups. This pattern is certainly clear on the Northwest Coast where De Laguna argues that Northwest Coast wars were fought over slaves, women, revenge, and booty (1972:583). In addition to the victors taking hostages (whom they called "deer"), trophy heads, scalps, crest objects and weapons, "rights to the designs for facial painting, personal names, and presumably other prerogatives were acquired by killing the owner" (de Laguna 1972:584). That is, the prestige of the slain individual was conferred upon the killer. Maschner has shown that in the Northwest Coast wars, these three categories

of trophies occasionally have different meanings and contexts, but at other times are indistinguishable in terms of their symbolism (Maschner 1997). These same Northwest Coast patterns are seen throughout the arctic and subarctic, but rather than arguing that this is a northern pattern that is shared among many groups, it is much more likely that this is a pattern that is shared by nearly all modern and prehistoric peoples worldwide.

TROPHY HEADS AND OTHER BODY PARTS

Archaeological and ethnohistorical data are limited in terms of trophy taking, but a number of examples in the literature detail the nature of these practices in northern regions, and some of these examples have been known for many years, although we know of no other compilation of such anecdotes.

The Danish anthropologist Kaj Birket-Smith was interested in warfare and commonly included related topics such as head hunting in his early interviews. Reviewing examples from both the arctic and north Pacific, he makes several references to "head trophies" (1929:48, 154, 219; 1936:179; 1953:102, 223) from a diversity of regions and even goes so far as to state that "*head trophies* must be included among the Northwest American elements. They are found all over the Northwest Coast, whence they have spread to the Alaskan Eskimo as far as Kuskokwim and Bristol Bay" (1953:223 italics his).

Friederici (1907:426–47) reviewed many subarctic examples of headhunting and scalping, including numerous Algonquian groups who collected Inuit scalps and a number of western Athapaskan groups who regularly took scalps (although he gives no references for his descriptions).

On the north Pacific rim, and in certain areas of the high arctic, trophy taking appears to have been well known. An excellent archaeological example is the Kachemak Tradition (1500 BC–AD 1000) of the Kodiak Archipelago and adjacent regions. These people lived in small, scattered villages and appear to have experienced war and violence regularly, given that many villages were located in defensible locations (Moss and Erlandson 1992:84). The Crag Point, Three Saints Bay, and Uyak sites on Kodiak Island contained human remains with cutmarks, perimortem breakage, dismemberment, drilling, cutting and other modifications of the remains of women and children (Simon and Steffian 1994:97). In adjacent Cook Inlet (de Laguna 1934:166) as well as elsewhere on Kodiak Island (Hrdlicka 1944), severed heads and other parts have been long associated with headhunting.

Simon and Steffian (1994) suggest that these remains could be evidence of warfare and violence, but prefer an explanation founded in the ritual processing or medical examination of human remains while Crowell, on the other hand, states that this was most likely evidence for the treatment of war captives (1988:133).

Hrdlicka (1944:149, 155, 293) originally argued that these patterns were signs of cannibalism, but Simon (1992:146) and Urcid (1994) believe that cannibalism does not explain the patterns because there is no other corroborating

evidence. Urcid (1994) presents a strong case against the idea that cannibalism was involved in the Uyak patterns of dismemberment and against those ideas originally created by Hrdlicka, but his argument does not negate violent acts. In fact, in his attempt to refute cannibalism he offers a number of ethnographic examples of decapitation for reasons other than cannibalism including the Jivaro (Urcid 1994:103), who collected heads of their dead captives and kills in war, and Nazca trophy heads (1994:120), two common examples of violence in the anthropological record—and patterns seen in the Kachemak data as well.

In all of these analyses (Simon and Steffian 1994; Simon 1992; Urcid 1994), the authors review the Kachemak patterns of perforating bones at joints with the ultimate goal of rearticulating body parts. These rearticulated bodies perhaps served as powerful symbols of enemies killed in war or at least important personages. Workman argues that the various patterns of decapitation, dismemberment of the postcranial skeleton, and secondary internment indicate a complex mortuary pattern, not violence (1992:21–24). Following Workman and others, we agree that some of the patterns of dismemberment and rearticulation do argue for a rather complex mortuary custom, but severed heads are another matter. Keeley states, "by far the most common and widely distributed war trophy was the head or skull of an enemy. The custom of taking heads is recorded from many cultures. . . . [M]ore than any other body part, the head of a vanquished foe was an unequivocal token of the individual that had been overcome (Keeley 1996:100), which can include scalping. Many of the disarticulated skulls in the Kachemak tradition of Kodiak Island have cut marks at the base or show clear signs of scalping (Simon and Steffian 1994:89; Urcid 1994:107, 109, 111, 113).

In 1994, archaeologists excavating at Peterson Lagoon, Unimak Island, in the Aleutian Islands found buried in the side room of a barabara (semi-subterranean house) a Koniag (Kodiak Island and Eskimo) slate point (dating between 1550 and 1650) lodged between two cervical vertebrae of an Aleut skeleton (Hoffman 1995). The skeleton was also curiously missing its hands, feet, and head. Seventy years earlier, Jochelson wrote, "the ancient Aleut warriors used to bring home the head of a slain enemy, which they set up on a pole on the roof of their dwelling" (1925:28 see also Lantis 1970:267). In addition, Veniaminov describes a gruesome practice following a raid, in which most old men and women were slaughtered and younger men and women were taken prisoner (a slightly different translation is found in Lantis 1970:266).

> Those [enemies] destined for captivity were marked with blood spots on the face and on the forehead while the one whom they intended to kill had an ear or some other part of the body cut off, for instance, a part of the scalp. They even cut out the genital organs of men as well as of the women. And these parts cut off or excised out of the body, and the weapons taken from the enemy, were the most important trophies of the victors, who passed them on to their descendants for the glory of their lineage as living memorials of their military exploits; a few of the conquerors ordered that such trophies be put into their graves (1984:208).

The Aleut also adorned themselves for feasting and dancing with trophies that their ancestors captured from enemies such as hair, teeth, utensils, weapons, and clothing (Veniaminov 1984:201). This grisly record of success in war, in which enemy scalps or genitals became family heirlooms, appears to have been the practice during foreign wars against the people of the north shore of the Alaska Peninsula or the Kodiak Islanders (Alutiiq), for whom the very word enemy (*Angadutix*) was used to describe the inhabitants (Veniaminov 1984: 205).

The human anatomical knowledge of the ancient Aleut is well known for having been especially advanced (Marsh and Laughlin 1956; Laughlin 1980), and this is partly a product of their dismemberment of war captives. In a linguistic study, Marsh and Laughlin collected an extensive vocabulary of anatomical terms (1956:38) building upon the previous work of Veniaminov (1846) who was an Orthodox priest. This knowledge predated any Russian involvement in the Aleutians, and was based upon their learned skills of mummification, autopsies of the dead, and comparative anatomy through the use of the sea otter as the closest comparison to the human form (Laughlin 1980:96).

The belief that spiritual power existed within the human body guided their work in the handling of that spirit. Mummification was reserved for the deceased elites. Organs were removed and the cavities were stuffed with dried grasses (Laughlin 1980:98). These deceased were dressed in their best garments, placed in a flexed position, and often wrapped in sealskins, sea lion skins, or basketry (1980:98). Mummies were usually interred in caves, and numerous mummies have been found throughout the Aleutian Islands (Hrdlicka 1945; Laughlin 1980:99). Aleut anatomical knowledge was also learned through the dismemberment of slain enemies, slaves or other persons deemed to be "dangerous" (Laughlin 1980:103; Veniaminov 1984:259). Dismemberment was seen as the primary way to keep your enemy from initiating any further attacks (Golder 1963a:136, 1963b:338; Laughlin 1980:104). Laughlin recorded stories of dismemberment from the late nineteenth century, as well as Russian accounts of witnessing Aleuts cutting their dead enemies apart after a battle.

Other north Pacific examples are found in Prince William Sound where among the Chugach Eskimo, houses were plundered and burned in warfare and the slain victims' heads were put on display in the victors' village. Birket-Smith writes that the "heads of fallen enemies were brought back to the village and kept in a wooden box outside the house. When everyone had seen them, they were buried in a distant place" (1953:102). Chugach warriors observed taboos after killing enemies, but also ate pieces of their victims' hearts to break certain food and sexual taboos (Oswalt 1967:188).

Moving north into the Bering Sea, Lantis reported that Nunivak Islanders [Yupik Eskimo] expressly stated that their ancestors did not take trophies of their enemies, but she questions their denial since it was no doubt practiced against them. She states, "Eskimos on the Yukon and even those at Hooper Bay would cut off the heads and privates of their victims" (1946:169).

Warfare and trophy taking occurred in the Alaskan arctic as well (Burch 1974, 1998; Mason 1998). In an archaeological example, Knud Rasmussen's Fifth Thule Expedition photographed the remains of an Eskimo battlefield near Point Barrow, which consisted of a pile of broken skulls and bones (Rasmussen 1927; Burch 1988:230). The ratio of skulls to other skeletal remains appears to be especially high.

In western Canada, the remains of 35 Inuit women, children, and elderly found at the Saunaktuk site in the Mackenzie Delta exhibit the same kinds of cut marks as those found in the Kachemak Tradition, only 300 to 500 years after the Kachemak examples above. Melbye and Fairgrieve (1994) attribute these to violent deaths, arguing that the randomly scattered bones exhibit evidence of facial mutilation, decapitation, skinning of the head, and removal of tissue. Joints were severed systematically, muscles were cut, and marrow was extracted from long bones through splitting and gouging. Hands and feet were severed, and decapitation indicates that trophy skulls may have been collected. They add that there are no data that support "a mortuary custom of slashing or chopping the deceased, defleshing and dismembering the body, splitting long bones, and scattering the remains in a random fashion about the site" (1994:58). This is clear evidence of a massacre, and oral tradition places the men out hunting belugas while Athapaskans tortured and massacred the Inuit families. Bones were scattered amidst animal bones, showing that both had been butchered in a similar fashion.

In the western subarctic Lane reports the Chilcotin of present-day British Columbia in the western subarctic sometimes scalped their enemies (1981:408). This was usually practiced if raids were for vengeance, and "scalps might be taken and the bodies of the enemy dead mutilated. On the way home, the scalps were left under rocks in streams and body parts might be hung in trees along the trail. Such trophies were not carried home" (1981:408). The return home was followed by feasting, dancing, reenacting the raid, and purification rituals. Further, an Ahtna warrior would cut open his slain victim and eat a piece of fat from near the heart in order to avoid taboos and terror after a war (De Laguna and McClellan 1981: 652).

Some of these examples appear to go beyond mere trophy taking and enter the realm of dehumanizing an enemy. In one case, Burch relays a story about raids between the Kobuk Valley Koyukon Athabaskans and Iñupiat from the Noatak valley in which Koyukon men killed everyone in an Iñupiat village while the men were caribou hunting, except for two women who were originally from Kobuk (1998:98–100). The returning hunters "found the corpses with their genitalia cut off and strung out on a line" (1998:99). They retaliated and killed all but two elders and the same two women. These two groups raided and brutalized each other for years with the same two women being captured repeatedly. The narrative culminates once again with an instance of Koyukon raiders killing every Iñupiat woman in a hunting camp. "Then they cut off their vulvas, strung them on a line, and headed quickly toward home" (1998:100), no doubt perpetuating an endless cycle of revenge and humiliation.

Davydov's writings contain humiliation by Copper River Athabaskans against Russian promyshlennikis. In 1801, Tlingits attacked Fort Sitka after the Russians "had committed many unjust acts" against them, including stealing their women (Davydov 1977:189). They forced them out of the fort using fire, and those who were not killed were treated in "a most barbarous way—they were first scalped—the Koliuzhes [Tlingit] keep scalps as trophies, then children were made to stab them or they were burned in various parts of the body, or their bodies were hacked about with fish-bone saws . . . . The corpses were transfixed on spikes as a sign of shame, or thrown onto the seashore for the dogs and crows to eat" (1977:189).

The wars between Inuit and unrelated Na Dene and Algonquian speakers in the subarctic were especially violent because neither group considered the other human (Reedy-Maschner and Maschner 1999; see an eighteenth-century example in Hearne 1958). D'Anglure reports that Eastern Cree took Inuit scalps and slaves in some 20 raids between 1707 and 1794 (1984:477, 499).

Friederici (1907:426) notes a distinction between North American Indian "scalpers" and Eskimo "head gatherers" at their frontier on Hudson Bay, Newfoundland, and Labrador. Here, Algonquin and Beothuc "took many an Eskimo scalp," and the Nottaway were said to have imposed a yearly tribute of Eskimo scalps on the Montagnais. Eskimos of the Bering Strait, on the other hand, took whole enemy heads as trophies. Friederici believed that the Eskimo were really mutilators at heart, and goes on to say that "the Eskimo were famed for the mutilations which they practiced on the dead bodies of their enemies. These mutilations were a potent cause of the great hate felt toward the people by all the neighboring Indians. According to Friederici they quartered the bodies, cut and tore them into pieces, abused them, and threw the remains into the water" (1907:426). Of course, this similar pattern of dismemberment has also been attributed to Athapaskan attacks on Inuit (e.g., Melbye and Fairgrieve 1994), and one naturally wonders which sources were used in Friederici's assessments.

Head hunting practiced by the Eskimo against the Kutchin was also described by Leechman (1950:160–1, c.f. Slobodin 1971:293–298) in an oral history account that perhaps places many of these activities in context. The Eskimo had captured Atsunve, an Arctic Red River Kutchin girl, and took her back to their camp where they married her to two brothers, and, in time, she bore a baby. As the story goes, "Summer was the season for raiding, and in the summer after Atsunve's capture, the Eskimo went off again to war. Late in the summer they returned, with a canoe-load of Indians' heads" (1971:293). However, in the canoe were the heads of Atsunve's brothers. Although she was very upset, she betrayed no emotion to her in-laws. At Atsunve's suggestions, the Eskimo had a big feast and played games. Atsuve watched to see which kayak was fastest in the kayak race. She fed her husbands until they could eat no more and then told them to sleep on driftwood pillows, which "should be done after cutting off the heads of so many of the enemy" (1971:294). That night, she cut her husbands' throats with a fish-knife and then cut up all the kayaks except the fastest and paddled away, leaving her baby behind. Eskimos pursued her but she made it back to her people. She looked so Eskimo

that she offered to marry two young men if they would protect her. That fall, Atsunve and her husbands led a large war party back to the Eskimo camp. There they found her dead baby hanging from a tree. She burst forth and attacked the camp, killing everyone before the rest of her war party reached it.

WOMEN AND BAUBLES AS TROPHIES OF WAR

All northern groups, if they were involved in war at all, captured women as trophies of war (e.g., Maschner 1997; Maschner and Reedy-Maschner 1998; Nelson 1899:327; Reedy-Maschner and Maschner 1999). Regardless of whether we discuss the mobile foragers of the high arctic, the semi-sedentary riverine peoples of the western subarctic, or the complex foragers of the Bering Strait and Gulf of Alaska, captured women were powerful symbols of status and success in war. But the baubles of prestige are not discussed extensively in the ethnographic writings of the north and are little represented in the archaeology of northern peoples. Even though the peoples of the Gulf of Alaska, such as the Koniag of Kodiak Island and the Aleut of the Aleutians were ranked, sedentary foragers, their mode of travel in times of war, the single-hatched ocean kayak, did not carry much of a payload. But both women and trophy goods were status symbols of success in warfare, and were symbolically significant much the same way as body parts.

Among the complex societies of the north Pacific rim, women were important war trophies. For the Chugach of Prince William Sound, warfare was formalized (Oswalt 1967:187) but enemy men were killed and women and children captured. There is a great deal of evidence for stealing women on the Aleut–Alutiiq frontier before the arrival of Russian fur hunters. The early explorers witnessed some of the last cases of this in the context of war raids. Shelikhov saw first-hand the Fox Islands Aleut plotting a sneak attack on the Alutiiq, but unfortunately they were raided first with all the men killed and five women imprisoned (Davydov 1977:188). The Alutiiq took only the women and children as prisoners after having killed all of the men (Davydov 1977:188; Oswalt 1979:244–245). Stories of Aleut men raiding other Aleut villages as well as in Alutiiq and Yup'ik territory for the purposes of capturing women are numerous (Golder 1963b:336; Townsend 1983; Veniaminov 1984:203). Unalaskan Aleuts were so known for "stealing women" from the Amlia Islanders on their route to war with the Atka Islanders that the Amlians were permanently on alert (Prokopeuff 1988). Alutiiq regularly attacked the Tanaina on the Alaska Peninsula and raided for clothing, children, and women, provoking nearly continuous revenge wars (Osgood 1966:109–113, 183). The Tagish of the British Columbia interior were regularly raided by the Tlingit, especially for women (McClellan 1975a:519, 1975b:202), and a primary motivation for war by the Kaska was "a desire to steal women" (Honigmann 1981:447, see also 1954).

The pattern is much the same in the arctic. Osgood makes clear that although the acquisition of Inuit goods as trophies of war and to increase one's status were the

primary motives for the Kutchin in their wars with the Inuit (see below), the capture of women is his third most common reason for warfare (1970:86). Kutchin men tattooed their upper arms and cheeks indicating war honor (Slobodin 1981:517). The Yellowknife were so aggressive toward their Slavey, Dodrib, and Hare neighbors that they pillaged their women and furs (Gillespie 1981:286; Helm 1981:294).

The accumulation of slaves for the purposes of enhancing a man's status was also an instigation of war for the Aleut (Townsend 1983:122–4; Veniaminov 1984:240). Stories confirm that warriors taken prisoner were cut across the foreheads, and that the skins of warriors were usually not left whole, which also served to mark them as slaves (Bergsland 1959:65–66; Snigaroff 1979:94).

Among the Aleut, there is scattered evidence of pillaging for goods after a successful raid, but the amount of goods one could take home in a kayak is limited, and the confiscation of goods seems to have been more opportunistic than planned.

Interior peoples had much the same problem, except any booty had to be carried by hand. In both cases, material trophies of war were dominated by symbols of the opposing groups such as bows and arrows, clothing, and other similar items. Osgood stated that the Kutchin went to war with the Inuit in order to capture their possessions and that "many of these things have more of a trophy value, serving to enhance the prestige of the owner, than any important place as useful objects" (1970:86). It should be no surprise then that his second cause of Kutchin war is that it is "a means of acquiring prestige. A powerful chief often becomes such because he is a great war leader, and I have seen men regret, apparently most sincerely, that they can no longer fight the Inuit" (1970:86) and thus gain prestige in their own social group.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The examples discussed in this chapter are in no way exhaustive of the northern literature, but they serve one particular point—that northern peoples, whether complex foragers on the north Pacific or highly mobile egalitarian peoples of the high arctic or interior, participated in the same forms of status competition seen in nearly every society on the planet.

The symbols of success in warfare are often, it seems, more important than the war itself. This implies that there is no direct functional–ecological reason for conflict in the north. The intensity of the trophy taking, or the dehumanization associated with it, appears, in a qualitative sense, to be related to whether or not the combatants considered each other human or not, or at least is a measure of social relatedness. We have generally taken a Darwinian approach to status competition in our writings about northern violence, but one could take an approach grounded in the Marxist dialectic, Bourdieuian social theory, or any number of approaches, and while the analysis might be different, the outcome would be the same: Warfare in the north is a by-product of status competition between males, lineages, clans,

villages, and other social formations. The symbols of success in warfare, regardless of how they are analyzed and interpreted, include body parts, women, and rarely goods that are symbols of the attacked or vanquished.

Status striving and male competition have a long evolutionary history that has been analyzed in a number of important contexts (e.g., Barkow 1989; Chagnon 1988; Wrangham and Peterson 1996). Recent studies have shown that status competition permeates many aspects of modern societies, both at the local, community, or village level (Figueredo et al., 2004; Reedy-Maschner 2004) and as a measure of modern crime rates and interpersonal violence (Daly and Wilson 1988; Wilson and Daly 1985).

Trophies are still collected in war when allowed or available, such as American soldiers in Iraq acquiring Kalashnikov rifles as symbols of combat success or high school football teams stealing trophies or other symbols of status from the opposing teams. Regardless of context, this behavior has a long and specific evolutionary history that permeates many aspects of modern life. Perhaps the best example of trophy taking is in the Irish film *The War of the Buttons*, about a conflict between groups of children from two small villages where buttons stolen from the opposing group's [enemy] clothing become the baubles of prestige competition. These examples might appear far from the taking of body parts, but the fact that trophy taking must now be regulated by international convention indicates that the symbols of status acquired through warfare are still critical and important aspects of participating in conflict.

While there are no examples in the arctic as flamboyant as Pharoah Meneptha of Egypt and his acquisition of 13,240 penises in a single battle from Libyan, Sicilian, Etruscan, and Greek warriors, many of the basic conditions are much the same but at a smaller scale. Trophies, in whatever form they are collected, are powerful symbols of status, power, dominance, and success in violent conflict.

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Chapter 3

Human Trophy Taking on the Northwest Coast

An Ethnohistorical Perspective

JOAN A. LOVISEK

This chapter provides an overview of the evidence for human trophy taking on the Northwest Coast from archaeological, historical, and ethnographic records. Although trophy taking has been commonly associated with raiding and warfare, whether this was the cause or the result of these practices will be examined from an ethnohistorical perspective. The chapter examines the purposes and functions of Northwest Coast trophy taking and display, with particular regard to its relationship to warfare, slave taking, ritual, ideology and the appropriation of prestige prerogatives associated with status.

INTRODUCTION TO THE NORTHWEST COAST

The aboriginal peoples on the Northwest Coast are maritime societies situated between Yakatat Bay in Alaska to the north and Puget Sound in the state of Washington to the south (Figure 3.1). Most groups are in British Columbia, Canada. Precontact, the region had an estimated population of approximately 150,000, which was the second largest population in aboriginal North America (Ames and Maschner 1999:43; Donald 1997:17; Boyd 1990:136). The region is linguistically diverse and includes the Tlingit, who currently occupy the mainland and islands of the Alaska panhandle, but before 1906 were situated partly in British Columbia on the Dundas and Zayas Islands and on part of the western shore of Portland Canal; the Haida, on the Queen Charlotte Islands; the Tsimshian on the northern mainland coast encompassing the Nisga'a, Gitxsan, Coast Tsimshian and Southern Tsimshian; the

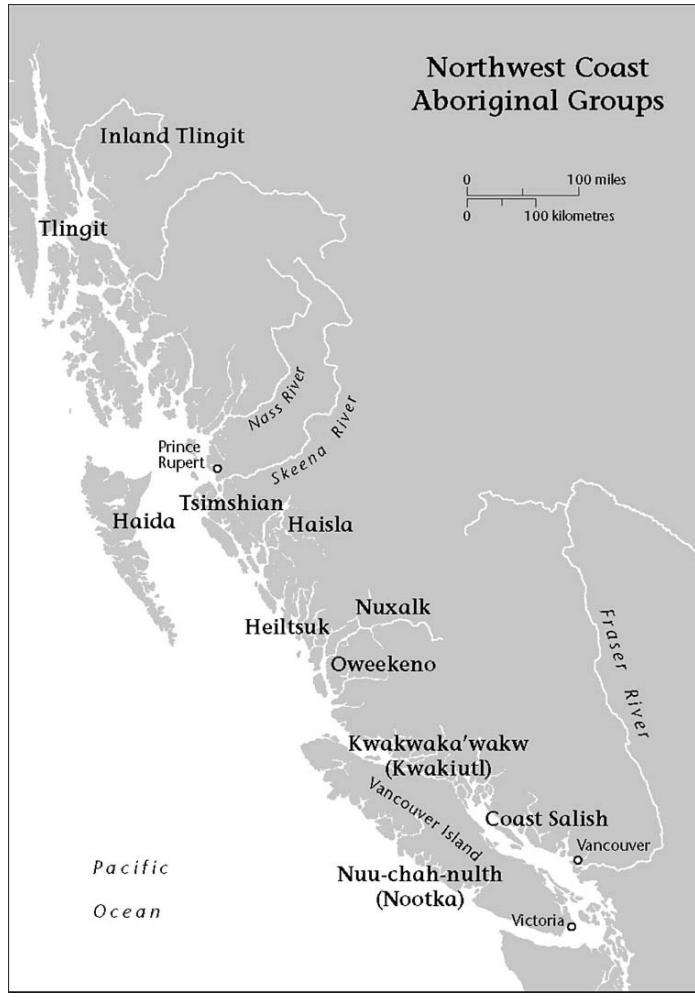

Figure 3.1. Map of Northwest Coast.

Haisla, Haihais, Heiltsuk (Bella Bella), and Owikeno [Oowekeeno] on the central mainland coast (previously identified as Northern Kwakiutl); the Nuxalk (Bella Coola) on the central mainland coast; the Kwakwaka'wakw and Kwa'giulth (collectively known as Kwakiutl) on the north and east coasts of Vancouver Island and adjacent mainland; the Nuu-chah-nulth (northern and central Nootka) and Nitinaht on the west coast of Vancouver Island; and various Coast Salish groups around the Strait of Georgia (Cybulski 1994:75; De Laguna 1990:203; Sapir 1966).

The centrally located Kwakiutl have been the most studied group over the longest time period on the Northwest Coast, but they were not the first group contacted by Europeans. The northern groups, such as the Tlingit, were probably the

earliest groups to be exposed to contact initially by the Russians in the mid eighteenth century. Sustained contact occurred with the Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth) by Spanish and British maritime explorers a half-century later (Gunther 1972; Gibson 1992:12). Currently, the best historical evidence at the time of contact is based on the Nootka, and the most complete and extensive ethnographic evidence comes from the Kwakiutl (Boas 1897; 1935–1943; 1966). The archaeological evidence of human trophy taking, however, derives primarily from the area occupied by the ethnographic Tsimshian. Therefore, careful geographical and chronological control is required when analyzing the historical and archaeological data to avoid potentially misrepresenting practices that have been previously interpreted as human trophy taking.[1]

HUMAN TROPHY TAKING IN THE LITERATURE

The subjects of human trophy taking, cannibalism, slavery, and, to a lesser extent, warfare have been inadequately treated in the literature on the Northwest Coast (see Donald 1997:65; Archer 1980; McDowell 1997; Maud 1986; Maschner 1997; Ferguson 1984; Coupland 1989; Ames and Maschner 1999; Lovisek 2007; Ruby and Brown 1989). Within the postmodernist genre of colonial discourse, the subject of human trophy taking, which projects a view of the "ignoble savage," provides an example of the negative cultural characteristics as applied to colonial peoples with the objective of demonstrating the privileged nature of colonial "civilized" society (Bracken 1997; Fee 1999).

Although several writers have suggested that cannibalism did not exist on the Northwest Coast (Fee 1999; Archer 1980; Howay 1969; Maud 1986), others have accepted the existence of cannibalism (Boas 1897; McDowell 1997; Wike 1984; Walens 1981; Donald 1997). The contrary views appear to be based on a failure to distinguish between gustatory cannibalism, that is, the eating of human flesh for food, from ritual cannibalism, the eating of flesh for ritual purposes (see Wike 1984). No similar controversy occurs over the existence of human trophy taking, primarily because the subject is rarely discussed in the literature. Drucker and Heizer (1967:127), for example, have cautioned against taking the "picturesque references" of head-taking, blood, and slaughter too literally.

Describing the Northwest Coast as inhabited by "headhunters" was common among early writers because it sold books (Collison 1915). The title of Edward S. Curtis's classic 1914 film of the Kwakiutl, *In the Land of the Head Hunters,* was scripted to attract viewers (and money), before the title was changed in the 1970s to the more politically acceptable *In the Land of the War Canoes.* Curtis emphasized the fact that the Kwakiutl once took trophy heads. Motana, the protagonist, is shown entering a grave house and dancing with a neck ring of skulls before he lays his head on a pillow of skulls in a quest for supernatural power. Despite these ritual uses of human trophies, Holm and Quimby (1980:65–66) concluded that skulls were not central features of Kwakiutl ceremonials and were mostly obtained

as war trophies; a view shared by other scholars. Curtis (1914 [1978]:98) described head hunting as the "winning of gory trophies" and the prime objective of warfare. Codere (1950:107), whose principal contribution has been to interpret Franz Boas's ethnographic work on the Kwakiutl and develop a thesis that the potlatch replaced war,[2] suggested that Kwakiutl head hunting was a form of Plains-type scalp taking. Although Codere (1950:108) alluded to a socio-cultural connection between the head or scalp representing an intermediary between the death of the enemy and the death of a tribal member, the principal objective of war and head taking was terrorism, which explained why the heads of sleeping victims or small groups were taken and why heads were attached to poles in front of the villages of the victors.

Ferguson (1984:308–310, 315), a principal investigator on the subject of the material rationale for warfare on the Northwest Coast, also discounted human trophy taking as a significant component. Although Ferguson acknowledged that head taking was often an effect of war, wars were not initiated for trophies. For Ferguson, the region-wide pattern of staking heads in front of settlements was simply a means to convey a warning to potential adversaries.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR HUMAN TROPHY TAKING

Trophy skulls have been recovered from a burial and cache that dates to the Middle Pacific Period (1850 BC–AD 250/500). This collection of 25 items included skull pieces and long bones, most of which have been associated with partial burials. The site has been identified as Prince Rupert Harbour, and is located in the ethnographic Tsimshian area. Cybulski (1978:28) suggested that most of the 25 items indicated ritualism and perhaps shamanism. Both males and females had been decapitated and some of the skulls and long bones had been modified for use as tools. Cybulski also recovered three individuals (two males, one female) dating to AD 200 from the Lachane site. Based on the cut neck vertebrae, Cybulski determined that the three victims had been decapitated (Marsden 2001:102).

According to the principal investigator Jerome Cybulski (1978:29–31), this type of bone ritualism could be explained by the Northwest Coast belief that the dead had tremendous power, coupled with the belief that the soul of a person resided in the head. For this reason, skull and skull parts represented more power than other parts of the skeleton and this is evidenced by that fact that the majority of ritual bone modifications at the Prince Rupert Harbour site were found to have been performed on the cranium.

Although Cybulski (1979:25) suggested that there are links between these human body parts found in the archaeological record and those used in the Kwakiutl *Hamatsa* or cannibal dance, the origin of the *Hamatsa* has not as yet been determined to date earlier than the nineteenth century—although an earlier form, known as the *Hamshantses,* may have preexisted the *Hamsata* (Wike 1984:250; Boas 1897:664)—nor has it been linked ethnographically to the precontact Tsimshian where the bones were recovered. A form of the *Hamatsa,* described

as "arm biting," was introduced to the Tsimshian probably from the Haisla and Heiltsuk in the early nineteenth century (Hudson's Bay Company Archives 1834; Halpin and Seguin 1990:279). Fur trader and physician William Fraser Tolmie (1963:259) reported on December 28, 1833, that he had treated two Heiltsuk (Bella Bella) victims for wounds administered from arm biting. Tolmie "dressed the wounded arms of two Indians—the wounds are on the dorsal aspect of forearms—are several square inches in extent & have been produced by the bite of the chief."

THE ETHNOHISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR HUMAN TROPHY TAKING

Human trophy taking on the Northwest Coast has been associated closely in the historical record with cannibalism, torture, human sacrifice, and general violence (Archer 1980:453,465). Early Northwest Coast mariners were not averse to exaggerating the practice of headhunting and cannibalism to deter competitors and prevent their crews from deserting to live with the Natives. Similarly Native Peoples were eager to dissuade Euro-Americans from trading with competing groups by describing their competitors as cannibals (Archer 1980; Inglis and Haggarty 2000:99).

According to Archer (1980:465) early Euro-American observers did not distinguish between cannibalism and human trophy taking and assumed that all trophy taking was evidence of cannibalism. The earliest explorers to the Northwest Coast believed that acts which involved the offering of human body parts for barter was indicative of both warfare and cannibalism because the severed hands and heads were considered fragments of enemies (McDowell 1997:xvii, 40–41, 46, 49, 50; Archer 1989:474). Archer (1980:466) has speculated that perhaps the Nootka had suspected that the early Euro-American traders were in fact cannibals, because they kept asking about severed hands and skulls.

Although heads comprise the principal form of human trophy taking that is documented ethnographically on the Northwest Coast (Boas 1897; Codere 1950; Boas 1966:105; Drucker 1951; de Laguna 1990; Suttles 1990:465; Krause 1956:172–173), the historical record indicates that among the Nootka of the western coast of Vancouver Island, the taking of hands, mostly right hands, was a practice that had occurred before the early contact period ca. 1774. Of all identified body parts offered to Euro-Americans in a 14-year period at the commencement of direct contact, most were hands, but were sometimes accompanied by heads (Wike 1984:245–6). The hands observed by early contact explorers were in various states—fresh, smoked, dried, and specially preserved (Archer 1980:465). The dried and preserved hands suggest that the practice predated Euro-American contact.

Captain James Cook, the first European to spend some time with the Nootka, described them as cannibals for their possession of human trophy heads and hands, which they brought to the ships to barter (Inglis and Haggarty 2000:99;

Wike 1984). In April 1778, Cook wrote that he had convincing proof that the Natives engaged in frequent and bloody wars "from the vast number of human skulls which they brought to sell" (Cook 1784:247, 263–264). This barter was not only witnessed by Captain Charles Clerk, but he also bought a human head for the price of two nails (Archer 1980:461–462).

The body parts offered for barter included heads, some still fresh with flesh and hair attached, and preserved hands and limbs. In 1786, Captain James Strange visited Nootka Sound where he met the Nootka warrior, Clamata, who was said to have killed 28 enemies in the "last ten moons." Clamata took Strange to a secluded spot and showed him a basket containing three hands and a head, which he offered as barter. Strange wrote that this transaction was a common and frequent practice and commented on the fact that the heads and hands had been preserved. In attempting to understand the purpose of taking hands, Clamata informed Strange through sign language that the hands were good to eat. To communicate this, Clamata ate a strip of meat from one of the preserved hands. However, in response to Strange's obvious disgust, Clamata assured him that he would not eat him and that he only ate the hands of enemies, which in Strange's translation, was a practice "acceptable in the Eyes of Heaven." Subsequently, Strange attempted to stop the sale of hands and heads as he thought the trade in these items would only induce the "savages" to purposely engage in war specifically for body parts for the purposes of barter (Ayyar et al., 1982:86–87).

Another early observer, American fur trader, Alexander Walker, reported that the Nootka collected hands which were then rubbed in a white substance and tied up in leaves or bark. They were kept, in his words, like preserved hams in boxes (Archer 1980:465; Walker 1982:82). Walker had been offered two hands for sale by a female and there are suggestions in his account that the Nootka offered many hands at high prices. There is also some indication that Nootka females were known to cut and disfigure human bodies for body parts (Fisher and Bumsted 1982:185).

In 1788, Captain John Meares reported that the Nootka chief, Maquinna, possessed several severed hands and Chief Callicum used a bag of skulls as a pillow (Archer 1980:467). In addition to heads and hands, the Spanish explorer Jacinto Caamaño reported ca. 1792 that he had seen the arms and bones of children offered for barter among the Nootka. A native informant, Natzape, described the bones, preserved hands, and other body parts as battlefield trophies (Archer 1993:150–152).

Captain George Vancouver (1801:77), the first recorded European to visit the Kwakiutl, described in 1792 how he had found on a low point of land two upright 15-foot-high poles, each impaled with a freshly decapitated human head:

> [T]he hair and flesh were nearly perfect and the heads appeared to carry the evidence of fury or revenge, as, in driving the stakes through the throat to the cranium, the sagittal with part of the scalp, was borne on their points some inches above the rest of the skull. Between the stakes a fire had been made,

> and near it some calcined bones were observed, but one of these appearances enabled us to satisfy ourselves, concerning the matter in which the bodies had been disposed of.

Archibald Menzies, a botanist who accompanied Vancouver, described the same scene:

> [W]e saw two human heads impaled upon the points of two poles erected a few yards asunder & about twelve feet high, part of the Skin about the Chin was hanging down, but the rest of the face teeth & black long hair was entire in each. The poles entered under the Chin pierced their Vertex, & in their formation, the poles had a degree of uniformity that required a good deal of trouble (Newcombe 1928:24–25; 76).

Whether these poles were constructed purposely for hanging heads or were used for other purposes, is not clear from the records. The poles were described as tridents and were reported and sketched in several other locations without impaled heads (Newcombe 1928:24–25, 76).

When American sailor John R. Jewitt was nearly decapitated by the Nootka in 1804, he described the weapon used on him as an axe. Jewitt's captain and shipmates, comprising 25 men of the infamous *Boston*, were all decapitated and their heads were placed in a line on the quarter deck of the ship. Jewitt was later asked by the Nootka chief, Maquinna, to identify the heads by name (Jewitt 1807:4; 1816:32).

These examples of human trophy taking were considered by the early Euro-Americans as evidence of trade, warfare, and increasingly of cannibalism. As Archer (1980:467) has concluded:

> [W]hile the ubiquitous severed hands continued to appear in the fur traders' and explorers' journals, the stories about cannibalism went through transformations as the trophy-taking variety changed to the more horrendous ritual cannibal ceremonies.

How much of the barter in human body parts was in fact stimulated by Euro-American interest is difficult to assess (McDowell 1997:125). The fresh hands may indicate the influence of market forces and increased raiding. The preserved hands suggest an earlier precontact practice which may also be related to raiding. The barter of hands and skulls apparently stopped around 1792, either because Euro-American curiosity was assuaged or because Spanish mariners, who replaced the British were not interested in human relics (Wike 1984:249).

One of the significant changes in warfare on the Northwest Coast in the historical period was a shift to predatory raiding for slaves as the fur trade escalated and the commercial value of slaves increased. This was primarily motivated by a shift from trading sea otter pelts to land animal pelts. Coastal groups without access to land animals started to trade slaves for pelts and pelts for Euro-American trade goods (Donald 1997; Lovisek 2007). As status and prestige came to be associated with material gain, it is conceivable that human trophy taking became

less random and more dedicated toward specific enemies of equal or greater status from whose death and dismemberment, property, and privileges could be appropriated.

Although no ethnographic descriptions of the taking of hands have been found to substantiate the purpose of this practice, the preserved hands may have served as both trophies and charms. which were used during times of sickness or at memorial feasts (Archer 1980:465; McDowell 1997:48, 50–53).

G. M. Sproat (1868:187–188), a businessman and later Indian Reserve Commissioner, suggested that the dried human hands offered for sale "may have been trophies, or charms, preserved by the Natives under some superstitious feeling." Wike attempted to reconcile the reports of the early Euro-American mariners with ethnographic evidence by suggesting that by offering hands, the Nootka were in fact offering body parts that they knew were either useless or toxic (Wike 1984; McDowell 1997:123). This hypothesis is based on the ethnographic account that the Kwakiutl believed that the ingestion of certain body parts, like hands and feet, caused sudden death. According to a Kwakiutl informant (Boas 1897:441) "the skin is cut around the wrists and ankles, as they must not eat the hands and feet. It is believed that else they would die immediately." Wike (1984:244–246) speculated that the offering of hands to Euro-Americans was either a "covert attack" or a test to see if the Euro-Americans would eat the hands. Although Wike suggested that these "poisonous appendages" were offered not only for profit but to test Euro-American vulnerability or gullibility, she provides no explanation for the purpose of the hands that had been preserved for a long period of time, or the relationship, if any, between preserved body parts and Kwakiutl cannibalism (Wike 1984:244–246). There is as yet no direct historical evidence that the Kwakiutl offered hands (or feet) for barter to Euro-Americans.

Unlike hands, the taking of heads as trophies among the Nootka has been documented in several ethnographic accounts obtained by native informants (Sapir and Swadesh 1978:353, 381, 417, 430, 434). The most common reason reported in the ethnographic and historical records to obtain trophy items is prestige enhancement associated with war. The taking and display of human heads improved the status of the community as the decapitator received newly acquired privileges, prestige, and potentially property in the form of resource procurement rights, depending on the status of the victim. In a war account recorded in 1908, but which referred to an earlier unspecified time involving an incident between the Bella Bella and Owikeno, only the chiefs' heads (15 in total) were decapitated. The informant was able to identify the chiefs by name from the heads (Provincial Archives of British Columbia, Newcombe Papers, 1908:14).

During the 1850s, head taking continued to be reported in the historical record, but there were also incidents where decapitation occurred but the heads were not always taken, particularly in the central and northern parts of the Northwest Coast where warfare was more widespread (Lovisek 2007; Ames and Maschner 1999; Maschner 1997; Coupland 1989). It appears that persons of status were targeted as human trophies and their heads were taken for these

persons, usually identified by their countenance or from information obtained from the newly enslaved, owned important rituals, songs, dances, and property that transferred upon death to the victor. Although there is one ethnographic Nootka (Clayoquot) account of female heads being taken as trophies, this appears to have been associated exclusively with the childish raiding activities of young inexperienced males (Sapir and Swadesh 1978:443). Females and children were not usually decapitated, especially as the value of slaves increased during the fur trade (Donald 1997:112).

The early historical record for the Nootka has emphasized the taking of hands. In the records for a later period (ca. 1850), which corresponds to the land fur trade period and increased predatory raiding for slaves, only heads were reported as being taken as trophies. On October 6, 1849, a Kwakiutl war party returned to Beaver Harbour (near Fort Rupert) with "14 skulls and about 30 prisoners" (Galois 1994:45). Hudson's Bay Company trader, J. S. Helmcken also reported in 1850 that Kwakiutl raiding expeditions were undertaken for the "purpose of taking heads and captives of enemies" (Provincial Archives of British Columbia 1857:67).

When Admiral Prevost, then captain of the *H.M.S. Satellite,* made his first voyage up the Northwest coast around 1850 to the newly established fur trading post at Fort Rupert, he reported finding the heads and decapitated bodies of Kwakiutl scattered along the shore. He was subsequently informed that a fleet of Haida on their way south had attacked the Kwakiutl and carried off a number of captives as slaves (Collison 1915:88, 89). On April 13, 1850, fur trader George Blenkinsop, reported that the Bella Coola (Nuxalk) were discovered near Fort Rupert with the purpose of being "revenged for the attack on them last fall when 14 were decapitated" (Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Fort Rupert Journal, 1849–1850).

HUMAN TROPHY TAKING: RITUAL AND BELIEF

Although the historical evidence, and to a lesser extent the archaeological evidence, indicates that human trophy taking occurred at an undetermined time prior to Euro-American contact, for human trophy taking to have anthropological significance it should reflect an organized coherent form of violence in which the severed body part is given a specific ritual meaning. This act should be consecrated and commemorated in a culturally appropriate way (Hoskins, 1996:2).

Northwest Coast beliefs integrate ideas of the soul, which physically resides on the crown of the head,[3] with dismemberment and reincarnation. Kwakiutl belief conveys the idea that the proper treatment of the soul, which is described as about the size of a thumb although it can enlarge when travelling, required preparation of the head to prevent the spirit from returning to the body through the head and then to the esophagus. The tongue in particular is considered to be a life force of the body that communicates with supernatural power through singing and whistling, for example, and appears as a significant motif in art forms. The

tongue also visibly protrudes at death (Jopling 1989:120–121). In Kwakiutl belief, biological death occurs when the soul separates from the body. Decapitation was the proper treatment of enemies because dismemberment prevented the soul from returning to the body and harming the decapitator. After decapitation, the heads were often sprinkled with eagle down, an act of utmost respect and communication with the spirit world (Walens 1981:110; Mauzé 1994:180; Goldman 1981:50; Jacknis 1991:193). Curtis (1915 [1978]:107–108) recounted the practice among the Lekwiltok, considered the most warlike of the Kwakiutl, of dusting the down from eagles on the bleeding skulls of the recently decapitated before impaling the heads on top of seven foot stakes. Eagle down, after it had been rolled into a ball and tied on a string, was also used to represent the soul during the Kwakiutl "soul catcher dance" [*Ba'baqoayul*] (Boas 1897:561).

The Kwakiutl also distinguished between the "individual" and the "person." The individual is composed of a body and soul, but the person is composed of a body, soul, and a name. While the soul can be reincarnated into individuals and persons, only the names of mythical ancestors were reincarnated into persons. Among the ranked Kwakiutl, chiefs and nobles were considered persons, while commoners were considered individuals (Mauzé 1994:177–179). By taking the head of a person, that is, an individual with a name, a Kwakiutl could essentially attain "personhood" (see Mauss 1985 [1938]). This important distinction may explain why, in the historical and ethnographic record, some heads were scattered and abandoned, while others were treated reverentially.

The principle that death only occurred when the body was broken apart or dismembered is critical to Kwakiutl belief. This principle applied to the killing of food, particularly the staple food, salmon, where it was the task of females to kill the salmon by cutting off its head. Dismemberment released the souls of the fish from its body, which allowed it to be reborn or reincarnated in the classic sense of transformation. This belief is reflected in mortuary practices characterized by the disposal of corpses in trees or elevated scaffolds or by exposure, where it was the sacred task of ravens, the trickster or transformer figure on the Northwest Coast, to dismember the corpse. For the Tlingit, however, who cremated their dead except for shamans, the elevated disposal of the remains of a shaman involved the separation of the head from the body and separate treatment of each part (Cole 1985:171; Krause 1956:160).

The Yakutat (Tlingit) treated a shaman's head separately from his body by covering the head with a large basket woven of branches while the body was placed in a small grave house which stood on four posts. The head and body were placed in separate boxes. A heavy pole was driven into each end of the box containing the body and diagonally into the ground so that the upper ends met and were tied together with a cord. The poles were connected about two feet below this tie by a crosspiece. On this crosspiece, the box with the head was placed and tied with a cord (Krause 1956:160).

De Laguna (1960:156–157) also reported that after the massacre of some Tlingit at Wrangell by the Kagwantan of Sitka ca. 1852:

> [T]he victors cut off the heads of the most important victims and carefully preserved them. These heads were displayed on their triumphal return to Sitka and were redeemed by the relatives of the slain men. Some of the heads, however, are said to remain to this day in the possession of the Sitka Indians.

As noted, the act of decapitation as dismemberment severed the spinal and esophageal connections between the mouth and the stomach, which made it impossible for the soul to reenter the body. The separation of the head from the esophagus is metaphorically significant because images of orality pervade Kwakiutl symbolism from such metaphors of "swallowing property" by the *Hamatsa* or cannibal dancers, "swallowing up" other tribes or guests at potlatches, the mythical belief of resurrection through vomiting (Boas 1897:559; Goldman 1975:149,150,161; but see Berman 2000:54,91 ft. 23) the spiritual and aesthetic importance of the tongue (Jopling 1989:120) and the transformation of people with property (persons) through acquisition of their soul by decapitation. The act of decapitation permanently[4] separated the soul from the esophagus.

The Kwakiutl practiced decapitation because dismemberment released the spirit or soul from the body. If not released, the spirit or soul could do harm. When a Kwakiutl decapitated an enemy he became possessed by the dead man's spirit and began to dance and acquire the victim's names, crests, and supernatural powers. By killing enemies and taking heads, the warrior in essence acquired supernatural power (Walens 1981:84,148; Jopling 1989:38). Head hunting thus provided trophy takers with protection by preventing the avenging soul of the deceased from returning to the body. According to Rick Chacon (2004, personal communication), the Achuar Jivaro share a similar belief that the avenging soul of the victim exited via the head, in this case, through the mouth. This accounts for the practice of sewing the lips shut with fibres on Jivaro shrunken heads, thereby preventing the soul from escaping. This would appear to support the idea that the head was viewed by some indigenous peoples as a container of the soul.

The Northwest Coast belief that the dead had power is also illustrated by the Nootka (Mowachaht) who created shrines of human skulls to attract drift whales into their territory (McDowell 1997:73; Drucker 1965:155–156). The whaler's shrine was a repository for 16 human skulls and a house of purification rituals for the Nootka chiefly lineages that had the exclusive rights to hunt whales (Jonaitis 1999:3,5).

The French explorer, Camile de Roquefeuil ca. 1817 reported finding a burying place for the great Nootka chiefs in which human skulls were placed on the backs of carved wooden whales. The chiefs would be interred by burying their bodies eight feet deep and after a certain time the skulls would be unearthed and placed on the back of a whale in memory of the deceased's harpooning skills. The location, known as the *tchê-ha*, was considered a site in which only chiefs may enter "to salute the souls of his ancestors." When a chief is successful at whale hunting, he visits the *tchê-ha* to pay homage to the sun and to offer his ancestors part of the whale (Jonaitis 1999:23–24). This practice underscored the belief that

when a dead whale returns, it is considered to be a reincarnated chief who gives himself to the people, so that they may live.

When the whale returns alive to the Nootka (Mowachaht), however, the whale is not killed, at least in contemporary times. The Mowachaht people recently became the subject of a well-publicized dispute involving a young male Orca whom they call Tsux'iit (Su-keet), but who was commonly known as Luna the whale. Chief Mike Maquinna of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht believes that Tsux'iit embodies the spirit of their late Chief Ambrose Maquinna, who said that he would return to them as a killer whale. The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans wanted to remove Luna/Tsux'iit from Gold River, Nootka Sound, to rejoin its pod on the opposite side of Vancouver Island. The Mowachaht/Muchalaht objected to this plan, as they wanted Tsux'iit's fate left to nature and proper spiritual treatment.[5]

The Kwakiutl and the Haida chiefs also had ceremonial houses with guardian skulls and were reported to sleep on beds of skulls. These pillows contained the skulls of chiefs and ancient hunters (Wike 1952:100). However, Chief Kowe of the Tlingit, informed Captain Charles Bishop in the 1790s that they "cut the heads off their Enemies and Scalp them. When cleaned the Skulls are deposited in their great houses as trophies of their Prowess and Victory" (Bishop 1967:84). Although Kwakiutl ritual cannibalism used dried or mummified corpses, there is no direct evidence that body parts from enemies were eaten. Skulls obtained during raids were used for ritual display (Boas 1897:406, 411; Suttles 1991:100).

Northwest Coast groups accorded special attention to the head as a form of status display. Head deformation, usually in the form of flattening, was widespread, as was the wearing of labrets (or lip plugs), which have been described as emulating a tongue (Jopling 1989:121), and highly decorated combs. These practices reflect the importance of the head as an indicator of prestige or status. This provided a means to distinguish slaves from nobles, or persons (people with property including names) from individuals or commoners (Gunther 1992:30–31; Cybulski 1978).

Heads were also a central focus of native iconography and appear on war canoes as white chalk figures "representing eagles, whales, human heads & c" and dagger blades (Jewitt 1816:86, 98). Human skulls, both real and carved from wood, were also prominent in Kwakiutl art and ceremonials (Walens 1981:82; Hawthorn 1994; McDowell 1997:136) and were used as shamans' rattles (the *Solatlala*).[6] Carved ceremonial wooden skulls were used to adorn headdresses, masks, head rings, and rattles (Boas 1897:503–504; Hawthorn 1994:95, 100–101; 120–123). Skull (and tongue) imagery was common not only on Kwakiutl ritual art but also among the Bella Bella (Heiltsuk), from whom the *Hamatsa*, as a cannibal dance, originated and which the Kwakiutl obtained around 1837 (Boas 1897, 425–431, 664; Black 1989).[7]

The most detailed accounts of trophy taking were obtained from Kwakiutl informants in the narratives produced by George Hunt, who reported his findings to Franz Boas (and to Edward Curtis and others). Although the historical records link human trophy taking with war and cannibalism, there is ethnographic support

that there was also a ritual component to the taking of trophy heads, particularly for the Kwakiutl. This ritual component links war, ceremony, and belief with dismemberment and reincarnation.

The change in season from the secular resource gathering season to that of the sacred winter season was marked by the commencement of various ceremonies by most if not all of the Northwest Coast groups. Winter was the season of hunger, war, predation, and death. The Winter Ceremonial stood between game and predator, summer wealth and winter hunger, life and death (Berman 2000:75,78). The secular season for the Kwakiutl was *Ba'xus,* but the sacred winter season, *Tse'tas'aeqa*, was initiated by the cutting off of a head by a warrior. The act of decapitation would release or excite the Winter Ceremonial spirits, which became animated in the warrior (Boas 1897:429; also see Berman 2000:58–59). Upon the return of the warriors to their village, they would place their cedar bark neck rings, which may have been used to attach the heads, over the heads of some females, who would then make a ceremonial pivot holding the heads, which is similar to the movement used in the Winter Ceremonial dance. The females were followed by the warriors, who would also make the ceremonial pivot (Holm and Quimby 1980:66, 96).[8]

Among the mythical creatures closely associated with trophy heads is the Kwakiutl spirit known as "man eater," or *Baxbakwalanuxsiae*, which translates as "man eater at the mouth of the River" (Goldman 1975:10). This creature appears during the Winter Ceremonial in the *Hamatsa* or cannibal dances, which is the highest-ranking Kwakiutl dancing society. In some dances the head of the dancer was ritually decapitated and the decapitator would display a carved human head bearing a resemblance to the person whose head had been "cut" (Boas 1897:491). The Man Eater is depicted as a creature comprised of gnawing mouths, who was assisted in its rapacious activities by three avian raptor figures. This creature represented hunger and immorality and is akin to the *windigo*, an Algonquian cannibal spirit, which is also associated with winter, starvation, and cannibalism (Wike 1984:253). Trophy skulls were also ritually "fed" to the Man Eater during the Winter Ceremonial *Hamatsa* dance (Walens 1981:171, 172, 175).

In the Kwakiutl narratives collected by George Hunt, which can be dated to 1849, enemies were sometimes described as "salmon" who were "sleeping" at the time of an attack (see Berman 2000). It was the task of the lead Kwakiutl warrior, whose name translated as "merciless man," to take heads and slaves. He carried a small bundle of cedar branches around his neck, which was called a "slave rope." These were used to hang the heads by their lower jaws and to bind slaves.[9] Decapitation occurred by a circling stroke of a knife or war axe which cut close to the skull and usually left a small patch of hair on the back of the head. Those warriors who captured heads were elevated in status to positions from which to compete with others for rank in potlatches (Curtis 1915 [1978]:100–104; Boas 1966:117).

During such an expedition, the head would be cut off, held with the teeth and shaken, which apparently replicated the actions of the Man Eater,

Baxbakwalanuxsiae (Boas 1897:664; Hawthorn 1994:263). The heads were then placed in baskets and transported back to their village in canoes (McDowell 1997:59). The taking of heads was undoubtedly facilitated by canoe transportation, which was the principal method used on the Northwest Coast. The war party returned to the village where there would be a ceremonial counting of the heads (Jopling 1989:39; Boas 1935–1943:228). The sons of the warriors were then sent into the forest to cut poles and gather cedar to tie the heads to a frame which was constructed to hang the heads. Such a frame was constructed near Fort Rupert ca. 1849:

> When all the heads had been put on, after the scalps had been taken off to be dried by the owner in his house, then they took eagle-down and put it on the heads and after they had done so, it was called "cut off heads hung up." Now they remained there until they would fall down and they were seen by visitors from the various tribes who came to Fort Rupert (Boas 1921:1373–1375).

The Kwakiutl took scalps from the heads and stored them in boxes in the same way they stored animal skins. These were ritually disposed during the Winter Ceremonial *Hamatsa* (Boas 1921:1379; Boas 1966:105–106; Curtis 1914 [1978]:105; Walens 1981:171, 172, 175).

Although human heads were used in the *Hamatsa* or cannibal dance during the Winter Ceremonial, they were later replaced by hemlock and cedar wreaths, and the ceremony was modified by throwing wreaths (rather than heads) into a fire while calling out the name of the enemy. This was followed by the shooting of arrows into a fire in a ceremony called *yi'lxoa,* which translates as "placing the head of an enemy on a pole" (Boas 1897:522). By about 1865, heads were replaced by coppers in the Kwakiutl Winter Ceremonial, which were large sheets of hammered copper of a distinctive T shape which ranged in size from one and a half to three feet long and commonly had a design of a face incised on the top portion (Codere 1990:369 Jopling 1989:99, 129, 130; Donald 1997:178; Niblack 1890:319; Boas 1897:522). In the various winter ceremonies associated with coppers, and later the secular potlatch (Lovisek 2007) the destruction of a copper mirrored the destruction of a human body in the form of an enemy. First the "head" or the top portion of the copper was removed, after which the "body" parts were cut up. The formal act of breaking a copper was an act of aggressive status display that essentially "killed" the copper by breaking or dismembering it. The subsequent act of riveting the broken pieces together "reincarnated" the copper as a living being which increased its value both symbolically and materially in potlatches (Walens 1981:149; Niblack 1890:319).

Human trophy taking was certainly not acceptable to the early nineteenth-century British colonialists, who would not have appreciated its cultural meaning. The last recorded episode of human trophy taking on the Northwest Coast appears to be about 1860. The demise of trophy taking on the Northwest Coast can be associated with the increasing value placed on Euro-American trade goods from which to obtain prestige, which resulted in a shift from the ritual distribution of

goods during the Winter Ceremonial to the development of a secular potlatch,[10] the increasing importance of predatory raiding in which war captives were kept alive as slaves and exchanged for trade goods, the intimidating presence of the British military in the form of gunboats, population decline associated with epidemics, and the influence of missionaries.

THE SCRAMBLE FOR SKULLS

Shortly after the period when trophy heads were no longer taken on the Northwest Coast by Native Peoples, skulls became the object of scientific research by ethnologists, anthropologists, and agents acting for various museums. In 1846, Joseph Henry had been appointed as the first executive officer of the Smithsonian Institution. Henry's interest in ethnology led him in 1863 to instruct George Gibbs to prepare a circular to be distributed to various institutions of the Smithsonian's interest in Indian skulls, implements, and art. The skulls were to be obtained, according to the circular, "without offence to the living."[11]

Although it is not known how many skulls were taken from the Northwest Coast as a direct result of Henry's request in 1863, most of the objects by 1875–1876 that were collected on the Northwest Coast did not appear to include many skulls (Cole 1985:16, 30). However, the increased attention on grave goods, skulls, and skeletons motivated by profit, later became an activity anything but respectful to the living or dead (Cole 1985:9, 11). The growing popularity of anthropology as a museum-based science, in conjunction with the demands of the American phrenological market in which human skulls were seen to reflect human intellectual and moral capacity, exacerbated a market demand for skulls (Stocking 1987:26; Cole 1985:39, 110, 120).

In 1888, Franz Boas was funded through Horatio Hale by the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the Canadian government to undertake physical anthropological studies of the Northwest Coast which were to include a "description of the physical traits" (Cole 1999:111; Gruber 1959:384–385). In keeping with the principal anthropological method of the time, ethnographic salvage, Boas determined that the appropriate methodology to obtain the required physical anthropological data could be achieved through the collecting of human remains, or more accurately, grave robbing. Although Boas found the practice repugnant, this method of procuring physical anthropological data, which would prove useful for his later anthropometrical and linguistic work, was apparently the accepted scientific practice at the time (Cole 1985:119; Cole 1999:111–112; Oulsey and Jantz 2001:257–258).

Boas collected hundreds of skulls during the Jesup North Pacific Expedition in 1897, for both money and museums in what has been aptly described as a "scramble for skulls and skeletons." Most of the skulls and skeletons were removed from graves without the consent of the Native People (Cole 1985:119, 120, 147, 154, 286, 307–308; Cole 1999:112).

DISCUSSION

This overview of human trophy taking on the Northwest Coast has considered the subject within an ethnohistorical perspective. The indigenous cultural elaboration associated with the taking of human trophies demonstrates that the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies along much of the Northwest Coast was an aboriginal practice associated with soul reincarnation and prestige acquisition. The taking and staking of heads was a widespread practice recorded among the Nootka, Kwakiutl, Tsimshian, and Haida (Boas 1897; Sapir and Swadesh 1978:353, 381, 417, 430, 434; Swadesh 1948; Bishop 1967:218; Beresford and Dixon 1968:218). Although hands and limbs were also reported to have been taken during the early contact period, the geographic extent of this practice is not known, and there is little supporting ethnographic evidence to explain the purpose of the practice.

The ethnohistorical record suggests that human trophy taking changed over time depending on the importance of raiding and predatory slavery, the fur trade market, and the acquisition of status. Human trophy taking on the Northwest Coast was closely associated with war. It was also connected to prestige enhancement, which was directly linked among the Kwakiutl to the sacred winter season and the Winter Ceremonial, and among the Nootka to whaling. The act of decapitation for the Kwakiutl was related to beliefs concerning the importance of the head as a container of the soul, and that the proper treatment of the dead required dismemberment. The actual taking of the heads as trophies appears to be related to whether the decapitated were persons, that is, individuals with bodies, souls, and property like names, or just individuals, persons with only a body and soul.

Although there is archaeological evidence of human trophy taking in the precontact period, the findings are geographically limited and of specific but broad time periods and as such, cannot be readily analyzed through a direct historical approach. There may, however, be interpretative value to future archaeological finds from the ethnohistorical sources and ethnographic interpretations presented in this chapter. There may be connections between trophy taking which involve the dismemberment of certain body parts, prestige enhancement, war and mortuary practices, especially tree burials and its evidence in the archaeological record.

Smith (1997:257), for example, has suggested that human trophy taking as a prestige-motivated activity may prove to be an important variable in documenting incipient social complexity because it may be linked to differential mortuary treatment. Burial practices for example, changed significantly from midden burials in the period AD 500–1000, which led Ames and Maschner (1999:95–96, 256) to speculate that the coast-wide change in burial practice may be associated with other changes in social complexity, which in turn coincided with the escalation in warfare. More archaeological evidence of human trophy taking on the Northwest Coast will be required to draw and relate conceptual parallels from data in the historical and ethnographic record.

NOTES

1. The historical record is dominated by English records from British and American sources. There are obvious gaps in the historical records that come from a lack of analysis of Cyrillic (Russian) sources (see Gibson 1992:xiii), Chinese written records, Spanish records (but see Archer 1980) and, most importantly, the native oral traditions of which the collaborative works of Franz Boas and George Hunt are a principal resource.
2. For an ethnohistorical reexamination of Codere's thesis, see Lovisek (2007).
3. According to Drucker (1951:156), the Nootka believe the soul resides in the brain.
4. The soul could leave the body at night during dreaming.
5. In early March 2006, Luna was accidentally sucked into the propeller of a tugboat and died.
6. Attendants to the *Hamatsa* sometimes carried rattles in the form of severed human heads which were used to pacify the cannibal dancer.
7. This date is based on an estimate provided by Boas (1897:664) that the attack occurred "about 60 years ago," which is deducted from the date of publication of his study, 1897. There is as yet no corroborative historical evidence to support this date.
8. Contemporary Kwakiutl have recognized that the wreaths represent the number of heads taken (Holm and Quimby 1980:96).
9. The cedar branches were probably hung around the neck in the form of a wreath.
10. The Kwakiutl Winter Ceremonial changed when blankets replaced animal skins and human sacrifice. This resulted in the emergence of a secular potlatch sometime after 1862 (Lovisek forthcoming).This view holds that the potlatch as ethnographically described and analyzed through the Boasian perspective is not an aboriginal trait and could be productively analyzed as a postcontact cargo cult.
11. The original circular containing the instructions can be found in the *Annual Reports of the Smithsonian Institute*, Miscellaneous Collections, v. 7, no. 106 (Washington, DC, 1863).

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Chapter 4

Ethnographic and Linguistic Evidence for the Origins of Human Trophy Taking in California

PATRICIA M. LAMBERT

"Scalps were taken in the greater part of California, brought home in triumph, and celebrated over, usually by a dance around a pole" (Kroeber 1976:843); thus concluded the great California ethnographer Alfred Kroeber on the human trophy taking in his lengthy treatise, *Handbook of the Indians of California*. At the time of his study of the cultural elements of California's indigenous peoples, California was or had recently been occupied by over 50 tribal groups (Figure 4.1) representing six major language stocks/families and numerous languages and dialects (Dixon and Kroeber 1919; Heizer 1978: ix; Kroeber 1976; Moratto 1984; Shipley 1978). It was then, as now, an ethnically and linguistically diverse landscape. For this reason, the indigenous landscape of California provides an ideal backdrop for examining the processes by which cultural traits such as human trophy taking are developed, introduced, adopted, modified, rejected, or eliminated as they move across social boundaries. The purpose of this chapter is: to document human trophy-taking behavior in indigenous societies of California and to examine the relationship between historic patterns of trophy taking and the geographic distribution of the six major language groups, with an eye on elucidating the origins and antiquity of the practice.

The taking of human trophies is a war-related practice found in many societies past and present (Bridges et al. 2000; Darlington 1939; Harner 1972; Hassig 1992; Murphy et al. 2002; Owsley 1994; also see other chapters in this volume).

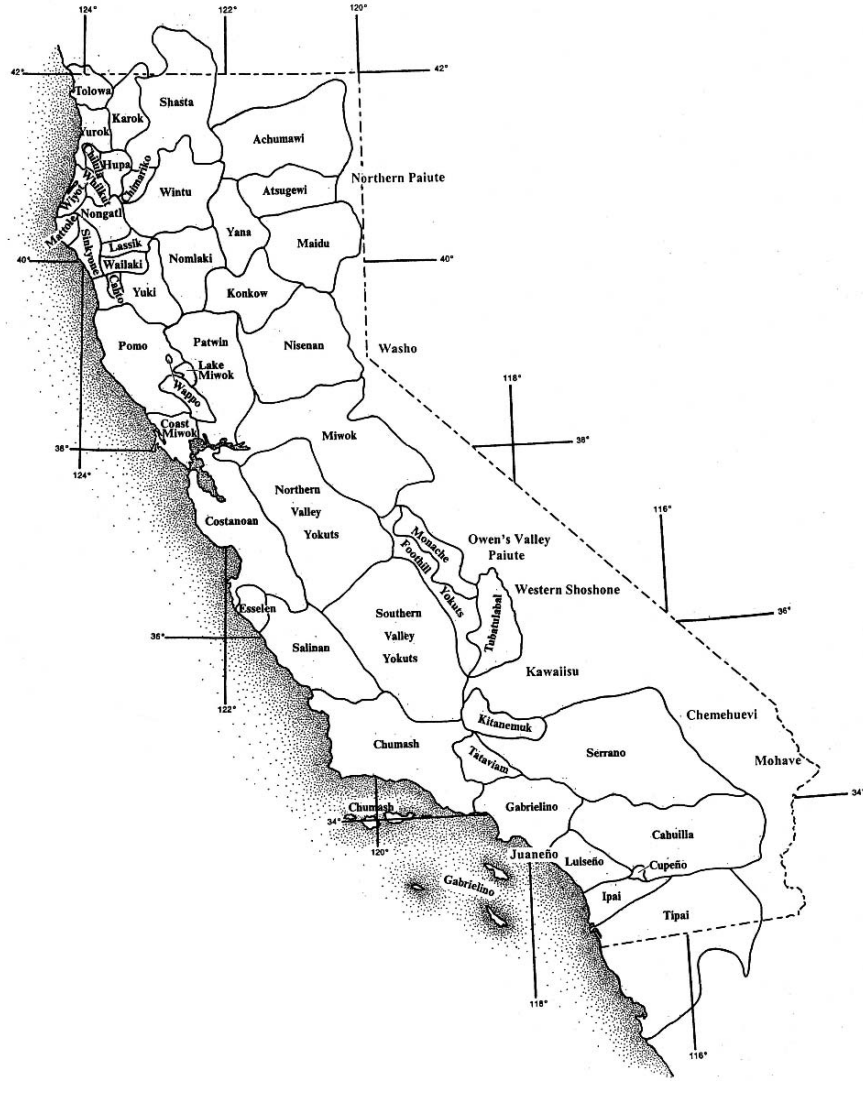

Figure 4.1. Geographic location of California Indian tribes included in the study. The map is intended as a guide rather than as an authoritative representation of actual territories at any one time. Base map reproduced from the *Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8: California* (Heizer 1978: ix), with the permission of the Smithsonian Institution Press.

Although any body part can be removed for this purpose, the head or a portion thereof appears to have been the most common target of trophy seekers before the practice was suppressed in many world regions. A quick perusal of the ethnographic literature indicates that this was also the case in native California, where whole heads or full scalps were commonly taken from enemy warriors on the battlefield (Heizer 1978; Heizer and Whipple 1971; Kroeber 1976). Why the head

in particular was selected probably has to do with the fact that it is the most identifiable part of the body and thus most symbolic of the life taken. The head conveys the social identity and position of the victim and therefore is an obvious body part to retain for purposes of revenge and display. It remains open to debate, however, whether or not this explains its prominence as a war trophy in California and throughout many regions of the Americas.

It is clear from the literature that not all societies have practiced human trophy taking, even within the context of warfare, and those that take trophies do not necessarily target the head. This raises the larger question about the origins of the practice of head-taking. Did it emerge independently in many different societies in both Old and New World contexts due to a basic human need for revenge and a shared recognition of the head's usefulness for this purpose, or does the practice trace back to one or a few points of origin where unique historical events led to its development? If the latter is true, then patterns of trophy taking may follow patterns of linguistic affiliation, to the extent that the spread of languages reflects the spread of people and/or their cultural traditions (see Bellwood 1997).

Ultimately, this question will have to be resolved at a much higher level than the current study. The goal of this research is to begin the examination of broader patterns of warfare-related cultural behavior, such as the taking of human trophies in war, by documenting patterns in one North American culture area: California.

LINGUISTIC HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA

With as many as 80 "mutually unintelligible tongues" spoken in its hills and valleys, indigenous California was one of the most linguistically complex regions of the world, rivaling even New Guinea in its concentrated linguistic diversity (Shipley 1978:80). Although agreement has yet to be reached regarding the finer details of linguistic classification in California, most scholars agree that six major language stocks/families (Figure 4.2) were represented by indigenous languages spoken at the time of European contact: Algic (Algonkin), Athapascan, Hokan, Penutian, Uto-Aztecan, and Yukian (Kroeber 1923, 1976; Moratto 1984; Shipley 1978).

Hokan and Penutian were the most widely distributed of these languages and accounted for most (∼74%) of the languages spoken in the California culture area proper (Figure 4.2) (Moratto 1984; Shipley 1978). Algic, Na-Dene, and Uto-Aztecan stocks were represented by a number of sociolinguistic groups in California, but were distributed even more broadly outside the modern state borders—although Uto-Aztecan speakers populated a good portion of southern California. Only Yukian was exclusively found in Old California, and it was limited to a couple of locations north of the San Francisco Bay Area (Shipley 1978).

When the geographic distribution of these six language groups is plotted on a map (Figure 4.2), the external origins of some are clearly evident. Na-Dene and

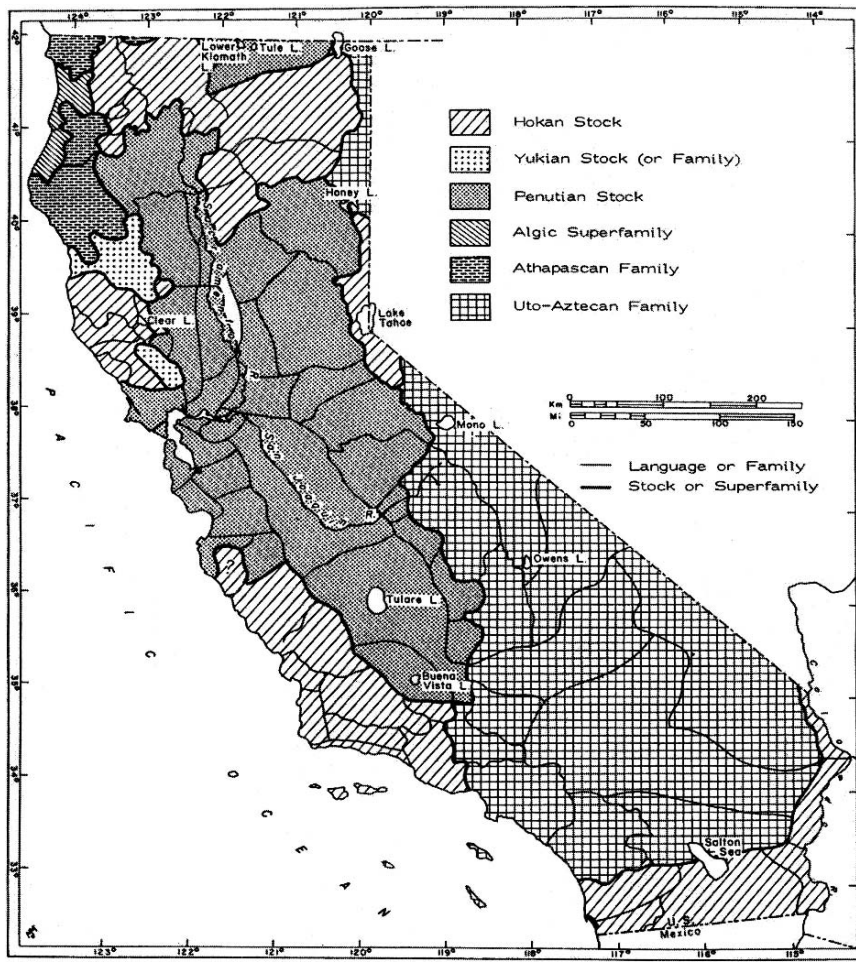

Figure 4.2. Distribution of major language stocks/families in Native California, ca. 1750. Reproduced from *California Archaeology* (Moratto 1984: 537), courtesy of Michael J. Moratto.

Algic groups represent southerly extensions of language stocks (and presumably people) more broadly distributed in regions to the north (Driver 1969). Uto-Aztecan groups in California can be seen to represent the westernmost extension of a language family more widespread in the northern Great Basin (D'Azevedo 1986a; Moratto 1984) and Southwest (Hale and Harris 1979). Penutian groups, while forming a central node in the linguistic geography of California, also appear to have linguistic ties to groups such as the Modoc and Nez Perce to the north and northeast (Driver 1969; Moratto 1984). The location of a contiguous patch of Penutian groups along the major river valleys of central California, coupled with the patchy distribution of Hokan groups around the margins of this sociolinguistic

conglomerate, suggests intrusion of Penutian speakers into a Hokan-dominated landscape, probably from the north or northeast.

The historic relevance of this pattern has not gone unnoticed by scholars of California linguistics and prehistory (Gerow 1974; Kroeber 1923; Moratto 1984). In 1923, Kroeber made an early attempt to characterize the developmental sequence of California culture that included an accounting of the introduction and spread of language groups. Other scholars followed suit, proposing various hypothetical models of population movement and language dispersal in western North America (Hopkins 1965; Taylor 1961).

In 1984, Michael Moratto built on the work of these and other scholars in his volume *California Archaeology*, constructing hypothetical maps of language distribution across time and geographic space. According to his reconstructions, speakers of Hokan and Yukian languages first settled the region 10,000–4000 BC. Between 4000 BC and 2000 BC, speakers of Uto-Aztecan languages began to make their way into eastern California from the Southwest, an intrusion supported by recent linguistic research suggesting that Uto-Aztecan languages originated in Mexico and spread northward into the Southwest and thence into regions to the north and west some time after 4500 BP (Hill 2001; see also Fowler 1983, and Madsen and Rhode 1994). To the north, Penutian groups moved into eastern California and the Sacramento Valley from the northern Great Basin or Columbia Plateau. Nonetheless, California remained a largely Hokan province at this time. From 2000 BC to AD 1, Penutian groups spread out to the central coast and diversified along major river systems, possibly in several waves, and Uto-Aztecans spread from the eastern desert regions into the San Joaquin Valley and out to the Los Angeles Basin, in both cases displacing in-situ Hokan groups. During the years AD 1–1000, Penutian groups expanded out north and south along California's central valley, and Algic groups entered the North Coast Ranges of California from the north, further displacing Hokan and Yukian groups there. Finally, in the period AD 1000–1850, Athapascans moved into the North Coast Ranges from Oregon and California assumed the sociolinguistic configuration recorded by early historians and ethnographers (Figures 4.1 and 4.2), with Penutian and Uto-Aztecan speakers occupying much of the landscape and Hokan groups patchily distributed about the peripheries. Linguistic influences in California after this time were largely of European and Mesoamerican origins. Moratto's (1984) reconstruction suggests both continuity and change through time in the linguistic landscape of California.

The research presented here builds on the work of Kroeber (1923, 1976), Moratto (1984), and others in using the linguistic framework described above to investigate the history of another cultural attribute: in this case, human trophy taking. The primary question addressed by the research is whether or not human trophy taking was introduced into California in a manner similar to, indeed connected with, the introduction of the different language stocks. In other words, did the practice of trophy taking originate with one or more groups represented by a distinct language stock? Did this group bring the tradition with them as

they migrated into California, or did they adopt it from their new neighbors, who developed it in situ? The hypotheses tested in this study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: If the origin of human trophy heads/scalps lies outside of California, then the practice of trophy taking should correlate with one or more specific immigrant (linguistic) groups that migrated into California from adjacent culture areas after initial settlement by Hokan and Yukian peoples.

Hypothesis 2: If the practice originated with the earliest Californians, then this trait should be most common among Hokan and/or Yukian groups.

The absence of corresponding patterns between the taking of human heads/scalps and language stock will support the null hypothesis—that the history of human trophy taking is distinct from the linguistic history of California, and that language cannot serve as a proxy measure of the cultural affiliation of this particular trait.

THE STUDY SAMPLE

The language stocks/families and affiliated tribal/language groups analyzed for this study are based on the research of Roland B. Dixon, Alfred Kroeber (Dixon and Kroeber 1919; Kroeber 1923, 1976), and William Shipley (1978). Included in the analysis are tribes that occupied the region currently comprising the modern state of California, but not always classified as members of the California cultural region proper (e.g., Modoc, Northern Paiute, and the various Shoshonean groups of southeastern California) (see Heizer 1978:ix). For purposes of this study, 54 tribal groups representing the six language stocks (Algic, Athapascan, Hokan, Penutian, Uto-Aztecan, Yukian) were identified based on tribal/linguistic maps in the *Handbook of the Indians of California* (Heizer 1978:ix), *The California Indians: A Sourcebook* (Heizer and Whipple 1971:frontispiece), and *California Archaeology* (Moratto 1984: 537) (Figure 4.1). Each of these tribal groups was treated as a representative unit of one of six major language groups (Table 4.1).

Ethnographies and synthetic works pertaining to these groups were examined for information on war-related behavior more generally and the practice of human trophy taking in particular. The presence/absence of head/scalp-taking practices was determined based on descriptions provided by ethnographers, ethnohistorians, and native informants. Many of the works cited in Table 4.1 did not discuss warfare practices or make reference the practice of trophy taking; these were nonetheless included in the table for the purpose of documenting all sources consulted in the study.

The practice of scalping/head-taking was determined to be present if an ethnographer specifically indicated this was the case or provided quotes from tribal informants to this effect. Positive attributions were based on statements such as that by Albert Elsasser (1978a:199), who noted that among the five Athapascan groups

Table 4.1. Ethnographic Evidence of Trophy Taking in California by Tribal Group (north to south) and Linguistic Affiliation.

Tribal group[1]	Language stock[1]	Scalping/ Head-taking	Use/Purpose of trophy scalp/Head	Mode of display	References consulted (*scalping present; No = scalping absent)
Northern California (north of the San Francisco Bay)					
Yurok	Algic (Algonkin)	Some	Scalp/victory dance	Head on a pole	Driver 1939*; Kroeber 1922, 1976 (No); Meyer 1971*; Pilling 1978
Wiyot	Algic (Algonkin)	No	?	?	Driver 1939 (No); Elsasser 1978b; Kroeber 1922, 1976
Tolowa	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	Yes?	?	?	Driver 1939*; Gould 1978; Kroeber 1922, 1976
Chilula	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	No	?	?	Driver 1939 (No); Kroeber 1922, 1976: Wallace 1978a
Hupa	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	No	—	—	Driver 1939 (No); Kroeber 1922, 1976; Nelson 1988; Wallace 1978a
Whilkut	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	No?	?	?	Kroeber 1922, 1976; Wallace 1978a
Nongatl	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	No	—	—	Driver 1939 (No); Elsasser 1978a (No); Kroeber 1922, 1976
Mattole	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	No	—	—	Driver 1939 (No); Elsasser 1978a (No); Kroeber 1922, 1976
Sinkyone	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	Yes	Scalp/victory dance	Scalp/head on a pole	Driver 1939*; Elsasser 1978a*; Kroeber 1976
Lassik	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	Yes	Scalp dance. Special custodian for scalp.	Scalp on a pole, "fed," women place between legs in dance	Elsasser 1978a*; Essene 1942*; Kroeber 1976*
Wailaki	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	Yes	?	?	Elsasser 1978a*

(*Cont.*)

Table 4.1. (*Continued*)

Tribal group[1]	Language stock[1]	Scalping/ Head-taking	Use/Purpose of trophy scalp/Head	Mode of display	References consulted (*scalping present; No = scalping absent)
Cahto	Na-Dene (Athapascan)	Yes	Scalp/victory dance. Special custodian for scalp.	Whole face scalps or heads. Scalp on pole, "fed"; women carry between teeth & put between legs in dance.	Driver 1939*; Essene 1942*; Kroeber 1932*, 1976*; Myers 1978*
Karok	Hokan	Some	Victory/scalp dance	Scalp on pole	Bell 1991; Bright 1978; Driver 1939*; Kroeber 1922, 1976
Shasta	Hokan	Some	Only Modoc scalps taken, in revenge for Modoc scalpings. No scalp dance.	Not displayed	Holt 1946*; Kroeber 1976; Ray 1963*; Silver 1978b*
Chimariko	Hokan	Yes?	?	? (Scalps/whole heads)	Driver 1939*; Kroeber 1922, 1976; Silver 1978a
Achumawi (Palaihnihan)	Hokan	Yes?	?	?	Kroeber 1976; Olmsted and Stewart 1978; Sapir and Spier 1943*
Atsugewi (Palaihnihan)	Hokan	Yes	Scalp dance, scalps carried by dancers who lost kin.	Scalps mounted on 4′ poles	Garth 1978*; Kroeber 1976
Yana	Hokan	Yes	Scalp dance	?	Johnson 1978; Kroeber 1976; Sapir and Spier 1943*
Pomo	Hokan	No/Rare	—	—	Bean and Theodoratus 1978; Essene 1942*; Kroeber 1922, 1976*, 1932 (Rare)
Washo	Hokan	Yes	Scalp dance?	?	Beals 1933*; D'Azevedo 1986b; Downs 1966*; Gifford 1927*; Lowie 1939*
Modoc (Lutuamian)	Penutian	Yes	Scalp dance. Scalp burned at end of 5-day dance	Fastened to a 7-ft pole fixed in the ground	Kroeber 1976; Ray 1963*
Wintun	Penutian	Yes—except in NW	Scalp dance	Scalps from eyebrows back, or whole heads, hung on poles	Kroeber 1932*, 1976*; Lapena 1978*; Sapir & Spier 1943*

Nomlaki (Wintun)	Penutian	Yes	Scalp dance to express revenge & shame enemy	Suspended on a pole	Goldschmidt 1978*; Goldschmidt et al. 1971*
Maidu	Penutian	Yes	Scalp dance	Suspended on a pole	Kroeber 1976*, 1932*; Riddell 1978*
Konkow (Maidu)	Penutian	Yes	Scalp dance	Suspended on a pole	Jewell 1987*; Riddell 1978*
Nisenan (Southern Maidu)	Penutian	Yes?	Danced around, shot at with bow and arrow	Placed on soaproot effigy on pole in open	Beals 1933*; Gifford 1927*; Kroeber 1929, 1976; Wilson and Towne 1978
Patwin (Southern Wintun)	Penutian	Yes	Scalp dance. Scalp/ head shot at & finally burned with food offerings for dead.	Whole heads (or scalps) taken. Placed on tall pole.	McClellan 1953*; Johnson 1978; Kroeber 1932*, 1976
Miwok	Penutian	Yes	Scalp/victory dance	Scalp on a pole	Aginsky 1943*; Callaghan 1978; Conrotto 1973; Gifford 1926; Kelly 1978; Kroeber 1932, 1976; Levy 1978b
Northern Paiute	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	?	?	?	Fowler and Liljeblad 1986
Yuki	Yukian	Yes	Scalp/victory dance. Express revenge & shame enemy. Not kept permanently.	Whole scalp or head, suspended on pole, thrown on ground, carried in teeth by widows, orphans	Driver 1939*; Essene 1942*; Foster 1944*; Goldschmidt 1978*; Goldschmidt et al., 1971*; Kroeber 1932*, 1976*; Miller 1978*, 1979*
Wappo	Yukian	No	—	—	Kroeber 1976; McClellan 1953 (No); Sawyer 1978
Central California (San Francisco Bay area to southern San Joaquin Valley)					
Esselen	Hokan	No?	?	?	Breschini & Haversat 2004; Hester 1978a; Kroeber 1976
Salinan	Hokan	?	?	?	Hester 1978b; Kroeber 1976
Costanoan	Penutian	Yes	Displayed by victors in their village	Head/entire skin placed on a pike	Geiger and Meighan 1976*; Kroeber 1976*; Levy 1978a*

(*Cont.*)

Table 4.1. (*Continued*)

Tribal group[1]	Language stock[1]	Scalping/ Head-taking	Use/Purpose of trophy scalp/Head	Mode of display	References consulted (*scalping present; No = scalping absent)
Yokuts	Penutian	Sometimes	No apparent scalp/victory dance	? (Heads/Scalps)	Aginsky 1943 (No); Driver 1937 (No); Kroeber 1922, 1976*; McCorkle 1978*; Wallace 1978b*
Mono/Monache	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Sometimes	?	?	Aginsky 1943*; Driver 1937 (No); McCorkle 1978*; Spier 1978
Tubatualabal	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Sometimes	?	?	Driver 1937 (No); Kroeber 1976; Smith 1978*; Wheeler-Voegelin 1938 (No)
Owens Valley Paiute	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Some Groups	Scalp/victory dance	Scalp on a pole	Driver 1937*; Liljeblad and Fowler 1986
Western Shoshone	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	?	?	?	Thomas et al., 1986
Southern California (South of the San Joaquin Valley)					
Chumash	Hokan	Some Groups	—	? (Scalps carried back to village)	Bowers 1897 (No); Burrus 1967*; Grant 1978; Johnson 1988*; King 1982*; Kroeber 1976
Diegueño	Hokan	Yes	Scalp dance? Special scalper. Scalp preserved, worn on belt by warrior to indicate bravery.	Whole skin of head with ears, worn on dancers' heads during dance. Hung on belt of warrior.	Drucker 1937*; Hohenthal 2001*; Kroeber 1976*; Luomala 1978*
Kamia	Hokan	Yes	Special scalper.	? (Whole skin of head with ears)	Drucker 1937*; Kroeber 1976
Yuma	Hokan	Yes	Scalp dance. Special scalper.	Whole skin of head with ears. Suspended on a pole	Drucker 1937*; Kroeber 1922*, 1976*

Mohave	Hokan	Yes	Scalp dance. Scalps dressed & often kept or future dances. Special scalper, only a few scalps taken.	Mounted on long cottonwood pole Scalps from those with good-looking hair.	Drucker 1941*; Kroeber 1922*,1976*; McCorkle 1978*; Stewart 1971*
Kitanemuk	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	?	?	?	Blackburn and Bean 1978
Tataviam	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	?	?	?	King and Blackburn 1978
Kawaiisu	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	No?	?	?	Driver 1937 (No); Kroeber 1976; Zigmon 1986
Gabrielino	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Yes	Scalps preserved as trophies, displayed during grand feasts. Sometimes ransomed.	Scalps suspended from a high pole near the sacred enclosure	Bean and Smith 1978b*; Engelhardt 1927; Johnson 1962*; King 1982*; Kroeber 1922, 1976; McCawley 1996*
Juaneño	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Yes	Scalps dressed, preserved for display on public occasions. Sometimes ransomed.	Hung from a pole near the ceremonial enclosure	Kroeber 1976*
Luiseño	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	No?	?	?	Bean and Shipek 1978; Drucker 1937 (No); Kroeber 1976
Serrano	Uto-Aztecan	No?	?	?	Bean and Smith 1978c; Drucker 1937 (No); Kroeber 1976
Cahuilla	Uto-Aztecan (Shosonean)	Yes	Heads, brought back to village as a symbol of victory.	Whole heads, esp. of enemy war leaders, displayed in village ceremonial house.	Bean 1972*, 1978; Drucker 1937 (No); Kroeber 1976
Cupeño	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Yes?	?	?	Bean and Smith 1978a; Drucker 1937*?; Kroeber 1976
Chemehuevi	Uto-Aztecan (Shoshonean)	Yes	Scalp dance. Special Scalper.	Whole skin of head with ears. Mounted on a central pole.	Drucker 1937*; Kelly and Fowler 1986*

[1]Based on Dixon and Kroeber (1919); Heizer (1978:ix); Kroeber (1976); Shipley (1978)

of northwestern California—Mattole, Nongatl, Sinkyone, Lassik, and Wailaki—"scalps were taken by all groups but the Mattole and Nongatl," especially when these statements could be backed up by other sources. When different sources were contradictory, the presence/absence of the practice was determined based on the preponderance of the evidence. For positive cases, information was also collected on the use and display of human trophy heads and scalps. Question marks in Table 4.1 indicate cases where the presence/absence of the practice was indicated but not clearly stipulated, or for which a clear determination was difficult to obtain due to conflicting reports. In all, information on trophy head/scalp-taking behavior was obtained for 49 of the 54 groups included in the study.

RESULTS

Of the 49 tribes for which trophy-taking behavior could be ascertained, 37 (75.5%) engaged in the practice of taking human heads or scalps in warfare contexts (broadly defined to include feuding and raiding). Twelve (24.5%) did not do so, or did so only rarely (Tables 4.1 and 4.2). These findings are in concordance with Kroeber's 1925 (1976) overview of California cultural elements, which emphasized the prominence of this practice among the different tribal groups.

There is both patterning and complexity in the data on head/scalp-taking (Table 4.2; Figure 4.3). All of the Penutian tribes for which information is available commonly (90%), or at least sometimes (10%) took heads and/or scalps. Most of the Hokan tribes also frequently (64%) or at least sometimes (21%) took these trophies. Results for the other groups are more mixed. Among the Athapascan,

Table 4.2. Relative Frequency of Head/Scalp-Taking in California Tribes by Linguistic Affiliation.

Language stock/Family	Tribal groups in known sample	Frequent/Common	Sometimes/Some groups	Rare/None
Penutian	10	9	1	0
		90.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Hokan	14	9	3	2
		64.3%	21.4%	14.3%
Uto-Aztecan	11	5	3	3
		45.4%	27.3%	27.3%
Athapascan	10	5	0	5
		50.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Yukian	2	1	0	1
		50.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Algic (Algonkin)	2	0	1	1
		0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Total	49	29	8	12
		59.2%	16.3%	24.5%

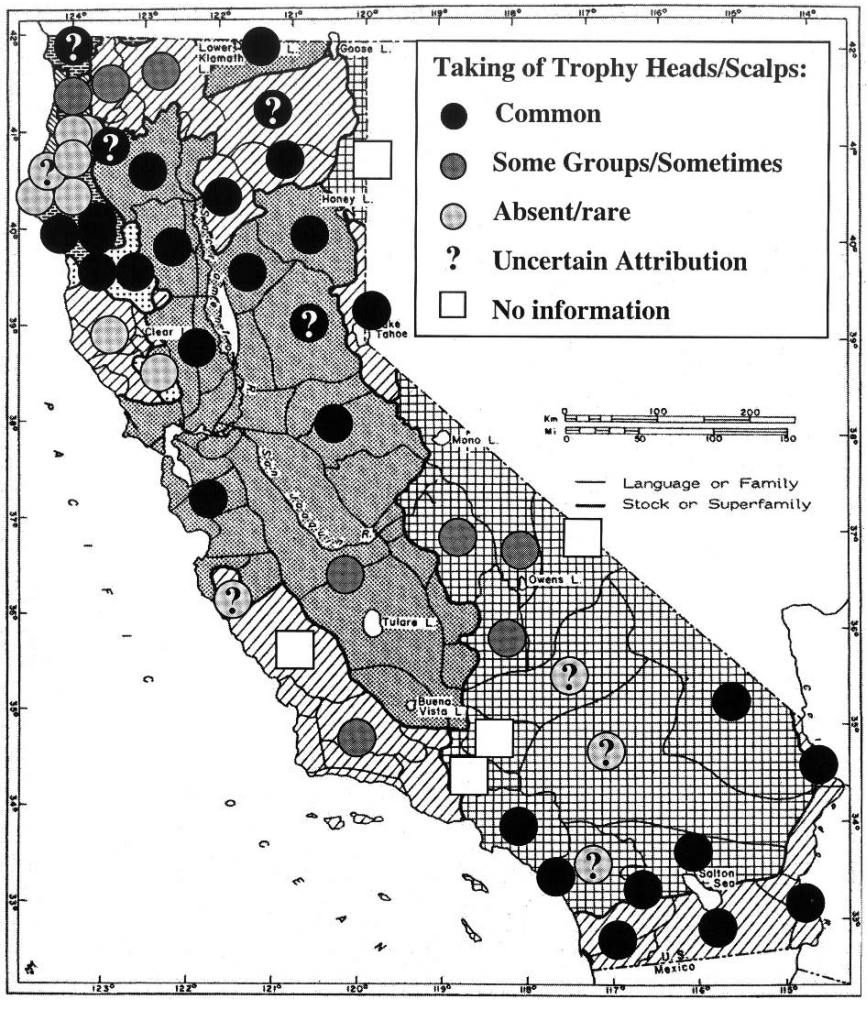

Figure 4.3. Geographic distribution of human trophy taking in Native California by tribal group and linguistic affiliation. Base map reproduced from *California Archaeology* (Moratto 1984:537), courtesy of Michael J. Moratto.

Algic, and Yukian tribes, 50 percent of the respective samples were found to have commonly (or at least sometimes) taken trophies. Uto-Aztecan tribes also varied, with some commonly participating in this practice (45%), others sometimes doing so (27%), and several apparently showing little predilection for the practice (27%).

Of the tribes known to have brought human trophy heads and scalps back to their villages after battle and for which information regarding their purpose in doing so was available ($n = 28$), at least 22 (79%) did so for the purpose of holding a victory or scalp dance. Of the 25 tribes for which mode of display was noted,

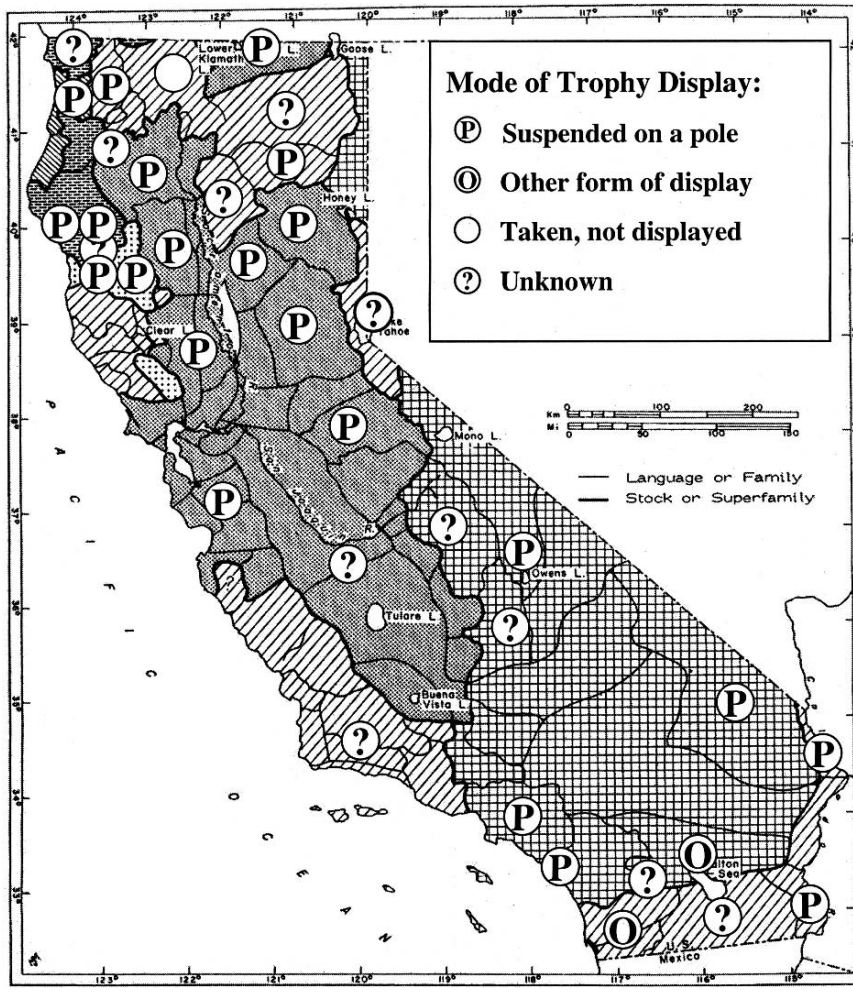

Figure 4.4. Mode of display of trophy heads/scalps by tribal group and linguistic affiliation. Base map reproduced from *California Archaeology* (Moratto 1984:537), courtesy of Michael J. Moratto.

22 (88%) hung or mounted these trophies on a pole for dances or celebratory displays (Figure 4.4).

DISCUSSION

The hypotheses tested in this research find some support in the ethnographic data. Although the practice of human trophy taking is not clearly delineated along the lines of linguistic affiliation, some patterns are suggestive (Table 4.2;

Figure 4.3). Most notably, all Penutian ($n = 10$) tribes for which this cultural trait could be examined appear to have practiced this form of trophy taking to some degree, and for most (90%) it appears to have been a relatively common practice within the context of warfare. Further, all nine of the Penutian tribes who participated more actively in this practice also mounted or fastened the head/scalp to a pole and danced a victory dance around it (Figure 4.4). These are the most consistent findings of all the six broadly defined language stocks/families, suggesting one of the following: that the taking of human trophies had its origins in one or more of the hypothesized migrations of Penutian groups into California, and spread to adjacent and linguistically affiliated groups; human trophy taking was a warfare practice shared by Penutian speakers due to common cultural origins. These data offer tentative support for Hypothesis 1.

The archaeological record of the South San Francisco Bay Area, a region occupied historically by Penutian-speaking peoples (Costanoans), also contains evidence for the taking of trophy heads and extends the practice back to a time closer to the hypothesized arrival of Penutian immigrants. Headless burials, burials with extra or nonassociated skulls, and various human bone artifacts (including one made from a calotte) have been reported from sites in this region (e.g., A.R.M. 1990; Davis and Treganza 1959; Grady et al., 2001; Rackerby 1967; Schenck 1926; Breschini, personal communication, 2006), extending the practice of human trophy taking well back into the prehistoric period. Indeed, an archaeological site recently yielded evidence for the taking of human forearms as trophies over 2000 years ago (Andrushko et al. 2005; Grady et al. 2001). These archaeological data (albeit in some cases controversial) provide evidence in support of the argument that Penutian speakers may have played a role in the introduction and spread of human trophy taking in California, at least in northern California.

Tribal groups affiliated with the other language stocks present a more mixed picture that defies easy explanation. Hokan tribes are perhaps the most interesting in terms of the question of the antiquity of trophy taking behavior in California, and therefore for addressing Hypothesis 2. According to the linguistic evidence presented above, Hokan groups were the first to arrive in ancient California, and appear to have been increasingly displaced through time by immigrant groups from the north, east, and south, such that they came to have a patchy distribution on the periphery of California (Moratto 1984). An examination of the Hokan data indicates that 12 of 14 tribes for which the presence/absence of the practice could be established (Tables 4.1 and 4.2) took trophy heads/scalps commonly ($n = 9$) or sometimes ($n = 3$), and only two groups did so only rarely or not at all (Figure 4.3). How can these data be understood in terms of the research question? A survey of Hokan groups across the three regional divisions of California suggests some possibilities.

In the far southern California region, the four Hokan tribes (Diegueño, Kamia, Yuma, and Mohave) for which data were obtained, all spoke Yuman languages and occupied the southern border of California. They also shared sociolinguistic ties with the Southwest and Mexico (Kroeber 1976). For these Hokan groups, there are

several possibilities for how the practice of human head/scalp-taking came about: (1) it developed in situ; (2) it was retained from earlier times; (3) it was acquired from adjacent Uto-Aztecan groups; (4) it was brought into California by Hokan immigrants from the South or Southwest.

Although any and all of these explanations are possible, differences in the treatment and display of human trophies among these groups (Hohenthal 2001; Kroeber 1976) relative to other trophy-taking groups in California suggest that either the first or fourth explanation is most likely (Table 4.1; Figure 4.4). For example, all of these tribes had specialists who selected, collected, and prepared human trophy scalps. No such position appears to have existed in peoples to the north. Further, both the Diegueño and the Mohave dressed scalps and kept them after the initial celebration, and Diegueño warriors sometimes wore them on their belt to indicate bravery. These were not practices found to any degree in other regions of California.

The Chumash, a Hokan-speaking tribal conglomerate located several hundred miles to the north on the Pacific coast, present mixed evidence for scalping. According to a Chumash informant of Stephen Bowers (1897), "the Chumash did not scalp their victims, but instead cut off the right hand of slain enemies" (Bowers 1879, in Grant 1978:534). However, the easternmost Emigdiano Chumash are on record as having scalped a visiting Yokuts chief (Harrington notes, in King 1982). In addition, a late eighteenth-century account of the Chumash recorded by the military governor Fernando Rivera y Moncada suggests that the practice of scalp-taking may have been more common in the Chumash heartland:

> Two and a half leagues to the south or southeast [from Dos Pueblos] are three very large villages [at the Goleta estuary], one of which is isolated by water which enters inland from the sea. When I dispatched a guard to guide some families [of settlers from Mexico], they encountered [some Indians from Dos Pueblos], returning from these [Goleta towns] to their own villages. They had been fighting [and were] carrying one or more cabelleras (scalps), which is the skullcap with the hair which they cut from those they kill." (Burrus 1967:135, in Johnson 1988:123)

This early account recorded over 100 years before Bowers spoke with a Chumash informant indicates that the practice was present among at least some Chumash groups during the period of Spanish settlement. However, these records have yet to be reconciled with the archaeological record, which presents little evidence for scalping prehistorically (Lambert 1994, 2002). One interesting note in this regard: the description of scalp type noted in the above quote—"a skullcap with hair"—is unlike that described for other California groups (who generally took whole skins), raising questions about the origins and antiquity of scalping in this area.

In the central California region, the Esselen are the only Hokan group for which data were obtained. An isolated tribe living in the coastal mountains south of Monterey Bay, they do not appear to have been particularly aggressive, or to have

practiced scalping (Breschini and Haversat 2004; Breschini personal communication, 2006). However, missionization heavily impacted the Esselen very early on, and less is known about this group than almost any other California tribe (Hester 1978a).

In the northern California region, both the presence and absence of the trait is apparent in historic Hokan tribes. The Pomo comprised a large Hokan group that did not generally practice head-taking/scalping, although there were rare exceptions along the northern borders of Pomo/Yuki territory that appear to have had to do with acts of revenge. For example, Kroeber (1976:235–236) recounts two related incidents between the northeastern Salt Pomo, a small isolated group with apparent ties to the Yuki, and the Clear Lake Pomo to the south:

> The Clear Lake Pomo . . . were also in the habit of journeying to this region [northeastern Pomo salt deposit in the territory of the Salt Pomo]. About 1830 a party went over to combine trading with a dance. According to the account of the Clear Lake people, this entire party, with the exception of two men, was treacherously murdered in the dance house. The scalps were stretched over wicker frames hung on poles, ornamented with beads, carried across the mountains to a Yuki village . . . and there danced over . . . . For something like 10 years no revenge was taken. Then a Clear Lake party went to the head of Stony Creek and lay in wait by a dam. When fishermen appeared, two of them were killed. Their scalps were danced over on the farther side of Clear Lake.

As Kroeber notes, the scalpings by the Clear Lake Pomo appear to have been in reprisal for the Salt Pomo scalpings, and the reason given for the Salt Pomo transfer of the scalps to Yuki territory is that the Yuki were "more accustomed to scalping and could conduct a better dance" (Kroeber 1976:236). Therefore, these accounts do not establish the custom among the Pomo more generally, and most references note its absence.

All Hokan tribal groups to the north and east of the Pomo practiced scalping or head-taking to some degree, but apparently not always with the alacrity exhibited by their Penutian neighbors. The Shasta are said to have scalped only the Modoc (Penutian) and then only in revenge for Modoc scalpings (Holt 1946). Similarly, Karok informants indicated that some groups scalped, while others apparently did not (Driver 1939). The other four Hokan tribes in this northern section—Achumawi, Atsugewi, Yana, and Washo, are all on record as having taken heads or scalps in battle. However, the Achumawi attribution is based on a Yana informant's statement that the Pit River People, as the Achumawi were known, scalped their enemy (Sapir and Spier 1943). Other references suggest a less aggressive people:

> The Achumawi reaction was usually not to respond in kind but to hide out until the raiders had given up and left for home (Olmsted and Steward 1978:230–231).

> The Madesi [Achumawi] seem never to have left their own valley, but rather to have been the object of attack by others (Sapir and Spier 1943:269).

Among the Atsugewi, a linguistically affiliated tribe, the practice appears to have been more institutionalized:

> Returning warriors were purified . . . . After a feat that evening a war dance was held around a large fire with the men forming the inner of two circles, shouting and brandishing their weapons as they danced. Enemy scalps mounted on four-feet poles were carried by dancers who had lost relatives in battle (Garth 1978:239).

The Yana are also said to have practiced scalping, according to both Yana informants and Wintu enemies (Sapir and Spier 1943). This Wintu war narrative, for example, offer details on one Yana practitioner:

> A Yana leader, Hawalsa, is described as constantly raiding the Wintu; cutting off their arms, legs, and scalps; seizing their chief's sons and daughters to take home to kill (Sapir and Spier 1943:269).

Finally, elderly Washo informants indicated that scalping had once been practiced (Downs 1966), and Nisenan informants supported these assertions with their accusations of the same (Gifford 1927, in Beals 1933:404).

What can be said, then, from the distribution of trophy-taking practices among Hokan tribes in California? First, the most centrally located of the Hokan tribes—the Esselen and Pomo—do not appear to have embraced the practice of human trophy taking, and it is perhaps also notable that Shastan peoples apparently did not take trophy heads/scalps of other Hokan groups (Holt 1946; Kroeber 1976; Silver 1978a). Among those who did, the tribes most committed to the practice were either on the margins of the Southwest and Mexico, or located to the north in a region densely occupied by Penutian groups (and the Yuki) with firmly embedded traditions of scalping. The lack of unity among Hokan groups in the practice of trophy taking does not support Hypothesis 2—that the tradition of head/scalp-taking originated with California's earliest residents and was transmitted to later immigrant groups. Instead, it may have been variously adopted by Hokan groups in response to acts of mutilation performed on their war dead by immigrant tribes who introduced the practice into California, or perhaps it was developed by some Hokan groups later in time.

Uto-Aztecan tribes present a different pattern of human trophy taking that suggests the practice was adopted by these groups within California rather than brought to the area from the Southwest or Great Basin. The most dedicated Uto-Aztecan practitioners of human trophy taking in California were tribes located on the border with Yuman (Hokan) tribes known to have institutionalized the practice of human trophy taking. It seems likely that Uto-Aztecan warriors encountering this Yuman practice may have responded in kind to mutilation of their war dead and adopted the practice in this way. In any event, the practice appears to have been of less import among Uto-Aztecan tribes more distant from

Yuman territory, which argues against trophy taking as a pan-Uto-Aztecan cultural trait.

As with the Hokan and Uto-Aztecan tribes, the Athapascan and Yukian tribes also present a mixed picture with regard to in the degree to which they participated in the practice of taking human trophy heads and scalps from fallen foes. Most northern Athapascan tribes (Chilula, Hupa, Whilkut, Nongatl, Mattole) did not take heads or scalps in battle contexts, whereas southern Athapascan groups (Sinkyone, Lassik, Wailaki, Cahto) did so with apparent alacrity. As above, their close geographic association with the Yuki, arguably the fiercest and most warlike tribe in California (Foster 1944), may have served as a strong inducement for acquiring the practice. Additionally, according to Gifford (1926, in Moratto 1984:541), "The Wailaki and Cahto . . . were Yukian in physical type and culture but Athapascan in language," suggesting there may have been a high degree of intermarriage and transmission of cultural norms and values across some of these Athapascan groups.

The origins of the practice among the Yuki is even more obscure, given their ancient origins in California and their linguistic affiliation with the Wappo, who are not known to have taken human trophies (McClellan 1953). However, the linguistic ties between Yuki and Wappo are tenuous, and Moratto (1984:538) indicates that the Yuki and Wappo were physically distinct and may have long followed separate biocultural trajectories due to their physical separation by the Pomo and subsequent "centuries of intermarriage with neighboring peoples." Perhaps the Yuki represent an independent center for development of the practice, or they may have adopted it in response to territorial encroachment by non-Yukian peoples.

It is clear from this explorative study that the origins, spread, and distribution of cultural traits such as trophy taking result from a complex interplay of innovation, shared cultural origins, and diffusion. Regardless of how the taking of human trophy heads and scalps came to be such a widespread practice in California, those who did so shared strikingly similar attitudes about how the trophy was to be taken, used, displayed, and disposed of. Throughout California, with the possible exception of the Chumash, human trophy taking involved more than excision of a section of hair, as on the Plains or in the Southeast (Owsley and Jantz, 1994). Rather, it was the whole head or entire skin of the head including hair and some facial features that was taken and put on display. These trophies, often a single specimen, were taken on the battlefield and brought back to the village to serve as a focal point for the victory celebration, or scalp dance. On the whole, this dance was informal and primarily served the purpose of enabling the victorious to shame their enemies, and mourners to vent their wrath and avenge their dead. Afterward, the "trophy" was usually and rather unceremoniously discarded (Kroeber 1976; Table 4.1). The exception to this rule occurred among Hokan tribes of the far south, where trophies were preserved and either worn or displayed on important occasions.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on data presented above, it seems likely that the practice of taking human heads/scalps as war trophies was not (at least exclusively) an in situ development or ancestral practice of the earliest Californians, but rather a practice that developed elsewhere and was introduced into California by later immigrants from other regions and cultural traditions. Of course, this may have happened very early on with the Yuki, although a more probable source based on linguistic and ethnographic evidence are Penutian groups that began to make their way into California around 4000–6000 years ago. The practice could have been introduced in one of several waves, as Penutian immigration is hypothesized to have occurred over a 4000-year period, and simply followed the path of linguistically affiliated tribes. According to this scenario, it would then have spread to other, unrelated linguistic groups as kinfolk of the slain sought revenge for the mutilation of their loved ones.

Alternately, it is possible that human trophy taking has no significant time depth in California, or that the practice has waxed and waned and/or changed significantly through time. The answers to these questions cannot be found in the ethnographic literature, but rather in the archaeological record of California. A preliminary survey of archaeological papers and reports from the Costanoan region of the San Francisco Bay Area (e.g., Andrushko et al., 2005; A.R.M. 1990; Davis and Treganza 1959; Grady et al., 2001; Lambert 2002, 2007; Rackerby 1967; Schenck 1926; Wiberg 1988; 1997) suggests that the patterns observed historically may have much deeper roots in at least some culture regions. Although burial practices such as cremation may have forever precluded investigation of prehistoric trophy taking in many regions of California (Kroeber 1976), those for which human remains are or have been available for analysis nonetheless hold important clues regarding the history of trophy taking and offer a means of testing the hypotheses put forth in this study.

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Chapter 5

Head Trophies and Scalping
Images in Southwest Rock Art

POLLY SCHAAFSMA

INTRODUCTION

The taking of trophy heads was widespread in the New World, and the various meanings it may have had must be sought within the context of each practicing culture. With the beginning of maize horticulture in the American Southwest and into the ethnographic present, there is evidence for head-taking and scalping (Cole 1985, 1989; Schaafsma 2000). Even earlier claims for the presence of this practice could be made, based on the presence of disembodied heads represented by anthropomorphs holding weapons in petroglyphs with Archaic origins along the San Juan River (Cole 1985:Fig. 5; Pachack 1994:Figs.1–4). This chapter, however, focuses on trophy heads and scalp-taking among the late prehistoric Pueblos and their ancestors.

Decapitated heads or symbolic allusions to scalping are portrayed graphically in Basketmaker II and Fremont rock art, on Mimbres ceramics, and in protohistoric Pueblo and Navajo art. The fact that scalping was practiced into ethnographic times helps us to understand the meaning that scalping had in prehistory. Ethnographically, through complex rituals, scalps were incorporated into Pueblo villages as powerful rain bringers, and these procedures are backed by rich oral tradition that includes both narrative mythology and poetry (Bunzel 1932:674–689; Parsons 1926:60; 1929:266; Stevenson 1904:578–608).

HUMAN HEADS AND OTHER TROPHIES ON THE COLORADO PLATEAU

The Rock Art

Several types of disembodied human heads or scalps are pictured in Basketmaker and Fremont rock art. The elaboration and variation seen in these heads are

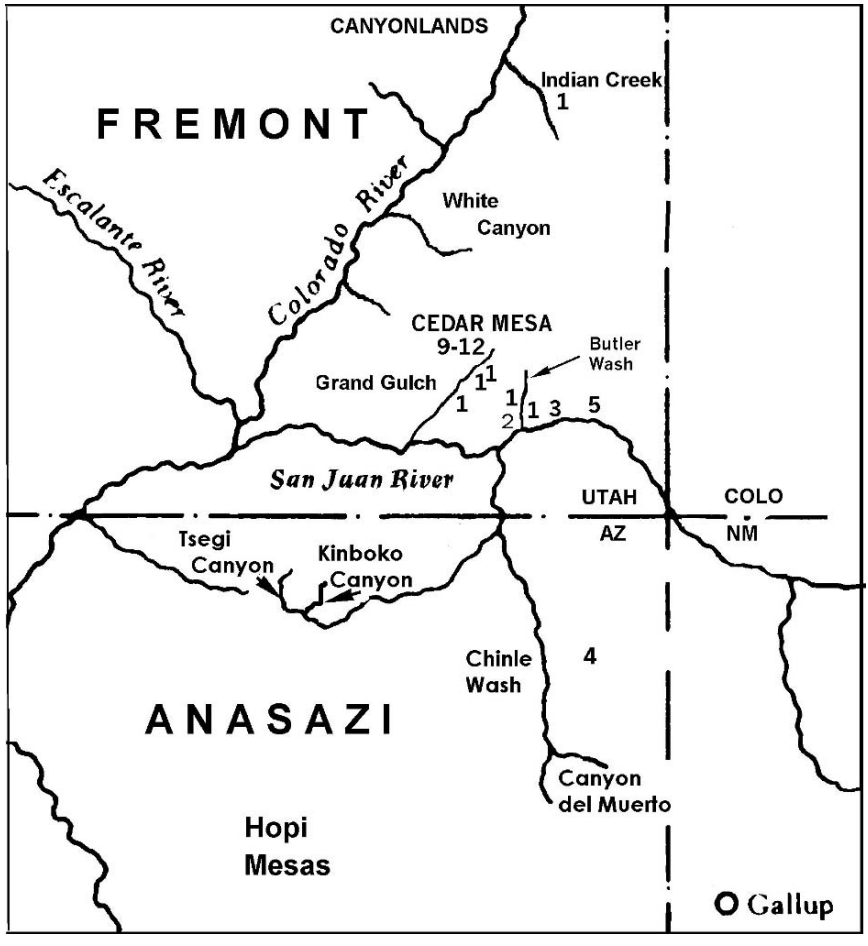

Figure 5.1. Map of the San Juan drainage showing the locations of sites with flayed heads or scalps as individual icons. The number designates how many heads occur at any given site.

testimony to the complexity and importance of the tradition of head-taking and scalping in these cultures on the Colorado Plateau.

In Basketmaker II rock art (ca. 400 BC–AD 400), the decapitated human head and/or flayed skin of a head is usually shown as an individual element and sometimes is suspended in the hand of a shamanic figure. Petroglyphs and rock paintings of disembodied heads are clustered along the lower San Juan River, as well in Grand Gulch and Butler Wash entering the San Juan from the north (Fig. 5.1). To the south, such depictions have been documented in Buttress Canyon in the Chinle drainage (Archives, Rupestrian CyberServices, Flagstaff) and in Canyon del Muerto (Cole 1989:Fig. 7d).

As separate icons, these rock art depictions have several forms (Figs. 5.2–5.7). Sometimes facial features are indicated, or the face may be striped horizontally.

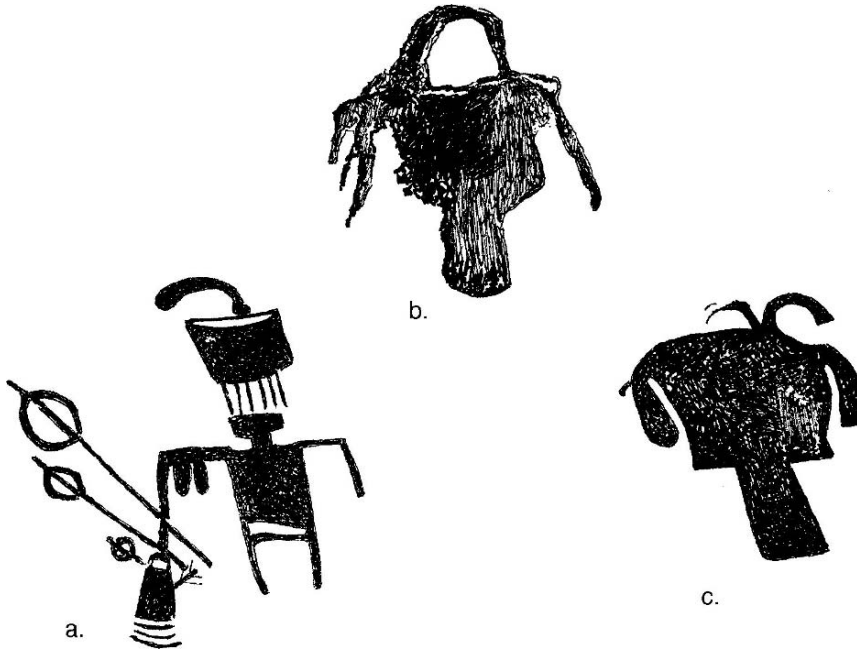

Figure 5.2. Basketmaker petroglyphs on the San Juan River (ca. 400 BC–AD 400). (a) Figure below a head holds a bag, atlatl, and darts. (b) Head with loop on top. (c) Head with hair arranged in short bobs.

Figure 5.3. Basketmaker rock painting of flayed head with carrying loop on top, Grand Gulch, Utah. The hair is bright red, and the face is striped in green and yellow.

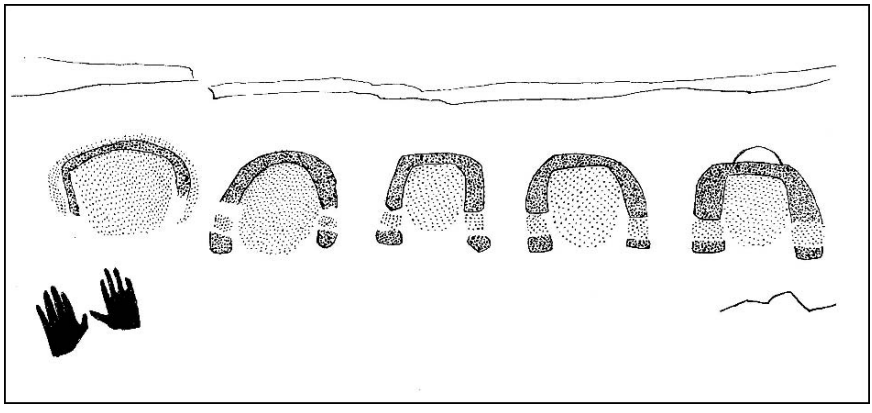

Figure 5.4. Five out of a row of nine or more heads painted in white and green, Grand Gulch. Details include the carrying loop (right) and the hair wrapped in bobs. Handprints were stamped in conjunction with these paintings.

Figure 5.5. Basketmaker petroglyph along the San Juan River of flayed head skin with carrying loop. Comparisons with actual scalps indicate that the tabbed element below represents the skin of the neck.

Figure 5.6. Butler Wash Basketmaker figure with birds and ceremonial accoutrements, including a head (right). This head appears to have maiden hair whorls, and lines fall below suggesting blood, rain or both (compare with head in Figure 5.2 above, man with atlatl and darts.

Looped thongs for carrying the head are frequently shown on top. Most commonly, the heads are portrayed with hair arranged in male Basketmaker fashion, tied in hanks or bobs on either side of the face, this being a hairstyle found on male Basketmaker mummies:

> Men let their hair grow long, wearing it usually in three bobs tied with string, one at each side of the head and one in back. In one instance the ends have been turned back and caught under the tie-string; in another they hang free below the string (Amsden 1949:61).

Both modes of hair dressing described by Amsden are represented. Some of the heads have short hair bobs (Fig. 5.2b,c) resembling the hairstyle on the Kinboko head skin. In Green Mask Cave in Grand Gulch (Fig. 5.3), long hanks of red hair project below the level of the face, and horizontal facial stripes are painted yellow and green (Cole 1985). Other notable examples occur at Lion Tracks Spring, also in Grand Gulch, where a row of at least nine and possibly a dozen life-sized white-faced heads with green hair is painted high up under a shallow overhang (Fig. 5.4). As in several other Grand Gulch paintings, the hair is wrapped in bobs that frame the face. A carrying loop is clearly present on the best-preserved figure.

Several similar but squarish heads with carrying loops and long dressed hair on either side of patterned faces are rendered in petroglyph form on the San Juan River near Bluff, and these have narrow rectangular projections or tabs hanging

Figure 5.7. A claw-footed Basketmaker figure holds a head surmounted by a tier of crescents. Human appendages are attached to his lower body. San Juan River, Utah.

below the face, probably representing the skin of the neck (Fig. 5.5; see also Fig. 5.2b,c). "Tabbed" heads are pictured in the hands of anthropomorphs in Canyon del Muerto, Arizona (Cole 1989:Fig. 7d), and Grand Gulch (Blackburn and Williamson 1997:99).

Other petroglyph examples of disembodied heads may be female. A detached head in Butler Wash (Fig. 5.6) appears to sport hair whorls, characteristic of ancestral Pueblo maidens from Basketmaker times into the Pueblo present. Lines falling below the head suggest blood, rain, or perhaps both. In Fig. 5.2a, a head of this type is pictured directly above an anthropomorph holding a medicine bag and darts.

Figure 5.8. Petroglyphs of large ceremonially attired figures holding trophy heads, Vernal, Utah.

As for other aberrations, one disembodied head on the San Juan River looks like a skull, but nevertheless with the carrying strap carefully indicated. Nearby, what is probably a head on the left-hand side of a seemingly masked Basketmaker anthropomorph is surmounted by a tier of crescents—a typical Basketmaker headdress (Fig. 5.7). The figure holding the fetish has clawed animal feet, suggesting the transformational features characteristic of shamans. An additional pair of limbs dangles from his belt. I previously interpreted these limbs as being small legs and feet (Schaafsma 1994:Fig. 11), but it is equally as possible that forearms and hands are what are represented here. The well-known Basketmaker Burial of the Hands from Canyon del Muerto accompanied by numerous offerings (Morris 1925:291–192; Smiley and Robins 1997:30) lends support to the second interpretation.

In the stylistically related Fremont Classic Vernal style, in the Uinta Basin, detailed heads are pictured in the hands of elaborately attired, imposing figures (Fig. 5.8). These heads may have facial designs, including tear streaks, and the downward projecting flap is shown, convincingly illustrating the skin of the neck (Castleton 1984:33–34, Fig. 2.38; Schaafsma 1971: Figs. 4.6 and 4.12). As illustrated in this example, decorations are sometimes shown attached to the base.

Triangular objects that sometimes share the tab (of skin) just described (Fig. 5.9) or have a vertical line of dots falling below (Cole 1989: Fig. 7a) are more ambiguous as to their identity. It is likely, however, that these represent scalps. In the Vernal region, one of these items does have a face, and the object in question is suspended on a stick carried by a regal figure holding a shield in the other hand (Fig. 5.10).

Figure 5.9. Fremont anthropomorph holding shield and a triangular tabbed object that probably represents a scalp. Dinosaur National Monument, Utah.

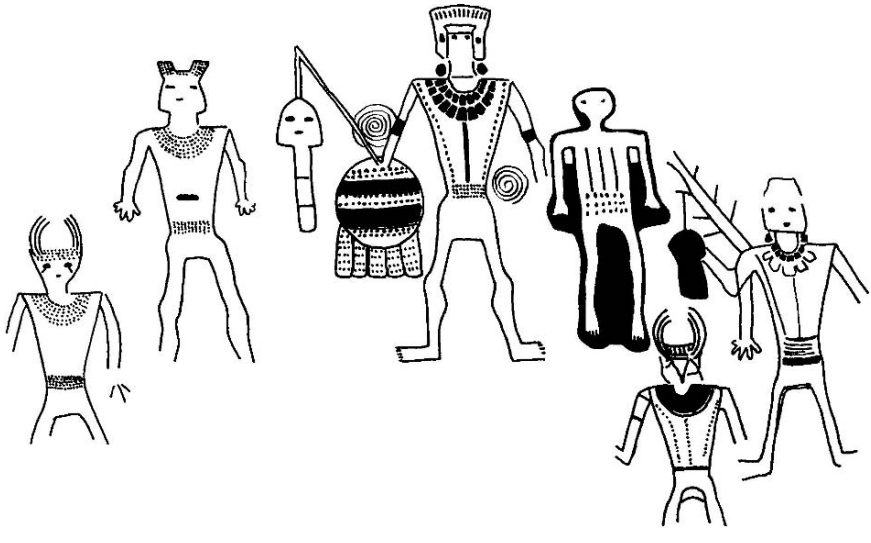

Figure 5.10. Elaborate life-size Fremont figure with feathered shield and tabbed object similar to that pictured in Figure 5.9 but with a face. Vernal, Utah.

Archaeological Artifacts as Counterparts

Just as several types of flayed heads and scalps appear in the graphic record, scalps and related artifacts recovered from archaeological contexts also vary in form. Portrayed in many petroglyphs and rock paintings is a flayed head skin that includes a reconstructed face, an example of which was found, complete with carrying strap, in Basketmaker Cave 1, Cist 16, Kinboko Canyon, in Marsh Pass, Arizona (Fig. 5.1). This unusual artifact has been described previously in considerable detail (Cole 1985; 1989:71; Kidder and Guernsey 1919:190–191; Pl. 87a and b). The flayed skin was painted in red, green, and yellow with stripes across the face. In this regard it resembles the painting at the so-called Green Mask site in Grand Gulch. The Kinboko item was fastened around the neck of a munnified burial.

In addition, human scalps of men, women, and children from Mill Creek near Moab and Nine Mile Canyon in the Uinta Basin are the subject of a detailed discussion by Howard and Janetski (1992; see also Reagan 1933:57). The descriptions that follow are from their report. These scalps, some complete with hair, and some not, were stretched over basketry disks between 6.5 and 14.5 cm in diameter. Leather thongs attached to the disks supported the scalps from the top. Some of the disks had been painted red. In all cases, the weaving technique employed for the disks conforms to Basketmaker II and III (as opposed to Fremont) standards.

According to Howard and Janetski (1991:131): "The basketry disks apparently functioned as a means to hold the scalp in place as they were displayed or carried." These scalps with hair, supported by the disks, might have appeared much like the tabbed triangular objects held in the hands of rock art figures.[1] Elongated perforations at the base of the tabs of neck skin of the Nine Mile Canyon scalps (Howard and Janetski 1992:Figs. 1 and 2) show that articles were hung from them, as seems to be illustrated in some of the Vernal petroglyphs.

Radiocarbon dates from the Lema scalp from Mill Creek near Moab yielded a calibrated date between AD 1 and 359 (Howard and Janetski 1992:130), thus establishing its chronological placement in the latter half of the Basketmaker II period, which is consistent with the basketry technique of the disks: "Morris and Burgh (1941) report that this technique was characteristic of the Basketmaker II and III periods, which suggests that the open-coiled disks and associated scalps are Basketmaker in age" (Howard and Janetski 1992:131). Radiocarbon and tree-ring dates for archaeological sites associated with Classic Vernal style rock art east of Vernal in Dinosaur National Monument fall between AD 600 and 1000 (Cole 1990:173–174), which is slightly later than the Basketmaker II–III dates (ca. 400 BC to AD 600) established for the basketry disks associated with the scalps. It is hoped that future research will resolve these chronological discrepancies.

A number of questions are raised by the fact that the basketry disks, including those from Nine Mile Canyon, use Basketmaker II and III manufacturing techniques and are unlike Fremont basketry. This issue is summarized by Howard and Janetski (1992:131–132), who note that the widespread Basketmaker II and

III basketry techniques beyond the Basketmaker region is usually attributed to trade or migration. Were the scalps themselves also traded?

In sum, Basketmaker-type basketry in Fremont contexts, the presence of artifactual scalps from both Basketmaker and Fremont sites, and indications of the ceremonial use and display of trophy heads and scalps as seen in the rock art are phenomena that indicate a shared ideology as well as trade between the two groups. Evidence for interaction and some degree of historical continuity is present in the rock art style and content in general.

The Social Context and Meaning

Importantly, "the assessment of any sample of data from the archaeological record is contingent on our interpretation of its social and ideological context" (Wilcox and Haas 1994:211). In the absence of ethnographic information, the meaning of these heads and other body parts must be sought within the broader cultural framework. It is not known whether these items were retrieved from enemies killed during hostilities or sacrificial victims taken during such conflicts, or were simply taken from revered ancestors [e.g., as in Peru (Mason 1968:175, 187–88)]; all are possibilities. Nevertheless, as pointed out by LeBlanc (1999:88), there is no historical tradition of curating the bones of ancestors in the Southwest. Therefore, archaeologists have traditionally regarded the heads and scalps as trophies.

Certainly the dramatic Vernal petroglyph in which the principal figure holds a shield and an apparent human scalp on a stick suggests a combative atmosphere. This conjunction of elements occurs elsewhere in the Vernal district (Castleton 1984:Fig. 2.61; Schaafsma 1971:Pl. 3). While evidence for an acceleration of hostilities in the Fremont region is characteristic of the time period following AD 1150, accompanied by a rock art complex in which human trophies are absent (LeBlanc 1999:191–192; Schaafsma 2000:17–22), the Vernal rock art clearly documents an earlier practice of trophy head-taking. This, in turn, is seemingly linked to an ideology associated with Basketmaker practices to the south.

The Basketmaker record in regard to conflict is more ample and informative. Skeletal evidence of violence exists in San Juan Basketmaker sites on Cedar Mesa in southeastern Utah. In Cave 7, Whiskers Draw in Cottonwood Canyon, over 90 Basketmaker II skeletons suggest the scene of a massacre (Hurst and Turner 1993; LeBlanc 1999:123). Cut-marks on three males suggest that they were scalped (Hurst and Turner 1993:168–169). In Cave 19 (Cut-in-Two Cave) in Grand Gulch, disarticulated buried body parts included arms and hands as well as legs and feet. Both Green Mask cave, also in Grand Gulch, and nearby Red Canyon also produced evidence of violent deaths (LeBlanc 1999:140).

Hurst and Turner (1993:169) conclude that "lethal conflict was a part of Basketmaker life," noting that similar evidence is not limited to southeastern Utah. A late Basketmaker II massacre site, known as Battle Cave (LeBlanc 1999: Table 4.1) in Canyon del Muerto has been described by Ann Morris (1933:216–217)

and Earl Morris (1939:19). LeBlanc (1999:123, Table 4.1) lists only a few sites with evidence of Basketmaker II violence, including those named above, but with the addition of Woodchuck Cave from the Tsegi drainage.

With regard to Woodchuck Cave (Lockett and Hargrave 1953), where all the adult male skeletons had been decapitated, Turner and Turner (1990:201) believe that these skulls were removed historically, citing evidence of cutting with a metal knife as evidence. A more complex picture is promoted by Wilcox and Haas (1994:229) who believe that at least one of the skulls was removed prehistorically. Heads were also missing from Cave I burials, Kinboko Canyon (Smiley and Robins 1997:47), the implication being that the heads had been removed prehistorically.

Skeletal evidence of Basketmaker II massacres, such as found in Cave 7 and Battle Cave, and perhaps at other sites as well, supports the contention that the heads displayed in the rock art are indeed trophies. Trophy heads, as desirable fetishes, could also have been obtained in conflicts of a much smaller scale than the massacres that leave such a dramatic impression in the archeological record.

Elsewhere, ethnographically, only the most important Mohave shamans acted as scalpers on war expeditions, because scalps were viewed as "magically contagious and very dangerous" (Stewart 1974:6–7). Regardless of the nature of the enemy, in the hands of shamans, as depicted in Basketmaker II and Fremont rock art, the inherent powers of the scalp would have been activated and controlled by specialists for the benefit of the group.

With the aid of spirit helpers, tutelary deities, and divine or semidivine beings (Eliade 1964:88–95) the shaman, an other-world voyager, could maneuver such powers in the interests of curing, divining, successful hunting and battle exploits, and weather control (Schaafsma 1994:47). Painted handprints stamped beside some of the paintings indicate that the flayed trophy head *images* themselves were revered and probably perceived as embodying supernatural powers. Such prints are thought to be indicative of acts of prayer and veneration, and they were commonly made over and around the large shamanic figures that typify this art (Schaafsma 1994:64).

In addition to their display in group rituals, picturing trophy heads and scalps on cliffs would have been another mode of exhibition. Many of the cliffs carved along the San Juan River are exposed sites where the heads could have been easily viewed, either in the context of rituals or merely as a general presence in an area where miscellaneous daily activities were going on. It has been proposed that the heavy concentration of Basketmaker II rock art in the vicinity of the mouth of Butler Wash is related to the local farming potential using subsoil irrigation practices, and that the petroglyphs may have overlooked planted fields (Smiley and Robins 1997:81–88). These localities may also have been the focus of group ritual activity, including rock art production.

Painted heads, however, such as those at Green Mask Cave, Lion Tracks Spring, and in lower Butler Wash are often found in more secluded, and sometimes restricted locations, and are featured subjects. These sites, near springs and plunge pools, may have been selected for their water associations, if the heads

were perceived to embody fertility or rain-bringing powers, as did scalps almost 1000 years later. In this regard, the female head and associated figures in lower Butler Wash come to mind (Fig. 5.6). I suggested previously that the lines falling from the head suggest blood or water. The waterfowl depicted with the shaman commanding this scene, however, could refer to supernatural flight as well as water (Schaafsma 1994:60–62).

In this scene, the central shaman figure, the object to his left, and the head all share a similar feather. In Fremont rock art, facial details are shared between the shamanic practitioner holding a head and the head itself, thus establishing some sort of identity between them. The horizontal facial banding on the well-known painting of the "trophy" head in Green Mask Cave and on the flayed head from Kinboko Canyon (Kidder and Guernsey 1919:190–191) is also found on a few complete Basketmaker figures believed to represent shamans (Cole 1993:Fig. 9.26, 9.27). Cole (1989:71) suggests that the similar facial designs on death's heads and the faces of living shamans may have linked the shamans with their underworld journey and spiritual powers thereby attained.

There may be other explanations as well. On the social front, features shared between the living and the trophies may suggest conflict within Basketmaker and Fremont groups. Following ethnographic clues, it is even more likely that such similarities functioned as visual signs of incorporation of the conquered into the victor's camp. In the manner of the late Pueblo trophy scalps (Bunzel 1932:674–675), it is possible that the head of the defeated enemy, even one of different ethnic affiliation, after being submitted to various punishments and incorporation rituals, would have been regarded as "initiated." At that point, invested with desirable spiritual forces, these powers—in this case those of a rainmaker—could then be tapped for the benefit of the victors.

AD 400–1300

Following the representation of head trophies in Basketmaker II rock art, there is a roughly 900-year gap before clear allusions to head-taking or scalping are apparent in prehistoric Pueblo petroglyphs and rock paintings.

Ironically, Earl Morris (1939:41–42) reports evidence of widespread conflagrations during the centuries following, which he interprets as evidence of "troubled times." In a recent review of Anasazi warfare, LeBlanc (1999:149) surmises that a decrease in hostilities after Late Basketmaker II was followed by an increase in Pueblo I (AD 750–900). Although there is some scattered physical evidence for the Anasazi use of human body parts and skulls following Basketmaker II (Peckham 1963; Roberts 1929:144), their display as trophies, as such, is not apparent, and none have been identified in rock art.

The period of Pueblo II until late Pueblo III was relatively peaceful (although see Tragedy House, in the Wupatki region AD 1100–1200 (Turner and Turner 1990). After AD 1200, however, there are multiple lines of archaeological evidence

for sharply increased hostilities (Haas 1990:187; Haas and Creamer 1996; Kohler and Van West 1996:184; Kuckelman et al. 2002; Schaafsma 2000). Although LeBlanc (1999:192) places the beginnings of defensive behavior and increasing conflict around AD 1150, he also states: "Virtually every class of archaeological data that could reflect increased evidence for warfare has it beginnings in the late 1200s" (LeBlanc 1999:197). This evidence includes shield-bearing warriors in the rock art of the Colorado Plateau rock art by around AD 1250, if not earlier (Schaafsma 2000:9–27), and these observations have implications for the centuries to follow.

Before the onset of the Pueblo IV period in the northern Rio Grande valley around AD 1325 (Fig. 5.11), there are some rather dramatic beheadings pictured on Classic Mimbres black-on-white bowls (AD 1000–1150) in southern New Mexico. These consist of scenes in which persons, wearing horned serpent attire and holding curved sticks as weapons, are in the act of decapitating or holding a severed head (Fig. 5.12; and see LeBlanc 1999:Fig. 2.7).

LeBlanc (1999:89) mentions that there are other bowls showing just the heads. The decapitation scenes appear to be pictures of ritual acts, and Thompson (1999:4–27) interprets these scenes as representing the beheading of the elder Hero Twin by the younger Twin, in terms of Mayan mythology. On Mimbres pottery, these scenes could represent an oral tradition only, or a mythological basis for, if not an actual Mimbres beheading rite. Corroborative archaeological evidence for such rites is, nevertheless, ambiguous (LeBlanc 1999:188).

It is worth mentioning a Zuni tale in which the little War Gods entertained the A'shiwi (Zuni) youths in a performance in which the war twins killed each other with their turquoise "rabbit sticks" (curved sticks), only to immediately revive the slain twin unharmed. This all ended disastrously, however, when the A'shiwi youths demanded that they, too, be struck with the sticks. In this case, however, they were simply killed (Stevenson 1904:57–58).

Other Mimbres bowls portray a profile figure holding up a staff, a motif that seems to make its debut on Mimbres ceramics (Brody 1992: Fig. 13). This motif is found widely in rock art of the Mimbres, Mountain and Jornada Mogollon, and Western Pueblos before ca. AD 1325 (Fig. 5.13). Items on these staffs vary greatly and may include "placards" with geometric designs, a variety of animal effigies, birds, down-curved arcs (scalps?), and even clouds (see McCreery and Malotki 1994:Figs. 3.2; 3.16; Schaafsma 2000:Fig. 4.8; Schaafsma and Young, in press; Slifer 1998:Fig. 148). Staffs in the form of dragonflies in Jornada rock art also have symbolic reference to moisture or rain (Slifer 1998:Fig. 229, 235).

It is possible that these staffs and their attachments may have some relationship to poles, bows, and arrows by means of which scalps were displayed among the ethnographic Pueblos (Beaglehole 1935:23–24; Parsons 1939:885; Stephen 1936:97; Stevenson 1904:Pl. CXXXI). At Taos, scalps were painted red and stretched on a stick (Parsons 1939:644). Dances or other rituals are described around a scalp pole at Hopi, Taos, and Zuni (Parsons 1939:645, 867n++, Stevenson 1904:582). Ethnographically, the Pueblo practice of carrying scalps aloft

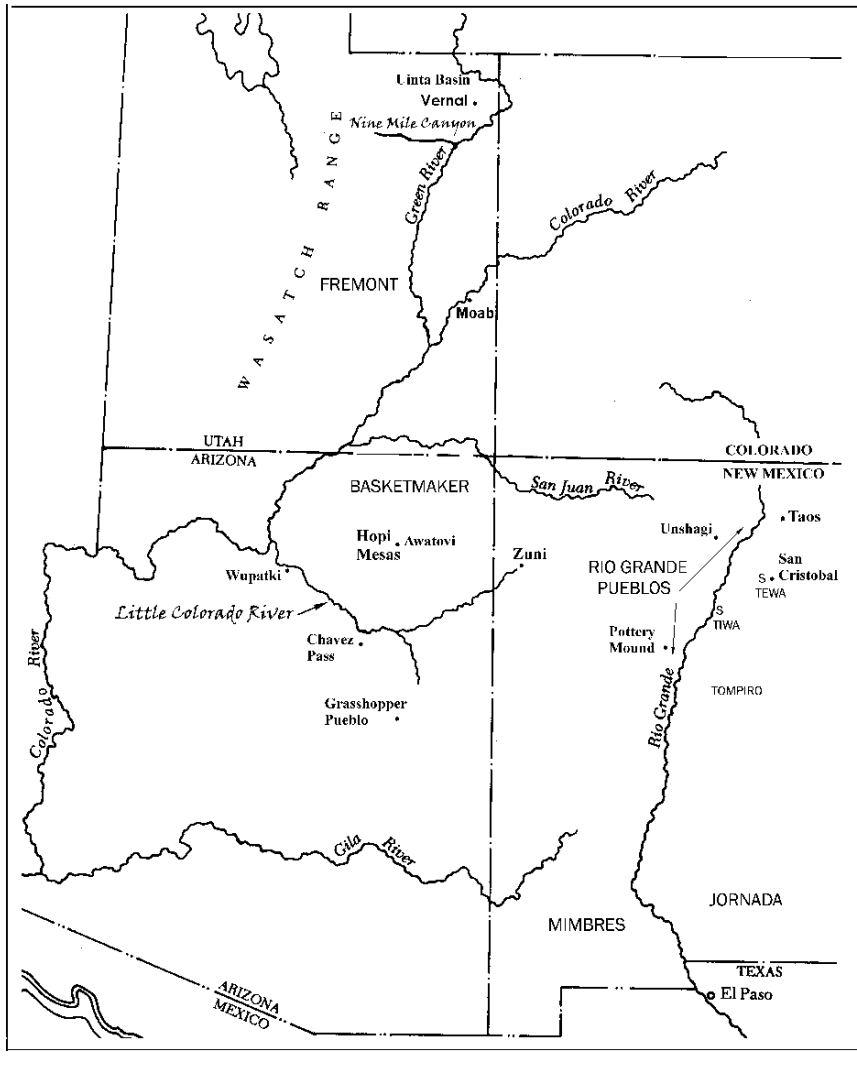

Figure 5.11. Map showing culture areas and selected archaeological sites and Pueblo regions.

is supported in oral tradition. In a Taos story, it states: "Once Morning Star killed 7 redheads so that the Corn Girls could bring in their *heads* on a pole" (Parsons 1939:937 [emphasis mine]). The role of Morning Star as a scalper will be explored further below. Similarly, in a Hopi tale, the Brothers cut off the heads of the So'yoko Monsters and brought them in stuck on their bows (Malotki 1978:18).

On balance, the rock art suggests that the use of a pole to exhibit a trophy head or scalp in ethnographic times has deep antecedents in prehistory, dating back to the eleventh or twelfth centuries when pole displays pictured in rock art

Figure 5.12. Man wearing a horned serpent costume, holding a curved "rabbit" stick and a decapitated head, ca. AD 1050–1150. Osborn Collection. (Adapted from Fewkes 1923:Fig. 13).

appear to have been complex in meaning and included symbols of moisture and clouds—meteorological features to which scalps are symbolically linked. Whether or not scalps as such were part of this rain-making complex prehistorically remains uncertain. LeBlanc (1999:88) points out that in the Mogollon region there is no archaeological evidence of scalping and that signs of warfare are not pervasive.

PUEBLO IV: SCALPING AND ITS METAPHORS, CA. AD 1325–1680

Historically, membership in Pueblo warrior societies almost universally required taking a scalp. These scalps were later used for ritual purposes. Scalping was an important factor in hostile encounters, because scalps were regarded not only as spoils of war but also valued for their perceived various supernatural powers (Parsons 1939:351; Stephen 1936:97–99; Stevenson 1904:578–608; see also the account of Pueblo auxiliaries taking Navajo scalps in 1705 in Hendricks and Wilson 1996:28 and n. 16, pp. 142–143.)

References to both decapitation and scalping linked with fertility and rain-making are abundant in contemporary Pueblo oral tradition and rituals. Prehistorically, scalping, conceptually linked with decapitation, is alluded to through visual metaphors in Pueblo IV rock art and kiva murals after ca. AD 1350. The prehistoric

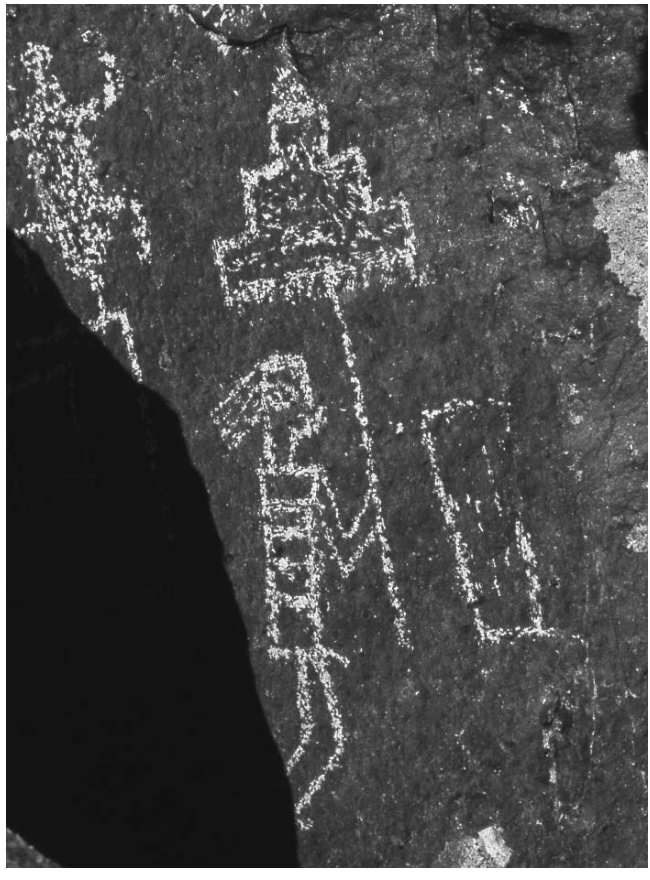

Figure 5.13. Person holding aloft a staff with a raining cloud on top. Jornada style. Three Rivers, New Mexico.

visual text, like historic Pueblo ritual poetry and narrative, is filled with esoteric symbolism. Bunzel (1932:618) notes that fixed metaphors, resistant to change, are outstanding features of Zuni poetic style. Within this framework, the usual ceremonial appellation for a scalp is the enemy's "water-filled covering" (Bunzel 1932:676, n. 13a).

Unlike Basketmaker II and Fremont rock art where decapitated heads and scalps are pictured in a rather straightforward manner, in Pueblo IV art no scalps as such have been positively identified. Triangular objects hanging from the elbows of warriors in Pottery Mound kivas 7, 8, and 9 may represent scalps, although alternative interpretations of these items are also possible (Crotty 1995: Fig. 64; Hibben 1975:Figs. 23, 37, 57, 67; photo archives, Hibben Center, University of New Mexico). In support of the scalp interpretation is not only their association with warriors, but the fact that in one mural (Kiva 7, layer 33) this highly stylized

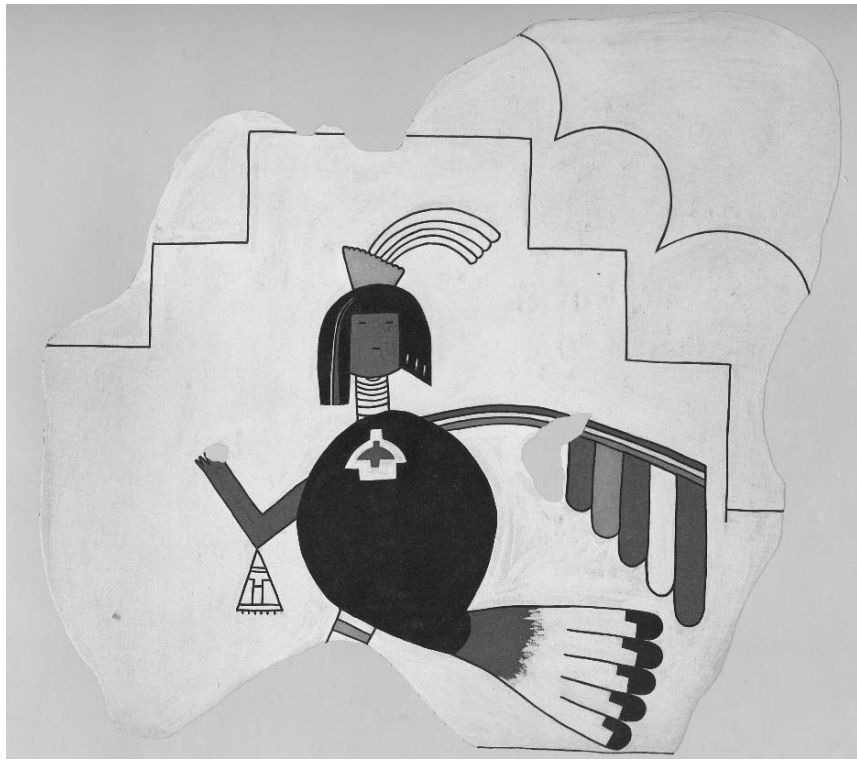

Figure 5.14. Pottery Mound mural with Knifewing impersonator framed by clouds, AD 1370–1450. One possible interpretation of the triangle suspended from the elbow is a scalp. Kiva 7, layer 33. (Hibben 1975:Fig. 37. Courtesy of KC Publications, Las Vegas.)

object is suspended from the arm of a figure with the attributes of Knifewing, an eagle-like supernatural associated with scalping (Fig. 5.14). Clouds form the background of this painting. Allusions to scalping, on the other hand, are abundant in Pueblo IV art, and the supernatural agents of scalping are well represented. Fortunately, late Pueblo prehistoric iconography, only a few hundred years in age, is amenable to interpretation based on ethnographic information, as there is a good fit between the Pueblo IV imagery and contemporary religious ideology.

The proliferation of warfare iconography in Pueblo IV art indicates that not only did hostilities play a significant role in Pueblo life during the late prehistoric period (LeBlanc 1999), but also that an ideology of conflict was institutionalized and integrated within the broader religious context (Schaafsma 2000). In addition to picturing numerous shields, warriors, and weapons, the rich iconography of late prehistoric Pueblo warfare with its numerous symbols and metaphors suggests that warfare and fertility comprised a dual process, the spiritual component of which was dedicated to maintaining cosmic balance and seasonal rhythms necessary for

Figure 5.15. Star and mountain lion with claws extended. Southern Tewa, ca. 1350–1525.

successful farming and hence well-being (Schaafsma 2000:154–157). It further suggests that various war societies were also in place and served, along with the kachina cult, to socially integrate the large towns characteristic of the period.

The Rock Art

Scalping in Pueblo IV graphic art is commonly referenced indirectly via the scalpers. The ethnographic texts tell us that it is the scalping capacity of these taloned supernaturals that is symbolically alluded to in the imagery. These entities, frequently portrayed in the context of shields and warriors, consist of mountain lions, eagles or monster eagles, and importantly, stars conflated with eagle tail feathers, talons, and even wearing projectiles in their eagle-tail fan headdresses (Figs. 5.15–5.17). Mountain lions also may be embellished with empowering feathers or pointed warrior caps. It is particularly significant that the talons of these creatures are often prominently displayed. Awatovi murals picturing Knifewing (or Kwatoko), the scalper, with maize and lightning (Smith 1952:77a) graphically unite the scalping/rain/fertility symbolic complex. In another painting, maize ears are shown below a conflated mountain lion/eagle against a background that is probably a stepped cloud (Smith 1952:Fig. 73c).

Figure 5.16. Shield-bearing eagle warrior. The stylized eagle motif on his shield includes tail feathers and talons. Southern Tewa.

At San Felipe, the head of the O'pi Warrior Society (scalp-takers) took on the identity of a mountain lion. At Hopi, according to Titiev (1944:161), returning warriors were not allowed to say that they had killed anyone, but were expected to attribute all slayings to Kwatoko, the supernatural eagle, of the sky or zenith. This being was known as "Achiyalataka," or Knifewing at Zuni, a mythical monster with wings of knives (Bunzel 1932:528; Young 1988:82). Similarly, Zuni ritual poetry makes reference to the "beast bow priests" as scalpers (see following, p. 113).

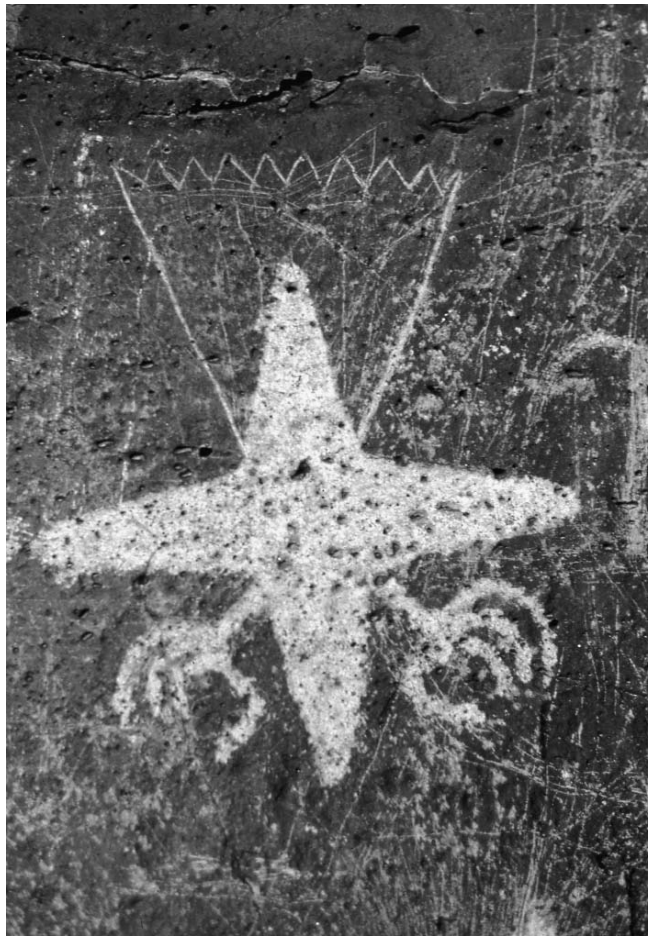

Figure 5.17. Star conflated with eagle feathers and talons. Southern Tiwa.

Stars are associated with war. Star supernaturals are prevalent in the rock art of the Southern Tewa, Southern Tiwa, and Tompiro Pueblo provinces of Rio Grande where they are found as shield decorations, pictured individually, and as kachinas or deities (Figs. 5.17–5.18). Conflated with eagle attributes, this taloned star supernatural, descending from the heavens, is regarded as a powerful scalper (Schaafsma 2005; Schaafsma 2000:152–153). One Southern Tewa petroglyph displays the attributes of the now Hopi Heart-of-the-Sky God, Sotuqnangu, associated with war, summer thunderstorms, and lightning, and who is said to have invented scalping (Fig. 5.18). Many stars have faces, and some petroglyph stars show evidence of having been painted red, a color associated with war and blood. In the Pottery Mound kiva murals (ca. AD 1370–1490), the down-turned, toothed mouths of star persons are also painted red (Schaafsma 2000:Pl.9).

Figure 5.18. Star-faced deity, Heart-of-the-Sky, said to have invented scalping. He is surrounded by projectiles, symbolic of lightning, and the bird on his chest is thought to represent Knifewing. Southern Tewa.

Although all stars are associated with war in Pueblo thought, Venus is often identified with the Warrior Twins (Young 1992) and scalping: "Scalps were called Morning Star at Hano" (Parsons 1939:181–182). The Blue Corn Girls in Tewa stories become not only warriors but also "Dark Star Man," analogous to the War Twins, and in battle they take many scalps (Parsons 1926:60; 1929:266). Trophy heads (or scalps) and fertility—represented by the Corn Girls—and Morning Star are all linked in these tales.

Other references to scalping or beheading in Pueblo IV rock art include certain warrior kachinas, which in contemporary kachina performances enact symbolic scalping and whose fearsome nature is elaborated in oral traditions. Such kachinas include Hilili and the Bloody Hand Kachina (Figs. 5.19–5.20).

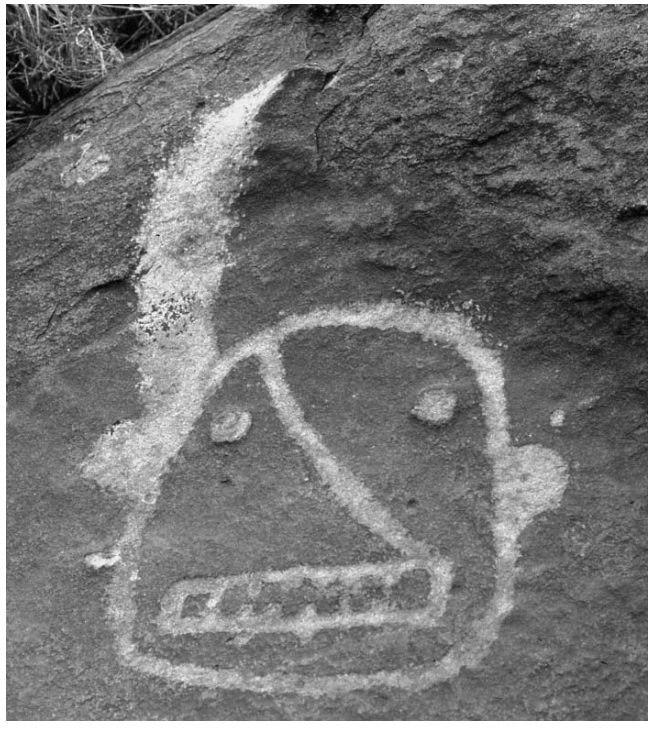

Figure 5.19. Hilili kachina with scalping knife attached to the side of his head. Southern Tewa.

The Archaeological Record

Conflict between Rio Grande Pueblo towns and between Pueblos and Plains groups is a subject of archaeological concern (Haas and Creamer 1997; Habicht Mauche 1988; Schaafsma 2000:162–175). Burned villages, the florescence of war themes in rock and mural art, and historical documents with reference to past hostilities (Hammond and Rey 1940; 1966) are sources of information for warring activities.

Within an environment characterized by an apparent acceleration of hostile encounters, along with widespread indirect references to scalping in the pictorial record, it is surprising that the physical archaeological evidence for special treatment of heads or head parts is not overwhelming. Scalps as such, however, would not have survived in the characteristically exposed archaeological sites. Furthermore, as LeBlanc (1999:88) points out, analysis of skulls for indications of scalping has not been routinely conducted in the Southwest, and therefore such evidence is under-represented in the literature. Exceptions to this are horizontal cutmarks on ten fourteenth-century crania from Arizona—Nuvakwewtaqa (Chavez Pass) and Grasshopper Pueblos (Allen and Merbs 1985). These individuals were

Figure 5.20. Hand kachina known for scalping in Rio Grande Pueblo oral traditions. Southern Tiwa.

subsequently buried with grave goods. A Pueblo IV skull burial together with three whole culinary jars from Unshagi (Reiter 1938:79) is suggestive of rain-bringing rites (Schaafsma 2002). Reiter also describes a second burial in which the skull was placed under the chest, a situation suggesting decapitation. The skull, however, in this case, was clearly not kept as a trophy, and its meaning in this association is unclear. Kidder (1932:270, Fig. 199d) reports a skull fragment from Pecos that was once inlaid, thus indicating that it was valued. Clearly more research, including a reexamination of skeletal remains from Pueblo IV, is needed.

THE SCALPKNOT IN PROTOHISTORIC NAVAJO ROCK ART

In northwestern New Mexico, Navajo rock art from the late 1600s through the first half of the 1700s depicts supernaturals and ceremonial themes (Schaafsma 1980:302–326; 1992:26–41). One of the elements depicted in the petroglyphs is the scalpknot, stylized as an hourglass design (Schaafsma 1980:315, Fig. 261; Stevenson 1891:247). This motif persists in present-day Navajo ritual contexts, and occurs historically among the Pueblos (Bunzel 1932:Pl. 39b; Schaafsma 1980:Fig. 246; Stevenson 1904:561).[2]

In spite of a well-known phobia of the dead, in mythology and in actual practice, the Navajo were scalp-takers: "Scalps were taken from both male and female enemies by anyone except a woman or a boy on his first war raid—the individuals whose spirits were weak. Some warriors took only a small piece of skin; others preserved the whole scalp including the ears" (Reichard 1950:595). Some of these scalps were preserved in Navajo medicine bundles, or *jish*. "A pre-Fort Sumner assemblage date is known for many jish still in use [i.e., 1863–1864]; references to specific raids and battles, which have provided scalps and /or other parts of enemies for Enemyway jish, occur in the histories of these jish" (Frisbie 1987:438).

After Pueblo contact in the protohistoric period, the early Navajo, who became maize farmers, assimilated the Pueblo symbolism of the scalp. In rock art, the scalp-knot appears with maize sprouts or plants, where it has reference to moisture, but its meaning is compounded by the fact that the hourglass scalpknot is also a symbol for the younger War Twin (Fig. 21; and Schaafsma 1966:Fig. 12 [printed upside-down]; 1980:Fig. 261). This twin, who maintains a scalping role in Navajo mythology (Faris 1990:195; Reichard 1950:417; Zolbrod 1984:181–183, 221) is known variously in English as Born-for-Water, Child-of-the-Water, One-Cuts-Around-It

Figure 5.21. Early eighteenth-century Navajo petroglyph featuring a corn plant growing from a cloud. An hourglass-shaped scalpknot is attached. To the right is Ghanaskidi with a planting stick. His hump is said to contain seeds and mist.

(Reichard 1950:483), or as "the parent of all waters" (Stevenson 1891:280). Ethnographically, and in rock art, the scalp knot is featured on Born-for-Water's mask and body (Haile 1947:28; Schaafsma 1980:Pl. 27). The color of this god is red.

Navajo mythology appears to have been derived in large part from Pueblo sources during the years 1600–1700) (Schaafsma 1963:66 and Fig. 54). Interestingly, Parsons (1940:9, n. 4) notes that the Little War God appears as a corn kachina in some Pueblos, thus denoting another specific point of cultural continuity within the milieu under discussion.

THE ROLE OF METAPHOR AND FUNDAMENTAL MEANINGS

Metaphor in art constitutes a visual language by means of which a dialogue takes place among those culturally initiated. Knab (1986:52) describes metaphor as an organizing principle structuring experience in a culturally defined manner: "It is through metaphor that the chaos of experience is reduced to meaningful patterns." Further: "Metaphorical messages capture the essence of the social, political, and religious concepts of a group" (Heyden 1986:35). It is within culturally specific paradigms that define metaphorical relationships between human beings and other natural entities that the meanings ascribed to human trophies may be considered.

Ethnographically, from Hopi to Taos, trophy scalps acquired in war were perceived as having supernatural powers. Some of the powers of the brave vanquished enemy were sought by the conquerors. For the Hopi, Stephen (1936:99) writes: "During the twenty-five days of the ceremony the women took the scalps and scraped off, with their fingernails, shreds of the adhering flesh and gave these shreds to their male children to eat . . . to make them brave." The powers of scalps were also utilized at Isleta to empower runners participating in spring war ceremonies (Parsons 1932:962; 1939:). Primarily, however, scalps were viewed as rain-bringers and seed beings. Reference has been made repeatedly in the previous discussion to moisture, rain, and fertility in regard to scalps and trophy heads.

In order to understand the potential of these associations, it is necessary to probe more deeply into the Pueblo world view. A case can also be made for exploring related practices and beliefs in Mexico (Schaafsma 1999, 2000, 2001; Schaafsma and Taube 2001; Taube 1986, 2001; Thompson 1999). In general, in Mesoamerica and in the Southwest, an animate world is linked together by an inseparable spiritual essence, and the line is blurred between human beings and various aspects of the cosmos. Within this framework of perception, three organizational principles can be identified that underlie the powers perceived in the trophy head or scalp: (1) a duality wherein life and death are viewed as a single on-going process; (2) the concept of reciprocity; and (3) the identification of the human body with natural forces.

A link between the death's head and fertility is fundamental in New World cosmologies (Anton 1987:19, 47, 65–66, 72–73; Furst 1978:22–23). Concepts of

fertility and rejuvenation relating to the death's head are made explicit in the Mayan text, *Popul Vuh* (Tedlock 1996:97, 99). In central Mexico, skeletonized heads are believed to be symbols of life, fertility, and rebirth. Divinities with life-giving roles are also skeletonized (Furst 1978:22–23). Also in central Mexico, scalps were used in ceremonies including those involving the deity Xipe-Totec, Our Lord the Flayed One, whose spring festivals were suggestive of agricultural renewal (Miller and Taube 1993:188; Rodriguez 2004:44).

In Mesoamerica, decapitation is commonly associated with fertility and equated with harvesting an ear of corn. The Cacaxtla murals (ca. AD 600–900) depict ears of maize as human heads (Carlson 1991:Fig. 15e,f). A connection with fertility is also exhibited in the form of plants or serpents sprouting from a neck from which a head has been severed, which is a persistent theme in Mesoamerican iconography (Graulich 2003:17). Similarly, in a Zuni story, the blood spilled by the head of Paiyatamu, cut off by the corn maidens, resulted in the growth of flowers (Tedlock 1972:110, 117).

The conceptof a dynamic life/death duality is acted on by the Pueblos in various ways, including the ritual use of enemy scalps as described here. Another expression of this duality is the view of the departed that become kachinas and return to the living as rain clouds to water the fields of the living (Hieb 1994; Ladd 1994). The willingness of the kachina to bestow their gifts is dependent, however, upon offerings. This brings us to the principle of reciprocity listed above. Reciprocity between man, his ancestors, and other supernatural entities is perceived as necessary in order to maintain a balanced universe.

In Mesoamerica, offerings to nourish the gods commonly took the form of human sacrifice and bloodletting. Among the Pueblos, prayerstick offerings substituted for human deaths, but bloodletting in any form was (and still is) viewed as an offering and as a fertility-related act, fulfilling a ritual obligation. In recent Hopi ceremonies, bloodletting was achieved by the flogging of clowns by the kachinas during spring and early summer plaza performances (Stephen 1936:451, 454): "Now we must lash you that rain clouds may come" (Stephen 1936:462). Further: "If many youths are whipped the kachina have to *pay back* with many rains" (Stephen 1936:351) [emphasis added]. The bloodletting that results in taking a scalp would have performed similar functions. While the scalp itself is a trophy that embodies power, the blood sacrificed in its taking compounded the scalp's perceived value. The Zunis say (Bunzel (1932:687:and n. 41) that the blood of the enemy "adds to the flesh of our mother earth."

Thirdly, human beings may be equated under certain circumstances with natural phenomena (Titiev 1944:176–177). In turn, natural phenomena may be described in anthropomorphic guise, and supernaturals are sometimes described in kinship terms or are assigned gender roles. Among today's Nahua of northern Veracruz, Alan Sandstrom (1991:255) describes perceptions of the human body as a metaphor for various aspects of the universe. Within this scheme, corn may be viewed as having a human body. Critical to this discussion is the observation that in both Mesoamerica and in the Southwest, the human body may be likened to or

identified with both corn and clouds (Sekaquaptewa and Washburn 2004:471–472). Importantly: "Hopi think in terms of metaphors about everything in their lives" (Sekaquaptewa and Washburn 2004:468).

Pueblo allusions to the maize/human connection vary. Sekaquaptewa and Washburn detail the ways in which the Hopi bride embodies both. Elsewhere among the Pueblos: "The corpse is like corn husk after the corn has been gathered" (Parsons 1939:71). The ear itself may be used ritually to represent the soul of the dead, the heart of the deceased (Bandelier in Lange 1959:416; Parsons 1939:73).

In life, on the other hand, one aspires to be like a perfect ear of corn: Antelope Society initiates at Hopi say, "We will come up from this kiva . . . as the corn and vines grow up out of the jar behind the altar, perfected" (Stephen 1936:626–627). At San Juan, a perfect ear of corn is laid beside a newborn infant so that it too will grow up to be perfect (Parsons 1939:92). Or conversely, corn becomes anthropomorphized. In Zuni poetry: "All the different kinds of corn . . . tenderly will bring forth their young. Clasping their children . . . ," referring to the young ears wrapped in their leaves (Bunzel 1932:645 and n. 7).

Equally important in the Pueblo Southwest is the identification of people with clouds. Modes for equating persons or even a community with clouds are numerous, including hairstyle, dress, and body painting of ritual participants. Pueblos engaged in rituals such as prayerstick making, dancing, and so forth, let their hair fall loose, mimicking and encouraging the rain (Stephen 1936:546). Just as hair is worn loosely during ritual performances among the Pueblos to encourage rain, among the Aztecs, women's hair worn loose and flowing during festivals was equated with maize silk (Heyden 1986:38). In Mexico and in the Southwest, preparations of the dead for their journey to the afterlife include steps to ensure that they will negotiate with the Cloud People for rain or return themselves as rainbringers (Furst 1993; Hill 1982:171–172, 177; Parsons 1939:70; Schaafsma 1999:188–189; Stephen 1936:325, 383, 442, 450, 455, 580–581, 701, 824–25; Titiev 1944:176–177).

If living people are identified with maize and clouds and the ancestral dead are perceived as useful rainbringers, it is logical that for the initiated the scalp of the enemy can also be seen as an asset. Identified with cosmological entities, among the Tewa, scalps are referred to as Mist or Light Rain and are said to foretell precipitation (Parsons 1939:351). Stephen (1936:97) describes freshly acquired scalps thrown by women onto ground drawings of clouds as the scalps were brought into the village. According to Parsons (1939:350): "The dead enemy is supposed to invest his scalp, or at least return to it, and so, after a measure of abuse and insult, the scalp is adopted and considered a beneficent fetish." Like Aztec prisoners of war, scalps may be referred to in kinship terms (Schaafsma 2000:157).

Although displays of scalps on poles in public plazas have been observed historically, as described earlier, references to scalps and scalping in oral tradition, poetry, and graphic art have been couched in metaphors. After the scalp has been set up on a pole in the plaza, the Zuni pekwin addresses the people, affirming the fertility implications of the fetish hanging on the pole (Bunzel 1932:679):

The Beast Bow priests,
With their claws,
Tore from the enemy,
His water-filled covering,
Into the country of the corn priests
The enemy made his road enter.
(Bunzel 1932:678)

Or further, in reference to the enemy:

Even though he was without value, . . .
Yet he was a water being;
He was a seed being.
(Bunzel 1932:679)

CONCLUSION

Researching trophy heads and scalps throughout time via the record of rock art in the Southwest reveals fundamental differences in the manner in which visual texts have illustrated this phenomenon. We have moved from scalps and head trophies that are boldly depicted—sometimes seemingly in a narrative way in the hands of ceremonialists—into a visual arena comprised of numerous allusions to the practice of scalping, but rarely naming the object itself. Couched in a sea of metaphorical references, the significance ascribed to the scalp and its ultimate meaning in late Pueblo ceremony is multivocal and powerfully ambiguous. At least some of these meanings were carried over into eighteenth-century Navajo cosmology.

In summary, the severed head of the enemy was viewed as a vital source of magical powers. Head-taking has been pervasive among New World maize-growing cultures, seemingly acting on the link between the death's head and fertility described earlier. While it is reasonable to hypothesize that the head trophies pictured in the rock art on the Colorado Plateau were part of an early fertility cult—water and blood are indicated in certain cases—associated visual information is scarce as to what specific powers may have been attributed to these scalps.

The degree to which the Vernal Fremont populations depended on maize bears further investigation (Marwitt 1986:169). On Cedar Mesa, however, isotopic osteological studies (Berry 1982:33; Matson and Dohm 1994:61) have demonstrated that late Basketmaker populations between AD 200 and 400 depended on maize as 80 percent of their food intake, thus firmly linking these and nearby populations—who created the majority of the rock art sites featuring these heads—with maize agriculture. For the later Pueblos, whose vision of the cosmos involved the need for reciprocity with supernatural entities and the identity of persons with natural phenomena such as maize, clouds, and mist, the practice of scalping conjoined warfare and fertility into a powerful duality that assured adequate rainfall and agricultural success in an arid land (Schaafsma 2000:154–57).

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NOTES

1. An element of ambiguity is introduced, however, if one compares the "scalp" to an actual Basketmaker II fetish from White Dog Cave illustrated in Guernsey and Kidder (1921:Pl. 39). In this drawing an object, shaped very much like the triangular objects in the rock art, is comprised mostly of hanging feathers and animals tails. Only a strand of human hair in the bundle is reported. Pendent streamers of unidentified "soft dressed skin" fall below. The object in question hangs on a bird-headed stick, as does a similar object in a Vernal petroglyph (Malotki and Weaver 2002:Pl. 63). In the Vernal group, the anthropomorph holding the bird-headed stick holds a knife and shield in the other hand.
2. In the culturally disruptive historic period, and especially after the advent of horses, communication between tribes was significantly increased. It would appear that the hourglass icon became widespread at this time. In coup drawings on Plains buffalo robes, the icon represents victims. The symbol is also found in the Eastern Woodlands (Toby Herbst, personal communication 2004).

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Chapter 6

Human Finger and Hand Bone Necklaces from the Plains and Great Basin

Douglas W. Owsley, Karin S. Bruwelheide,
Laurie E. Burgess and William T. Billeck

INTRODUCTION

Culturally patterned violent conflict between social groups has a long history in the prehistoric Plains and Great Basin of North America. Evidence for both the small-scale feuding and raiding that resulted in traumatic injuries and death and the large-scale warfare that destroyed villages and produced mass fatalities has been detected archaeologically and through studies of human skeletons (Bovee and Owsley 1994; Blakeslee 1999; Brooks 1994; Hollimon and Owsley 1994; Lambert 2002; Owsley 1994; Owsley and Bruwelheide 1997; Willey 1990). The prevalence of conflict varied through time and by location, being less frequent in the Plains during the Archaic and Woodland periods, and more common during the Village period. The pace and bloodiness of intertribal warfare increased even more dramatically during the protohistoric and historic periods as the Cheyenne, Crow, Sioux and other groups migrated from the east into already occupied lands in the Plains.

In the Great Basin, warfare was prevalent during the last millennia as Numic populations including the Paiute, Ute, Shoshone and Comanche expanded their territories through military force (Sutton 1986). Numic groups avoided hostility toward one another, but were "militarily aggressive" and at war with "virtually all of their neighbors" (Sutton 1986:77). Shoshone movements northward into the Plains began after 1500, while the Ute and Comanche entered the southern Plains circa 1700. Resident populations were displaced or eliminated.

Territorial expansions and competition for resources through militarism changed tribal relationships, boundaries, and cultures throughout the Plains and

Great Basin. "Probably there have been no changes in any aspect of aboriginal culture greater than those which have occurred in warfare. These changes were brought about by the introduction of the horse, gun, and fur trade on the northern Plains" (Lewis 1942:46).

> The prehorse motives of warfare, that is, vengeance and the defense and expansion of the tribal hunting grounds persisted, but were displaced in importance by raiding for loot. The religious element in scalping dropped out and scalps were sought for only as trophies of war. There followed changes in organization and tactics. Large massed forces under central leadership gave way to the small raiding party under a temporary leader; open battles with a great show of numbers became less frequent. Instead, stealth, secrecy and ambuscade were employed. Equipment as over against mere numbers became a vital factor. Casualties increased and warfare became a serious and deadly affair (Lewis 1942:59).

The practice and cultural importance of warfare to the historic Plains tribes is carefully documented in several classic works featuring the Blackfeet, Cheyenne and Pawnee (Ewers 1955, 1958; Grinnell 1890, 1910, 1915, 1923; Lewis 1942; Powell 1981a, 1981b). For some tribes, the "chief occupation was war" (Grinnell 1923b:6). For men, prestige and leadership within the tribe could only be attained by successful warriors and, for the tribe itself, raiding for horses became an integral part of its economy.

The taking of human trophies as a part of warfare also has deep roots in the Plains and Great Basin. Scalps stretched over basketry disks dating to the Basketmaker period (nearly 2000 years old) have been discovered in the eastern Great Basin where drier environmental conditions facilitate preservation of organic materials (Howard and Janetski 1992). Trophy heads and scalps also seem to be depicted in rock art in eastern and southeastern Utah (Cole 1990). Osteological evidence for scalping and the taking of trophy heads has been reported in Fremont culture sites dating from AD 650–1180 (Lambert 2002). The osteological evidence includes cuts on cranial vaults produced by scalping, cranial pathology characteristic of survival after being scalped, dismembered and decapitated remains, trophy skulls, and intentionally modified human bones, such as long bones made into musical instruments and cranial vaults fashioned into bowls (Owsley and Bruwelheide 1997; Owsley et al. 1994; Williams 1994).

Mutilation of dead enemies is frequently mentioned in historical and ethnohistorical accounts of Plains Indian warfare (Ewers 1997). The custom of scalping was the most common form of mutilation, the meaning of which has been extensively written about. A scalp was recognized merely as a trophy, "an emblem of victory" to take back to the village to dance and rejoice over (Grinnell 1910:303). Other parts of the body could serve the same purpose. "Other extremities—most commonly hands —were severed from the fallen body, carried home, displayed in the victory dance, then thrown away" (Ewers 1997:202).

Following the return of successful war parties, scalps and other trophies were turned over to and prepared by women for the postraid victory celebration (Ewers

1997). Given the opportunity, women also played active roles in the mutilation and dismemberment of deceased enemies. Eastman (1849:47) describes a Sioux woman who "had cut off the hands and feet of some little Chippeway children, and strung them, and worn them for a necklace."

> The action of older women in emasculating the dead bodies of enemy males was well documented in the writings of other careful observers of Plains Indian warfare as far back as the 1790s. Jean-Baptiste Truteau, an experienced French trader and keen observer of the tribes of the Middle Missouri, described the frenzied mutilation of dead enemies by elderly Indian women: "I have seen these furious old hags near their dwelling themselves cut off the hands, limbs, [and] the virile parts of the dead enemies, hang them around the neck and at the ears, and dance thus at all the lodge doors of the village" (Ewers 1997:201; cf. DeMallie and Parks 2003:69).

Mutilation was most likely to occur when the death involved revenge motives, as described for the Blackfeet:

> When seeking revenge for earlier losses at the hands of the enemy, the Blackfeet wreaked terrible revenge upon their victims. A Blackfoot warrior whose father, brother, or best friend had been killed by the tribe he was fighting was not content merely to take the scalp of a fallen enemy. He mutilated the body of his foe—cut off his hands, feet, and head, or even literally hacked him to pieces. (Ewers 1958:137–138).
>
> Informants said it was common for such a man to cut off the hand of the enemy, pierce a hole in it, pass a cord through the hole and tie the trophy to the bridle of his horse. Thus he carried it back to camp (Ewers 1955:207).
>
> After collecting their trophies, the successful scalp raiders rode homeward. As they neared their camp, they began to sing, and proudly display their trophies. The wife or other female relative of each man who had brought home a trophy carried it in the post-raid scalp dance. The hands, feet, scalps, or even the heads of fallen enemies were raised on poles borne by the women as they danced in a circle. These gruesome trophies proved to the camp that Blackfoot warriors had revenged their past losses at the hands of their enemy. Usually they were thrown away after the scalp dance. They had served their purpose. (Ewers 1958:139–140).

Cheyenne ledger art depicting the scalp dance after the Battle of the Little Big Horn illustrates this behavior (Powell 1981b:981). This circa 1877 drawing shows women dancers carrying scalps and a severed hand near a red-and-black painted victory pole, which also has a scalp and a hand tied to it.

The Crow also engaged in the taking of body parts as part of acts of revenge. Five Blackfoot who had stolen horses from a Crow in 1853 were caught about a mile from the village and killed. One man was not killed.

> This man they took out alive, scalped and cut his hands off, gathered their boys around who fired into his body with powder, striking him in the face with his own scalp, and knocking him on the head with stones and tomahawks until

> he died. Afterwards the five bodies were carried to camp, the heads, hands, feet, and privates cut off, paraded on poles, and thrown around the camp, some of which found their way to the fort, and were presented by the Crows to the Cree Indians then here. A few weeks before the period at which we write some Blackfeet stole horses from the Cree camp, were pursued and 11 out of the 12 of which the party consisted were killed. The remaining one was taken alive, scalped, his right hand cut off, and thus started back to his own nation to tell the news (Denig 1930:491–492).

The Assiniboine (Kennedy 1972), Blackfeet (Ewers 1958), Cheyenne (Bourke 1892, Powell 1969), Cree (Ewers 1958), Crow (Ewers 1958; Denig 1930:491; Ruger 1888), Pawnee (Grinnell 1923b), Sioux (Carrington 1896; Eastman 1849; Goodrich 1997; Marquis 1986), and Ute (Hamilton 1907) are all reported to have removed hands during hostile confrontations. The Indian pictograph emblem for the Cheyenne—"marks on the arm" (Mallery 1972:382), and the gesture sign—drawing "the hand across the arm, to imitate cutting it with a knife" (Mallery 1880:298; cf. Clark 1885:98) possibly refer to the "custom of cutting off the enemy's fingers for necklaces, and sometimes to cutting off the whole hand or forearm as a trophy to be displayed as scalps more generally are" (Mallery 1972:382–383).

Edward Denig, a trader in the northern Plains during the mid-eighteenth century, was well-acquainted with the Plains Indians and reported on the taking of body parts:

> There are no religious associations attending these acts, and they are not made with the view of appeasing the anger or of sacrifices to the Great Mystery; neither do their words and actions on these occasions imply such idea; all is insult to the dead enemy, and savage glory and revenge to themselves (Denig 1930:492).

In the northwest, Lewis and Clark were surprised to find the custom of cutting off hands and preserving fingers as trophies by a Chinookan group on the Columbia River, just above the Dalles. On October 29, 1805, Clark wrote [sic]:

> The Chief then directed his wife to hand him his medison bag which he opened and Showed us 14 fingers [NB (Nicholas Biddle): *different fingers not little or middle fingers*] which he Said was the fingers of his enemies which he had taken in war, and pointed to S. E. from which direction I concluded they were Snake Indians (Northern Paiute); this is the first Instance I ever knew of the Indians takeing any other trofea of their exploits off the dead bodies of their Enimies except the Scalp.—The Chief painted those fingers with Several other articles which was in his bag red and Securely put them back, haveing first mad a Short harrang which I Suppose was bragging of what he had done in war (Moulton 1989:351).

Mutilation of fallen enemies was practiced to some extent by all Plains tribes, with certain ones being the most notorious (Mails 1995). Historic texts give the impression that after celebrating, most of the collected body parts were discarded. Being comprised of tissue they, like scalps, were subject to decomposition and

disintegration without special preservation. According to Mails (1995:575), however, "it was fairly common to collect finger bones, which were made into necklaces to be worn at great festivals."

Aside from scalps, however, the retention of appropriated remains for use in producing more lasting objects is not well known and only occasionally mentioned in the literature. A lecture by George Catlin in New York City on October 11, 1837, describes, as indispensable ornaments of the Plains Indian, necklaces that were variously comprised of grizzly bear claws, animal teeth, and the trophies of the hunter, which sometimes included "the finger-joints of the human hand of his enemies—the latter esteemed most rare and valuable." (*Southern Rose* 1838:6). Two such necklaces and a buckskin bag containing a severed hand and arm of a Shoshone woman and 12 right hands of babies were found by the U.S. military following a battle with the Cheyenne in 1876 (Powell 1969:166). One of the necklaces was sent to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and is described in this report (necklace no. 7). The second, consisting of four fingers, was buried under the orders of Maj. General George Crook, who wished to keep only one specimen for scientific purposes (Bourke 1892:481). A necklace made of finger- and toe-joints of a Comanche was also observed in 1867 by a British traveler at a Tonkawa dance at Fort Belknap, Texas (Savage 1977:100).

Necklaces of this type are rare in museum collections. As ethnographic objects, only the one sent to West Point has been illustrated and described (Bourke 1892), and photographs of three others (two in a private collection and necklace no. 3 described in this report) have been published (Howard 1972: Plate IX; Reedstrom 1977:322).

Because little is known about these so-called "finger necklaces," our objective is to provide detailed descriptions of representative nineteenth- and early twentieth-century human finger and hand bone necklaces held in museum collections. Information on construction, composition, style, variation and authenticity are presented. As will be shown, these objects are unique, reflecting the design specifications of their maker. Shared stylistic features suggest the possibility of tribal patterning, but limited representation makes any such assertion preliminary. Finally, the complex question of the meaning of these personal adornments is discussed within the context of the available record.

TROPHY NECKLACES IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Eight necklaces, from the collections of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC), the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (CUMAA), the Denver Art Museum (DAM), the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) and National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), are described. Tribal attributions are Ute (two and tentatively a third), Cheyenne (one), Cheyenne or Sioux (one), Crow (one), Apache (one), and a final example that is not authentic nor affiliated with a specific tribe. Four were

collected during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, three were acquisitions during the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, and the eighth, an imitation attributed to the Cheyenne, was likely made during the second quarter of the twentieth century for the art market. After providing available information on provenience, each necklace is illustrated photographically and described as seen by the viewer (not relative to the person wearing the necklace). The descriptions provide details as to how the object was fabricated, noting composition with regard to human remains, dressed hide, cordage, and other materials.

Glass beads acquired through trade were often incorporated into the necklaces and specific information on bead identifications are presented in Table 6.1. Glass beads were classified using the Kidd and Kidd (1970) system as expanded by Karklins (1985); the classification also followed Ross (1990; 2000). The *Munsell Book of Color* was used to provide standardized color values. The beads were categorized based on manufacture type, diaphaneity, shape, presence or absence of decoration, color and size. Beads were graded by diameter size according to Kidd and Kidd: beads with diameters less than 2 mm were classified as very small, diameters of 2–4 mm as small, diameters of 4–6 mm medium, diameters of 6–10 mm large, and diameters of 10+ mm as very large.

NECKLACE DESCRIPTIONS

Finger Phalanx Necklace, Cheyenne or Possibly Sioux, BBHC (no catalog number)

Provenience: The accession record for this "finger bone necklace" provides limited information, identifying it only as Cheyenne prior to 1890. According to lore, this necklace represents the trigger fingers of General George Custer's soldiers. An article in the *Cody Enterprise* (April 25, 1963) describes a museum exhibit on Custer, noting that one case displays a Sioux Indian necklace "composed of actual bones from the 'trigger fingers' that were cut from the hands of dead soldiers on the battlefield." The source of the Sioux attribution is not known and may be an error on the part of the reporter, but the article clearly refers to this finger necklace. Analysis of this specimen was aided by Robert Pickering (2001).

Sixteen phalanges and one blue bead are strung on sinew among red and white beads in this simple necklace of medium length (22.3 cm) (Figure 6.1). Fifteen of the phalanges are strung so that the palmar surfaces are oriented in the same direction, which is inferior on the right side (as viewed), and superior on the left. Only the first bone on the right, the single foot phalanx, is strung in the reverse direction, that is, volar surface superior. For reference, the bones are designated 1 through 16 in a clockwise direction beginning at the top right of the photograph.

All 16 phalanges are drilled A-P (anterior–posterior [ventral–dorsal]) through the proximal ends of the bones. Some of these perforations are so small that they barely accommodate the sinew cord; others are much larger. All of the perforations

Table 6.1. Glass trade beads used in finger necklaces

Bead manufacture, Kidd & Kidd variety, diaphaneity/color, Munsell value, shape, count, size (op = opaque, tsl = translucent, tsp = transparent. Size = least diameter: very small: 0–2 mm, small: 2–4 mm, medium: 4–6 mm, large: 6–10 mm, very large 10+ mm)	
BBHC No. 1	Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op white (N9.5/), barrel shaped, $n = 65$, large Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op blue, (5PB4/6), barrel shaped, $n = 1$, large Drawn, tumbled, polychrome, IVa, op red/tsp green (10R4/8 on 10GY6/6), barrel shaped, $n = 14l$, large
NMNH E014975 No. 3	Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, tsp red (5R5/8), disk shaped, $n = 760$[2], very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op white (N9.5/), disk-barrel shaped, $n = 199$, small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op white, (N9.5/), disk shaped, $n = 400^2$, very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op yellow, (7.5YR6/8), disk shaped, $n = 5$, very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op blue, (5B4/6), disk shaped, $n = 12$, very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, tsl blue (5PB2/8), disk shaped, $n = 7$, very small
NMNH E073077 No. 4	Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op white (N9.5/), disk-barrel shaped, $n = 268$, small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op black[1] (N9.75/), disk-barrel, $n = 112$, small
NMAI 045866 No. 5	Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op white, (N9.5/), disk shaped, $n = 203$[2], small Drawn, tumbled, polychrome, decorated, IIIb, op white on op white, w/alternating simple red and green stripes (N9.5/), tubular, $n = 2$, medium Wound, monochrome, WIc, op white (N9.5/), oval, $n = 2$, very large
CUMAA-1929.59 No. 6	Drawn, six straight sides with two rows of ground facets, If, tsl blue (7.5PB4/6), faceted barrel, $n = 14$, large Drawn, six straight sides with two rows of ground facets, If, tsl purple (7.5RP2/4), faceted barrel, $n = 10$, large
NMNH E129504 No. 7	Wound, monochrome, WIIg, op white (N9.25/), oval faceted, $n = 7$, medium Wound, monochrome, WIc, op white (N9.25/), oval, $n = 51$, medium Wound, monochrome, WIc, op black[1] (N0.5/), oval, $n = 1$, medium Drawn, not tumbled, monochrome, Ia, tsl white (N9.5/), tubular, $n = 1$, medium Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op white (N9.5/), disk, $n = 1740^2$, very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, tsl blue (5PB2/6), disk, $n = 400^2$, very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op blue (10B6/6), disk, $n = 900^2$, very small Drawn, tumbled, monochrome, IIa, op blue (7B7/4), disk, $n = 20^2$, very small

[1] Black to the unaided eye, but dark red-purple under high illumination.
[2] Count estimated.

Figure 6.1. Finger phalanx necklace (no. 1), BBHC.

are worn and are dark or darker in color than the remainder of each bone, indicating that the perforations are old.

The phalanges resemble anatomical specimens; none are bleached. All of the bones show handling or wear polish. Two show marginal erosion around the lip of the proximal joint. No deep cut marks are observed. However, number 13 phalange has some type of nick or deterioration in its proximal joint margin and there is also postmortem erosion/breakage around the proximal joint margins of numbers 4, 5 and 9. An old, worn cut is present on the superior, distal articular surface of phalange number 3, and possible cuts are present on the proximal articular surfaces of numbers 5, 6, 12, and 13.

The minimum number of individuals represented by the bone assemblage appears to be three. The sizes of these bones are consistent with identification as male, although none of these individuals would have had large hand bones.

The individual phalanges show differences in color, cortical surface texture, and the degree of development of the palmar marginal ridges. These differences allow preliminary sorting of the elements into separate individuals. Three distinct color differences are evident. One foot and three hand phalanges are a

reddish-brown color, nine phalanges are black or mottled black in color, and two phalanges are yellow-brown in color. The red-colored and yellow-colored phalanges likely represent young adults, and the darker-colored elements are more likely to be from a middle-aged individual.

The phalanges with a reddish cast (numbers 1 [foot], 2, 3, and 6) represent a young adult. The bone surfaces are smooth, the joint margins are clean, and the palmar marginal ridges show no development. The foot phalanx is tentatively grouped in this set because it shares some of these characteristics (i.e., color, cortical and joint surface youthful features).

The two phalanges (numbers 9 and 13) with a yellow tinge likely represent a slightly older adult. They show trace development of the palmar marginal ridges.

The phalanges with a black or mottled-black color (numbers 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 16) represent the oldest male. This individual has slight to moderately developed palmar marginal ridges, reflecting a background involving vigorous use of the hands. The bone surfaces reflect age-related irregularity. A few of the distal joints of the mottled black phalanges show trace arthritic lipping (e.g., numbers eight and eleven).

The 14 red glass beads and 53 white glass beads are in a pattern of one colored bead with two white beads on either side (Table 6.1), except in an area where thread has been used to repair the necklace. The presence of a single blue bead suggests a visual center to the necklace. Two additional white beads are loose.

Overall the beads vary in size as well as appearance, and represent larger varieties of nineteenth-century drawn glass trade beads. One of the larger white beads, found between the knot and last phalanx on the left, has a diameter of 9.6 mm and length of 7.8 mm. The white bead adjacent to it has a diameter of 8.2 mm and a length of 5.4 mm. All of the red beads are large or moderately large, although there is variation. Representative examples include one with a diameter of 9 mm and length of 8.3 mm, while another has a diameter of 7 mm and length of 6.5 mm. The single dark blue bead has a diameter of 7.3 mm and a length of 6 mm.

Specific details on the different phalanges are presented in Table 6.2 in clockwise order from the right of the knot. All represent proximal row hand phalanges unless otherwise specified.

This northern Plains Indian necklace is authentic, however, tribal affiliation is only tentatively identified as Cheyenne, or possibly Sioux. Other than representing at least three young to middle-aged adult males, the origin and cultural affiliation of the phalanges is undetermined. They may or may not be from Custer's soldiers. In addition to the foot phalanx, multiple digits from both hands are represented, such that the precise claim of "trigger fingers" is doubtful.

Fingertip Necklace, Ute, NMAI (Catalog No. 01/4669)

Provenience: Documentation accompanying this necklace states that it was purchased by Major E. M. Hamilton in 1872 or 1873 from a young Ute man who claimed to have taken the fingers from a Sioux described as a "big chief." The

Table 6.2. Identification of phalanges in the BBHC necklace (No. 1)

Phalanx number	Predominant color	Side*	Digit	Maximum length	Comment
1	Reddish	R		31	Proximal row foot phalanx.
2	Some reddish	R	2–3	40	This phalanx serves as an example of the smaller size perforation drilled in order to thread this bone. The diameter on the palmar surface measures 1.9 mm.
3	Red	L	2–3	41	
4	Mottled black	R	4	33	
5	Yellow	R	1?	34	
6	Red	R?	3–4	39	
7	Mottled black	R	2–3	40	
8	Mottled black	L	2–3	41	
9	Yellow	R?	2?	44	
10	Mottled black	R	3–4	39	
11	Mottled black	L	2–3	42	
12	Mottled black	R	3–4	41	
13	Yellow	L	2?	46	This phalanx has one of the larger perforations with a diameter measurement of 4.4 mm.
14	Mottled black	L	2		This specimen also has a large perforation on its palmar surface, the diameter measuring 6.2 mm.
15	Black	L?	3–4	38	
16	Black	R	3–4	38	

*R = right; L = left.

fingers were reportedly taken when "a band of Sioux came down into Northern Colorado on a raid . . . and were attacked by a band of Utes who went there on a buffalo hunt. The Sioux were defeated and some of them lost their scalps and one of them lost his fingers" (Hamilton 1907). The Ute later celebrated their victory at a scalp dance held near Denver, Colorado, which Hamilton witnessed. The necklace was acquired by George G. Heye from Major Hamilton in 1907, and is now part of the NMAI collection.

Ten terminal finger elements—the distal phalanges, surrounding desiccated tissue, and fingernails—make up this simple necklace (Figure 6.2). Two thumb tips form the central elements; terminal digits of fifth fingers end the hide cord necklace on each side. The other six complete terminal finger elements, three on each side of the thumbs, are out of sequence and from two hands. All 10 finger tips, based on the consistency in nail length and on the apparent pairing of unit size and shape, represent the right and left hands of a single individual. No beads or other artifacts adorn the necklace.

The fingertips, closely spaced over 15.4 cm, are not centered on the 4 mm wide and 60 cm long cord: the left side of the remaining cord measures 12.8 cm;

Figure 6.2. Fingertip necklace (no. 2), NMAI 01/4669.

the longer right side measures 31.3 cm. The cord, inserted through the desiccated tissue on the proximal palmar side of each fingertip, does not penetrate the bone. Dermal ridge (fingerprint) patterns are visible on the tissue which has been discolored red from the application of a pigment (Figure 6.3).

The fingernails are consistent in length with fairly smooth, trimmed, unchipped edges. The nails are relatively short; there is some debris under the nails. Radiographic analysis reveals unfused proximal epiphyses, indicating the individual was approximately fifteen to seventeen years old at death (Figure 6.4). Based on the large size of the distal units, the individual was male. The cuts that severed the distal digits exposed some of the cancellous bone of the proximal epiphyses.

Fingertip Necklace with Red and White Glass Beads, Ute, NMNH (Catalog No. E014975)

Provenience: This necklace was entered into the logbook of the U.S. Army Medical Museum (AMM) on December 11, 1867, and later transferred to the U.S. National Museum (USNM), the precursor of the NMNH. Objects were generally entered into the logbook shortly after they were received. The log description is "a necklace of twenty-one finger nails being trophies taken in battle from the Navajo Indians and ornamented with bead-work and worn by the Utes." (AMM Object Logbook, Catalog No. 44, n.d.). The specimen was submitted by Surgeon Bennett A. Clements, a career army officer whose tour of duty included camps and forts

Figure 6.3. Palmar view of three digits showing construction and preservation of dermal ridges (no. 2).

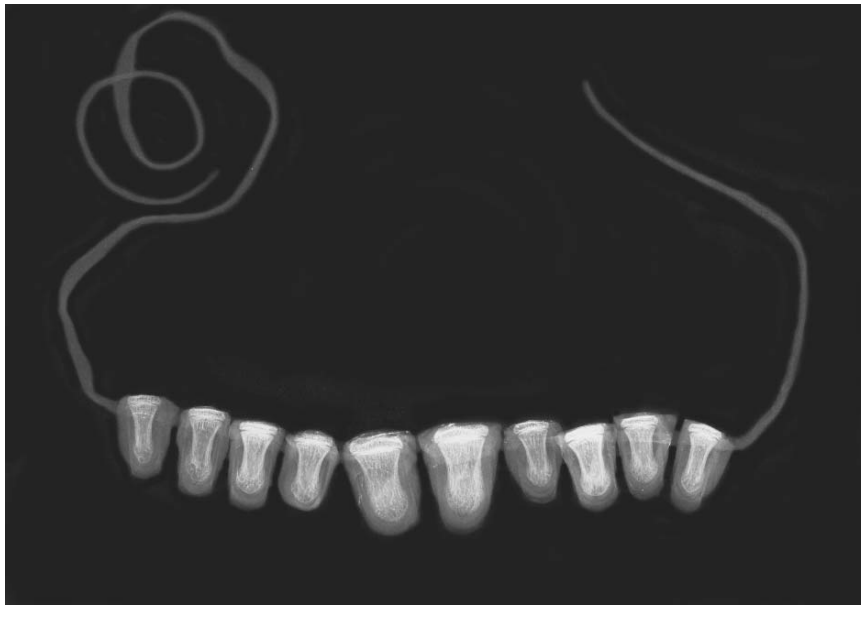

Figure 6.4. Radiograph of the distal phalanges showing unfused epiphyses (no. 2).

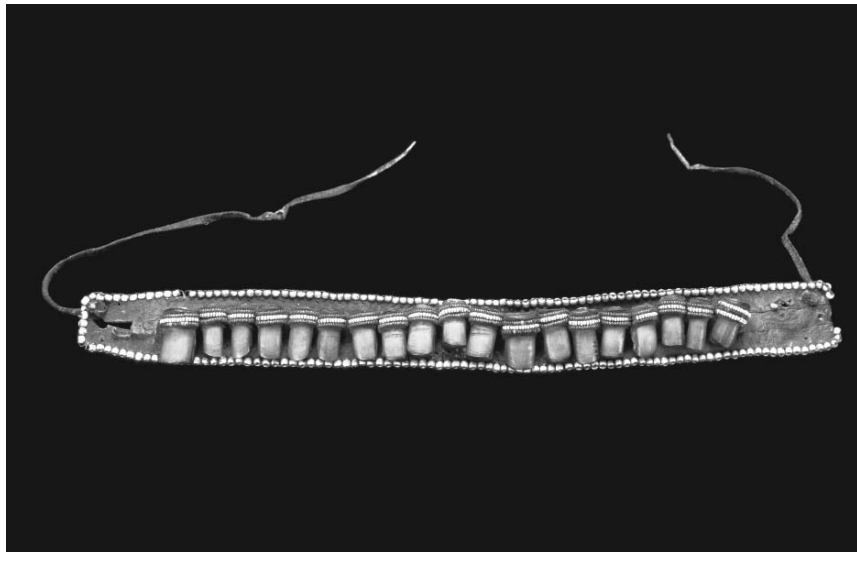

Figure 6.5. Fingertip necklace with red and white glass beads (no. 3), NMNH E014975.

in Utah and New Mexico from September 1858 to July 1862 (National Archives and Records Administration).

Nineteen fingertips, each crowned with three rows of small glass beads, form this choker-length necklace (Figure 6.5). The evenly spaced digits almost fill the approximately 31 cm long, dressed hide band that is itself trimmed with white beads along the four edges. The digits are not arranged according to size or anatomical order on the necklace, although four of the central digits show two transverse lines carved into the nails as if to create a visual center to the piece (Figure 6.6). Red color, possibly ochre, is visible on the front surface of the dressed hide band and on the digits.

The terminal end of each digit includes the distal phalanx, nail, and desiccated tissue with dermal ridges still visible on some of the digits. The total count, finger representation, and condition and appearance of the nails, along with variation in size, indicate different fingers from a minimum of three individuals, most likely males. The digit on the far left side is the largest and, based on its size and shape, is likely a thumb (nail width of 14.4 mm). Although smaller (nail width of 12.7 mm), another probable thumb is the twelfth digit from the left.

Other digits of the necklace vary in size and represent all four fingers of the hand. The second and third digits from the left correspond in size, shape, nail curvature and nail length, appearing to be antimeres: the left and right digits of the same finger of a single individual. Based on their narrow nail widths (8.2 mm and 8.7 mm), they are likely fifth digits. The smallest nail on the necklace measures 7.7 mm in width. The digits range from 24.8 mm long, on the far left, to 21.1 mm long, on the far right.

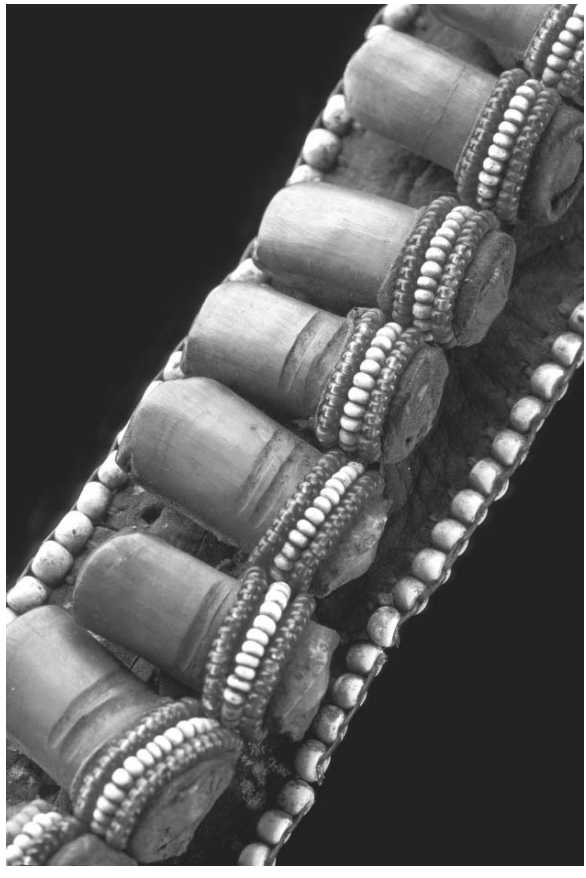

Figure 6.6. Incised nails in four centrally positioned fingertips (no. 3).

Some of the nails are neatly trimmed, others are not. The far right digit shows two well-defined longitudinal parallel lines in the nail that developed antemortem. No arthritic changes are evident radiographically on the joints of the phalanges.

At the proximal end near the nail bed, each digit is wrapped with a strip of dressed hide to which three rows of beads are attached (Table 6.1). These hide strips are secured around each finger on the under-side, or palmar surface, by what appears to be thread. Thread was also used to string the three rows of beads that decorate the hide strips. Sixteen of the digits are decorated with the same pattern of beads: opaque white, glass beads form the center row; red transparent, slightly smaller glass beads form the superior and inferior rows. The far left thumb has three dark yellow beads among the red beads in the inferior row. The far right digit has a center row of blue and purple-blue beads with white superior and inferior rows. The eighth digit from the right has a yellow bead centered in the superior row as well as one yellow, one purple-blue, and four blue beads in the inferior row.

It is possible that the beaded strips were made at different times. However, based on the necklace's construction, all of the decorated digits were mounted to the neck band at the same time.

To make the neck band, two nearly equally sized strips of dressed hide are vertically joined with a whip-stitch of sinew. The right half of the band measures 16.1 cm in length, the left half measures 14.6 cm in length. The maximum width is 3.0 cm at the right end, 2.1 cm at the tapered left end, and 2.7 cm in the middle. The approximate thickness of the neck band is 3.0 mm.

Ten fingers are attached to the right half of the dressed hide backing. They are held to the backing with six stitches made with a thin hide strip threaded through either the hide used to wrap the proximal ends of the digits, or through the ventral surface (palmar side) desiccated tissue of the digits themselves. The hide cord that attaches the first digit on the far right side is threaded through the beaded hide strip, the end hidden underneath it. The cord is then sewn through the hide backing of the necklace, sewn back through the front side resulting in a small stitch, and is then sewn through the desiccated tissues or beaded hide strips on the backs of the next two digits. The cord is then stitched back and through the hide backing again and into the tissue or decorated hide on the palmar side of the next two digits. It continues this way until the tenth digit. At this point, the hide strip is threaded through this single digit only. The cord is brought up between the hide strips of the left and right sides of the necklace backing and is sewn through the desiccated tissue of the next finger tip, on the left half of the backing. After passing through the tissue of this single digit, the cord is sewn through the backing and proceeds in a manner similar to that noted for the right side; threading through two digits at a time. After passing through the tissues of the last two digits the cord is sewn through the backing and then through to the necklace's front side where it hangs loose.

The intricate, detailed construction of the dressed hide neck band itself is not visible from the front. The two halves are each made up of separate dressed hide strips carefully and finely stitched together in order to make a wider band.

The right half of the dressed hide backing is comprised of three separate strips, each approximately 16 cm long and 0.9 to 1 cm wide, that are faintly visible in the photograph (Figure 6.5). The outer strips are tightly positioned along both sides of the middle strip, and are sewn together, edge to edge, along their lengths with sinew. The stitches are only visible on the back of the necklace; they do not penetrate the hide's ventral (external) side, but disappear into the thickness of the strip. The top strip of hide has a running stitch along its inferior edge. There is an opposing straight, running stitch positioned counter to it on the adjacent, middle strip. Because these opposing stitches are made from a single line of sinew that joined the strips together without doubling back or crossing itself, the stitch is identified as a "staggered running" stitch (Grimm 2002:37). The up and down positioning of the sinew strand is hidden by sewing into the hide's thickness and only the straight, alternating running stitches are apparent on the backside of the necklace. Because the central strip is joined to both the top and bottom strips, it

has two lines of running stitches along its superior and inferior edges while the top and bottom strips have only a single line of running stitches along their inferior and superior edges, respectively. The top strip has seventeen running stitches. The middle piece has two rows of 16 stitches each, and the bottom strip has a row of 16 stitches and a final stitch ending in a knot. The size of the visible stitches varies from 1.3 mm to 4.6 mm on the right side.

On the backing's right side, two holes are present in the middle dressed hide strip. The larger hole (located 5.3 cm from the end) has a diameter of approximately 5 mm, the smaller hole (located 5 mm from the end) has a diameter of approximately 2 mm. The top strip also has two holes, one located 1.8 cm from the end with a diameter of approximately 2 mm. A second hole, located 5 mm from the end, is threaded with a thin strip of hide (3 mm in width) that is knotted on the hole end and hangs loose for a distance of 16 cm. This thin strip was presumably used to tie the necklace around the wearer's neck.

The left half of the backing is comprised of two pieces of dressed hide: a central strip measuring 12.7 cm long and 1 cm wide, and a second piece cut length-wise down its center to form two strips that have been spread apart to accommodate the central strip. The far left end of this main piece remains uncut, but has a circular hole with a diameter of 4.8 mm at the termination of its lengthwise division that made it easier to insert the central piece without buckling the hide. The connected superior and inferior strips are about 1 cm in width.

The three strips are sewn together in the manner noted for the right side. At least 11 stitches are present in the inferior border of the top left strip. The center strip has 12 stitches running counter to the stitches in the top strip and 13 stitches running counter to the 13 stitches present in the superior border of the bottom strip.

A smaller hole superior to the larger opening is threaded with a thin hide strip that has an inadvertent knot approximately 16 cm from the knot that secures it to the backing. This strip has a maximum length of 24 cm and a width of 4 mm.

The necklace backing has a border of white beads around the entire perimeter of the piece with the exception of 0.9 cm of the center strip of backing on the left side. These beads are larger than those decorating the nail beds of the fingers and are individually sewn onto the edge of the dressed hide backing with sinew. All of the beads used in this necklace are the small, drawn beads typically used in Plains beadwork.

Large Fingertip Necklace with Dark Red-Purple and White Glass Beads, Apache, NMNH (Catalog No. E073077)

Provenience: As with necklace no. 3, this submission by Surgeon B. A. Clements was recorded in the AMM log on December 11, 1867, and transferred to the USNM/NMNH in 1884. The record attribution is "an Apache necklace of twenty-nine finger nail trophies taken in battle ornamented with beadwork" (AMM Object Logbook, Catalog No. 45, n.d.).

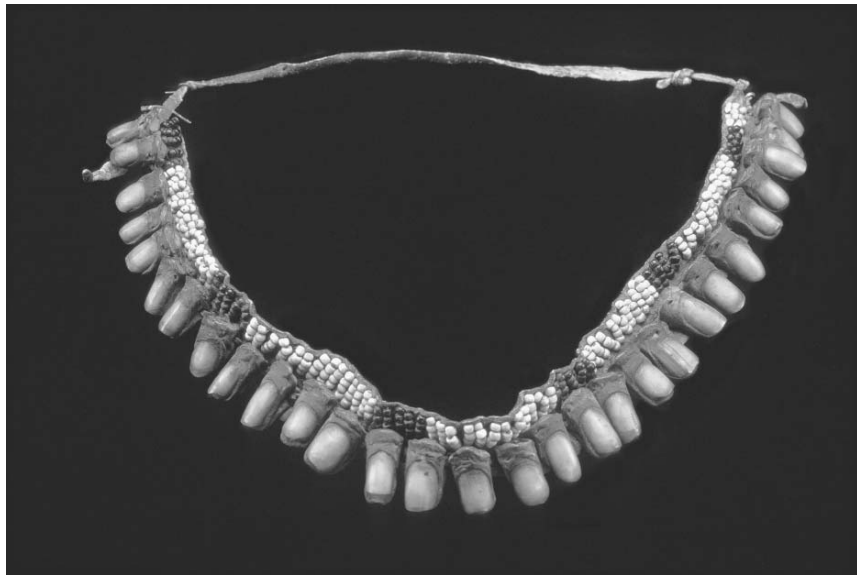

Figure 6.7. Large fingertip necklace with dark red-purple and white glass beads (no. 4), NMNH E073077.

Twenty-nine distal finger digits surmounted by 95 columns of dark beads and white beads form this necklace (Figure 6.7). Based on consistencies in nail size and appearance, these fingertips represent four adults, at the minimum. Several digits have neatly trimmed nails while others have chipped and broken nails (Figure 6.8). No arthritic changes are visible radiographically on the joint surfaces; dermal ridges are faintly visible on some digits.

Only one of the digits is large enough to be from a thumb, although a small one. While some of the digits could represent females because they are comparatively small in size, sex is indeterminate for the individuals represented. There is no obvious pattern to the arrangement of the digits. One of the smaller digits (21.7 mm length (l), 11.1 mm width (w), 6.9 nail width) is at position one on the left of the necklace but two small digits are in positions six (20.2 mm l, 11.5 mm w, 7.9 mm nail w) and nine (22.4 mm l, 11.3 mm w, 7.3 mm nail width). The widest nail (11.6 mm) is at position 5; the narrowest at position 1. The longest digit (24.7 mm) is at position 10; the shortest digit (19.0 mm) at position 26.

The evenly spaced digits are sewn to a dressed hide backing with a thin hide cord drawn through the palmar surface desiccated tissue and then through the backing. This simple running stitch allows the digits to hang downward to face the viewer while only slightly exposing the tops of the digits. The stitching does not go through the bone. The dorsal skin near the proximal joint is fully exposed and was perforated above the nails on both the right and left sides. Based on the appearance of the tissues above the nails, the perforations were never used.

Figure 6.8. Close-up showing construction detail and terminal phalanges with trimmed and broken nails (no. 4).

From the front, the 42.5 cm long necklace appears to be one piece of dressed hide. The back view shows the necklace is composed of two strips: an upper strip to which the beads are attached and a lower strip to which most of the fingertips are attached. This construction allows the beaded portion to rest firmly against the wearer's neck while the fingers on the lower portion flare outward, resting loosely against the clothing or skin.

The two strips are neatly whip-stitched together with sinew along their lengths. Because the lower strip is 4.5 cm shorter than the upper strip, three of the fingertips are sewn to the upper strip on the left side. The two strips are uneven throughout their length, but together measure 2.9 cm at their maximum width (height). Since the fingertips hang slightly beyond the dressed hide, the total maximum width (height) at the center is 3.5 cm, and 2.6 cm and 2.8 cm on the left and right ends respectively.

Above the line of digits, 96 vertical columns of beads provide a high-contrast design element. Each column consists of four beads, commonly known as seed beads, on a sinew loop. Beads that look black are actually 112 red-purple glass beads that are slightly translucent under high illumination. White, opaque glass beads comprise most of the design, numbering 268 beads. A pattern may have been established, but modified after reaching the necklace's center. From the left, the row groupings are: 5 RP, 15 W, 5 RP, 14 W, 5 RP, 12 W, 5 RP, 11 W, 4 RP, 11 W, 4 RP, 4 W. The beading appears complete, with no gaps in the columns or obvious spaces in the design.

The thin strips used as ties for the necklace are directly attached to the beaded strip. A hole punched through each end of the backing allows a narrow cord, tied

onto the necklace at the right side, to be pulled through the opposite hole to create the desired necklace length. This tie cord arrangement allowed the article to be worn necklace length; it would drape down to the clavicles. On the right side, two strips of cord have been tied together, approximately 1.8 cm from the neck band. The 27.3 cm length of the tie cord gives the necklace a total length of 69.8 cm.

Grizzly Bear Claw and Fingertip Necklace, Possibly Ute, NMAI (Catalog No. 04/5866)

Provenience: This necklace was purchased for the George Heye collection in 1915 and is now in the collection of the NMAI. The record does not specify origin. The catalog description states: "Necklace consisting of Bear Claws and Human Finger tips. Probably Ute."

Six human fingertips sewn between seven bear claws on a thin hide strip form this simply constructed necklace (Figure 6.9). The unadorned digits are not

Figure 6.9. Grizzly bear claw and fingertip necklace (no. 5), NMAI 04/5866.

trimmed with either hide or beads but the proximal ends were covered with a red pigment, traces of which are also visible on the nails.

The desiccated, flesh-covered, distal phalanges are smoked, or dried, to preserve the tissue. The dermal ridges are not preserved although the fingernails are present. The fingertips are not large, indicating they do not represent the thumb. One fingernail, small relative to the others, is a right fifth digit. The others are small to moderate in size and represent digits two, three, and four. The nails are consistent in length, being uniformly short with slightly irregular margins. All of them show two natural, slightly discolored, longitudinal indentations or depressed lines in the lateral halves of their surfaces.

Based on their overall size and appearance, the fingertips are from the left and right hands of a single individual. The phalanges have a youthful appearance, with no arthritic changes at the visible joint surfaces, and likely represent a young adult male.

All seven claws are from forefeet of the grizzly brown bear *(Ursus arctos)*. Six claws, consistent in size and curvature, were taken from a single bear. The second claw on the right shows greater curvature, suggesting it came from another bear. The chord lengths of the claws vary from 8.3 cm to 9.3 cm. Each claw is capped with a hide sheath, stitched together at its end along the underside of the claw. The sheaths cover from 1.6 cm to 2.4 cm of the proximal ends of the claws.

Three kinds of trade beads, typical of the nineteenth century, decorate the necklace. Two rows of white, opaque glass beads strung on hide encircle the lower edge of each claw sheath. The white beads are attached to the necklace in a form of beadwork known as edge-beading, where beads are set in an alternating pattern. The orientation of beads in this style can be loosely described as alternating horizontal and vertical beads. Twenty-nine beads are present on one claw. The number of beads on the other six bear claws were not individually counted, but are of similar number to the counted bear claw. Individual beads, commonly known as seed beads, vary slightly in size, for example: 2.3 mm length (l) by 3.3 mm diameter (d), 1.6 mm l by 2.6 mm d.

Next to the final claw on each side is a large, wound glass bead of a type known vernacularly as a "pigeon egg" bead. The bead on the left (26.5 mm l, 17.2 mm d) has been broken and mended; the one on the right is a partial bead (17.5 mm d). Both show extensive wear.

Next to each large white bead is an opaque, white tubular bead with chopped ends with four thin, alternating stripes, two translucent red and two translucent green, that are slightly spiraled around the bead. These beads are unusual. A single similar bead was found at Fort Union (1828–1867), although the stripes were black and red and were compound rather than simple (Ross 2000). Another similar bead of green glass with compound stripes was recovered from Ft. Clark (1822–1861), and three beads were recovered from Deapolis, North Dakota, which was occupied 1797–1822 and in the 1850s (Badorek and Ahler 2003).

Both fingertips and claws are strung on a 1.6 mm thick hide strip that is tied into a circle with a circumference of 44 cm. The strip passes through the hide

sheaths of the claws and through the palmar surface tissue of each fingertip near the proximal end.

Metacarpal, Bead, Bone and Elk Tooth Necklace, Crow, CUMAA (Catalog No. 1929.59)

Provenience: The CUMAA catalogue attributes this necklace to the Crow tribe of the North American Plains, and identifies it as being "made from human finger bones." It was probably purchased circa 1925–1926, and was a gift to the museum by curator L. C. G. Clarke.

Of the 100 elements in this symmetrical necklace, the majority are freshwater bivalve shell, faceted glass beads, and animal bone (Figure 6.10). The center section features human metacarpals with elk teeth attached (Figure 6.11). Both the

Figure 6.10. Metacarpal, bead, bone and elk tooth necklace (no. 6), CUMAA 1929.59.

Figure 6.11. Central section with metacarpals and elk teeth (no. 6).

carefully designed repeating pattern, and the increasingly larger bead size toward the center, indicate that this necklace was made when all elements were present; it appears that no elements were added later with the possible exception of the elk teeth, which could have been attached to the metacarpals after the necklace was strung. The entire necklace is stained a rich green color.

In the center section, five adult metacarpals progress in a size sequence from thumb (on the left) to little finger (on the right) (Figure 6.11). They are all likely from the left hand of one person; and their small size is most consistent with a female. While the general shape of each bone is not changed, the bones are smoothed and polished. Both ends of each metacarpal are perforated: the proximal metaphyses so that stringing is possible; the distal metaphyses so that the elk teeth can be attached. The holes run transversely, making the palmar surfaces of the bones rest against the wearer.

Four elk canine teeth are carefully positioned to draw the eye to the one central tooth. On the left side, a slightly larger tooth combined with the shorter thumb bone makes its length equal to that of the tooth/little finger combination on the right. The next pair of teeth are tied so that each slanted edge faces the central tooth and are sized so that the bone/tooth combinations are of equal length. All of the yellow-green teeth, tied so the viewer sees their domed surfaces, are attached in a two-step process. First, a loop of hide is loosely tied through a conical hole drilled in the tooth. Then, another strip of hide is passed through the hide loop and tied through the hole in the bone.

The center section of the necklace continues the pattern developed for the whole necklace: small disc of shell, faceted glass bead, small disc of shell, bone. However, the pattern is interrupted at each end of the center section by an expanded

animal long bone metaphyseal bead that follows a large shell disk. Both of those bone beads were cut with a saw. The hollow cavity of the bead on the right conceals a knot that ties together two strips of hide used to string the necklace. The next bone beads on each side are also sections of animal metaphyses.

Tubular bone beads for the remainder of the necklace are made from one or more diaphyses of a small- to medium-sized mammal, about the size of a dog. The beads are cut into sections that vary from a maximum length of 2.4 cm to a minimum of 1.67 cm; the diameters vary from a maximum of 1.7 cm to a minimum of 0.9 cm. Each end of each bead is beveled by grinding and the bone further modified by polishing.

Seventeen small shell disks, about 12 mm in diameter, remain on each side of the central section; it is possible that two have broken off the necklace because the pattern calls for 18 shell disks on each side. Twelve small disks are used in the center section with two larger disks, about twice the size, capping the metaphyses as described above. As originally strung, there would have been a total of 50 shell elements in the necklace.

Twenty-four faceted drawn glass beads, in dark blue and smoky purple, intersperse the bone and shell beads. On each side of the necklace the bead pattern begins with a blue bead at the tie and ends with a blue bead before the larger metaphyseal bone beads. In between, one blue bead is among six purple beads on the right side of the necklace; two purple beads are among five blue beads on the left side. The beads have six straight sides with two rows of ground facets, one row at each end of the bead. Blue beads of this variety are common in the nineteenth century; purple ones occur less frequently. This bead variety occurs in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century archaeological contexts (Ross 1990:38).

The beaded portion of the necklace measures 79 cm long. The hide strip holding the beads varies in width from 2.5 mm to 5 mm; the hide holding the elk teeth measures about 3.7 mm wide.

This necklace is simple in design, but elegant in color and appearance. The museum record lacks information on provenience, which would help determine authenticity of this twentieth century acquisition. As is, it seems too intact, symmetrical, and stylized to represent a nineteenth-century trophy necklace. Other details that seem suspicious are the inclusion of sawn, polished faunal elements with beveled edges, remarkable symmetry, and the uniformly green color. The carefully worked bone and intense green pigment are very unusual (C. Greene 2005, personal communication). At the very least, this necklace appears to have been restrung.

Necklace of Human Fingers, Glass Beads, Projectile Points and Bacculite Fossils, Cheyenne, NMNH (E129504)

Provenience: The necklace was found in a lodge by scout Baptiste Pourrier following Col. Ranald S. MacKenzie's attack on the main village of the Northern Cheyenne in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming in November 1876. The warrior High Wolf identified the fingers as the left middle digits of his enemies. Pourrier

gave the necklace to Captain John G. Bourke who gave it to the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, which later transferred it to the USNM (NMNH) "where it was believed it could better fulfill its mission of educating students in a knowledge of the manners and customs of our aborigines" (Bourke 1892:481). Pourrier and Frank Grouard, another army scout, provided Bourke with information about the necklace which he used to describe it and its acquisition.

Five years after it was deposited in the USNM, the necklace was described and accompanied by a colored lithograph in the *Ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Bourke 1892). A comparison of the original lithograph (Figure 6.12) with a current photograph (Figure 6.13) shows that the bags are arranged differently, an arrowhead originally on the left side is now missing, and some of the applied coloring has come off the fingers.

This complex and elaborate necklace of several significant elements and eight human fingers is composed of two parts. A folded piece of dressed, fringed hide is attached to a completely beaded, tubular collar.

The beaded collar, measuring 30 cm in length and 8 to 9.5 mm in diameter, has been formed by encircling, or wrapping, a hide strip with rows of strung glass seed beads to create a tubular effect. The small white, navy blue, and turquoise blue beads are arranged in patterns by color. Beginning on the left end of the collar there are 14 rows of white beads, two rows of navy blue beads, seven rows of turquoise blue beads, and two more rows of navy beads. This sequence is followed by 15 rows of white beads, two rows of navy beads, 11 rows of turquoise blue beads, and two rows of navy beads. The pattern continues with slight variation in the number of white bead rows and turquoise bead rows, but all are separated by two rows of navy beads. The sequence ends on the right side with two rows of navy blue beads followed by 15 rows of white beads.

The fringe attached to the beaded collar is constructed by folding a piece of dressed, thin hide lengthwise into a short side and a longer side. The longer side is cut perpendicular to the fold into narrow strips. Individual fringe pieces vary in length from 5.9 cm to 8.4 cm and in width from 2 to 5 mm. The pieces have an approximate thickness of 1 mm and vary in their degree of deterioration.

This fringed hide is sewn onto the beaded collar along its length at the fold. Most, but not all, of the fringe pieces suspend a single oval, white opaque bead kept in place by knotting the fringe below the bead. These glass beads were misidentified as "wampum shell beads of native manufacture" by Bourke (1892:482). Elemental analysis using X-ray fluorescence (XRF) of one of the white oval beads confirms the presence of lead, which differs in amount among the bead colors, as evidenced by varying opaqueness visible radiographically (Figure 6.14). Four fringe pieces at the center of the necklace have two beads strung onto them as does one fringe on the right and one on the left.

The approximately 1 cm of uncut hide serving as the superior border for the fringe also functions as the attachment surface for eight human fingers, three animal-looking fossils, and four stone arrow points. All surfaces of the dressed hide and attached objects (e.g., fingers, projectile points, and fossils) are colored red.

Figure 6.12. Human finger, glass bead, projectile point and bacculite fossil necklace (no. 7), 1892 Bureau of Ethnology lithograph, NMNH E129504.

Figure 6.13. Human finger, glass bead, projectile point and bacculite fossil necklace (no. 7), NMNH, E129504.

Figure 6.14. Radiograph showing glass bead opacity and radio-opaque densities of the fingers and pouches (no. 7).

Each of the eight human fingers is held to the fringe by a thin hide strip. The strip is passed first through a hole in the proximal palmar surface, then brought up through a hole in the back surface, then passed across the finger and through another hole in the back surface, and finally brought back through another hole in the proximal palmar surface. These hide strips are then knotted close to the dorsal side of the fringe and the two ends of the hide strip hang loose similar to the pieces of fringe.

Bourke's (1892:482) report states the fingers were processed with an "elaborate antiseptic treatment in order thoroughly to desiccate them. They were split longitudinally on the inner side and after the bone had been extracted the surface of the skin, both inside and out, received a treatment with a wash or paint of ocherous earth, the same as is used for the face. I was told that the bones were not replaced but that sticks were inserted to maintain the fingers in proper shape."

The fingers are comprised of the skin from the entire length of the digit and the nail. Beginning on the left side of the necklace the fingers have the following maximum lengths (including finger nails): digit 1—7.7 cm, digit 2—8.2 cm, digit 3—7.6 cm, digit 4—7.3 cm, digit 5—7.8 cm, digit 6—7.1 cm, digit 7—7.2 cm, and digit 8—7.1 cm. The skin is cut the entire length of the palmar surface to remove the bone and underlying tissues and then sewn back together (Figure 6.15). Radiographically, the internal stuffing is faintly defined, slightly more in the fingertips, and no dense objects are visible (Figure 6.14). Computed tomography (CT) confirms that no bones or sticks are present, but that the fingers are stuffed with a nondescript wadding with cylindrical voids (Figure 6.16).

The skin was treated to prevent decomposition and to maintain the attachment of the finger nail. The skin is colored red, some of which has flaked off,

Figure 6.15. Stitching on the palmar surface of a finger (no. 7).

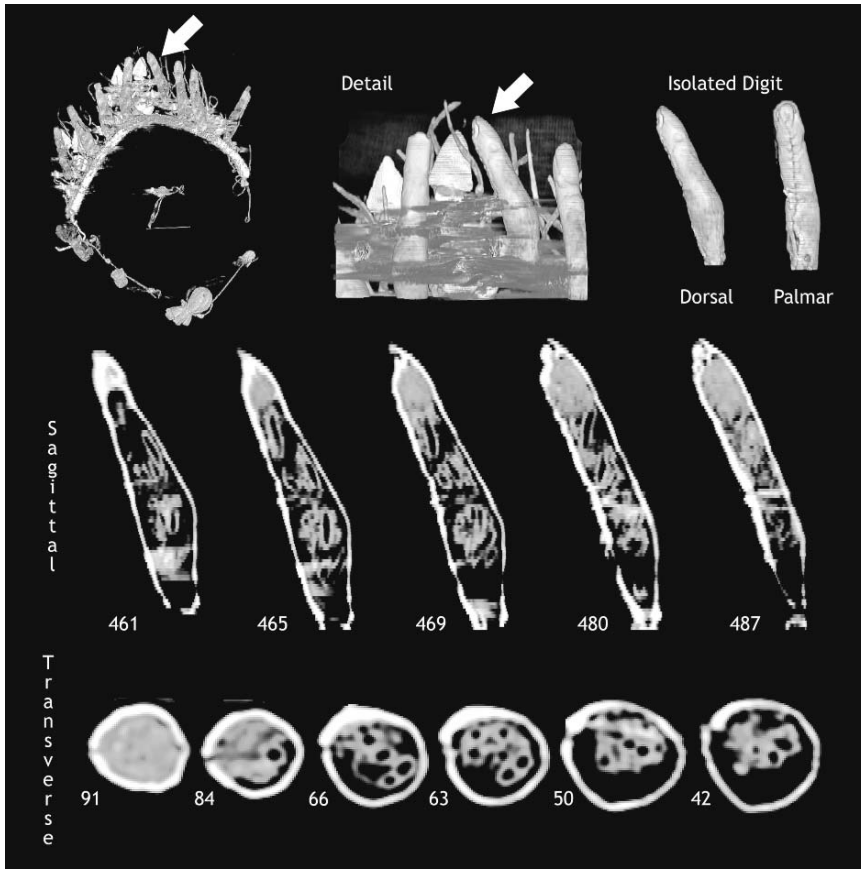

Figure 6.16. Reconstruction of the 3D-CT data with sagittal and transverse sections of digit four (no. 7).

but a majority of the surfaces remain heavily coated with a desiccating agent with biocidal properties. XRF elemental analysis of the surface of digit 6 confirms the presence of iron, lead, and mercury (the latter may be a museum preservative treatment). Red lead oxide was common during the Historic period and may have been mixed with the naturally occurring iron oxide. Quantitative analysis using x-ray diffraction is needed to further identify the components/sources of this treatment.

Three small, animal-like pieces that have been shaped, smoothed and polished are attached to the necklace. They are fossilized sections of a marine animal, identified as a bacculite, one of the straight ammonites from the Upper Cretaceous (Dr. T. Waller, personal communication 2003). The three fossil sections all have the same shape, resembling an animal with four legs, a head, and tail or hind section.

On this necklace, one of the bacculite figures is larger than the other two, which are roughly the same size. The larger figure, positioned in the center of the

Figure 6.17. Bacculite fossil and projectile points in the center of necklace no. 7.

necklace, is tightly tied to the uncut margin of the hide fringe by two hide strips, each wrapped around the body of the figure (Figure 6.17). A single white bead, similar to those strung on the hide fringe, is present on each strip. This figure has a maximum length of 2.6 cm, a maximum breadth of 1.9 cm, and a height of roughly 1.4 cm. Red pigment is visible in the crevices of the figure, which is dark brown to black in color.

The fossil figure on the left side of the necklace is tightly attached to the hide fringe between the first and second fingers. Similar to the centrally positioned figure, it is wrapped with two strips of hide each strung with a single bead and has also been treated with red pigment. This figure has a maximum length of 2.6 cm, a maximum breadth of 1.6 cm, and a height of approximately 1.2 cm.

The fossil figure on the right side of the necklace is also tightly attached to the uncut portion of the hide fringe. It, too, is wrapped with two strips of hide each strung with a single bead, and red pigment is present. The figure has a maximum length of 2.5 cm, a maximum breadth of 1.6 cm, and a height of approximately 1.0 cm. It is positioned between the seventh and eighth fingers and shares its attachment site with two stone points.

Ewers (1986) in his discussion of religious, magical and ceremonial effigies of Plains Indians describes figures made from similar fossils as buffalo stones, or *Iniskims*. These stones could have several meanings ranging from good luck charms to sacred medicine possessing supernatural powers. When Bourke (1892:482) described these figures he called them "artificial teeth, resembling those of the fossil animals abundant in the Bad Lands of South Dakota, but cut out of soft stone."

In addition to the fingers and fossils, four notched stone projectile points or arrowheads are attached to the necklace. Two points made of Knife River flint

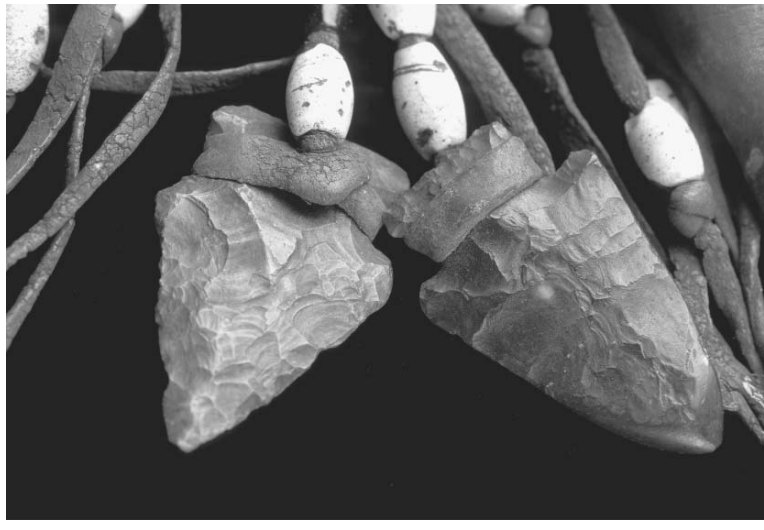

Figure 6.18. Projectile point with ground edges (no. 7). The two points are reversed in position relative to Figures 6.13 and 6.17.

are attached to the hide fringe at its midpoint, also the location of a fossil figure (Figure 6.17). A narrow hide strip is wrapped around the base of each point at the notch. One end of the strip is perforated to allow the other end to be threaded through the hole and tightened to secure the point. The long, unperforated end of each hide strip was strung with three beads and then attached to the fringed strip. One strip has three white beads; the other has a white, black, white combination. The following measurements describe the two centrally placed points, as viewed in Figures 6.13 and 6.17:

#1 (right)—3.2 cm in maximum length, 1.9 cm greatest breadth, 1.3 cm breadth at base, 0.5 cm greatest thickness, 2.5 cm height of blade (excluding base);
#2 (left)—3.1 cm in maximum length, 2.0 cm greatest breadth, 1.7 cm breadth at base, 0.5 cm greatest thickness, 2.3 cm height of blade (excluding base). This point has been smoothed at the tip by grinding (Figure 6.18).

Two dull reddish brown phosphoria points are attached to the right side of the necklace and are positioned between the seventh and eighth fingers. These two points are secured by thin hide strips which are wrapped around their notched bases and knotted. The long, loose ends of the hide were then twisted together and secured to the hide fringe at the attachment site of a small fossil figure. The following measurements describe the two points on the right of the necklace identified as projectile points #3 and #4:

#3 (left)—2.8 cm maximum length, 1.8 cm greatest breadth, 1.6 cm breadth of base, 0.4 cm greatest thickness, 2.3 cm height of tip (excluding base);
#4 (right)—3.4 cm maximum length, 1.7 cm maximum breadth, 1.4 cm breadth of base, 0.3 cm greatest thickness, 3.0 cm height of tip (excluding base).

In describing the points attached to the necklace, Bourke (1892:482) provided the following:

> Pendant from this collar are five medicine arrows, the exact nature of which, it was, of course, impossible to determine.... Both Frank [Grouard] and Baptiste [Pourrier] agreed that an arrow might become "medicine" either from having been shot into the person of the owner himself or into the body of an enemy, or even from having been picked up under peculiar circumstances.

The four stone points present are identified as dating to the late prehistoric period by archaeologist Dennis Stanford of the NMNH. The points are made of Knife River flint and phosphoria, two high quality extensively used northern Plains lithic raw materials. Based on their late prehistoric date the points were recycled or reused and were not made or used as a weapon by the maker of the necklace. It is likely that the points were collected or "picked up" as stated by Bourke.

Thin strips of hide are tied to the left and right ends of the beaded collar and presumably represent the neckpiece of the object. On the left side, the strip is tied near its midpoint and both ends of the strip hang loose. On the right side, the strip is tied to the end and is then used to secure a small hide bundle, or pouch.

This bundle has a maximum length of approximately 5.9 cm. The rounded portion, or pouch, measures approximately 3.0 cm in diameter. The hide strip securing the pouch is then tied to another thin hide strip which secures a second dressed hide bundle much smaller than the first, measuring 2.7 cm in length and 1.7 cm in diameter. This second hide strip is then secured to a third hide strip with a larger knot. This third hide strip secures a third hide bundle, similar in size to the first. The third bundle measures 6.2 cm in length by 2.9 cm in diameter. The third hide strip then extends loosely from the knot that secures the bundle. A fourth, thinner hide strip is also tied around this third bundle and extends for approximately 9.0 cm to where it secures a fourth hide bundle – the smallest on the neckpiece. This bundle measures 2.9 cm in length by 1.3 cm in diameter. After this bundle the thin strip of hide hangs loose for approximately 1.5 cm from its knot around the bundle. All of the pouches and their joining strips are colored red similar to the other pieces of the necklace. These multiple hide strips comprising the neck piece of the necklace presumably were used to join the left and right sides. The thinness of the hide strips likely resulted in their separation, although even the illustration in the BAE report shows nonunion of the strips.

Sometime prior to Bourke's (1892:482) report the pouches were opened and examined "under a powerful glass" by Dr. H. C. Yarrow, U.S. Army. Dr. Yarrow

identified the bags as human scrota. The external surfaces of the pouches were recently reexamined by Alfred Gardner of the Mammals Divisions at the NMNH. Dr. Gardner could not rule out the possibility that the hide pouches had been made of human scrota, but confirmation would depend upon molecular analysis. Two of the pouches are much smaller than usual for humans. In the 1892 report, the contents of two of the pouches were tentatively identified:

> The first of these contained a vegetable powder, somewhat decomposed, having a resemblance to hoddentin; the second was filled with killikinnick; the third with small garnet-colored seeds like the chia in use among the Apache, and the fourth with a yellow, clayey-white vegetable matter not identified (Bourke 1892:482).

It appears that Bourke may have been trying to interpret Cheyenne ethnobotany by referring to Apache sources for some of the botanical terms, which may or may not be relevant for plant materials used by the Cheyenne. Hoddentin is a yellow powder from the pollen of the tule, or cattail, reportedly used in rituals and ceremonies (Farish 1918:28). Killikinnick is a variant of the more commonly used term kinnikinnik. It was smoked in pipes by Native Americans, and also Euro-American traders, and is usually a mixture of tobacco, sumac leaves, and the inner bark of a type of dogwood (Hodge 1979:692). Chia seeds of the salvia plant common in Nevada, southern Utah, Arizona, and northwest Mexico were often parched to make the flour, pinole. When soaked in water the seeds make a nutritious, mucilaginous drink (Moerman 1998).

In the current examination, the pouches were not opened; their contents were viewed only with the assistance of radiography and computed tomography, both of which are nondestructive and noninvasive techniques. Both methods revealed ill-defined substances, likely organic in nature. No dense, or highly radiopaque materials are present except for a single tubular white bead that is secured by a knot to the loose end of the thin hide strip connecting the larger pouch on the left with the small pouch on the left. The pouch with the shell bead is likely the one containing kinnikinnik, as tan-colored plant fibers are visible through small perforations caused long ago by insect damage.

Finger Phalanx Necklace, Fake, DAM (Catalog No. 1946.161)

Provenience: This "necklace with knuckle bones" was loaned to the DAM by Sarah Coolidge Vance on March 18, 1943, and was accessioned as a gift on January 21, 1946, along with other Native American objects. (Native Arts Department 1997). The original source of these materials is unknown, but a hand-written attribution on the loan sheet identified the necklace as Cheyenne.

This long necklace of white shell beads and brown botanical beads with 18 bones is not a trophy necklace (Figure 6.19). The bones are human phalanges but, based on their appearance, were recovered from a funerary context and strung long after the tissues had decomposed. The perforations were made in dry bone;

Figure 6.19. A fake finger phalanx trophy necklace (no. 8), DAM 1946.161.

the exposed cancellous bone is light in color and no perforation margin polishing is evident (Figure 6.20). Based on the clean cylindrical cut and lack of beveling, the perforations were made with a modern drill bit. It is likely that the necklace was constructed for sale during the first half of the twentieth century.

The 42 white, opaque, round, flat disk shell beads vary in diameter and length, and their perforations for stringing also vary in diameter. With one exception, all of the perforations are circular and have no beveling. The bead following bone 12 (as counted from the left of the tie when viewing the necklace) has good external

Figure 6.20. Thumb phalanx with two "recently drilled" light-colored, circular perforations (no. 8).

surface striations on one flat side and its perforation is beveled on both sides. Many of the shell beads have surface striae evident on one side.

The 276 brown, opaque, round, flat disk beads were made from a herbaceous plant, possibly a cactus or other desert plant (H. Alden 2005, personal communication). Stained, polished, and cut yucca stem is a possibility. The flat interior surface is light brown in color. The outer surface has fine longitudinal stria and a dark brown patina. The brown beads also vary in diameter, length, and size of perforations. Again, the perforations are circular and have no beveling.

The beads and bones are strung on three strands of a multifiber plied thread or cord resembling waxed cotton or dental floss. The pattern of eight brown beads, one white bead, bone, one white bead has been broken in two places by missing bones which, if once present, have been lost.

Three proximal foot phalanges, three distal hand phalanges, and 12 middle and proximal hand phalanges are in the necklace. All of the bones are from adults

and some are from the same individual. For example, three specimens with red staining show similarities in preservation, relative size, and color. (Subtle staining of this type resulted from contact with a dyed fabric during decomposition, a common observation in cemetery remains.) Based on size and morphology, variation in preservation, and age-related degenerative changes, at least four individuals are represented.

All of the bones have ventral–dorsal perforations in their distal ends near the distal joints. The bones are arranged on the necklace according to size: the larger phalanges are placed in the center of the necklace with progressively smaller phalanges arranged on both sides. The bones hang with their proximal ends facing out and the sides facing forward and backward. The first two phalanges on the right side have their palmar surfaces facing down toward the central bones of the necklace. The next seven phalanges have their palmar surfaces facing up toward the back of the necklace. On the left side, the first phalanx has its palmar surface down toward the central bones; the remaining eight have their palmar surfaces facing up toward the back of the necklace.

More than half of the bones (numbers 2–4, 7, 8, and 12–16) are middle finger phalanges. The proximal joint of number 16 has slight arthritic lipping and joint surface porosity; its palmar surface has pronounced, activity-induced marginal ridging. Number 14 has a fresher, less desiccated appearance than the other bones; its palmar surface has slight marginal ridges. Number 13 has slight red discoloration at the proximal end. Number two has some postmortem breakage. Bone nine, with red discoloration and slight marginal ridges on the palmar surface, and bone six are proximal finger phalanges. Bones 10 and 11 are proximal row thumb phalanges. The proximal joint of number 10 has sight red discoloration; its distal end has two drilled perforations in it. Bones 1, 17, and 18 are distal hand phalanges. Three bones are toe phalanges: number 5, number 15 with inferior marginal lipping of the distal joint, and number 12 with trace arthritic lipping.

As with the bones, the brown botanical beads are arranged according to size. The portion of the necklace that would rest against the back of the neck is comprised entirely of brown beads, except for one white shell bead that ends each side. There are two sizes of brown beads. The first 31 on the right side and the first 32 on the left are smaller (e.g., 7.1 mm diam., 1.5 mm thick, 1.6 perforation diam.; 7.3 mm diam., 2.1 mm thick, 1.7 mm perforation diam.; 6.7 mm diam., 2.0 mm thick, 2.2 mm perforation dia.). The brown beads comprising the rest of the necklace are fairly consistent in size. Beginning at the size transition on the right side, representative brown beads measure 9.4 mm in diameter with a length of 2.3 mm and a perforation diameter of 2.3 mm to 9.0 mm in diameter with a length of 2.1 mm and a perforation diameter of 2.5 mm. Two representative examples of beads at the midpoint of the necklace have measurements of 8.6 mm in diameter with a length of 2.0 mm and a perforation diameter of 2.5 mm and 9.0 mm in diameter with a length of 2.7 mm and a perforation diameter of 2.2 mm.

BEAD ANALYSIS

Glass trade beads serve as temporal indicators in the archaeological record, and they can be used to provide general dates for ethnological objects as well. Beads from tightly dated archaeological sites, or beads from ethnological objects with known dates, allow for temporal comparisons for undated assemblages or objects. The beads incorporated into six of these necklaces are typical of those found throughout much of the nineteenth century.

Two of the most common bead manufacture types, drawn beads and wound beads, are present on the objects, with drawn beads outnumbering wound beads. During the nineteenth century, especially during the latter half, the small, monochrome drawn beads known as seed beads occurred most frequently and were generally used in beadwork. These were the least expensive beads of the nineteenth century and they predominate at archaeological sites (Ross 2000). The larger wound beads were typically strung or suspended, often on strips of dressed hide or on sinew. Larger beads are more typical of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century assemblages, and diminish in frequency toward the middle and late nineteenth century (Ross 2000).

The large beads on necklace no. 5 (NMAI 04/5866), which are known vernacularly as "pigeon egg" beads, may date to the first half of the nineteenth century. According to Ross (2000), these beads appeared on the Ft. Union, North Dakota, inventories during 1831–1851. This occurrence, however, does not preclude their presence before or after these dates. In fact, among the beads used on necklace no. 5, these beads exhibit the most wear and are in poorer condition than other beads on the necklace. It is possible that these beads were not new when used on the necklace, or they may not have held up as well as the other beads. Interestingly, another type of bead on the same necklace, a drawn, opaque white bead decorated with alternating green and red stripes may be datable by comparison to similar beads recovered archaeologically. Long, drawn beads with inlaid stripes and chopped ends appear at mid-nineteenth century sites such as Ft. Clark (1822–1861) and the Deapolis village (1797–1822, and 1850s), both in North Dakota (Badorek and Ahler 2003; Lehmer et al. 1978:322–323). The combination of the pigeon egg bead and the striped bead may suggest a mid-nineteenth century date for the necklace, which was acquired by G. Heye in 1915.

DISCUSSION

The practice of dismembering the bodies of defeated enemies and the display of body parts, especially scalps, is well documented for Indian tribes of the Plains and Great Basin. Trophy taking also included the removal of hands and feet, and sometimes these elements were used to craft display pieces in the form of necklaces that varied considerably in style and appearance. Because the specimens described

here come from various tribes, these types of necklaces must have been widely used even if not usually saved. A very few are curated in museum collections. An unknown number are held in personal collections. In addition to the eight described here, the authors are aware of three others in a museum collection, and have seen photographs of four others held privately.

Six of the trophy necklaces presented here are authentic, while one and perhaps a second are early twentieth century fabrications. In number eight the drilled perforations and appearance of the phalanges clearly identify this necklace as a fake. Furthermore, authentic necklaces generally show evidence of use-wear on the design elements, but this one does not. In number seven, the metacarpals are not easily recognized as human by most individuals thus reducing the full effect of a trophy piece. This necklace is suspect, partly because it is so aesthetic. The design is more symmetrical and carefully assembled than the others, which tend to be asymmetrical. The green pigment could have been applied to make the necklace seem exotic whereas some of the other necklaces show the traditional symbolic red color. A comparable situation is perhaps reflected in the reporting of detailed instructions on how to replicate grizzly bear claw necklaces by Feder and Chandler (1961). Claw necklaces were historically uncommon and highly sought after as ornaments and emblems of valor.

From available sources, these necklaces were men's objects. Women assumed active roles in mutilating the dead when possible and during victory celebrations, but whether women contributed to the construction of any of the necklaces is unknown. The construction design of the more complicated necklaces suggests the possibility of assistance by women. Bead and hide work were traditionally done by women in the Plains (Grinnell 1923a). Blackfeet girls, for example, "received instructions in dressing hides, preparing foods, making clothing, and in the women's crafts of geometric painting, porcupine quillwork, and beadwork" (Ewers 1958:102). In contrast, boys were taught to hunt, make miniature bows and arrows, care for horses, and participate in sports and games.

Within this context, women may have contributed to the fabrication of some necklaces. Although the hide stitching is fairly sophisticated in a couple of them, the beadwork is not elaborate in the described examples. Direct involvement by women likely depended upon whether the particular necklace was viewed solely as a trophy adornment, or as a man's medicine object, in which case it was probably made by a man.

Given the available sample, little can be said as to whether different tribes had stylistic preferences. Most of the necklaces, but not all, incorporated glass trade beads. Fingertips were used to construct Ute necklaces numbers two and three, as well as number five, which is tentatively identified as Ute. In contrast, a Cheyenne necklace (no. 7) incorporated entire fingers into the construction design. Reportedly, a second necklace from the same village was made of four whole fingers (Bourke 1892).

Entire fingers were also used in the two putative Cheyenne necklaces shown in Reedstrom (1977:322). The first is comprised of a rectangular section of dressed

hide from which three fingers are suspended. Ten opaque white, spherical glass trade beads (Kidd and Kidd variety WIb) are strung in sets of five on either side on the thin strip used to suspend the necklace around the neck. A dark glass trade bead is strung on a strip of hide secured near the proximal end of the center finger. The second necklace incorporates four fingers, glass trade beads, 23 tubular sections of bone, and four complete bone hair pipes. Bone hair pipes appeared among the Plains tribes circa 1880, when cattle bone was used in place of the more fragile shell hair pipes (Ewers 1957).

While other forms of trophy taking did occur prehistorically in the Plains and Great Basin, necklaces made from human hand bones have not been found. However, a necklace made from metacarpals, metatarsals, and hand and foot phalanges is reported from the Diablo Phase (1261–1340) of Casas Grande, Mexico (Di Peso 1974:579; Di Peso et al. 1974:65). This specimen is stylistically quite different, being solely made of bones, the larger of which were perforated lengthwise while the phalanges were drilled and strung either anterior–posterior or end to end.

Although the necklaces reported here were products of the historic period, in design and circumstance they were unique to their maker. How anyone of contemporary society can ever fully divine the actual meaning or purpose of these necklaces is therefore difficult to imagine. Only limited recorded information is available in this regard. One clue is in the impression a necklace gives to a viewer, a visual assessment that suggests differences in some innate way. Perhaps this distinction is the difference between a trophy, something gained in conquest or victory, versus a talisman, an object thought to act as a charm.

Some necklaces absolutely come across as trophies of conquest, adornments meant to impress the viewer with power and victory on the part of the wearer. Grizzly claw necklaces, which were never numerous due to the difficulty in obtaining claws, may be somewhat analogous in their intent (Fedler and Chandler 1961). A claw necklace "silently proclaimed to all who saw it that its wearer was a man and a warrior of distinction" (Skinner 1925:129).

Necklace no. 2, comprised only of the distal ends of a young man's fingers, boldly fits this category. Hamilton (1907) witnessed the scalp dance in which this necklace was worn by a young Ute warrior: [He] "was conspicuous in the dance and boasted savagely with many flourishes of his tomahawk, shook a scalp he wore and pointed often at the necklace around his neck. A few days after the dance he came to my room in Denver, where I bought the trophy from him."

For the authentic necklaces, one could argue that all of the fingers are trophies because they were taken from someone. But the design components suggest that some of these necklaces differed in their ultimate use or meaning. This seems especially true for necklace number eight, which has projectile points, bacculites, and pouches tied to the necklace that may represent personal medicine or war medicine, such as described by Ewers (1958:127). War medicine protected a warrior from harm, ensuring good luck and success in hazardous adventures (Ewers 1955; Raczka 2003).

The Cheyenne wore charms and amulets of many descriptions because of a belief in their protective quality (Grinnell 1923b:117–124). Arrowheads were often viewed as luck charms against accident and sickness.

> Men very commonly wear stone arrowheads tied in the hair or about the neck, and usually to the shank of the arrowpoint is tied a little deerskin bundle containing some medicine, usually a part of some plant. They wear these stone arrowpoints in order that they may have long life. This is a part of the general belief as to the endurance, permanence, and perhaps even immortality of stone (Grinnell 1923b:117–118).

Bacculites were also worn:

> When worn by men on the warpath, such charms will often indicate to a man where enemies are to be found, and when men are fleeing and being pursued, the stones if prayed to and shaken in the air will bring a heavy storm so that the tracks of those who are running away will be effaced (Grinnell 1923b:122–123).

Scalps during the historic period had a well-defined significance as trophies. Other body parts, especially hands, served the same purpose, although most of these were discarded after being used in victory celebrations. Once in a while these elements were fashioned into personal adornments in the form of necklaces, which sometimes were purely trophies while others were fixed with personal medicine. Ultimately, this distinction as to the unrecorded thoughts of the maker may be one of those obvious cases where the difference is truly in the eye of the beholder.

According to Gordon Yellowman, Southern Cheyenne Chief from Oklahoma (2005 personal communication), at times the retention of certain trophies indicates something significant about the circumstances or the person who was killed, perhaps as a means of honoring the bravery or an attempt to keep their spirit from entering the spirit world. The person making the necklace wanted to preserve and display the remains. Continued preservation of these unique trophies of war acknowledges the original intent and is a means of honoring both the tribe and the warrior who crafted the necklace.

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Chapter 7

Predatory War and Hopewell Trophies

Mark F. Seeman

"Hopewell" refers to a distinct array of social and ideological relations that are seen in the middle-range societies of the Midwest and South during the Woodland period ca. AD 1–400. Participating societies were regionally distinct, but many shared a common commitment to growing storable seed crops, a collective orientation toward protracted mortuary rituals, and a need to create and manipulate complex cultural landscapes. Hopewell also was characterized by the development of an expanded system of material symbols that employed images of overt cosmological reference. Participating groups were clearly linked on a variety of scales, but it was the shared importance of these symbols that has given Hopewell its enduring character.

The Hopewell societies of the Ohio Valley, the central Mississippi Valley, and the lower Illinois Valley are currently the best known to archaeologists, in part because each of these areas has a seen a considerable amount of antiquarian and archaeological attention, and also (and not unrelated) because Hopewell-participating groups here were somewhat more frequent and more concentrated when compared to other major drainages. Since the Chillicothe Conference in 1978, there has been a strong upturn in the research intensity directed toward interpreting Hopewell relationships across this vast area of land. Although much has been learned, there continues to be disagreement among scholars regarding many critical features of Woodland life—in short, what it meant to be "Hopewell." For example, the debate continues today as to whether or not Ohio Hopewell societies were mainly sedentary food producers or mobile foragers, and all that these designations imply (Pacheco and Dancey 2006; Seeman 1999; Yerkes 2003). These varying interpretations are prompted by the fact that the people in question lived nearly 2000 years ago in environments that were (or are) quite capable of creating a complex set of taphonomic and site-formational quandaries, and also because

nearly all analyses must be sufficiently robust to incorporate critical materials that were excavated over 100 years ago using imperfect methods and providing many ambiguities.

Despite these ambiguities, however, not all interpretations are equal, and the preferred views are those that can utilize multiple lines of evidence, worked against each other, to produce "strong inference" (Wylie 1992:20, 25). This chapter examines the practice of Hopewell trophy taking in order to develop interpretations that can be fit into a broader fabric of Hopewell relations, especially those that pertain to the Ohio Valley. Attention will be given to the notion of cooperation and competition in Woodland societies, the implications of age and sex distinctions, the historical uses of "cut jaws" as the most intensely modified class of trophy materials, and the metaphorical linkage between humans and animals as they pertain to trophy taking.

Human trophies evoke strong sensibilities, and it should be expected that such practices will facilitate a variety of relationships to people, places, and things. Trophy taking pertains most directly to the context of war and peace, and it is this relationship in the Hopewell case that must be considered at the outset.

WOODLAND WAR AND THE *PAX HOPEWELLIANA*

War is a key dimension of the human condition, and it has borne critical review in all of the social sciences. Among the many treatments in anthropology, Kelly's (2000) recent cross-cultural and generalizing approach allows connections to be developed to those societies of the past that are generally the domain of the archaeologist (e.g., Flannery and Marcus 2003:11802).

By a carefully constructed path of contrast sets, Kelly provides useful insights into the conditions that produce war, particularly among those societies hovering on the border between foraging and food production. In Kelly's view, no matter how simple, warfare is about the collective interests that characterize lineal descent groups as lineage, subclan, and clan are linked to their ancestors and their ancestral lands (Kelly 2000:45–46). Warfare is armed conflict collectively carried out by kinsmen: individuals employ deadly weapons with deadly force; the deaths of other persons are envisioned in advance; the resultant deaths are seen as legitimate; and because of the principle of substitutability, the victims need not be specific people or aggravating personalities. Women and children, for example, are substituted for offending male warriors if the circumstances are right; in fact, it is often this broadening of the range of targets that allows the separation of homicides from the victims of war in the archaeological record (Kelly 2000:149–150; see also Milner et al. 1991:587).

War brings into being a social instrument of power that has the latent potential to transform society (Kelly 2000:7). It broadens the sphere of cooperation and competition connecting social groups, as enemies become friends and friends become enemies. Leadership roles develop in these circumstances that would

otherwise be valueless. Warfare elevates the range and type of interactions between societies, and fits within a range of intergroup connections that also includes gift giving, adoption, and marriage. Why do wars develop? Kelly argues that the most basic cause is competition for resources—"the engine of this transformation is now apparent; restricted resource availability relative to population in environments rich in subsistence resources" (Kelly 2000:143). In sum, warfare emerges from a people's need or perceived need to control resources and places and it provides a transformative context for social relations.

War is undervalued and underdetected in the archaeological record when evaluated against its likely far-reaching consequences (Turbitt 2003:151). In part, this is because the perceived place of warfare in a given archaeological complex often hinges on the discovery of relatively rare events that eclipse "normal" circumstances. For example, without the discovery of the catastrophic Crow Creek or Larson site death assemblages in South Dakota the perception of warfare and trophy taking on the prehistoric Plains would be far different (see Willey 1990).

In contrast to these sites, at most Plains cemeteries evidence of death by projectiles is represented in less than 1% of the burials (Deitrick 1980). Similarly, the discovery of the out-of-scale evidence for war and trophy taking at the Norris Farm site in Illinois jolts us from a picture of Oneota warfare than otherwise might be seen as of minimal impact or importance (Milner et al. 1991; Santure 1990:156). In the Ohio Valley, the decapitated and fatally wounded Glacial Kame burials from the Drew site are unique among Glacial Kame cemeteries in the Midwest and certainly present a much more vivid picture of violence that at any other site of the time period (Budinoff 1976). How are we to interpret such rare (or rarely preserved) events, and to what extent are our archaeological interpretations of warfare and its incidence colored by the absence of such "Pompeii effect" events in many situations?

The archaeological record of Hopewell populations is sometimes interpreted as that of a peaceful folk that avoided the unpleasantness of war. Howard Winters coined the term *Pax Hopewelliana* to connote this relationship, and like many catch phrases it continues to be used in the literature (e.g., Cantwell 1980:4, 175; Hall 1997:156). Winters focused on the scanty evidence for violent death in the Hopewell mounds of the Midwest, and used the phrase to connote a generally friendly nature to Hopewell interactions, with the implicit analogy to the imposed peace of the Roman Empire, the *Pax Romana*. This notion of peaceful Hopewellian inter-regional interaction can be traced at least back to the 1950s and the notion of "Hopewellian communities" as espoused by Thorne Deuel (1952)—a clearly Childe-influenced view that saw peaceful Hopewell traders and craft-specialists proselytizing from region to region.

Milner's (1995, 1999) recent reviews of the evidence for violent death in eastern North America seems to confirm Winters' earlier findings—there is little by way of direct evidence for Hopewell (and the Early Woodland period as well) violent death. Milner's (1995:234–235) explanation of a *Pax Hopewelliana* is couched essentially in subsistence terms. He sees the increased importance of food production

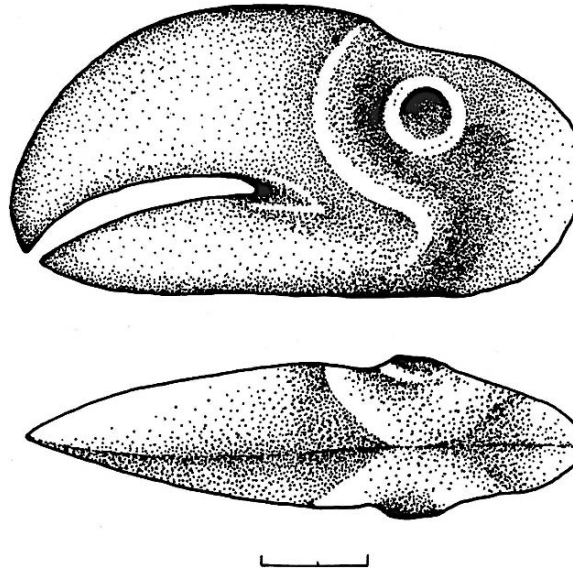

Figure 7.1. Reconstruction of a "killed" three-quarter grooved axe in the shape of a heavy-billed bird, Russell Brown Mound 1, Ross Co., Ohio. (See Seeman and Soday 1980:102). Scale = 2 cm. Drawing copyright 2007 by Linda Spurlock.).

as leveling out environmental differences, thus removing a major source of competition of people for resources, as well as new (and unspecified) forms of social organization that dampened tensions.

David Anderson similarly notes the apparent lack of evidence for Hopewell warfare and violent death, and at the same time the careful spatial placement of many Hopewell centers in the Southeast. His conclusion is that this spacing of ritual centers represents "the peaceful delimited precursors of later Mississippian conflict-maintained buffer zones" (Anderson 1998:289), and that individualistic expression must have been based on hunting rather than the warfare and militarism of later Mississippian societies (Anderson 1998:297).

For Ohio Hopewell, of the many hundreds of burials documented, very few (if any) have been found with projectile points imbedded in bone, fatal blunt trauma to the skull or other indications of violent death. In apparent contrast, the weaponry of war, especially finely crafted projectile points, oversized spears, daggers, and celts (or axes) are clearly in abundance and the focus of considerable ritual attention (Figure 7.1). So too are some of the images that are associated with warfare in later complexes; for example, raptorial birds, and most particularly, the "weeping eye" of the peregrine falcon (see Hudson 1976:129).

It is possible that by placing too much emphasis on a shortage of violence or mutilation in Hopewell mound contexts, a kind of lineage- or clan-based society has been created that never really existed. Although on a much different scale, this

peaceful Hopewell world is reminiscent of the ethereal societies that Mayanists saw in Mesoamerica before Proskouriakoff's (1960) decipherment of the Piedras Negras dynastic succession. It seems inconsistent to create Hopewell societies that engaged in such competitively laden practices as ritualized ceremonial feasting (Anderson 1998:297; Knight 2001; Styles and Perdue 1986:524–526), public mortuary display (Braun 1986), the delineation of group territories (Brown 1985:219; Charles 1992), the adoption of (and peace-making with) foreigners (Hall 1977, 1997), the hasty desecration or destruction of hilltop enclosures (Prufer 1997:313; Riordan 1996:253), and the embellishment of self with individualistic coiffures, tattoos, and adornos of various sorts (Seeman 2004:58–61), but that did not go to war.

Christopher Carr (1995) has made a useful contribution in showing the strongly controlling effects that ideologies have on mortuary rites cross-culturally. Particularly in a case like Hopewell, where the dead become ancestors through multiple stages of ritual over time, it can be expected that the dominant ideology strongly shaped how, and with what, the dead were presented. For Hopewell in the Ohio Valley, it is reasonably clear based on available estimates of regional population size and the age and sex distribution of the mortuary "populations" themselves that some selectivity was involved in mound burial–a selectivity strongly shaped by the collective ideals of mourners and sponsors. The rarity of broken skulls or flinty points embedded in bone must be considered in this context. Additionally, it should be noted that whereas a later and much better understood Mississippian iconography reveals a strong representation of conflict between humans (or humanized deities) replete with weapons and severed heads in the hands of successful warriors (Dye 2004; Knight et al. 2001; Milner 1995:235: Trubitt 2003:152), Hopewell iconography is dominated by other themes pertaining to shamanism, renewal, and animal spirits (Brown 1997:468, 473; Seeman 2004:61, 65, 68). Very few of the people buried in Hopewell mounds seem to have met a violent death, yet across the major valleys of the Midwest and South, some of them are associated with modified human remains that legitimately might be called "trophies." This paradox may have more to do with conventions shaped by world view and ritual practice than any real mirroring of intergroup conflict or lack thereof.

WHAT IS A TROPHY? PROBLEMS IN RECOGNITION AND DEFINITION

Trophy taking, especially of human heads, is a widespread practice dating back to at least the Mesolithic (Keeley 1996:37–38, 100). The guiding sentiments are mainly to mutilate the victim's corpse in order that these effects might be felt in the afterlife, and to have a tangible token of dominance and spiritual power (Hall 1997:65; Keeley 1996:102). Arms, thumbs, legs, feet, fingers, noses, scalps, hearts, and particularly heads have been well documented as acceptable trophies among the many Native American peoples that inhabited eastern North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

With regard to evaluating the Hopewell situation, if the interpretation of these societies as lineage-based or clan-based is reasonable, then following from Kelly's stance, people in the Woodland past should hold an important place in the development of warfare and trophy taking on the continent. Certainly, headless Hopewell corpses, Hopewell heads as apparent offerings, and extensively modified Hopewell bones are all well documented (e.g., Bullington 1988:229; Fischer 1974:459; Kidder 2002:77). So too are the occasional human finger pendants and other human bone artifacts. Importantly, the wide range of processes that *could* have produced such results introduces unwelcome ambiguity. The possible effects of site formational processes such as the modification and selective reinterment of early graves by subsequent, later burial activities (Joyce 2001:14), and/or the purposeful desecration of the dead by head removal (Hall 1997:16) must be acknowledged. However, it is those activities pertaining to the long-term curation of ancestral relics and/or secondary burial processing that are likely to have had the strongest confounding effects on interpretations of Hopewell trophy taking.

The notion that isolated Hopewell heads or body parts might be the result of secondary burial seems remote at first glance. Ethnographically in eastern North America, ancestral relics of this type appear to have been rarely kept. I know of no documented examples of "head burial" among the many Native American peoples of the Eastern Woodlands and only one occurrence on the Great Plains (Harrod 2000:117; see also Seeman 1988:573). As Brown (1995:9) points out, however, ethnographic observations often fail to document minority patterns in funeral rites because of their infrequency and/or the typically short periods of ethnographic observation. Certainly in the Late Prehistoric archaeological record of the region there are many examples of heads and bodies following separate burial trajectories through secondary rites (e.g., Binford 1972:403, 413; Brown 1971:97). The potential confusion of trophy-taken heads with heads redeposited as stages in mortuary or other ritual acitvities can be illustrated with two examples.

Kolomoki in southern Georgia was probaly the largest ceremonial center in eastern North America shortly after AD 350. William Sears, the primary excavator, documented over forty isolated skulls from Mounds D and E at the site (Sears 1956:48). Many of these were associated with copper ear and hair ornanments, and the presence of human hair allowed Sears to conclude that these heads had been buried "fresh" rather than as extensively curated skulls. Some also were adorned with necklaces. These skulls occurred as scattered, isolated finds across the surface of the primary mound, but also as accompaniments to extended burials and in caches composed mainly of finely crafted ceramic vessels in a variey of animal and geometric (but not human) forms. Sears (1956:12, 47) also argued that mounds were built very quickly. He interpreted all of the isolated heads in the Kolomoki mounds as "trophy heads" taken in warfare, and cited the approaprate ethnographic examples for the Southeast.

Recently, Pluckhahn (2003:62, 193, 195) has reinterpreted these same Kolomoki materials as secondary skull burials pertaining to venerated relatives

associated with slow, yearly construction increments. He reasons that enemy skulls would not be adorned or decorated and that they fit better with his interpetation of mortuary ceremonialism as focused on collective, egalitarian norms rather than individual aggrandizement. Pluckhahn's practice-oriented interpreation is not based on any reanalysis of the actual specimens (indeed, most appear to have been lost), but rather, stems from his general model of the site as populated by a less complex society that buried the dead collectively over decades of time. To the extent that no actual criteria have been generated to separate these two interpretions, it is difficult to pick a winner, although the sheer number of isolated heads would seem to somewhat favor the Pluckhahn interpretation.

A second example bearing on recognition comes from the Plains. Here, O'Shea (1992), in a study of ethnographic expectation and archaeological reality, interprets particular isolated human remains as trophy skulls taken in war and others as skull burials representing secondary processing. Here, and only by inference, trophy skulls are culturally modified by being painted red and by being arranged on a shelf in a burial feature. In contrast, isolated skulls found in a nearby common pit and suggestive of a hasty burial are interpreted as the result of secondary burial processing unrelated to warfare (O'Shea 1992:107–108, 147–149). O'Shea, in contrast to the Sears/Pluckhahn case, does at least provide some *implied* criteria (formality, degree of cultural modification) for discriminating between the two practices, but the interpretive "key" hinges on such limiting criteria that it is difficult to justify. Elsewhere on the Plains, trophy-taken skulls are identified by the presence of drilled holes and/or cutting, cut edges, and polish (Owsley et al. 1994:368–370). In sum, it is difficult to conclusively recognize the results of trophy taking in the Eastern Woodlands and it is easy to confuse them with other practices. One attempt to resolve this problem as it pertains to the Hopewell case has been to suplement contextual and formal criteria with age and sex comparisons of the relevant materials.

HOPEWELL TROPHIES: THE IMPLICATIONS OF AGE AND SEX

The use of human bone among Hopewell societies ca. AD 1–400 to symbolize collectivity via the sequential processing and display of human remains in mortuary crypts and charnel houses is notable (see Brown 1979). During this same period, human bone becomes an important material for the production of a variety of standardized material forms. Some of these appear to be shamanic or transformative in character (e.g., flutes, sucking tubes, rattles, whistles, gorgets with mythic themes), while others do not. For the first time in eastern North America human bone becomes a widespread craft medium. Numerically, the most obvious manifestations of this pattern are the skull and mandibular parts found across the span of Hopewell interaction that have been cut, ground, drilled, polished, and painted. The patterns of modification present on these skulls, plus their use as

accompaniments to more complete, extended burials is most responsible for their interpretation as evidence of Hopewell trophy taking.

Although the discovery of extensively modified Hopewell human remains dates to the nineteenth century, it was not until 1945 that William Webb and Charles Snow first seriously entertained the topic of Hopewell trophy skulls in a chapter of *The Adena People* entitled "The Problem of the Trophy Skull." The term itself entered the literature a good deal earlier (Shetrone 1926:26; see also Buikstra 1979:225–226). Webb and Snow's conclusion—based on the premise that no morphological differences could be detected between isolated "trophy" skulls and those of nearby extended burials—was that the former were ancestral members of the local group rather than war trophies; that they "were Hopewellians themselves, who for reasons of honor, memory, love, or other motives for particular considerations were accorded this special preparation" (Webb and Snow 1945:287). Twenty-five males and four females were identified based on the established morphological criteria of the day. In a subsequent reanalysis, Snow (n.d.) backed away from his earlier interpretations, leaving more room for the view that these remains were the result of trophy taking.

The development of more accurate aging and sexing criteria has prompted a renewed interest in possible Hopewell trophy taking. Seeman (1988) reinvestigated many of the cases examined by Webb and Snow and concluded that an age and sex bias toward young males of "draft age" lent some support to the trophy-taking model. Nawrocki (1997:55) examined 22 fragmentary trophy mandibles from the GE Mound representing young adults of both sexes, but provides no more specific interpretations. Johnston (2002) analyzed age and sex distributions of the culturally modified human remains from the Hopewell-type site as well as the eight individuals in graves associated with these materials. At one point she "tentatively rejects" the trophy-taking interpretation, but later seems to accepts it (compare Johnston 2002:iii, 106–107 and Johnston 2002:113). Importantly, all five of these studies have used different analytical procedures and selected their samples pertaining to trophy taking based on different criteria. What they have in common, regardless of interpretation, is the documentation that Hopewell trophy skulls and mandibles come from a narrow segment of the population; they are mainly young to middle-aged adults and the majority are males.[1]

HOPEWELL JAWS AND THE SUCCESSFUL PREDATOR

> *They leave the mutilated carcasses of the slain, upon the contested field, a prey to the wolves and vultures.*
>
> (O'Shea 1992:147 quoting James 1823, 1:295–296)

Materials typically regarded as evidence for Hopewell trophy taking range from skulls with single drilled holes to extensively cut, ground, and polished mandibles and maxillae. The latter highly modified forms have parallels in other

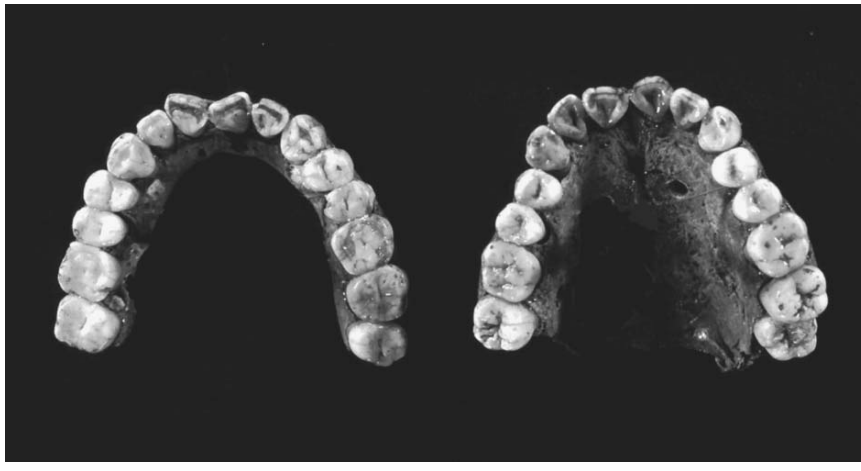

Figure 7.2. Cut and polished human jaws, Hopewell site, Ross Co., Ohio.

parts of the world, notably Mesoamerica (Castro 1993; Spence et al. 2004), but not in other archaeological complexes of Eastern North America (Figure 7.2). These modified human jaws do have formal precedents in the region, however, by way of their similarity to modified animal jaws (Figure 7.3).

Preciosities fashioned of animal jaws have a great antiquity in North America, extending across at least 4,500 years of time (e.g., Webb 1946:228; Kenyon 1982:210). In considering this long-standing relationship, it should be noted that functionally the jaws and teeth of an animal are critically tied to its behavior. They thus stand for or reference perceived purpose. Teeth also are extremely hard; they are usually the last portion of the corpse to deteriorate, and are thus regarded among certain Native American groups as the last residence of an animal's spirit (Schleiser 1987:9).

Animal jaws (both maxilla and mandible) in Hopewell contexts were sometimes modified in order to remove those areas not pertaining directly to the dentition, and sometimes were bilaterally split along the midline. Both plans facilitate suspension, and mortuary placement indicates that their most prominent use was as what Parker Pearson (1999:7) calls "adornments of the body." To be clear, rarely if ever these cut jaws occur in contexts suggesting medicine bundles, cult furniture, or the specialized regalia of office. Modified animal jaw ornaments have been found in both Hopewell mortuary and village contexts, which, following from Braun (1979:67, 70) would provide additional evidence that social meaning did not relate too strongly to vertical status distinctions.

Altogether, something on the order of 200 of these animal jaws have been reported from over 30 sites in Hopewell contexts from Florida to Ontario. In cases where species determinations are possible, they overwhelmingly are derived from predatory species (99/110 = 90%). Modified wolf (*Canis lupus*) jaws are by far

Figure 7.3. Cut and polished wolf jaws, Burial 228, Libben site, Ottawa Co., Ohio ca. AD 1000. (From collections of Kent State University.)

the most common animal species identified, followed by bear, mountain lion, and bobcat, respectively. Predator jaws are found mainly in the northern regions of Hopewell interaction, with strongly decreased frequencies in the Tennessee Valley and points south (Figure 7.4). Thus, in Hopewell contexts, animal jaw adornments specifically mean "predator" jaws.

The place or meaning of predatory animal adornments in the Woodland world can be inferred only indirectly. Animals of all sorts are metaphorically tied to many Native American practices, relating back to the perceived equivalencies and obligations linking the two: "The essential equality between humans and animals made the common metamorphous between human and animal life sensible." (Vecsey 1990:63; see also Harrod 2000:46). Predatory animals are especially notable in this regard. Predators by definition are effective hunters, but importantly, they also are metaphorically effective warriors. Amongst the Omaha, for example, wolves, because of their ability to hunt down prey, were associated with success in warfare: "The wolf which you have heard howling has promised me success if I would vow to feast with him. I now give such a vow and I will eat a part of the flesh of any enemy we may slay" (Fletcher and LeFlesche 1911:446). Similarly,

Figure 7.4. Distribution of Hopewell sites with predator and modified human jaws; ▼ = predators; □ = human; ◆ = predator and human. Occurrences at Crystal River, Florida (lion), and Kolomoki, Georgia (human), not mapped. References for mapped data: Bennett (1945); Braun et al. (1982); Cole and Deuel (1937); Cooper (1933); Fowler (1952); Griffin et al. (1970); Herold (1971); Heilman and Mahoney (1996); Jefferies (1976); Johnston (1968); Leigh et al. (1988); Mason (1981:263); McAllister (1932); McGregor (1952); McGregor (1958): Meinkoth (1995); Mills (1907); Mills (1916); Moore (1903); Moorehead (1922); Neumann and Fowler (1952); Nowrocki (1997); Parmalee (1959); Perino (n.d.); Perino (1968); Perkins (1965); Quimby (1941); Ritchie (1965); Sears (1956); Seeman and Cramer (1982); Shetrone (1926); Shetrone and Greenman (1931); Struever (1968); Swartz (1976); Taylor (1929); Walker (1952); Whyte et al. (2004); Willoughby (1922); Wray and MacNeish (1961).

scavenging animals, particularly crows and ravens, were associated with success in war because of the propensity of these animals to search out and feast on the bodies of fallen warriors (Hall 1997:35). Groups of ravens sometimes attach themselves to particular wolf packs and thus may appear to lead them to their quarry, thereby increasing the density of possible metaphorical connections. The general argument

for an association of animal predators with warfare has been presented previously for post-Hopewell contexts in the Midwest (Santure and Esarey 1990:105; see also Brown 1982:473–475).

As a notable aspect of Hopewell materialization, human jaws were modified after the fashion of predatory animal jaws. Both were cut laterally or longitudinally and drilled and ground to reduce the mass of the mandible or maxillary away from the dentition. Based on these similarities, it seems probable that one of the meaningful links from human trophy-taking was back to the more ancient practice of taking and displaying animal trophies. This interpretation is strengthened by the commingling of over one hundred similarly modified jaws of predators and humans in the large cache at the Tremper site in Scioto Co., Ohio (Mills 1916:285; Shetrone and Greenman 1931:507).

Modified human jaws in Hopewell contexts are surprisingly frequent. When compared with the similarly produced items pertaining to any other species, human jaws are the more frequent. In terms of geographic distribution, they mirror the distribution of worked predator jaws, and also of such "northern Hopewell" characters as pearl beads, shell beads, metal celts, bear canine ornaments, and conch shell containers (Seeman 1979:410). The GE Mound, with a minimum of 22 and a theoretical maximum of 46, is the site with the largest number of occurrences, and it is too bad that these materials were examined and reburied under such extenuating circumstances (Nawrocki 1997:29). Worked human jaws are found in contemporary, but non-Hopewell contexts as far west as the Dakotas (Neuman 1975:76–77).

Hopewell human jaw adornments appear in Havana tradition contexts of the central Illinois Valley shortly before AD 1, and this region may be the point of origin for the practice. This date is generally consistent with the increased importance of mound construction as a statement of territoriality and belonging, but is shortly before effective horticulture and broadscale "Hopewell" inter-regionalism (see Fortier 2001:179). The latest examples may be from Kolomoki (Sears 1956:48). The jaws and teeth themselves are generally disease-free and symmetrical. This aesthetic dimension is emphasized by the fact that one example from the Harness site had modified deer incisors inserted into empty tooth crypts in order to render a visual image of "completeness" (Mills 1907:165). Aesthetic considerations may have placed an increased value on the jaws of young adults for ornament production. To return to the more ancient practice of taking trophy animal jaws, it should be noted that because of the short-lived nature of predators, adult teeth are characteristically "perfect"; the prominent canine teeth of old carnivorous animals remain symmetrical and show little wear. In contrast, the human dental arcade becomes notably imperfect with age, not only within the lives of particular individuals but also pertaining to the long trajectory of cultural sequence in the region. Pre-Hopewell, Archaic period teeth in the Midcontinent are among the most worn teeth in human history; presumably due to an excessively gritty diet, they are often worn to the gum and abscessed by the third decade of life (e.g. Bassett 1982:1072–1073).

Similarly, after the introduction of intensive maize agriculture toward the end of the Woodland period, adult jaws show excessive dental caries and periodontal disease. Human teeth have a "look" most like predator teeth during the Woodland period.

Cut human jaws, like predator jaws, appear to have been intended to be worn and seen. Unlike predator jaws, they have been found only in nondomestic contexts. The latter (burial) situation indicates that some were worn around the neck, on the chest or torso, some were probably sewn to garments, and others were suspended from the wrists (e.g., Meinkoth 1995:54). In Ohio, many appear to have been associated with prestigious individuals and some appear as elements of opening or closing events pertaining to particular buildings and mound layers (e.g., Greber 1979:35; Greber 1981:31; Johnston 2002:103). Thus, the conjunction of human and predator both as a particular type of adornment and as metaphor can be connected to warfare, and by extension, trophy taking.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL IMAGERY

Hopewell iconography is distinctive, recognizable, and carries a shamanic caste. Dominant themes include those of human and animal connection, ancestors, and world renewal. The theme of human heads, body parts, and headless, handless, and footless torsos, is also present and clearly iconic (e.g., Penney 2003:22). Included here would be a curved copper headplate from Mound City depicting a handless and headless torso (Mills 1922); this figure precisely duplicates the style of headless and handless mica torso cutouts at the nearby Hopewell-type site and pertains to a class of headgear symbols that generally pertain to animals—deer, bears, wolves. In one Illinois Hopewell tomb there is even a formal tomb burial of a decapitated roseate spoonbill (Parmalee and Perino 1971) and in Ohio similar dedicatory placements of human trophies and detached and "scalped" red-headed woodpecker crania (Seeman 1988:569; see also Hudson 1976:130). Given my emphasis on predator as warrior, however, those artistic representations showing actual juxtapositions of animals and humans are particularly relevant because it can be presumed they show perceived relationships. A few examples suffice to document the complex linkages connecting the two:

1. A limestone platform pipe excavated in 1948 in western Illinois at Gibson Mound 4, Calhoun Co., Illinois, showing a raven eating a human head (Perino 1968:121). The raven itself is disproportionately large when compared to the size of the human head (Figure 7.5).
2. A smoking pipe showing a wolf (or dog) feeding on the base of a human head. This steatite Great Pipe was found in a dedicatory cache at the Seip-Pricer mound at the Seip Earthworks, Ross Co, Ohio. The wolf is disproportionately large when compared to the size of the human head.

Figure 7.5. The "Hungry Pipe," Gibson Mound 4, Calhoun Co., Illinois, showing a raven eating a human head. (Image by K. Farnsworth and courtesy of the Gilcrease Museum.)

Another stylistically similar, but broken pipe also was found in this same cache, and Shetrone and Greenman (1931:416) suggest the second wolf also may have been feeding on a human head. One of the conventions of Hopewell imagery is to show animals feeding on what they eat—for example, an otter eating a fish or a raccoon with its paw in a crawfish hole (Figure 7.6).

3. A platform pipe showing a heavy-billed bird, possibly a raven or raptor, pecking at a human hand. This pipe was part a large cache of "killed" and burnt pipes found at the Mound City site in Ross Co. Ohio (Squier and Davis 1848:266, for stylization see also Willoughby 1922:159).
4. An effigy boatstone showing a falcon with a human head placed on top of the raptor's head (Moorehead 1922:166). Given the limitations of the boatstone form, the falcon head/human head association might be something similar to the examples above.
5. A carved human bone showing the head of a feline immediately behind the image of a human foot. The teeth in the jaws of the animal are bared and prominently rendered. Cincinnati Earthworks, Hamilton Co., Ohio (Shetrone 1930:137).
6. A sandstone human figure with bearskin cloak and a detached human head at the thighs. The "Wray figurine" was found at the Newark Works, Licking Co., Ohio (Dragoo and Wray 1964) (Figure 7.7).
7. A male deer-roseate spoonbill-human composite figure made of a human femur and recovered from Hopewell Mound 25, Ross Co., Ohio (Shetrone 1926:128, 160). This is sometimes interpreted as a shamanic

Figure 7.6. Great Pipe from Seip-Pricer Mound, Ross Co., Ohio, showing a wolf eating a human head. (Courtesy of Ohio Historical Society.)

and/or master-of-animals theme, with emphasis on its transformative qualities. The face, eyes, and mouth are skeletonized. Willoughby has pointed out that through a series of superpositions the antlers show stages of maturation from buttons to a mature branching rack similar to depictions on larger copper headplates from the site (Greber and Ruhl 1989:249–252).

8. Horned or antlered skeletonized human form made of human bone. This fragmentary incised tube was recovered from the Turner site, Hamilton Co., Ohio, and may be a restatement the principles depicted more realistically in No. 7. Certainly when compared to the corpus of Hopewell art, these two figures are more similar than different (see Seeman 2004:62).

In reviewing this small sample, it is worth noting that both of the major themes posited for isolated skulls and skull parts, "trophy" and "ancestor," can be supported with these materials. Following from previous discussions, those depictions of animal predators feeding on human heads may relate most strongly to symbolic success in war, whereas the composite and skeletonized transformer may relate better to the nexus of ancestor-spirit helper-renewal. Ambiguities and overlaps in these themes very well may have been intentional. Finally, it must be

Figure 7.7. The Wray figurine, Newark Earthworks, Licking Co., Ohio, showing male figure with bearskin cape, bear claws, and detached human head on thighs. (Courtesy of Ohio Historical Society.)

pointed out that similar ambiguities exist in the interpretation of human "trophies" in later Mississippian art. Here also are examples of predatory animals holding or feeding on human heads or "portrait" human heads built in pottery (e.g., Brown 1996:513; Dye 2004:198; Hamilton 1952:130; Reilly 2004:126). While some see such images as the materialization of ancestral themes, others see them as celebrations of warrior values and trophy taking (compare Dye 2004:202–203 and Walker 2004:225).

CONCLUSIONS

Hopewell societies had a place in the development of trophy-taking practices in eastern North America. In this chapter, I have focused on the paradox implicit in the *Pax Hopewelliana* concept: middle-range, lineage-based societies capable of intensive cooperation but no competition. This interpretation, I would submit, has more to do with archaeological visibility and the social-symbolic direction of

Hopewell public ceremony rather than everyday practice, as I have argued previously (Seeman 1988). Communal, collective, and commemorative elements have high archaeological visibility and seem to dominate Hopewell ceremony, yet other dimensions of Woodland life—population concentration, territoriality, farming, increased inter-regionalism—and following from the generalizing arguments of Kelly (2000) would seem to provide the proper context for increased raiding and warfare. Hopewell wars must have been different than those of later times; goals such as the sacking and desecration of temple towns and/or the acquisition of slaves that play important parts in the tactics of later regional warfare would have been inconsistent with Woodland realities. The taking of prisoners, wives, potential adoptees, and the garnering of resultant prestige are another matter. In the great Hopewell ceremonies that took place in the public buildings and corporate facilities of the day, there was little visible of defeat to be seen and only the symbolic trophies, weapons, and other mementos that symbolize success. Considerably modified human parts fit into this broader domain of material symbols.

Warfare was not one of the central themes of Hopewell ideology and references to it would have been framed in traditional metaphors such as the connection between predatory animals and predatory warriors, modeled on the "warring" abilities of these animals themselves. The extent to which modified animal trophy mandibles and similarly modified human mandibles share similar adornment purposes fits this interpretation. The use of modified human trophy mandibles and maxillae as "adornments of the body" appears to largely end in eastern North America with the end of Hopewell, yet of course the importance of trophy taking itself continues. As has been suggested, a consideration in the abandonment of this practice may be found in a changed perception in the relationships linking people and animals.

The ambiguity that we struggle with regarding the meaning of "trophy" as pertaining to the vertical trajectory of ancestry or the more horizontal connection to successful competition was probably intentional. In this gray area particular Hopewell identities could be negotiated and legitimized according to particular circumstance. In examining this area of congruence, it is important to regularly revisit both the practice of trophy taking and the alternatives with which it might have been entangled, as fresh perspectives and new information come to light. Correia's (1997) recent research and commentary on Hopewell dismemberment and cremation practices fits the bill nicely in this regard.

NOTE

1. Nawrocki (1997:22) contends that Seeman's (1988) data on sex show no significant differences between males and females. It should be noted that conclusions on this score are only supported if four of the five original categories are collapsed into two; for example combining "possible males" and "males" prior to testing. If only unambiguously sexed males and females are tested, the results are quite different.

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Chapter 8

"Otinontsiskiaj ondaon" ("The House of Cut-Off Heads")

The History and Archaeology of Northern Iroquoian Trophy Taking

Ron Williamson

INTRODUCTION

In the winter of 1623–1624, Gabriel Sagard, a Recollet friar, visited the country of the Huron in what is now southern Ontario and wrote the following passage based on a series of encounters the Huron had with their enemies:

> After having clubbed them or shot them dead with arrows, they carry away the head; and if they are too much encumbered with these they are content to take the scalps with the hair on them, which they call *Onontsira*, tan them, and put them away for trophies, and in time of war set them on the palisades or walls of their town fastened to the end of a long pole. (Wrong 1939:152–153)

The taking of heads, scalps and other body parts was not unique to the Huron but constituted an essential element of warfare and prisoner sacrifice among all Northern Iroquoians. This chapter summarizes the ethnographic and archaeological evidence for trophy taking and presents the cultural contexts in which it was undertaken.

THE PEOPLE

The region occupied by Northern Iroquoians—after AD 1300—constitutes most of what is now known as southern Ontario, southwestern Quebec, New York, and northern Pennsylvania (Figure 8.1). This area is entirely south of the Canadian

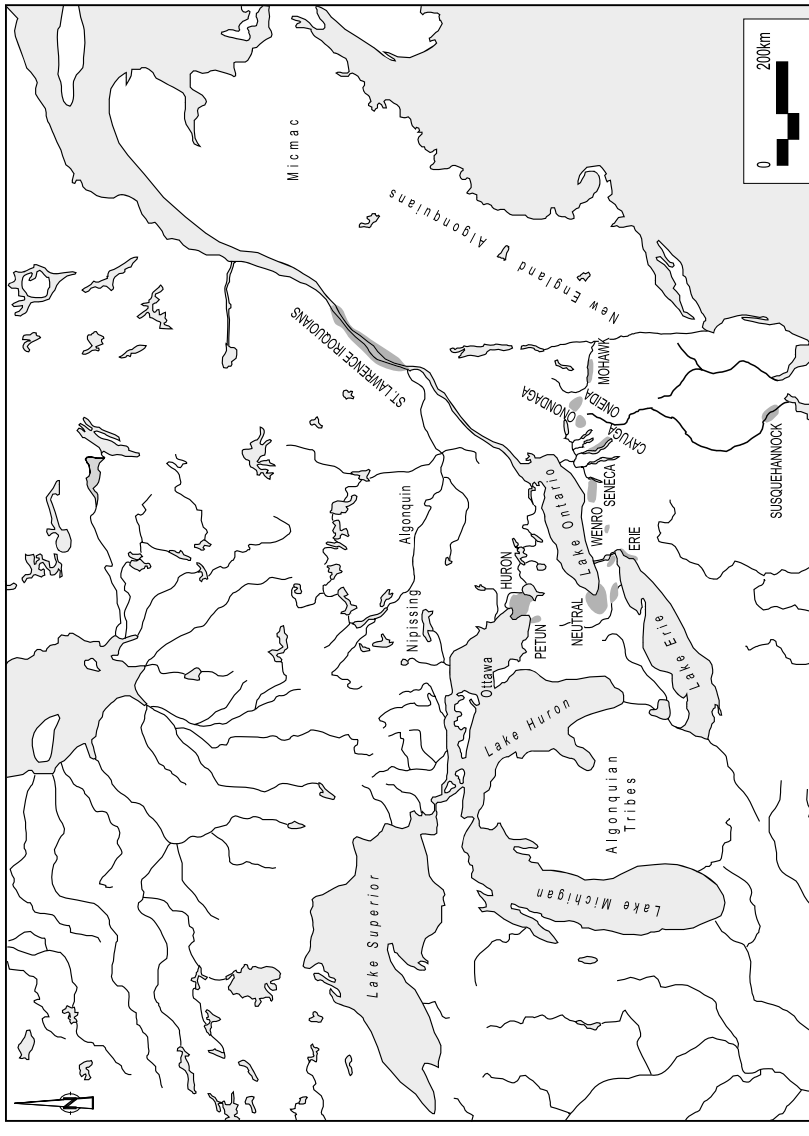

Figure 8.1. Map showing location of Aboriginal Nations mentioned in text.

Shield and is characterized by largely deciduous forest underlain by soils favorable for maize agriculture. The Iroquoian languages of the people that inhabited this area are distantly related to Cherokee, spoken in the southern Appalachians, and to Tuscarora, spoken near the mid-Atlantic coast. The term "Iroquoian," therefore, should not be confused with "Iroquois," an Algonquian word used by Europeans to refer to the Five Nations Confederacy of New York State (Trigger 1969:6).

The Huron (who called themselves the Wendat) were the northernmost of the Iroquoians, historically inhabiting the peninsula of land between Georgian Bay on Lake Huron and Lake Simcoe (Trigger 1969; 1976; Tooker 1964). The relatively small Tionnontate or Petun nation lived immediately to the southwest of the Huron (Garrad and Heidenreich 1978) and were so named by the French because of the large quantities of tobacco they cultivated. The Petun resembled the Huron in most linguistic and cultural respects. Their combined population prior to the onset of European-introduced epidemics in the 1630s has been estimated at approximately 20,000 (Trigger 1985:234).

The tribes of the Neutral Confederacy (called Attiwandaron by the Huron) lived farther to the south between the lower Grand River Valley and the Niagara River (Lennox and Fitzgerald 1990). Despite their European name, given by the French to signify the peace (albeit tenuous) between the Neutral and the Huron and the Neutral's refusal to participate in the long-standing feud between the Huron and the Iroquois, they were certainly engaged in blood feuds with Algonquians to the west. In 1641, the Jesuits estimated the Neutral population at approximately 12,000 people living in about 40 villages although prior to the epidemics, their population may have been significantly higher (Trigger 1985:235).

There were also Iroquoian-speaking communities living in the St. Lawrence Valley west of Québec City in the sixteenth century (Jamieson 1990; Pendergast 1991). Encountered by Cartier in his 1534 and 1535 visits, they had inexplicably disappeared by Champlain's visit of 1603, constituting one of the most compelling mysteries of eastern Canadian history (Trigger 1985:144–148).

The Erie was a small nation, relatively unknown to early European visitors, inhabiting the area of the southeastern end of Lake Erie (White 1978; Engelbrecht 1991). Even less is known about the Wenro (Oneronon), also a small group who lived farther to the east than the Erie. They are reported to have been allies of the Neutral Confederacy, and at least some of them appear to have joined with the Huron in 1639.

During the early seventeenth century, the five tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy lived in tribal clusters across upper New York State. From west to east they included the Seneca in the Genesee Valley (Niemczycki 1984); the Cayuga around Cayuga Lake (White et al 1978; Niemczycki 1984); the Onondaga in the region southeast of Syracuse (Tuck 1971; Bradley 1987); the Oneida in the Oneida or Oriskany Valley (Pratt 1976); and the Mohawk who inhabited the central Mohawk Valley (Fenton and Tooker 1978; Snow 1991, 1995). These tribes were culturally distinctive due to their long separate developments as reflected in differences in language and material culture as well as clan organization, kinship terms, and

mortuary patterns. Considering that the Iroquois were reported to have occupied ten large settlements prior to 1650, it is suggested that their pre-epidemic population may have equaled if not exceeded the Huron (Trigger 1985:235–236).

The Susquehannock lived to the south of the Iroquois, on the lower Susquehanna River (Jennings 1978; Kent 1984). Their linguistic relationship to the other Northern Iroquoian languages is unclear. They were, however, allies of the Huron against the Iroquois and were reported to have had members living in Huron country as late as 1647. The Susquehannock were the last Northern Iroquoians to have been conquered by the Iroquois.

The general characteristics that defined the cultural pattern shared by these Northern Iroquoian-speaking peoples included a primary reliance on horticulture for subsistence purposes; a similar division of labor, whereby men engaged in land clearing, hunting, fishing, building houses, trading and defending the community while women cared for their young children, manufactured many items including bone tools and ceramic vessels, and planted, tended and harvested the crops; habitation in often fortified villages containing bark-covered longhouses shared by matrilineally related extended families; matrilineally defined membership in clans that extended beyond each village to other communities thereby integrating villages within tribes and confederacies; separate organizations for civil and military functions; a set of shared religious beliefs and practices, and almost identical creation myths, deities, and celebrations; a set of shared social values and attitudes, expressed in careful attention to internal and external social relations; and participation in ritualized warfare and prisoner sacrifice (Trigger 1976:91–104; Fenton 1978).

WARFARE

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, war was waged both among Iroquoian groups and between them and some of their Algonquian neighbors. War was waged not in competition for scarce resources or land but in an ongoing struggle to avenge the violent deaths of one or more members of one group by killing or capturing members from the group responsible for those deaths. This kind of feuding should be viewed as a self-perpetuating, institutional part of Northern Iroquoian life best understood in the context of Iroquoian culture (Trigger 1967:154; Richter 1983). Indeed, to achieve notice as a brave warrior would appear to have been the most effective way for young men to acquire prestige.

These behaviors should also be viewed in the context of Iroquoian religious beliefs. Not only were war activities and dreaming linked as warriors sought supernatural support and information from shamans and their dreams but the taking and sacrifice of prisoners was highly ritualized (Trigger 1967; 1969: 44-53; Richter 1983:533–534). The act of beheading to access the brain can even be equated with a mythical figure named Oscotarach (pierce-head), who inhabited a cabin on the road to the village of the dead. He was known to draw the brains out of the

Figure 8.2. Detail showing Huron torture of a prisoner, from Bressani's *Novae Franciae Accurata Delineatio*, 1657. (Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa)

heads of the dead and keep if not eat them (Thwaites 1896–1901, 10:147; Tooker 1964:141).

Similar treatment awaited Iroquoian prisoners in this world. Upon the seizure of an enemy, they were taken to the victor's home for adoption or torture. Failing this, they were beheaded or scalped and their head or scalp brought home as a trophy (Trigger 1969:44–53; Friederici 1907; Axtell and Sturtevant 1980). Knowles (1940:211–212) argued that in the context of warfare of this nature, the prisoners themselves were viewed as war trophies.

The particular arrangements regarding the distribution and eventual treatment of prisoners were linked to village negotiations, previous family losses and the behavior of the prisoner. Some were adopted, replacing lost relatives. While women and children were often allowed to live, men were usually tortured in an elaborate ceremony as a sacrifice to the sun (Trigger 1985:97). In the case of the Huron, *aireskoi* was the term for a spiritual force equated with war, fertility of nature and perhaps the sun, to which victims were sacrificed (cf. Abler and Logan 1988:8–9; Goddard 1984).

The whole torture performance took place in stages, following adoption of the prisoner by a family (who decided whether or not to sacrifice the individual). The progression involved the use of kinship terms to address the prisoner; singing; running of gauntlets; staging of the torture on an elevated platform (Figure 8.2); mutilation of prisoners' body parts by sharp tools and firebrands; removal of extremities, limbs and heads; demonstrations of bravery on the part of prisoners; efforts to preserve the lives of prisoners until sunrise to ensure that the sun was a witness to the fate of warriors; ritual cannibalism, in particular the consumption of hearts; and fear of the wandering souls of prisoners (Trigger 1976:73–75). The

bones of these captives eventually found their way into village middens (Trigger 1969:104). Certain elements of this ritual complex, including the removal and eating of the heart and other body parts and the killing of the victim on an elevated platform in view of the sun, connect this ritual with ones practiced in the southeastern United States and Mesoamerica. This suggests that the fundamental ideas of this ceremony diffused northward, to be used by various groups in differing ways (Trigger 1985:97).

While blood feuds certainly date to preagricultural times, as demonstrated by arrow-riddled bodies in Late Archaic contexts in New York (Ritchie 1965:109, 120; Milner 1995:232), there is only limited archaeological evidence for prisoner sacrifice at Northern Iroquoian sites prior to the turn of the fourteenth century, after which there is substantial and increasing evidence for both prisoner sacrifice and trophy taking. The emergence of these phenomena was concomitant with the amalgamation of small lineage-based villages into larger communities, the inhabitants of which were involved in intensive maize–beans–squash agriculture, increased inter-community interaction and new, more integrated social and political structures, reflecting for the first time, a fully evolved Northern Iroquoian cultural pattern.

ETHNOGRAPHY

There is a rich seventeenth-century ethnographic record of the lives of Northern Iroquoians. The three principal sources are the works of Samuel de Champlain, an experienced soldier and explorer who recorded his observations of a winter spent with the Huron in 1615–1616 (Biggar 1922–1936); the account of Gabriel Sagard, a Recollet friar, who spent the winter of 1623–1624 with the Huron (Wrong 1939); and the annual accounts of the Jesuit priests who lived among the Huron from 1634 until their dispersal in 1649–1650 and among the Iroquois from 1654 to 1667 (Thwaites 1896–1901).

The earliest account of Northern Iroquoian trophy taking, however, is that of Jacques Cartier. During his second voyage to eastern Canada in 1535, Cartier was shown dried and mounted scalps of traditional Toudaman (Micmac) enemies by the inhabitants of Stadacona, a St. Lawrence Iroquoian village located near present day Québec City (Biggar 1924:67).

Champlain's first encounter with Iroquoian warfare and trophy taking occurred during the summer of 1609 when he accompanied a party of Huron and some Algonquian allies in a raid against the Mohawk near Lake Champlain. Upon capturing a number of prisoners, the Huron party tortured one of the prisoners by applying fire to various parts of the body, scalping him and then pouring hot gum over the head and piercing his arms near the wrists in an effort to tear out his sinews by force. When they failed to remove the sinews, they cut off his arms. Champlain then described the treatment of the corpse:

> They opened his body and threw his bowels into the Lake. Afterwards they cut off his head, arms and legs, which they scattered about; but they kept the scalp, which they had flayed, as they did with those of all others they had killed in their attack. They did another awful thing, which was to cut his heart into several pieces and to give it to a brother of the dead man to eat and to others of his companions who were prisoners. (Biggar 1922–1936, 2:102–103).

Following another battle with the Iroquois in the following summer, Champlain described similar treatment of prisoners including the taking of arms, legs and other parts of the body. In this case, the flesh was not taken away to be eaten but was fed to the camp dogs (Biggar 1922–1936, 2:136–137)

In another passage, Champlain describes the torture of a young Iroquois boy by a number of Huron in retaliation for the murder of their villagers. While still alive, they cut off his hands and arms, removing the shoulder blades. Champlain concludes the account by stating that "each man carried off a piece of his flesh and ate it" (Biggar 1922–1936, 5:231).

Sagard, in his descriptions of prisoner treatment, follows Champlain's account, adding, however, that children received pieces of bowel to be carried in victory around the village and that the prisoner's three principal (bow) fingers were also cut off (e.g., Wrong 1939:161; Thwaites 1896–1901, 17:101; 18:29). He also states that Iroquois women and children, if captured, were not brought back to the village to be tortured, but were killed on the spot, their head or scalp being removed and taken away (Wrong 1935:149).

There are also numerous accounts of Huron trophy taking in the yearly chronicles of the Jesuit priests. In various accounts of warfare and prisoner sacrifice, the highly structured nature of these practices is presented. Scalps, for example, were preserved as very special objects:

> Accordingly, the first thing they did to him afterward was that one of them cut with a knife around his scalp, which he stripped off in order to carry away the hair, and, according to their custom, to preserve it as very precious. (Thwaites 1896–1901, 17:67).

The practice of removing a prisoner's head would also appear to have been common both upon capturing an enemy and at the conclusion of an episode of torture (Thwaites 1896–1901, 15:187; 17:71; Wrong 1939:162). In one dramatic case of courage, a prisoner's feet and hands were removed, yet he remained defiant until he was decapitated:

> It was then that nature, before yielding to the cruelty of these torments, made one last effort, that could never have been expected. For, having neither feet nor hands, he rolled over in the flames, and, having fallen outside of them, he moved more than ten paces, upon his elbows and knees, in the direction of his enemies, who fled from him, dreading the approach of a man to whom nothing remained but courage, of which they could not deprive him except by wresting away his life. This they finally did, one of them cutting off his head with a knife" (Thwaites 1896–1901, 17:69).

In this same example, one of the hands was provided to the Jesuits, having converted the prisoner prior to his death:

> Our Barbarians . . . know the displeasure that we feel at these cruelties, and particularly at their inhumanity in eating the bodies of these poor victims. After their death . . . they found means, in order to annoy us, of throwing one of the hands of this poor dead man into our cabin, as if giving us our share of the feast. We were surprised to see at our feet this pierced hand; and considering that it was the hand of a Christian, we buried it in our Chapel and prayed to God for the repose of his soul. (Thwaites 1896–1901, 17:75).

In the following account of the capture of eight enemies, the ritual importance of head-taking is reflected in the term used to refer to the war captain's house:

> On the 2nd of September, we learned that an Iroquois prisoner had been brought to the village of Onnentisati, and that they were preparing to put him to death. This Savage was one of eight captured by them at the lake of the Iroquois, where there were 25 or 30 of them fishing; the rest had saved themselves by flight. Not one, they say, would have escaped if our Hurons had not rushed on so precipitately. They brought back only seven, being content to carry off the head of the eighth one . . . .
>
> Meanwhile the Sun, which was fast declining, admonished us to withdraw to the place where this cruel Tragedy was to be enacted. It was in the cabin of one Atsan, who is the great war Captain; therefore it is called "Otinontsiskiaj ondaon," meaning, "the house of cut-off heads." It is there all the Councils of war are held . . . .
>
> He had no sooner returned to his place than the war Captain took his robe and said, "Oteiondi"—speaking of a Captain—"will despoil him of the robe which I hold;" and added, "The Ataconchronons will cut off his head, which will be given to Ondessone, with one arm and the liver to make a feast . . . ."
>
> Therefore, fearing that he would die otherwise than by the knife, one cut off a foot, another a hand, and almost at the same time a third severed the head from the shoulders, throwing it into the crowd, where some one caught it to carry it to the Captain Ondessone, for whom it had been reserved, in order to make a feast therewith. (Thwaites 1896–1901, 13:37–79)

The Jesuits recorded similar practices for the Iroquois not only with Huron captives, but with captives from far afield in Maine, Virginia, and throughout the midwest (Thwaites 1896–1901, 47:141–153). Scalping was a prominent feature in their encounters with Huron (e.g., Thwaites 1896–1901, 29:251).

After the dispersal of most of their traditional enemies, the Jesuits report on the continuing hostile activities of the Iroquois in the mid-seventeenth century:

> Their first expeditions are undertaken merely for the purpose of shedding human blood and of signaling themselves by murders; and their infantile bands, armed with hatchets and guns which they can hardly carry, do not fail to spread fear and horror everywhere. They go to war at a distance of two or three hundred leagues from their country, over inaccessible rocks and through

> vast forests, provided solely with hope, and leaving in their Villages, for whole years at a time, only their women and little children. But a few scalps that they bring back, or a few prisoners of war, destined to be butchered by them, are the trophies with which they consider their labors happily rewarded. (Thwaites 1896–1901, 43:263–264).

Trophy taking among the Oneida was also recorded by Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert, an employee of the Dutch West India Company. Van den Bogaert was dispatched with two other employees into the interior of Iroquois country in 1634 to investigate a decline in the fur trade. In his daily journal of this expedition, van den Bogaert records an account of entering the palisade surrounding an Oneida village, observing that:

> Above the entrance stood three large wooden images, carved as men, by which three locks fluttered that they had cut from the heads of slain Indians as a token of truth, that is to say, victory. This castle has two entrances, one on the east and one on the west side. A lock was also hanging by the east gate. (Gehring and Starna: 1988:12).

An indirect reference to Mohawk practice was recorded by Roger Williams, the Puritan cleric who was the founder of Providence, Rhode Island. Williams had lived among the Narragansett, an Algonquian-speaking group that inhabited Narragansett Bay in southern New England. In his *A Key Into the Language of Americ*a, written in 1643, he refers to the Mohawk in the following passage:

> The Mauquauogs, or Men-eaters, that live two or three hundred miles West from us, make a delicious monstrous dish of the head and brains of their enemies. (Williams 1643:58).

He also recorded that typical warfare ends with the victor carrying away the head of the slain (1643:152) and defines the Narragansett term *Timeqúassin* as:

> . . . to cut off, or behead—which they are most skilful to doe in fight: for, whenever they wound, and their arrow sticks in the body of their enemie, they (if they be valorous, and possibly may) they follow their arrow, and falling upon the person wounded and tearing his head a little aside by his Locke, they in the twinckling of an eye fetch off his head though but with a sorry knife. (Williams 1643:59)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

There is also ample archaeological evidence for the prisoner sacrifice complex and trophy taking from Northern Iroquoian sites. A number of detailed studies have been undertaken to examine the links between scattered human bones from large villages and prisoner sacrifice and cannibalism through analyses of modifications to the skeletal elements and their proveniences within villages (Jamieson 1983; Cooper 1984; Rainey 2002; Fontaine 2004).

Most researchers have concluded, however, that the attribution of scattered human bone to the remains of sacrificed prisoners is equivocal given the other potential reasons for the recovery of miscellaneous human elements throughout villages—the most likely of which is the preparation of primary inhumations for secondary ossuary burial. In this process, extremities can easily be left behind. While most northern Iroquoian groups buried their dead or placed them on scaffolds wrapped in skins in cemeteries near their villages, the precontact and contact period Huron and Petun would later exhume or gather the dead for reburial in a large pit when a community was about to relocate (see also Williamson and Steiss 2003). Those who had died unusual deaths such as drowning were also treated differently by the Huron and often given bundle burials. The fact that the procedures for dealing with bodies in these situations appears to have frequently involved disarticulation, defleshing, and burning also makes it difficult to equate modified elements with evidence of cannibalism.

In the case of trophy taking, however, Martin Cooper (1984:11) has suggested that the taking of heads should be indicated by a proportionately larger number of cranial elements among the scattered human bones at a site, and if these elements originated from the crania of prisoners, some might have cut marks indicative of scalping. Nearly parallel and transverse or oblique cut marks on the anterior, lateral, and posterior portions of the cranial vault near the hairline are characteristic of scalping (Milner et al. 1991:584). Given the ethnographic record of the removal of both arms and legs during episodes of torture and the taking of arms as trophies (e.g., Biggar 1922–1936, 5:231), the presence of considerable numbers of long bones might also be expected, perhaps more arms than legs.

Occasionally, intact crania are also found in refuse contexts on Iroquoian sites. In the absence of any ethnographic evidence for ancestor worship, they may be interpreted as trophy heads. Also, human bone artifacts, which are relatively common at late fourteenth-through sixteenth-century Northern Iroquoian sites, are likely to have been manufactured from the body parts of captives. Fragments of these objects are often found in village middens and interior house refuse pits along with scattered human bone, although complete specimens, such as skull rattles have also been found with burials (Wray et al. 1987:45–46).

There is also evidence of trophy taking in some rare cases of burials of single or multiple individuals thought to have suffered personal violence at the hands of their enemies but were, nevertheless, buried either where they fell or returned to their home villages.

SCATTERED HUMAN BONE AND HUMAN BONE ARTIFACTS

Scattered Bone

Table 8.1 lists those sites for which data regarding the frequency and nature of scattered human bone are available. Most data are from Ontario sites due in part

Table 8.1. Scattered Human Bone on Northern Iroquoian Sites

Site	Age	Total number of scattered human bones	Number and percent of cranial elements (excluding teeth)	Number and percent of long bones	Number and percent of digits	References
Uren	Early 14th century	53	11 (31%) of 35	N/A	N/A	Jamieson 1978:4–11; Wintemberg 1928
Roebuck	Late 14th century	339	153 (45%)	139 (41%); 43% arms, 57% legs	N/A	Jamieson 1983:166–172
Parsons	Late 15th century	1,185+	Many cranial elements present; some burned	Many long bone fragments present; some burned and gnawed	Isolated digits recovered	Morrison 1980:2; Robertson et al. 1998:52
Draper	Late 15th century	287	205 (71%)	33 (11%)	35 (12%) hand and foot elements	Cooper 1984:56–63
Keffer	Late 15th to early 16th century	1,074	557 (52%)	195 (18%)	61 (5%)	Rainey 2002
Kirche	Late 15th to early 16th century	26	17 (65%)	4, one with gnawing	0	Ramsden 1989:151
Lawson	Late 15th to early 16th century	276	184 (66%)	89 (33%); 57% arms, 43% legs	3 (1%)	Cooper 1984:37
Southwold	Late 15th to early 16th century	33	5 (15%)	28 (85%)	0	Cooper 1984:51
Beeton	Late 16th century	86	31(36%)	53 (61%)	2 (2%)	Cooper 1984:68

to Ontario planning legislation, which has resulted in a large amount of salvage archaeology of Iroquoian and other period sites by cultural resource management firms in advance of public and private land development. Extensive data have also been generated for studies undertaken for graduate programs in Ontario focusing on bioarchaeological research (e.g., Rainey 2002; Fontaine 2004). Archaeologists have certainly noted the presence of human bone in the refuse deposits of other sites in New York State and Ontario (e.g., Ritchie and Funk 1973: 219; Pratt 1976: 98, 100; Burns 1979:161–164), some in considerable quantities (e.g., Jury 1941; Tuck 1971:113–114; Pendergast 1972:35–36), but these reports lacked the necessary detail to evaluate the representation of various skeletal elements in the assemblages. In many other cases, only one or two elements were recovered from relatively small test excavations.

There are substantial amounts of scattered human bone at some fourteenth- through early sixteenth-century sites. At those sites where adequate samples were analyzed, there are proportionately more cranial elements, many with cut marks (i.e., Table 8.1: Draper, Keffer, Lawson). Cooper (1984:28) has cautioned, however, that even small cranial fragments are easy to identify, thereby potentially resulting in over-representation of cranial elements in analyses of human bone assemblages. Some of the cut marks on cranial elements have been attributed to scalping although cuts have also been related to removal of the mandible, ears, and entire head. Defleshing and artifact manufacture are also possible sources for cut marks on cranial fragments (e.g., Jamieson 1983:167–169; Cooper 1984:28–29; Rainey 2002:137). Burning and circular scorching marks on frontal bones at the Roebuck site were equated with scalping followed by the pouring of burning pitch on the skull (Jamieson 1983:168).

On sites where it was possible to differentiate among various long bones, substantial quantities of both arms and legs were noted (Table 8.1: Lawson and Roebuck). Few long bones are complete and both burning and cut marks are evident on many specimens. Cut marks have been recorded on distal and proximal portions of arm and leg bones, near muscle and ligament attachments, which have been equated with disarticulation (e.g., Jamieson 1983:170; Cooper 1984:40–41, 60–61). It is likely that these bones originated with prisoner sacrifice and/or the taking of trophies because they would most likely have been found in mortuary contexts had they been altered during preparation for secondary burial.

Isolated Crania

There have been relatively few cases of the discovery of intact crania on Northern Iroquoian sites. One such find was made on the large, late fifteenth-century Parsons site, situated in northern Toronto (Williamson and Robertson 1998). Two human adult crania, one male and one female, were found buried at the bottom of a refuse-filled depression at the base of a midden, which lay within the area of the eastern inner palisade (Robertson et al. 1998:40–41). Both

Figure 8.3. Two crania from refuse pit from the late fifteenth-century Parsons site. (Archaeological Services Inc.)

crania were placed in an upright position with their faces pointing east beyond the palisade (Figure 8.3). Although neither of the crania exhibited signs of cut marks indicative of scalping, their location within a midden deposit suggested that they represented captives rather than villagers. Conflict is suggested at the site by an elaborate palisade and abundant scattered human bones and human bone artifacts made from cranial and mandibular bones (J. Wright 1966:70; Morrison 1980; Robertson et al. 1998: Table 27). It should also be noted that the distribution of scattered human bones, although dispersed throughout the entire excavated area (Robertson et al. 1998: Table 27), was biased (75 percent) toward the eastern portion of the settlement near the refuse-filled depression containing the crania.

In a craniometric analysis, measurements from the two Parsons crania were compared to measurements from crania representing four other aboriginal groups, two local (Kleinberg and Uxbridge) and two distant (Roebuck and Broughton Hill, New York), which were known to have contact with the region through trade and/or warfare. In their detailed comparative analysis, Dupras and Pratte (1998) found that the two crania closely resembled one another and those from the Uxbridge site, an ossuary situated on a neighboring drainage. These data suggest that the crania came from a local population rather than a more distant one. If these crania represent trophy heads, their affinity with a local rather than a distant population would seem to indicate that feuding was taking place between fifteenth-century neighboring tribal systems.

Human Bone Artifacts

Table 8.2 presents the frequencies of modified cranial and long bone fragments from Northern Iroquoian sites. A few of these sites also yielded beads made from drilled phalanges. Unless otherwise indicated, all of the artifacts were found in refuse contexts, where they were discarded once they were broken or of no further use.

Some of the earliest evidence of scattered human bone was on the tenth-century Porteous site, situated on the Grand River in southwestern Ontario near Brantford (Noble and Kenyon 1972:30; see Fox 1990 for chronology). One of nine fragments, a leg bone, exhibited a ground and polished surface (Burns 1977:276), representing the earliest occurrence of a possible human bone artifact on Northern Iroquoian sites. A pierced mandible was also found in a burial in the twelfth-century Praying Mantis site near London, Ontario (Spence 1994).

The earliest modified human cranial fragments found on a Northern Iroquoian site, and likely representing a skull rattle, were discovered in a semi-subterranean sweat lodge on the late thirteenth-century Moatfield village, situated about seven miles (12 kilometers) north of Lake Ontario in the city of Toronto. While the village was only tested, an associated ossuary, containing the remains of 87 people, was completely excavated and the remains reinterred in another location at the request of Six Nations Council of Oshweken, Ontario (Williamson and Pfeiffer 2003).

Skull rattles consist of two concave disks that were typically derived from opposing parietal bones, usually originating from the same cranium, although the Moatfield example appears to have been made from the parietals of two different young adults of varying robustness. Occasionally they are made of frontal bones as in the case of an unusual small specimen from the Beeton site in Ontario, which also included the orbitals.

Rattle disks appear to have been manufactured by first removing the triangular section adjacent to the squamosal suture, thus forming a roughly circular shape. The margins, which usually maintain the suture lines, were often ground smooth, beveled, and polished. Beveling allows the two disks to fit together. The disks are usually 9–11 cm in diameter and their surfaces are often polished. Bi-conical holes are drilled along the lateral margins in order to bind the two portions of the rattle (Figure 8.4). The polish is often only on the exterior convex surface, which may derive from a hide sheath that helped to hold the skull halves together, particularly in the case of nonperforated examples (William Fox, personal communication, 2004).

In the case of the Moatfield fragments, the holes (two on each fragment) were drilled along the margins when the bone was still "fresh," in that significant lipid and collagen content remained such that the bone did not crack or splinter. These could have been drilled any time from immediately after death to perhaps about a year later, depending on how the remains of the deceased were handled. All four holes appear to have been made by the same type of tool, presumably a stone-tipped bow drill. The steep angle to the surface immediately surrounding

Table 8.2. Human Bone Artifacts on Northern Iroquoian Sites

Site	Date	Description of artifact	Reference
		Early Ontario Iroquoian (AD 900–1300)	
Porteous	10th century	Ground and polished fibula fragment	Burns 1977
Praying Mantis	12th century	Pierced mandible found within burial	Spence 1994:9
Moatfield	Late 13th century	Two young adult parietals (one left and one right) from different individuals but found together; four perforations; polished edges	Williamson et al. 2003:46–47
		Middle Ontario Iroquoian (AD 1300–1400)	
Uren	Early 14th century	A circular skull (also possibly shell) gorget, with multiple perforations, was said to have been recovered by a collector, although now lost.	Wintemberg 1928:38
		Late Ontario Iroquoian (AD 1400–1580)	
Winking Bull	14th–15th century	Cranial portion; ground along outer edge	Finlayson 1998:276
Pound	15th century	Left parietal fragment, perforated and smoothed	Spence, personal communication
Crawford Lake	Early 15th century	Skull rattle portion; seven perforations	Finlayson 1998:244
Downsview	Mid- to late 15th century	Modified mandible pendant	Emerson 1954:102
Jarret–Lahmer	Early 16th century	Modified cranial fragment, ground	ASI 2001
McKenzie	Late 16th century	A skull rattle	Emerson 1954:150
Draper	Late 15th century	Cranial element; one perforation; scratching	Cooper 1984:65
		Cranial fragment; calcined; grinding to a beveled edge	Cooper 1984:66
		Parietal fragment; cut marks; highly polished endocranial surface	Cooper 1984:66
		Parietal fragment; cut marks along edge; one edge scraped smooth; light polishing on endocranial surface	Cooper 1984:66
		Right parietal; cut marks; apex formed by intersection of coronal and sagittal sutures broken off in effort to round it	Cooper 1984:66
		Cranial fragment; perforated; highly polished	Cooper 1984:66
Spang	Late 15th century	Skull rattle or pendant fragment	Carter 1981:37

Table 8.2. (*Continued*)

Site	Date	Description of artifact	Reference
Keffer	Late 15th to early 16th century	Juvenile parietal (three fragments); cut marks; parallel striations; scrape marks; two perforations; one polished edge	Rainey 2002:76
		Left parietal; cut marks; multiple perforations	Rainey 2002:78
		Parietal; cut marks; two perforations; one polished edge	Rainey 2002:80
		Juvenile parietal fragment; cut marks; scrape marks; worked (polished?) edge; localized smoking	Rainey 2002:81
		Right parietal; worked edges (artifact-in-making—cracked) [other modified parietals in this midden too]	Rainey 2002:83
		Parietal; cut marks; scrape marks; four perforations; lightly smoked	Rainey 2002:88
		Parietal fragment; one worked (ground) edge	Rainey 2002:89
Lawson	Late 15th to early 16th century	Right parietal; one worked (ground) edge; one perforation; extensive polishing and scratching	Cooper 1984:44; Fontaine n.d.
		Parietal; cross/sunburst etching (unfinished?)	Cooper 1984:44; Fontaine n.d.
		Juvenile parietal; 2 perforations; light incising on endocranial surface	Cooper 1984:45; Fontaine n.d.
		Right parietal; 6 perforations; ground and very polished	Wintemberg 1939:36; Figure 4
		Parietal; 2 partial perforations, incising	Fontaine n.d.
		Parietal, thin table, two perforations	Fontaine n.d.
		Subadult parietal, thin table, 3 perforations	Fontaine n.d.
		Right parietal; 3 perforations; incising	Fontaine n.d.
		Left femur; posterior and anterior proximal cutting and grinding resulting in obliteration of greater and lesser trochanters and reduction of head in size; broken halfway down diaphysis resulting in pointed end	Cooper 1984:45

(*cont.*)

Table 8.2. (*Continued*)

Site	Date	Description of artifact	Reference
		Tibia; lateral and medial proximal and distal cutting and grinding to a bevel resulting in destruction of medial and lateral condyles, medial malleolus and both inferior and superior fibular articular surfaces	Cooper 1984:45-46
		Right tibia; anterior and posterior cutting and grinding to a bevel; beveling of medial malleolus	Cooper 1984:46
		Fibula fragment; pointed at one end, though end broken	Cooper 1984:46
		Complete left fibula with grinding on lateral malleolus	Cooper 1984:46
		Phalanx; hand, row 2; drilled through centre	Fontaine n.d.
Campbell	Early 16th century	Skull rattle and ulna dagger	Finlayson 1998:293
Clearville	15th century	Modified parietal; 8 perforations; exterior incised lines resembling a sunburst or starburst and a stick figure image of a headless individual; one other with only one perforation	Jury 1941; Pearce 2003
Parsons	Late 15th century	4 complete cranial "gorgets"; at least 2 have multiple perforations	Morrison 1980; private collection
		Modified skull cap	McMaster Collections Inventory No. 1080
Seed	Early 16th century	Modified skull cap	McMaster Collections Inventory No. 1102
Beeton	Late 16th century	Frontal (including orbitals); polishing on endocranial surface	Cooper 1984:71
		Frontal (posterior portion); cut marks	Cooper 1984:71
		Post-contact Huron	
Melville	Mid-17th century	parietal fragment; 2 perforations	Cooper 1984
		Post-contact Neutral	
Walker	Mid-17th century	Human skull rattle and pendant	M. Wright 1981
Christianson	Early to mid-17th century	Ulna fragment bead	Fitzgerald 1982:25

Table 8.2. (*Continued*)

Site	Date	Description of artifact	Reference
Dwyer Ossuary	Mid-17th century	Drilled skull pieces	McMaster Collections Inventory No. 1018
		St. Lawrence Iroquoian	
Roebuck	Late 14th century	Navicular; carved—unknown purpose, but done postmortem	Jamieson 1983:166–172
		13 parietals; two juveniles, two complete; two complete specimens have seven and four perforations; all uni-directionally drilled from outer surface of cranium by different tools; ground edges; surfaces ground and polished to varying degrees with only one exhibiting evidence of five straight, evenly spaced parallel lines on outer surface	Wintemberg 1936; Jamieson 1983
		3 awl-like tools made from adult ulnae; distal ends ground to blunt points; polish on points and shafts	Wintemberg 1936; Jamieson 1983
		1 bead made from a mid-fibula fragment; 3 other possible bead blanks—two fibulae and 1 radius	Wintemberg 1936; Jamieson 1983
		2 ulnae, 3 radii and 1 fibula with removed ends	Wintemberg 1936; Jamieson 1983
Lite	15th century	3 modified cranial portions	Pendergast 1972
Salem	15th century	3 modified cranial portions; two perforated; one with ground and polished edges	Pendergast 1966:33, 38
Glenbrook	15th century	10 modified cranial portions	Pendergast 1981
Hochelaga	16th century	Modified cranial portions recovered	Dawson 1888:145
		Five Nations Iroquois	
California Ranch	Precontact	A male skull with an artificially thinned and polished temporal portion of the left zygomatic arch suggesting it was carried by a thong as a trophy skull	Sublett and Wray 1970:22
Kelso	Late 14th century	Originally round skull fragment; edges polished smooth;	Tuck 1971:76, 213
Otstungo	Early 16th century	Modified skull fragments	Engelbrecht 2003:43
Olcott	Early 16th century	Modified mandible	Pratt 1976:100
Tram	Late 16th century	Modified skull fragments	Wray et al. 1991:56

(*cont.*)

Table 8.2. (*Continued*)

Site	Date	Description of artifact	Reference
Adams	late 16th century	4 complete and 1half human skull rattles; 4 parietal, 1 frontal; smoothed and beveled; multiple perforations; included with burials	Wray et al. 1987:45–46
Factory Hollow	early 17th century	2 small fragments; beveled and polished outer edge	Sempowski and Saunders 2001:379
Diable	late 16th century	skull rattle, matching modified parietals with perforations	Pratt 1976:19, 212
Atwell	late 16th century	modified skull fragments	Bradley 1987: 216-217 n. 23

the hole (like countersinking) indicates a pointed tip on a relatively broad drill (Williamson et al. 2003:46–47). All of the holes on the Roebuck site specimens originate from the convex surface of the bone, but vary in the method used in their creation. Two specimens have roughly gouged, beveled holes; two have very neatly beveled holes; and five have simple smooth rounded holes, suggesting that

Figure 8.4. Complete parietal disk, likely from a skull rattle, fifteenth-century Lawson site. (Museum of Ontario Archaeology.)

different tools and techniques of rotation were used in their manufacture (Jamieson 1983:160–162).

Skull rattles may have been held in the hand or fastened to a handle, analogous to the turtle shell rattle (e.g., Kenyon 1982:49, 52–53, 143, 209–211; Sempowski and Saunders 2001:103–105, 380–381, 600–602; Wray et al. 1991:63–64). Similar items manufactured from copper and still retaining their lashings were excavated from the Grimsby site, a Neutral cemetery (W. Kenyon 1982:21–23, 205; Sempowski and Saunders 2001:121, 406, for brass examples). Skull rattles likely played important roles similar to those made of turtle shells or metal. They were used during dancing, feasting, and curing ceremonies (Wrong 1939:115–116; Thwaithes 1896–1901, 15:179, 17:213), or at other times when the aid of a spirit was invoked (Thwaites 1896–1901, 20:23). They may also have been used during war feasts held in advance of the departure of war parties.

Some skull rattle disks possess only single or paired holes. Such specimens may also have functioned as gorgets or pendants as they too often exhibit considerable polish as if worn against softer material (Cooper 1984:30). Jamieson has suggested that those with multiple perforations may also have been sewn onto a piece of hide or clothing with the convex surface worn outward, resulting in the wear and polish often noted on these surfaces (1983:162–163; cf. Pearce 2003) although he acknowledges that the edge wear pattern would also occur if two gorgets were lashed together to form a rattle. A similar-sized, circular shell gorget with two perforations was recovered from the Grimsby cemetery (Kenyon 1982:33).

Given the prominent role of the sun in Iroquoian ideology, specifically in the ritual sacrifice complex with the final stage occurring at sunrise, their disk-shape may have been intended to represent the sun (Jamieson1983:166). Moreover, Cooper (1984:44) suggested that the pattern etched into the outer surface of a parietal disk from the Lawson site was a cross or sunburst, noting that similar images are common in the art and cosmology of the contemporaneous Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. Incised lines resembling a sunburst or starburst as well as a stick figure image of a headless individual are also present on a striking specimen from the Clearville site (Jury 1941) (Figure 8.5). Fenton (1978:316) has suggested that graphic representations of headless individuals may represent head-taking in warfare, a particularly fitting observation for this image, it having likely been carved into a cranial fragment of an enemy.

While the example from Moatfield appears to represent the earliest skull rattle recovered from a Northern Iroquoian site, their manufacture and use, along with other artifacts, certainly seems to have become more common and widespread during the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries. The function of a number of the modified long bone tools is unknown. Awl-like objects or "daggers" are often made from ulnae, while beads are known to have been made from fibulae, ulnae, and radii. The awl-like objects recovered from the Roebuck site were made from the ulnae of adult individuals. Their distal ends had been ground to a blunt point and polishing is evident on the points and shafts (Jamieson 1983:163–164). Two unusual modified tibiae were recovered from the Lawson site (Cooper 1984:

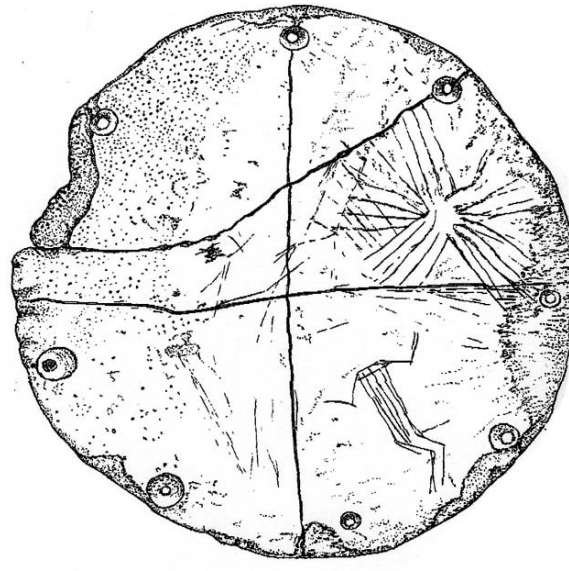

Figure 8.5. Complete parietal disk, likely from a skull rattle, fifteenth-century Clearville site, Jury 1941, illustrated by Dr. Helen Battle, Department of Zoology, University of Western Ontario, 1939.

45–46). In both cases, the distal and proximal ends have been modified by cutting and grinding, creating a beveled surface on the medial and lateral sides of the bone (Figure 8.6). Although their function is unknown, the similarity in their alteration is notable.

Perhaps the most compelling artifact was found on the precontact Iroquois California Ranch site. A male skull with an artificially thinned and polished temporal portion of the left zygomatic arch suggests it was carried by a thong as a trophy skull (Sublett and Wray 1970:22).

VICTIMS OF PERSONAL VIOLENCE

Draper Site

The Draper site was a large, late fifteenth-century village located about 22 miles (35 kilometers) northeast of Toronto, Ontario (Finlayson 1985). During the height of its occupation, it contained 35 house structures surrounded by an elaborate multiple row palisade. Fourteen burials were found on the site, one of which constituted the bundled remains of an aged and diseased male found within one of the house structures (Williamson 1978; Forrest 2005). The bones had been placed in an orderly fashion in a small shallow ovate pit (Figure 8.7).

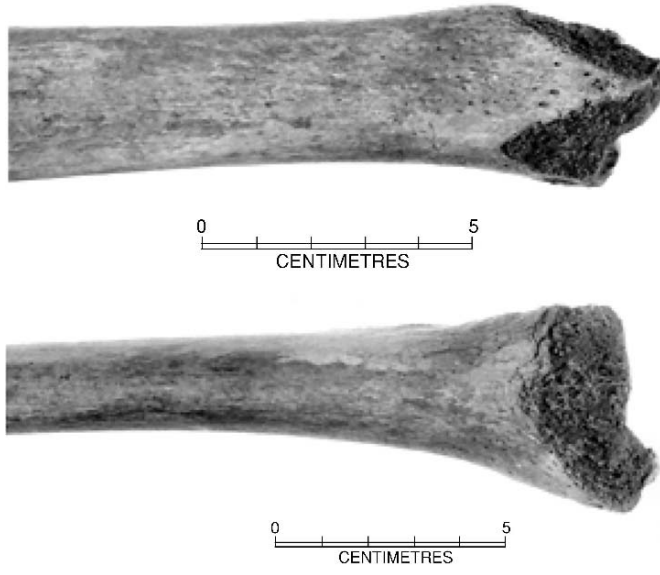

Figure 8.6. Modified tibiae, fifteenth-century Lawson site. (Cooper 1984; Museum of Ontario Archaeology.)

Several bones were damaged and many skeletal elements were missing, including both arms and the scapulae. Embedded in the posterior side of the right femoral neck was the tip of a chert projectile point. In that there was no bone growth surrounding the chert, it was assumed that death occurred at or shortly after the time of the assault. There was also evidence that the individual had been

Figure 8.7. Bundle burial, fifteenth-century Draper site, Burial 6.

Figure 8.8. Scalping marks, bundle burial, fifteenth-century Draper site, Burial 6.

speared in the chest between the tenth and the eleventh thoracic vertebrae. Also, the skull bore cut marks (Figure 8.8), some of them above and parallel to the brow ridges suggesting that his scalp had been removed. Moreover, the lower left side of the skull had sustained a severe blow. A number of cut marks were noted, some of which likely occurred during the removal of the arms as well as during dismemberment and defleshing.

It would therefore appear that the individual had been shot from behind in the leg, speared or stabbed in the chest when prone, scalped, and possibly partially dismembered to remove his arms. It is further suggested that he was killed outside of, but probably close to, his village. His scalp and his arms were taken as trophies. Upon the discovery of his remains by his own villagers, he was further dismembered and defleshed and given a neat bundle burial within his own house. This interpretation of the data is consistent with ethnographic sources for Huron treatment afforded to the remains of captives, whereby their bones were scattered throughout the village middens, while Huron victims of personal violence were buried in pits and not re-interred in the village ossuary.

Cameron Site

The Cameron site was a late sixteenth-century Seneca village located two miles (three kilometers) southwest of Lima, Livingston County, New York. It is thought to have encompassed, at least originally, an area of approximately 5–6 acres (2–3 hectares) and is known to have included two cemeteries at the north and south ends of the settlement (Wray et al. 1991:177–178). A robust young male was recovered in a small, plough-disturbed pit in Cemetery 2 (Wray et al.

1991:207–213). While the cranium of the individual was largely reconstructed, the infracranial skeleton was far less complete. Alternatively, the left leg and the right arm were found articulated in the interment.

A number of different types of marks were found on the skeleton. Fine slices or wedge-like slashes caused by metal tools, cuts probably resulting from chert implements, and deep wedgelike grooves believed to have been carried out by a tool such as an iron axe, were found on the cranial and infracranial elements. Evidence of stabbing was also found on the infracranial remains. Most elements had also been subject to burning. While all of the body had been exposed to intense heat, only the cranial elements were charred. The rest of the remains were mottled black, dark brown or reddish-brown in color.

Six cut marks, present on the superior portion of the frontal bone, appear to have been the result of scalping, which was undertaken prior to the cranium being subjected to intense heat. On the other hand, a deep wedgelike wound, executed by a heavy tool, was found on the right parietal and is believed to have occurred postmortem. The presence of this wound was interpreted as evidence of the breaking open of the skull to extract the brain.

While the individual clearly appears to have been subjected to personal violence, and perhaps torture, the researchers were perplexed by the fact that full disarticulation had not occurred and that he was found within the village cemetery and not scattered throughout the village middens. In their explanations for the burial and skeletal patterns, they suggest that either a prisoner, possibly known to the villagers, died prematurely during an episode of torture and was buried in the cemetery to facilitate his disposal or a Cameron villager was a victim of personal violence and was returned to the village for proper burial (Wray et al 1991:211).

Alhart Site

Occupied during the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, the Alhart site, situated in the Oak Orchard Creek drainage in western New York, was apparently the scene of a particularly violent encounter (Hammel 1987; Engelbrecht 2003:115). Based on evidence of the burning of longhouses and foodstuffs and the recovery of the dismembered remains of 17 of the community's residents, most of them male, it was proposed that the site had been destroyed during an enemy raid after which female prisoners were taken and incorporated into the captor's group.

Of particular note were 15 male crania found buried together in a corn storage pit over the partially charred remains of maize. That most of the skulls were found articulated with their mandibles and upper cervical vertebrae suggested that they had been placed within the pit as in-the-flesh, severed heads (Hammel 1987:51). The infracranial remains of a child were found in a second pit while another skull of a female was found in a third storage pit. A small quantity of additional dismembered infracranial remains were found interspersed with the skulls within the storage features as well as in nearby roasting pits. At least some of these

individuals appear to have been burned in-the-flesh based on the burn patterns on the recovered remains while two of the male crania had suffered premortem blows to the front of their heads.

Whether the dismembered remains were interred by the aggressors in fear of the avenging souls of their victims or by their own villagers on their return from having escaped the attack is unknown. There is some biological evidence, however, based on distinctive physical anomalies, to suggest that captured Alhart females had been adopted into later Seneca populations (Engelbrecht 2003:115).

Van Oordt Site

The Van Oordt site is a late fourteenth- to early fifteenth-century special-purpose cemetery located on a small knoll in Kitchener, Ontario (Molto et al. 1986). The site is situated within the traditional precontact territory of the Neutral. Nine small, plough-disturbed pits containing varying amounts of bone were found across the south face of the knoll. As the site had been investigated by police 15 years previously and because the 1982 investigation was negotiated with the local First Nation, resulting in limits to the investigations, the site was incompletely explored.

It is thought that between 9 and 13 burials had been interred on the site. Each pit contained the remains of a single young adult male, all exhibiting signs of personal violence. One of the individuals had portions of three projectile points embedded in his skeleton. He also exhibited evidence of multiple puncture wounds, the severing of both arms and one leg, some in mid-shaft, and beheading. On the basis of the arrangement of the bones and their condition, it was suggested that the burials were primary inhumations of dismembered individuals. While the authors concluded that the remains had been dismembered to protect the living by "immobilizing the spirits of the dead," it was not clear to the authors whether the action was carried out by friends or enemies of the deceased (1986:60).

Although the authors prefer the interpretation that the cemetery contained the dismembered remains of enemies, interred by local villagers at some distance from their community, the special attention taken to inter the individuals is at odds with the ethnographically and archaeologically documented pattern of discarding the remains of prisoners in middens or on the surface of the ground within the captors' village.

Indeed, this pattern of careful treatment seems to be consistent with the burials from the Draper and Cameron sites, perhaps representing people discovered by their own villagers and provided with proper interment. On the other hand, the evidence from the Alhart and Van Oordt sites might represent another cultural practice whereby the remains of victims are interred by their captors to avoid retribution on the part of the souls of their victims, a belief also recorded by the Jesuits (Thwaites 1896–1901, 39:29). Regardless of the means by which the victims were interred at the two sites, the discovery of so many individuals thought to have suffered from personal violence, perhaps resulting from one encounter, points to a

level of hostility in precontact Iroquoian warfare that is far more critical than any characterization of it as having involved only a few casualties (Milner 1995:222–223; cf. Helmuth 1993).

CONCLUSIONS

While there is a rich ethnographic record of trophy taking for seventeenth-century Northern Iroquoians, the archaeological evidence suggests that the practice had a relatively short history. It appears that the practice began at the end of the tenth century and intensified around the turn of the fourteenth century. By AD 1500, the middens of many communities, contained not only substantial quantities of human bone, but also the unused or broken artifacts from which they were fashioned.

This intensification occurred at the same time as the formation of ever-expanding, well-planned, and heavily palisaded villages, which represented not only population growth but also continuing amalgamation of communities. Some of the merging groups may have previously participated in loosely formed trade or military alliances. In the absence of any convincing evidence for ecological stresses in the archaeological record (Trigger 1985:98), and given a heightening of the role of socially integrative mechanisms (e.g., formalized feasting, gaming, curing societies) in order to maintain cohesion within essentially egalitarian systems, the consolidation of new more structured military alliances may have been both a cause and a consequence of the intensification of warfare at this time.

Coordinated and more regular male participation in hostilities would certainly have helped to address the social and political tensions inherent in new, larger residential populations, representing an elevation in a systemic ritual response to an uncertain world with far more social and political complexity (Richter 1983; Abler and Logan 1988:14). The notion that individual valor came to be increasingly reflected through success in warfare (Trigger 1985:98–99; Richter 1983:530) is entirely consistent with these trends and the ritual practice of consuming the heart and therefore spirit of a courageous enemy (cf. Abler and Logan 1988:5).

While there have been considerably fewer complete excavations of historic than precontact Iroquoian sites, the initial evidence suggests that historic sites have less scattered human bone (Cooper 1984:22–24). It is also noteworthy that the first European visitors among Iroquoians did not record the practice of fashioning parietal fragments from human skulls into rattles or gorgets, which is surprising given their attention to other clothing adornments and to the use of tortoise shell rattles (Tooker 1964) although subsequent ethnographic research linked a mythical cannibal sorcerer with dishes and spoons made of human skulls (Beauchamp 1922:4).

The absence of seventeenth-century accounts of the manufacturing of human bone artifacts may relate to the fact that most of these have been found on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sites. This phenomenon may be due to the

increasing importance of prisoner adoption as a means of maintaining population levels in the face of intensified warfare and European introduced disease, resulting in the production of fewer human skull rattles (Richter 1983:530–531; Cooper 1984:76–77). The adoption was achieved through a traditional "requickening" ceremony, held in order to replace the spirit of a deceased person with that of a successor. In this way, hostilities were not only acts of blood revenge but part of the mourning process. A spirit freed by death could not rest until another had been adopted to replace its loss, having assumed the name of the deceased. This view of adoption as the symbolic reincarnation of the dead is reflected in the Seneca's painting of the hair and skin of trophy scalps red as well as the faces of adopted prisoners. The scalps were adopted as "living relatives" symbolically equating them with a prisoner awaiting adoption and the status of the dead person being mourned (Hall 1997:33–35).

Iroquoians also believed that each person had two souls (Thwaites 1896–1901, 10:87), a "reasoning" soul that resided in the head and an "animating" soul that resided in the bones (Hewitt 1894). The fact that the bones of the dead were called "the souls" is consistent with the derivation of those terms from the same semantic set (Hall 1997:30). The act of perforating both parietal disks and long bones to create beads, through the marrow, might have had both a prosaic and ritual purpose, the latter being to ensure the release of the soul of the captive (Hall 1997:30–31). That this was a concern was noted by the Jesuits having observed that the soul of a captive who had been tortured to death was expelled from the house by making horrible noise (Thwaites 1896–1901, 39:29).

While the taking of heads and scalps has been seen as a form of soul capture (Hammel in Engelbrecht 2003:43), perhaps the act of decapitation may also have been seen as a release of the soul. It is tempting to therefore relate head-taking with that of the fate of the stylized human heads removed from Iroquoian smoking pipes (Figure 8.9), which are often found in village middens. There was a common belief among Iroquoians that even inanimate objects had souls and that the souls

Figure 8.9. Stylized human heads from ceramic smoking pipes, late thirteenth-century Antrex site. (Archaeological Services Inc.)

of these objects accompanied the dead to the next world (Wrong 1939:172). It is possible that the removal of the stylized heads from the pipes represents a symbolic beheading or spiritual expulsion. This may have corresponded with an important stage in the function or usefulness of the artifact or change in the status of the owner of the object or the being that is represented by the head, such as their death or increasing spiritual malevolence. Perhaps in these cases, the souls of pipes were not invited to the afterworld as was the case with the souls of beheaded, scalped, or tortured prisoners. This suggestion is entirely consistent with the evidence for the ritual killing of Iroquois medicine masks in the early twentieth-century (Fox 1992:30) given their potentially dangerous power (Fenton 1990:155). A similar practice among Algonquian-speaking groups has also been documented by William Fox (1992), who argued that the removal and damage to dragon sideplates from trade muskets related to Cree–Ojibwa expressions of spiritual beliefs related to hunting and Mishipizheu, the water lynx.

While there can be no doubt that Iroquoians participated in widespread trophy taking, there needs to be much more attention directed toward the archaeological evidence for its appearance and transformation. At present, the practice seems to have peaked before the arrival of Europeans, representing an incongruity between the ethnographic and archaeological evidence, regardless of an assumed broadening of focus on adoption in the seventeenth-century. Only with much more research will the evolution of its full cultural context be understood.

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Chapter 9

Human Trophy Taking in Eastern North America During the Archaic Period

The Relationship to Warfare and Social Complexity

Robert P. Mensforth

INTRODUCTION

Hunting and Animal Body Part Trophy Taking

Trophy taking emerged as a dominantly male activity associated with hunting behavior in both band and tribal-level societies. In many of these societies, the planned acquisition, selective retention, and curation of animal body parts played an important role both in rights of passage to adulthood and in quests for personal esteem and prestige. As such, a trophy served to demonstrate and symbolize an extraordinary accomplishment of personal and spiritual significance. Souvenirs, trinkets or mementos may be fairly common objects of some personal value to their owners. However, trophies are often prepared in special ways, kept in special places, and displayed at special times. As such, trophies and their owners are often requisite participants in ritual behaviors rooted in animism, animatism and magic designed to maximize good fortune and minimize harm to the social group (Barton 1930).

Trophy animals are considered extraordinary because their intrinsic qualities are viewed as extending beyond the realm of the natural to include attributes of the supernatural (e.g., unusual size, speed, intelligence, prowess, or physical power). For this reason the quest to find and kill a trophy animal involves significant risk.

The most valued trophy animals are usually medium- to large-sized predators that can easily kill a human. Such animals are therefore usually difficult to hunt and dangerous to kill. In human societies, activities that involve considerable risk of serious injury or death, where fear and anxiety are high and where successful outcomes are very unpredictable, are usually associated with a significant body of imitative and/or contagious magic intended to improve the probability of success and to minimize risk of failure (Kottak 2002). Thus, a successful trophy hunter is recognized socially as a brave individual who is strong in body, mind and spirit. An animal body part trophy is an object that serves as a visual display of a remarkable feat. And if the hunter adheres to prescribed ritual treatments and use of the trophy, he may acquire, and to some extent control, the desirable spiritual and physical attributes of the animal.

Warfare and Human Body Part Trophy Taking

Many warfare-related behaviors practiced by foragers are derived directly and logically from hunting behavior itself. The organization, composition and dynamics of the war party mimic those of the hunting party (Caneiro 1994; Ember and Ember 1997; Ember 1978; Ferguson 1997, 2003; Keeley 1996; LeBlanc 1999; Owsley 1994). Acts of hunting and warfare are planned events (Kelly 2000). The tools used for hunting are the same as those used for war (i.e., atlatl, bow and arrow, spear, club and knife) (Worcester 1945). The primary strategy of both the hunt and the war party is to ambush (i.e., to surprise attack, undetected) and kill the prey or enemy, respectively. This attack is preferably done from a safe but effective distance using missiles (spears or arrows) rather than at close range via shock weapons (clubs and knives) (Keeley 1996).

After a successful kill has been made, the tools and methods used to process an animal carcass are similar to those that are used to fraction the corpse of a human victim. In the case of a hunting success, the purpose of carcass reduction is to facilitate transport of most or all the animal back to the home base. After further processing, animal body parts of no primary food value, such as hides, bones, and teeth, are often fashioned into utilitarian tools or ornaments.

While patterns of warfare-related human body reduction often mimic those of hunting-related animal carcass processing, the similarity usually ends there. Following a raid that has resulted in the death of one or more of the enemy, a war party often retreats quickly to minimize risk of detection and immediate deadly reprisal from members of the victim's group. However, given sufficient time, numbers and safety, members of a successful war party may choose to inflict additional defamatory mutilations upon dead enemies. These acts include decapitation, evisceration, dismemberment, over kill via pin-cushioning of the body with many projectile point or spear injuries, and skinning or flaying of the corpse (Keeley 1996; Metraux 1949; Friederici 1907). Human body mutilations such as these must be regarded as violent acts designed to disable the body and soul of the victim (Barton 1930). In addition, bodies and body parts treated in this

manner may be left at the scene of an attack to serve as a visual display of defeat and humiliation to be witnessed and feared by surviving members of the victim's group. While these behaviors are more common in tribal-level societies, mutilation of dead enemies has also been reported for seasonally mobile hunter-gatherers of the Arctic (Melbye and Fairgrieve 1994; Simon 1992; Burch 1974).

Of course, sometimes certain body parts of a human victim are mutilated specifically to access a trophy. It has long been recognized that a human trophy serves to provide physical proof of a warrior's, or a war party's, success. This earns the successful individual(s) a degree of enhanced prestige or status for some indefinite period of time. To another extent, the possession of a body part of a slain enemy can represent a victory for an entire group (e.g., the society as a whole or kinship groups such as clans or lineages in segmented tribal-level societies).

The trophy item can hypothetically function as a symbol of dominance and control over the physical and spiritual powers of the victim and his/her kindred. Thus, human trophy taking, and many of the rituals and risks that accompany it, may represent a means whereby members of a society attempt to assert some degree of control over the high levels of fear and anxiety that accompany intergroup warfare. One can therefore posit that human trophy-taking behaviors may occur most frequently in societies that engage in reciprocal revenge wars that occur with sufficient frequency to elevate and sustain a fear that death by violence, though unpredictable in the short term, may nonetheless be imminent, and that any and all members of one's society may suffer this fate at any time.

Human Body Part Trophies

Ethnohistoric surveys conducted by Friederici (1907) and Metraux (1949) demonstrated that human body part trophy taking in the New World occurred most often in tribal-level societies, and it occurred almost exclusively in the context of intergroup warfare. Human body part trophy items identified thus far include scalps, whole heads, eyes, ears, skulls, skull cap bowls, cheek bones, beards, tongues, mandibles, teeth extracted from the upper and lower jaws which are subsequently notched or drilled for suspension as necklaces or ornamental displays, and carefully prepared skins of the entire face and scalp (Melbye and Fairgrieve 1994; Metraux 1949; and Friederici 1907). Some reports also describe the removal and/or mutilation of the genitals, hands, fingers, and long bones of defeated enemies (Metraux 1949). Fingers were taken for a variety of reasons where some were smoked, or otherwise preserved, and affixed to a necklace for ornamental or ritual display. Long bones were used to make projectile points, bone awls, bone tubes, rasps, and flutes on occasion (Metraux 1949). The recovery and use of human body parts obtained from members of one's own society, such as the retrieval of agnathic skulls for ancestor worship, does occur in some human groups (Burenhult 1993: p. 36). However, within any particular society these items serve as relics or reliquaries, and their retrieval and curation have nothing to do with issues of conflict, aggression and trophy taking.

Scalping as a Trophy-Taking Behavior

Scalping as a trophy-taking behavior evolved independently several times in both the Old and New Worlds (Murphy et al. 2002, Smith 1997; Owsley 1994; Owsley and Berryman 1975; Reese 1941). In many cultures scalps became the preferred human trophy item. This is probably because a scalp can be removed from a victim very quickly (Nadeau 1941). Scalps are also light and relatively small. These two properties make a human scalp highly portable where the victor can make hasty and unencumbered retreat to safety. The scalp also has the property of durability. Like animal skins, the scalp can be stretched, dried and modified in a variety of ways for permanent display (Owsley 1994; Nadeau 1941; Friederici 1907).

In the American Indian warfare complex, scalping also occurred in other contexts in some groups. These are called mourning war and shame aggression war (Smith 1951). Both evolved as mechanisms to externalize grief and hostility. However, while mourning war was a collective action involving a true war party, shame aggression war was perpetrated by an individual who had lost status or prestige. This might happen if a man's wife left him for another man in the group or if he failed at some task expected of him. Rather than escalate within group conflict, the individual who lost face could recoup status by going out and killing any nonmember of his own society. Any victim would do for this purpose (i.e., man, woman or child). There was no personal grudge harbored against the victim; they were simply viewed as the most direct means to acquire a trophy to regain lost status (Smith 1951). Because shame aggression assault is perpetrated by an individual against an individual the act does not constitute warfare. However, such acts could certainly precipitate and escalate reciprocal warfare between two groups.

Differential Selectivity in Trophy Taking: The Proximity Model

In his ethnographic survey of scalping in the New World, Friederici (1907) noticed that the size of a human trophy was often inversely related to the distance that a victor had to travel to reach the safety of his own village or territory. This can be called the proximity model of differential trophy selection. For example, if an enemy from group A was caught near the home base of group B, often the entire body was retrieved, mutilated and disposed of by members of group B. If a member of enemy group A was located and subdued midway between the two home bases, members of group A might retrieve one, or more, of the larger body segments (whole limbs, heads, etc.). But, if members of group B located and killed a member of group A in, or near, the territory of group A, they were more likely to take smaller forearm, hand, scalp, or mandible trophies to facilitate a rapid and safe retreat lest they be caught, killed and dismembered themselves (Friederici 1907). Thus, many individuals who engaged in human trophy taking seem to have done so to in a way that would improve probability of success and reduce risk of failure

(i.e., capture, injury or death). Because scalps can be taken quickly after a victim is subdued or killed, combined with the fact that they are lightweight and durable, it seems logical that this type of trophy taking would evolve and persist among societies engaged in reciprocal ambush and raiding types of warfare.

Pattern of Trophy Taking in Segmented and Nonsegmented Societies

In his excellent treatment of the origin of warfare in simple societies, Kelly (2000) emphasized that the principal differences in band versus tribe warfare relate to differences in subsistence strategy and social complexity that evolved to sustain those adaptations. The social organization of hunter-gatherers, who are highly mobile on a seasonal basis, usually consists of a small number of kindred and affines. The resources they exploit are widely distributed. Their foraging strategy is essentially an immediate return system where foods are collected, hunted and consumed promptly. When a resource area is exploited to the point of diminishing returns the group moves on to other core areas in their relatively large home range. These nonsegmented societies are highly egalitarian. People can earn status but marked status differentials are not encouraged or tolerated (Woodburn 1982). There are no permanent authority figures and people are highly individualistic in their actions and deeds. When it comes to conflict within or between bands, it is usually a matter to be resolved between the two individuals involved in a dispute. Given their small group size, loose kindred associations, and their need for mobility, foragers at this level of social organization do not have sufficient motives to establish and maintain a pattern of warfare that would promote human body part trophy taking.

In contrast, societies that practice food production via domestication of plants and/or animals are required to practice delayed-return subsistence behaviors. Group mobility decreases dramatically, territoriality increases sharply, and fixed villages and cemeteries make their appearance. Horticulture combined with local foraging permits an increase in population size. But delayed-return resources must be managed, protected and distributed in an effective and cooperative way that benefits the group. In these societies we witness the emergence of segmented social organizations (Kelly 2000). In contrast to the small and temporary nuclear family kinship groups seen in mobile foragers, the larger more permanent kinship groups that characterize sedentary tribal-level societies (i.e., lineage and clan descent groups) represent a collective socioeconomic and political entity that asserts definite group interests (Kelly 2000). These societies develop a strong sense of collective responsibility and collective liability, and they embrace the principle of social substitution (Kelly 2000). When it comes to intergroup conflict, these concepts alter the character of warfare in segmented societies.

For example, if someone in your descent group is killed by someone from another society (regardless of whether or not death from an enemy is real of imagined), all members of your descent group have the collective responsibility to avenge the misdeed. Your group may desire to kill the specific individual, or

individuals, who inflicted the damage. However, this is often impractical, risky and potentially deadly. By invoking the principle of social substitution, any member of the enemy group serves as a suitable victim to right the wrong. This means that men, women and children are suitable targets for retaliation (Kelly 2000). In this way, a war party can minimize risk of detection, improve probability of success and retreat quickly to avoid immediate lethal retaliation.

Because of their subsistence base, segmented societies support larger numbers of people on a local and regional basis. Many villages will contain two or more descent groups. While these societies also have no permanent full-time political authorities, differences in achieved status become an important criteria for selecting part-time leaders. The practice of warfare-related human trophy taking represents one of several ways in which individuals can acquire status. In doing so, the trophy provides empirical evidence of their courage, skill, power and commitment to the descent group.

It is also probable that descent groups themselves may garner some degree of differential status from the collective accomplishments of their warriors. Because the descent group persists through time, we can predict that symbols of group identity (e.g., totems) and group status (e.g., animal and human trophy items) would become more significant. As such, we can predict that these types of symbolic objects may play a more important role in the ritual behaviors of the group. As symbols of differential kinship group status and accomplishment, individual warriors would likely be permitted (or expected) to retain, maintain and display human trophies for longer periods of time. With status and prestige transferred to the kinship group, successful warriors can live within the social boundaries of a markedly egalitarian society (Woodburn 1982).

When investigating the social behaviors of prehistoric hunter-gatherers, it has been suggested that archaeological evidence for intergroup warfare that resulted in the violent deaths of men, women and children—combined with the practice of human trophy taking—may serve as a useful tool for inferring the evolution of social complexity. The particular type of complexity referred to in this study is the establishment of segmented social organizations. While these are typical of tribal-level societies, they also appear among some complex hunter-gatherer groups (Price and Brown 1985).

The people of segmented societies incorporate, and act on, the principles of social substitution, collective responsibility and collective liability (Kelly 2000). Because these social concepts markedly affect the ways in which intergroup warfare is conducted, they also influence the nature and types of injuries that are manifest in the bones of earlier human groups.

The Archaic Period in the Eastern United States (8,000–1,000 BC)

As the Pleistocene Epoch came to a close, glaciers melted, sea levels rose, land bridges contracted and small bands of Paleo-Indian foragers began to exploit a greater diversity of floral and faunal resources that made their appearance in

woodland and riverine environments of the Eastern United States (Walthall 1980). By the onset of the Archaic Period (8,000 BC) warmer temperatures began to have a dramatic effect on plant and animal life forms. The cold-adapted conifer forests were replaced in many areas by deciduous forests. Conifers do not produce much in the way of edible plant parts for birds and mammals. Also, because they prohibit most of the sunlight from penetrating to the forest floor, their understory is largely barren (Meindl et al. 2001). In contrast, the expanding deciduous forests included many mast species. These provided highly nutritious nutmeats (hickory, acorn, chestnut, etc.) in great quantities on a seasonal basis annually. The understory permitted growth and development of a great variety of weedy shrubs. These new food sources were greater in diversity and quantity, and were of higher nutritional value. They supported dramatic local and regional increases in the numbers of bird, mammal, fish and mollusk species that occupied the Eastern Woodlands of the United States. In the Archaic Period, humans moved to these resources and began to exploit them more intensively (Marquardt and Watson 2005; Walthall 1980; Winters 1974).

In particular, a number of events occurred in the Middle Archaic (6,000–4,000 BC) that Walthall (1980) regards as critical to understanding the life ways and adaptations of these peoples. First came the onset of the Hypsithermal. This was a period of warming and drying that persisted until the Late Archaic Period. People began to exploit shellfish in large quantities. They also began to establish cemeteries that were located at, near or in shellfish middens. The Middle Archaic peoples began to use greater quantities of bone, antler and ground stone tools. The greater number, size and distribution of archaeological sites, combined with increasing evidence of violent injury and death, suggests that increases in local and regional population growth were accompanied by increases in territorial behavior and intergroup conflict (Dye 1996; Walthall 1980).

By Late Archaic times (4,000–1,000 BC), we witness maximum development of the shell mound cultures in the Eastern United States. These were no longer small groups of highly mobile hunter-gatherers. They were more sedentary than their ancestors, but they never established permanent year-round villages. During the spring and summer months, many of the Late Archaic groups hunted small game and harvested shellfish intensively. In the fall, these groups moved to the upland areas away from the rivers to hunt deer and harvest abundant nutmeats. Although these foragers maintained a broad subsistence, their seasonal focus on fewer food items that were nonetheless seasonally abundant, where several were also storable food items (i.e., nutmeats and smoked/dried mussels) prompted Winters (1974) to refer to these as harvesting economies. Several of the shell midden cemetery sites from the Late Archaic Period in Kentucky are also very large (e.g., Oh2 Indian Knoll and McL11 Ward Site), although only a handful were completely excavated during the earlier half of the twentieth century.

Artifacts recovered from Late Archaic sites in the Eastern Woodlands show that some of these groups had likely evolved greater levels of social complexity relative to others (Marquardt 1985). The evidence for this is threefold. First, analyses

of grave good distributions at several sites imply that an increase in *social differentiation*, beyond the parameters of age and sex, were beginning to become manifest at this time. The establishment of *interregional relationships*, as indicated by long distance trade networks (e.g., copper from the Great Lakes region and Gulf Coast marine shells) is also regarded to be an indicator of social complexity (Marquardt 1985). Finally, the introduction of *plant husbandry* to the region (i.e., squash, a domesticated Curcurbit) supports the argument that social complexity was on the rise among some of these Late Archaic peoples (Marquardt 1985). While the quantity of evidence for social differentiation, interregional relations and plant husbandry is small for Late Archaic societies overall, the fact that these phenomena are seen in these peoples at this time remains significant to our understanding of the origins of complex hunter-gatherer and tribal-level societies in the eastern Woodlands of North America (Marquardt 1985; Marquardt and Watson 1983; Price and Brown 1985).

Of course, the Late Archaic Period is also the time when evidence for increasing numbers of deaths due to violence and human trophy-taking behaviors become apparent in the Eastern United States (Smith 1993, 1995, 1997; Mensforth 2001; Webb 1946; Snow 1948). Several researchers regard the appearance of human trophy taking to be related to warrior prestige enhancement and evolving social complexity (Smith 1993; Mensforth 2001; Andrushko et al. 2005). Relative to Marquardt's (1985) model of increasing social complexity, it is suggested here that human trophy-taking behaviors constitute an additional source of evidence to support the inference that greater levels of social differentiation characterized some of the Late Archaic Period complex fisher-hunter-gatherer societies. It is likewise inferred that those peoples who engaged in human trophy taking had evolved segmented social organizations and kinship relationships, which are characteristic of those particular types of societies.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Given the nature of human trophy taking described thus far, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, I would like to describe the evidence for human trophy-taking behaviors that has been identified among the Late Archaic Period skeletal remains of peoples from the Eastern United States. The second issue concerns the evolution of social complexity in the Archaic Period and the extent to which human trophy-taking behaviors may serve as an inferential tool for identifying societies that have undergone a transition from unsegmented kindred-based social organizations to segmented descent group–based social organizations. Here, human trophy taking is regarded to be primarily a warfare-related behavior that arises *de novo* only in societies that have evolved segmented social organizations. Foragers classified as complex hunter-gatherers should therefore represent the first societal type where segmented social organizations and human trophy taking should become manifest. Given the issues described thus far, human trophy-taking

behaviors among Archaic Period hunter-gatherers of the Eastern United States were examined as follows.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The types of warfare-related trophy-taking behaviors that were investigated for this study include evidence of perimortem scalpings, decapitations and dismemberments that would have provided source material for various human body part trophies. The database consists of Archaic Period human skeletal remains that I have examined directly over the past 15 years, and human burial descriptions published in the archaeological literature from the mid-1930s to the present.

The Archaic Period sites that yielded useful information for various aspects of this study range from New York, to North Dakota, to Alabama, to Florida. They include the Frontenac Mortuary Island Site, NY (Ritchie, 1945); seven Ohio Archaic Period sites (Mensforth 2001); four Kentucky Green River Archaic sites (Webb and Haag 1940; Webb 1946; Webb and Haag 1947; Webb 1950a; Snow 1948; Snow 1942; Watson 1974); eight Tennessee Archaic Sites including those of the Kentucky Lake and Cordell Hull Reservoirs (Smith 1993, 1995, 1997; Moore et al. 1992; Morse 1967); the Flint River site in Alabama (Webb and DeJarnette 1948); four Pickwick Basin Archaic shell mound sites in northern Alabama (Webb and DeJarnette 1942); and the terminal Early Archaic Windover Pond mortuary site in Central East Florida (Doran 2002; Dickel et al. 1989).

The skeletal collections that a group of research assistants from Cleveland State University and I examined for evidence of lethal and nonlethal violent trauma are the Ward Site (McL-11), Indian Knoll (Oh-2), and Carlston Annis (Bt-5) shell mound sites from Kentucky and the seven Ohio Archaic skeletal samples. These materials are housed at the University of Kentucky, Museum of Anthropology (UKMA) in Lexington, Kentucky, and at the Ohio Historic Society (OHS) in Columbus, Ohio, respectively. Most evidence of violence at the Cypress Creek Ward Site (McL-11) went unnoticed at the time when the original site report was published (Webb and Haag 1940). However, Webb (1946) and Snow (1948) made a directed effort to identify and describe the violent injuries, dismembered and decapitated bodies, and cut mark mutilations that occurred in the Indian Knoll (Oh-2) and Carlston Annis (Bt-5) human skeletal samples (Webb 1946, 1950a; Snow 1948).

We reexamined the Indian Knoll and Carlston Annis human skeletal materials in 1995 and identified additional individuals with cut marks indicative of scalping, decapitation and dismemberment which had gone unnoticed previously (Snow, 1948). All skeletal remains that showed unhealed cut marks associated with injuries or mutilations were classified as *demonstrated* evidence of perimortem violent trauma (Mensforth 2001; Olsen and Shipman 1994; Miller 1974). Other published reports that described headless and dismembered burials, which were

otherwise undisturbed at time of recovery, were classified as *inferred* evidence of violent death and dismemberment.

The ages at death for specimens cited in the study represent the average of several osteological and dental age indicators that I used with the Carlston Annis (Bt5), Ward (McL11), and Watt's Cave samples recovered from Kentucky (Mensforth 2005), and all of the Ohio Archaic Period sites referenced in this study. Likewise, adult sex estimations were based on standard pelvic and cranial morphological criteria (see Mensforth 2005 and references therein). Age and sex estimates for other skeletal assemblages cited in the study are those available from site reports and related analyses that have been published thus far.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I. Evidence of Potential Trophy-Taking Behaviors

Tennessee Archaic Period Sites

In the early 1990s, Maria Smith (1993) reexamined much of the prehistoric human skeletal material that had been excavated from Tennessee Archaic Period sites during the twentieth century. This was done in order to identify and quantify evidence of violent conflict and warfare-related behaviors. Smith (1995) was the first researcher to present unequivocal evidence that demonstrates that scalping behavior dates back to the Archaic Period in the Southeastern United States. In addition, Smith (1995, 1997) has identified cut mark evidence of decapitation and dismemberment (e.g., forearm trophy taking), and other projectile point and stabbing wounds indicating the nature and types of violent deaths that occurred among the Late Archaic peoples of Tennessee. The observations by Smith (1997) that are relevant to the practice of trophy-taking behaviors are described below.

Kentucky Lake Reservoir Sites ($n = 7$), Tennessee

Scalping and Dismemberment

The Kentucky Lake Reservoir sites in northwestern Tennessee yielded 439 human skeletons that were suitable for analyses (Smith 1995, 1997). The skeletons were recovered from the Eva, Cherry, Ledbetter Landing, Kays Landing, Big Sandy, Oak View Landing and McDaniel sites. The set of 10 skeletons that displayed violent injuries were all adult males associated with the Late Archaic cultural horizon. Among these, three showed evidence of scalping and/or dismemberment. The first is Burial 62 (male, 25–35 years) from the Eva site. This individual exhibited unhealed transverse cut marks, which coursed along the right parietal bone and extended back to the occipital bone. The second scalping victim is Burial 84 (male, +50 years) from the Kays Landing site. The skull of this individual presents a deep cut mark along the mid-portion of the frontal bone and two cut marks on

the parietal bone. The third scalping victim is Burial 49 (male, adult) from the Big Sandy site. The skull of this individual has cut marks on the left and right temporal bones, the posterior right parietal bone, and the occipital bone. In addition, Burial 49 was missing the bones of both forearms and hands. Upon inspection, Smith (1995, 1997) identified sets of transverse unhealed cut marks situated on the distal surfaces of both the left and right humeri. Scalping and bilateral forearm dismemberment are clearly demonstrated for this individual.

Robinson Site (40SM4), Smith County, Tennessee

Decapitation and Dismemberment

Smith (1993) also reexamined the human skeletal remains recovered from the Robinson site (40SM4) in Smith County, Tennessee. The Robinson site is located on the banks of the Cumberland River in Cordell Hull Reserve. The site was excavated in 1963, and 62 human burials were recovered (Morse 1967). Radiocarbon dates place occupation of the site between 3,250 and 2,500 BP. Among the artifacts recovered from the site, archaeologists identified a single cut and polished human femur shaft bone tube that is 12.4 cm long and described as likely to have come from the thigh bone of an adult male.

The human bone artifact is described as a grave inclusion associated with Burial 39. This individual is described as a 20- to 25-year-old male that was headless and missing the bones of the left forearm and hand. On direct examination, Smith (1993) confirmed that the skull and first cervical vertebra of Burial 39 were missing. Disarticulation cut marks were identified on the superior articular facets of the second cervical vertebra. Unhealed transverse cut marks were also identified on the posterior surface of the distal left humerus. Thus, decapitation and dismemberment are demonstrated for this individual.

Davidson County Site (40DV35)

Dismemberment

Moore and associates (1992) recovered 25 human skeletons from the multicomponent 40DV35 site located in the Cumberland River Valley in Tennessee. Feature 23 at the site yielded a skeleton buried in a sitting position. The individual is described as an adult male who was approximately 25–30 years of age at time of death. The individual was missing bones of the right forearm and hand. Unhealed transverse cut marks were identified on the anterior surface of the distal right humerus. Moore and colleagues (1992) suggested that the cut marks were made for mortuary purposes to permit the arms bones to be flexed tighter and close to the body. However, Smith (1995) pointed out that lacerations to facilitate forearm flexure would more likely be associated with cut marks situated on the

posterior surface of the distal humerus (i.e., to disengage the forearm extensor muscles). Also, all the bones below the right elbow were missing with no evidence of post-depositional disturbance of the grave. The cut marks on this individual are therefore consistent with an interpretation of perimortem dismemberment for the purpose of forearm trophy taking.

Kentucky Archaic Period Sites: Ward Site (Mcl11)

Demonstrated Evidence of Scalping, Decapitations and Dismemberment

Scalping. Archaeological investigations at the the Ward Site (McL11) in McLean County, Kentucky, were conducted by Webb (1940) and associates in 1938. Approximately 16 percent of the Late Archaic cemetery and habitation site was excavated over a nine-month period. A total of 422 human skeletons were recovered from the site. In 1992, I requested and received loan of the Ward Site skeletal sample from the University of Kentucky Museum of Anthropology (UKMA) in Lexington. Over the next several years we unpacked and organized the materials. All skeletons were then laid out in numerical order on long rows of tables in our large laboratory at CSU. The set-up was time-consuming, but it permitted us to collect metric and nonmetric data quickly, and to check and recheck the accuracy of our observations almost instantaneously. I have also worked directly with the Carlston Annis (Bt5) and Indian Knoll (Oh2) skeletal collections. But, my greatest familiarity is with the Ward Site skeletal remains. So as not to confuse the reader, it is important to note here that while the Ward site was the eleventh prehistoric site registered in McLean County, Kentucky, it was catalogued as the twelfth human skeletal collection at the UKMA. Thus, Ward Site human skeletons are numbered with the prefix "12."

Three Ward Site adult individuals, all males, display cut marks indicative of scalping. The first is Burial 12-175 (male, 23 years) who was buried in a multiple grave with three other adult individuals (173, female +50 years; 174, female 27 years; and 176, female +50 years). None of the latter showed any osteological evidence of violent injuries or perimortem mutilations. Burial 12-175 displays scalping cut marks on the mid- and right portions of the frontal bone (Figure 9.1). At time of recovery archaeologists found a drilled and incised gulf coast shell placed over the face of this individual. Burial 12-175 was also missing both the left and right lower extremities below the hip. Evidence as to cause of death was also present. Four left true ribs and one right false rib displayed multiple unhealed cut marks situated on the neck and/or tubercle of the ribs. The location of scoring on the ribs, and the path of the cut marks, indicate that the individual was stabbed in the back multiple times.

The second scalping victim is Burial 12-262 (male, 25–30 years). The field photograph for 12-262 showed that bones of the right forearm and hand were missing, as were the bones below the left and right femurs (Figure 9.2). On direct

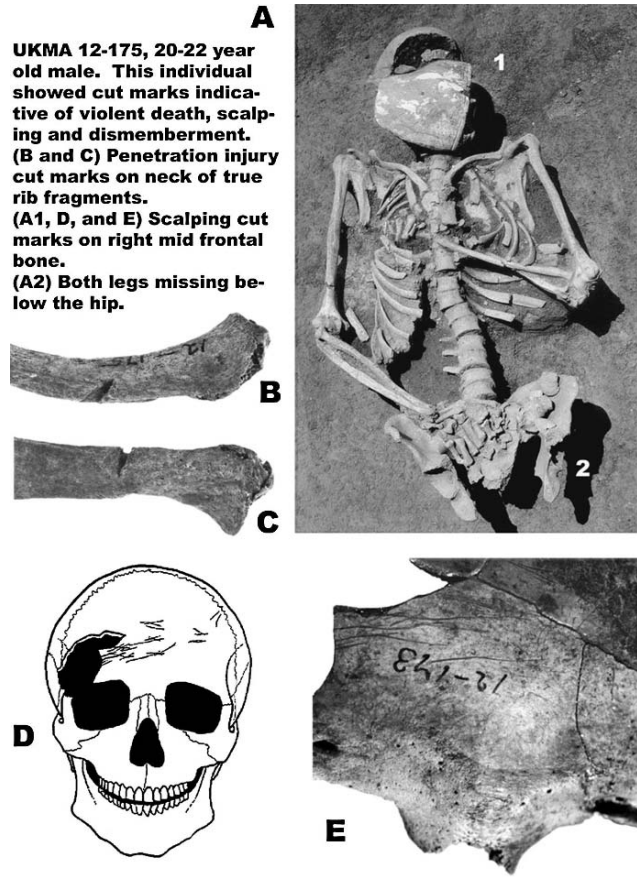

Figure 9.1. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-175 which illustrates perimortem stabbing injuries to the ribs, scalping, and dismemberment. (Figure 9.1a, UKMA Ward Site field photograph negative no. 1269.).

inspection, transverse disarticulation cut marks were identified along the medial and lateral aspects of the distal right femur of Burial 12-262. The individual also exhibits multiple sets of unhealed cut marks that circumscribe the cranium (Figure 9.3). Thus, scalping and dismemberment are demonstrated for this individual.

The third scalping victim is Burial 12-421 (male, 35–40 years). This is one of many individuals included in a feature at the site referred to as the trench burials. The skull of B-421 has perimortem cut marks on the right side of the frontal bone Figure 9.4a, and a second set of parallel linear cut marks located on the posterior aspect of the skull, along the lambdoid suture, between the right parietal and occipital bones (Figure 9.4b).

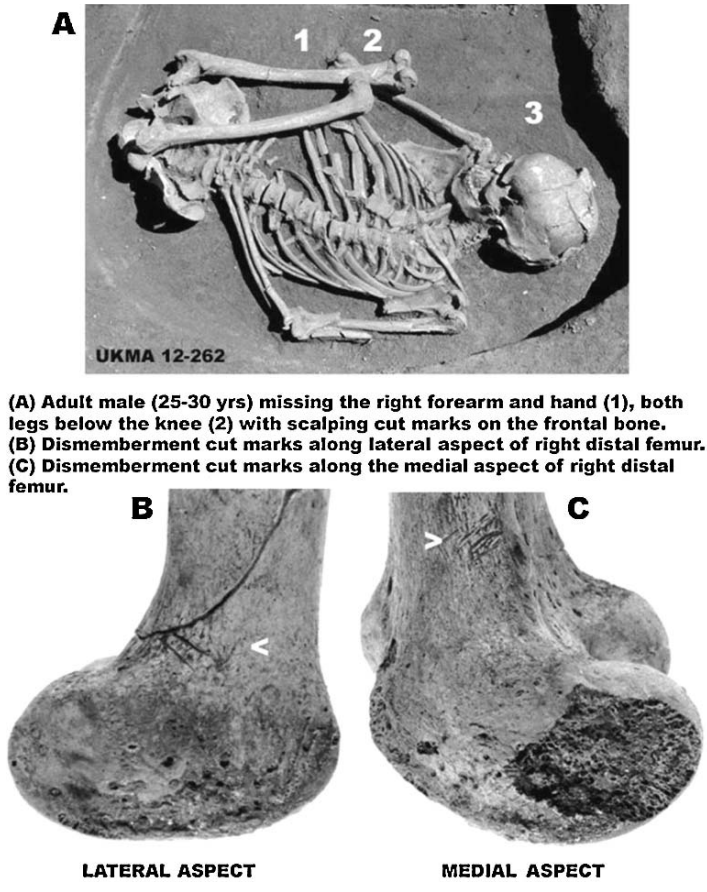

Figure 9.2. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-262 that shows demonstrated and inferred evidence of scalping, right forearm, hand dismemberment, and dismemberment of both legs and feet below the knees. (Figure 9.2a, UKMA Ward Site field photograph negative no. 1311).

Mandible Trophy

The Ward Site trench burial feature contained a relatively large number of skeletons that are now poorly provenanced. We have fairly good photographs of the large set of exposed burials. But the problem is this: After nine months of excavation at the site, the property owner, Mr. Godfrey Ward, demanded a substantial sum of money to permit the WPA archaeologists to continue their work. Unwilling to pay the tribute, the WPA field crew ceased all operations and began to pack up the very next day. Almost all of the trench burial skeletons were retrieved from the ground quickly and en masse. Thus, the skeletons were not given individual burial numbers, and we don't really know precisely which burial came from where in the feature. This is disappointing because what appears to

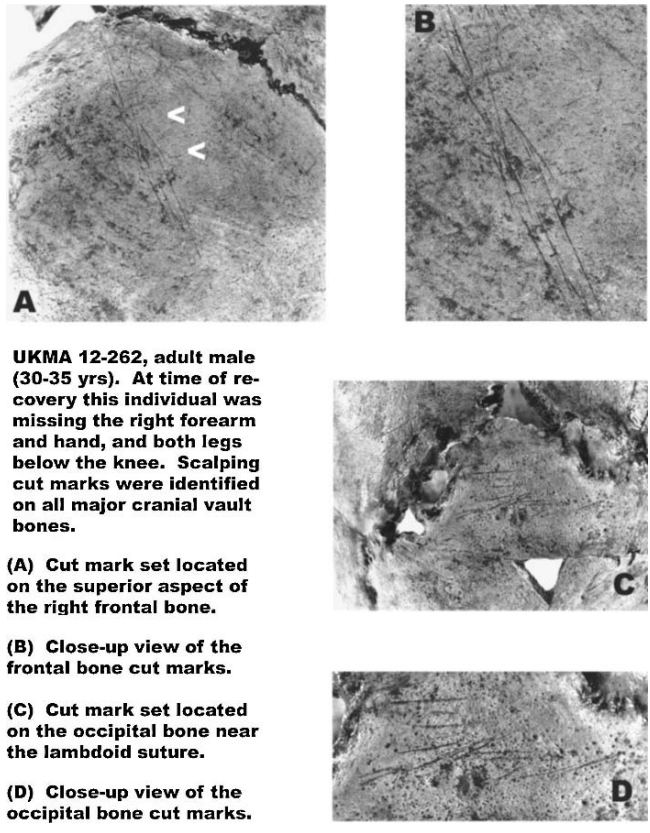

Figure 9.3. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-262 scalping cut marks situated on the frontal and occipital bones.

be a trophy mandible was mixed in with the trench burial skeletal remains. The specimen is identified here as 12-426. It is the complete mandible of an adult male who was approximately 33 years old at time of death. The bone exhibits transverse disarticulation cut marks along the anterior and posterior margins, and the lateral surfaces, of both ascending rami (Figure 9.5a and 9.5c). In addition, the inferior aspect of the left horizontal ramus exhibits a set of unhealed cut marks which are usually associated with removal of the tongue (Figure 9.5b) (Willey and Emerson 1993). Due to lack of provenience, it is not known whether this mandible was a grave inclusion or whether it came from general midden deposits at the site.

Arm Trophy

Ward Site skeleton 12-191 (male, 29 years) was buried in a single grave (Figure 9.6a). Draped over the left side of the upper body, and included in the

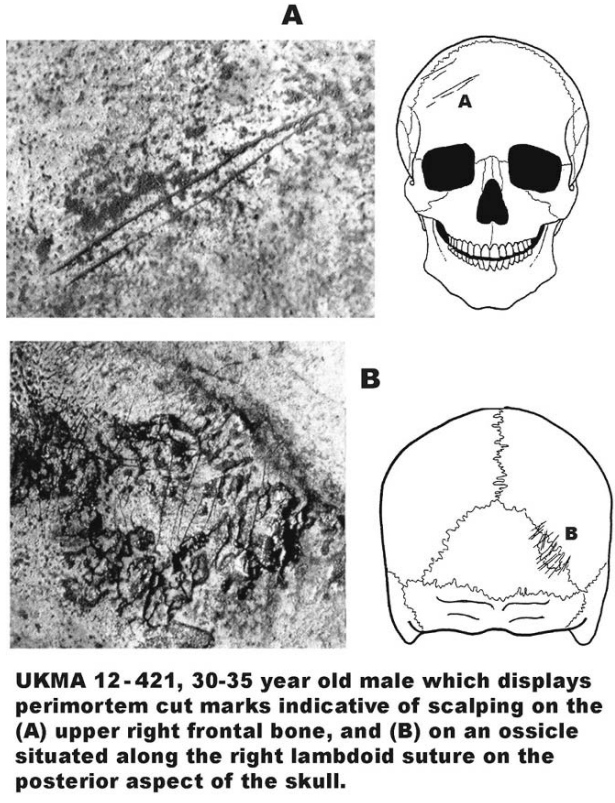

Figure 9.4. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-421 scalping cut marks located on the frontal bone and on an ossicle situated posteriorly along the right lambdoid suture.

grave, is the near-complete upper right extremity (12-192) of an 18- to 19-year-old male (Figure 9.6b). The age and sex for this specimen were estimated based on epiphyseal maturation status of the proximal humerus and joint robusticity, respectively. The arm and shoulder bones of this appendage (clavicle, scapula, humerus, radius and ulna) were articulated at time of excavation and discovery. While bones of the trophy arm did not display any defleshing cut marks, they do appear to be sun bleached to some extent. All bones of the wrist and hand were missing, but the distal radius and ulna did not bear any disarticulation cut marks. The superior and medial aspect of the right clavicle did display a small set of unhealed disarticulation cut marks (Figure 9.6c and 9.6d).

Decapitation and Dismemberment

Ward Site Burial 12-214 is a 15- to 17-year-old adolescent male buried in a grave with the skeleton of 12-215 (male, 28 years). At time of recovery the body

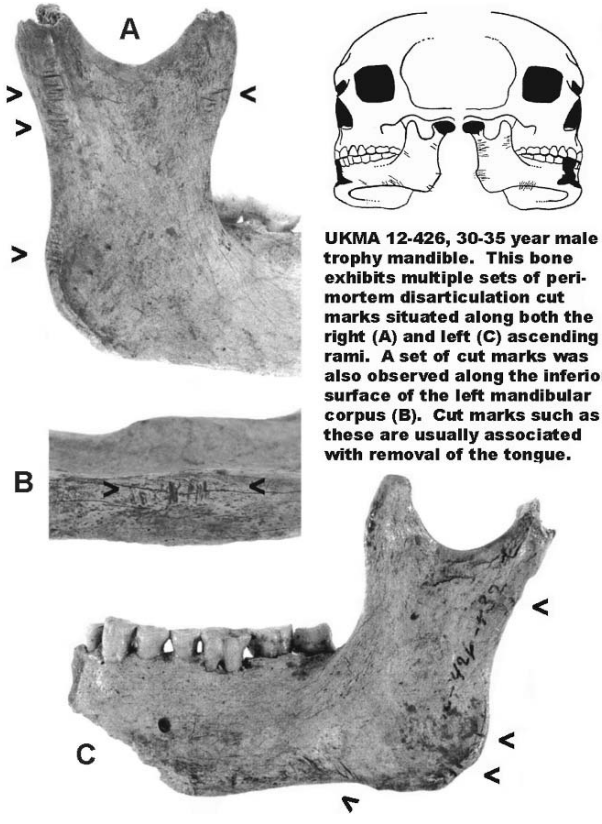

Figure 9.5. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-426 adult mandible that shows cut mark evidence of disarticulation and removal of the tongue.

of Burial 12-214 was headless and missing most of the cervical vertebrae (see skeleton on the right in Figure 9.7a). When placed in articulation vertebrae C7, T1 and T2 were found to have an oblique/vertical cut through successive laminae on the left side of the vertebral arch (Figure 9.7b). This injury provides insight as to the manner in which the head was removed. Also missing were both legs below the hip and all forearm and hand bones below the elbow joint. On direct examination, sets of transverse unhealed cut marks were identified on the anterior surface of the distal right humerus (Figure 9.8). Finally, several true rib fragments of Burial 12-214 show scoring on the neck and tubercle (Figure 9.7c) Again, the location and orientation of rib cut marks indicates that the individual was stabbed from behind at least two or more times. Associated Burial 12-215 did not show any evidence of mutilation or death by violent injury.

Burial 12-385 is that of a 30- to 32-year-old male. Upon inspection, sets of long vertical cut marks were observed along the inner surface of the right pelvic bone. The scoring extends from the iliac crest, down through the iliac

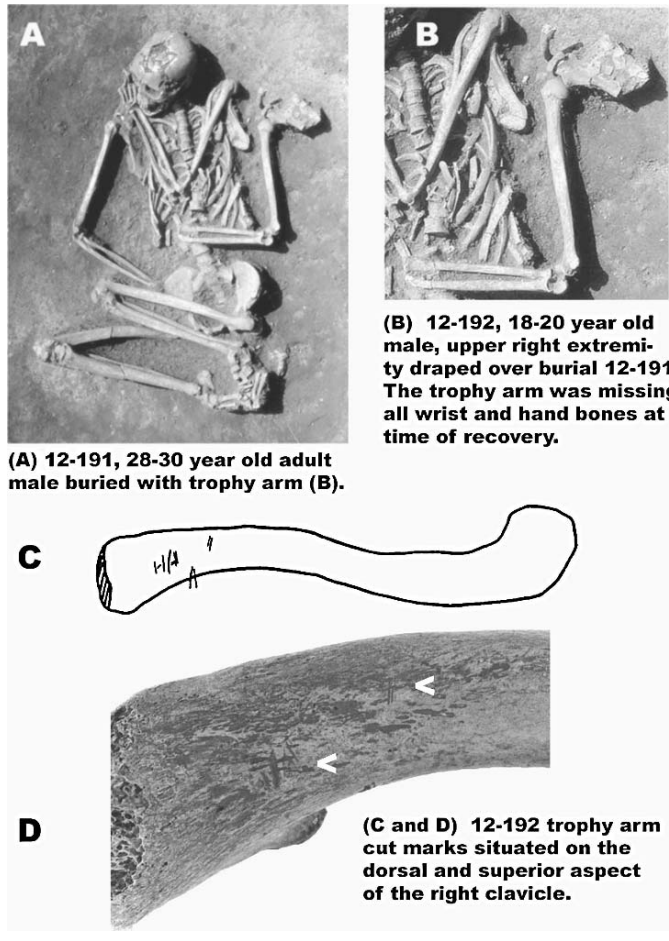

Figure 9.6. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-191 buried with trophy arm 12-192. (Figure 9.6a-b, UKMA Ward Site field photograph negative no. 1271).

fossa, and over the arcuate line. All of the cut marks are unhealed. The location and orientation of these cut marks indicates that the right common iliac artery was severed. Hemorrhage from this injury alone would have been sufficient to cause death in very short measure. However, the location of this injury (i.e., the ileocecal junction between the small and large bowels) is also ideal if the goal of the mutilation was to disembowel the victim.

Evidence of Warfare-Related Violent Death

The Ward Site produced a multiple grave that contained the skeletons of five males ranging in age from 16 to 45 years at time of death. Four of the five had

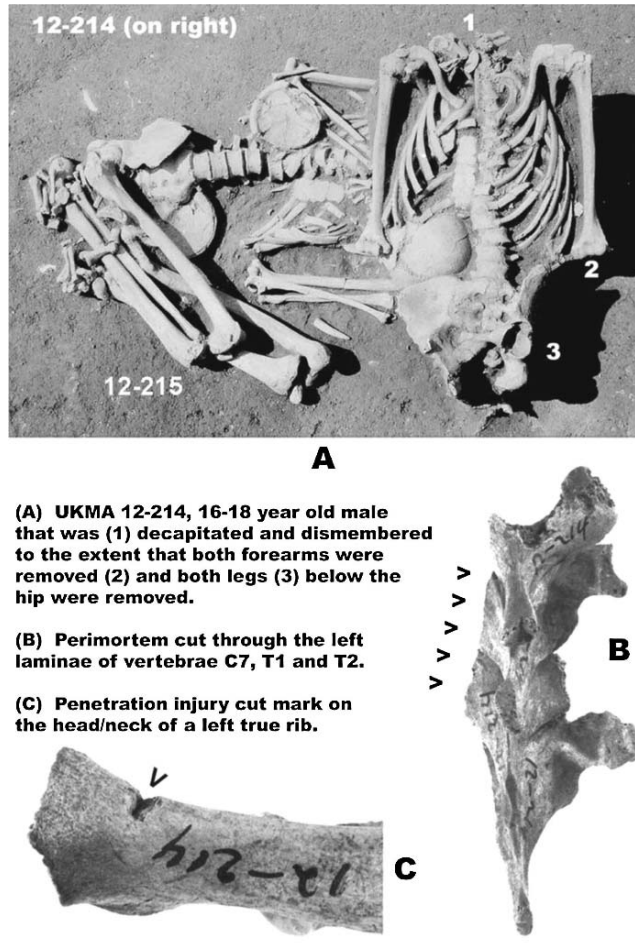

Figure 9.7. Ward site (McL11) UKMA skeletons 12-214 and 12-215. Burial 12-214 is the torso of an adolescent male who was stabbed, decapitated, and dismembered (both forearms and hands, and both legs below the hip). (Figure 9.7a, UKMA Ward Site field photograph negative no.1287).

projectile points either embedded in bone or located in body cavities that contained vital organs. Burial 12-301 (male, 25 years) is the only member of this group with no apparent projectile point injury, although the skull was crushed and several skull bones were missing at time of recovery. Burial 12-302 (male, 16 years) was found with an antler tine spear tip resting on his lumbar vertebrae. The skull of this individual also displayed the only lethal clubbing injury at this site. Burial 12-303 (male, 38 years) was found with an antler tine spear tip embedded in lumbar spine. The orientation of the antler tine indicates that the spear point was thrown, or thrust, behind and to the left of the victim. Burial 12-304 (male, 45 years) was found with a flint projectile point in the thoracic cavity. Burial 12-305 (male,

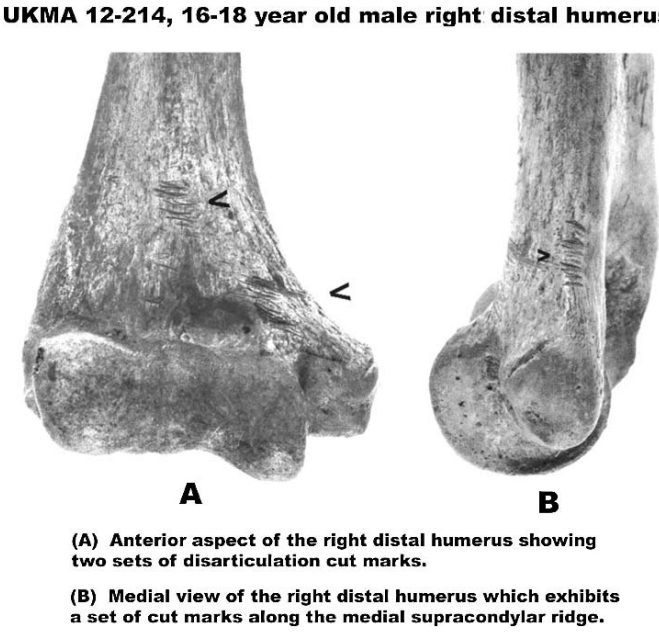

Figure 9.8. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-214. Examples of forearm dismemberment cut marks situated on the distal right humerus.

34 years) had a flint projectile point lodged in the seventh thoracic vertebra. This individual also displayed two rib fragments with stabbing penetration cut marks on the body of the ribs near the tubercles posteriorly. The location and orientation of these cut marks indicate that the individual was stabbed from behind. While this burial set displays substantial evidence that the victims were ambushed and killed in a raid, it is important to note that none of victims appear to have been scalped, decapitated, dismembered or mutilated in any other way.

Inferred Evidence of Decapitation and Dismemberment at the Ward Site (McL11)

Inspection of the Ward Site field photographs led to the identification of several undisturbed graves that nonetheless contained headless bodies. The skeletons were then examined carefully for disarticulation cut marks, but none were found. Included in this data set are Burials 12-15 (female, 60+ years), and associated Burials 12-63 (female, 17 years) and 12-64 (female, 18-21 years). These two individuals were interred in a multiple grave with 12-61 (female, 21 years) and 12-62 (female 65+ years). The last two showed no osteological evidence of mutilation or violent injury. Also found headless was 12-87 (male, 44 years) and 12-132 (male, 21 years). While no cut marks were observed for Burial 12-132, the body was found in an undisturbed grave with evidence of perimortem violent injury present

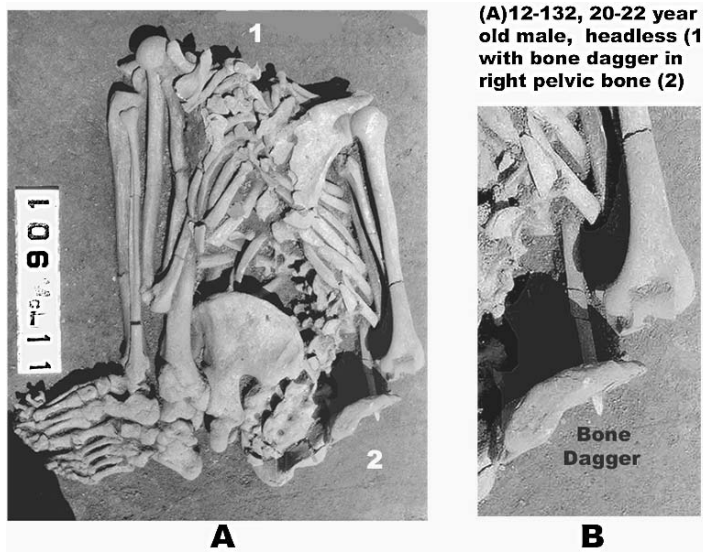

Figure 9.9. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA skeleton 12-132 illustrates a perimortem violent injury (bone dagger embedded in the right pelvic bone) and decapitation. (Figure 9.9a-b, UKMA Ward Site field photograph negative no.1243).

(Figure 9.9). A bone dagger was found *in situ* piercing the iliac blade of the right pelvic bone. Also, at time of excavation a stone spear point was found embedded in the anterior surface of the right proximal femur of this individual. The injury showed no healing at time of death.

Indian Knoll (Oh2)

Demonstrated Evidence (Unhealed Cut Marks) of Potential Trophy-Taking Behaviors from the Indian Knoll (Oh2) Late Archaic Shell Mound

Scalping. Oh2-B-864 (male, 30 years) was recovered from a multiple grave which also contained Burials 865 and 866. Burial 864 displays sets of cut marks on the frontal bone which are characteristic of scalping. The skeleton also exhibits unhealed cut marks on the lateral surface of the right innominate bone, and a healed or healing circular puncture wound in the center of the right parietal bone of the skull (Snow, 1948). Associated Burial 865 (male, 24) is described as headless, but no cut marks were identified on direct examination of the skeleton. The skeleton of Burial 866 (female, 24 years) also showed no evidence of scalping, dismemberment or other violent injuries.

Trophy Skulls. Two adult human skulls were recovered from Indian Knoll which may have been trophy items. The first was found in the grave of a

three-year-old child (Oh2-B-165). The second is an isolated skull of a 45- to 50-year-old male (Oh2-B-216). Neither of these skulls is described as having disarticulation or mutilation cut marks. Likewise, no other evidence of cultural modification has been reported for these specimens.

Trophy Mandible. Webb (1946) recovered the mandible of an adult male (Oh2-DA-947) from the disturbed area at Indian Knoll. The disturbed area refers to that part of the site that was excavated by Moore (1916) in the early twentieth century. At the time of Webb's excavations the disturbed area consisted mainly of back fill containing mixed and scattered bone and cultural materials. The mandible identified as DA-947 exhibits several sets of unhealed disarticulation cut marks along the lateral aspect and anterior and posterior margins of the ascending rami. Given the lack of provenience for this potential trophy specimen, we have no way of knowing whether the mandible was a grave inclusion or simply an object disposed of with general midden debris.

Dismemberments. Two of four Burials (B-55, 56, 57 and 58) included in a multiple grave displayed cut mark evidence of decapitation. These are skeletons Oh2-B-57 and 58. Burial 57 (male, 30 years) is described as headless and missing the right forearm and hand bones. Upon direct examination cut marks were identified on the third cervical vertebra along the posterior aspect of the left and right superior articular facets. Burial 58 (male, 22 years) is reported as headless and missing the left forearm and hand bones. On direct examination cut marks were observed on the anterior surface of the body of C3, and transverse cut marks were also identified on the anterior surface of the distal left humerus. Associated Burial Oh5-B-55 (male, 21 years) displayed no osteological evidence of violent injury or mutilation, but the individual was buried with two bone awls and a cut and polished femur shaft bone tube. All of these human bone artifacts showed polishing and the two bone awls exhibited evidence of functional use (i.e., similar to awls made from animal bones). The skeleton of associated Burial Oh5-B-56 (female, 21 years) likewise showed no evidence of violent death or mutilation.

One of three burials (B-97, 98, and 99) included in a multiple grave exhibited cut mark evidence of decapitation. Oh2-B-99 (male, 22 years) is described as a headless and legless body. Upon examination we identified several blunt horizontal cut marks situated on the anterior surface of the third cervical vertebra (C3). Associated Burial Oh2-B-98 (male, 24 years) is reported to be a headless skeleton also missing the left and right forearm and hand bones and both legs. On direct examination no cut marks were identified on any of the bones of this individual. The third individual included in the grave, Oh2-B-97 (male, 17 years), did not appear to have been mutilated in any way. Upon direct inspection we found no evidence of perimortem violent injury to the bones of this individual.

Oh2-B-614 (male 19 years) is described as headless in Webb's report (1946). On direct examination cut marks were identified on the anterior surface of the body of the third cervical vertebra of this individual. Burial 614 was in a multiple

grave with Burials 611 (male, 25 years), 612 (male, 22 years), and 613 (male, 22 years). None of the additional skeletons displayed evidence of violent injuries.

The associated Burials Oh2-B-639 and 640 also display cut mark evidence of dismemberment. Oh2-B-639 (male, 23 years) was found missing the right clavicle, the bones of both arms and the entire left lower extremity. On direct examination we identified cut marks on the right clavicle. Oh2-B-640 (male, 25 years) is described as missing the left and right arms, the entire right leg and bones of the left leg/foot below the knee. We identified cut marks on the anteromedial and inferior aspect of the left femur neck. Thus, at the time of death, an unsuccessful attempt was also made to remove the left thigh of this individual.

Inferred Evidence for Potential Trophy-Taking Behaviors from the Indian Knoll (Oh2) Late Archaic Shell Mound

Additional burials that were originally described as being headless or missing limbs—skeletons that we subsequently reexamined and found no evidence of cut marks on—are listed here. Oh2-B-93 (male, 24 years) is described as headless, and missing the left and right forearm and hand bones, and both lower extremities. Oh2-B-383 (male, 32 years), Oh2-B-432 (child, 2 years), and Oh2-B-675 (male, 25 years) are described as headless at time of recovery.

Another six individuals are described as missing body segments where some present evidence of violent death. Among these, skeleton Oh2-B-34 (adult male, 24 years) shows that limb segments were dismembered, but they were nonetheless placed in the grave with the torso. The bones belonging to each isolated limb segment were in proper articulation at time of recovery. They were simply out of position relative to the torso. The articular pattern of the limb bones makes it clear that the grave was not disturbed by an intrusive burial at a later time. Another individual, Oh2-B-441 (male, 40 years), is described as missing the left arm. Associated Burials 536 and 537 also yield interesting observations. Oh2-B-536 (female, 21 years) is missing bones of the entire right arm, the left forearm and hand, and bones of the left and right legs. Burial Oh2-B-537 (male, 27 years) is missing all limb bones. An antler tine projectile point was found lodged between the sixth and seventh cervical vertebrae of this skeleton. Thus, death due to violent injury is demonstrated for this individual. Finally, Oh2-B-655 (6-7 year child) is described by Webb (1946) to be the body of child that was severed in half such that all bones of the pelvis and lower extremity were missing. The child also displayed an unhealed circular puncture wound to the skull that is situated along the superior aspect of the right parietal bone near the bregma. Again, death due to violent injury is demonstrated for this individual.

Carlston Annis (Bt5)

Excavations at the Carlston Annis shell mound in 1939 yielded human skeletal remains of 390 individuals. In his original report, Webb (1950a) provided a burial list with preliminary demographic information along with brief descriptive

notes that identified artifact associations. Additional observations included comments about violent injuries and missing body parts, which suggests that some members of the Bt-5 group had been killed, decapitated or otherwise dismembered. During the early 1980s much of the Bt-5 skeletal material was cleaned in preparation for demographic analyses (Mensforth 1990, 2005). At that time additional cut mark evidence for scalping and dismemberment was identified. That information is supplemented here with data collected in 1995 at the UKMA in Lexington, Kentucky. At that time we conducted a complete visual survey of all Bt-5 field photographs. All undisturbed skeletons that were missing heads or limb segments *in situ* were then examined for the presence/absence of perimortem cut marks and evidence of violent death.

Webb (1950a) recovered nine worked human bone artifacts from general excavations at the Bt-5 shell mound. However, none of the human bone artifacts were grave inclusions. In addition, no trophy skulls or trophy limb segments were recovered from either grave or nongrave areas of the Bt-5 shell mound cultural assemblage. In contrast, reasonable skeletal evidence exists to infer that the Bt-5 people were subject to in intergroup conflicts that resulted in scalping, decapitation and dismemberments.

Demonstrated Evidence (Unhealed Cut Marks) of Potential Trophy-Taking Behaviors from the Carlston Annis (Bt5) Late Archaic Shell Mound

The single scalping victim from this site is Bt5-B-147. The crania of this 18- to 22-year-old young adult male displays two sets of horizontal cut marks along the left and right sides of the frontal bone, respectively. The individual was identified at time of recovery as having a stone projectile point embedded in the distal articular condyle of the left humerus. Wounds to the bones of this individual do not exhibit healing. They are thus regarded to be perimortem injuries. Bt-5-B-147 was buried in a multiple grave with three other individuals. Two of the three are males and all three presented evidence of violent death at time of recovery. These are Bt5-B-146, 148, and 149. Associated Burial Bt5-B-146 (male, 25 years) was found with a stone projectile point embedded in the anterior surface of the upper left tibia. Bt5-B-148 (male, 28 years) had a flint projectile point within the pelvic cavity at time of excavation. And, Bt5-B-149 (female, 17 years) was found with stone projectile points in body cavities and also embedded in bone.

Twelve additional Bt5 skeletons show either demonstrated or inferred evidence of perimortem decapitation or dismemberment. The three skeletons that display demonstrated cut mark evidence of mutilations are described here. Bt5-B-8 (male, 24 years) is reported as missing both lower limbs (Webb 1950). More specifically, we examined the skeleton and found it to be missing both lower legs below the knees. The distal right femur exhibited disarticulation cut marks along both the medial and lateral surfaces of the bone. Bt5-B-202 (male, age indeterminate) was not described as missing body parts by Webb (1950a). However, field

photographs show the skeleton to be headless and missing the left forearm and hand bones. Upon direct examination we identified decapitation cut marks on the anterior surface of the body of the fourth cervical vertebra. The anterior surface of the left distal humerus also displayed multiple sets of transverse disarticulation cut marks. All cut marks on this individual were unhealed at time of death. Bt5-B-348 (male, 18 years) is described as missing all left and right forearm and hand bones. Dismemberment cut marks on an unspecified humerus were reported by Webb (1950a) for this individual. We reexamined the specimen and identified sets of disarticulation cut marks on both distal humeri. The left distal humerus displays cut marks situated on the posterior surface of the bone just above the olecranon fossa, and other cut marks are situated on the lateral aspect of the supracondylar ridge above the elbow joint proper. The right distal humerus exhibits transverse cut marks along the anterior surface of the bone superior to the articular surfaces.

Inferred Evidence for Potential Trophy-Taking Behaviors from the Carlston Annis (Bt5) Late Archaic Shell Mound

The nine Bt5 skeletons for which decapitations and/or dismemberments are inferred come from graves that showed little of no disturbance prior to recovery. Thus, postdepositional events, processes, and human behaviors cannot account for the occurrence of these fractioned burials. All of the specimens listed below were examined for evidence of cut marks associated with missing body parts. For this subset of skeletons no cut marks were observed. Also, no physical evidence as to cause of death was identified for these individuals. The exception to this is Bt5-B-340 where an embedded projectile point injury described below was the probable cause of death (see below).

The headless burials are Bt5-B34 (adult female, 30–35 years), Bt5-B-72 (adult female, 45–50 years), Bt5-B-245 (adult female, 30–35 years), Bt-5-B-318 (adult male, 20–25 years), and Bt-5-B-320 (adult male, 20–25 years). The burials that were reported to be missing heads and one or more body segments are the Bt-5-B-73 torso (adult male, 30–35 years) missing the head, both upper extremities and both lower extremities; Bt5-B-127 (15 year old) is a headless adolescent also missing both left and right lower legs below the knees; Bt5-B-154 (adolescent female) was buried in a grave with several large stones heaped upon her. Upon removal of the stones Webb (1950a) commented that the body was headless and the arms were missing; and Bt5-B-340 (male, 35 years) is described as missing both lower legs. A stone projectile point was found embedded in the fifth lumbar vertebra of this individual (Webb 1950a).

Watt's Cave

The Watt's Cave site from Christian County, Kentucky, was excavated by amateur archaeologists in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The artifacts, skeletal

remains and a small set of field notes were later donated to the Ohio Historical Society (OHS) in Columbus, Ohio. Based on artifact typology OHS staff archaeologists classified the Watt's Cave assemblage as belonging to the Archaic Period. OHS personnel also identified and inventoried the faunal remains recovered from the site. However, to date no formal site report has been prepared and the precise location of the site in Christian County, Kentucky, has not been documented. The Watt's Cave human skeletal remains are important because they provide evidence that adult females were also targets of scalping in the Archaic Period. Also, as described below, the Watt's cave scalping victims represent two of only three Archaic Period scalping victims that survived the initial assault. With one exception, all other Archaic Period scalping victims are adult males who were scalped at time of death.

The Watt's Cave site yielded six burials in formal graves at a depth of five to seven feet below surface. While I was examining Ohio Archaic Period human skeletal remains at the OHS facility, Martha Otto Potter directed my attention to two of the Watt's Cave burials that exhibited unequivocal evidence of scalping. One skeleton, referred to here as WC-B-1, is that of a young adult female which I estimated to be about 25 years of age at time of death. I estimated the second scalping victim (WC-B-2) also to be that of an adult female. However, no adult skeletal age indicators were sufficiently preserved to permit an estimate of age at death for this individual. The crania of each adult female showed multiple sets of cut marks that circumscribed the cranial vault. The path of the cut marks deepened and widened due to extensive necrosis. The denuded area of bone on the crown of each skull exhibited numerous necrotic lesions with peripheral periosteal reactions that were active at time of death. The skull of WC-B-2 also displayed a healed laceration injury above the left orbit. Each skull displayed minimal bone healing in the vicinity of smaller cut marks on both skulls. While these two individuals were not killed at the time when the assault and mutilation occurred, it is highly probable that death from infection occurred several weeks later as a direct result of the injury.

Barrett Site (Mcl4)

Excavations at the Late Archaic Barrett (McL4) Site in Kentucky yielded human skeletal remains of 412 individuals. Webb and Haag (1947) report that only one individual, Burial 100 (adult male), displayed a perimortem violent injury where a flint projectile point was found embedded in and between the third and fourth thoracic vertebrae. Our research group conducted a limited survey of the Barrett Site cranial remains to collect data on the frequency of auditory exostosis and cranial injuries. We identified an additional individual, B-77 (adult male), with an unhealed embedded projectile point in the crania. Burial 83 (adult female) also displayed a healed penetration wound injury to the skull. The only other evidence of conflict related damage to the skull consisted of 12 individuals that displayed small healed cranial depression clubbing injuries. From our examination of crania and mandibles, and from our survey of Barrett Site field photos, we found no

evidence that Barrett Site folks were victims of scalping, decapitation or limb dismemberments. The site yielded no recognizable trophy skulls or limb segments as grave goods. And no human bone or tooth artifacts have been identified among the cultural materials recovered from the site. Overall, the Barrett Site skeletal and mortuary evidence indicate that these people experienced very low levels of intra-and-intergroup conflict.

Read Site (Bt10)

Inferred Evidence of Dismemberment and Head Trophy Taking

The Read Site (Bt10) located along the Little Bend of the Green River in Butler County, Kentucky, represents the only shell midden cemetery site that was completely excavated by Webb and his WPA field crews (Webb 1950b). A total of 247 human burials were identified in the field, but poor preservation compromised the recovery of many. More recent skeletal analyses of the Read Site human materials suggest that at least 173 individuals are sufficiently intact to yield useful demographic data (Milner and Jeffries 1998; Herrmann 1990). At time of excavation Webb (1950b) reports that associated Burials 171 and 172 were both found to be missing all limb bones. They were in a grave that was otherwise undisturbed until time of excavation. Webb (1950b) also noted that the Burial 213 was interred along with an isolated human skull (B-220). I have not examined any of the Read Site human skeletal material, and to date I am not aware of any attempt to identify cut marks indicative of scalping and other mutilations on the bones of these individuals. Still, the mortuary disposition of the skeletal remains suggests that reciprocal warfare-related dismemberment, decapitation and trophy-taking behaviors occurred among these Late Archaic peoples. These materials need to be reexamined for the presence/absence of cut marks and other potential perimortem violent injuries.

Salts Cave Vestibule, Kentucky

Archaeological investigations that were conducted at Salts Cave, Kentucky, in the late 1960s produced a wealth of information about Late Archaic and Early Woodland cultural adaptations and technological innovations (Watson 1974). Of interest here is the skeletal assemblage recovered from test excavations in the Salts Cave Vestibule. Several of the test trenches yielded mixed and highly fragmentary human and animal skeletal remains. Duffield (1974) analyzed the nonhuman faunal subset of approximately 2,000 bones, and Robbins (1974) investigated the complimentary subset of nearly 2,000 human bone fragments. None of the human or animal bones were recovered from a grave or formal burial pit.

Robbins (1974) estimated that the human bone assemblage contains skeletal elements from a minimum number of 41 individuals that included infants, children, adolescents and adult men and women. The human and nonhuman

bones were processed in the same ways. The presence of many disarticulation and defleshing cut marks, combined with evidence that many of the bones had been chopped, splintered and burned, led Robbins (1974) to conclude that these human and animal remains were most likely processed for human consumption. Test trenches E and G at the site produced radiocarbon dates that range from 710 to 1460 BC. These dates indicate a terminal Late Archaic and/or Early Woodland occupation of the site.

In addition to evidence for the practice of cannibalism, the human bone assemblage at the Salts Cave Vestibule site yielded nine worked, polished and worn utilitarian human bone artifacts. Two human tibia long bone fragments were fashioned into awls. One human proximal ulna shaft fragment awl is described as being highly polished and worn. Another polished and reworked awl-like implement was made from a proximal section of a human fibula. Two adult human femur shaft artifacts were identified at the site. One is a cut mid-shaft bone tube that was polished to a high gloss. The second is mid-shaft section cut from the right femur of an adult male. The distal end of this bone is reported to be rounded, smoothed and blackened by charring. Three other artifacts were apparently fashioned from human humerus (two) and tibia (one) bone fragments.

A small number of human and animal bone fragments recovered from the site were incised with simple but similar motifs (Robbins 1974). An interpretation that the Salts Cave Vestibule human bone assemblage represents some form of anthropophagy has been challenged (White 1992; Seeman 1986). While I concur with White (1992) that evidence for cannibalism at this site needs to be better organized, described, illustrated and quantified, I also support the original inference put forth by Robbins (1974). This is so because several more rigorous studies have recently addressed the issue of anthropophagy as it relates to interpretations of warfare-related cultural behaviors in the prehistoric past (Marlar et al. 2000; Marlar and Marlar 2000; White 1992; Turner 1983). And the results of those studies leave little in the way of plausible alternative explanations to explain how the Salts Cave Vestibule human skeletal sample acquired the particular types, and overall pattern, of post-mortem modifications.

Kentucky Archaic Period Sites Reported to Have No Evidence of Violent Death

Among the many sites excavated by Webb and associates in the mid- to late 1930s, a few of the skeletal assemblages produced no apparent skeletal or mortuary evidence of intergroup violence. These include Chiggerville (Oh1) which yielded 114 burials (Webb and Haag 1939), Kirkland (McL12) which produced 70 skeletons (Webb and Haag 1940), and the Butterfield (McL7) site where 153 human skeletons were recovered (Webb and Haag 1947). The skeletal remains from most of these sites need to be reexamined for cut marks and other evidence of violent injury that may have escaped detection at time of recovery.

However, the current evidence available from these sites, as well as the Read (Bt10) and Barrett (McL4) sites, make it clear that many people of the Green River Late Archaic cultural complex display little or no evidence of intragroup conflict or intergroup warfare-related behaviors (i.e., lethal assaults, post-mortem mutilations, and trophy-taking behaviors).

Ohio Glacial Kame and Adena Archaic Sites

Demonstrated Evidence of Scalping

In 1995, we examined human skeletal remains that were salvaged from several Archaic Period sites located in west central and northwest Ohio (Mensforth, 2001). These materials are well organized and curated by the staff archaeologists at the Ohio Historical Society (OHS) in Columbus, Ohio. Four of the sites that produced human skeletons are Glacial Kame cultural assemblages that date from 1,500 to 500 BC. These include the Clifford Williams, Stratten-Wallace, Boose and Orleton sites. Two other sites, the Williams Cemetery and Davis Mound, are Adena Archaic cultural affiliations and date from 800 to 300 BC.

The human skeletal remains salvaged from most of these sites is highly variable with respect to bone preservation and differential representation of skeletal elements. Also, no field photographs were available that would have provided useful information about the mortuary context for most of these skeletons. Thus, the inferential utility of the Ohio Archaic skeletal materials is limited in several respects.

Our composite sample of demographic specimens from the Ohio Archaic sites consisted of approximately 120 individuals. Two cases of scalping were identified among these remains. One individual was a young adult female (OHS-3484-26-3) from the Clifford Williams site. The individual displays multiple horizontal and slightly oblique unhealed cut marks running from the left to right side of the frontal bone. The second scalping victim is from the Stratten–Wallace site. This individual (OHS-3123-28-2) is an adult male approximately 35 years of age at time of death who exhibits unhealed transverse cut marks along the left and right halves of the frontal bone. The cranium of this specimen also displayed a small healed cranial depression clubbing injury situated on the superior aspect of the left parietal bone midway between the coronal and lambdoid sutures. A few additional projectile point injuries, and minor clubbing injuries to the skull, were identified for the Ohio Archaic skeletal sample (Mensforth 2001). However, no evidence of decapitations or dismemberments was observed in this particular sample of human skeletal remains.

Baum Site (32mo97), North Dakota

Demonstrated Evidence of Scalping

While not situated in the northeastern United States, the Baum Site (Williams, 1994) from the northern plains of North Dakota provides important information

about the geographic distribution of scalping, and about the age range of victims who were fair game for the practice during the Archaic Period. The skeletal remains of 19 human individuals were recovered from the Baum site. While examining the bones for evidence of disease and injury, Williams (1994) identified two individuals with cut marks that strongly suggest that they were scalped. Although specimen numbers are not reported for these individuals, one is described as an adult individual with an occipital bone fragment that displays unhealed linear cut marks. Williams (1994) considers an interpretation of scalping for this individual as equivocal because other bones from the site show cut marks that more likely occurred as a consequence of defleshing for mortuary-related purposes.

The second case concerns the relatively complete skull of a ten-year-old child that displays cut marks that circumscribe the crania. Similar to the two Watt's Cave adult female scalping victims, the skull of the Baum Site child shows extensive necrosis with widening of cut mark grooves and erosive necrotic lesions on affected areas of the cranial vault. The child was not killed at the time of assault and mutilation. However, progressive ulceration and tissue necrosis associated with the site of injury led to chronic infection and the eventual death of the child.

Frontenac Island, New York

Inferred Evidence of Decapitation, Dismemberment and the Taking of Trophy Skulls

The Frontenac Island site in Cayuga County, New York, is a Late Archaic Period cemetery site which has been radiocarbon dated to 4,930 ± 260 BP (Ritchie 1961). The original site report published by Ritchie (1945) documents the excavation and recovery of 159 human burials. Due to the small size of the island (i.e., slightly less than an acre) combined with shallow depth of the soils overlying bedrock, and repeated use as a mortuary facility over time, many of the skeletons at this site showed evidence of post-mortem disturbance at time of recovery. High frequencies of post-mortem disturbance can make the task of identifying warfare-related perimortem mutilations difficult in the absence of definitive cut mark evidence. And, to date, cut marks have only been identified and reported for one individual from this site. Ritchie (1945) describes the individual (Burial 67) to be an adult male who had a broken chert projectile point fragment embedded in the frontal bone. Surrounding the wound are several sets of cut marks that indicate that an attempt was made to remove the broken stone fragment prior to death (Ritchie 1945; Pfeiffer 1977; and Pfeiffer 1985). The attempt was unsuccessful and cut marks adjacent to the wound display no healing. Thus, the injury occurred at or near time of death. Ritchie (1945) identified three more skeletons that displayed evidence of healed and/or lethal projectile point injuries (Burials 43, 102 and 128 also identified as adult males), and four individuals that had clubbing injuries to the skull (Burials 5b, 26, 59 and 65b identified as adult males).

Of interest here is the evidence that Ritchie (1945) provides for decapitation, dismemberment, and head trophy taking behavior as a component of the Late

Archaic warfare complex in the Northeastern United States. The skeletal remains of two Frontenac Island burials are torsos only. Burial 43 is identified as a headless and limbless adult male with an unembedded projectile point positioned near the mid-spine at time of recovery. Burial 74b is also identified as a headless and limbless adult male. His grave included a trophy skull placed just below his pelvis. For these two cases there is no evidence of post-depositional disturbance which, as stated, was otherwise common at the site. In all, Ritchie (1945) was careful to identify three probable trophy skulls at Frontenac Island. In addition to the grave described above, skeletons 64a and 79 were each buried with the skull of a different individual. Burial 64a is described to be a three-year-old child who was buried with an adult human skull which still had the upper cervical vertebrae articulated at the base of the skull at time of excavation. Burial 79 is identified as an adult male who was buried with the skull of an adult female placed over his lower abdomen at time of death.

The Frontenac Island burial list published by Richie (1961) was reviewed to search for additional evidence of possible decapitations and dismemberments at this site. Including the two torso burials (43 and 74b) recognized previously, eleven more fractioned burials (11/159, 6.9 percent) were identified that might have been victims of perimortem mutilations. These are listed in Table 9.1.

In her analysis of skeletal disease and injuries that occurred among Archaic peoples of the Great Lakes region, Pfeiffer (1977, 1985) assessed that several of the Frontenac individuals originally classified as males are more likely to be females. I have not had the opportunity to personally examine these materials, but I strongly suspect that Pfeiffer is correct. Nonetheless, the osteological and *in situ* burial evidence that currently exists suggests that targets of interpersonal violent trauma and warfare-related injuries among the Late Archaic people of New York included children, adolescents, adult women and men. Given the number

Table 9.1. Frontenac Island Fractioned Burials (from Ritchie, 1945)

Burial number	Age	Sex	Body segment missing at time of excavation
7a	Adult	M	Headless, missing left. & right lower legs
43	Adult	M	Headless, limbless torso (stone point near mid spine)
45	Adult	M	Missing whole left leg
47	Adult	F	Headless
74a	Adult	M	Missing whole right arm and whole left leg
74b	Adult	M	Headless, limbless torso (trophy skull below pelvis)
91	Adult	M	Headless (buried with adult males 92 and 93)
94	Adult	F	Headless
111	Adult	M	Headless, missing left & right lower limb bones
131	Child	—	Headless, missing entire right arm and left & right lower legs
132	Adol.	M	Headless, missing whole left arm

of fractioned burials that are present at the site, it is my opinion that the Frontenac human skeletal remains warrant further examination in order to detect the presence/absence of disarticulation cut marks.

Alabama Archaic Period Sites

Inferred Evidence of Decapitation and Dismemberment

Archaeological investigations conducted by Webb and DeJarnette (1942) in the Pickwick Basin from 1935 to 1938 represent a significant and remarkable effort. They identified 323 archaeological sites in the 75-square-mile area. They had sufficient time and resources to survey 19 of these sites prior to the planned flooding of the basin. Among the multicomponent sites represented in the Pickwick Basin, I will focus here on information reported for skeletons recovered from Late Archaic shell midden cemeteries in northwest Alabama. Virtually all of the human skeletal material from these sites needs to be reexamined for osteological evidence of warfare-related scalping, decapitation and dismemberment. Nonetheless, the pattern of missing body parts and limb segments which Webb and DeJarnette (1942) document so clearly is consistent with demonstrated evidence for these trophy-taking behaviors that characterize Archaic Period human skeletal samples from Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, New York and elsewhere (Smith 1993, 1995, 1997; Mensforth 2001; Williams 1994; Ritchie 1945).

Mulberry Creek (Ct27)

A total of 134 human skeletons were recovered from the Mulberry Creek Site in Colbert County, Alabama. Several of the Late Archaic skeletons had projectile points embedded in the bones and body cavities (Walthall 1980). The Pickwick Basin report describes a particular multiple grave that contained the skeletons of four individuals where all presented either demonstrated or inferred evidence of violent death or mutilation. Age and sex data are not given in the report, but field photographs suggest that all are adults. Burial 83 was found with three projectile points between the ribs. Burial 84 had seven projectile points embedded in bones or in body cavities. Burial 84 is also described as missing all forearm and hand bones. Burial 85 is described as an adolescent who had a flint projectile point embedded in a thoracic vertebra, and Burial 86 was missing most leg bones at time of discovery. Burial 93 was also found with a flint projectile point resting deep in the thorax, and Burials 108 and 136 are described as headless (Webb and DeJarnette 1942).

Perry Site (Lu25) Unit 1

Unit 1 of the Perry shell mound site in Lauderdale County, Alabama, produced 141 human burials. Webb comments that eight of the bodies were headless, and another two bodies had heads that were disarticulated and placed elsewhere in the

grave (Webb and DeJarnette 1942). The burial descriptions in the Pickwick Basin report identify Burials 2, 3, 134 and 135 as being headless. Burial 2 also had a stone projectile point that showed no healing embedded in the proximal right humerus. Burial 62 is described as headless and missing the entire right arm. However, the skull was found in the midden about four feet away from the body. Burial 66 is described as having the head, arms and forearms detached from the torso, but otherwise the head and limb segments were placed in the grave near the feet. This individual also had two projectile points near the pelvic cavity. Two other adults, Burials 86 and 94, displayed circular penetration wound injuries to the skull. These are described as drill holes in the report, but from my experience with Ward Site and Indian Knoll skeletal materials from Kentucky, it is more probable that these injuries were caused by antler tines that were either fixed to a war club or used as an atlatl dart spear tip.

Unit 2 of the Perry Site yielded 209 additional burials where 168 are described as being affiliated with Archaic shell mound cultures. Webb made a point to comment that 16 of the 168 graves contained headless bodies where only four of the 16 headless graves might have been disturbed by some agent prior to excavation and recovery (Webb and DeJarnette 1942). Information listed in the Pickwick Basin report describes a multiple grave containing four headless adults (Burials 164, 165, 166 and 167) and a skeleton of an infant (Burial 224). Associated Burials 171 and 172 are also described as headless. Another headless adult, Burial 190, was found with a flint projectile point embedded in the twelfth thoracic vertebra. Of interest is Burial 247. This individual is represented by a bundle burial where the grave also contained three possible trophy skulls designated as B-245, B-246 and B-248. Finally, the report describes another multiple grave from Unit 2 that contains four individuals. These are adult Burials 206, 207, 208 and the skeleton of a juvenile identified as Burial 209. All four were found headless where three of the skulls were otherwise included elsewhere in the grave.

Bluff Creek Site (Lu59)

The skeletal remains of 197 individuals were recovered from the Bluff Creek shell mound in Lauderdale County, Alabama (Webb and DeJarnette 1942). The site report describes adult Burials 60 and 91, and adolescent Burial 149, as being headless. Remarkably, the grave of headless Burial 60 contained 137 human teeth which were drilled or notched for suspension, along with seven bone awls. Five of the seven bone awls were made from human radius and fibula bone fragments. In addition, adult Burials 166 and 174 are described as missing the arms and legs, and both skulls were partially burned.

Long Branch Site (Lu67)

The Long Branch shell mound in Lauderdale County, Alabama, produced 92 human burials. Webb and DeJarnette (1942) described two of interest here.

Adult Burials 34 and 75 were found headless at time of excavation. The grave of Burial 75 had a heap of large stones placed over the body (similar to the mortuary circumstance of the Bt5-B-154 headless and armless adolescent female).

Flint River Site (Ma48)

The Flint River Site in Madison County, Alabama, is a multicomponent site which yielded 211 human burials (Webb and DeJarnette 1948). The site report describes some burials as headless while others appear to have been dismembered (Webb and DeJarnette 1948; pp. 19–20). The report also describes artifacts fashioned from human bone including a skull cap bowl, gorgets made of human skull bone, and awls made from human long bone fragments (Webb and Dejarnette 1948; p. 19). The authors describe Burials 7 and 29 as being headless. Burial 74 is described as being headless where the disarticulated skull is nonetheless placed in the grave with the individual. And, Burial 67 was found with a stone projectile point embedded in a lumbar vertebra. Included in the grave of Burial 67 were two perforated gorgets, one circular and one elliptical, made from human skull bones.

The inferred evidence of warfare-related decapitations and dismemberments presented here for Alabama Archaic Period shell mound cultures of the Pickwick Basin (Webb and DeJarnette 1942) and the Flint River site (Webb and DeJarnette 1948) make it clear that head hunting may have become the preferred trophy-taking behavior among these people. Again, it is important to emphasize that all of the Alabama shell mound culture human skeletal materials need to be examined for osteological evidence of warfare-related trophy-taking behaviors.

Windover Pond Site (8br246), Florida

Demonstrated Evidence of Violent Death and Inferred Evidence of Decapitation

Excavations at the Windover Pond Site in Brevard County, Florida, produced the skeletal remains of at least 168 individuals which date to the end of the early Archaic Period approximately 7,400 BP (Doran 2002). The mortuary pond is believed to represent a predominantly summer/fall seasonal occupation. Approximately 110 of the human skeletons provided useful demographic data. Individuals recovered from the site range in age from birth to 65+ years. During their analyses of the Windover Pond human skeletal remains Dickel and associates (1989) identified several individuals who had sustained injuries due to interpersonal violence. Five individuals (three adults and two subadults) displayed cranial deformation (clubbing) injuries to the skull. Another adult male estimated to be approximately 47 years old a time of death exhibited a healed parry fracture of the left ulna forearm bone. The same individual displayed a healed clubbing injury to bones of the upper right eye socket and an associated blow out depression fracture of the floor of the right orbit. The configuration of eye socket injuries led the authors suggest

that the trauma was most likely caused by hand held club fitted with an antler tine.

In addition, Burial 102 displays injuries that are consistent with an interpretation of violent death and decapitation. This individual is described as an adult male who was approximately 29 years of age a time of death. At time of excavation, an antler tine projectile point was found embedded in the posterior aspect of his left pelvic bone. The wound shows no evidence of healing and thus constitutes a perimortem injury. Burial 102 was also found missing the skull, mandible, and the first cervical vertebra (Dickel et al., 1989; Doran, 2002). The authors do not comment as to whether or not the remaining upper cervical vertebrae were examined for cut marks. However, the pattern of missing bones (i.e., skull, mandible, and upper cervical vertebrae), along with the lack of evidence for post-depositional disturbance of the grave, support the inference that this individual was attacked, killed, and decapitated. The decapitation may have been performed as a mutilation alone, as a trophy-taking behavior, or both. If this can be confirmed by future examination, then Windover Pond Burial 102 would represent the earliest evidence of warfare-related trophy taking behavior in the New World that has been identified to date.

II. HUMAN BONE/TOOTH ARTIFACTS RECOVERED FROM ARCHAIC PERIOD SITES

Webb (1950a) noted that while artifacts made from human skeletal and dental remains were rare at most Archaic Period sites, they nonetheless did occur and such items were geographically widespread. Smith (1993) provides a very good description and synthesis of all the human artifacts that were identified from, and reported for, Archaic sites in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and some other areas in the southeastern United States. Smith (1993) also provides a cogent discussion of the theoretical significance that these artifacts may have in relation to the emergence of warfare-related trophy taking behaviors that occurred at this time in prehistory in North America. In addition to the list of Archaic Period human bone/tooth artifacts reported by Smith (1993), the present discussion will include human bone/tooth artifacts reported for the Ward (McL11) (Webb and Haag 1947: Mensforth 2001) and the Salts Cave Vestibule sites in Kentucky (Robbins 1974; Watson 1974). These data are summarized in Table 9.2.

At least nine human bone artifacts were identified in the Salts Cave Vestibule mixed sample of human and nonhuman remains (Robbins, 1974). The published data indicate that almost all bones were broken into small fragments by chopping and splintering. Relatively equal numbers of human and animal bones were processed at the same time and in the same ways (Duffield, 1974). In addition to fragmentation, many bones exhibit disarticulation and defleshing cut marks along with evidence of burning. Some of the human and animal bones were fashioned

Table 9.2. Human Bone/Tooth Artifacts Recovered From Archaic Period Sites in Eastern North America

Site	Anatomical Part									
	Cranium	Mandible	Teeth	Humerus	Ulna	Radius	Femur	Tibia	Fibula	Total
Salts Cave Vestibule, KY (Robbins, 1974)				2	1	1	2	2	1	9
Carlston Annis, KY (Webb, 1950a)	1				1		3	1	3	9
Indian Knoll, KY (Webb, 1946)							**1**	1	1	3
Ward, KY **2** (Webb & Haag, 1940)			**2** (6 total)							2
Ledbetter Landing, TN (Smith, 1995)							**2**			2
Robinson, TN (Morse, 1967)							**1**			1
Bluff Creek, AL (Webb & DeJarnette, 1942)			**1** (132 total)			**1**			**4**	6
Mulberry Creek, AL (Webb & DeJarnette, 1942)	1									1
Flint River, AL (Webb & DeJarnette, 1948)	**2**									2
Sloan, Arkansas (Morse, 1967)							**1**			1
Bell Glade, FL (Stirling, 1935)	1									1
TOTALS	5	0	3	2	2	2	10	4	10	38

Note: Bold: artifacts which were grave inclusions (15/38 = 39.5 %); roman: artifacts found in nongrave site deposits (23/38 = 60.5 %).

into utilitarian tools while others were incised with simple motifs. Robbins (1974) estimates that the partial remains of at least 41 human skeletons are represented by individuals of both sexes that range in age from birth to 50+ years. Seven human bone awls, and awl-like implements, were fashioned from fragments of the humerus ($n = 2$), ulna ($n = 1$), radius ($n = 1$), tibia ($n = 2$), and fibula ($n = 1$). Two cut and polished bone tubes were fashioned from adult human femur shafts. In one case the distal end of the bone had been smoothed, rounded and burned, which suggests that it was used repeatedly for culinary or crematory purposes.

The Carlston Annis (Bt5) shell midden situated along the Green River in the western coalfield region of Kentucky also yielded nine human bone artifacts (Webb, 1950a). All are reported as non-grave inclusions that were found during the general digging of midden debris at the site. The human bone artifacts are represented by one skull cup, bone awls and awl-like implements made from fragments of the ulna ($n = 1$), radius ($n = 1$), femur ($n = 2$), tibia ($n = 1$), and fibula ($n = 3$). In addition, one cut and polished adult human femur midshaft section, which was somewhat damaged, was recovered from the site.

Three human bone artifacts were identified at Indian Knoll (Oh2), Kentucky. They are represented by two nongrave artifacts (i.e., a worked adult tibia fragment and a modified adult fibula fragment), and a cut and polished adult femur bone tube that was included as a grave offering.

The Ward Site (McL11) provided evidence of only one type of human artifact. These consisted of adult human teeth that had been carefully extracted and drilled for suspension (Figure 9.10a and 9.10b) (Webb and Haag 1942). None of the teeth showed any evidence of pathology (i.e., cavities, pulp exposures, or necrosis associated with root abscesses), and they exhibited only slight to moderate occlusal wear. These observations suggest that the teeth came from younger adult individuals. And, given the lack of associated pathology, it is unlikely that any of these teeth were purposefully extracted for some health-related purpose while the donor was alive. The first set of five drilled human teeth were found *in situ* at the neck of a young child (Burial 12-429) that was approximately two and a half years old at time of death (Mensforth 2001). Similarly, the second drilled human tooth was at the neck of an infant (Burial 12-178) who died at approximately eight months of age. The necklace buried with this subadult was composed of one adult human maxillary central incisor, one deer tooth, two carnivore canine teeth and three shell beads (Figure 9.10c). All of the ornaments had drill holes for suspension. The Ward Site also produced a single adult male human mandible (12-426) with several sets of disarticulation cut marks present on the left and right ascending rami (Figure 9.4). However, the mandible was not modified in any other way to suggest that it might have served a utilitarian or ritual function.

Ledbetter Landing (9BN25) is the only Kentucky Lake Reservoir site in northwest Tennessee that produced human bone artifacts (Smith, 1995). Both are cut and polished adult human femur shafts which were identified as grave inclusions. One femur bone tube was found cradled in the arms of a 21–25 year old male (Burial 91). The second polished human femur shaft artifact was buried with an

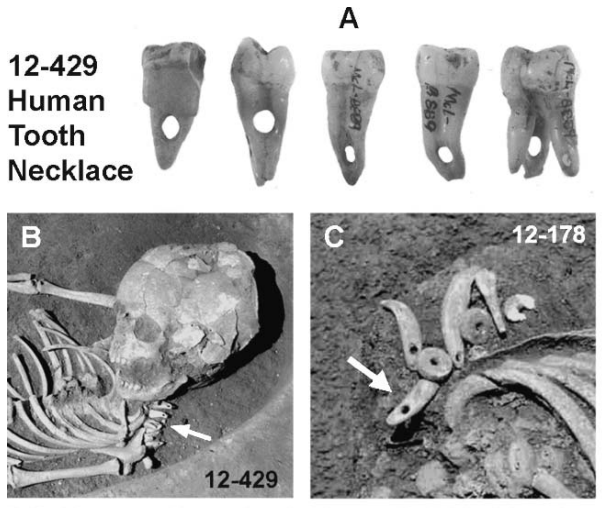

Figure 9.10. Ward Site (McL11) UKMA subadult skeletons 12-429 and 12-178. Illustrated here are two necklaces that were made from, or included, drilled adult human teeth. (Figures 9.10b and 9.10c, UKMA Ward Site field photograph negatives no.1370 and 1264, respectively).

infant (Burial 78). The Robinson site (40SM4) in the Cordell Hull Reservoir area of Tennessee along the Cumberland River also produced a single cut and polished adult human femur shaft (Smith 1995). Morse (1967) describes the artifact as a grave inclusion similar to an adult femur bone tube that was reported from the Sloan Site in Arkansas.

Two Pickwick Basin sites in northwest Alabama yielded human bone and tooth artifacts in association with Archaic Period shell mound cultural horizons. Six human artifact items were recovered from a single grave at the Bluff Creek (LU59) site (Webb and DeJarnette, 1942). The skeleton of Burial 60 is described as a headless adult male. One artifact set consisted of 137 worked human teeth. Some were notched and some were drilled. According to the description in the Pickwick Basin report (Webb and DeJarnette, 1942) the proximity and orientation of the teeth in the grave indicates that they are most likely elements of a single composite artifact. Also included in the grave of Burial 60 were seven worked and polished bone awls. Five are human bone artifacts. One of these is an eight-inch awl made from a human radius. Four others are bone awls made from human fibula bone fragments. The two animal bone artifacts consist of a carnivore ulna bone awl and a wild turkey tarsometatarsal bone awl (Webb and DeJarnette 1942).

The Mulberry Creek (CT27) site produced a single human bone artifact. This is a rather large skull cap bowl, with drill holes, that was made from the upper half of an adult human cranium. The artifact was found in midden deposits and is not a grave inclusion (Webb and DeJarnette 1942). A similar cup or bowl made from human skull bone was recovered from the Bell Glade shell midden site in Florida (Stirling 1935).

Finally, two gorgets made from human skull bone were identified as grave inclusions at the Flint River (MA48) site in Alabama (Webb and DeJarnette 1948). The artifacts are associated with Burial 67. This is an adult skeleton that was found with a flint projectile point embedded in an upper lumbar vertebra. The projectile point entered the body from behind the right side of the victim. The injury shows no healing at time of death. The two gorgets made of human cranial bone contain drill holes. One gorget is circular with a maximum diameter of 72 mm, and the other is elliptical with length and width dimensions of 110 and 74 mm, respectively (Webb and DeJarnette 1948).

Smith (1993) noted that Archaic Period warfare-related mutilations such as decapitations and limb dismemberments may have served as the source material for the manufacture of the human bone artifacts described above. While I support this idea, it is also reasonable to speculate that some human bones may have been retrieved from primary burials that were disturbed by mortuary activities at a later date. Graves in all Archaic Period cemetery sites discussed in this study were, to greater or lesser degree, subject to post-depositional disturbance by human agency. Thus, it is possible that the opportunistic discovery and retrieval of human bones may have occurred. However, at present we have no evidence to support this idea. Also, we have no evidence to support the idea that human graves were intentionally mined to procure bones for the manufacture of tools.

In all, 38 artifacts made of human bones or teeth have been recovered from Archaic Period sites that are distributed primarily in the mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States (Table 9.2). Approximately 40% of these artifacts were grave inclusions, and the remaining 60% were recovered from various nongrave features or general diggings at these sites. The most common human bone artifacts ($n = 20$) are long bone fragments that were fashioned into bone awls or awl-like objects. Many of these are described as showing significant wear. The method of manufacture, and the pattern and degree of wear, which characterize the human bone awls is identical to awls made from animal bone. Therefore, the human bone awls were most likely utilitarian tools of no special ritual or mortuary significance. A likely exception to this, of course, is headless Burial 60 at the Bluff Creek Site, Alabama. This represents the only occasion reported thus far where five human bone awls were found as grave inclusions, along with two animal bone awls, and a set of 137 drilled or notched human teeth.

Cut and polished adult human midshaft femur sections are the next most common human artifact found in the Archaic Period sites (Table 9.3). Of the ten human femur bone artifacts found, one was a fragment worked into a bone awl-like tool, and nine were fashioned into bone tubes of varying lengths. Five of these

Table 9.3. Distribution of Cut and Polished Adult Human Femur Shaft Artifacts

Site	Grave inclusion
Salts Cave Vestibule, Ky	
• one adult human femur shaft bone tube, cut and polished to a high gloss finish	No
• one adult human femur shaft cut, polished, charred, and rounded at the distal end	No
Carlston Annis (Bt5), Ky	
• one cut, polished, and reamed adult human femur shaft	No
• suggested to possibly be an atlatl handle	
Indian Knoll (Oh2), Ky	
• one cut and polished adult human femur shaft found in the grave of Burial 55 (21-year-old male)	Yes
Ledbetter Landing, Tn	
• one cut and polished adult human femur shaft buried with infant B-78.	Yes
• one cut and polished adult human femur shaft cradled in the arms of an adult male B-91	Yes
Robinson Site, Tn	
• one cut and polished adult human femur shaft	Yes

Note: 4/7 = 57.1% occur as grave goods.

were found as grave inclusions and most likely represent war trophies. The other four were found in non-grave deposits. Some of these are short enough in length to have served a utilitarian function similar to that of several modified animal bone tubes (e.g., bucket handle).

The five human artifacts fashioned into ornaments were made from adult cranial bones or teeth. As described earlier, these consisted of two perforated bone gorgets and three drilled or notched tooth necklaces. All five of these artifacts were found as grave inclusions. Three additional human artifacts made from cranial bone were skull bowls or cups. All three of these were nongrave inclusions. The extent to which they may have been used for special ritual versus common utilitarian purposes remains obscure.

Trophy Skulls Recovered from Archaic Period Sites

A total of nine possible adult human trophy skulls were recovered from Late Archaic Period Sites. Three were identified at the Frontenac Island mortuary island site in New York (Ritchie 1945), another three are from the Perry site (unit 2) in Alabama (Webb and DeJarnette 1942), two are from the Indian Knoll site in Kentucky (Webb, 1946) and one was reported from the Read Site in Kentucky (Webb, 1950b). Eight of the nine skulls were grave inclusions. One skull found in the Indian Knoll cemetery (Burial 216) was apparently deposited in a small grave by itself (Webb 1946). None of these potential trophy skulls are described in their

Table 9.4. Archaic Period Cut Mark Evidence for Scalping

Site	Sample n	Burial no.	Age	Sex	Assault outcome
Baum Site, ND	19	(?)	10		Short-term survival
Clifford Williams Site, OH	13	(?)	20–30	F	Perimortem mutilation
Stratten-Wallace Site, OH	7	(?)	35	M	Perimortem mutilation
Carlston Annis (Bt5), KY	390	147	18–22	M	Perimortem mutilation
Indian Knoll (Oh2), KY	880	864	30	M	Perimortem mutilation
Watt's Cave, KY	6	1	25	F	Short-term survival
		2	Adult	F	Short-term survival
Ward Site (McL11), KY	433	175	20–25	M	Perimortem mutilation
		262	25–30	M	Perimortem mutilation
		421	35–40	M	Perimortem mutilation
Eva, TN	73	62	25–25	M	Perimortem mutilation
Kays Landing, TN	34	84	50+	M	Perimortem mutilation
Big Sandy, TN	20	49	Adult	M	Perimortem mutilation
TOTAL	1,875	13 (0.69%)			

1 subadult (1/13 = 7.7%), 10/13 = 76.9% were perimortem mutilations
12 adults (12/13 = 92.3%), 3/13 = 23.1% survived short term
3 adult females (3/12 = 25.0 %), 13/13 = 100 % experienced a lethal outcome
9 adult males (9/12 = 75.0%)

respective reports as having cut marks. Likewise, none of them are reported to have been modified in any way.

Evidence of Scalping from Archaic Period Sites

Ten sites yielded a total of thirteen scalping victims, which are all described by Late Archaic cultural affiliations. These data are summarized in Table 9.4. The majority of scalping victims were adults (12/13 = 92.3%). One was a ten-year-old child (7.7%). Among the adults, nine males (9/13 = 69.2%) and three females (3/13 = 23.1%) were victims of scalping. The three scalping victims who survived the assault, only to die a short time later, were the child from the Baum Site in North Dakota and the two adult females from the Watt's Cave site, in Kentucky. All adult males and one adult female were killed at the time the scalping took place. These data are interesting because they suggest that (1) children and women were scalped for the trophy itself where death of the victim was not the primary motive for the assault; and (2) that the victor was acting based on concepts of social substitution and collective liability (i.e., the attributes of societies with segmented social organizations) (Kelly 2000).

Body Parts Taken Versus Body Parts Recovered

Based on demonstrated and inferred evidence reported here, a total 95 individuals were either scalped, decapitated or dismembered (Table 9.5). A total of

Table 9.5. Distribution of Archaic Period Perimortem Body Mutilations

Archaic sites	Number of skeletons	Scalped	Headless	Whole upper extremity	Forearm and hand	Whole lower extremity	Leg and foot	Total no. of body segments	Total no. of mutilated individuals
Baum Site N. Dakota	19	1						1	1
Frontenac Island, NY	159		9	7		8	4	28	11
Ohio (2 sites)	20	2						2	2
Kentucky (5 sites)	1,861	7	28	18	12	22	8	93	43
Tennessee (5 sites)	214	3	1		4			8	5
Alabama (6 sites)	943		28	7	2	6		43	32
Windover Pond, FL	168		1					1	1
Total	3,384	13	67	32	18	36	12	178	95

Note: 95/3,384 = 2.81% show inferred or demonstrated evidence of mutilation.

178 body segments were missing from a total of 3,384 Archaic Period skeletons. In contrast, only 50 human body parts were recovered from graves or midden deposits at these sites. The latter consist of 38 bone or tooth artifacts where several were likely trophies (i.e., nine possible trophy skulls, two possible trophy mandibles, nine cut and polished human femur shaft trophies, and one entire right upper extremity trophy). While reciprocity in trophy taking certainly occurred between demes involved in blood feuds and grudge disputes, the overall ratio of body parts taken versus body parts recovered is 3.56 (178/50). This ratio is surely an underestimate because most of the bone artifacts were made from relative small quantities of available limb and skull bones. Still, an unbalanced reciprocity ratio may mean that most potential human body part trophies during the Archaic Period were symbols of limited or short-term status. Such items would eventually be discarded by common or ritual means, or the objects might be used as source material for common utilitarian items of no special spiritual significance. An alternative hypothesis is that more trophies were taken from these people than they took in return. However, given the highly reciprocal nature of band and tribal level dispute resolution the latter seems unlikely. It is more probable that human trophies during the Later Archaic period had a finite lifespan as objects of prestige for most individuals.

Still, the fact that some of these trophy items were prepared and curated as nonutilitarian objects (e.g., bone tubes), combined with the fact that several of these were buried with infants and children who did not procure the item, suggests that some of these objects were held in high esteem and were thought to possess special beneficial powers. Archaic Period examples include the Ledbetter Landing, Tennessee, infant buried with a cut and polished human femur; the human trophy skull buried with a child at the Frontenac Island site; the New York child; and two necklaces made in part, or wholly of human teeth that were buried with an infant and a young child at the Ward Site, Kentucky).

Subadult Violent Deaths and Mutilations from the Archaic Period

Only eleven Archaic Period subadults displayed evidence of violent death (Table 9.6). While uncommon overall they do occur. The subadults victims range in age from 2 to 14 years and the majority come from Kentucky (Indian Knoll $n = 6$, Carlston Annis $n = 1$, Frontenac Island $n = 2$, Bluff Creek $n = 1$, and Baum site $n = 1$). For this subset of victims, one individual was scalped (1/11 = 9.1%), five were headless (5/11 = 45.5%), four were dismembered (4/11 = 36.4%) and five were found with projectile points embedded in bones (5/11 = 45.5%). Thus, children were assaulted in the same manner as adults.

Violent Deaths Among Adult Females

Violent deaths were far less common among adult women at the Indian Knoll, Ward and Carlston Annis sites in Kentucky. I refer to these sites because I worked

Table 9.6. Archaic Period Subadult Skeletal Remains That Exhibit Perimortem Mutilation or Evidence of Violent Death

Site			Scalping	Decapitation	Dismemberment	Evidence of violent death
Indian Knoll, Ky						
B-254	Child	10 years				X
B-432	Child	2 years		X		
B-593	Adol.	14 years				X
B-655	Child	6 years			X	X
B-691	Child	4 years				X
B-818	Adol.	<15 years				X
Carlston Annis, Ky						
B-127	Adol.	<15 years		X	X	
Frontenac Island, Ny						
B-131	Child			X	X	
B-132	Adol.	<15 years		X	X	
Bluff Creek, Al						
B-149	Adol.	<15 years		X		
Baum Site, Nd	**Child**	**10 Years**	**X**			
TOTAL $N = 11$			1	5	4	5

Scalping (1/11 = 9.1%); decapitation (5/11 = 45.5%); dismemberment (4/11 = 36.4%); violent death (5/11 = 45.5%).

directly with those skeletal materials and I therefore have confidence in estimates of adult sex assignments. These sites yielded a total of adult 66 violent deaths where sex could be diagnosed with reasonable accuracy. Only 21.1% (14/16) of adult violent deaths occurred among females. A male:female sex ratio of 3.71 indicates that adult males experienced the great majority of violent deaths. Moreover, most of these victims were young adult males who ranged from 16 to 35 years of age at time of death. Adult women do not appear to have been preferred targets of violent assault and trophy taking during Archaic Period times. However, as with children, adult female victims of lethal assault and trophy taking did occur.

Collectively, the finding that victims of violent injuries, death and trophy taking include children and adults of both sexes (i.e., a broad demographic range) at some of these Late Archaic sites supports the inference that warriors and war parties acted on the principles of social substitution and collective liability. The latter are attributes of social complexity that are characteristic of societies with segmented social organizations and a well developed concept of group identity and group interests.

Demographic Correlates of Conflict and Warfare

A substantial body of literature on the anthropology of warfare in simple and complex human societies is now available to interested readers (Carneiro

1994; Ember and Ember 1997; Ferguson 1997, 2003: Keeley 1996; LeBlanc 1999; Milner et al. 1991; Reyna and Downs 1994; and references therein). Many different behavioral, economic and/or political factors have been proposed to account for acts of intergroup aggression and violence. However, it is now clear that a few fundamental features seem to characterize warfare in modern and premodern human societies. First, some degree of conflict and aggression occurs at varying degrees of frequency and intensity in all human societies. Despite earlier assertions to the contrary, Ember (1978) demonstrated that intergroup conflict and violence are essentially a cultural universal in human societies. This is so even though such behaviors may be manifest on a temporary or transient basis over time.

Second, it appears that demographic change is one of the strongest correlates of warfare in human societies. In particular, Keeley (1996) notes periods of rapid population growth are often followed by periods of elevated aggression. Regardless of absolute population size, if a society undergoes a phase of rapid population growth the net effect will be to decrease the number of opportunities that future members of society will have in order to achieve levels of status comparable to those of their elders and ancestors (Keeley 1996). A common short-term response, or solution, to this dilemma in simple societies is to increase the frequency and intensity of intergroup warfare. Under such conditions it would also be reasonable to hypothesize that human trophy-taking behaviors would become a more frequent and important activity associated with acts of externalized aggression.

When population growth recedes and opportunities for critical resources (i.e., food, mates and achieved status) become more accessible, we would expect that levels of intergroup warfare and raiding would decrease or cease altogether for an indefinite period of time.

Evidence for population growth during the Archaic Period is supported by the fact that this was a time when dramatic increase in the number of local and regional archaeological sites became manifest in the Eastern Woodlands of North America (Dye 1996; Walthall 1980). This is also the time when resource abundance and harvesting economies permitted some Archaic peoples to contract their home range, reduce annual and seasonal mobility, and establish formal cemeteries. These mortuary facilities were often located at or near a fixed resource such as a freshwater mussel shoal. Many of these cemeteries were in use for long periods of time (Meindl et al. 2001; Pedde and Prufer 2001; Charles and Buikstra 1983; Winters 1974).

Information about cemetery formation and demographic composition can be of value in identifying particular time periods when rapid population growth occurred. We currently have a much better radiocarbon database for understanding the chronological relationships among and between many Archaic Period sites in the Eastern Woodlands (Marquardt and Watson, 2005). However, information about diachronic relationships within particular sites remains problematic. This is due in part to the nature of site deposits themselves, subsequent taphonomic factors, and the technological limitations that existed when many of these sites were excavated during the WPA years prior to World War II.

Here I would like to explore the potential relationship between population growth and warfare by examining burial depth data for the Carlston Annis (Bt5) ($n = 390$), Ward (McL11) ($n = 422$), and Indian Knoll (Oh2) ($n = 880$) Late Archaic sites from Kentucky. These sites are of interest because they each yielded relatively large numbers of individuals, and because burial depth data is readily available from museum records and/or research publications. For each of these sites the depth of each burial was recorded in feet and inches.

For the exercises to follow, burial depth is used as a proxy variable for time. Thus, relative to the overall process of site formation, deeper graves are assumed to be older and shallow graves are regarded to be more recent in time (i.e., vertical stratification). Although it is recognized that archaeological sites can develop in the horizontal or transverse dimension, here it is assumed that the dominant mode of site formation was vertical accretion over time.

A potential source of bias in the vertical placement of graves concerns the extent to which smaller infants and subadults may have been buried in shallower graves. In order to examine this, I partitioned burials for each of the three sites into subsamples defined as infants (all skeletal remains under one year of age excluding *in utero* fetal remains), subadults (all individuals 15 years of age or younger at time of death), and adults (all individuals 16 years of age or older at time of death).

If body size markedly influenced burial depth, then we would expect to see large numbers of adults represented in the deepest graves. Similarly, greater numbers of subadults would be distributed at more intermediate depths, and infants would be better represented at more shallow depths. Results summarized in Tables 9.7a, 9.8a, and 9.9a and illustrated in Figures 9.11a, 9.12a, and 9.13a show that infants, subadults and adults are distributed in similar ways at various cemetery depths at each of the three Late Archaic Kentucky sites. Thus, there is no evidence to support the idea that a cultural mortuary bias related to body size influenced burial depth, and therefore the vertical placement, of bodies that were included in these cemeteries.

With regard to the issue of population growth it could be predicted that a stationary society with a near zero growth rate, where crude birth rate equals crude death rate, would fill a cemetery over time with near equal numbers of individuals. For example, if a cemetery contained 500 bodies, and had a depth of 5 feet, and individuals were buried at the same or similar depths, then we would expect a near-linear distribution over time such that 20% of individuals would be represented in each 12-in. level of the cemetery). It is interesting that all three Late Archaic sites show differential filling of their respective cemeteries.

One indication that these populations were growing during the early and middle periods of site formation concerns the fact that the number of bodies successively increase from the low to intermediate depths. Again, if depth serves as a relative measure of time, then the periods of peak filling for these cemeteries occur at depths of 5–4 ft. for Carlston Annis, 3-2 ft. for Ward, and 5–3 ft. for Indian Knoll (Figures 9.11b, 9.12b, and 9.13b, respectively). If we refer back to Tables 9.11a, 9.12a and 9.13a, where burials were partitioned by infants, subadults, and

Table 9.7a. Carlston Annis (Bt5) Burial Depth Data Partitioned by Adult, Subadult, and Infant Subsamples.

Burial depth	Adults		Subadults		Infants	
(feet)	*N*	(%)	*N*	(%)	*N*	(%)
0–0.99	5	2.2	1	0.6	0	0.0
1–1.99	28	12.6	11	6.8	9	14.1
2–2.99	39	17.5	24	14.9	8	12.5
3–3.99	34	15.2	34	21.1	12	18.8
4–4.99	49	22.0	43	26.7	13	20.3
5–5.99	35	15.7	19	11.8	9	14.1
6–6.99	29	13.0	22	13.7	8	12.5
7+	4	1.8	7	4.3	5	7.8
TOTAL	223		161		64	

Table 9.7b. Carlston Annis (Bt5) Burial Depth Data Partitioned by the Total Burial Versus the Violent Death Subsamples

Burial depth	Total sample		Violent death sample	
(feet)	*N1*	(%)	*N2*	(%)
0.0–0.99	6	1.6	1	6.3
1.0–1.99	39	10.2	1	6.3
2.0–2.99	63	16.4	4	25.0
3.0–3.99	68	17.7	7	43.6
4.0–4.99	92	24.0	1	6.3
5.0–5.99	54	14.1	1	6.3
6.0–6.99	51	13.3	1	6.3
7.0+	11	2.9	0	0.0
TOTAL	384		16	4.2

Table 9.8a. Ward Site (McL11) Burial Depth Data Partitioned by Adult, Subadult, and Infant Subsamples

Burial depth	Adults		Subadults		Infants	
(feet)	*N*	(%)	*N*	(%)	*N*	(%)
0–0.99	29	13.2	12	6.5	9	9.2
1–1.99	54	24.4	57	30.7	30	30.6
2–2.99	75	33.9	76	40.9	38	38.8
3–3.99	50	22.6	35	18.8	19	19.4
4–4.99	11	5.0	4	2.2	0	0.0
5+	2	0.9	2	1.1	2	2.0
TOTAL	221		186		98	

Table 9.8b. Ward Site (McL11) Burial Depth Data Partitioned by the Total Burial Versus the Violent Death Subsamples

Burial depth (feet)	Total sample		Violent death sample	
	*N*1	(%)	*N*2	(%)
0.0–0.99	39	9.4	0	0.0
1.0–1.99	119	28.6	14	46.7
2.0–2.99	154	37.0	9	30.0
3.0–3.99	84	20.2	7	23.3
4.0–4.99	15	3.6	0	0.0
5.0–5.99	5	1.2	0	0.0
TOTAL	416		30	7.2

Table 9.9a. Indian Knoll (Oh2) Burial Depth Data Partitioned by Adult, Subadult, and Infant Subsamples

Burial depth (feet)	Adults		Subadults		Infants	
	N	(%)	*N*	(%)	*N*	(%)
0–0.99	7	1.5	13	3.3	10	4.6
1–1.99	41	9.0	45	11.5	26	12.0
2–2.99	66	14.4	62	15.9	36	16.7
3–3.99	87	19.0	90	23.1	57	26.4
4–4.99	104	22.8	71	18.2	46	21.3
5–5.99	42	9.2	50	12.8	26	12.0
6–6.99	60	13.1	31	7.9	10	4.6
7+	50	10.9	28	7.2	5	2.3
TOTAL	457		390		216	

Table 9.9b. Indian Knoll (Oh2) Burial Depth Data Partitioned by the Total Burial Versus the Violent Death Subsamples

Burial depth (feet)	Total sample		Violent death sample	
	*N*1	(%)	*N*2	(%)
0.0–0.99	32	3.6	0	0.0
1.0–1.99	93	10.6	6	14.0
2.0–2.99	145	16.5	8	18.6
3.0–3.99	182	20.7	1	2.3
4.0–4.99	172	19.6	4	9.3
5.0–5.99	97	11.0	1	2.3
6.0–6.99	81	9.2	15	34.9
7.0+	77	8.8	8	18.6
TOTAL	879		43	4.9

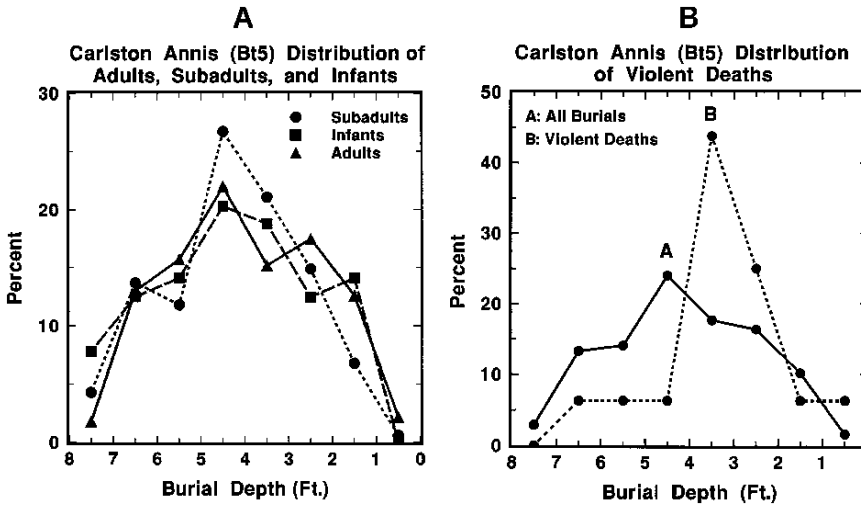

Figure 9.11. (a) Carlston Annis (Bt5) burial depth distribution by percent for the adult, subadult, and infant subsamples. (b) Carlston Annis (Bt5) burial depth distribution by percent for all burials versus the subsample of violent deaths.

adult subsamples, it is also apparent that cemetery depths of peak filling are also those intervals where the greatest proportion of subadults occur at each site. This is important because we would expect periods of rapid population growth to be represented by a high proportion of subadults in each respective skeletal age

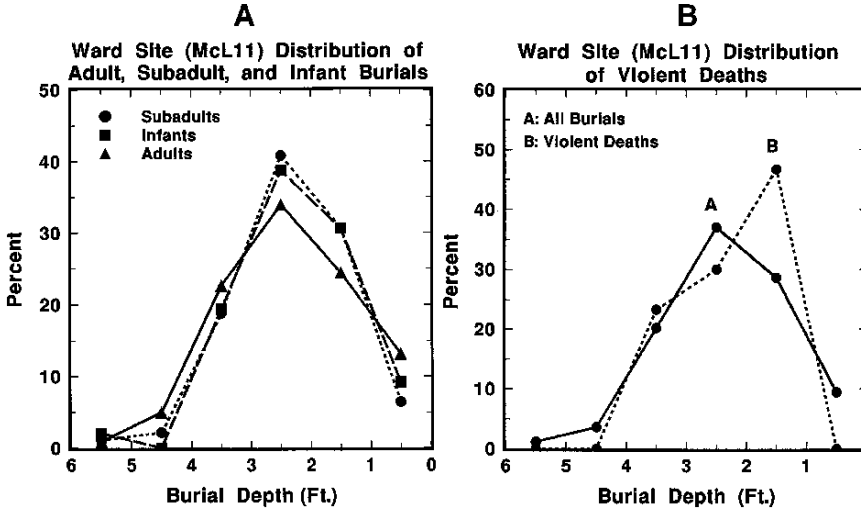

Figure 9.12. (a) Ward Site (McL11) burial depth distribution by percent for the adult, subadult, and infant subsamples. (b) Ward Site (McL11) burial depth distribution by percent for all burials versus the subsample of violent deaths.

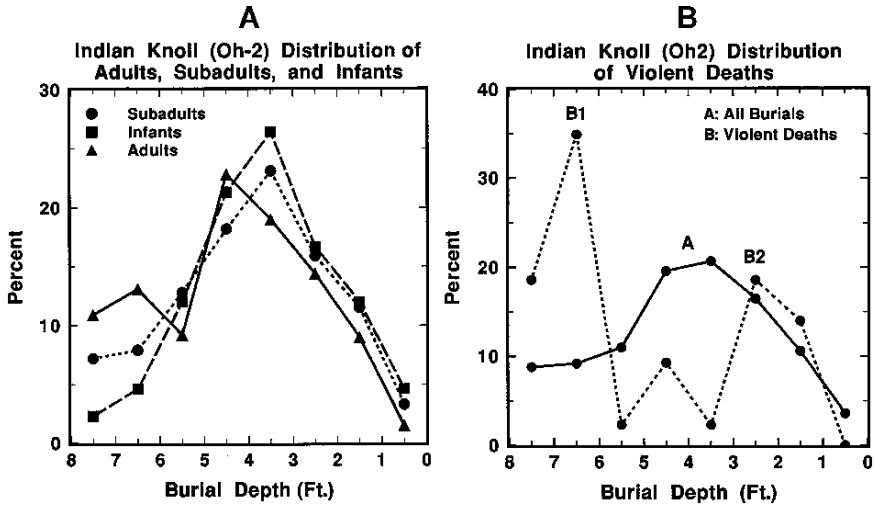

Figure 9.13. (a) Indian Knoll (Oh2) burial depth distribution by percent for the adult, subadult, and infant sub-samples. (b) Indian Knoll (Oh2) burial depth distribution by percent for all burials versus the subsample of violent deaths.

distribution. Thus, a pattern of differential cemetery filling, associated with a high proportion of subadults in the period of peak filling, suggests that the populations were growing and reached a peak population density during the middle vertical strata of site/cemetery formation. The data also indicate a subsequent decline in population size and cemetery use for these three sites.

Finally, all three Late Archaic sites exhibit a lag phase where periods of peak filling (time of maximum population growth) are followed by a peak in the proportion of violent deaths that occurred at each site (Tables 9.7b, 9.8b and 9.9b; Figures 9.11b, 9.12b and 9.13b). These results are concordant with those predicted by Keeley (1996). The only exception to this is the distribution of violent deaths at Indian Knoll (Oh2) (Table 9.9b and Figure 9.13b). Data for this site show a bimodal pattern where the first peak in violent deaths occurs at the deepest levels (6–8 ft.). This is interesting because it suggests that the claim, acquisition and territorial defense of that particular resource may have resulted in costly retaliation. The second peak in violent deaths at Indian Knoll followed the period of peak cemetery filling at the site (i.e., the pattern observed for the Carlston Annis (Bt5) and Ward (McL11) sites).

The evidence for warfare-related deaths, violent injuries, and trophy-taking behaviors in the Archaic Period is similar in some ways to the evidence put forth by Marquardt (1985) to support the hypothesis that at least some of these fisher-hunter-gatherer societies had evolved higher levels of social complexity. That is, geographically widespread artifact and skeletal evidence for these behaviors does exist. However, such evidence is relatively uncommon overall, and even more

infrequent at any particular site. It now seems that the emergence of segmented societies and social complexity in the Late Archaic Period primarily affected those groups with sufficient resources to sustain an indefinite phase of rapid population growth. A subsequent increase in intergroup warfare occurred. In some cases the warfare complex included perimortem mutilations and human trophy-taking behavior. However, the differential burial depth data for all individuals versus those that died violent deaths at Carlston Annis (Bt5), Ward (McL11) and Indian Knoll (Oh2) suggest that levels of warfare were generally low during most time periods of site occupation. In other words, peaceful relationships and successful mechanisms of conflict resolution likely characterized these peoples and prevailed during much of their life history as a culture (Marquardt and Watson 2005; Marquardt 1985).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The data and issues presented in this chapter can be summarized briefly as follows. First, though not common, scalping was geographically widespread in the Eastern United States by Late Archaic times. At least 13 individuals exhibit cut marks indicative of scalping. These individuals were identified from sites in North Dakota, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Nine scalping victims were adult males, three were adult females, and one was a ten-year-old child. The child and two of the adult females survived the initial assault to die shortly thereafter of infections associated with bone necrosis and ulceration. Thus, all 13 victims suffered a lethal outcome associated with scalping.

Entire heads represent the body part most often removed as a consequence of warfare-related perimortem mutilation. Evidence that demonstrates, or is strongly consistent with, decapitation was also widespread by Late Archaic times. At least 67 decapitated bodies were identified in undisturbed graves from sites in New York, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Florida. Many of these victims showed other evidence of perimortem violent death and dismemberments. And, while only 13 individuals showed cut mark evidence of scalping during this time period, it should be recognized that the 67 missing heads may also have provided source material for scalp and mandible trophies.

Thus far, only 38 human bone and tooth artifacts have been recovered from Archaic Period sites. However, as noted by Webb (1948) they too have a wide geographic distribution in the Eastern United States. And, Smith (1997) notes that the body parts used to make those artifacts conform very well to the kinds of body parts that are found missing from decapitated and dismembered individuals. In addition to scalps and possible trophy heads, it is clear that cut, polished, and curated human femur shaft bone tubes were also trophy items of special significance to some of the Archaic peoples. Seven of these items have been identified in the Eastern United States from three sites in Kentucky and two sites in Tennessee. A small number of human skull cap bowls and gorgets, lower jaw bones, and necklaces of worked human teeth are also likely trophy items from this time period.

It is interesting that, relative to the total number of body parts removed from victims, only 2–19% of body part materials ever survived to be recovered as an artifact. This may mean that most of the body parts were either discarded outright, or were used in victory celebrations and then disposed of. Many of these items could have been trophies of short-term symbolic value, a phenomenon that is most likely to occur in nonhierarchical societies that do not permit significant prestige and status differentials to emerge or persist for extended periods of time.

In sum, it is suggested here that human trophy-taking behavior, as a warfare-related activity, provides information about the level of social complexity that characterizes societies that practice the behavior. If this is so, then we have an additional diagnostic criterion that can be used to support the speculation that some or most Late Archaic shell midden cultures in Eastern North America had evolved complex lineage based political and socioeconomic social organizations (Marquardt 1985). Evidence presented here that documents trophy taking, and the inclusion of women and children as targets of warfare and trophy taking, support the inference that concepts of group responsibility, group liability and social substitution influenced the character and pattern of warfare that many, but not all, of these groups engaged in. As such, these behaviors provide additional knowledge about the evolution of hunter-gatherer social complexity in the prehistoric Eastern United States.

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Chapter 10

Severed Heads and Sacred Scalplocks

Mississippian Iconographic Trophies

James A. Brown and David H. Dye

Severed trophy heads play a prominent role in Mississippian art. Perhaps the most distinctive iconographic trophy motif is the severed agnathous humanlike head of the Braden style. Agnathous heads occur during the Middle Mississippian period as elements of regalia for highly specific Mississippian headdresses as depicted in copper repoussé plates and engraved marine shell cups. We suggest that ritual regalia utilizing trophy motifs served not only as a symbol of success at war but as a metaphor for specific mythic narratives that identify prowess in mortal combat with high stakes gaming with the ultimate triumph of life over death.

INTRODUCTION

Images of decapitated heads are widely cited as proof of violent intergroup conflict in the southeast during the Mississippian Period. Such images reinforce a picture built upon a contemporaneous archaeological record of deadly violence on human bodies and widespread defensively protected towns (Dye 1995; Milner 1999).

It is seductively easy to slip into an easy conflation of images and physical evidence, and in so doing perceive artistic imagery here and elsewhere as a contemporary pictorial document. That is, it is primarily a pictorial confirmation of biological and physical reality. In this snapshot-of-reality view, ancient imagery becomes a passive record of real events. But this perspective fails to recognize the active role that religious beliefs have in selecting those images deemed appropriate

for honoring the sacred, particularly on objects engaged in sacred activities (Knight et al. 2001). To access these religious beliefs it is necessary to look beneath what the art historian Panofsky (1939) calls "identifiable visible form" in imagery for the likely emic or "conventional" meaning (Phillips and Brown 1978: 103–4).

When the iconographic context is taken into consideration Mississippian images of decapitation disclose a more complex message. That message turns out to be related only tangentially to actual pre-Columbian warfare practices. The images instead connect to an ideology in which death is but the necessary precondition to the regeneration of life. They lie close to the heart of an allegory that is invoked about the cosmological mainspring of human regeneration. By tapping into an emic view of how human life is renewed, death becomes part of a perpetual cycle. The theme is a global one in which human mortality is translated into something eternal and immortal (Bloch 1982).

THE SEVERED HEAD IN THE SOUTHEASTERN CEREMONIAL COMPLEX

An important place to begin exploration into severed head imagery is with the two Rogan copper repoussé plates from Etowah Mound C (Thomas 1894). The Rogan plates are significant as widely recognized archetypes of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (henceforth SECC) (Brain and Phillips 1996; Brown 1975, 1976, 1985, 1996, 2000; Brown and Kelly 2000; Dye 2003; Gillies 1998; Howard 1968; Hudson 1984; Knight 1986:680, 1995; Knight et al. 2001:138; Lacefield 1995; Phillips and Brown 1978, 1984; Waring and Holder 1945).

Waring and Holder (1945) used the two Rogan plates to identify the icons of the SECC and their material counterparts in the archaeological record. Although the way these connections were used limited subsequent conceptions of the complex, Waring and Holder helped focus scholars' attention on the ritual acts of specific heroes on these plates (Brown 2007a; Brown and Kelly 2000).

Decapitated heads are a conspicuous component of the Rogan plate imagery. In each case a severed head is grasped in the left hand of a dancing warrior while in one of the plates the other hand brandishes a mace-shaped weapon. Although the right arm of plate No. 2 is broken away, the two plates are otherwise so nearly identical compositionally as to suppose that a mace was grasped in the right hand of this plate as well (Figure 10.1).

Another detail reinforces the figure's combatant quality. This is the large heart-shaped object suspended from the front of his belt. Comparative analysis among various renditions of this "apronlike" article engraved on marine shell lead to the conclusion that it represents none other than a scalp, with a rectangular headdress plaque occupying the upper center, out from which flows long suspended hair (Phillips and Brown 1978:98–100; Brown n.d.). This duo of severed heads and scalps leads to a question: If the Rogan images represent serial killing, why are

Figure 10.1. Morning Star as Birdman. Slain adversary at belt and "father's" head in hand. Copper repoussé plate (Rogan No. 1) in Classic Braden style from an Early Wilbanks-phase grave in Etowah Mound C, Georgia. Smithsonian Institution, Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC A91117. (Reproduced with permission of D. E. Hurlbert.)

the scalps on the belt depicted so differently from the beheaded victims? And why does the severed head bear the sacred forked eye surround associated with the falcon, whereas the scalp on the belt simply repeats the headdress formally similar to its counterpart on the central figure? What kind of sacred identity is conveyed by these markings? Evidently, markings on these images are deliberate and not simply casual depictions of aggressive combat—not when the central figure is so minutely decked out in ritual gear. Obviously, there is more to this avimorphic human image than the preiconographic visible form reveals.

Archaeological evidence reveals a severed head connection deep within the social fabric of the period. Elite status was displayed through the entombment of symbol-laden copper emblems that associate condensed wealth, ritual weaponry, combat trophies, and ceremonial regalia with specific high-ranking individuals. Associations with conspicuous display of long knives, clubs, and axes only add to the emergent picture of bloody warfare. The same hand-held weapons are found elaborated into utility-compromising forms fabricated from fragile and expensive materials (Brown 1996).

Outstanding examples of these are the monolithic axes and delicately chipped stone blades found interred with elaborately accoutered dead in the most exclusive precincts of major settlements (e.g., Larson 1971). The use to which these hypertrophic versions of utilitarian weapons were put likewise underscores the degree to which these instruments of battle were incorporated into the political economy (Dye 2004). The combined pattern fits all too comfortably with a blanket characterization of the period as widely ridden with deadly conflict, if not one occupied with celebrating it as well. But this latter extension finds slender support from an analysis of SECC imagery.

Severed head imagery has been documented in a wide range of media. Sheet copper, marine shell surfaces, pottery, carved stone, and wood are some of the important materials. Of these, repoussé copper plaques, engraved shell cups and gorgets, and engraved pottery have claimed the greatest share of archaeological attention because these objects have served as a very rich source of iconic imagery (Phillips and Brown 1978, 1984).

The entire Southeast, broadly conceived, has participated in the production of these images of decapitation, including Cahokia, Etowah, Moundville, Spiro, and the Memphis area of the Mississippi alluvial valley. Of these locations Cahokia was the place where figurative imagery emerged by AD 1200 as the Classic Braden style (Brown 2004). This style represents for many the epitome of the SECC (Brown and Kelly 2000). The decapitation theme has a prominent place in this canonical form of regional image-making (Brown 2004). In the succeeding century Classic Braden inspired styles formed in other regions of the Southeast. The strong impact that Classic Braden had on the Craig style of the Red River and the Ozarks region was accompanied by the theme of decapitation (Brown 2004; Phillips and Brown 1978, 1984). This area has come to include what has been identified as the Caddo area. The record from the central Mississippi alluvial valley consists of a development out of Classic Braden known as the Late Braden style (Brown 2007b). Classic and Late Braden likewise inspired some of the imagery in the Hemphill style of the Moundville area and the Hightower style of Etowah and eastern Tennessee (Muller 1989, 1999).

In the twelfth century prior to the consolidation of the Classic Braden style, some remarkable sculpted shrine figures were produced at Cahokia (Brown 1997a; Emerson et al. 2003). They were carved from a brick red claystone and range in size from about 13 cm to as tall as 27 cm (Brown 1996). Outside of the Cahokian region they are found modified into pipes in a broad distribution of the Southeast (Brown

Figure 10.2. Spiritual conqueror. Redstone sculpture, from the Craig Mound, Spiro, Oklahoma (greatly restored), Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC 21/4088. (Reproduced with permission of John Bigelow Taylor.)

1996; Emerson et al. 2003). Both female and male gods or heroes constitute the sculpted subject matter. Mythic themes are consistently depicted where sufficient detail is present to make this connection (Brown 1997b; Emerson et al. 2003; Prentice 1996; Reilly 2004).

One of the male figures, however, features a ritual execution as part of its identity. This sculpture, dubbed the "Conquering Warrior," was one of the statutes converted into a pipe and recovered archaeologically at the Spiro site in eastern Oklahoma (Brown 1996:520–523; Burnett 1945; Dye 2004; Emerson et al. 2003; Fundaburk and Foreman 1957:Pl. 100 upper; Hamilton 1952). The piece portrays an oversized, armored supernatural executing a crouched victim seized by the neck (Figure 10.2).

The right-hand wields a club that decapitates the hapless victim with a slice-through-the-mouth cut (Burnett 1945; Dye 2004:Fig. 16a,b; Fundaburk and

Foreman 1957:Pl. 100 upper). The club is recognizable as a type of mace that is one of the distinctive kinds of weapons elaborated in chipped stone (Dye 2004). Hypertrophic bifaces of this mace type have been recovered in Early Mississippian contexts throughout the southeast (Brown 1996). Actually, these chipped stone versions were too brittle to behead anyone. That task would have been readily accomplished by hardwood versions of the kind preserved in the waterlogged deposits of Key Marco in southwestern Florida (Gilliland 1975:123).

Decapitated heads were well established in SECC regalia and associated status paraphernalia early in the thirteenth century and continued throughout the sequence into Late Braden (Brown 2004, 2007a). The Rogan plates are typical of Classic Braden style although they were deposited with the elite dead after that style had been replaced by Late Braden. The ragged necks of complete heads convey a message of decapitation. Other attributes of the severed head motif have changed over time. Complete heads are typical of the thirteenth century, but over time severed, agnathous—or jawless—heads seem to prevail. These agnathous heads constitute a distinctive iconographic trophy motif. Even contemporaneous full heads have the lower jaw set off from the rest of the head by a painted zone that copies the agnathous head (Brown 2004; Childs 1993).

On copper repoussé plates and engraved marine shell cups agnathous heads are depicted as elements of regalia in highly specific Mississippian headdresses. Agnathous heads are also portrayed on copper repoussé plates. An anthropomorphic repoussé copper hawk plate from the Malden cache of southeast Missouri portrays a Birdman with an agnathous human head fastened into its headdress (Brose et al. 1985:Plate 118; Brown 2004:Figure 23; Fowke 1910:Plate 16; Watson 1950:Figure 3) (Figure 10.3). Another repoussé copper plate fragment from Spiro displays a Birdman dancer holding an agnathous severed head (Burnett 1945:Plate 74; Hamilton et al. 1974: Figure 70).

Agnathous heads are engraved on Classic Braden shell cups from Spiro alone and as elements of high-crested feather headdresses (Phillips and Brown 1978:87, 146, Plates 2, 17). This form of headdress also incorporates nonagnathous human heads (Phillips and Brown 1978:22g). Agnathous heads appear as elements of regalia at Etowah. A wooden agnathous headed mask was excavated at the Craig Mound, Spiro (Brown 1996: 2–103a). The first of these examples, at least, appears to have been attached to headdresses. Images of decapitation occur in three types of artwork associated with the high-crested feather headdress (Sampson and Esarey 1993:469). Wooden human head rattles lacking mandibles have been found at the Emmons cemetery (Conrad 1989:110, 1991:144; Kelly 1991:73; Morse et al. 1961; Sampson and Esarey 1993), and at Etowah (Brain and Phillips 1996:159; Larson 1957, 1959) and Spiro (Brown 1996:528). Osage gourd rattles were said to symbolically represent the head of a man; the pebbles inside the rattle were said to be the teeth; and the handle was the forearm (Bailey 1995:80).

Ceramic vessels become a particularly important component of the post-thirteenth century SECC. The central focus of the symbolic portrayal of trophies on ceramic containers suggests that in the context of military-related rituals appeals for supernatural power and purification continued to be important in elite ideologies.

Figure 10.3. Unknown (Native North American, Mississippian, Missouri), Repoussé Plaque, c. 1200–1400. Copper 11 3/3 × 5 1/4 in. Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO 63130-4899. (Gift of J. Max Wulfing, 1937.)

The SECC trophy theme at Moundville, for example, is outlined in the work of Gillies (1998:56–62), Knight (1995), and Lacefield (1995:42–43). Of the eleven themes identified in the Hemphill engraved style on Moundville ceramics, the trophy theme is the second most prevalent (Lacefield 1995:37). The principle components of the trophy theme include the scalplock, skull, forearm bones, and hand and eye motifs, occurring in various combinations. Severed human heads, including agnathous decapitation, raptor heads, and raptor tails also belong to the Moundville trophy theme (Gillies 1998:34, 96; Knight 1995:5). At Moundville these themes are engraved in registers laid out on the body of polished subglobular bottles (Gillies 1998:74).

In the Central Mississippi Valley ceramic bottles modeled as human heads and painted, engraved, incised, and appliquéd with motifs depicting human heads and scalplocks are found with some variations in design, combination sets, and execution (Childs 1993; Dye 2002; Hathcock 1983, 1988; McNutt and Childs 2002; Morse and Morse 1983; O'Brien 1994).

Three Walls Engraved jars from eastern Arkansas exhibit panels of severed heroic warrior heads (Childs 1993:143–144; Hathcock 1988:35; Phillips and Brown 1978:201). One good Late Braden–style vessel has half-snapped war clubs, while another vessel exhibits a series of severed heads alternating with scalp locks. On another bottle severed heads are engraved on the base, surrounded by forearms with partially attached severed hands (Childs 1993:Figures 3, 5b). SECC motifs continue in the Central Mississippi Valley into the early seventeenth century, where severed heads, warclubs, and scalp motifs are painted and engraved on ceramic bottles (Hathcock 1983:99–105). Another example of Late Braden severed heads is the Hollywood beaker from Georgia (Brain and Phillips 1996:300).

Engraved imagery on the haft of the Wilbanks monolithic ax from northwest Georgia, for example, exhibits the key diagnostic markers for Late Braden: oblong scalp pendants with circular head plates, human heads with snarling mouths, and scalloped lines drawn from the nose to the lower ear region, setting off the jaw from the upper face (Brown 2007b; Phillips and Brown 1978:72) (Figure 10.4). The scalloped line treatment across the face is likely to be another detail that mimics

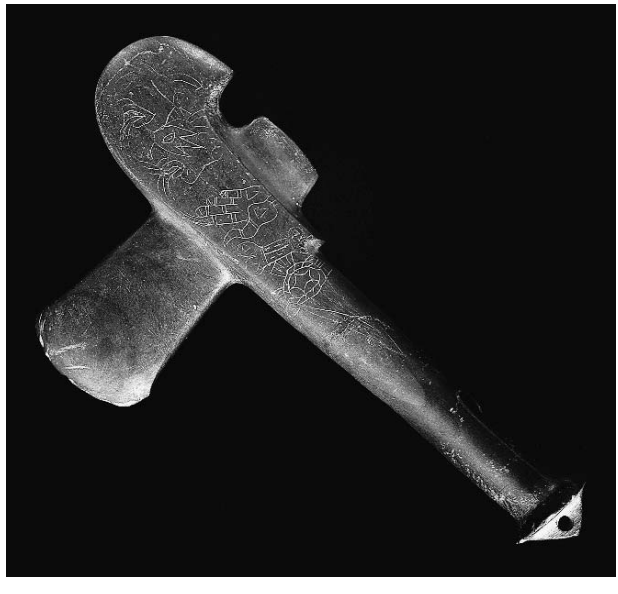

Figure 10.4. Stone monolithic axe from the Wilbanks site, Georgia. Smithsonian Institution, Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC A317614. (Reproduced with permission of D. E. Hurlbert.)

the agnathous human head. It is present on the severed head shell gorget from Moundville (Brown 2007b; Moore 1907:Figure 97).

The early to mid-fourteenth century marks the shift in the portrayal of the scalp images from an article of ritual dress to an oblong scalp object to become a free-standing emblem of elite honor and prowess (Brown 2000). The headdress plaques likewise shifted from a rectangular device to a circular one. The circular plaque scalp gorgets are fashioned from red ironstone and copper plaques and have been interpreted as stylized circular scalps with hanging hair (Brown n.d.; Hudson 1976:251; Wilkins 2001). These insignia and badges of status, perhaps representing scalps of slain supernaturals, were interred as mortuary gifts for preeminent individuals. Examples of Late Braden circular scalp motifs are found on ceramics from the Central Mississippi Valley (Childs 1993:146) and Moundville (Moore 1905:Figures 146–147). In both areas oblong scalp motifs are associated on ceramics with severed heads and forearms with partially attached severed hands.

THE CONVENTIONAL MEANING OF BIRDMAN

The sheer number of isolated heads points to the prominence of head collecting during the middle portion of the Mississippian Period (AD 1200–1400). Severed heads catalogued above look like a signature of warfare. But are they?

Good reasons to think otherwise emerge when we move beyond the Southeastern archaeological penchant for reading the iconography of the Mississippian Southeast as a depiction of real events in real time—that is, as snapshots from the realm of experience. Knight et al. (2001) have argued at length that all the imagery of the SECC has to do with supernaturals, supernatural events, and aspects of the sacred. Hence, action takes place in mythic time, not natural time. In this light the subject of decapitation should reference the other world, in particular when imagery is placed on expensive materials of beaten native copper and laboriously prepared marine shell surfaces. Of course, events in mythic time require costume and other details to be ones that contemporaries were familiar with. Those "realistic" details cannot be the basis upon which a "snapshots-of-reality" approach is justified. Just how different from reality these depictions are will become evident the following comments.

By eliminating ordinary activities of everyday life from consideration Knight et al. (2001) force us to side-step the descriptive implications of the preiconographic or "surface" form and recognize the emic, conventional meanings attached to these images. Just such an emic meaning was advanced by Brown (1997a,b; 2007a). He argued that Birdman imagery references the mythic struggles of Morning Star, one of whose names is Red Horn among certain Siouan speaking groups.

Robert Hall (1991, 1997) initiated this line of thinking when he identified two specific visual markers of the mythic twentieth-century Red Horn in ancient precontact images. He pointed out the similarity of the long-nosed god ear maskettes to the animated faces Red Horn wore in his ears (Diaz-Granados 2004:

Figures 19, 20). These objects composed one of his names—"He-who-wears-human-heads-as-earrings." Our hero worked these ears with long-nosed faces to seduce his female adversary, thereby enabling Red Horn to successfully game against his deadly adversaries, the Giants (Brown 1997a,b; Hall 1997). Hall (1989, 1997) followed this observation by pointing out that the Bi-lobed arrow headdress worn by the bird figure is none other than that of the Calumet stem. It is this stem, called by its alternative name of "Deer Lungs," that Pawnee and Siouan speaking peoples of the Prairie Plains employed as an instrument for conferring a new identity upon individuals and symbolically to bring them to life. Later—in the Calumet Dance—it became an instrument in an adoption ceremony that conferred a new name upon strangers, thereby incorporating them into the local group. A third name for Red Horn was "Deer Lungs."

To further cement the connection to the theme of rebirth, the falcon markings that accompany "Birdman" also provide a direct link to human rejuvenation in Osage ritual (Brown 2007a; LaFlesche 1939). The falcon, it will be remembered, is used worldwide as embodying the principle of a very swift and deadly attack.

In the Winnebago version of the Red Horn myth, Birdman has a conventional name, Red Horn, which recalls his long braid of magical, red-colored hair. In other Winnebago myths this and other long braids are clearly provided a phallic significance (Brown 2007a). The Rogan plates feature a braid hanging to the side that is distinct from the figure's own hair so carefully coiffed into a bun. Thus the braid is part of his headdress. From the forefronting of the long braid as a separate part of the headdress, it is evident that the Rogan Birdmen embodies a significant portion of the identity of the twentieth-century "Red Horn" (Brown 1997b, 2007a).

Another combination of Red Horn attributes is incorporated into the famous "Resting Warrior" pipe, a male figurine that was carved in the twelfth century at Cahokia and deposited some two centuries later at the Spiro site in eastern Oklahoma (Figure 10.5). He bears a carefully modeled headdress braid that is tied to the side of the head (Reilly 2004: Figure 13a,b). This sculpture also bears ear maskettes of the "long-nosed god" type, albeit shortened by necessity of the soft stone medium (Brown 1996: 522–523).

In sum, the four material markers of the Red Horn deity of the Rogan figures and Resting Warrior pipe are concrete instruments of powers attributed to Red Horn—one is his capacity to play a lewd trick over death; the second is his capacity to confer new life; the third is his phallic braid; and the fourth is his prowess in combat. Each of these powers play into aspects of Morning Star's cosmic narrative.

THE MORNING STAR THEME

Just what is the cosmic narrative in a range of groups of the Prairie-Plains region? Morning Star is the champion of his brother the Sun and precedes him into the predawn sky, where he is conceived of as in single-handed combat with the

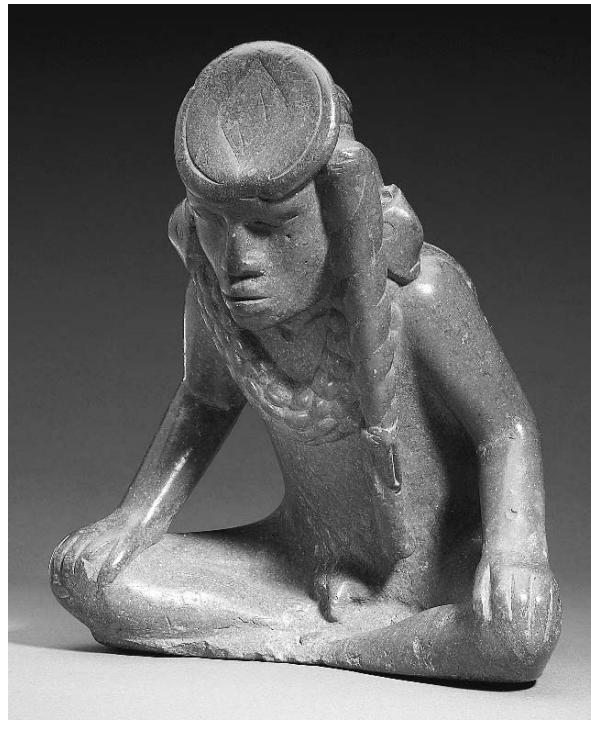

Figure 10.5. Morning Star. Redstone sculpture from the Great Mortuary deposit, Craig Mound, Spiro, Oklahoma. University of Arkansas Museum, Fayetteville 47-2-1. (Reproduced with permission of John Bigelow Taylor.)

deity of Night. Morning Star thereby assures the safe passage of the Sun into the heavens where the latter can provide life-sustaining warmth. In the course of the day the Sun eventually sets and gives way to night, in a manner analogous to the end of life. Morning Star likewise loses his last fight with the Night—only to reemerge as a reincarnated being the following day. According to Dieterle (2005) the color reference in the name, Red Horn, refers to the rosy-colored sky before the sunrise.

Morning Star has other important work. In his journey across the sky this deity's goal has been to seek out and impregnate the elusive Evening Star. With successful achievement of this goal, Morning Star has concluded his life's mission. The child of their union becomes humanity's ancestor or ancestress, depending on whether descent is calculated patrilineally or matrilineally.

From the perspective of Morning Star's celestial labors the Rogan plates, and by extension the severed head motif, take on a meaning that differs from the appearance of simple rudimentary combat. The dancing/jumping stance of the central Birdman figure, together with the scalp on the belt and the head in hand, points to a specific mythic episode.

The sacred power-chartering myth of Red Horn that Paul Radin (1948) was fortunate to have recorded drew upon the succession of day after night to frame the triumph of life over death, in as much as the warmth of day revives the human spirit after the chill of night. The trope is played out in the Winnebago case with the sons of Red Horn tricking and magically overpowering the seeming indomitable force embodied by the Spirit of Death though a combination of human cunning and supernatural powers. Over great odds the boys triumph over the emissaries of death by cooperative use of their magical arrows. Their object was to recover all that remained of their father—his head. Thus restored to the sons, the head made possible continued life. The implied theme of intergenerational continuity is cemented by the identity of the father with the older son in both power and appearance. Thus Red Horn Jr. becomes in an important respect a reincarnation of Red Horn Sr. To cast this intergeneration succession into the sky, the sun of today is but a reincarnation of the sun of yesterday, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Among the various dramatic episodes in the Morning Star myth, the Rogan plates encapsulate the celebratory moment in which the dead father's head is retrieved from the possession of the Spirit of Death, or the "Life Takers." Consider the details: weapon in hand, the right arm is raised aloft in a celebratory flourish, while the left hand holds his father's head. His adversary's scalp lies suspended from his belt. Other iconic detail conveys a compatible message. The bi-lobed arrow, mounted as a headdress in Birdman's hair, is the very instrument used for renewal, reincarnation, and ceremonial identity transformation according to post-contact use of the Calumet (Brown 2007a; Hall 1989, 1997).

In Morning Star's cosmic role as father of humanity we have a strong motif of life-conferring powers, which as Hall (1977) pointed out are reiterated by the specific regenerative powers of the Calumet stems and their ancient forerunners the Bi-lobed Arrow. Death thereby becomes the prelude for the beginning of new life.

DUAL AVENGERS

Red Horn has two sons. In this and related myths the collaboration of the two is essential in accomplishing the task of avenging their father, or uncle, as the case may be. This theme, which features the exploits of the heroic boy twins, has a broad hemisphere-wide distribution. In eastern North America, this theme commonly takes the form of "Lodge Boy and Throw Away" (Radin 1950). In this version of the theme the twins represent opposing human dispositions and possess "contrasting temperamental traits."

Antagonistic as the two are, Radin pointed out that "meaningful activity can only come about through unity and positive willing." (Radin 1950:388). Theirs is not an avenging role. Instead, according to Paul Radin's analysis their unified activity was impelled "by defiance of limitations seemingly arbitrarily set by their father" (Radin 1950:389). Four types of monsters, including giant snakes

and the thunderbirds are attacked with increasingly impulsive abandon (Radin 1950:375). Here wanton killing is used to direct the listener's attention to the consequences of hubris while reinforcing ones obligation to be thoughtful and socially responsible "in a world dominated by strong forces controlled by the gods" (Radin 1950).

The more common variant brings out a message considerably closer to that of Red Horn. This "Children of the Sun" myth falls within a pattern that has a wide distribution in the southwest and in Mesoamerica (Radin 1950:377). As Radin's synopsis of the Winnebago narrative makes clear, the twins were created and set upon this world to correct an imbalance of powers. But unlike the Lodge Boy and Throw Away myth, the plot is set in motion by an outsider. Here we see elements that parallel the one-on-one deadly contest introduced in the Red Horn narrative.

> The next morning a visitor resembling her brother in every respect appears to challenge him to a smoke-inhaling contest. The challenger is defeated, decapitated and burnt up. The visit to the tree-spirit is repeated the next day, additional help is secured, and another challenger appears and is defeated. However, on the third day a new challenger appears, who defeats the brother, decapitates him and rushes off with his head, leaving the sister weeping and holding her brother's headless but still living body in her arms.
>
> Shortly after the brother's decapitation the sister becomes pregnant from the rays of the sun. Two boys are subsequently born to her who resemble their uncle in having their arms inlaid with sharp obsidian blades. Like the Twins [in Lodge Boy and Throw Away] they develop rapidly but always retain diminutive stature. They spend most of their time attending to their uncle's wants until they think the time has arrived for them to visit their father, the Sun. Like the Twins they, too, possess contrasted temperamental traits.
>
> As they sit in the sun-lodge of their father they hear a person approaching, shouting. It is their uncle's slayer. Dangling from his belt they see their uncle's head. The intruder walks straight through the side of the sun-lodge in order to show his contempt for its inmates. The Sun now explains to his sons that their uncle's slayer has obtained his present unlimited powers because he now has not only his own power but also that which the uncle possessed. It is therefore impossible to kill him. He can only be attacked with any chance of success at one place, namely at a lake at the west end of the world, where every day he stops to drink and where his head is then buried in the water. To attack him, the Sun continues, the boys have to succeed in disguising themselves so that he could not detect their approach. After some testing the boys succeed in discovering a proper disguise and set out immediately for the attack. They find him and kill him, and bring their uncle's head to their home, where it is attached to the uncle's body again. The boys, thereupon, take leave of their mother and uncle and ascend to their father's lodge." (Radin 1950: 377–8) [Reproduced with permission of Daimon Verlag]

Many elements significant to both the Red Horn myth and the decapitation imagery are represented in this myth—the divine parentage, the obligatory revenge upon the uncle's slayer, retrieval of the uncle's head, and the twin's final apotheosis into the Heavens. In one version the slayer is made out to be Morning Star, thereby illustrating the overall similarity between the Children of the Sun and the Red Horn myths (Radin 1950).

In all three myths a key element is the different identities the boys possess. Red Horn's senior son was a copy of himself, whereas Red Horn's junior son had his long-nosed faces upon his breasts instead of in his ears. In contrast, the two variations upon the twins theme focus upon personalities to define their differences, with a dramatic birth history enlarging on that difference in Lodge Boy and Throw Away.

In Classic Braden style imagery the sons of Red Horn are treated differently. The younger Red Horn junior has shieldlike devices painted or tattooed over his nipples (Brown and Kelly 2000). In the paired-figure variation of the Hightower style shell gorget, called "Big Toco," the otherwise symmetrical combative figures by a pointed breast marking one (Brain and Phillips 1996). The two are identical except for the small projection on the breast of one.

Different though they are the boys represent a duality that without collaboration remains a power unfulfilled. In each case the boys are called into being to overcome extraordinary opposition. The partition of powers into two underscores the division of powers that confer superior strength. In concert the two can accomplish goals that acting alone cannot achieve.

ICONIC COMPLEXITIES

Although the Morning Star identity of precontact Birdman imagery appears to be secure, many details in the ancient imagery remain unspecified. A number of reasons can be given to account for these loose ends. One is the relatively small set of examples to parse out patterning. Regional variation renders this limitation all the more acute. After all, substantial blocks of major linguistic groups are involved in the ancient participation in the Morning Star ritual if we are to regard it as spread throughout the distribution of the SECC. Whether the participants spoke Siouan, Caddoan, or Muskhogean languages, each can be anticipated to have had its own take on the subject matter (Brown 2004). On the other side of the equation, some emic disjunction can be expected because a considerable lapse of time exists between the ancient imagery and the written texts. Furthermore, an inevitable diversity within communities themselves poses additional variability in the narratives and their material embodiment. Complicating this is the potential for plot motifs to cross over between thematically segregated myths. All of these militate against an easy conflation of the historic Red Horn narratives with the Birdman imagery created seven centuries earlier.

This brings us to the problem of gender marking. Although male identity is pervasive in the postcontact versions of the combat theme, we should not rush to dismiss alternatives. The figure's gender requires examination despite the near universal equation of warriors as male. Although male identity is customarily assumed, female identity is not necessarily foreclosed. After all, we have an image that is not of the ordinary world and one not governed by rules that are supposed to prevail in this world. A larger problem is at stake. If the male principle is involved in the Morning Star myth, it is logical to look for the corresponding female element. This being at issue, its identification becomes an important agenda item.

Those who have advocated a female identification have focused on the projection often shown sticking out from Birdman's chest that is suggestive of a female breast (Brown 1982; Koehler 1997; Levy 1999). This detail, which is very visible on one of the Rogan plates, is somewhat ambiguous (Figure 10.1). It may be a female breast or alternatively either a death-dealing prong , a sharp breastbone, or some chest maskettes on the younger Red Horn. Traditionally, indigenous peoples of the region believed that falcons kill their prey by pressing them against their sharp breast (Howard 1968:44). In Cherokee mythology a giant supernatural hawk, *Tla'nuwai,* obviously a falcon deity, uses its "sharp breast" in precisely this manner (Mooney 1900:284, 466). The actual technique has been revealed by modern stop-action photography. Contrary to the commonly held belief the telling blow is actually dealt quite differently. At the instant of contact the falcon stabs its prey with its raised and frontally engaged talons (Johnsgaard 1990:44). Whatever its significance, the breast or prong is not a trivial detail, but is one intended to identify and differentiate. In principle, all detail has meaning—if only at the level of stylistic conventions of embedded practice.

ETERNAL BALANCE

The juxtaposition of head taking with the regeneration of life is not unusual worldwide. But the ramifications in some areas of the world are very complex. Janet Hoskins (1996) tells us that headhunting has layers of complexity that challenge Western notions regarding its significance.

> Heads are ambiguous political symbols, and we do not want to lift headhunting out of history and make it into something discrete, essentialized, and timeless. There is no reason to assume a single explanation for all cases where heads are taken in raids or warfare. (Hoskins 1996:18)

In southeast Asia, where she draws from mainly, Hoskins (1996) points out that headhunting does not have all the elements that Westerners automatically assume—namely, that an essence lies in the head itself. Furthermore, she observes that by its very existence headhunting lends itself to discourses on other

matters, including human reproduction, which is highly relevant to the Mississippian southeast.

In his classic paper, "Death, Women and Power," Bloch argued that in double funerals, employing secondary rites, "One side [of these rites] will focus on pollution and on sorrow, something which in the end has to be removed and another side will always assert the continuity of something else, a reassertion of the vanquishing and victorious order where authority has its legitimate place" (Bloch 1982:224). Bloch observed that worldwide this theme of contrasting duality in mortuary practices is "the reaffirmation of the eternal order where birth and death are overcome by representing them as the same thing and where therefore everything is fixed forever and ever" (Bloch 1982:224). In this reassertion of the triumph of eternal order, human mortality is translated into an eternal, immortal quality.

In contrast to the directions explored in the Asian cases the severed trophy heads prominent in Mississippian art and displayed in headdresses inform us about a role that they play within a cosmological allegory. The severed head does not so much reference the taking of heads in the actual world of here and now, as it does to serve as a vehicle for the transfer of sacred powers necessary for cosmic renewal in its manifold dimensions. These trophy motifs serve not only as a symbol of success at war but also as a metaphor for specific mythic narratives that identifies prowess in mortal combat with high stakes gaming and with the ultimate triumph of life over death. If anything, head-taking at the mythic level is likely to have inspired the practice of head-taking in a conscious attempt of southeastern peoples to emulate the heroic combat that gods conduct in order to ensure the renewal of the cosmos.

CONCLUSIONS

The centuries-long emphasis on trophy symbolism in Mississippian figural art retains its hold on Mississippian society by virtue of the association of elite status with combat prowess and the celestial realm of supernaturals. We can conclude that the severed head is both a reference to the mythic source of ideological and political power and a trope for the male generative force. The placement of heads in headdresses becomes a way of expressing this generative power. In a single, condensed, and visually prominent article of costumery the head is a trope. Notwithstanding the currency that combat has in Mississippian cultural life, what is being valorized is not ordinary combat but an eternal struggle conducted in universal time.

But, to restate the reciprocal relationship between real-life activities and beliefs about unquestioned sacra, the trophy head imagery has obviously emerged from a practice environment of warfare, raiding and trophy taking. Imagery has served not so much as a pictorial documentary but as an ideological archetype. Head- taking

by Morning Star is more likely to have served as a format for practice—not as a description.

NOTES

1. The restoration of the father's head is the essential feature of the Winnebago narrative. Little is done with the head itself. In one narrative the head rejoined its body to become whole again.
2. Strong parallels between the Red Horn myth, the Lodge Boy and Throw Away Boy narratives, and the Mayan Popul Vuh myth are described by Hall (1989, 1997). In the latter case the Hero Twins triumph over the Lords of Darkness through trickery to recover the head of their father. Points of difference lie in the parentage of the sons of Red Horn. They are half-brothers. Southern Siouan versions of the Morning Star myth cycle do not focus on the activities of the son, or daughter as the case may be, of Morning Star and Evening Star.

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Chapter 11

Disabling the Dead
Human Trophy Taking in the Prehistoric Southeast

KEITH P. JACOBI

The Shawnee chief Tecumseh visited southern Native American groups in the summer of 1811 with the hope of getting them to become members of a confederacy that was formed with the British to help wage war against the United States. In his visit with the Chickasaw and Choctaw, Tecumseh described how the white people were destroying Indian land and leaving the Indians in poverty. In his multiple speeches with various Choctaw groups, he said that it was the duty of the Choctaw to forget the hatred they had for other Indian tribes and to get along with, and to unite with, not only other Indian groups but also the British in order to defeat the Americans. Tecumseh expressly noted in his talk to the Choctaw and in other talks made to other Indian councils that "the Indian custom of killing women and children in war" should end (Halbert and Ball 1969:44). "This custom they should renounce, and henceforth, in all wars, the lives of women and children should be spared" (Halbert and Ball 1969:44).

The Choctaw agreed, but were not convinced that they should ally themselves with the British against the Americans. The Choctaw Pushmataha explained to Tecumseh that "the white people were the friends of the Choctaws" (Halbert and Ball 1969:44). Any Choctaw that followed Tecumseh would be put to death, and if Tecumseh did not leave their land he would be put to death as well. Tecumseh left with an escort of Choctaw who later had their horses stolen by some Creek Indians. A number of Creek warriors were killed in an ensuing fight with the Choctaw and friends of the Choctaw, as well as the Shawnee of Tecumseh. The surviving Creek warriors took their compatriots who had died in battle and could be recovered from the battlefield. The Choctaw scalped the Creek warriors who could not be recovered. Tecumseh and the Shawnee did not participate in the trophy taking by the Choctaw (Halbert and Ball 1969: 50–55).

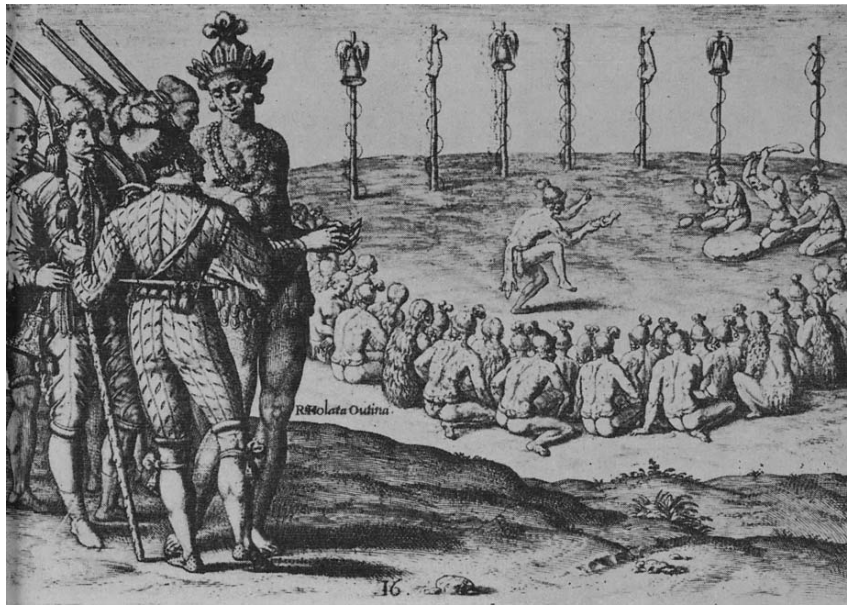

Figure 11.1. Engraving of DeBry after LeMoyne depicting trophy taking and display of arms, legs and scalps. (From Lorant 1946:67.)

A trophy can be defined as a prize. It is something especially gained or given in conquest, and the item is often preserved or displayed for remembrance. Tecumseh, in his words to the Choctaw, pleaded for an end to the killing of women and children by members of each of the Indian tribes he addressed. His comment implied that this type of killing had a substantial history behind it. Tribal animosities ran deep. These feelings of hatred resulting from the death of males and females as well as children, and in many cases the subsequent mutilation of the deceased's body, are not only part of the historic times that Tecumseh noted in the early 1800s, but also part of the prehistoric Southeast.

There is definitive evidence for the removal of human body parts and subsequent use and display of the parts by Native Americans in the prehistoric Southeast. There was a good deal of conflict in the region. More often than not these trophies were exhibited for all to see. The engravings of Theodore De Bry, modeled from the work of Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues of the Timucua Indians of Florida during the sixteenth century (Figures 11.1 and 11.2), show the violent taking and subsequent display of trophy body parts. De Bry's engravings depict the cutting off of arms, legs, and scalps. These three body parts were displayed on poles set in the ground or carried by the victors (Lorant 1946:67).

Such practices were particularly brutal considering the Native American's view of the need and importance of a complete human body when an individual dies and travels to the hereafter. Col. Richard I. Dodge in his book *Our Wild Indians* (1882 cited in Fowke 1902:488) gives a historic account that describes this belief.

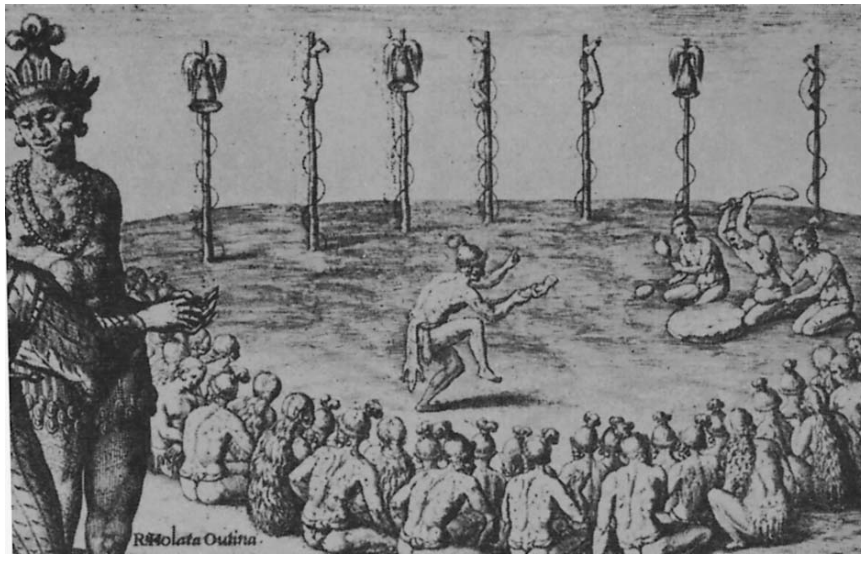

Figure 11.2. Close-up of engraving of DeBry after LeMoyne depicting the display of arms, legs, and scalps after a victory. (From Lorant 1946:67.)

> The personal misfortunes and peculiarities which an Indian has in life stick to him beyond the grave. A one-legged man in life is one-legged to all eternity. . . . A warrior killed in battle and not mutilated, shows, in his future life, no signs of wound; but if the soul be not annihilated by scalping, every mutilation inflicted on the body after death, also mutilates the soul. If the head, or hands, or feet are cut off, or the body ripped open after death, the soul will so appear and exist in the Happy Hunting Grounds. Some believe that if the dead body is transfixed with arrows and left to decay, the soul must always wear and suffer from the phantasms of those arrows. . . . If a body so found pierced with many arrows, is unscalped, it was the vindictive purpose of the murderers forever to torment the soul.

While the scalping of an individual is an obvious example of trophy taking, does the decapitation of an individual make that head a trophy? Not necessarily. This may only be the case if the head is then displayed. For example, there are many instances of headless individuals at the site of 1Lu25 (Perry Site) in northern Alabama, but that does not necessarily mean that all those heads were displayed. It is true that the decapitations clearly indicate that the headless individuals were made incomplete for a reason. But that reason could be that the individual was someone that was disgraced within the community or an enemy who was dispatched in a horrific manner but not displayed. However, a headless or limbless individual was disliked for some reason, and that dislike could have been translated into a gleeful and proud display of part of that person indicating that individual's demise.

THE LANGUAGE OF TROPHY TAKING IN SOUTHEASTERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Even though there is abundant evidence for trophy taking by prehistoric Native Americans in the Southeast, this record has been embellished through the writing of individuals who examined or discussed the archaeological evidence through the years. Some of this literature was written in colorful prose. Other writings were reports that described Native American burials in the Southeast using specific terminology that created images of numerous headless bodies when in fact the total was less than implied.

Haywood's (1973) observations made around 1768 of Tennessee mounds evoke the bloody images that are built upon with unintentional and intentional uses of language. In a paragraph that starts with layers of ashes in the Trojan War and bones placed in urns we get the description of a Tennessee cave near Bledsoe's Lick:

> But the strata of ashes, at intervals from top to bottom, with human bones intermixed, show that here *were human victims* committed to the flames, after decapitation and removal of the skull to the neighbouring cave, where it was laid up in the darkness for the use of the deity. The black ashes denote the consumption of *tobacco*, the only incense in America which they could offer, in which also was consumed *the consecrated victim*. (Haywood 1973:119)

Joseph Jones' (1876) wonderful and informative work describing the skeletal remains and Native American earthworks of Tennessee does continue in the tradition of the early colorful writing of Haywood and other early explorers by mentioning what they previously recounted. He indicates that early explorers found caves "full of human bones" (Jones 1876:1). Jones reports that some of the caves "contain the skulls of human beings alleged to have been sacrificed by fire on the mounds" (Jones 1876:4). Jones was a doctor and his medical diagnoses are very astute and laden with specific description of pathology present on the bone (e.g., syphilis). No one else had described bone pathology like that in Southeastern literature. He even debunks Haywood's claim of ancient pygmies in Tennessee, finding that these skeletal remains were children (Jones 1876). However, Jones still mentions, even though he may not believe it, the possible removal of human heads to a cave as the result of human sacrifices by the Native Americans. Jones was interested in the cranial deformation present in the Native American skeletons that he examined so he would often describe primarily the skull in the text of his work. Sentences omit the fact that there was additional bone material in the burial:

> The skull obtained from the stone grave which contained the paint bowl is square and pyramidal in its shape . . . the occiput and inferior portions of the parietal bones are flattened. (Jones 1876: 63–64)

Three paragraphs in a row start with either "The cranium from this stone grave" or "The skull from the grave" (Jones 1876:64–65). There is no mention of

any other skeletal material. One gets the feeling that there are only skulls present. This is not the case even though skulls were the part of the body that most interested the early explorers, archaeologists, and medical doctors. And skulls were often the only thing removed from a site. Jones was heavily influenced by the work of Samuel George Morton (1839) who put together the book called *Crania Americana,* with its amazing lithographs by the scientific artist John Collins of skulls throughout the world, including some from the southeastern United States. It is Collins' lithographs that would create a crania-centric orientation of physical anthropologists for years to come. Catalogs such as *Thesaurus Craniorum* (Davis 1867), which focused on the physiognomy of skulls and attempted to distinguish different races, were published.

Clarence Bloomfield Moore was a natural scientist who many times led archaeological expeditions throughout the south from Louisiana and Arkansas, through Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and Florida using a stern wheel work boat called the *Gopher of Philadelphia* (*Gopher,* for short) as a base of operations (Knight 1996). His works include excellent photos and drawings of archaeological materials found at some of the hundreds of sites he encountered on his expeditions. But his reports are descriptive and do not synthesize the information that he uncovered. He was "seduced by the lure of mortuary artifacts" (Knight 1996:16). He was accompanied by Dr. Milo G. Miller who helped consult in the excavation of burials because of his knowledge of osteology.

Much of the description of the skeletons found in the mounds that Moore, Miller, and accompanying workers encountered noted only that a skeleton was found or a portion of a skeleton was uncovered, and that information was secondary to the pot or artifact that was interred with the skeletal remains. Moore's language in the reports can give the reader the feeling that there were a number of skeletons without their heads. For example at the Gilbert Mound in Florida:

> Human remains were encountered at various depths, superficially, in the body of the mound and below the level of the surrounding territory. In all, human remains were noted at twenty-seven points in the mound, though it is possible that a trench dug by a former investigator may have removed a certain number in addition. In no case did interments noted by us, which were of the bunched variety, include the entire skeleton. In a number of cases isolated crania were found and once, two skulls associated with no other bones. (Moore 1999:70)

We know the "bunched remains" indicate secondary burials and the loose or "isolated crania" could belong to some of these secondary burials, but heads "isolated" do make the reader think about the location of the rest of the body. Moore repeatedly uses the term "isolated crania" (see, e.g., Moore 1999: pp. 70, 92, 98).

Archaeological reports that derived from work by the Works Progress Administration and Tennessee Valley Authority excavations in the 1930s and early 1940s perpetuate this feeling that parts are missing with regularity in the skeletal record. In the Norris Basin report by Webb (1938), there are numerous passages

that make the reader feel that there might be some decapitation or trophy taking going on when in fact natural taphonomic processes are at work. Heads are noted as being "detached," "disarticulated," "removed," "missing," and "separated."

In reference to burial numbers 44 and 45 at the Cox Mound (Site Number 19 in the report):

> The head was disarticulated and was placed face down over the left breast. (Webb 1938: 174)
>
> The head was disarticulated. (Webb 1938:174)

The implication one gets is that there was a conscious effort to disarticulate the head from the rest of the body when in fact the burial was a sitting burial and the skull had naturally disarticulated from the skeleton and dropped from its original position. However, the archaeologists were aware that natural forces caused this fact because they more often than not would write: "As usual, the skull had fallen forward and rested inverted in the pelvic cavity" or "postburial slumping usually produces considerable change in the original position of the skeleton. The head usually falls forward and comes to rest in the pelvic cavity, the legs may spread apart leaving the feet under the shifted skeleton" (Webb and DeJarnette 1942:118, 239). But they did not describe the burials identically every time, and "detached" or "disarticulated" heads make it look as if there is more ritual decapitation and/or trophy hunting taking place.

The Wheeler Basin report, which has minimal mortuary information, has burial descriptive language that indicates that "some bones were missing" or "the long bones were broken in many places and the skull was missing" (Webb 1939:26). Numerous times bones are noted as missing, or skeletons are "headless," but then in the remainder of the paragraph there is a statement that says the burial may have been disturbed by a plow. But the descriptions "headless," "skull missing," and, "missing" by themselves are repeated by the author. Again, while there are definitely headless skeletons, and burials of heads by themselves in the Wheeler Basin, the language used in the report makes the reader feel that there may be many more.

The caption on a photo in the Pickwick Report taken at the 1Lu25 (Perry Site) indicates that there are two headless bodies (Burials 170 and 171) when in fact the picture shows that there is only one skeleton without a head (Webb and DeJarnette 1942: Plate 108, number 1). The head of one of the burials is angled to the side and it makes it appear that there is a skeleton without a head. There is definitely a headless skeleton crowded next to the burial with the head, but there is one less headless individual than the report indicated.

In the Pickwick Basin at 1Lu25 (Perry site) it was noted that eight burials were headless and "two other burials had heads disarticulated, but in the vicinity of the body. . . . Headless burials seemed to have no significance as to depth distribution" (Webb and DeJarnette 1942:63). Conversely, in describing Burial 62 at 1Lu25, the same language is used but may in fact actually describe a burial that became headless for a specific reason.

> The right arm was entirely missing, and the head was detached and buried at the same level about 4 feet from the body and at least 5.5 feet from its natural position. (Webb and DeJarnette 1942:65)

Even at the Walters Farm Village in Tennessee, which had no human burials, it was noted that there were cut and worked bone implements made of a large number of animal femora that were "cut and hollowed out, and calcined at the cut end. They suggest the possibility of use as torches when filled with grease" (Webb 1938:126). This kind of description helps create the aura of disregard or even the practical use of the skeleton by the Native Americans, but in this case there were no human bones involved.

PSEUDOTROPHIES IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

There are a number of situations that can lead one to believe that a stray body part may be a prehistoric trophy. Geology and its subdiscipline paleontology provides us with the study of taphonomy, or laws of burial. Natural formation processes such as erosion, deposition, and transport can influence all objects deposited at an archaeological site. Bone or a portion of a body can be disturbed by a number of natural processes. Animals do move human skeletal remains. Excavations at archaeological sites are constantly plagued by "rodent runs" that disturb the integrity of archaeological context. Rodents do eat human flesh and in their gnawings move parts of human remains. Carnivores such as different types of canines and felines will move human remains. Dogs will dig for "meat" if it is buried and will try to pull off part of the carcass. Human remains that are on the surface will be scattered by dogs, coyotes, and the like. Usually, the hands and arms, legs and feet are pulled away from the body to be feasted on in a lair or quiet spot. Binford and Bertram (1977:95) and Binford (1981) found that predators such as wolves in central Alaska transport parts of a fresh kill to their den or lair, thus moving bone. Forensic case investigation of crime scenes in wooded areas by this author has recorded similar behavior. Wild dogs have torn limbs from a human corpse and transported the limbs some distance from the initial deposition of the body. Even the ends of the longbones that animals gnaw on can appear to the untrained eye as bone that has been intentionally separated from the body.

Bone is often moved by tree roots and other roots in both prehistoric and modern contexts (Perino 1973:65; Kerley 1984:301). Lopinot (1984:100) illustrates the possible effects of root activity at an "unplowed open-air site" with 4,000 years of human occupation deposits:

> Based on mapped vertical profiles, traces of larger roots with a mean diameter of about 3.0 cm averaged approximately 16/m^2 or approximately .011 m^2 of surface area. Assuming a root life of 50 years, and projecting this density over 4,000 years, nearly nine-tenths (88%) of each square meter of earth would have been penetrated by roots at one time or another. Inclusion of smaller

> roots would push this estimate well over 100% of each square meter or, for that matter, the entire site. (Lopinot 1984:100)

If a set of remains is left on the surface or partially buried, then the remains can be moved, eroded and deposited by water. Researchers interested in taphonomy have studied in detail the fluvial movement of bone (Voorhies 1969a, 1969b; Dodson 1973; Wolff 1973; Behrensmeyer 1975; Boaz and Behrensmeyer 1976; Korth 1978; Hanson 1980; among others). The specific interest was in determining sorting patterns of animal and mammal skeletons in reference to tendencies for certain bone element transport when water influenced the skeleton. Voorhies (1969a), using a circulating hydraulic flume, found that when examining coyote and sheep bones in the flume, that ribs and vertebrae are elements moved by low-velocity currents; femora, tibiae, and humeri by faster currents; and elements such as the crania and mandible would only be transported by the fastest currents. Bone elements such as scapula or, more germane to this study, hand and foot phalanges, metacarpals, and metatarsals could be moved more readily by water moving at a low velocity. Behrensmeyer (1975: 493) in her hydraulic experiments found that "bones with high surface areas to volume ratio" (e.g., vertebrae centrum or a scapula) will transport more easily than heavier bone that does not have as much surface area. Contradicting the last finding by Voorhies, Boaz and Behrensmeyer (1976:60), using human crania, found that they were the fastest moving element as opposed to the slowest.

The influence of gravity can move bone whether the bone is on a level surface or in an upright or inclined position. A human skull often moves when all its connective tissue decomposes. Prehistoric and modern human burials often have been found with their head out of alignment with the rest of the skeleton. Prehistoric burials interred in a seated position invariably have, upon decomposition, exhibited movement by gravity of certain bone elements from normal anatomical position to abnormal body position, such as a cranium moving to the chest or pelvic region. A body that is placed in an area of geological terrain that is undergoing movement by creep or solifluction will have skeletal elements moved by gravity (Wood and Johnson 1982).

Finally, the activities of man can move body parts away from their original resting place. Prehistoric aboriginal disturbance of a burial pit for some reason such as the building of a structure, or modern disturbance through pothunting or machinery and other tools used in the building, are primary reasons for missing skeletal elements. So, heads, hands and feet can move away from a primary resting place easily by natural processes and activities of man.

THE MANY HEADS OF HEADLESS AND THE WANDERING OF HANDS AND FEET

Headless burials in the archaeological context are hard to explain. There are multiple interpretations that go along with the obvious question that involves why

this individual was buried as a headless corpse. It is certain that the individual was either an enemy or a luckless warrior on the receiving end of being decapitated, someone held in disgrace, someone held in veneration, someone considered different or feared, or someone who was involved in a ritual. To complicate matters, a headless corpse can be due to taphonomic processes that involve both natural and prehistoric, as well as modern, removal of the skull from the mortuary context.

The avenues of interpretation become even more crowded when one examines the timing and positioning of a head that is intentionally removed from a body. First, was an individual's head removed prior to burial? Most individuals fall into this category with heads being decapitated with obvious cut marks present on the occipital condyles and/or the first and second cervical vertebrae, or the heads were removed during or after decomposition. These latter remains were exposed to the elements to allow for decomposition and subsequent bundling and burial. And occasionally, there is the individual who was buried and became headless after burial. An individual is allowed to decompose in the ground, and later the head is removed from the burial with no other portion of the body disturbed. The rest of the skeleton remains in anatomical order. The only thing that is disturbed is the skull. This indicates that the individual disinterring the skull knew the orientation of the body and where the head would be. This grave would have been marked in some fashion.

Is a head removed as a trophy for display as a result of animosity toward the individual, or removed for the purpose of veneration or ritual and ceremonial purposes? A skeleton can remain headless in the mortuary context of a burial after removal. However, there are times where the head is removed and deposited in various places within the burial pit. The head can be removed and placed close to where it would be anatomically. Conversely, an individual's head can be placed somewhere else within the burial context, on the stomach of an extended burial or at the feet of an extended burial, or higher up in the fill of the burial pit. The head of an individual can be deposited in its own small pit by itself and nowhere close to the remainder of the skeleton. Finally, the head can become a utilitarian or ceremonial object such as a skull bowl or part of a rattle. All of these possibilities indicate the handling of the head for some purpose. The difficult questions are, which of these heads are actually trophies and, if so, what type of trophy?

The presence of extra arms, hands, legs and feet or the absence of the same in a burial site can be evidence for trophy taking. Documentation of trophy-taking behavior requires that cut marks on the bone be seen or extra parts are present in a mortuary context where there has not been reuse of the burial pit.

TROPHY TAKING IN FOUR TENNESSEE RIVER BASIN REGIONS

Prehistoric Southeastern Native Americans took parts of the human body as trophies. Sites such as Koger's Island (1Lu92) and the Perry Site (1Lu25) in northern Alabama provide proof of this fact because there are extra elements,

specifically extra skulls, hands, and feet in burial pits. Jacobi and Hill (n.d.:11) feel this could be a type of retribution for the actions enemies incurred on a group.

> Southeastern Ceremonial Complex design motifs substantiate this. At Moundville there is the well-known "skull and bone" cup from Moundville (Fundaburk and Foreman 1957:Plate 36). And, at the Etowah site in Georgia, a copper plate depicts a warrior holding the severed head of an enemy in one hand and a war club in the other (Kopper 1986:166, photo; Fundaburk and Foreman 1957:Plate 30 or Phillips and Brown 1978:Figure 243, drawing). Recent interpretations (Knight et al. 2001) suggest that this is a mythical being yet the figure depicts the act of dismemberment (Jacobi and Hill n.d. 11).

For the purpose of this study, four large Tennessee River basin areas: the Pickwick Basin (sites in western Tennessee and Alabama), Wheeler Basin (Alabama), Guntersville Basin (Alabama), and the Norris Basin (eastern Tennessee) are investigated here for evidence of trophy taking by prehistoric Native American inhabitants (Figure 11.3). The sources used in the investigation included the archaeological reports issued on each of the basins, and in the case of the Pickwick, Wheeler, and Guntersville Basins excavation forms and drawings of the burials were consulted. Photographs taken of the burials and included in the reports, as well as, some additional photos taken and housed in the Alabama Museum of Natural History archives (the latter primarily of the Pickwick Basin) were inspected to corroborate the written word in the reports. Notes taken by the late Patricia Bridges in her analysis of various Pickwick Basin sites were consulted. And, when possible, osteological investigation of skeletal remains were made for evidence of trophy taking (Pickwick, Wheeler, and Guntersville Basins). A number of these sites from the Pickwick, Wheeler, and Guntersville Basins still are being re-inventoried and analyzed because previous inventories date to the late 1930s and early 1940s and have minimal information.

The data compiled from the reports and notes includes the number of burials excavated from each site. Descriptions of the burials in the reports and the excavation forms were examined when available, as were any accompanying photos or drawings of skeletal remains that illustrated that a burial may have been affected by trophy-taking behavior. Previous notes by Patricia Bridges and this author were examined as well as new examinations of the skeletal remains in a number of the cases. The burials of interest were noted as to whether a skeleton was (1) headless, (2) a skull only, (3) missing arms and/or hands or an individual was given extra arms and/or hands (representing payback or retaliation for deeds done to the deceased), (4) missing legs and/or feet or an individual was given extra legs and/or feet, (5) Scalped, (6) a unique burial because of burial position (e.g., face down). In addition, it was noted whether the burial had *good* or *possible* evidence for trophy taking, *good* or *possible* evidence for being a focal point in veneration and/or ritual activities, and if a "possible" trophy was most likely the result of taphonomic processes.

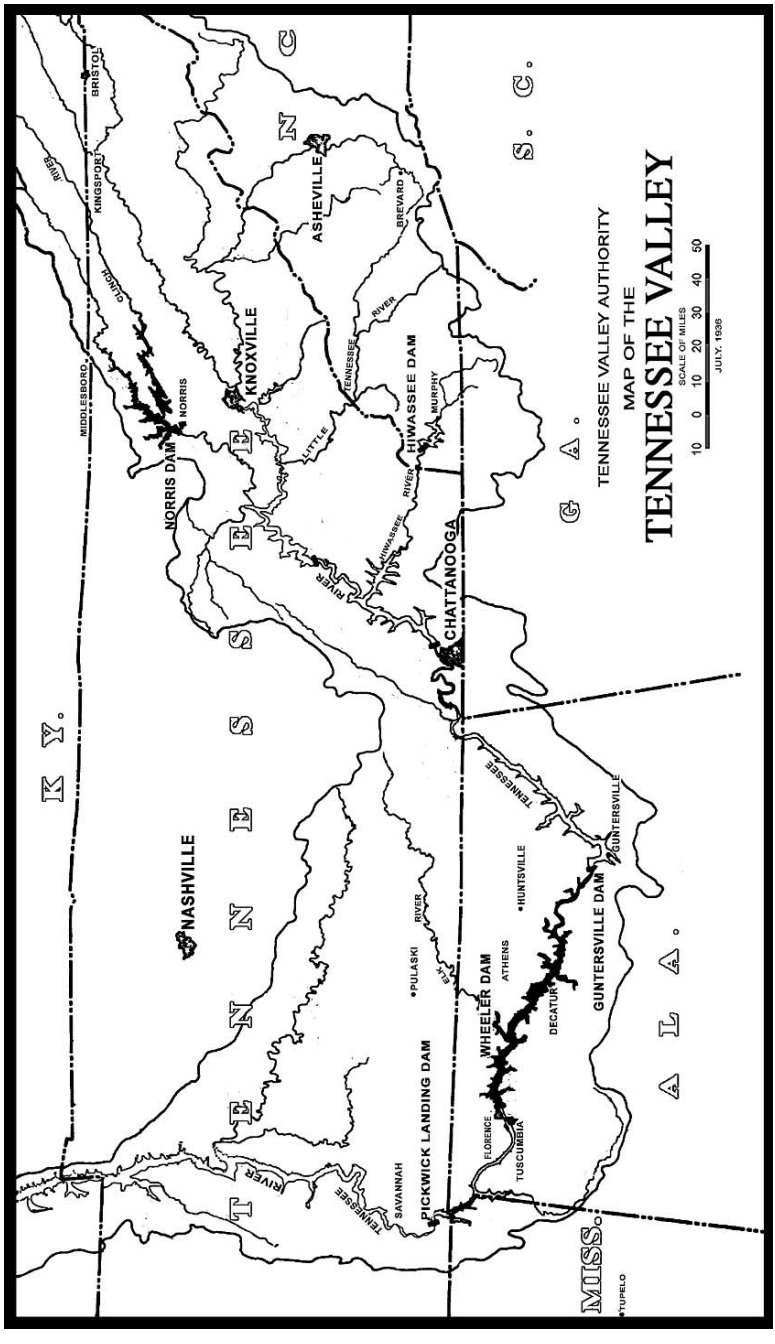

Figure 11.3. Map illustrating the four Tennessee River Basins: Pickwick, Wheeler, Guntersville, and Norris. (Redrawn from Webb 1938: Plate 1.)

PICKWICK BASIN

Twenty-one archaeological sites in the Pickwick Basin were investigated for trophy-taking activities. Sources used in the investigation included the Pickwick Basin reports (Webb and DeJarnette 1942, 1948a, 1948b), TVA burial notes and forms on file at the Laboratory for Human Osteology at the University of Alabama, as well as notes compiled by Patricia Bridges and this author. As noted previously, a number of these sites still are being re-inventoried and analyzed because previous inventories dating to the late 1930s and early 1940s are inadequate.

However, the existing data includes information on approximately 1,700 skeletal remains from 20 archaeological sites (Table 11.1). The Pickwick Basin stands out from the other basins as having the most evidence for obvious warfare and raiding, due to violence visible on the skeleton. Pickwick also has the distinction of being the basin that includes the highest count of human body parts that

Table 11.1. Presence of Trophies and Trophy-Taking Behavior as Noted in Pickwick Basin Archaeological Sites

Pickwick basin site no.	No. of burials	No. of headless	No. of skull-only present	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) arms and hands	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) legs and feet	No. of scalped individuals
Hn1	16			1	1	
Hn4	64		2			
Hn49	Unknown					
Lu5	6					
Lu21	16					
Lu25 Unit 1	141	8		1	1	1
Lu25 Unit 2	209	16	5		2	
Lu25 Unit 3	214		1			
Lu25 Unit 4	144		2			
Lu54	22					
Lu59	197	3		3	2	
Lu61	62					
Lu62	2					
Lu63	16					
Lu64	37					
Lu65	0					
Lu67	93	4		1		1
Lu72	21	3		1	1	
Lu92	102	6		6	5	8
Ct8	163	4				
Ct27	134	3	1 skull bowl	1	1	
Ct34	9					
Ct42	4					
Total	1672	47	10	14	13	10

are possible evidence for trophy taking behavior. While many of the 1,700 individuals do not show evidence of being either the unfortunate recipient of a missing head or limb or conversely the recipient of an additional head or limb portion in their burial, there are certain sites that do stand out as having greater evidence for the practice of trophy taking. At 1Lu25 (Perry Site) a site with both Archaic and Mississippian components, 708 burials were excavated. However, the actual count of skeletons will exceed 1,000 when the full re-inventory (post-NAGPRA) is completed in the lab.

The site was excavated in four units. Units 1 and 2 were reported on in greater detail (Webb and DeJarnette 1942) than Units 3 and 4 (Webb and DeJarnette 1948). This was entirely because there was no WPA money left to do the reports that had not been completed by the early 1940s.

Units 1 and 2 included 24 individuals who were headless (Table 11.1). These were undisturbed burials. A multiple Mississippian stage burial (Burials 164–167 and 224, an infant) yielded four headless individuals, and one of those four was buried face down in an obvious display of disrespect. One individual (Burial 170) who had pathological vertebrae as well as other parts of the body with pathology was found headless. Perhaps the diseased individual was a disgraced or feared individual. Two other headless individuals show evidence of violent perimortem trauma with projectile points embedded in bone. One of these burials was an Archaic Stage individual (Burial 2). Five burials consisted of only a head, each placed in a pit by itself. Two individuals had no feet and one of those individuals was buried face down (Burial 305). The other individual had the feet removed and placed near his own pelvis (Burial 343).

Unit 2 has skeletal evidence for veneration. In a multiple burial with two extended burials (Burials 243 and 244) there was a neatly piled bundle burial (Burial 247) at the head of the grave and three extra skulls (Burials 245, 246, and 248) that were placed near the bundle. The placement of the three extra skulls could in fact be trophy items on display for the dead placed in the pit as payback for ills done to those buried with complete skeletons. Or, the skulls could represent a type of veneration, a result of a ceremony in which three individuals lost their heads in respect for the skeletons buried whole. Again, these heads are displayed to the dead as prizes to accompany those individuals into the afterlife.

Units 1 and 2 show evidence of burials that were disgraced at death. Three were buried face down (Burials 38, 165, 305), another three of a group of four burials (Burials 206–209) had heads intentionally disarticulated from the body ensuring these individuals would enter the afterlife as they left it, incomplete with head separated from their body (Webb and DeJarnette 1942). In addition, one individual (Burial 66) was buried in disarray within a pit, the body dismembered with only legs, pelvis, and the lower half of the trunk. There are portions of arms present and the right arm has been dismembered in a manner that would have included the scapula and clavicle. This right arm was placed between the legs of the incomplete skeleton. It is possible that the arm was part of a trophy display

(perhaps hung) and then interred intentionally or with lack of care between the legs of the skeleton (Webb and DeJarnette 1942:Plate 79, number 1).

Finally, skeletal analysis of a young 18- to 21-year-old Mississippian female (Burial 5) shows evidence of having been scalped and having survived the scalping. There is evidence of areas of exfoliated dead bone with new granulated bone formation. In addition, the frontal bone has visible cut marks that were healing at the time of death. Based on Moore's (1870:22) observations of another scalping, it is possible that this woman lived for as long as three months after the scalping incident. She would have entered the afterlife incomplete or she may have been denied access to the afterlife because she was incomplete.

Units 3 and 4 from 1Lu25 have 358 burials excavated from them but the report on this portion of the site is extremely lacking because there was no money to provide a complete report. There is virtually nothing on the context of each of the burials. However, it was listed in a table within the report that there were three instances of skulls being buried separately and two individuals showing evidence of being dismembered (Webb and DeJarnette 1948a:23). There is a brief discussion by the authors that, similar to Units 1 and 2, there were a large number of multiple burials with some of those interred in the burials exhibiting evidence of violence (projectile points in bone) (Webb and DeJarnette 1948a).

THE SCALP AS A TROPHY AND THE HORRIFIC MORTUARY RECORD AT KOGER'S ISLAND

Scalping was most often performed at death or minutes before the onset of death. The taking of a scalp by a prehistoric or historic Native American individual can be construed as a final insult or curse. In order to enter the afterlife it was important for a Native American to be physically complete. The scalping of an individual prevents this.

It is well documented that historic southeastern Native Americans such as the Choctaw, for example, took scalps from tribal enemies (Romans 1962; De Lusser 1730 in Swanton 1993) and painted them red (Adair 1775:282 in Swanton 1993:166).

> They never exercised so much cruelty upon their captive enemies as the other savages; they almost always brought them home to shew them, and then dispatched them with a bullet or hatchet; after which, the body being cut into many parts, and all the hairy pieces of skin converted into scalps, the remainder is buried and the above trophies carried home, where the women dance with them till tired; then they are exposed on the tops of the hot houses till they are annihilated. The same treatment is exercised on those who are killed near the nation, but he that falls in battle at a distance is barely scalped (Romans 1962:75–76).

Figure 11.4. Perimortem scalping of an individual from Koger's Island (Burial #35). (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

The act of taking an individual's scalp by southeastern Native Americans in historic times was a tradition present also in the prehistoric past. Skeletal materials from the Alabama archaeological sites of 1Tu500 (Moundville, in western-central Alabama), 1Lu92 (Koger's Island), 1Lu25 (Perry site), and 1Lu67 (Long Branch) in the Pickwick Basin, and the Hampton Site (86RH41), Watts Bar Reservoir in Rhea County, Tennessee, demonstrate the scalping trauma.

There are a number of cases from some of these sites with perimortem cut marks that indicate the act of scalping around the time of an individual's death. Most of the individuals who were scalped showed no sign of the bone healing that would indicate survival of the scalping event. Koger's Island (Mississippian site) alone is remarkable in that eight individuals display evidence of being scalped (Figure 11.4). All of these individuals were scalped perimortem and there is no evidence of healing. The fact that seven of the eight scalped individuals are in mass

Figure 11.5. Male individual from Moundville (Burial 2870) who survived scalping of possible topknot. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

burials and seem to be placed in a line and grouped together would suggest that all of these individuals died at the same time as a result of a raid by enemies. This raid would have been a devastating event to the community affecting it for years to come. This event would have had political implications and it would have had detrimental effects on a group's subsistence activities.

Beyond the horrific happenings at Koger's Island, other Alabama southeastern archaeological sites, some in the Pickwick Basin, do provide cases that involve scalping victims who survived the act of scalping totally, or survived the event for a number of weeks or months until infection spread and the individual died. One male individual over 40 years of age from Moundville (Burial 2870) survived a scalping incident and the subsequent trauma of healing (Figures 11.5 and 11.6). This male exhibits an oval to round defect on the superior portion of the calvarium with the bone central to the defect roughened and healed with the small exception of a healing perforating lesion of less than one-half centimeter on the left parietal near the coronal suture and bregma. The scalping defect begins further up on the frontal bone, closer to bregma, a location further up the cranium than scalping defects exhibited on other individuals who were scalped.

In these other cases, the most anterior portion of the defect was closer to the supraorbital ridge or brow of the individuals. The oval/circular defect of the Moundville male is situated on the most superior portion of the skull. It is possible that this defect reflects a scalping trauma on an individual who had a topknot hairstyle not unlike those depicted in Theodore De Bry's engravings of the Timucua

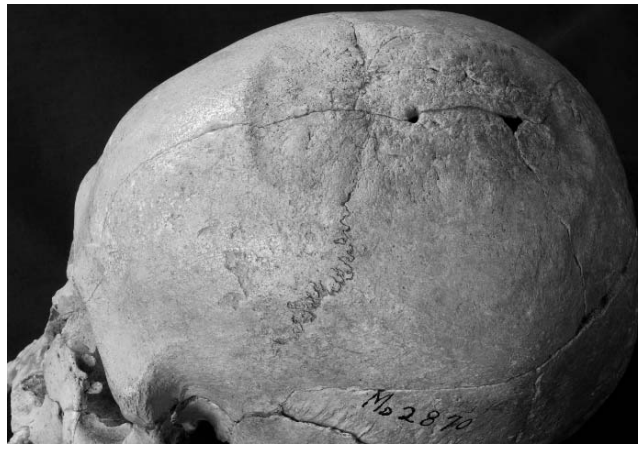

Figure 11.6. Another view of the healed scalping wound. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

Indians (see Figures 11.1, 11.2, and 11.7; see also figures in Lorant 1946:65, 67). These hair topknots were, in a sense, taunts to other warriors. It was fortunate that this male survived the scalping of his topknot to live a longer life as evidenced by the extensive healing. However, his death is marked by the ever-present

Figure 11.7. Engraving of DeBry after LeMoyne depicting Outina's warriors treatment of enemies. Notice displayed arms, legs, and scalps, and topknots on Outina's men. (From Lorant 1946: 65.)

incompleteness in the afterlife indicating a taunt gone bad and a prize trophy for an enemy that would last for all eternity.

Swanton (1995:115) provides us with a "war story," recorded by Dr. A. S. Gatschet from Judge George W. Stidham that includes the act of scalping in the folklore of the Native American.

> One night the Yamasee came to her house, surrounded it, and at daybreak made an attack upon it. That woman had a gun with her which she seized, and she shot at them. They would run away, and, when they came on again, she would shoot again. She put the older boy outdoors and made him run away, saying to him "Run and tell the people at the town." While she continued to shoot, she took the second boy, who was very small, on her arm and ran off with him. As they continued to pursue her, she laid the boy beside a log when she jumped over it. But they came up, discovered the child, killed him and returned with his scalp.
>
> Upon this the woman reached the town and told what had happened. While she was running away she shot one of the Yamasee and killed him, dragged him back and laid him close to the door, after which she ran off. Now the Hitchiti started out, took off the man's scalp and returned with it. When they reached their square ground, since the woman had killed a man and they could not make her a *tåsikaya* [first grade warrior], they made her son a *tåsikaya*. She thought, "While I was fighting I was whooping," but she was only crying.
>
> This is how the story goes.

While there is quite extensive documentation of prehistoric scalping as trophy taking by Native Americans in the literature (e.g., Neumann 1940; Snow 1941; Hamperl and Laughlin 1959; Hamperl 1967; Owsley and Berryman 1975; Owsley et al. 1977; Gregg and Gregg 1987; Williams 1991, 1994; Milner and Smith 1990; Smith 1995; Bridges 1996; Milner 1999; Bridges et al. 2000; Mensforth 2001), what else constitutes a body part trophy in the archaeological record?

A TROPHY WITH BITE

At the northern Alabama site of 1Lu59 (Bluff Creek Site) there is a headless burial (Burial 60) of an individual who was referred to by Webb and DeJarnette (1942:124) as "a prehistoric dentist." What is striking about this burial is that this male who was 31–35 years old at the time of death was buried with a human tooth necklace, probably worn around his neck at the time of interment, as well as additional human bone artifacts (Figure 11.8). Other tooth necklaces have been found at the site of Moundville and at the King Site (Scarry 1995:199; Garrett 1988). The teeth in this burial were found near the vertebrae and were grooved or perforated/drilled for suspension (Figures 11.9 and 11.10). Out of the 131 teeth that were noted in the lab evaluation of the individual in the 1940s and 1950s, 95 of these teeth currently exist. All these teeth are permanent adult teeth and show

Figure 11.8. Headless male from 1Lu59 (Burial 60) found with human tooth necklace and sharpened human longbones. (Photo from Alabama Museum of Natural History Photograph Archives.)

different stages of wear with most of the teeth not particularly worn. A separation of the teeth into tooth classes provided some interesting information. There are a total of 21 incisors, 13 canines, 36 premolars, and 25 molars. Maxillary teeth include 10 incisors, 8 canines, 13 premolars, and 11 molars and mandibular teeth

Figure 11.9. Drilled teeth from human tooth necklace. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

Figure 11.10. Grooved tooth roots for suspension in human tooth necklace. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

include 11 incisors, 5 canines, 23 premolars, and 14 molars. It is apparent that there were a minimum number of ten individuals represented among all these teeth from the necklace because there are ten lower left second premolars.

One could speculate about this headless person's acquisition of these teeth. Were these teeth derived from initiations, teeth extracted by a prehistoric dentist, teeth removed as trophies on the battlefield of ones' enemies, or teeth scavenged or selectively chosen by a "bone picker" for his own collection? Front teeth such as incisors and canines are usually knocked out in initiation ceremonies (Cook 1981), so these teeth were probably not a result of that type of rite because the numbers of teeth representing the back of the mouth are more numerous. Webb and DeJarnette's labeling of this individual as "a prehistoric dentist," might be a possibility especially when an examination is made of the possible "tool kit" with which he was interred (Webb and DeJarnette 1942:124). There are four additional human fibulae and a sharpened radius that were found in the burial and comprise the other human bone artifacts in the burial context. The fibulae and radius are sharpened to a point in the same manner that an animal bone is honed into an awl. These sharpened "tools" were found lying across the right arm, right pelvis, and right stomach. If these were the tools of a prehistoric dentist who extracted and kept diseased teeth then there would be evidence of caries development or abscessed roots of which there is none. The sharpened tools could in fact be a type of sharpened dagger stuck into the individual prior to or after his death. This action could be an attempt at a further insult, beyond being headless, with the intent of producing continuous pain for the individual in the afterlife (e.g., Scott et al. 1998:99 Sergeant Frederick Wyllyams, Company G Seventh Cavalry; also Fowkes 1902:488). However, no evidence of skeletal trauma was found on this individual from 1Lu59.

On the other hand, if these teeth belonged to a shaman or some individual who derived pleasure or some type of satisfaction from gouging trophy teeth from enemy victims, then the teeth would show evidence of fracture in the attempt to extract the teeth from the enemies. The teeth are not broken in this manner. It is more probable that the teeth in the necklace may have been chosen for their aesthetic value and worn by an Archaic "bone picker" who selected souvenir or memento teeth from corpses or decayed skeletons while in charge of the processing of human remains. So, these teeth are trophies but not trophies of conquest. The "bone picker" has selected prizes that symbolize his profession as well as mementos representing certain individuals in his prehistoric society. The teeth do make the individual incomplete for the journey to the afterlife and therefore could be the "bone picker's" revenge or retaliation toward certain individuals. However, his own final interment speaks loudly as to what the individuals in his society felt toward him. He was headless and possibly tortured before death.

Historically, there is evidence for the bone picker. Captain Bernard Romans (discussed in Jones 1876:16) describes the bone pickers of the Choctaw as "old men, who wear very long nails on the thumb, fore, and middle finger of each hand, as a distinguishing badge, constantly travel through the nation" and " after the body is taken down, with his nails tears the remaining flesh off the bones, and throws it with the entrails into the fire, where it is consumed; then he scrapes the bones and burns the scrapings." Adair (1775) also describes the Choctaw bone picker as a man who uses a sharp knife to work on the corpse, stripping the flesh from the bones.

Other necklaces that incorporate human teeth have been found at the King Site in Georgia and at Moundville in Alabama. These necklaces seem to be more of an exotic ornamentation in which an individual displayed the human tooth prominently. The symbolism was interpreted differently by others in the population than that symbolism conveyed in the necklace of the bone picker. The necklace from the King Site was one of numerous adornments and exotic items that included Spanish metal, interred with a mature adult male of the warrior class (Burial 92). Based on burial accoutrements, this individual was the most elite of all individuals from the King Site (Garrett 1988:39). The necklace had ten teeth and the majority of the teeth appear to be molars with one or two that could be premolars (Jacobi and Hill 2000, n.d.). Two other necklaces made of human teeth were found in excavations in 1948 in an area east of the conference building at the Mississippian archaeological site of Moundville in Alabama (Scarry 1995:199). These necklaces are missing and are depicted only in a drawing of the burials (Scarry 1995:199).

CUP OF REMEMBRANCE

The Mulberry Creek Site (1CT27), an Archaic shell mound in the Pickwick Basin, has its share of headless individuals, violence, and a rare human bone artifact. There are three individuals at Mulberry Creek who are noted as headless,

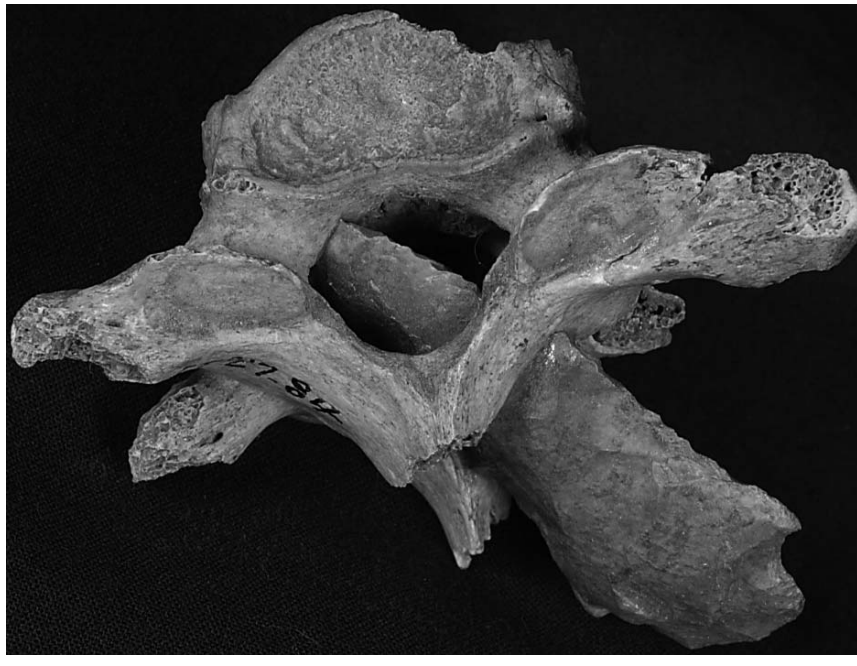

Figure 11.11. Projectile point embedded in thoracic vertebrae of Burial 84 from 1CT27 (Mulberry Creek). (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

but recent analysis of the skeletal collection by Shields (2003:124) did not find any skeletal evidence for cut marks that would indicate decapitation.

In addition, there is a Middle Archaic mass grave in which three individuals were thrown into a burial pit with no regard or concern as to how the bodies should be positioned. There is no doubt that these individuals were looked on unfavorably because two of the skeletons have evidence of violent trauma with embedded points driven into their vertebrae from behind. It is possible that these individuals represent an enemy raiding party that was captured by the inhabitants of Mulberry Creek. One skeleton has no lower arms present in the burial context (Burial 84). In addition, seven projectile points were found in association with the remains, possibly indicating that this individual was not only killed but tortured. Four of the points were found in various positions in the thoracic cavity, two points were found in the spinal column (one embedded and oriented from the front, and one embedded and oriented from the rear (Figure 11.11), and one projectile point in the mouth. There is a probability here that the arms were taken as trophies for display. However, Shields (2003:124) and this author found no cut mark evidence for dismemberment on the humeri. But the situation does make one wonder if the arms were removed for display purposes by the inhabitants of this Mulberry Creek site.

Figure 11.12. Human skull bowl from 1CT27. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

A truly unique human bone artifact is described by Webb and DeJarnette (1942:238, 259): a human skull bowl that was broken into several pieces and found by itself in the midden. The authors indicate that the skull pieces were in a "neat little pile as though they had been placed intentionally in that position" and they feel that the "manufacture of such an artifact may be a partial explanation of the occasional finding of 'headless' burials" at the site (Webb and DeJarnette 1942: 238, 259). A reconstruction of the bowl shows the amount of work that went into fashioning the bowl (Figure 11.12). Just as medical examiners do today in an autopsy room, the skull was cut to allow for the top portion of the skull to be removed from the rest of the skull. The cut edges of the skull were carefully rounded off to make these newly created edges not as sharp, thus making drinking from the cup easier (Figure 11.13). These rounded edges are polished with use. In addition, careful drilling of the skull on both sides by a prehistoric individual has produced holes that would have allowed the skull bowl to be hung up when not in use (Figure 11.14). An interesting thing about the skull bowl is that if it is flipped over there is an obvious depression fracture that has healed (not a genetic defect because there is evidence for the depression fracture internally) (Figure 11.15). So, the individual in fact survived a life-threatening injury only to be made, after his death, into a bowl.

In Fowke's work on the archaeology of Ohio (1902:357 citing Moorehead's work, Chapt. XIV condensed) he describes a burial with a human skull bowl. There was a skeleton found beneath logs and placed on charcoal.

> Whether this had been deposited at the same time as those above it, or placed here when the sand mound was first built, we cannot tell. A few inches lower than this skeleton was a very peculiar deposit—a mass five feet long, from 12 to 16 inches wide, having an elliptical section four inches thick at the middle and composed almost entirely of small fragments of human bones. They had

Figure 11.13. Polished and rounded edges of human skull bowl. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

> been burned until nearly destroyed, and were mingled in utter confusion as though hastily gathered up from the place of cremation. Some belonged to the frame of an adult, while others were from the remains of a child not more than half grown. All had been carried in from the outside. Thrown upon them

Figure 11.14. Drilled holes on side of cranium for the purpose of suspending the bowl. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

Figure 11.15. Healed depression fracture on superior portion of skull bowl. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

> after they were deposited, was about half of the top of a human skull, bearing no traces of fire. It had evidently been used as a cup or vessel before being broken. All the thicker portions of the bone had been cut away, and the edge thus left carefully trimmed, leaving a smooth rim entirely around it. (Fowke 1902: 357)

Another such find has been recorded: "A cup made from a human skull was exhumed . . . near Brookville, Indiana." (Fletcher, 6 note: Alice Fletcher: "Tribal Life Among the Omahas." in *Century Magazine*, January1896, or Fletcher XVI; Alice Fletcher in Pea. Mus., III.; cited in Fowke 1902:357).

Southeastern prehistoric Native Americans definitely used human bone to make artifacts. Williams (1975), Mainfort (1986), and Jacobi and Hill (2000, n.d.) describe human parietal pieces that are circular and have holes drilled into them. Jacobi and Hill (2000, n.d.) suggest these were in fact human bone parietal pieces that were connected together to form a rattle that would be worn on the legs or arms.

What would possess a human being to make the cranium of another human being into a bowl? It is hard to conceive of a reason. Because of the scarcity of these bowls in the archaeological record, this bowl is most likely a trophy. Speculation provides various explanations for this type of prize. The most obvious possibility would be that the skull bowl is a remnant of some vanquished adversary, and the trophy made into a utilitarian or ritual object. The bowl would remind its owner or owners of their own prowess in battle each time it was used as that utilitarian object or as an object in a personal or tribal ceremony. Each use of the individual's skull cap could be looked at as heaping insult upon insult on the individual because he is incomplete in the afterlife, or each use might be regarded as an incorporation of the vanquished enemy's power into the physical body of the user.

It is possible that the skull was used to contain ceremonial liquids not unlike the tea called the "black drink" made from Holly leaves (*Ilex vomitoria*) in the southeastern United States. Europeans called the drink "the black drink" because it was black in color. However, among southeastern Native Americans it was "the white drink" because it "symbolized purity, happiness, social harmony" (Hudson 1976:226). This drink was traditionally drunk out of conch shells and can be seen being drunk by Timucuan Indians in an engraving by Theodore de Bry after a painting done by Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues (Fundeburk 1996).

Milanich (1979) has found, in his investigation of shell cups in the Southeast, that they were rarely used in the Archaic Period. However, a few have been found in Archaic burial context as grave goods. For example, two shell cups were found on an infant burial at the Archaic Carlson Annis shell midden in Kentucky. The cups had drilled holes. Milanich (1979:87) notes that "drilling of holes through the narrow ends" of the shell cup was widespread and continued into the Mississippian period. He continues to question the purpose of the holes and supposes that they were used to "attach a thong for suspending the cups" (Milanich 1979:87). Comparatively, the skull bowl from Mulberry Creek probably was in fact a trophy that served as a focal point in a personal or tribal ceremony with liquid contents like the black drink or some other ritual drink concoction.

WHEELER BASIN

The Wheeler Basin report provides us with very little descriptive burial information in general, but burials were noted in the text (Webb 1939). Many of the burials were said to be in bad preservation so the exact number of some of the sites is unknown. But, out of a total of 287 burials from 18 sites that were noted only seven burials from the site of 1Lu86 were singled out as being headless (Table 11.2). But even these burials expressed in the report as headless were followed up in the burial description with the comment "may have been disturbed by plow" or "four inches below surface," the latter implying the burial could easily have been disturbed by a plow (Webb 1939:26–27). It is hard to tell in an examination of the photos of these burials whether the burials are truly headless because of the actual act of decapitation or of decapitation as a result of a plow. An

Table 11.2. Presence of Trophies and Trophy-Taking Behavior as Noted in Wheeler Basin Archaeological Sites

Wheeler basin site no.	No. of burials	No. of headless	No. of skull-only present	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) arms and hands	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) legs and feet	No. of scalped individuals
Lu85	No information					
Lu86	36	4				
Ct17	9					
Ct19	0					
Ct24	0					
Ct25	0					
La13	27 (18 separate skulls)		18			
La14	13					
La16	Flooded 33? Possible					
La37	Unknown due to bad preservation					
La40	Unknown due to bad preservation					
Li36	20					
Ma1	49					
Ma2	Unknown Possibly 29					
Ma3	24					
Ma4	10					
Ma5	0					
Mg2	37					
Total	287	4	18			

examination of the remains of four of the individuals has not provided any tell-tale signs of decapitation (three of these sets of remains were never brought in from the field). But, the remains of four are noted here as possible headless individuals.

18 HEADS

The one interesting mortuary behavior present at a site in the Wheeler Basin involves the site of 1LA13 that was called "Tick Island." The site was primarily a burial mound that was undisturbed. The report describes 27 burials of which 18 are separate skulls. Text from the report describes the odd mortuary findings:

> To right of the body there was a group of three pots and four skulls, all piled together without any special order or orientation. (Webb 1939:64)

> In block 20L2 there occurred three skulls with no evidence of any torsal bones: near the head of one there was a pot and large sherds . . . in this instance, as in other cases, it appeared that no body had been buried with the skull. Deterioration of skeletal material due to excessive moisture and leaching out of the lime by ground water, and to bacterial action, might have been rapid, but rapid destruction of bone material cannot account for the absence of bones of the torso when the skull is still present. (Webb 1939:64)
>
> In all, there were 6 burials of bodies in the flesh extended or flexed, 3 bundle burials of bones, and 18 skulls that had no torsal bones to accompany them. With these separate skulls there was usually deposited one or more open bowls and sometimes a heavy sherd from a large vessel. (Webb 1939:65).

The situation at Tick Island allows us to investigate a number of possibilities for why the heads are buried separately within the burial mound and whether these separate heads can in fact be called trophy heads. It is possible that taphonomic processes could have weathered away or physically moved all the remains except the heads, but this is highly unlikely. The presence of bundle burials may be a clue as to the use of the mound. Perhaps the burial mound was used to inter individuals after they had undergone deterioration and processing. The interment of the bundle burials is evidence for this assertion. However, the 18 heads have no bodies. The absence of the bodies does not seem to be due to weathering. It is possible that the 18 burials are representative of a type of secondary burial like the bundle burial. The prehistoric individuals using the mound may have felt that interment of the head of an individual was sufficient to represent an individual in the mortuary mound as a secondary burial. And, the presence of pottery bowls in association with the skulls might show that those individuals were given offerings to sustain the individual in the afterlife. However, this interpretation may not be accurate.

The three bundle burials were complete. There are six burials in the mound that are extended or flexed. The probable belief of the prehistoric Native Americans in the need for the body to reach the afterlife complete may indicate that in this mound the 18 skulls represent ritual sacrifices accompanying the other individuals buried in the mound. The pottery bowl and the accompanying skull may, as a pair, have been an individualistic offering or dedication. If so, these heads then become a type of spiritualistic trophy belonging to the others buried in the mound who were complete. It is not known whether these heads were enemies or individuals from the society who built the mound. Because these burials have not been reanalyzed since the late 1930s and early 1940s, when they were first inventoried, our understanding of the true mortuary purpose behind the separate skulls will have to wait.

GUNTERSVILLE BASIN

While the Wheeler Basin did not have the trophy-taking behavior seen in the Pickwick Basin, but did have its own interesting use of separate body parts,

Guntersville Basin combines the practices that were found in both the Pickwick and Wheeler Basins. The archaeological report for the Guntersville Basin includes information on 37 sites with some mention of a combined 1191 burials (Table 11.3) from these sites (Webb and Wilder 1951). At some of these sites there is evidence of headless burials (ten instances), presence of a skull separated from its owner (19 instances), and the occasional missing arm, hand, leg, or foot (seven total instances) (Webb and Wilder 1951). One historic scalping was noted (Lubsen 2004).

RETALIATION AND VENERATION

At the Harris Site (1MS80) in the Guntersville Basin there is a burial (Burial 76) interred with three skulls (Burials 77–79). All three of these skulls are missing their mandible and maxillary teeth. Each one of these skulls was painted. Burial number 77 (Figure 11.16) is especially interesting because we can see the extreme care taken in the painting of the design on the skull. Part of the design has lines that follow the cranial sutures (Figure 11.17). The Harris site also has another cache of three skulls (Burials 33–35) buried in a pit together. These skulls had no mandibles and there were no teeth in each respective maxillae. Webb and Wilder (1951:106) indicate that:

> In other cases at this site and other sites, separate skulls have been found buried together sometimes in association with a complete skeleton and sometimes as in this case without other burial association. Always these skulls occur in groups of three and have been called "trophy skulls" on the assumption they might have some ceremonial significance. These skulls show evidence of having been decorated by graphite painted in stripes along the sutures and the borders of orbits as in other cases.

The presence of caches of three trophy skulls at the Harris site may be explained by a number of mortuary possibilities. These skulls could represent decapitations of individuals in battle or after capture and the heads may have then been placed in a burial pit with an individual as a tribute as might be possible with Burial 76. The enemy warriors or even warriors from the individual's own tribe painted in death as they would have been painted in life. Or, the decapitated heads could just be placed in a pit to make sure the enemy warriors were incomplete for the afterlife, a token of retaliation, as in the cache with burials number 33, 34, and 35.

However, the cache of "trophy" heads that were painted indicates that the heads had to have been defleshed and cleaned, teeth removed, and then decorated with a painted design. Were these skulls defleshed in the open air and then placed in a pit, or left to decay in a burial pit and then later placed into another pit for which they were intended? These skulls could represent a kind of spiritual trophy: a dedication of allegiance, a supreme sacrifice of another person's access to the

Table 11.3. Presence of Trophies and Trophy-Taking Behavior as Noted in Guntersville Basin Archaeological Sites

Guntersville basin site no.	No. of burials	No. of headless	No. of skull-only present	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) arms and hands	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) legs and feet	No. of scalped individuals
Ms14	15					
Ms32	69				1	
Ms39	2					
Ms43 Unit 1	16					
Ms43 Unit 2	2					
Ms48 Bad preservation	19					
Ms51	14					
Ms53	6					
Ms53A	13					
Ms55 Unit 1	26					
Ms55 Unit 2	45					
Ms80	82		6			
Ms91 Unit 1	56					
Ms91 Unit 2	157	2	4			
Ms100	74					1 (historic)
Ms107	16					
Ms109	7	1	1			
Ms111	4					
Ms134 Bad preservation	130					
Ms136 Bad preservation	40					
Ms137	28		1			
Ms142 cave	0					
Ms143 cave	0					
Ms145 cave	Unknown number 4 ft deep in bone deposition					
Ja9A	5	1	4			
Ja27	12					
Ja27A	6					
Ja28	80	3				
Ja42	0					
Ja101	1					
Ja102	28	1				
Ja155	46	1				
Ja155A	2					
Ja176	16	1				
Ja176A	93		2	1		
Ja180	24		1			
Ja180A	57			1	4	
Total	1191	10	19	2	5	1

Figure 11.16. Painted skull (Burial 77) from 1Ms80 (Harris Site). (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

afterlife given to the complete person in the pit. Another interpretation involves either veneration or overt display of the skull for all to see of the various individual's who were defleshed, cleaned, and painted.

As veneration, the painted skulls could be included in daily rituals and activities. If the skull represented a loved one, then that individual would still be present in the daily activities of living family members or tribe members. The painted skulls would be spiritual trophies of remembrance that eventually would be buried. On the other hand, the painted skulls could be a focus of disgrace painted and displayed, and ridiculed by members of a society, then buried incomplete in further disgrace. No indications of cut marks could be found on the skulls from the Harris Site.

Figure 11.17. Design on posterior portion of painted skull following coronal and sagittal sutures. (Photo by Teresa Golson.)

The Chucalissa site (40Sy1) in western Tennessee provides a similar but more recent archaeological example of dismemberment and presentation of a cache of skulls dating to the first half of the fifteenth century (Nash 1972). In three burials, individuals have extra body parts buried with them. They include lower arm parts (ulna and radius) and worked or modified segments of human bone. In one burial (Burial 3) there are three extra human skulls buried with an individual whose hands appear to have been removed (Figure 11.18) (Nash 1972:Plate 10). Two of these skulls include cut marks indicating scalping or defleshing prior to burial. One of these three skulls, an adult female was painted with red ochre and the base of the skull seems to have been cut or knocked out possibly for display on a pole (Nash 1972:Plate 11).

Another cache of three skulls with a different type of burial was found at 1Ms91 (Columbus City Landing site) which included two Copena burial mounds.

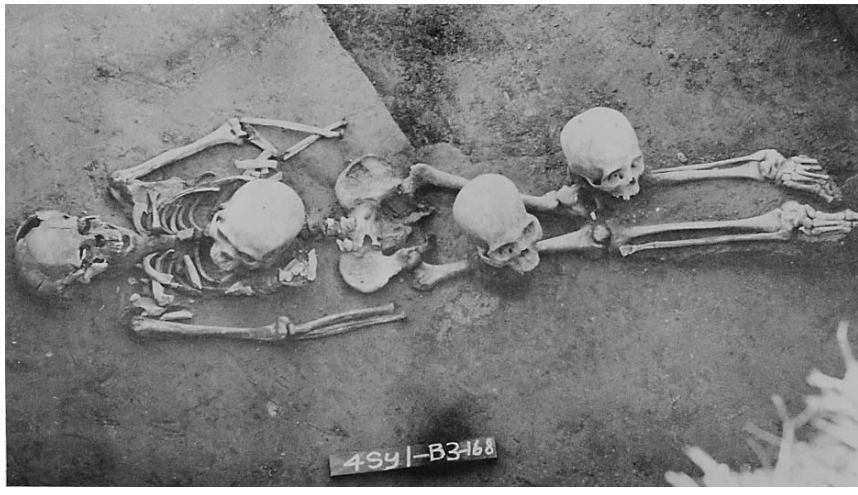

Figure 11.18. Photo from Chucalissa site of Burial 3 interred with three human skulls. (From Nash 1972:Plate 10.)

At this site there were eight instances of multiple burials with six of those including more than four burials in a pit. One grouping had nine burials. One multiple burial of five individuals had two individuals that were headless. And one burial (Burial 14) was a later burial added to a pit that contained the bones of skeletons numbered 15, 16, and 17. The bones of these latter skeletons were thus disturbed prehistorically and some of their remains were "piled up in the end of the grave pit" while others from the skeletons were left in place (Webb and Wilder 1951:124).

Burial 14 was laid across the long bones of Burials 15 and 16 and "with burial No. 14 on its left side were placed the three separate skulls of burials numbered 15, 16, and 17. These skulls at some time had been cleaned, dried, and decorated by painting. . . . This portion of the grave, when filled, was not again disturbed" (Webb and Wilder 1951:125). However, the burial pit was later opened and another individual was placed in the fill over Burial 14. This burial pit was definitely reused. The three painted skulls may have been painted around the time the pit was disturbed to inter Burial 14. The three skulls from Burials 15, 16, and 17 may have been defleshed by natural elements at the time of disturbance and the surface of the skulls then could be painted. The placement of the three skulls near Burial 14 does not seem to be an antagonistic display, for example, symbolizing retaliation by decapitation. It seems more of an act of ancestor veneration.

Finally, at 1JA180A (Rudder Site) there was an individual (Burial 25) buried in a limestone slab cyst with additional femora, tibiae, and fibulae, of three different individuals, laid out alongside. The femora, tibiae, and fibulae of Burial 26 lay at the feet, those same bones of Burial 27 at the left arm, and the same bone elements of burial 28 at the head. However, unlike the caches of heads discussed previously above with the remainder of their owner's skeleton in the pit, these individuals are

represented by legs only. It is possible that these leg additions are parts of family, or tribe members, or enemies who may have been displayed and placed in the pit symbolizing retaliation. Analysis of these skeletal remains has yet to be done.

NORRIS BASIN

The Norris Basin report describes the least number of burials of all four Tennessee River Basins sites discussed. There were only 189 burials from 23 sites investigated (Table 11.4). From all of these sites only one individual from Irwin Village was found to be headless. And, at only one site, the Freel Farm Mound, was there a burial of a separate head. No missing or excess arms, hands, legs or feet were found at any of the sites. No scalping was noted. A large number of the burials from these sites were poorly preserved. The best-preserved burials came from Cox Mound where no human trophies were present, but the sitting posture of burials did make heads drop due to natural processes and this was mentioned in the report (Webb 1938, Funkhouser 1938).

CONCLUSIONS

Trophy taking among Native Americans has a history in the Southeast extending from historic times back into the prehistoric Mississippian period and still further back into the Archaic Period. There is evidence of human trophies in many areas of the Southeast that were inhabited by different prehistoric groups. Trophies are present in both small and large habitation sites. And the type of human trophies themselves show a side of the prehistoric Native American that is purely antagonistic, but also a side that speaks to the status or job a person had in life, the ritual activities that were a part of their life, and traveling 360 degrees from antagonistic, the veneration and spiritual respect for a deceased individual. The prehistoric Native American took the human trophy as a prize to prevent a person from entering the afterlife in a complete state. Conversely, some may have given a human body part as a gift, or a spiritual trophy to someone they respected.

While there are many cases of trophy taking in the Southeast, this study primarily examines human skeletal remains from archaeological sites in four Tennessee River Basins: Pickwick, Wheeler, Guntersville, and Norris. While much of the data for the study relies on the notes, photographs, and the final published reports written as a result of the work of the WPA and the TVA, new information, specifically about the Pickwick and Guntersville Basins, has been added through recent analyses. Investigation of the reports not only indicated that there was trophy taking of human body parts, but also shed light on the pseudotrophies created by natural processes that seem to imply greater mayhem than there was in actuality. In addition, the language of early archaeological reports in the Southeast helped to exaggerate the number of trophies that were present.

Table 11.4. Presence of Trophies and Trophy-Taking Behavior as Noted in Norris Basin Archaeological Sites

Norris basin site no.	No. of burials	No. of headless	No. of skull-only present	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) arms and hands	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) legs and feet	No. of scalped individuals
Site #1						
Hetherley Stone Mounds	3					
Site #2						
Bowman Farm Mounds	0					
Site #3						
Saltpeter Cave	13					
Site #4						
McCarty Farm Mounds	1					
Site #5						
Irwin Village	3	1				
Site #6						
Hill Farm Stone Mounds	0					
Site #7						
Wilson Farm Mound	0					
Site #8						
Richardson Farm Mound	0					
Site #9						
Harris Farm Mounds	0					
Site #10						
Ausmus Farm Mounds	6					
Site #11						
Walters Farm Village	0					
Site #12						
Wallace Cave	0					
Site #13						
Bullock Cave	2					
Site #14						
Hawkins Cave	0					
Site #15						
Johnson Farm Cemetery	10					
Site #16						
Taylor Farm Mound	16					

(*Cont.*)

Table 11.4. (*Continued*)

Norris basin site no.	No. of burials	No. of headless	No. of skull-only present	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) arms and hands	No. of missing (−) or excess (+) legs and feet	No. of scalped individuals
Site #17						
Lea Farm Village and Mounds	4					
Site #18						
Stiner Farm Stone Mounds	2					
Site #19						
Cox Mound	49					
Site #20						
Ausmus Burial Cave	20 estimated					
Site #21						
Crawford Farm Mounds	42					
Site #22						
Freel Farm Mound	17		1			
Site #23						
Doan Cave	1					
Total	189	1	1			

There is a difference in the human trophies found from basin to basin along the Tennessee River. In the Pickwick Basin, which is the westernmost basin of the study, human trophies are prevalent and varied. There are headless bodies, numerous multiple burials with headless bodies, individuals without arm and leg parts, individuals with extra arm and leg parts laid next to them, skulls buried by themselves, a human skull bowl, a human tooth necklace and sharpened human fibulas accompanying a headless man, and evidence of scalping sometimes in large numbers at a site. The Wheeler Basin does not exhibit either the amount or variation of human trophies seen in the Pickwick. The Wheeler Basin does have one site with 18 heads that could reflect spiritual trophies to be taken into the afterlife by those extended and complete burials interred within the mound.

In the Guntersville Basin there are painted heads in groups of three and extra limbs placed in burials. The painting of the heads indicates that the heads were to be displayed in some manner. The question is whether they were to be an antagonistic display for the living to see, or a spiritual display of respect for the deceased to see in the afterlife. Finally, the Norris Basin report provided almost no evidence of human trophies. There is evidence for trophy taking in the prehistoric Southeast. While much of the trophy taking was probably antagonistic, there are other instances where this may not be the case, and where the trophy taking may reflect a gift with spiritual significance.

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Chapter 12

Trophy Taking in the Central and Lower Mississippi Valley

Nancy A. Ross-Stallings

Trophy taking is the act of removing human body parts from a living or recently deceased victim or foe, when the body part functions as a souvenir that marks the act of conquering or controlling another human being or human group. Trophy taking can be used as an act of revenge between certain factions of people, or to prove to a superior that a killing has been carried out. But the practice can also be done as a component of war, whether ritualized or as an impulse, done in the passion of the moment. Trophy taking has been done for thousands of years, and is still practiced in today's world in some circumstances.

The purposes of this chapter are to first review the criteria for evaluating whether or not a human remain should be considered as a legitimate trophy when found in an archaeological context. Second, some previously unpublished cases of decapitation and cannibalism from the central and lower Mississippi Valley, plus a site with one feature exhibiting multiple scalping and decapitation cases from southeastern Tennessee, will be presented. The final section is a review of sites in the continental United States where trophy taking and/or cannibalism has been verified, using the criteria established in the early part of the chapter. This review will demonstrate that trophy taking had two discrete origins in the United States, first from a temporal and second from a spatial standpoint, and that the practice spread across cultural areas on a timeline.

WHEN SHOULD A HUMAN REMAIN BE CONCLUSIVELY CONSIDERED A "TROPHY"?

While not nearly all of the human bones and teeth found as grave inclusions in Native American burials are trophies, some are and this forms the crux of one

of the more difficult aspects of researching these bone elements. Closely related to this issue is the examination of human body parts that are found in non-grave contexts in archaeological sites. These may be found in unusual places, such as in a pit in a house floor, or they may be associated with a ceremonial location in the site. Examples of these would be Hopewellian sites with numerous human bones altered into ceremonial objects. A study of culturally modified human remains from Hopewell sites in Ohio and Indiana by Johnston indicated that a regional difference existed in the types of mechanical modifications that were done to them. The skeletal material came from young to middle-aged males and females, and females were represented in significant numbers in both the Ohio and Indiana samples. No conclusive evidence that these were trophies, as opposed to curated skulls obtained by body processing and other mortuary practices, could be established (Johnston et al. 1997).

An earlier study by Seeman (1988) attempted to demonstrate that his sample of modified Hopewellian skulls could be considered trophies as opposed to "venerated ancestors" who had undergone mortuary processing at time of death and subsequent curation of their cranial material. Some of the skulls had been perforated, possibly for hanging on display. Based on the ages of the individuals at death, Seeman concluded that they represented trophy heads rather than ancestors. However, in both of these studies, no cut marks consistent with decapitation were described, and none of the material had been discovered with articulated mandibles or cervical vertebrae, indicating flesh-on deposition. Most had been so heavily modified, there was no reasonable way to determine conclusively whether or not they were originally taken as trophies. As a result, in this chapter, these Hopewellian skulls are not considered as trophies. Only those skulls that show conclusively their trophy origin, via cut marks, presence of articulated cervical vertebrae, or other characteristics, are included in this study sample.

At three sites in southeastern Michigan, perforated crania and long bones were discovered (Hinsdale and Greenman 1936). None of these examples bore conclusive evidence of being decapitated or scalped, based on the photographs and descriptions given by the authors. At the Riviere aux Vase site (ca. AD 1000–1300), a large mortuary site also in southeastern Michigan, careful analysis revealed that the numerous disarticulated burials were the result of human curation for mortuary purposes (Raemsch 1993). At the McKinstry Mound Two, a Blackduck Culture site in northern Minnesota, an extensive study was undertaken of some skeletal material that had unusual modifications. These modifications were consistent with postmortem body processing including defleshing and disarticulation. Some of the interments had clay burial masks, clay eye plugs inserted into the eye orbits, and perforations or other larger holes cut into the skulls. The authors concluded that the alteration done to some of the skeletal material was not undertaken with the intention of harvesting trophies, based on the location and types of cutmarks (Torbenson et al. 1996).

A final example of an additional study of this nature was done by Fenton (1991) in his study of "the social uses of dead people," producing a dissertation

of that title. His descriptions of body processing included the removal of specific elements of the deceased before burial, as well as curation of body parts. While he contrasted ethnographic examples from around the world (including the Roman Catholic Church's practice of curating supposed relics of revered persons), his primary emphasis was on the early and middle Woodland Period Adena culture. Fenton demonstrated that whether the "body processing" cultural practices were either prehistoric or modern, or from the Old or New Worlds, they offered a window into the social persona of the deceased. He held that these data indicated the role that both survivors and the deceased played in the social affairs of the living (Fenton 1991:323–324).

As in the cases above, a thorough examination of the bones or teeth will reveal certain kinds and patterns of cut marks that differ radically between those found on an intended trophy and those found on bones that were subjected to secondary defleshing and alterations. Good explanations of the required methodology are located in Binford (1981:35–181), Olson and Shipman (1994), Hurlbut (1999) and Turner and Turner (1999). Surprisingly, depending on the region of the United States, this type of careful documentation has not been practiced on a regular basis by osteologists who are examining the recovered human remains. LeBlanc noted that careful analysis of cut marks has not been routinely undertaken in the Desert Southwest in the past and so evidence for scalping is underreported in the literature (1999:88).

There are a number of steps for proper documentation. First, the skeletal remains have to be examined by proficient individuals who have been trained to recognize cut marks, chop marks, and fractures on green bone (evidence of perimortem activity) and be able to delineate it from mortuary processing or defleshing activities associated with secondary burial or skeletal element curation. Second, the osteologist must be proficient in delineating marks of scavenging by rodents, carnivores, and insects, and identifying effects of root growth and weathering activity on human bone (Hurlbut 1999). Third, the osteologist must recognize the overall modifications of the bone surface and patterns of burning and scorching, to separate instances of cremation from cannibalism (Darling 1998; White 1992). As a result of his research, Turner (in White 1992:39) isolated a list of 14 exacting characteristics that are indicative of cannibalism.

A fourth requirement is that the osteologist must be proficient in recognizing pseudopathologies. For example, instances have occurred when grooves formed by the pulsations of the frontal branch of the superficial temporal artery on the frontal bone of a skull have been confused with true cut marks (Saul and Saul 1992:7). An examination of possible candidates for trophy taking and cannibalism is tedious, and is done macroscopically, or by using a hand lens, coupled with stereoscopic microscopes and even scanning electron microscopes. Post-depositional disturbance of burial or ritual features, damage to bones from excavation, transport, cleaning and analysis of the material can all leave marks on the bone. All of these issues need to be taken into consideration by osteologists before determining if bones served as trophies.

Research of this type is labor intensive and costs money. In the world of cultural resource management archaeology, the added pressure of strict time deadlines for report submission, coupled with adherence to a competitively bid budget can play havoc with the amount of work required to correctly document the skeletal material. Thus, it is small wonder that some of the cultural activities on bones are not described in site reports or remain buried in "gray literature" which is difficult for researchers to become aware of and to easily obtain access to. In many cases, minimal osteology was done on the skeletal material, usually enough to "get by," and that is all that is presented.

Even in reports that have been produced under circumstances more sympathetic to the resource, essential information regarding the cultural practices conducted on human bone is often not described in the report. Examples of cannibalism may not be described as often as they occur, because the fragmented bones, with their green breaks, spiral twisting, chop and cut marks, and scorching may be misinterpreted as a part of the site's faunal collection. It is not unusual for an alert faunal analyst to discover human remains in bags of fauna from sites. As a result, curated remains, whether misclassified as fauna or simply stored without adequate study, may never permit these practices to be adequately documented. Finally, those human remains that have already been reburied may never have these cultural modifications described.

DECAPITATION, SCALPING AND CANNIBALISM CASES IN THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA AND SOUTHEASTERN TENNESSEE

The trophy-taking cases and one of the two cannibalism cases described in this section have not been previously published. The Collegedale Site (40HA407) was located in suburban Chattanooga, Tennessee. In 1996, an apartment complex owner wanted to build additional units and began to have the topsoil bulldozed away on the parcel. A multicomponent site with Late Archaic through the Mississippian Periods was discovered, with over 50 hearth and trash pit features, plus 11 interments present. By the time the Tennessee Division of Archaeology (TDOA) staff visited the site and an archaeological contractor began salvage operations, the part of the site that was revealed by topsoil removal was badly damaged. Eighty centimeters of midden was removed before the site was reported. One of the pit features containing human bone attracted particular notice by Emanuel Breitburg, a physical anthropologist and faunal analyst at TDOA.

At excavation, the pit was found to have been filled in one event, with no discernable strata in it. Human skulls were found in abundance. The pit fill also contained turtle carapace fragments, and whole turtle shells which seemed to be placed in association with some of the skulls. A half mandible with heavily worn teeth from an older canid, deer bone, some with cut marks on them, and a large deer antler fragment were recovered. Also present was a Cotaco Creek point, dated at 2500–1000 BC (Richard Stallings, personal communication 2004), and

a steatite bowl fragment with a cross-hatched rim and a groove running along the rim. No ceramics were found in the pit. The bottom of the pit contained a primary interment, a flexed-on-stomach female, aged 35–45. Three of the skulls in the pit had been placed around her head. Oxidizing carbon ratio dates run on fill from the pit gave a date of 2901 +/–87 BP (this is the area where the pit fill was disturbed from earth-moving operations) and 3072 +/–92 BP at the primary interment. OCR dates assume an AD 1950 baseline for computing Before Present (BP). The point and the OCR dates place the age of the feature within the Wade Phase of the Late Terminal Archaic.

The author was invited by TDOA to analyze the recovered skeletal material from the pit feature. The tough soil matrix and the bad bone preservation made the laboratory analysis difficult. Despite preservation issues stemming from several weeks exposure to sun, the cranial fragments and cervical vertebrae were examined with an adjustable 5–15X hand lens, and by stereoscopic microscope. Cut marks were measured and photographed. Each cut mark was examined by both Dr. Breitburg and the author, to lessen the possibility of interobserver error. When vascular channels from blood vessels were noted, they were recorded as such for the cranial fragments so that no misinterpretation could occur.

A total of 34 skulls were represented in the pit fill, excluding the one from the primary interment. Because of the truncation of the features at the site, it is not unreasonable to assume that the pit originally contained the remains of more skulls than were noted in the lab. Cut marks on the skull fragments demonstrated that the victims had been scalped. The cut marks appeared to have been made with bifaces as well as flakes. Chop marks were also present on some of the cranial fragments, demonstrating that during the scalping and decapitating, tissue removal was sometimes brutally done. A total of 12 of the skulls had preserved cervical vertebrae associated with them, clearly indicating decapitation. Of those with cervical vertebrae associated, three sets of cervical vertebrae had cut marks on them. Five of the skulls had mandible fragments in anatomical association with them. There were 16 total skulls with associated mandibles or cervical vertebrae. Loose teeth were also found in the pit fill. Sorting the teeth revealed that an additional six minimum number of individuals (MNI) were represented, plus a toddler's humerus fragment was found. It is unclear if the humerus fragment was intentionally placed or was pit fill. If it was intentionally placed, this brings the number of individuals represented in the pit to 42. Using discriminant functions, many were sexed by tooth measurements. The total demographic breakdown was the female primary interment, plus skulls from 14 males, 3 females, and 17 adults of unknown sex. The loose teeth were all from five adults, with the exception of one child's deciduous tooth. The ages of the adults, based on tooth wear, were 20–50 years old.

Upon examination, the female primary interment was found to have been scalped. Her cranium revealed that she had been hit on the back of the head, sustaining a severe skull fracture. Her burial furniture also included two awls and numerous whole turtle shells and turtle shell fragments. An extensive literature

search was undertaken to determine if comparable pit features have been excavated in other Late Archaic sites or in sites of different ages. At this writing, this pit feature is believed to be the only one of its size and type that has been documented in North America (Ross-Stallings 1997).

The Mississippi decapitation and cannibalism cases are from sites located on the Mississippi Delta, a diamond-shaped geomorphological feature that extends from Memphis, Tennessee, to Natchez, Mississippi. Geologically, the Delta was the location of a meandering Mississippi River channel, which changed many times over tens of thousands of years. Each time the channel changed, old river channels and tributary streams formed and reformed crescent-shaped lakes and bayous across the landscape. Prehistoric site density on the Delta was once very high. However, habitation by people over the last 170+ years has taken its toll.

Before levees were constructed in the 1920s, the Delta was very prone to flooding. Mississippian mound complex sites became popular for settlers to place houses and outbuildings on, since the structures were not as subject to flood damage. Plowing with horses and mules created some impact to sites. However, in the twentieth century the damage accelerated exponentially, particularly after World War II when horse farming gave way to tractor-based and heavy equipment farming. Chisel plowing and agribusiness has done more to destroy the sites across the Delta than probably any other activity. Especially damaging is the heavy equipment routinely used to level lands for rice fields. More recently over the last dozen years, heavy equipment for construction of large casino complexes, and associated urban sprawl on the northwest portion of the Delta, south of Memphis and adjacent to the Mississippi River, has impacted more sites.

Since 1987, the author has been working on the Mississippi Burial Study under the auspices of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), analyzing skeletal material that has been salvage-excavated ahead of backhoes and bulldozers. The Bonds Site (22Tu530) is a circa AD 1200 site located along Peters Bayou, which is an old channel cutoff of the Mississippi River in southern Tunica county. The site was a village containing wall trench houses, trash pits, hearths and burials. One of the interments was a double burial, designated Burials 6 and 7, with the decedents arranged extended and side-by-side. The neck area of one was placed next to the feet of the other. Burial 7 was a male, aged 30–35, with six points in his chest. Burial 6 was a 17- to 18-year-old male, with three points in his chest. Both had been decapitated, and Burial 6 was also missing his left arm. A lone male skull was found tossed face down in a trash pit, but it did not have cut marks or articulated cervical vertebrae.

Approximately ten kilometers south of the Bonds Site, also along Peters Bayou, was the Austin Site (22Tu549). The Austin Site was discovered when a plantation owner decided to level a piece of land for a rice field in 1988. The MDAH conducted salvage operations. Austin was much larger than Bonds, but was a contemporaneous sister site, based on the similar circa AD 1200 radio carbon dates. By the time the archaeologists arrived, probably a quarter of the site had been destroyed. The surviving six acres contained 149 interments and 40 wall

trench houses arranged in clusters, two palisade remnants with three-sided bastions at the ends, hundreds of pits, and thousands of postmolds. Austin had a mass grave with ten individuals placed in it. Some had points in their chests. Extremely bad preservation conditions in this feature prevented a complete check of crania for evidence of scalping.

Burials at this site were initially excavated and analyzed *in situ* if at all possible by the author, before additional work was done in a lab. While no scalping could be documented at the Austin Site, one unique decapitation case was found there. This interment was Burial 27, a 35+—year-old female with a skull pathology indicative of a metastatic carcinoma. The skull wall on one side had been destroyed by the tumor, with attendant pathological bone remodeling . She was interred extended on her back, but her skull was markedly displaced from her cervical vertebrae and rolled so that the lesion would not have been visible to the people tending to her grave. One cervical vertebral body had a cut mark on the right side.

The Oliver Site (22Co503), is located in Coahoma County, Mississippi, on the banks of the Sunflower River. The site was occupied intermittently since the Middle Woodland, and continued to be occupied well up into the seventeenth century, with some early European trade goods recovered from various portions of the site. During the late Mississippian, the Protohistoric and Historic contact periods, the site was the most intensively occupied and a total of 22 mounds were erected. In December 1990 and continuing into early 1991, the current owner decided to remove the one remaining large mound so he could farm the land underneath it. He allowed salvage archaeology to be conducted as heavy equipment scraped the site.

Two lone skulls in separate small pits were recovered, but one was in such bad condition that it was only a powdery outline. A portion of it had been sheared off in a heavy equipment scrape and it is unknown if it would have had cervical vertebrae with it. Designated Burial 24, it had a Mississippi Plain variety Neeley's Ferry everted rim helmet bowl with it, dating to the Late Mississippian and into the Protohistoric period. The second lone skull, however, was very well preserved. Designated Burial 22, it was clearly a trophy skull which had been tossed face down in a trash pit. There were no artifacts placed intentionally in the pit, and the fill was consistent with normal trash from the site. The skull was from an adult male, age 25. Found in anatomical position at the time of excavation was the mandible, and the first, second, and third cervicals. The skeletal material was in a very good state of preservation. The third cervical had three cut marks on it, indicating that the trophy taker first attempted to decapitate at the level of the third cervical, but changed his mind and moved slightly further down the neck. The nature of the three cuts indicate that one was made by a larger stone tool, while the other two were made from a smaller implement. Two are on the anterior aspect of the vertebral body, while the third is located on the right transverse process. Angles of the cut marks indicate that the trophy taker stood behind the limp or kneeling victim, pulled the head back by grabbing the hair, and exposed the neck area, just below the mandible. The mandible did not display any cut

marks at the gonial angle. These cuts can occur fairly often in the process of decapitation.

Burial 14A and 14B was a double burial of a man and a woman, extended, both placed on their backs. However, the female was positioned on top of the male. The male (Burial 14B) was headless, but his mandible was in fragments under her skull. Preservation issues hindered some of the analysis of this burial. A broken Madison point with an impact fracture was found inside Burial 14B's left rib cage area. A Nodena point was found beside Burial 14A's right hand, but there was no indication that it was inside of her at time of interment. Grave goods included a hooded water bottle, a copper coil, a copper wrapped cane dowel, and a rolled copper coil with a round simple drawn glass bead.

Burial 13A and 13B were found in the same burial cluster as Burial 14. This was an extended double child burial with both skulls, both mandibles and all cervical vertebrae missing. The children were buried side-by-side, but Burial 13A, age 5–6, was situated against Burial 13B's abdominal area. The other child was 9–11 years old. Burial furniture included five glass beads plus several copper bangles on the right arm of Burial 13A. A portion of Burial 13A's left femur was submitted for collagen dating and the noncalibrated date was AD 1600 +/−60 years, or 350 years BP +/− 60 years. This date is consistent with the artifacts found with the children.

The final interment of interest from the site was found during a visit by the author in September 2000 to the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University. The MDAH funded this visit to examine all of the skeletal material from the Oliver Site that had been excavated in 1901 and 1902 by Charles Peabody and W. C. Farabee. A boxed collection of bone with no burial number had documentation stating it had come from the "Grave Yard Mound" at Oliver. The box contained the MNI remains of six incomplete individuals, an adult male, an adult female, three adults of unknown sex and one child. The bone was in an excellent state of preservation. There were cranial fragments, a few mandible fragments, a few vertebrae, most with neural arches broken off, hand and foot bones, some broken apart, and fragments from all long bones in the human body. The cranial fragments tend to be no larger than 7–8 cm long, while the long bone fragments range from 7 to15 cm long.

From the appearance of the breakage, all of the material was broken apart prehistorically, on green bone (perimortem), and cannot be attributed to excavation damage. The long bones are split longitudinally with snapping, hacking and spiral twisting performed to cause the breakage. One parietal fragment exhibited two cut marks near the sagittal suture. They ran parallel on the outer table and had vertical walls. A midshaft femoral fragment displayed five cut marks on the shaft near the linea aspera and included a crude chop mark that was 4.2 mm wide. The chop mark had one vertical wall and one angled wall. Most of the bones were charred, but not heavily burned, as would be expected for cremation. On several of the long bone fragments, only the jagged ends are charred, with normal bone color along the rest of the shaft fragment. This is consistent with cooking while some soft tissue was still on the bone. The degree of burning, morphology of the breaks, the

cuts that were found, and the elements included in the collection point strongly to cannibalism and are consistent with criteria outlined in Turner and Turner (1999) and White (1992:39).

The final case of possible cannibalism and decapitation is from a burial recovered from the Lake George Site (22Yz557) in Yazoo County, Mississippi. The site is located on the southern end of the Delta, near the confluence of Silver Creek, the Sunflower River and Lake George, which is a lake formed by an old river channel cutoff. In the early 1960s, 25 mounds were still visible (Williams and Brain 1983:1). Excavations and study of ceramic chronologies indicate that the site was occupied for over 1000 years, with the first occupations occurring during the time of Poverty Point and terminating around AD 1450. Mound C, where a majority of the excavated skeletal material came from, has village occupation layers radiocarbon dated from AD 500–700 (noncalibrated), with the first construction layer of the mound begun at around AD 700 (noncalibrated) (Williams and Brain 1983:345–346). Mound C then appears to have been used for another 700 years before the site decline occurred.

Burial 37, containing a young to middle-aged adult female with no head, was found at only 50 cm below the existing surface of the mound. Her position in the mound indicated that she had been interred relatively late in the mound's construction. The burial had no grave goods with it to help date her in time. However, few of the Mound C interments had grave goods, which tends to be unusual on the Delta. Burial 37 was buried in a jumbled condition, but some of the bones were articulated, with the legs placed left over right. Many of the bones were charred. Juvenile cranial fragments were found mixed with the interment. Williams and Brain (1983:49, 52) offer cannibalism as a possible explanation. No long bone lengths for this skeleton could be taken in the lab assessment done in 1962, due to breakage and their incomplete state. This puzzling skeleton has not been analyzed yet by the author, so a possible cannibalism case is suggested based on incomplete information.

The evidence from these burials indicates that there was a great amount of conflict and social unrest on the Delta, spanning a time period from AD 1000 until European contact. Ethnographic accounts beginning at contact indicate that the unrest continued, and probably escalated, because of the complicating elements of European discovery and from political matters involving Spanish, then French and English, and finally Euro American interests for the next 300 years.

THE TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL FLUORESCENCE OF TROPHY TAKING AND CANNIBALISM IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES

In this section, the spatial and temporal distribution, as well as the types of trophy taking, will be reviewed across the continental United States. For inclusion

in this section, the act of trophy taking will be considered to be conclusive if there are cut marks and other bone alterations consistent with scalping or decapitation that are visible. The same level of criteria was applied for cases of cannibalism. In the figures below, river courses are not shown unless they form boundaries of the various states. If river courses were included, the maps would have become very difficult to read, in some instances.

Some of the depicted density of patterning in the diffusion of the trophy-taking practices may be partially skewed. The reason for this is because of salvage archaeology performed in certain locations around the continental United States where large amounts of development have taken place, particularly over the last 40 years. An example of this is in Figures 12.1 and 12.2, where the amount of Late Prehistoric decapitation and scalping seems particularly high in the Nashville, Tennessee, area. However, the Cumberland River flows through Nashville, and this was a fairly thickly inhabited place in the prehistoric past. Coupled with the explosion of sprawl affecting Nashville and (other urban locations) since World War II, reported sites have skyrocketed in recent decades. But, certainly, the cultural practices had to be exercised frequently enough in prehistory for them to be in the archaeological record and repeatedly found.

However, pervasive development is a two-edged sword. While sites are uncovered that may have gone decades or centuries before discovery if building sprawl was not occurring, they are being destroyed in unprecedented numbers as well. Despite the overlay of federal laws that apply to specific properties and conditions, policies and regulations regarding human remains, antiquities, historic preservation and cultural resource protection vary markedly by state and even within different communities.

While this research represents 15 years of active collection of trophy taking and cannibalism cases, it certainly is not exhaustive. Papers that the author has presented addressing the subject, are the result of updated personal research conducted in this area (Ross-Stallings 1995, 1997, 2003, 2004). Cases are always lurking in gray literature, in unpublished field and lab notes, in presented papers that were never published, and in old and obscure publications. In many cases, old publications offer the proverbial "one liner" that gives a tantalizing tidbit that may take months to track down and verify. In some cases, collections have been lost or repatriated, or the investigators who excavated the site and did the lab analysis have passed away, and the tidbit remains unverifiable.

With these caveats established, an examination of Figures 12.1, 12.2, and 12.4 and the accompanying Tables 12.1, 12.2, and 12.4 will show that there is patterning to the cultural practice of trophy taking; that it developed in different parts of the continental United States and then diffused to other areas. River drainages formed the route for many cultural practices to spread, prehistorically, and trophy taking is no exception. The sites depicted in central South Dakota on the decapitation map (Figure 12.2) and in central Kansas, South and North Dakota, and Nebraska on the scalping map (Figure 12.1) are located on or very near river drainages. For the sites in central South Dakota and the Bahm Site in southwestern North Dakota,

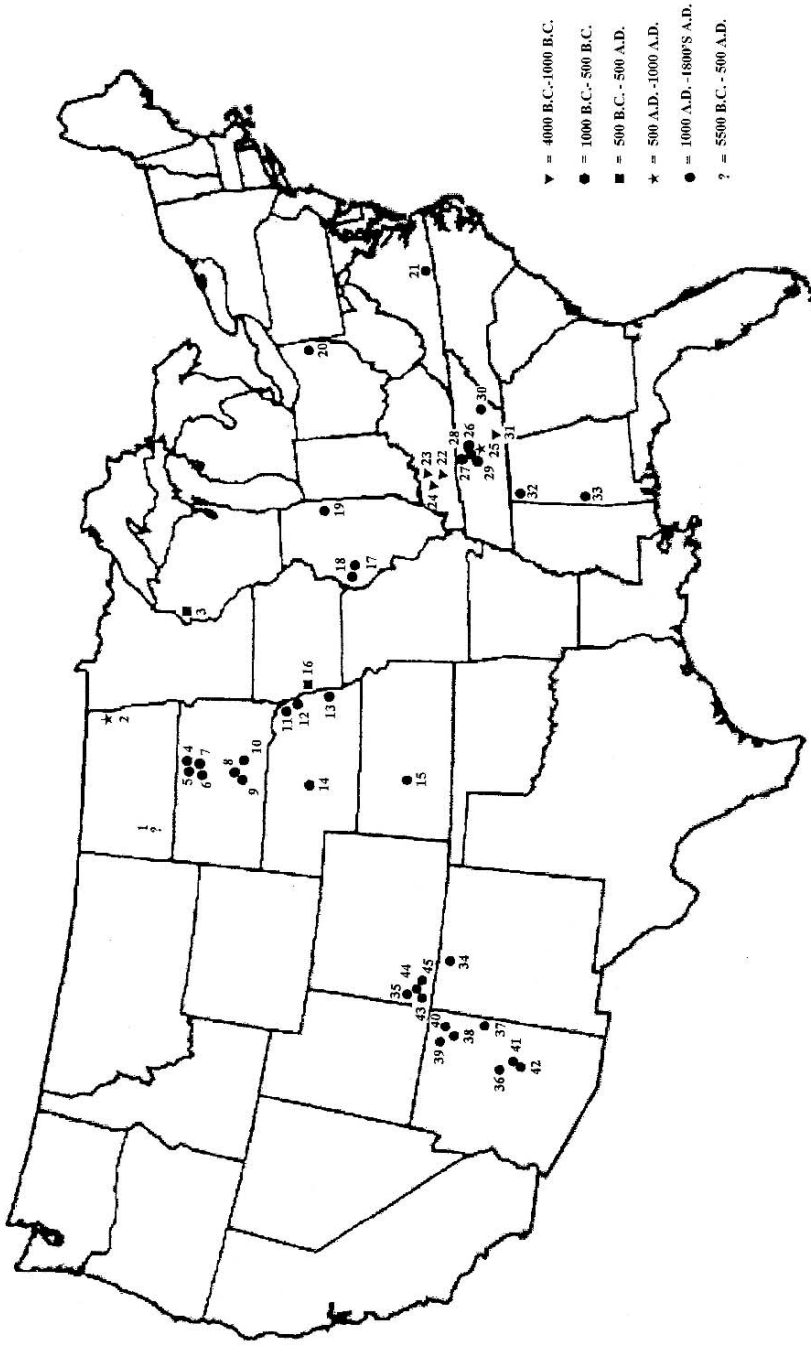

Figure 12.1. Scalping cases.

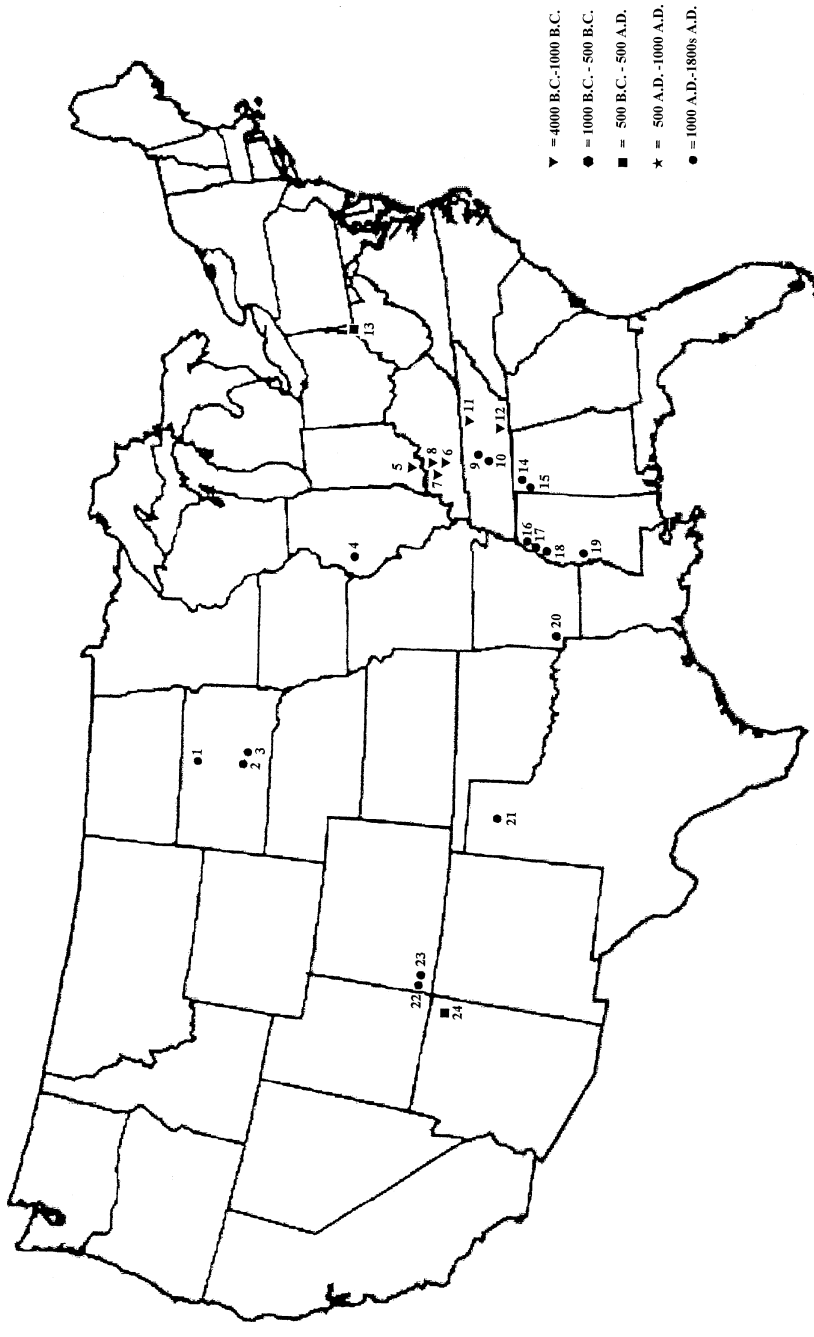

Figure 12.2. Decapitation cases.

Table 12.1. Scalping Cases

Site name/Number	Cultural affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's sex and age	Reference
1. Bahm Site 32MO97	Late Archaic ca. 100 BC–AD 500	Morton, ND	1 Adult of unknown sex; 1 child, 10	Williams 1994
2. Blasky Mound Group 32WA1	Late Woodland ca. AD 350–950	Walsh, ND	1 male, 35–40	Williams 1994, 1995, and personal communication 2004
3. Spencer Lake Mounds 47BT2	Middle Woodland AD 490–580	Burnett, WI	1 male of unknown age	Neiberger 1989
4. Anton Rygh Site 39OA4	Plains Village II ca. AD 1250–1700	Campbell, SD	1 Adult of unknown sex	Holliman and Owsley 1994:350
5. Larson Site 39WW2	Arikara AD 1750–1785	Walworth, SD	1 child, 5–9; 1 male, 10–19; 6 females, 10–19; 7 Adult males; 2 Adult females	Owsley 1994:335
6. SpiryEklo Site 39WW3	Protohistoric, LeBeau Phase	Walworth, SD	1 unknown age and sex	Holliman and Owsley 1994:350
7. Mobridge Site 39WW1	Plains Village II ca. AD 1250–1700	Walworth, SD	1 child, 6 1 Adult, unknown sex	Holliman and Owsley 1994:350
8. Sully Site 39SL4	Post–Contact Coalescent ca. AD 1650–1725	Sully, SD	1 female, 15–17	Holliman and Owsley 1994:350
9. Fay Tolton Site 39ST11	Plains Village I ca. AD 950–1250	Stanley, SD	1 child, 5–7	Holliman and Owsley 1994:346–350
10. Crow Creek Site 39BF11	Plains Village I ca. AD 950–1250	Buffalo, SD	486 males, females, and children; 90% ($n = 437$) scalped	Willey 1982; 1990
11. Site 25DX4	Plains Village 2, Nebraska Phase ca. AD 1250–1700	Dixon, NE	3 Adults of unknown sex	Miller 1994

(*Cont.*)

Table 12.1. (*Continued*)

Site name/Number	Cultural affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's sex and age	Reference
12. Site 25DK9	Plains Village 2, St. Helena Phase ca. AD 1250–1700	Dakota, NE	1 Adult male	Miller 1994
13. Wallace Mound Site 25SY67	Plains Village 2, Nebraska Phase ca. AD 1250–1700	Sarpy, NE	1 female, 16–18	Holliman and Owsley 1994:351 Miller 1994:212
14. Sargent Ossuary Site 25CU28	Plains Village I ca. AD 950–1250	Custer, NE	2 Adult males, 1 Adult female, 1 Adult unknown sex	Miller 1994; O'Shea and Bridges 1989
15. Unnamed	Unspecified	Pawnee, KS	1 female, >25	Willey and Bass 1978
16. Hanging Valley Site 13HR28	Middle Woodland AD 310 +/−60 AD 190 +/−190	Harrison, IA	1 female, 35–44	Tiffany et al. 1988
17. Norris Farm #36 Site 11FU2167	Oneota ca. AD 1300	Fulton, IL	1 Adult, unknown sex 10 Adult females 3 Adult males 1 male, 1618 2 children, unknown sex	Larson 1997:120–122 Mensforth 1991:582 Milner 1995:224–230
18. Crable Site 11FU896	Late Prehistoric	Fulton, IL	1 Adult male	Neumann 1940
19. Fisher Site 11WI5	Mississippian AD 1250–1300 AD 1450	Will, IL	1 Adult, unknown sex	Carlson 1996
20. Fort Laurens	Historic AD 1779	Dover, OH	15 Adult males	Williamson et al. 2003
21. Clarksville Site 43MO14	Late Woodland ca. AD 800–1630	Mecklenberg, VA	2 Adult males 1 Adult female	Owsley and Berryman 1975; Bass and Holmes 1962
22. Carlston–Annis Site 15BT5	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Butler, KY	1 Adult male	Mensforth 2001:118
23. Ward Site 15McL11	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	McLean, KY	3 Adult males	Mensforth 2001:118
24. Indian Knoll Site 15OH2	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Ohio, KY	1 Adult Male	Mensforth 2001:118

25. Mason Site 40FR8	Late Woodland AD 470 +/−85 AD 890 +/− 90	Franklin, TN	1 Adult Male	Owsley and Berryman 1975
26. Averbuch Site 40DV60	Mississippian AD 1425 +/− 55 AD 1255 +/− 50	Davidson, TN	1 Male, 30–34; 2 Males, 25–29; 1 Female, 30–34; 1 Female, 18.5–19.5	Owsley and Berryman 1975
27. Gordontown Site 40DV6	Mississippian AD 1310 +/− 70 AD 1430 +/− 60	Davidson, TN	1 Male, 35–40; 1 Male 30–40	Berryman 1981
28. Arnold Village 40WM5	Mississippian AD 1200 +/− 80 AD 1680 +/− 65	Williamson, TN	1 Adult Male; 1 Male, 25–35; 1 Male, 30–40	Berryman 1981
29. East Nashville Mounds Site; 40DV4	Mississippian ca. AD 1200	Davidson, TN	1 Male, 15–17; 2 Females ≥ 45; 1 Female 18–22	Berryman 1981
30. Sale Creek Site 40HA64	Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1600	Hamilton, TN	1 Female, 28–39	Moore and Breitburg 1998
30. Dallas Site 40HA7	Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1600	Hamilton, TN	1 Adult Male	Moore and Breitburg 1998
30. Ledford Island Site 40BY16	Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1600	Bradley, TN	1 Male, 23–39	Moore and Breitburg 1998
30. Rymer Site 40BY11	Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1600	Bradley, TN	1 Adult Male; 1 Adult Female	Moore and Breitburg 1998
30. Ocoee Site 40PK1	Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1600	Polk, TN	1 Male, 30–40	Moore and Breitburg 1998
31. Collegedale Site 40HA407	Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1600	Hamilton, TN	1 Female, ≥45	Ross–Stallings 1997
32. Koger Island Site 1LU92	Mississippian ca. AD 1000–1600	Lauderdale, AL	1 Male, 20–24; 1 Male 30–34; 1 Male 25–35; 1 Male 40–44; 1 Female 17–19; 1 Female 30–39	Bridges 1996
33. Moundville Site 1TU1	Mississippian ca. AD 1000–1600	Tuscaloosa, AL	1 Female, 24	Snow 1941
34. Largo–Gallina BG 3	Anasazi AD 1264	Rio Arriba. NM	1 Adult, Unknown Sex	Turner and Turner 1999:236–239

(*Cont.*)

Table 12.1. (*Continued*)

Site name/Number	Cultural affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's sex and age	Reference
35. Site 5DL975	Anasazi AD 1180	Delores, CO	1 Male, 22–43	Turner and Turner 1999:236
36. Chavez Pass (Nuvakwewtaqa) Site AZ O:4:1	Sinagua ca. AD 1200–1300	Coconino, AZ	1 Female, 25–30; 1 Female, 28–30; 1 Female, 30–35; 1 Male, 30–40; 1 Male, 40; 1 Male 25–30; 1 Male, ≥ 40	Allen and Birkby 1985:22–42
37. Houck K Pueblo Site NA 8440	Anasazi ca. AD 1150–1200	Apache, AZ	2 Adult Females	Turner and Turner 1999:369–382
38. Kin Klethla Site UKV 115	Anasazi ca. AD 1250–1300	Navajo, AZ	1 Adult Female	Turner and Turner 1999:236
39. Betatakin Kiva Site NA 3533	Anasazi AD 1267–1286	Navajo, AZ	1 Young Female	Turner and Turner 1999:367–369
40. Marsh Pass Area Cave Site	Unspecified	Navajo, AZ	Unknown Age and Sex	Bueschgen and Case 1996:232
41. Grasshopper Pueblo Site AZ P:14:1	Mogollon AD 1300–1375	Navajo, AZ	1 Male, 35–40; 1 Male 40; 1 Female 13–15	Turner and Turner 1999:43
42. Site AZ P:13:26	Sinuagua? ca. AD 1150–1250	Gila, AZ	1 Male, 40–50; 1 Male 35–45; 1 Female, 30–40; 1 Female, 25–35	Allen and Birkby 1985:22–42; Turner and Turner 1999:43
43. Sand Canyon Pueblo Site 5MT765	Anasazi AD 1250–1285	Montezuma, CO	1 Unknown Sex, 12–15; 1 Unknown Sex, 8	Kuckleman et al. 2002
44. Castle Rock Pueblo Site 5MT1825	Anasazi AD 1256–1285	Montezuma, CO	1 Male 35–50	Kuckleman et al. 2002
45. Porter Pueblo Site 5MT1	Anasazi, Early Mancos Period; AD 950–1025	Montezuma, CO	1 Child, 4–5; 1 Child, 8; 1 Child 10; 1 Male, 17	Malville 1989:3-22; Turner and Turner 1999:285– 286; White 1992:370

Table 12.2. Decapitation Cases

Site name/Number	Cultural affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's sex and age	Reference
1. Larson Site 39WW2	Arikara AD 1750–1785	Walworth, SD	1 male, 30–40; 1 male, 20–30; 2 adult males	Holliman and Owsley 1994:346–350
2. Fay Tolton Site 39ST11	Plains Village I ca. AD 950–1250	Stanley, SD	1 male, 25–29	Holliman and Owsley 1994:346–350
3. Crow Creek Site 39BF11	Plains Village II ca. AD 1250–1700	Buffalo, SD	486 males, females, and children; 25% decapitated ($n = 122$)	Willey 1982; 1990
4. Norris Farms #36 Site 11FU2167	Oneota ca. AD 1300	Fulton, IL	4 adult males; 7 adult females	Larson 1997:120–122 Mensforth 1991:582 Milner 1995:224–230
5. Myers Site 12SP1082	Late Middle Archaic ca. 4000–3000 BC	Spencer, IN	1 adult male	Anne Bader, personal communication 2004
6. Carston Annis Site 15BT5	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Butler, KY	1 female, 33; 1 female, 46; 1 female, 17.5; 1 male, 38; 1 male, <40; 1 unknown sex, 14–15	Mensforth 2001:118
7. Ward Site 15McL11	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	McLean, KY	1 female, 50–60; 1 female, 18–21; 1 female, 16–17; 1 male, 21; 1 male, 45; 1 male, 16–17	Mensforth 2001:118
8. Indian Knoll Site 15OH2	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Ohio, KY	6 adult males	Mensforth 2001:118
9. Gordontown Site 40DV6	Mississippian AD 1310 +/−70 AD 1430 +/−60	Davidson, TN	1 male, 17–20	Moore and Breitburg 1998
10. Arnold Village Site 40WM5	Mississippian AD 1200 +/−80 AD 1680 +/−65	Williamson, TN	3 adult males	Broster 1988; Owsley and Berryman 1975
11. Robinson Site 40SM4	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Sumner, TN	1 male, 20–25	Smith 1993:135

(*Cont.*)

Table 12.2 (*Continued*)

Site name/Number	Cultural affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's sex and age	Reference
12. Collegedale Site 40HA407	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Hamilton, TN	12 adults of unknown sex	Ross–Stallings 1997
13. Cresap Mound Site 46MA407	Adena ca. 500 BC	Marshall, WV	1 adult of unknown sex	Owsley and Berryman 1975:50
14. Koger Island Site 1LU92	Mississippian ca. AD 1200–1500	Lauderdale, AL	6 unknown age and sex	Webb and DeJarnette 1942:216
15. Mulberry Creek Site 1CT27	Mississippian ca. AD 1200–1500	Colbert, AL	multiple cases of unknown age and sex	Webb and DeJarnette 1942:235–246
16. Austin Site 22TU549	Mississippian ca. AD 1200	Tunica, MS	1 female, ≥45	Ross–Stallings 2003
17. Bonds Site 22TU530	Mississippian ca. AD 1200	Tunica, MS	1 male, 17–18; 1 male, 30–35	Ross–Stallings 2003
18. Oliver Site 22CO503	Protohistoric AD 1600 +/−60	Coahoma, MS	1 male, ≥25; 1 female, 5–6; 1 child, 9–11	Ross–Stallings 2002
19. Lake George Site 22YZ557	Mississippian ca. AD 1400	Yazoo, MS	1 adult female	Williams and Brain 1983
20. Crenshaw Site 3MI6	Pre—Caddo AD 1000	Miller, AR	4 adults of unknown sex	Powell 1977
21. Footprint Site 41PT45	Plains Village II ca. AD 1200–1500	Potter, TX	1 adult of unknown sex	Brooks 1994
22. Sand Canyon Pueblo Site 5MT765	Anasazi AD 1250–1285	Montezuma, CO	1 male, 35–39	Kuckleman et al. 2002
23. Castle Rock Pueblo Site 5MT1825	Anasazi AD 1256–1285	Montezuma, CO	1 female, 40	Kuckleman et al. 2002
24. Woodchuck Cave Site	Basketmaker II ca. AD 0–500	Northeastern AZ	20 men, women, and children	LeBlanc 1999

the Missouri River, and to a lesser extent, its tributaries, pass directly by them. For the Sargent Ossuary (Figure 12.1, Burial 14) in central Nebraska, the site is located on a tributary to the Platte River, which empties into the Missouri River near the eastern Nebraska border. For the Pawnee County, Kansas case (Burial 15), the Pawnee and Arkansas Rivers flow through and meet on the eastern end of the county, with the Arkansas River eventually dumping into the Mississippi River.

The Footprint Site, shown in Figure 12.2 (Burial 21) in the Texas Panhandle, seems at first glance to form a geographic midpoint between the Eastern Woodlands and the Desert Southwest, creating a question regarding which direction the cultural practice came from. However, this may not be the case. The site is located in Potter County, and the Canadian River flows through the county. The river continues through Oklahoma, and merges into the Arkansas River, which then makes its way to the Mississippi River. The Crenshaw Site, in Miller County, Arkansas (Burial 20), is sitting in the Red River drainage, eventually emptying into the Mississippi River. Thus, the Crenshaw Site inhabitants, and possibly the Footprint Site inhabitants, were following a cultural practice that probably originated east of the Mississippi River.

In examining Figure 12.2, the earliest incidences of decapitation in the continental United States were at the Late Archaic Carlston–Annis Site in Butler County (Burial 6), at Indian Knoll in Ohio County (Burial 8), and at the Ward Site in McLean County (Burial 7), all in Kentucky, and at the Robinson Site in Sumner County, Tennessee (Burial 11) as well as the Collegedale Site in Hamilton County, Tennessee (Burial 12). The Collegedale Site was the most easterly and most southern of the Late Archaic sites. The practice seems to have crossed the Ohio River into southern Indiana, being discovered in the summer of 2006 at the Late Archaic Myers Site in Spencer County (Burial 5). Not surprisingly, the Green River flows northward through western Kentucky and is a tributary to the Ohio River across from Evansville, Indiana. The Little Pigeon River forms the western boundary of Spencer County and dumps into the Ohio River only 30 km upriver from the confluence of the Green and Ohio rivers.

Robert Mensforth investigated the Ward, Carlston–Annis and Indian Knoll skeletal collections in the mid-1990s. He could find no indication of the same types of trophy taking at Ohio's Archaic sites (Mensforth 2001). For the Late Archaic Tennessee sites, the inhabitants of the Robinson Site (Burial 11) in Sumner County, Tennessee, may have been influenced via the headwaters of the Green River, since it begins only about 60 km from the Cumberland River as it flows through Kentucky. The river then flows into Tennessee, forms the border of Sumner County, and then flows through Nashville. The headwaters of the eastern Cumberland drainage originate not far from the Tennessee River, creating a possible route for the practice diffusing to the Collegedale Site in the very terminal Late Archaic (Burial 12). For scalping, first practiced in addition to decapitation at the Late Archaic sites, the tradition shows the same patterns as decapitation in the Late Archaic (Figure 12.1).

One point that must be stressed is that during this time period, other body parts were also removed as trophies, turning up in graves as offerings or discovered missing when a primary interment was excavated. The body parts include limbs, extremities, or mandibles. Mandibular trophy taking during the Archaic was found at just two sites, Ward and Indian Knoll (Figure 12.4, Burials 2 and 3). These sites, along with Carlston–Annis, showed a total of 45 limb segments either missing from burials or included in as trophies in burials (Mensforth 2001).

A possible explanation for the rise of trophy taking during the Late Archaic could be issues of population pressure. There is an upswing in frequency of archeological sites in that time period in the midwest and south, and competition for resources between expanding populations may have become more pronounced (Hofman 1984:135–136).

For the Woodland period, the only located incidence of decapitation (excluding any Hopewellian period skulls) is the Cresap Mound (Burial 13) in Marshall County, West Virginia. This Adena mound contained a decapitated skull that served as a grave good in a burial (Owsley and Berryman 1975:50) and dates to approximately 500 BC. The data on the Woodland is especially sparse, and is not much better for cases of scalping. The Woodland Period scalping cases occur in the upper Midwest, including in Wisconsin, at the Spencer Lake Mounds in Burnett County (Figure 12.1, Burial 3), which borders on the St. Croix River. This river intersects with the Mississippi further south along the Minnesota/Wisconsin line. This site dates to AD 490–580, making it approximately 1000 years younger than the Cresap Mound in West Virginia.

The Hanging Valley Site, in Harrison County (Figure 12.1, Burial 16) is near the Missouri River in western Iowa, with RC dates ranging from AD 190 to 310. At this early time frame, both the Spencer Lake and Hanging Valley sites contained only one scalping victim each, considerably down from the Late Archaic sites and from the Late Prehistoric sites that follow. Warfare during this time period may have been less frequent, as struggles for resources may have been less of an issue.

The Baum Site, in Morton County, North Dakota (Figure 12.1, Burial 1, Table 12.1), near the Missouri River, is an enigma to classify as far as site age is concerned. Published dates for this ossuary site with 19 MNI in it are given in a range that encompasses the entire Northern Plains Archaic Period, 6000 BC–AD 500 (Williams 1994:97). It is not clear how old the site is. Certainly, it can be no younger than the Spencer Lake Mounds in Wisconsin, but it could also be considerably older than the Late Archaic sites with scalping in the midsouth.

In the Late Woodland, there are no instances of decapitation noted in the literature, and only two cases of scalping, one at the Blasky Mound Group in Walsh County, North Dakota (Figure 12.1, Burial 2), and one in Franklin County, Tennessee at the Mason Site (Figure 12.1, Burial 25). Of importance for both scalping and decapitation in the south and midwest is that, with the exception of the Late Archaic Collegedale Site in Hamilton County, Tennessee, where the

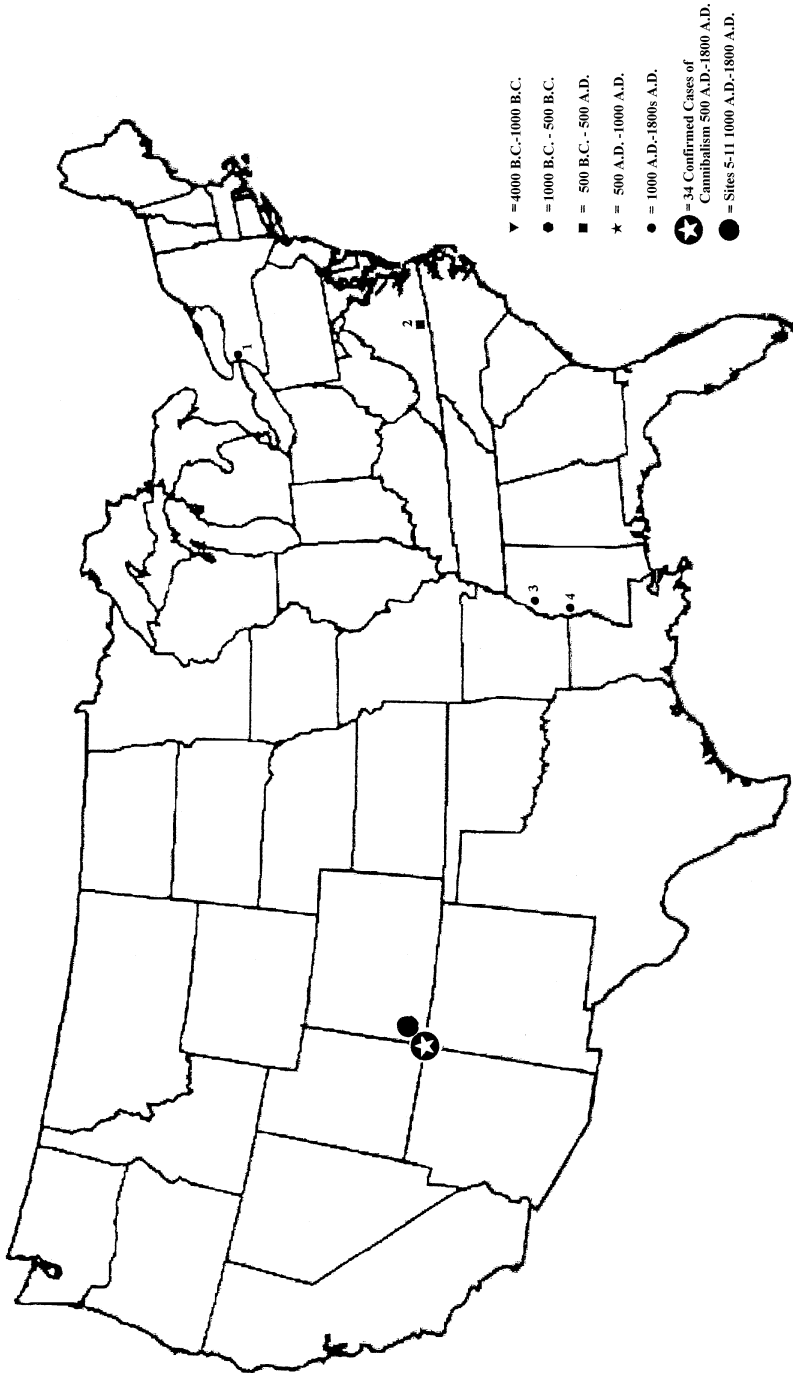

Figure 12.3. Cannibalism cases.

primary interment was a woman and some of the trophy skulls were from women, the practice was primarily done to males. This changes profoundly in the Late Prehistoric.

An examination of Figures 12.1, and 12.2 and Tables 12.1 and 12.2 shows that the Late Prehistoric from the Plains east has a resurgence of scalping and decapitation. Sites clustering in the Missouri River Valley in Nebraska and South Dakota exhibit relatively high incidences of the practices. One of the possibilities is that trophy taking as a cultural practice traveled up the Missouri River Valley with some of the Woodland groups who migrated out into the Plains by following this river valley. It is at this time period that such a practice first occurs in Illinois, Alabama, and Mississippi. It returns to Tennessee, shows up at the Clarksville Site in Mecklenburg County, Virginia (Figure 12.2, Burial 21) the most easterly occurrence, and shows up at the Crenshaw Site in Miller County, Arkansas (Figure 12.2, Burial 20), This site is a pre-Caddo AD 1000 site, from which a trophy mandible in a pit was also recovered (Figure 12.4, Burial 4; Table 12.4) (Powell 1977).

The Footprint Site in the Panhandle of Texas (Figure 12.2, Burial 21) ca. AD 1200–1500, yielded a pit with ten crania in it, some with vertebrae attached (Brooks 1994:318). The very late prehistoric Crow Creek Site, in Buffalo County, South Dakota (Figure 12.1, Burial 10; Figure 12.2, Burial 3), is a site of a massacre of approximately 486 individuals, with 90% scalped and 25% decapitated.

In the eighteenth century, the Ft. Laurens massacre, which occurred in the winter of 1779 in Dover County, Ohio (Figure 12.1, Burial 20), with 15 adult males excavated, was a Native American attack on the British occupants of the fort. This is the only incidence of a Native American vs. White attack that was used in this sample (Williamson et al. 2003). At virtually the same time, the Arikara Larson Site massacre occurred in Walworth County, South Dakota (Figure 12.1, Burial 5 and Figure 12.2, Burial 1). The massacre was in the AD 1750–1785 time frame. As with the Crow Creek massacre earlier, being female or a child did not greatly improve chances for survival. One of the prevailing philosophies from an ethnographic standpoint was that getting a head or scalp from a woman or child was even more noteworthy, because it meant that the assailants had penetrated the outer defenses of a village.

One unique case of gnathic trophy taking was discovered in the summer of 2004 at the Shippingport Site (15JF702) in Jefferson County, Kentucky (Figure 12.4, Burial 1). This site, RC dated to AD 1390 with more dates to follow, is a village site located on a peninsula of land extending into the Ohio River. At excavation, a young adult male was discovered by the author and Melinda King to have been severely mutilated at the time of death. The facial area below the eye orbits, the mandible, and the cervical vertebrae were missing. The cranium, from the eye orbits up, was intact, but was battered and bashed out at the base of the skull. Careful examination with a 15X hand lens was done and no evidence of animal scavenging was found. The bashing and fracture marks on the skull were old and were unrelated to excavation. The right side, top, and back of the cranium were examined *in situ* for cut marks and none were found. The skeleton awaits

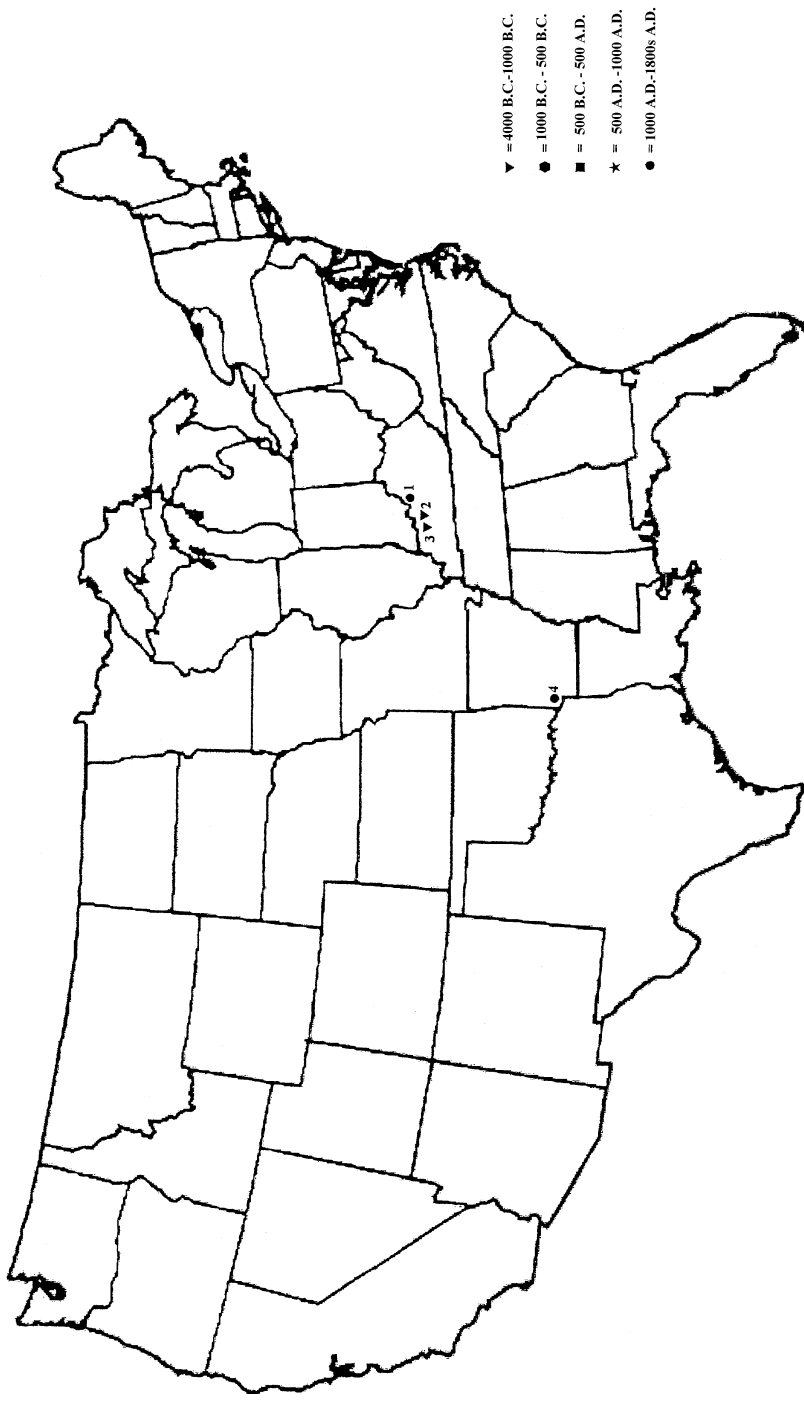

Figure 12.4. Trophy mandible cases.

laboratory analysis. The body was placed on its left side in a flexed position, with larger river rocks covering the missing lower facial area. He was buried with a few human teeth from three different individuals placed on the body, and a deer mandible was resting near his arms. A flint knapping kit, consisting of a small hammerstone and an antler baton, was placed near the top of the cranium.

The earliest recorded incidence of cannibalism in the eastern United States was at the Tolliferro Site in Halifax County, Virginia (Figure 12.3, Burial 2). The site, discovered by the River Basin Surveys in the 1950s, was dated to the Eastern Woodland Period from 1000 BC–AD 500, a very large time span. The three victims, described by Hoyme and Bass (1962:388), were an infant, an adolescent, and an adult male. In a tradition no longer followed by investigators, the adult's remains were deemed too poorly preserved to be curated and were discarded in the lab.

Aside from the Mississippi Delta cases described earlier in the chapter, the only other documented case of cannibalism was documented at the Bloody Hill Site, an Onondaga Iroquois site in Niagara County, New York (Figure 12.3, Burial 1). A roasting pit with broken and burned human bones was excavated at the site. A noncalibrated RC date was taken on wood charcoal found in the feature, yielding a date of AD 1420+/−80 (Tuck 1971:113–114). Cannibalism cases are very rare. One possibility is that they are sometimes misinterpreted as cremations, and the assumption has been that some cremations have not burned completely. Another possibility is that some bone fragments have been curated as faunal specimens and have never been adequately studied.

Turning to the Desert Southwest, the better bone preservation allows researchers to document the occurrence of cannibalism and trophy taking to a higher degree than at many sites in the Eastern Woodlands. Scalping (Table 12.1 and Figure 12.1) was practiced more than decapitation in the Four Corners Region (Table 12.2 and Figure 12.2). The oldest known instance of decapitation was at Woodchuck Cave in Northeastern Arizona, where a total of 20 individuals, men, women, and children were found with no skulls, and some were missing their first and second cervical vertebrae. The site has been dated to Basketmaker II (AD 0–500) (LeBlanc 1999). Little is known about Woodchuck Cave because the victims were described in 1953. LeBlanc does not note the disposition of the remains. Many of the decapitation cases occur in Montezuma County, Colorado, but Arizona and New Mexico have examples. Some sites have scalping, decapitation, and cannibalism (Tables 12.1–12.3 and Figures 12.1–12.3). For scalping, all of the sites with good dates are firmly placed in the late prehistoric period and begin right around AD 1000. The majority of the sites date from the circa AD 1150–1300 time frames, when drought, crop failures, and burgeoning population made the social environment ripe for conflict. At the Marsh Pass Cave site (Figure 12.1, Burial 40), the unique scalp removed from the cave in 1919 by A.V. Kidder and S. J. Guernsey was a grave good that was buried with a mummy of unknown age. The scalp was an example of a complete scalping, where the head, face and neck skin were removed in three pieces and then sewn back together. The hair was carefully decorated (Bueschgen and Case 1996:382).

Table 12.3. Cannibalism Cases

Site name/Number	Cultural Affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's Sex and Age	Reference
1. Bloody Hill Site New York State Museum Number 1070	Chance Phase AD 1420 +/−80	Niagara, NY	1 adult of unknown sex	Tuck 1971
2. Tolliferro 43HA6	Woodland ca. 1000 BC–AD 500	Halifax, VA	1 unknown sex, 12–15; 1 adult male; 1 unknown sex, 6–12 mos.	Hoyme and Bass 1962:388
3. Oliver Site 22CO503	Mississippian—Protohistoric ca. AD 1200–1700	Coahoma, MS	1 adult female; 1 adult male; 3 adults of unknown sex; 1 child of unknown sex	Ross–Stallings 2003
4. Lake George Site 22YZ557	Middle Mississippian ca. AD 1300–1400	Yazoo, MS	1 adult female	Williams and Brain 1983:49
5. Castle Rock Pueblo Site 5MT1825	Anasazi AD 1256–1285	Montezuma, CO	41 unknown age and sex	Kuckleman et al. 2002:494, 506
6. Cowboy Wash Complex; 5MT7704	Anasazi AD 1100–1150	Montezuma, CO	1 child; 1 adolescent	Lambert et al. 2000:49–64
7. Cowboy Wash Complex; 5MT10010	Anasazi AD 1100–1150	Montezuma, CO	1 child; 2 adolescents; 1 female, 3 males	Lambert et al. 2000:49–64

(*Cont.*)

Table 12.3. ***Continued***

Site name/Number	Cultural Affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's Sex and Age	Reference
8. Cowboy Wash Complex; 5MT10206* (See note for #12 below)	Anasazi AD 1100–1150	Montezuma, CO	1 adolescent; 1 female	Lambert et al. 2000:49–64
9. Cowboy Wash Complex; 5MT10207** (See note for #12 below)	Anasazi AD 1100–1150	Montezuma, CO	1 neonate; 3 children; 3 males; 3 females	Lambert et al. 2000:49–64
10. Yellowjacket Complex; Porter Pueblo Site 5MT1 (See note for #12 below)	Anasazi AD 950–1025	Montezuma, CO	1 child, 4–5; 1 child 8; 1 child 10	Malville 1989:3–22 Turner and Turner 1999:405
11. Yellowjacket Complex; Pueblo Kiva Site 5MT3 (See note for #12 below)	Anasazi AD 950–1025	Montezuma, CO	1 infant, 18 mos.; 1 infant, 2; 1 child, 4–5; 1 child, 8–10; 2 males; 1 female; 3 unknown sex	Malville 1989:3–22 Turner and Turner 1999:405
12. 34 Sites in Four Corners Region***	Various cultural affiliations	Various counties in CO, NM, AZ, UT	12 infants, 0–3; 52 children, 3-12; 52 adolescents, 12–18; 27 males; 27 females; 85 adult of unknown sex; 6 of unknown age and sex	Turner and Turner 1999:405

* Designated Aztec Wash II Site in Turner and Turner's Table 3.77 (1999:405).
** Designated Aztec Wash I Site in Turner and Turner's Table 3.77 (1999:405).
*** Sites 5MT10206, 5MT10207, 5MT1, and 5MT3 have been subtracted from the cumulative data presented in Turner and Turner's Table 3.77 (1999:405) and are listed individually.

Table 12.4. Trophy Mandible Cases

Site name/Number	Cultural affiliation/Age	County/State	Individual's sex and age	Reference
1. Shippingport Site 15JF702	Middle Mississippian AD 1390	Jefferson, KY	1 male, 25	Ross-Stallings, this volume
2. Indian Knoll Site 15OH2	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	Ohio, KY	1 unknown age and sex	Mensforth 2001
3. Ward Site 15McL11	Late Archaic ca. 3000–1000 BC	McLean, KY	1 unknown age and sex	Mensforth 2001
4. Crenshaw Site 3MI6	Pre-Caddo AD 1000	Miller, AR	1 unknown age and sex	Powell 1977

Cannibalism in the Desert Southwest has been well documented by the efforts of Turner and Turner (1999), LeBlanc (1999), and White (1992) and by researchers such as Patricia Lambert and Debra Martin and her associates in the years since the Turners published their book. Despite professional criticism, and understandably unhappy reception by some in the Native American community, these researchers have been doing a thorough and extensive job of documenting the practices of both trophy taking and cannibalism in an archaeological context. Excellent preservation, and the contexts where these cases have been found (Kuckleman 2002, Lambert et al. 2000, Malville, 1989, Turner and Turner 1999) have allowed investigators to not only study where and when such practices occurred, but also to begin to reconstruct why it occurred.

An examination of Table 12.3 and Figure 12.3 shows the very high frequency of sites with cannibalism documented in the Four Corners area. While some of the cannibalism may have had elements of retribution behind it, there is suggestion that in some cases the practice may have been for nutritional reasons in this region of the country. However, LeBlanc (1999:174–178) takes exception to this view and suggests that ritual feasting may have taken place. Both Turner and Turner (1999) and LeBlanc (1999) discuss the diffusion of the idea of cannibalism coming from Mexico and Mesoamerica. Turner and Turner also note that the cases of cannibalism seem to all fall around the center of Chaco Anasazi influence, (1999:410–414). The author agrees with them, regarding the issue of diffusion from the south for cannibalism, as well as the practice of decapitation and scalping.

In summation, the practice of trophy taking and cannibalism, both sensitive social topics for people of all cultures and ethnicities, has been examined in this chapter. Looking at the data from both the Desert Southwest and from the more eastern regions of the United States, it has became apparent that at least in the last 2000 years it became a practice to spare no one—that is, being female or a child seemed to matter less in the scheme of things. In examining those cases where sex could be assigned to both scalping and decapitation, approximately two-thirds of the victims were males, and one-third were females. For decapitation, only two of the victims were children, while for scalping, 8.77% were children. Crow Creek

massacre victims could not be included in these tallies, but the absolute numbers of women and children in the tally would have risen. In the future, it is hoped that when skeletal material is undergoing analysis, researchers will more closely examine it for indications of these cultural practices. More and better documentation will be necessary to help interpret this aspect of human cultural behavior.

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Part II

Latin America

Introduction

Alberto Esquit-Choy

The social position of the indigenous population of Latin America and the ideological constructions surrounding them make it a difficult and complex task to discuss the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies in the context of warfare and ritual sacrifice. It requires a critical analysis along with a dispassionate discussion of these important Amerindian cultural practices.

To be a Kaqchikel Maya (as I am) is to be a member of a society situated at the bottom rung of the dominant society's social ladder. This situation in which native peoples have been treated as second- or third-class citizens in Latin America has existed for hundreds of years, and is founded on and fueled by ethnic and racial discrimination.[1] The evolutionist and modernist perspectives of the nineteenth century held that indigenous people along with their traditional cultural practices were impediments to national progress and development. These notions were eagerly embraced by the elite of Latin America as they served to legitimize their regional centuries-long hegemony in the region.

The first time I came across the topics of Mesoamerican human sacrifice, trophy taking, the enslavement of war captives, bloodletting rites or auto-sacrifice, and the humiliation of vanquished enemies, I was politically active in the Maya Movement (Pan-Mayanism).[2]

Those of us involved in this particular cultural and social movement were justifiably proud of our long history of scientific achievements in mathematics, astronomy, architecture, and art along with the development of a very sophisticated writing system. However, my initial encounter with such so-called "mal-adaptative" cultural practices (e.g., warfare, trophy taking, human sacrifice, etc.) caused me to reflect on the nature of my Mayan identity and on the value of my political activism.

I asked myself, "What kind of culture was I heralding? What was I promoting? These feelings of ambiguity and self-doubt propelled me to engage in some very deep soul searching that resulted in my arrival at the following three conclusions:

1. All societies create their own images of themselves and of others, and these creations are influenced by the cultural, political, and social positions of the image creators.
2. Both the elites and rulers of the past, as well as those of the present, employ(ed) elaborate rituals and ideological constructions to legitimize their hegemony.
3. There is no evidence for the existence of a perfect society (indigenous or otherwise) that possessed a perfectly adaptive culture in which every one of its members enjoyed perpetual contentment. In short, there is no hard data backing any claims for the existence (either in the past or in the present) of a paradise on earth.

It is with these aforementioned conclusions in mind and in the context of the social and ethnic movements of indigenous peoples along with an increasing global culture in a postmodern age, that I now proceed to address the topic of the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies by the indigenous peoples of Latin America in the context of warfare and ritual sacrifice.

Firstly, it is important to highlight the fact (as Chacon and Dye do elsewhere in this volume) that human trophy taking was not unique to Amerindians. Secondly, it is also critical to note that the particular practice of trophy taking is simply one aspect of a much larger and complex social reality. Therefore, the indigenous practice of trophy taking should be viewed within the framework of the various native religious belief systems in which it has taken place. This is of paramount importance because warfare and religion in the region have always been closely interconnected, and this relationship did not cease with the entry of Europeans.

The editors of this volume conclude that the underlying causes for Amerindian trophy taking are based on different cultural meanings. Therefore, the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies in the context of warfare and ritual sacrifice is a complex and dynamic aspect of human behavior. Furthermore, a group's response to a shifting social and spatial milieu may vary over time.

In this context, indigenous peoples sometimes mummified and displayed the bodies of their ancestors or symbolically represented them in the form of masks, statues, and other forms of human body representation. An example of this occurred at Teotihuacan were the remains of mummified ancestors were displayed along the "Avenue of the Dead."[3]

When the Old and New Worlds first met, the Spanish were comprised of two principal groups: soldiers and priests. These sectors joined forces in order to dominate the native populations, and the point at which the influence of one faction stopped and the other one began was often difficult to discern. In the relationship between warfare and religion, the triumph of good over evil is sometimes

symbolized in the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies. This was metaphorically perceived as the Christian notion of the resurrection which signified the triumph of life over death. This exotic image of the human body displayed in Latin America from colonial times through the present is the Catholic image of the crucified Christ as a symbol of the victory of life over death.

New World societies (like their Old World counterparts) also created complex, and sophisticated ideologies that sometimes employed cruel methods of transmission and/or enforcement in order to preserve their respective adaptive social systems as well as the biological continuity of their subjects. The evidence presented in this work clearly indicates that many indigenous groups were not above resorting to violence to achieve this end. They strove toward the eradication of that which was not commensurate with their belief systems or political agendas and they often marked their triumph over those perceived as threats to their way of life by desecrating and displaying the bodies of the vanquished. The successful elimination of all who would question the authority and/or ideology of the regime would be announced publicly by their transformation into human trophies.

The causes underlying human conflict may change over time. Therefore, any analysis must take this factor into consideration so as to avoid the stereotyping of native (or of any other) groups. For instance at the time of the Spanish conquest of Americas, the Church and state forged an alliance with the goal of subjugating the indigenous peoples of the New World, but by the time of the French Revolution this union disintegrated with both sides becoming enemies who competed with each other for power.

During the Second World War, the United States and Russia put aside their significant sociocultural and economic differences to form an alliance against Nazi Germany. After their victory, however, they each fought for the control and domination of the Third World during the Cold War. It is important to note that during each of these periods, each group created convenient images of themselves in contrast to the others, depending on the historical and sociological circumstances that favored their respective political agendas.

The native peoples of Latin America have not been averse to pursuing this very same strategy as they have sought effective responses to the impinging forces of globalization that have dramatically threatened their socioeconomic, political, and cultural autonomies.

As such, the present effort of documenting and analyzing the various causes for the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies in the context of warfare and ritual sacrifice by the indigenous peoples in Latin America is an important contribution to the study of human behavior, ideology, and society. It is worth pointing out that trophy taking represents only one aspect of Amerindian behavior. Therefore, it must be critically analyzed as part of a larger magico-religious and political context in order to avoid falling into the pitfall of cultural and societal stereotyping. The present volume meets this requirement.

Ultimately, all human beings have the same basic biological wants and needs, and we each have the same basic intellectual capacity for use in designing various

cultural adaptations for meeting these needs in different environments. The realization that that New World peoples engaged in trophy taking (just like many Old World groups) should not shock or scandalize anyone, but rather should serve to demonstrate the commonality of the human mind and spirit.

Alberto Esquit Choy
Kaqchikel Maya
Ph.D. candidate, Vanderbilt University

NOTES

1. See Clara Arenas, Charles, Hale, and Gustavo Palma. *Racismo en Guatemala?: Abriendo el debate sobre un tema tabui*. Guatemala City: AVANSCO, 1999.
2. See Edward Fisher and R. McKenna Brown, *Maya Cultural Activism in Guatemala*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999, *and* Kay Warren, *Indigenous Movements and Their Critics: Pan Maya Activism in Guatemala*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, for overviews of Latin American sociopolitical and ethnic movements.
3. See Annabeth Hedrick, "The Streets of the Dead: Mortuary Bundles at Teotihuacan." *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 10: 69–85.

Chapter 13

Captive Sacrifice and Trophy Taking Among the Ancient Maya

An Evaluation of the Bioarchaeological Evidence and Its Sociopolitical Implications

Carrie Anne Berryman

INTRODUCTION

The practice of taking human body parts as trophies of war can be traced as far back as the Middle Formative period (800–500 BC) in Mesoamerica. Suprisingly, although scholars have given a great deal of attention to the iconographic and ethnohistoric evidence of this practice (Boone 1984; Moser 1973; Miller 2003), little attention has been given to the actual skeletal remains that provide the most direct evidence of trophy taking (but see Baudez 2000).

Such osteological studies conducted in Mesoamerica often focus on the Aztec and neighboring groups throughout central and northern Mexico, where more direct evidence likely exists due to the larger scale of warfare and human sacrifice in this region during the Postclassic period (AD 900–1500). For the Maya, many scholars still question whether the abundant images of human sacrifice and trophy taking are representations of mythic or actual historic events. This chapter examines the direct (osteological) and indirect (iconographic and ethnohistoric) evidence for captive sacrifice and trophy taking, and argues that not only were many of these events real, but that close attention to the osteological evidence may contribute a great deal to our knowledge of Mayan warfare and political organization.

Although a few detailed studies of human remains from the Maya are believed to represent trophy taking and/or sacrifice have been published (Tiesler and Cucina 2003; Massey and Steele 1997; Agrinier 1978; Romero 2004; Barrett and

Scherer 2005), for many sites, field reports make only passing reference to "problematic deposits" including isolated crania, headless bodies, caches of mandibles, or otherwise dismembered individuals. It has often been assumed that these finds are indicative of human sacrifice, but reports frequently fail to include pertinent information, such as the presence or absence of mandibles or cervical vertebrae with isolated crania, or, when preservation allows, the presence of cut marks or other modifications to the bone. Such data, when combined with contextual information, is critical for distinguishing between what may be the decapitation of a slain enemy for use as a "trophy head" versus what may be evidence of ancestor veneration, a common tradition among the Maya (McAnany 1995, 1998).

Ethnohistoric and iconographic sources make it clear that mortuary practices within the region were quite varied. Examples of multiple interments once assumed to be definitive evidence for human sacrifice, have since been shown to more likely represent secondary burial practices and tomb reuse, leading many to become increasingly skeptical of purported evidence of human sacrifice (Weiss-Krejci 2003). However, researchers should be cautious not to reject such evidence prematurely.

Elsewhere in the New World, where common iconographic themes have included captive sacrifice, the osteological data have offered rather persuasive evidence of the actual occurrence of such events. Excavations at Teotihuacan, Mexico, uncovered the remains of more than 200 individuals that appear to have been part of a mass sacrifice event at the Temple of the Feathered Serpent (Cabrera and Serrano 1999) and more recent excavation in the Temple of the Moon uncovered a large cache of decapitated heads as well as many headless bound bodies belonging primarily to young adult males (Sugiyama and López 2006; Pereira and Chávez 2006). In Peru, excavations at several Moche sites have revealed large deposits of human remains believed to represent sacrificed war captives (Verano 2001). Thus, given the wealth of iconographic and ethnohistoric evidence, it should not be surprising to find such deposits among the Maya.

One reason for the dearth of published analyses regarding these "problematic deposits" of human bone has been the view that such isolated finds are little more than a curiosity and not very informative for elucidating the *big picture*. However, given the emphasis placed on human sacrifice in Maya art and iconography, particularly the sacrifice of war captives, it should be clear that such treatment of the human body may have had important sociopolitical implications, especially in an area such as Mesoamerica where many now feel that warfare may have been one of the main factors directing culture change (Brown and Garber 2003; Golden 2003; Webster 2000; Schele and Freidel 1990; Schele and Miller 1986; Demarest 2004 Webster 1977). The data presented here illustrate a growing emphasis on captive sacrifice from the Middle– Late Preclassic (1000 BC–AD 200) into the Classic period (200–900 AD), as well as a more systematic pattern of body treatment, perhaps reflecting a greater degree of political organization during this time.

MAYA WARFARE AND IDEOLOGY

Views of Maya warfare have changed dramatically over the past century from having been virtually nonexistent (Thompson 1954) to having been large-scale and endemic (Webster 1977). The current view maintains that warfare was an important driving force for cultural change, but was likely carried out on a smaller scale (i.e., raiding parties as opposed to standing armies) and for very different reasons than previously thought.

Earlier materialist explanations saw warfare resulting from a need for resources or territory. However, the archaeological record does not appear to support this view. Most Mayan cities developed in the absence of fortifications until the Late Classic period when the scale of warfare seems to have changed (Sharer 1994). Current evidence suggests that, at least until the Late Classic (AD 600–800), the motivation for warfare was more ideologically based. The primary purpose appears to have been the demonstration of dominance by taking tribute and captives for sacrifice (Schele 1984; Schele and Miller 1986).

The need for captives is believed by many to have been the primary motivation for warfare in many cases, because certain events such as the birth of an heir or death of a ruler apparently called for sacrifice (Schele 1984; Schele and Miller 1986). However, Marcus (1992:433–434) has cautioned researchers to be wary of propaganda in ancient texts, noting that rulers may have used sacred goals to justify more material motivations for warfare.

The ideological basis of this need for sacrifice and the emphasis on decapitation can be traced back to the creation myths of the *Popul Vuh*. The myths recorded in this sixteenth-century Quiche Maya document can be found in Mesoamerican iconography dating back to Preclassic times (Brown and Garber 2003; Freidel et al. 1993; Schele and Freidel 1990). As seen in the *Popul Vuh*, sacrifice was associated with creation and rebirth as exemplified in the myth of the hero twins who played the ball game against the lords of death and eventually outwitted them by tricking them into submitting to sacrifice through decapitation. After defeating the lords of death, the twins were able to resurrect their father, the Maize God, who had previously been killed and decapitated by the lords (Schele and Mathews 1998; Tedlock 1985:132–141). Thus, the sacrifice of captives was an important means of reenacting this magical rebirth, and the ball game was a primary forum for the staging of these events (Schele and Freidel 1990; Schele and Mathews 1998; van Bussel 1991).

It has been suggested that elite captives were sometimes forced to play a ritualized version of the mythic ball game (Schele and Miller 1986:249–250) where the captive's ultimate decapitation symbolized victory over the lords of death and the rebirth of the Maize God. These acts had deep ideological significance, and the ultimate display of the defeated, or parts of them, as human trophies legitimated local rulers and acted as a lasting reminder of their high status and political power. Not surprisingly, images of decapitated heads become a "central symbol

of royal power" on stelae and panels of the Classic Period (Schele and Freidel 1990:124).

ETHNOHISTORIC SOURCES

The practice of sacrifice, dismemberment, and display of war captives is well documented in the ethnohistoric literature. Franciscan Fray Diego de Landa, writing in the 1560s, reported that following victory in warfare the Yucatec Maya "removed the jawbones of the dead men and wore them stripped of flesh on their arms . . . and if they captured any distinguished person, they at once sacrificed him. . . . The rest of the people remained captive in the power of the person who had taken them" (Pagden 1975:86). Landa also reports that sacrificial victims were usually buried in temple courtyards or the bodies were divided up and cannibalized, with the exception of the hands, feet, and head, which were given to priests and officials. Regarding slaves captured in war, Landa stated that "their lords would carry off the bones to use them as a fetish in their dances as a sign of victory" (Pagden 1975:84).

Writing sometime around 1540, Motolinía (Foster 1950:76) describes similar practices in Central Mexico: "The heads of those whom they sacrificed, especially prisoners of war, were skinned, and if the captives were lords or personages of importance, they skinned the heads, hair and all, and dried them in order to keep them.

During the early 1600s, Antonio de Herrera (Tozzer 1941:217) also reported that high-ranking individuals were believed to be particularly desirable offerings for the gods and as a result were specifically sought out in warfare. Although, it should be noted that Herrera, who had been appointed official chronicler of Castile by Phillip II, never actually traveled to America and relied on earlier reports.

In contrast to the treatment accorded captured enemies, Landa also describes the treatment of heads belonging to local lords for the purpose of ancestor veneration:

> They used to cut off the heads of the old Cocom lords when they died, and after cooking them cleaned them of flesh and then sawed off half of the skull from the crown back, leaving the front part with the jawbone and teeth. They replaced the flesh that was lacking from these half-skulls with a certain bitumen and modeled them into a perfect likeness of those whose skulls they had been. And they then preserved them with the statues full of ashes. These were all kept together with their idols, in the oratories of their houses, in great reverence and respect, (Pagden 1975:94)

Examples of such faceless skulls have been found at Uaxactun, Dzibilchaltun, and Altun Ha (Welsch 1988:214). Landa also states that, on occasion, members of the community offered their small children or slaves for sacrifice (Pagden 1975:83). The variety of practices described by Landa and others are important in that it becomes clear that many possibilities must be taken into consideration by

archaeologists attempting to interpret what may or may not be direct evidence of human sacrifice and/or trophy taking.

ICONOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The earliest depictions of decapitation and trophy heads within Mesoamerica date to the Middle Formative Period (800–400 BC) coinciding with the first signs of complex political, social, and economic systems, most notably at sites along the Pacific and Gulf Coasts, as well as the Valleys of Oaxaca and Mexico (Figure 13.1). From these sites, one of the earliest depictions of what appears to be a trophy head comes from the Olmec center of La Venta, Veracruz, Mexico (Figure 13.2). Stela 3

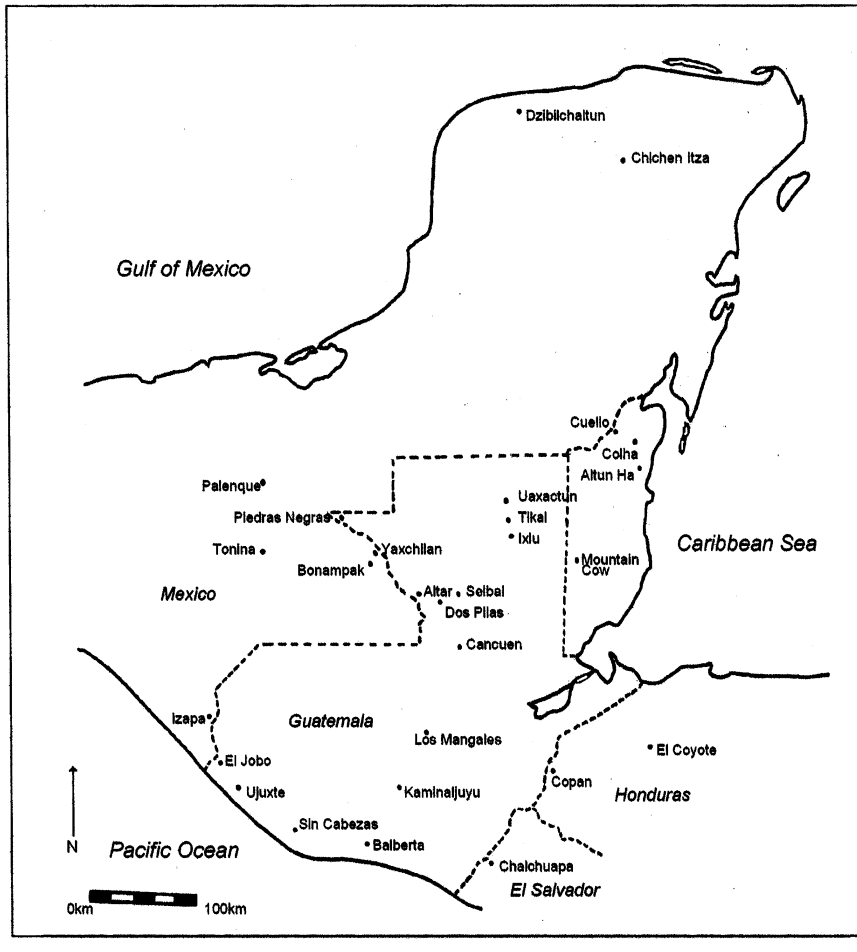

Figure 13.1. Map of the Maya area with sites mentioned in the text indicated.

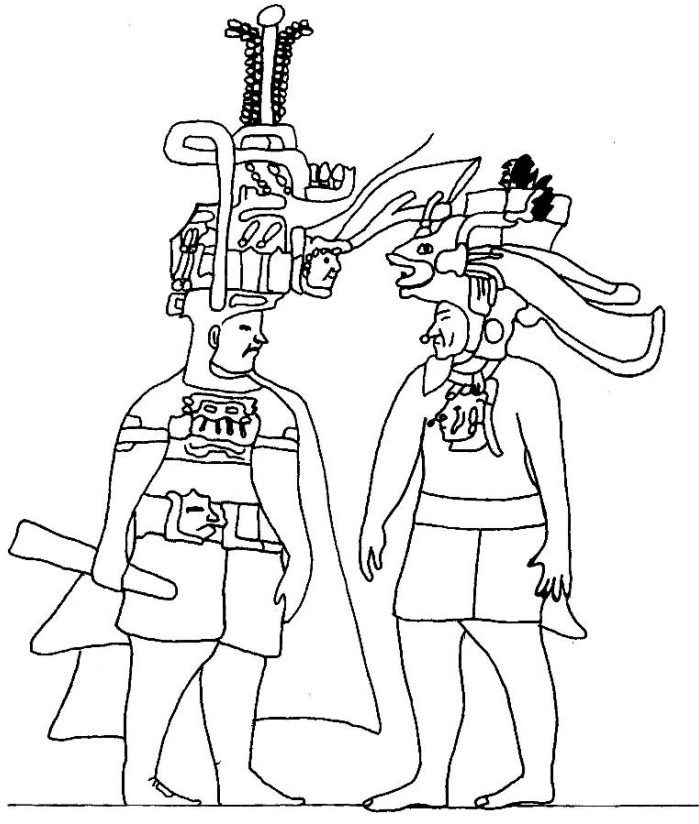

Figure 13.2. Central figures on Stela 3 from the Middle Preclassic site of La Venta, Veracruz, Mexico. (From Heizer 1967:Figure 1. Courtesy of University of California Archaeological Research Facility.)

depicts two men facing each other, one of whom is wearing what appears to be a trophy head hanging from a cord around his neck (Heizer 1967; Moser 1972:9).

Some have even suggested that the colossal stone heads associated with Olmec sites may actually represent the decapitated heads of defeated enemies rather than past rulers, as is the generally accepted interpretation (Baudez 2000). This seems unlikely due to the fact that in all but one case (Monument 1, Rancho la Cobata), the eyes are open and most are adorned with prestigious headdresses. Also, the energy investment required for long-distance transport of the two-meter-tall basalt blocks used to make the sculptures seems unlikely to have been wasted on defeated enemies. Moser (1972) sees them simply as a demonstration of the "early importance of the human head as an object for representing great rulers or ancestors" (Moser 1972:9).

During the Middle Formative occupation of the valley of Oaxaca we see at least one representation of what is believed to be a captured and possibly sacrificed

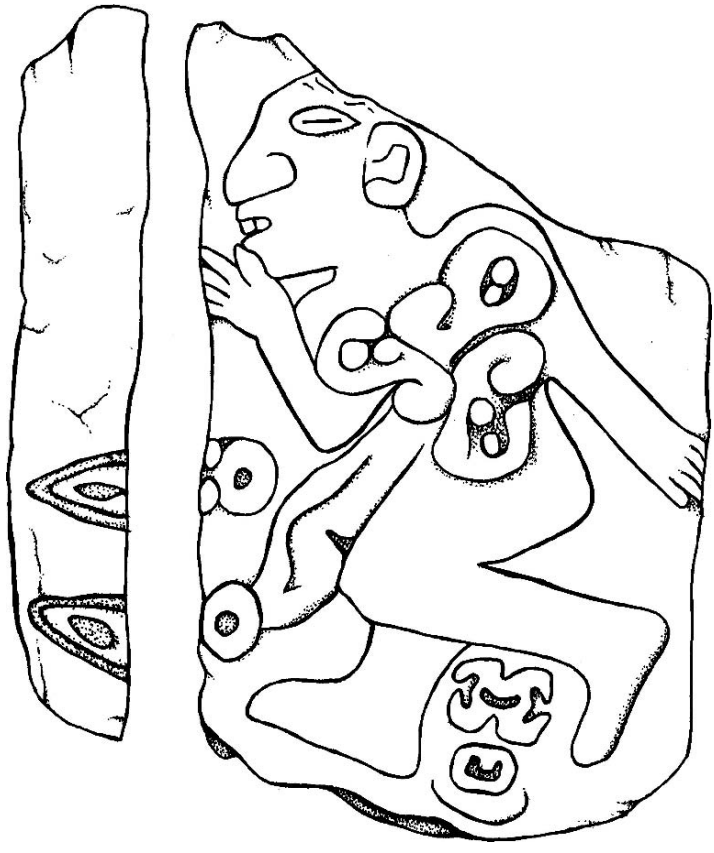

Figure 13.3. Monument 3 from the Middle Pre-Classic site of San Jose Mogote, Oaxaca, Mexico. (Adapted from Flannery and Marcus 1987:Figure 3:10. Courtesy of Joyce Marcus and Kent Flannery, University of Michigan.)

enemy. Monument 3 from San Jose Mogote is a stone slab lying on the ground at the entrance to a corridor between two public buildings (Figure 13.3). The monument depicts a naked individual with eyes closed, teeth bared, and blood and/or entrails being expelled from the chest. Anyone entering the corridor would tread on the body and therefore continue to inflict injury and disrespect on the individual (Flannery and Marcus 1983:57).

At nearby Monte Alban, over 300 similar sculptures dating to the Late Formative were uncovered, and all appear to represent slain captives (most with what appear to be name glyphs). Referred to as *danzantes,* these figures were placed along the eastern wall of the same structure in the Main Plaza at this time, which, according to Flannery and Marcus, coincides with Monte Alban's rise to dominance over the valley and thus, would have been the time in which leaders would have felt the greatest need for a display of power "to intimidate their enemies and

reassure their supporters, that is, before they achieved true statehood and really effective political power" (Flannery and Marcus 1983: 90).

Although the act of trophy taking is not represented by the *danzante* sculptures, one can see the early use of the image of the defeated and humbled captive as propaganda, which is very distinct from the Olmec rulers' use of sculpture to reinforce authority with imposing sculptures of the actual community leader. Sharer (1994:59) has noted this distinction by pointing out that the Olmec rulers "used personal portraits that linked them to the powers of the cosmos (earth and sky), [whereas] the early Oaxacan rulers asserted their authority with records of their successes in leading raids and taking captives," themes which would *both* be utilized extensively by the Maya during the Classic Period.

Other Formative period depictions of decapitated heads being held by the hair or otherwise suspended as trophy heads by apparent captors can be found at the sites of Izapa, Chiapas (Jimenez Moreno 1966:Figure 92); Tres Zapotes, Veracruz (Stirling 1943:Figure 3); and El Jobo, Guatemala (Miles 1965:Figure 15b).

In distinguishing between representations of trophy heads versus what may be the head of an ancestor, it is important to examine the way in which the head is presented. Many of the iconographic depictions of trophy heads show them being held by the hair or upside down, and blood or other fluids is often flowing from the neck, eyes, or mouth. In scenes of the actual moment of capture, the captive is often held by the hair, indicating that this is associated with an act of disrespect (Lintel 8, Yaxchilan and Lintel 2, Bonampak). These can be contrasted with images associated with ancestors in which typically upright heads with open eyes are worn on a belt or positioned at the small of the back (Figure 13.4; also see Lintel 2, La Pasadita).

By the beginning of the Classic period such images become much more frequent. Although scenes of the actual act of decapitation are rare, they do exist (see Schele 1984:9). More common are scenes of decapitated human heads being worn or presented as trophy heads, most frequently found on polychrome vases of this period. The heads are presented in scenes recounting myths (Figure 13.5), most often involving the hero twins, as well as in historical contexts revolving around warfare and/or palace life (Figures 13.6 and 13.7) . Trophy heads may also be found in murals such as those of Bonampak (Structure 1, Room 2) and Tonina, as well as in monumental architecture such as Lintel 12 of Yaxchilan, Monument 1 of Santa Lucía Cotzumalhuapa, and the Great Ball Court (Figure 13.8) and *tzompantli* of Chichen Itza. Decapitation appears to be the most common form of sacrifice depicted during this period (Schele 1984).

Although images of trophy heads exist in monumental architecture of the Classic period, it is not a particularly common theme. Much more widespread are scenes of bound war captives kneeling, sitting, or lying beneath a conquering lord. Examples include Lintel 16 of Yaxchilan, Stela 12 of Piedras Negras (Figure 13.9), Stela 10 of Tikal, and Stela 16 of Dos Pilas to name but a few. Hieroglyphic texts associated with many of these scenes record what has been referred to as an "axe event" glyph indicating the sacrifice of a defeated ruler (Sharer 1994).

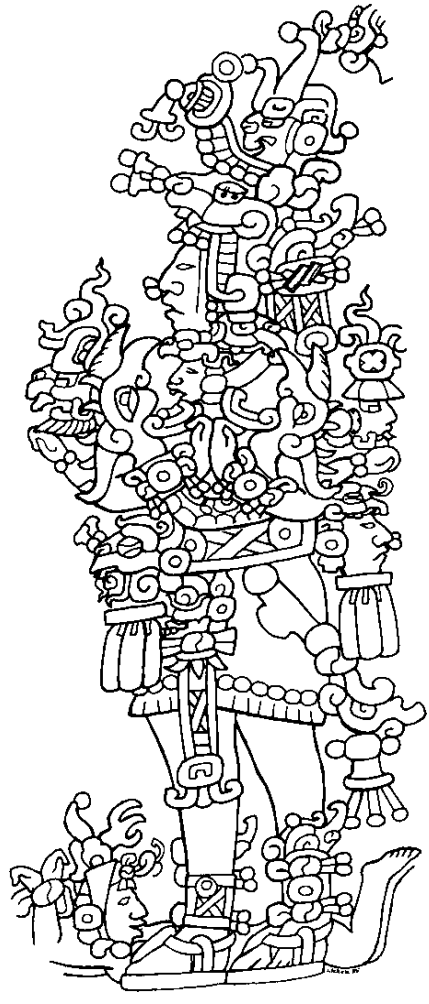

Figure 13.4. Early Classic image from the Leiden Plaque. The head seen at the small of the back is likely representative of an ancestor rather than a trophy head. (Drawing by Linda Schele. Copyright 2006 David Schele. Courtesy of Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc.; www.famsi.org.)

Interestingly, Schele (1984) noted that in most scenes of captives awaiting sacrifice, the glyph identifying the name of the victim(s) is usually included, but emblem glyphs identifying their place of origin are rarely recorded. This perhaps can be seen as a continuation of a Formative tradition, observed on the *danzantes*, where name glyphs are shown with images of captives. The fact that the place of origin is excluded, led Schele to conclude that the nature of Maya warfare during the Classic period was not about territorial expansion but about the *status* of those sacrificed as an important means by which leaders gained and maintained public

Figure 13.5. Mythical scene from polychrome vase involving underworld creatures holding decapitated heads. (Copyright 2006 Justin Kerr, K1490.)

respect. This observation correlates well with the previously mentioned fact that most Classic and Preclassic Maya centers developed in the absence of fortifications. This is further supported by cases in which "important rulers, such as Shield Jaguar II on Lintel 10 of Yaxchilan, are recorded without personal name or title and solely as 'Captor of—'" (Schele 1984:44).

Virginia Miller (2003) has recently contrasted the Classic Period iconography in the Southern Lowlands with that of the Postclassic in the Northern Lowlands, specifically at Chichen Itza. Like Schele, Miller believes the emphasis in the Southern Lowlands on specific captives, particular battles, and historic individuals is an

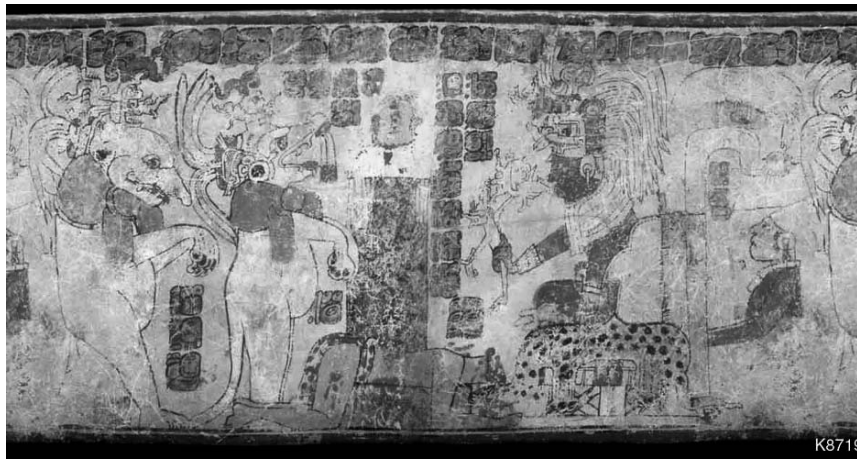

Figure 13.6. Ruler observes the decapitation of a captive. The head of the victim sits atop a column. (Copyright 2006 Justin Kerr, K8719.)

Figure 13.7. Executioner presents a decapitated head before the ruler while others await execution. (Copyright 2006 Justin Kerr, K680.)

indication that warfare during the Classic Period (and by inference, the Preclassic) was carried out on a smaller scale by "ambitious but less powerful political entities" whose perhaps tenuous political positions required constant legitimization (Miller 2003:400).

In contrast, the iconography at Chichen Itza during the Early Postclassic was typically anonymous, ahistoric, repetitive and full of religious themes. Such

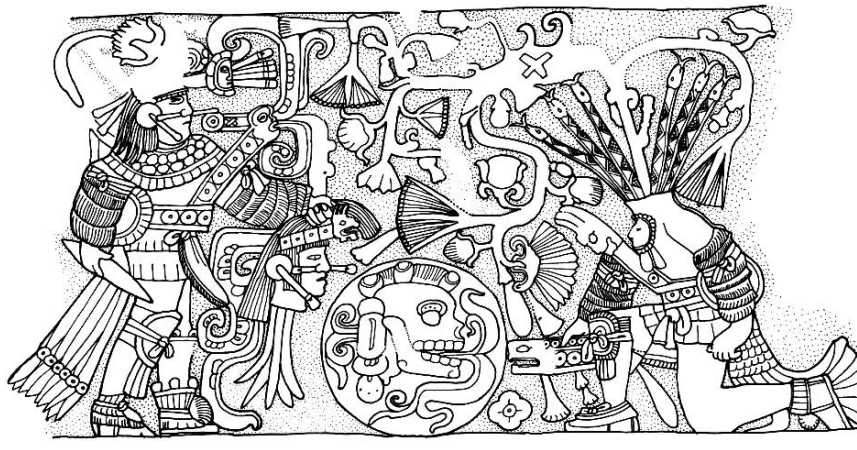

Figure 13.8. Terminal Classic depiction of a ballplayer holding a decapitated human head from the east central panel of the Great Ballcourt, Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico. (Drawing by Linda Schele. Copyright 2006 David Schele, courtesy of Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc., www.famsi.org.)

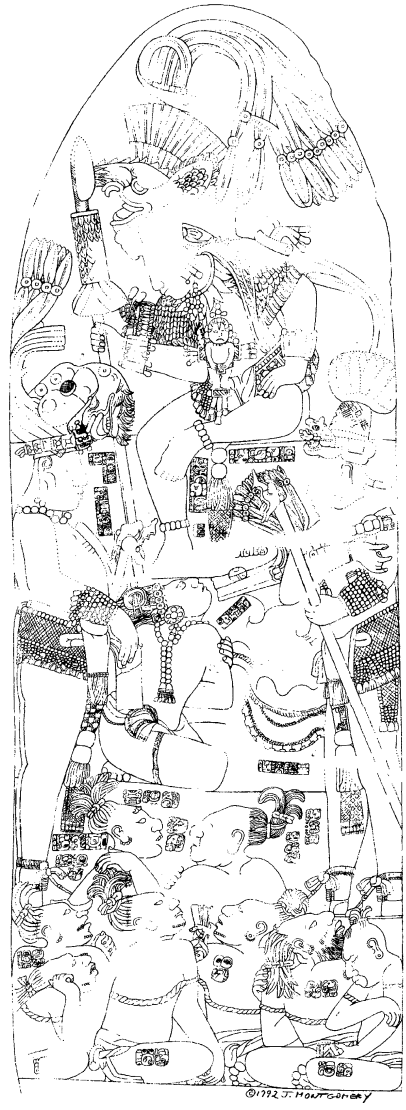

Figure 13.9. Late Classic image of ruler seated above numerous captives, Piedras Negras, Guatemala. (Drawing by John Montgomery. Copyright 2006 Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc., www.famsi.org.)

imagery was intended to appeal to, or intimidate, a broader audience as more diverse ethnic groups were subsumed under Chichen's political authority. She sees this as representing a dramatic change in political organization and warfare, which was becoming increasingly territorial. These changes would eventually culminate in the Aztec Imperialism of the Late Postclassic.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Preclassic

The earliest archaeological evidence of the possible taking of human trophy heads within the region comes from the Salama Valley in the Northern Highlands of Guatemala. The small site of Los Mangales is composed of three principal mounds situated on a narrow river terrace. It was initially settled in the Early Preclassic and became a center of mortuary activity in the region by the Middle Preclassic, 1000–400 BC (Sharer and Sedat 1987). Elaborate burials found at this site exhibit the earliest signs of social differentiation within the area. Excavations of the principal mound (Str. D6-1) uncovered three major crypt burials, all containing the remains of adult males associated with numerous crania interpreted as trophy heads, as well as possibly dismembered sacrificial retainers (Sharer and Sedat 1987). Unfortunately the sex of these individuals was not recorded nor was the presence or absence of modification such as cut marks.

The oldest multiple interment from Los Mangales, Burial 6, dates to the Middle Preclassic and was surrounded by the remains of at least 12 partially dismembered sacrificial victims and three possible trophy heads, all belonged to adults (Sharer and Sedat 1987). The three potential trophy heads were found lying inside the formal crypt with the principal individual. Many of the sacrificial victims were strewn around the outside of the formal crypt and were lying prone while the principal interment lay in a supine position. Some of the victims exhibited signs of having been bound and wrapped in bark cloth (a pattern repeated elsewhere).

Two other crypts were found in the same mound but date to the Middle–Late Preclassic transition period (500–200 BC). One was reportedly accompanied by a minimum of two trophy heads and the other was accompanied by eight crania believed to be trophy heads (all belong to adults). The partial remains of an additional individual were found outside one crypt and were interpreted as belonging to a sacrificial retainer. This individual is lying prone (in contrast to the principal interment) and is believed to have been dismembered, as it includes a cranium, right arm, and partial upper torso only (Sharer and Sedat 1987).

The isolated crania associated with these burials may offer the earliest evidence of trophy taking in the Maya region. Unfortunately, as is the case with similar finds in the region, little analysis was undertaken to substantiate claims that the crania represented trophy heads. Sex was only determined for the principal individuals, and no evidence of perimortem alteration, such as cut marks, were recorded. Of course, as is often the case in Mesoamerica, preservation may have inhibited observation.

Evidence of sacrifice and trophy taking in Mesoamerica during the Late Preclassic is more abundant. Excavations at the site of El Chalchuapa in western El Salvador, very near the Guatemalan boarder, uncovered the remains of 33 adult individuals who appear to have been victims of ritual sacrifice interred in construction fill during five episodes of construction (Fowler 1984). Of the 21 individuals

who could be securely assigned a sex, all appear to be male. All but two individuals were lying in a prone position. Many had their wrists and ankles positioned tightly together, suggesting they were bound. Most appear to have been wrapped in bark cloth. Only three individuals were accompanied by mortuary offerings (small jade beads). Three of the individuals were represented by crania only and were interpreted, by Fowler (1984), as trophy heads. Additional signs of mutilation included one individual missing a cranium, two individuals cut in half at the waist, one individual missing lower legs, and one missing both feet. No evidence of postdepositional disturbance was observed. Unfortunately, no mention is made of observation for true cut marks (perhaps an issue of preservation) or whether mandibles or cervical vertebrae were found with the isolated crania. Nevertheless, given the age and sex of the individuals, the general absence of grave goods, the pattern of body positions, the lack of grave preparation (with one exception), the evidence for dismemberment, and their location in construction fill, it seems very likely that these individuals could represent the ritual sacrifice of war captives from outside of the Chalchuapa population.

The sacrifice of so many adult males in the prime of life from within the community seems an unlikely scenario (i.e., 33 individuals interred during five different episodes). In addition, the prone position is consistent with the sacrificial victims found at other sites in the southeastern highlands including the earlier deposits at Los Mangales as well as contemporaneous deposits at Kaminaljuyu, Guatemala (Tomb II of Mound E-III-3), in which the primary occupant lies in the center of the tomb in a supine position, while what have been interpreted as sacrificial retainers lie in prone positions outside of the central crypt.

Additional evidence of trophy taking from the southeast comes from the small site of Sin Cabezas on the Guatemalan Pacific coast where excavations uncovered eight burials that have been interpreted as evidence of human sacrifice (Colby 1989). All were extended in a prone position and of the five for which sex could be determined, four were identified as male. Two were missing crania, two were missing the lower legs, and four reportedly exhibited signs of trauma. The burials were not accompanied by mortuary offerings, with the exception of one obsidian blade and one grinding stone. These discoveries are very consistent with those at Chalchuapa. However, unlike Chalchuapa, these burials were included with 19 other individuals who are not believed to be victims of sacrifice. These 19 individuals were distinct in that they were typically extended in a supine position, usually accompanied by mortuary offerings, and included both male and female adults, and children.

It should be noted that the prone position alone is not considered a clear indication of sacrifice. As pointed out by Weiss-Krejci (2003), this position is relatively common at other sites along the Guatemalan Pacific Coast including Balberta (Arroyo 1990) and Ujuxte (Arrendondo 1999) as well as within the Belize River Valley (Willey et al. 1965; Welsh 1988). However, for the sites outlined above, the additional contextual information, such as lack of grave preparation (inclusion

in construction fill), absence of mortuary offerings, juxtaposition to a supine central individual, occasional dismemberment, and many male individuals lend support to the argument that these cases may represent sacrifice of war captives.

Elsewhere in Mesoamerica during the Preclassic period the archaeological record is even less straightforward. Evidence exists for other forms of sacrifice, including what appears to be dedicatory sacrifice of children and others who may have been members of the local population and not necessarily war captives (Uaxactun and Altar de Sacrificios; Welsch 1988). In addition, the evidence is further complicated by practices that are more likely related to ancestor veneration, in which burials with grave goods, typically in residential areas (Dzibilchaltun, Altun Ha, Tikal, Cuello), have had skeletal elements such as the skull or limbs removed (Welsch 1988; see also McAnany 1995:60–63). Thus, the specific act of trophy taking is not clearly documented outside of southeastern Mesoamerica during the Preclassic.

At the site of Cuello, Belize, during the late Late Preclassic, several examples of decapitation, dismemberment, and sacrifice, primarily of young to middle-aged adult males in public/ceremonial contexts are reported (Robin 1989). Robin (1989: 150) states that this change corresponds to "a transition in architectural style and ritual elaboration at Cuello." Four apparently decapitated individuals were located in construction fill of public structures, and two mass burials containing at least 32 and 12 individuals, respectively, were found in the center of one ceremonial structure and have been interpreted as evidence of mass sacrifice.

Each of the mass burials contained two primary individuals in the center with the partial, semiarticulated remains of others surrounding them. Some of the remains appear to have been wrapped in bundles. Mortuary offerings, mostly ceramic vessels, are concentrated with the two primary individuals, and sex appears to be male for all but one. Despite the fact that many of these individuals appear to have been dismembered, no cut marks were observed (Saul and Saul 1991); this is attributed to the extremely poor preservation of the remains. However, as McAnany (1995) and Weiss-Krejci (2003) have pointed out, it seems difficult to justify an interpretation of mass sacrifice for these interments as opposed to secondary burial of select individuals from the Cuello population.

In the same ceremonial platform as the two mass burials, additional burials interpreted as evidence of human sacrifice were found in several single and double interments. Two were children, one of which had apparently been decapitated (Robin and Hammond 1991:215). The crania of three adults (two male, one unknown) with cut marks were also found together in the mound (Saul and Saul 1997:33). Additionally, one adult male and one possible adult female were lying parallel to each other with their apparently decapitated heads sitting upright nearby. Finally, two additional young adult males (one semi-disarticulated) were sprawled in construction fill (Saul and Saul 1997).

Contemporaneous mass or group burials from ceremonial structures have also been reported from the lowland sites of Altun Ha (Pendergast 1982) and Mountain Cow (Welsh 1988). At each site, two primary individuals appear to be

the central figures (extended supine) surrounded by five secondary individuals. Crania had been removed from some individuals and many of the remains were disarticulated. These deposits have been interpreted as evidence of the increasing importance of human sacrifice during this period. However, to date, the material recovered from these deposits has not been as thoroughly analyzed as that from Cuello and thus, a case for human sacrifice cannot be supported. The deposits might just as easily represent tomb reuse by a local lineage.

CLASSIC PERIOD

By the Classic Period (AD 200–900), numerous examples of captive sacrifice and the trophy head complex can be found, corresponding to an increase in the frequency of such depictions in iconography (Schele and Freidel 1990). Examples include interments of defleshed crania, caches of mandibles, or otherwise mutilated individuals lacking grave goods in and around areas of public or ceremonial use (Welsch 1988). Although it is clear that not all of these are examples of the actual act of trophy taking, some of the more compelling examples are reviewed below.

One of the most well-studied examples comes from the site of Colha, Belize, where a Terminal Classic (AD 800–900) pit was discovered next to a stairway belonging to a monumental structure in the site's center. The pit contained the decapitated heads of 30 individuals (Massey 1989; Massey and Steele 1997; Mock 1998). Ten of the individuals were children ranging in age from six months to six or seven years and the remaining 20 were adults (ten female, eight male, and two indeterminate). Cut marks indicated that the crania were thoroughly defleshed prior to interment, and some were partially burned.

The seemingly unusual age profile, treatment of the crania, and location of the burial pit led to a variety of interpretations including: (1) they were sacrificed as part of a religious ceremony; (2) they were political victims treated with ritual violence; or (3) they belonged to an elite lineage that was violently deposed (Massey and Steele 1997:76). Although it is not possible to determine the reason behind the special treatment accorded these individuals, the location of the burial, age profile, lack of mortuary offerings (besides some smashed pottery) or labor investment in the burial pit, and extensive defleshing of the crania do not seem compatible with the interment of revered ancestors.

Recently, Barrett and Scherer (2005) reported a second mass deposit of human remains from Colha, which is contemporaneous with the skull pit. The remains were found lying on the plaza surface at the base of the main stairway to a stepped pyramid within the site's main ceremonial plaza (not far from the skull pit). Unlike the remains from the skull pit, the deposit contained exclusively adult or adolescent individuals. Preservation of the material was extremely poor but for the elements for which sex could be assigned, all appear to be male. The material consisted of both cranial and postcranial remains; however, cranial fragments greatly outnumbered

postcranial and accounted for a minimum number of 25 individuals. The crania and some postcranial remains had also been defleshed, similar to those in the nearby skull pit. Notably, this deposit and the skull pit are both contemporaneous with the ultimate destruction and abandonment of Colha, and are believed by the authors to represent mass execution of members of the local population.

Additional Classic period examples of mass deposits of human crania that may also represent trophy heads come from Chichen Itza (Ruppert 1935:120) and Tikal (Coe 1967:72), although, to the author's knowledge, no osteological analysis has been published for either of these deposits, and certainly ancestor veneration cannot be ruled out.

A well-documented example from the Early Post-Classic has recently been reported from the site of Ixlu, Peten (Romero 2004), where six decapitated crania (i.e., found with articulated cervical vertebrae and mandibles) were found in groups of two, aligned with the east–west axis of a platform near the center of the site's ceremonial core. Decapitated and butchered postcranial remains for four individuals were found dumped in a shallow pit nearby. All individuals were young adults 15–35 years in age. Three were determined to be males (sex could not be determined for the remaining three individuals).

An example from my own analysis comes from the southern periphery site of El Coyote in northwestern Honduras, where two pits dating to the Terminal Classic period were discovered at the base of the main stairway leading to the central plaza of the site (Berryman 2002; Wells 2003:196–200; Wells et al. n.d.). The pits contained the remains of 14 young adults whose crania had been placed at the outer edges of the circular pits, while their mostly disarticulated postcranial remains had been piled in the center. The majority were 18–25 years in age and none were estimated to be older than 35 years.

Both metric and morphological analysis of the remains point to a strong probability that all were male. Many of the mandibles had been defleshed, and some fragments of the crania revealed signs of butchering as well (Berryman 2002). Although the material was poorly preserved and fragmentary, it was clear that many of the crania were articulated with mandibles and one was articulated with all seven cervical vertebrae indicative of decapitation. These remains may represent the execution of war captives based on their age, sex, perimortem modification, very public location, and lack of mortuary offerings or labor investment in the construction of the burial pits. The defleshing accorded the mandibles and crania also suggest that the remains were modified perhaps for the purpose of display for sometime prior to burial.

Further support for this conclusion is offered by the ethnohistoric record. Diego de Landa specifically mentioned the use of defleshed jawbones of defeated warriors following their sacrifice (Pagden 1975:86). The special attention given to the mandibles of the individuals at El Coyote is consistent with such treatment. Caches of human mandibles have been found at a number of sites throughout the Maya Lowlands including Cancuen (Berryman, unpublished data), Mountain Cow, Tonina, and Altar de Sacrificios (Welsch 1988).

DISCUSSION

Because of the wide variety of Maya mortuary customs, including secondary burial practices associated with ancestor veneration as well as tomb reuse and reentry, archaeologists have been justifiably reluctant to make definitive statements regarding the origins of seemingly atypical deposits of human skeletal remains. However, by taking into account the following factors, we may draw some defendable conclusions:

1. Placement of bodies in highly visible public or ceremonial spaces (in contrast to the typical residential mortuary patterns for the region, with the exception of some high-status individuals)
2. Lack of investment in grave preparation; typically not buried within structures but in plazas or left lying directly on the ancient surface (implying a lack of respect)
3. Presence of clear selection for certain members of the population (such as young to middle-aged adult males in the case of potential war captives)
4. Lack of mortuary offerings (human remains associated with ancestor veneration are more likely to be associated with dedicatory mortuary offerings)
5. Signs of dismemberment/decapitation (preferably supported by the observation of cut marks when preservation allows)

This is not to say that a formula exists for definitively distinguishing between the range of Maya mortuary customs and ritual activities involving human body parts because funerary practices may have been quite variable between sites. However, by carefully evaluating the archaeological context, and integrating ethnohistoric and iconographic sources, the social milieu in which these bodies were processed can be elucidated. For the samples discussed in this chapter, various distinct and salient burial and iconographic patterns become evident. These findings may prove to be very useful especially when viewed in conjunction with the concomitant cultural changes that occurred in the region.

In the Southeastern Highlands during the Pre-Classic period (as well as the site of Sin Cabezas along the Pacific Coast), one can observe the relatively common practice of interring adult males, often in a prone position, sometimes dismembered/decapitated, lacking grave goods, sometimes apparently bound, in public/ceremonial spaces. I argue that these lines of evidence suggest that these individuals represent war captives. The missing skeletal elements, particularly crania and lower limbs, seem to suggest that the taking of human body parts as war trophies may have been an important means used by local leaders to remind community members of their military prowess long after their success on the battlefield. The timing of these events corresponds to the beginnings of elaboration of social/political institutions within the region. This supports the idea, indicated by the iconographic evidence, that success in raids and sacrifice of war captives became an important means of legitimatization for local leaders during the Pre-Classic.

The pattern in the Lowlands during the Formative period is more tenuous. Only one of the mass burials discussed from this region (Cuello) has been analyzed in any detail. The similar burials at Altun Ha and Mountain Cow have received little attention and it is plausible that tomb reuse and/or ancestor veneration may be responsible for these deposits.

During the Classic period, the trophy head complex becomes well established in the Lowlands, which corresponds with the increased frequency of such images in the iconography. It appears that more emphasis is being placed on the decapitated heads of the sacrificed during this period. The postmortem treatment of the sacrificed also appears to be more systematic, perhaps a reflection of the higher level of political organization at this time. Caches of human heads (often defleshed) have been found in highly visible public areas at several sites. Such caches are found at the base of stairways within the main plazas at Colha, El Coyote, Ixlu, and perhaps, Tikal and Chichen Itza. Further corroborating the interpretation that these remains belong to sacrificial victims is the ethnohistoric account of Landa who reported that the Maya buried the remains of sacrificial victims in the "courtyards of the temples" (Pagden 1975:84).

In addition, the placement of these crania in such public contexts, in conjunction with the seeming lack of care associated with their deposition (lack of grave preparation or mortuary offerings) does not seem consistent with the treatment that would be accorded to revered ancestors. The disrespect for these individuals was clearly on display for the public. The location of several of the deposits at the base of stairways is also of interest as some scholars have persuasively argued that such public flights of steps likely served as open air venues for the sacrifice of victims (Inomata and Triadan 2003). Such locations created a theatrical spectacle for the public. Here, the defeated war captive could have been humiliated and, perhaps, decapitated for all to see. Inomata and Triadan (2003:204) along with others have suggested that such institutionalized homicide was necessary to legitimate the power of the elites by intimidating their rivals and reassuring their followers (Demarest 1984; Schele 1984).

Although this functionalist basis for the practice of human sacrifice and trophy taking among the ancient Maya is an important one, it is also important to reiterate that the need for sacrifice had deep ideological significance for the Maya, being necessary for rebirth and regeneration (Demarest 1984). Ideological and functional explanations for behavior need not be considered mutually exclusive.

In this chapter, I have underscored the value of careful attention to such "problematic deposits" of human bone so often discovered during excavation. Review of the archaeological evidence seems to provide excellent support for the conclusion that many of the graphic scenes depicted in Mayan art and iconography were more than mythical events, and were in fact representations of actual historic events. Mortuary practices among the Maya were incredibly diverse, making interpretation a tricky endeavor. However, detailed analysis of human skeletal remains when combined with the interpretive framework provided by the rich corpus of

Mayan art, iconography, and ethnohistoric resources may provide a more complete picture of ancient Mayan political organization and warfare.

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Chapter 14

The Divine Gourd Tree

Tzompantli Skull Racks, Decapitation Rituals, and Human Trophies in Ancient Mesoamerica

Rubén G. Mendoza

INTRODUCTION

Upon entering the Valley of México and seeing the great cities of México-Tenochtitlan, Tlatelolco, and allied centers of the Mexica Aztec Empire in 1519, Hernán Cortéz and his comrades were overcome by the beauty, majesty, and sophistication of the ancient *cues,* or towers and temples, masonry causeways, palaces, and other marvels which they considered akin to the greatest cities of Europe and Asia.

Such early impressions of the grandeur of this empire were soon conflicted by the apparently large-scale blood sacrifice and human heart excision performed at the many temples and within the many shrines. In the wake of their brutal exploits to subjugate the great Mexica Aztec city and people of México-Tenochtitlan, and more generally, the Aztec empire of *Anáhuac*, the Spanish *conquistadores* chronicled what they had experienced at first contact. Among those dimensions of the Aztec experience that the *conquistadores* had little hesitation listing as a justification for the conquest were the many blood-spattered temples upon which so many human beings had been dispatched in so unique, and yet so otherworldly, an act of mass immolation and blood sacrifice (Figure 14.1).[1]

Included in that constellation of technologies devoted to reifying human sacrifice and its aftermath was the so called *tzompantli*, "skull wall," "skull row," or "skull banner," of which seven such structures stood within the main civic-ceremonial precinct of México-Tenochtitlan (Sahagún 1950–1969; Miller 1999:346–47).[2] Many others have been documented throughout Mesoamerica, and range from the Epiclassic (ca. 600–900 CE) through early Post-Classic (ca. 900–1250 CE) "skull chambers" of the Northern Frontier (Mendoza 2001),[3] such as those identified at Alta Vista Chalchihuites, Zacatecas (Kelley 1978; Pickering 1985)[4] and

Figure 14.1. A sacrificial deposit or human trophies cache from the foot of the staircase of an Epiclassic/Early Post-Classic monument at Cholula, Puebla, México. Note the extent of cranial deformation present in each of the two children represented. To date, analysis indicates that most such sacrificial victims were drawn from the ranks of enemy aliens. (Copyright 1983 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, México (DiPeso 1968, 1974), through to the elaborately carved *huey tzompantli* or Great Skull Banner of Chichen Itzá, Yucatan, México (Coe 1999).[5]

From the heart of Panama to the north Mexican frontier settlement of Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, the pre-Hispanic presentation of human trophies in the form of decapitated heads or "scalp pots," and "drilled skulls" strung, impaled, skewered, or embedded into masonry walls, or suspended from arbors, palisades, or other scaffoldings exhibit considerable regional variation (Figure 14.2).[6] Whereas the evidence for human trophy taking, and by extension headhunting, in Mesoamerica extends well into remote antiquity (Moser 1973), early antecedents of the "skull wall" or *tzompantli* have been recovered at Loma de la Coyotera, Oaxaca, in what may well constitute the earliest such manifestation in Late Pre-Classic or Protoclassic contexts (Spencer 1982:234–242; Spencer and Redmond 1997:520–524).[7]

ISOLATING THE TECHNOLOGIES OF TERROR

Taken together, each of the aforementioned *tzompantli*-based human trophy sites make clear the diversity of technologies, pan-Mesoamerican distributions, and the relative antiquity of a phenomenon once thought to constitute little more than

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Figure 14.2. Map of selected major Mesoamerican archaeological sites and zones noted in text. Map prepared by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2006.

a "corrupting influence" of Post-Classic era Mexican invaders.[8] While the Quiche Maya *Popol Vuh* (Tedlock 1996) serves to acknowledge the most rudimentary and ancient form of the "skull tree"—that being the placement of severed heads in the bloodied branches of dead trees—the archaeological recovery of an intact *tzompantli* exhumed by Charles Spencer (1982) at Loma de la Coyotera, Oaxaca, clearly provides an incipient chronological index for checking the antiquity of "skull racks" like those used by the later Aztec and Mixtec of highland central México. Generally constituting a palisade comprised of a linear arrangement of massive vertical uprights tethered together by way of a series of horizontal *varas* or crossbeams (along which were laterally skewered or threaded freshly decapitated human heads), such *tzompantli* "skull walls" may be traced to their first documented appearance in the second or third century BCE.

SKULL CHAMBERS AND IMPALED HEADS

Whereas the impaling or "stacking" of freshly severed human heads on vertical uprights or posts may similarly exhibit considerable antiquity, specific architectonic features that depict such practice are largely restricted to the ninth or tenth century *huey tzompantli* of Chichen Itzá, Yucatan, México.

At the very least, public monuments built to accommodate "skull rows" replete with the vertical impaling of human heads are late Classic or Epiclassic in origin (ca. 600–900 CE). As such, if the evidence ultimately supports this contention, then the "skull chambers" of the Northern Frontier, with their "drilled skulls" (Kelley 1978; Pickering 1985) and "bone mobiles" (DiPeso 1968, 1974), are roughly contemporaneous with similar such phenomena deployed by the *Itzá* and *Putun* invaders of the Yucatan Peninsula.[9] It should be noted, however, that the Lomas Phase skull rack exhumed at Loma de la Coyotera combined the use of a wooden palisade replete with both "drilled skulls" and freshly severed heads on a rack otherwise built to accommodate the trophy heads atop beams or planks in the fashion of a shelving unit or rack (see Spencer and Redmond 1997:Figure 9.17).[10]

THE UBIQUITOUS SKULL FRIEZE

In the final analysis, the *tzompantli* "skull walls" of highland central México may well find their counterparts in analogous Late Post-Classic and early Colonial Maya monuments from the Yucatan Peninsula.[11] This observation is attested to in *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel* (Roys 1933:67, 160). In this context, Roys (1933:67) interprets the passage "he was pierced [by an arrow] when he arrived at the bloody wall there at Uxmal" to signify the deployment of a *tzompantli* wall or "skull frieze" to impale the head of the lord *Hapay Can* at *Chemchan*, Uxmal, Yucatan. Similarly, the same narrative makes reference to the fact that "the heads

of the foreigners to the land were cemented [into the wall] at Chakanputun" (Roys 1933:160).

As such, to the aforementioned list of *tzompantli* armatures and fixtures may be added the Maya "skull frieze," in this instance consisting of heads cemented into the very fabric of a limestone wall or rampart—a practice that accords well with the Aztec practice of cementing freshly severed human heads into the pockmarked masonry facades of both the *huey tzompantli*, and *huey Teocalli* or Templo Mayor, of México-Tenochtitlan.[12] In this latter instance, Alvarado Tezozomoc (1944:119; cf. López Luján 1994:270) acknowledged that eight Spanish soldiers "climbed to the top of the cu [i.e., temple] and counted on the walls sixty-two thousand skulls of people defeated in wars and sacrificed."[13]

TECHNOLOGIES, TRADITIONS, AND TYPES

Ultimately, even a cursory review of the archaeological data makes clear the makings of a forensic typology of forms and methods for exhibiting human trophy heads in public contexts. For Mesoamerica, these include (a) bilateral perforation and suspension of the cranium on a wooden scaffold, (b) basal impalement or "stacking" atop vertical uprights within a palisade, (c) apical suspension a la "bone mobiles" or looped cords strung from horizontal timbers, (d) occipital cementing or embedding within masonry platforms, (e) free-standing "walls" or "skull friezes," (f) arboreal emplacement or suspension from the bloodied branches of dead trees, (g) ritual caches or caching within civic-ceremonial precincts, (h) amorphous "stacking" or "skull heaps" such as those of the Yucatecan Maya, (i) floor arrays or ceremonial patterning or suspension within "skull chambers," (j) masonry vault (or cavern) racks such as that at Tonina, Chiapas, México, and (k) "skull towers" and "pavements" such as those of the contact-era peoples of Panama.[14]

In addition to those public displays so noted, Mesoamerican (and specifically Classic Maya) warlords and elites sported trophy heads tethered or otherwise suspended from belt cords or ball game belts (e.g., Kerr 2006:K700, K2342, K2781, and K5027), used as "pendants" in collars or necklaces (K7060, K8554, and K8738), hung from looped cord arm and wrist bands (K1082 and K4884), or displayed as mandible necklaces (K5124).[15] Clearly, this preliminary enumeration of technologies devoted to the public and civic-ceremonial display of human trophies is but the beginning of a much larger and more complex cosmological ecology and sociopolitical narrative that merits further analysis and consideration.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Mesoamerican skull racks, and associated ball court features, have long been a source of scholarly and public interest and speculation since the time of the Spanish conquest of the Aztec in 1521 (Andagoya 1945; Andrés de Tapia 1866; Baños Ramos 1990; Boone 1984; Cabrera Castro 1979; Carrasco 1999; Castro-Leal Espino 1972; Couch 1985; Dahlgren et al. 1982; Díaz del Castillo 1956, 1982; Durán 1971; Duverger 1983; Fernández 1972; Furst 1978; Gillespie 1991; González Rul 1963; González Torres 1985; Graulich

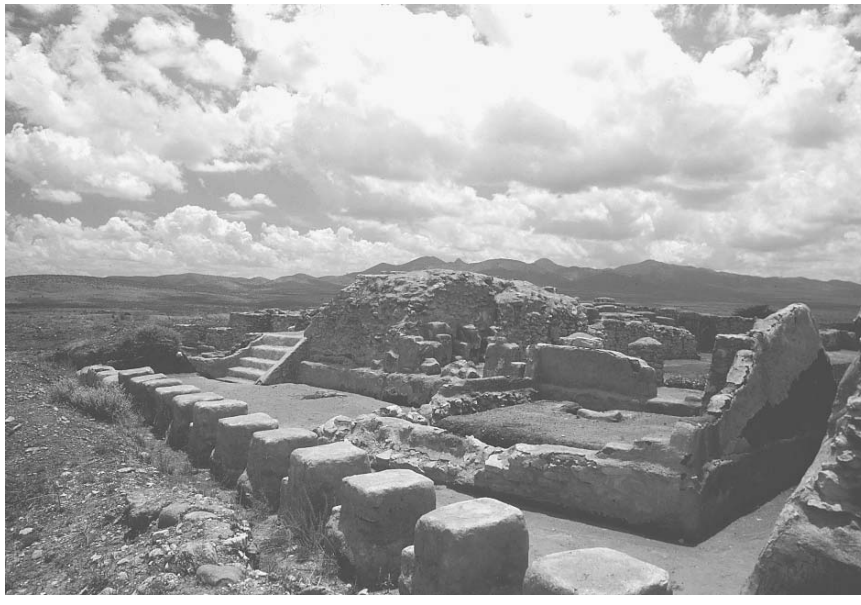

Figure 14.3. View toward the Hall of Columns and Temple of the Skulls located within the principal civic-ceremonial precinct of the north Mexican site of Alta Vista or Chalchihuites, Zacatecas, México . The Temple of the Skulls is here pictured in the foreground and contains the remains of a hearth and associated post holes once used to support a ridge pole or framework from which were once suspended human long bones and crania. (Copyright 1979 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

1988; Guilliem Arroyo 1999; Gussinyer 1979; LeBlanc 1999; Linares 1977; López Luján 1994; Matos Moctezuma 1972, 1979, 1984; Mendoza 2003b; Miller and Taube 1993; Miller 1999; Najera C. 1987; Ortiz de Montellano 1983; Pagden 1986; Pasztory 1983; Pickering 1985; Pijoan Aguadé and Mansilla Lory 1997; Pijoan et al. 1989; Pijoan et al. 1995; Quiñones 2002; Read 1998; Sahagún 1950–1969, 1970; Sánchez Saldaña 1972; Spencer 1982; Spencer and Redmond 1997; Stern 1949; Tezozomoc 1980). Significantly, therefore, the fundamental architectural and cosmological associations between ball courts and skull racks has long been recognized, albeit only marginally understood and appreciated (Castro-Leal Espino 1972; Fox 1991; Miller 1999; Pijoan et al. 1995; Taladoire and Colsenet 1991) (Figures 14.3–14.4).[16]

SKULL RACKS AND THE ART OF HUMAN TROPHIES

The many contact and early colonial-era depictions and ethnohistorical narratives written to describe and explain Mesoamerican "skull racks" have since been supplemented by a host of works ranging from archaeological reports documenting the exhumation of well-preserved *tzompantli* fixtures through to recent reviews concerned with associated architectural features (Miller 1999).[17]

Figure 14.4. Bas-relief panel depicting impaled human crania from the basal platform of the *huey tzompantli* of Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, México. While the depiction of human crania skewered along the length of vertical uprights constitutes a departure from the more common Post-Classic era pattern of temporal–parietal skewering along horizontal *varas*, or the earlier Classical pattern of apical suspension of human crania from cords, it may well be that this specific instance represents a regional variant of the pan-Mesoamerican *tzompantli* complex. (Copyright 1989 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

Of particular note is the extraordinary *tzompantli* deposit—replete with attendant human trophies—recovered by archaeologist Francisco González Rul from the site of Tlatelolco, México (González Rul 1963; Sánchez Saldaña 1972).

Among other relatively recent reports and innovative approaches to the study of Mesoamerican *tzompantli* features are to be included the critically significant works of Carmen Maria Pijoan Aguadé and Josefina Mansilla Lory (1997:229–234) who completed a forensic analysis of 100 of 170 articulated (replete with mandibles and cervical vertebrate) and/or partially disarticulated, and bilaterally perforated, crania recovered from the *tzompantli* of Tlatelolco (González Rul 1963; Pijoan et al. 1989; Pijoan et al. 1995). The evidence from Tlatelolco is particularly compelling, and clearly significant to understanding and interpreting "skull banner" architecture in Mesoamerica. This is due in no small measure to the fact that archaeological data now corroborate key elements of contact era eyewitness accounts and commentaries deemed critical to the study of human trophies and their exhibition within public and civic-ceremonial venues (Andrés de Tapia 1866; Díaz del Castillo 1956, 1982; Durán 1971; Pagden 1986; Sahagún 1950–1969, 1970; Alvarado Tezozómoc 1944, 1980).

Earlier, and clearly far more graphic, depictions of human trophy taking and decapitation rituals may be seen in the Epiclassic era (ca. AD 550–750) murals of

Figure 14.5. Decapitation scene from the polychrome wall mural of the "Great Battle" at the acropolis complex of Cacaxtla, Tlaxcala, México. At the center of this panel one can discern what has been interpreted as an *Olmeca-Xicalanca* or Historic Olmec warrior standing atop his victim. The scene clearly indicates that the fallen warrior has had his heart excised as the victor prepares to decapitate his prey with a large obsidian axe. (Copyright 1983 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

Cacaxtla, Tlaxcala, México (Figure 14.5). While much has been written about the site of Cacaxtla and its unusually graphic portrayals of war and sacrifice, little to no analysis currently exists that serves to address this and other related Classic era representations of the art of human heart excision and the taking of severed human heads. By contrast, the justly famous bas-relief ball court panels of early Post-Classic era (AD 900–1250) Chichén Itzá have been examined time and again for both iconographic and ritual content (Figure 14.6).

Further afield, Olga Linares (1977:79) contends that Mesoamerican influence played a primary role in the western Panamanian custom of "racking skulls" noted by Spanish chronicler Andagoya (1945:404). According to Andagoya, "We found a great street entirely paved with the heads of the dead, and at the end of it a tower of heads which was such that a man on horseback could not be seen from the other side" (cf. Linares 1977:79).

SKEWERED HEADS AND BURIED SECRETS

The *huey tzompantli* of Tlatelolco was described firsthand in some detail by both the *conquistadores* and a host of subsequent chroniclers (Andrés de Tapia 1866; Duran 1971; Sahagún 1950–1969). Recent findings by Carmen Maria

Figure 14.6. Ballplayer decapitation scene from one of six carved bas relief limestone panels that grace the lower ramparts of the 166.12-m-long playing field of Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, México. The decapitated head of the ball player issues both volutes of blood, and coral snakes, from the back or occipital areas and base of the severed head, respectively. (Copyright 1988 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

Pijoan Aguadé and Josefina Mansilla Lory (1997) provide one of the few examples of forensic analysis yet attempted on human remains purported to have a connection to the question of blood sacrifice and decapitation rituals within any one of the allied centers of the Mexica Empire. The forensic analysis in question clarifies aspects of those methods and procedures undertaken to flay and butcher the flesh, and to remove and prepare the facial skin-masks (Pijoan et al. 1989:565) of those sacrificial captives immolated and decapitated atop a circular temple, and *tzompantli* platform, complex dedicated to *Mixcóatl*—the Cloud Serpent of Tlatelolco (Bernal Díaz del Castillo 1972:383; González Rul 1963; Guilliem Arroyo 1999).

Significantly, the circular "temple" platforms of Tlatelolco and México-Tenochtitlan were taken to constitute symbols, or architectural embodiments of *Tonatiuh* the solar disk—and have, in fact, been construed as such from Late Classic or Epiclassic times (ca. 550–900 CE) through to the present (Mendoza 1977; Sandstrom 2001). The architectural antecedents of the circular platforms so noted have been identified among the Mexica, and their forbearers the Huasteca, Matlatzinca, Tolteca, and related Gulf Coast and Mexicanized Maya peoples since the earliest of pre-Hispanic times.

Mixcóatl's supernatural associations with primeval warriors and hunters, his incarnation as the primordial fire-borer and the planet Venus, as well as his

direct identification with the Milky Way and those Star Warriors or *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* (Four Hundred Southerners) dispatched yearly in the rites of the *Panquetzaliztli* "Raising of Banners" and "First Fruits," clearly warrants further consideration and scrutiny in this instance (Nicholson 1971:426). Finally, *Mixcóatl's* further identification with the Red *Tezcatlipóca*—in turn identified with *Xipe* the Flayed One, and by extension, the *Ometeotl* Complex and its primeval Place of Duality—necessarily serves to link the Cloud Serpent to the primordial genesis of the gods themselves.

Finally, it should be noted that the ministers of the temples of *Mixcóatl* are documented to have demanded both male and female *ixiptla* deity impersonators for blood sacrifice. This fact was first corroborated by those archaeologically recovered *tzompantli* specimens examined by way of forensic analysis by Carmen Maria Pijoan Aguadé and Josefina Mansilla Lory (1997). In this instance, of the 170 decapitated human heads recovered *in situ* from the *tzompantli* deposit at Tlatelolco by Francisco González Rul (1963), fully 55% represented the remains of the female cohort of those *ixiptla* dispatched and ritually decapitated on behalf of *Mixcóatl* (Pijoan and Mansilla Lory 1997).

Such rites were typically executed within the confines of the *Teotlachco* or Dark Ball Game Place—where the female captive was dispatched in much the same fashion as would characterize the butchering of a wild animal. After repeatedly bashing her head with a stone hand axe, the victim's ordeal culminated with the slashing of her throat and subsequent decapitation (Castro-Leal Espino 1972). Having presented her severed head as an offering to *Mixcóatl*, and his *tzompantli*, the victim's decapitated body was dragged (by one of the ministers) across the surface of the *Teotlachco* so as to bathe the ball court floor in human blood (Pijoan et al. 1989).[18]

Significantly, ball courts at Tlatelolco, Tula, and related central highland sites have been found to contain the buried heads and or dismembered body parts of female deity impersonators or *ixiptla* (Castro-Leal Espino 1972).[19] Many Mesoamerican sites, including those of the Maya region, as well as those of the Epiclassic (circa 600–900 CE) sites of Ranas and Toluquilla, Querétaro, México, have been found to incorporate significant caches of severed human heads buried within ball court floors, pavements, and associated platform features.

At Ranas and Toluquilla, relatively large caches of decapitated human heads have been exhumed during recent investigations. According to archaeologists of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia stationed at Toluquilla, as many as 50 severed human heads were exhumed from a significantly larger deposit cached within the end zone of the ball court at that site (INAH, personal communication to Mendoza, June 10, 2004).

Of equal significance in this regard is that the courts at Ranas, as well as that of the *Teotlachco* or Great Ball Court of Tenochtitlan, are each aligned on an east–west axis identified by this investigator with the celestial transit of the equinoctial sun. This fact accords well with the pre-Columbian notion that such ball courts served as the "Black Road" of the sun's transit through the "Place of

Figure 14.7. Monument identified with the conjoined ball court and *tzompantli* platforms located within the principal civic-ceremonial heart of the Toltec site of Tula, Hidalgo, México . Where the *Huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlán is concerned, the sheer quantity of skull fragments recovered from associated archaeological deposits provided the most compelling evidence for that monument's former use. (Copyright 1988 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

the Ball Game Sacrifice," or "Dark Ball Game Place," and thereby, the Underworld chasm of creation identified with *Mictlán* or *Xibalba* and the Lords of Darkness.

The universal association of the ball court with the cleft earth, chasm, or portal to the Underworld, and the "Calabash Tree" or "Tree of Gourds" and *tzompantli*, should therefore come as no surprise to those who have previously observed this triumvirate of symbols and civic-ceremonial features in Mesoamerican archaeological contexts (Figure 14.7).

THE HUEY TZOMPANTLI OF HUITZILOPOCHTLI

Of particular interest and curiosity to the contact-era Spanish *conquistadores* was the principal "skull rack," or *huey tzompantli*, that stood immediately west of the *huey teocalli* or Great God House of México-Tenochtitlan (Cabrera Castro 1979; Cortés 1967; Tezozomoc 1980). Recent investigations indicate that the archaeological vestiges of the principal skull rack of México-Tenochtitlan are situated immediately behind the Metropolitan Cathedral, and oriented on an east–west axis beneath the asphalt pavements of Guatemala Street (Cabrera Castro, 1979; Matos Moctezuma 1987:Figure 1; López Luján 1994: Figure 11). Interestingly, both the

principal ball court or *Teotlachco*, and the *huey tzompantli* or skull rack (recovered archaeologically in this instance), are oriented on the aforementioned east-west axis or equinoctial alignment with respect to the cleft or chasm formed from the dual emplacement of the temples of *Tlaloc* and *Huitzilopochtli* located atop the summit of the *Templo Mayor*.[20]

As such, a late fifteenth-century observer standing at the westernmost end of the great skull rack and oriented to the equinoctial sunrise (March 21 or September 21) would have observed the sun emerging from the cleft atop the *Templo Mayor*, traversing the chasm of the *Teotlachco* ball court, and ultimately, transiting the axis of the *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan. Hypothetically, therefore, I contend that this triumvirate of truly monumental architectonic features signifies the sun's emergence from the cleft earth of *Coatepec* or the sacred Serpent Mountain, its descent and rebirth from the chasm of creation or Underworld, and its ultimate ascent into the vault of the heavens or Milky Way embodied in the guise of that corpus of impaled human heads or "Star Warriors" suspended within the "branches" of the *huey tzompantli*.

According to period chronicler Diego Durán (1971 [1579]:78–79), of the seven distinct *tzompantli* platforms identified and described by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (1950–1969), the *huey tzompantli* or Great Skull Banner of Tenochtitlan was the largest and most complex. The *huey tzompantli* consisted of a massive masonry platform comprised of "thirty long steps" measuring fully 60 *varas* (meters) in length by 30 *varas* (meters) wide at its summit. Atop of the aforementioned platform was erected an equally formidable wooden palisade and scaffolding comprised of between 60 and 70 massive uprights or timbers woven together with an impressive constellation of horizontal cross beams or *varas* upon which were suspended the tens of thousands of decapitated human heads once impaled thereon (Figure 14.8).

Described by Andrés de Tapia (1866) as a "great theater" or "*teatro grande*," the *huey tzompantli* was, in this instance, directly identified with the *Templo Mayor* or *huey teocalli*, and the festivals of *Panquetzaliztli*, and as such, incorporated both masonry "skull towers" and finely sculpted and lime-plastered stairways extending both east and west at each end of the platform proper. According to Duran (1971:79):

> Along the center of this ample and long walk stood a finely carved palisade as tall as a great tree. Poles were set in a row, about six feet apart. All these thick poles were drilled with small holes, and the holes were so numerous that there was scarcely a foot and a half between them. These holes reached to the top of the tall, thick poles. From pole to pole, through the holes, stretched thin rods strung with numerous human heads pierced through the temples. Each rod held twenty heads.

Apparently, the giant palisade or superstructure at the heart of the *huey tzompantli* was framed, and thereby, reinforced or enclosed, at its eastern and western ends by the inclusion of massive skull and masonry towers embedded from base

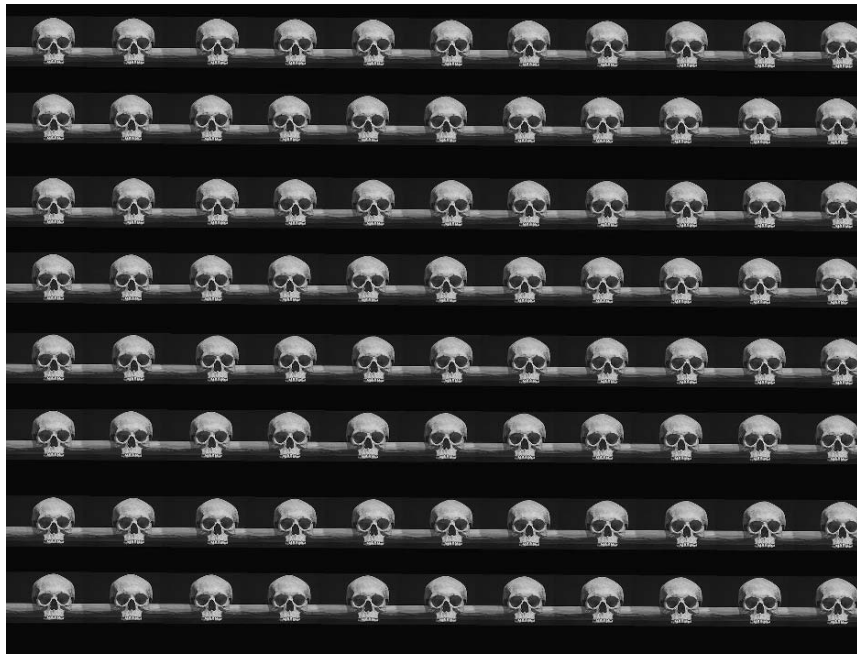

Figure 14.8. Digital reconstruction of horizontal supports or *varas* noted by early Spanish chroniclers for the *huey tzompantli*, or Great Skull Rack, of México-Tenochtitlán. It should be noted that such reports place the number of skulls per span or *vara* at between 5 at Tlatelolco and 20 at México-Tenochtitlán. Montage based on digital manipulation of photographs produced by the author. (Copyright 2005–2006 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

to summit with decapitated human heads cemented in place with lime mortar. According to the firsthand accounts of Andrés de Tapia (cf. Matos Moctezuma 1975:103), the "two towers were fashioned from lime and the skulls of the dead, without the use of a single other stone, with teeth facing outward" (i.e., "*dos torres hechas de cal e de cabezas de muertos, sin otra alguna piedra, e los dientes hacia fuera*" [translation by the present author]). Each horizontal cross member was in turn used to skewer human skulls one adjacent to the next in monotonous succession for a total of between 80,000 (Durán 1971) and 136,000 individual specimens in this single instance (Andrés de Tapia 1866; cf. Matos Moctezuma 1972:103, 108); not including, of course, the corpus of decapitated heads forming the aforementioned "skull towers" located at each end of the *tzompantli* platform under consideration (López de Gómara 1964:167; cf. Miller 1999:345).[21] Groupings of between five and twenty decapitated human heads are variously said to have been skewered on each and every individual two meter [*vara*] span of the otherwise finely crafted wooden palisade and framework in question (Andrés de Tapia 1866; cf. Matos Moctezuma 1972:103; Duran 1971:79).[22] Interestingly, the earliest period illustration—that rendered by Hernán Cortés (1524) himself—depicts

a complex grid or mazelike floor plan for the *huey tzompantli* of Tenochtitlan, and this fact, more than any other, may well underscore the apparent discrepancies and, as such, the plethora of conflicting accounts and descriptions.[23]

In addition to seven *tzompantli* platforms located throughout the principal civic ceremonial precinct of México-Tenochtitlan, both Spanish and Mexica Aztec scribes acknowledge that the Templo Mayor was in turn pockmarked from floor to sanctuary summit with impaled human heads.[24] Eyewitness accounts note that a virtually countless collection of severed human heads were embedded—*en masse*—within the walls and ramparts of the platforms, and those temple sanctuaries devoted to *Tlaloc* and *Huitzilopochtli* located at the summit of the Templo Mayor (Andrés de Tapia 1866; Duran 1971). In effect, the masonry surfaces of the Templo Mayor were studded with human skulls in a fashion that recalls the so-called "skull towers" of the aforementioned *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan. The sacred Serpent Mountain was, in effect, the largest such fifteenth-century monument devoted to the exhibition of human trophies in all of the Americas.

THE DECAPITATED HEADS

Ritual specialists or the "ministers" of the *huey tzompantli* flayed the freshly severed heads and thereby removed flesh, muscle, and gristle via the use of specially crafted obsidian blades and chert knives. In exceptional circumstances the long, black, and blood-matted hair that once served as the last identifiable vestige of the life of the sacrificial victim remained to frame the skeletal visage and cavernous eyes of the deceased (Duran 1971: 79; Pijoan et al. 1989; Pijoan Aguadé and Mansilla Lory 1997).[25]

According to Motolinia (1979:42), "The heads of those they sacrificed, especially those taken in battle, were flayed, and if they were Lords or important persons they were imprisoned, flayed with their hair, and dried for keeping." (i.e., "*Los cabezas de los que sacrificaban, especial de los tomados en guerra, desollábanlos, y si eran señores o principales personas los asi presos, desollábanlos con sus cabellos, y secábanlos para las guardar*" [translation by the present author]). The fact that the decapitated heads of sacrificial victims taken in battle were emptied of their contents, flayed, and dried, but unlike the vast majority of other such human trophies, original hair or coiffures of elite personages so prepared were kept intact, is of particular interest in this instance. As hair was thought to constitute a primary conduit of one's *tonalli* (solar heat, irradiation, spiritual or cosmic essence, or *Mana*, if you will), preserving the scalp hair or coiffure of the politically or supernaturally powerful assured that the cosmologically significant energies of the spirit essence, "vital force," or *Tonalli* was in turn preserved and fed to the monuments of the *axis mundi* of México-Tenochtitlan (Ortiz de Montellano 1990:233–234).

In sum, for the Mexica Aztec, blood sacrifice and the acquisition of human trophies was deemed necessary to the maintenance and renewal of the cosmos; and

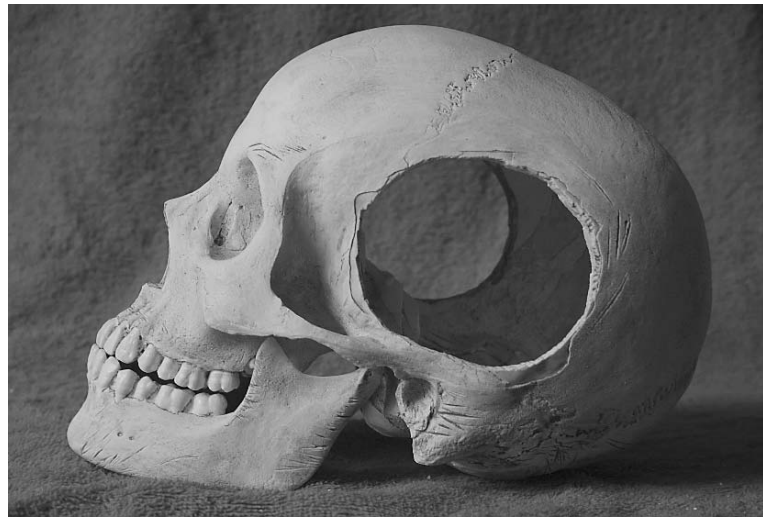

Figure 14.9. Author's reconstruction of bilateral excision patterns for temporal–parietal areas of female cranium based on modifications to plaster cast of same. This particular specimen depicts those cranial modifications noted from the *tzompantli,* or skull rack, of Tlatelolco, México. Note butchering marks at mastoid process, ramus of mandible, and maxilla areas of specimen based on those patterns noted by previous investigators. After observations and analysis based on Pijoan Aguadé and Mansilla Lory (1997) and photographs from specimens housed at the Museo del Templo Mayor, México, DF. (Copyright 2006 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

as such, the offering of captives blessed with a powerful *tonal*, or spiritual essence, were construed as most sacred (Carrasco 1999).[26] Concomitantly, the very act of grasping or clutching the hair or mane of an enemy warrior was the preeminent means by which to subdue and control the "vital force" of one's captive.[27]

So as to effect those modifications necessary for impaling freshly severed heads atop the *huey tzompantli*, portions of the temporal and parietal regions of each aspect of the cranial vault were perforated with an obsidian blade, bifacial knife, and or flint hand axe, and 5.0- to 8.5-centimeter-wide bilateral perforations were then trimmed to circular format with obsidian blades and or chert knives (Pijoan Aguadé and Mansilla Lory 1997:229) (Figure 14.9).[28] The decay and decomposition of both older skulls with, and *sans*, articulated mandibles, cervical vertebrate, and hair, and those freshly impaled heads obtained from decapitation rituals exercised within the ball courts of the ancient city, or derived of the *Veintena* festivals associated with the *Panquetzaliztli*, necessarily produced a horrific stench not for the faint of heart (Duran 1971:79).[29]

Moreover, the macabre spectacle of so many decomposing human heads and flayed skulls peering forth from crowded masonry towers composed almost exclusively of such trophies, and the equally imposing timber palisade and latticework of death and decapitation, was singularly unique for its otherworldly purpose and the cosmic drama and mythic theater that it was intended to conjure and impart.[30]

Significantly, Aztec ritual specialists were tasked with the duty of collecting and burning decomposed or heavily weathered crania and disarticulated postcranial remains from the *tzompantli* platforms of México-Tenochtitlan (Durán 1967, 1971; cf. Pijoan et al. 1989:563).[31] In effect, it was the duty of said specialists to maintain the ritual viability of the *huey tzompantli* in particular. As such, said specialists sought to refurbish or clear debris and decomposed crania from older sections of the timber latticework of the *tzompantli* on an ongoing basis for the purposes of impaling newly decapitated human trophy heads.

Weathered or damaged skulls removed from each of those *tzompantli* cared for in this way were subsequently burned. According to Dahlgren et al. (1982:106), it was absolutely critical that any and all weathered or otherwise decomposed crania were replaced continuously so as to assure that the numerical and numerological integrity of the *tzompantli* platform was maintained intact. To do otherwise might serve to upset the delicate and critical balance of the cosmological framework in question. By contrast with the aforementioned pattern of continuous renewal, Burr Cartwright Brundage (1985:171172) has acknowledged that in anticipation of the mass immolation of 1487, in which some 20,000–80,400 war captives are thought to have perished, "Ahuitzotl ordered the skulls that were at the time displayed on the great skull rack to be burned and discarded, thus making room for the great addition to come."

Given the architectural and cosmological constructs in question, what then may be inferred about the origins and affinities of this and related structures that have since been identified throughout Mesoamerica? And, given the architectural, civic-ceremonial, and cosmological contexts within which such monuments were typically situated, what might a contextual and structural analysis of an older generation of Mesoamerican beliefs and associated ball court features have to offer our interpretive understanding of the devices and monuments in question?

This assessment of the origins and affinities of *tzompantli* skull racks, and their symbolic, cosmological, and architectural associations is less archaeological survey and review, and more analysis, interpretation, and contextualization, of those dimensions of belief and ritual practice construed most relevant to advancing interpretations about human trophies, skull racks, and their respective otherworldly associations.

SERPENT MOUNTAIN AND THE TREE OF GOURDS

Not surprisingly, the most intense period of archaeological investigations yet conducted at the Templo Mayor was first undertaken when a massive sculpted monolith representing the decapitated and dismembered goddess *Coyolxauhqui* was recovered at the foot of the southern stairway of the bifurcated main temple, or twin towers, of the Templo Mayor (Gussinyer 1979; Matos Moctezuma 1979, 1984). This half of the staircase (and associated temple sanctuary) is devoted to *Huitzilopochtli*—the Mexica Aztec tutelary guardian, solar disk, and harbinger of

war, death, and destruction. *Coyolxauhqui* (replete with lunar associations and an identification with the Milky Way) is portrayed at the moment of her annihilation, dismemberment, and decapitation at the hands of *Huitzilopochtli* (López Austin 1996; Smith 1998:209).

DISSECTING THE TREE OF GOURDS

As a result of the aforementioned investigations, a significant number of new monuments, including a *tzompantli* platform with 240 individual masonry depictions of human skulls stacked like cord wood (Structure B), were recovered immediately to the north, and adjacent to the northwest corner of the Templo Mayor proper (Matos Moctezuma 1979, 1984; Miller 1999:344) (Figures 14.10–14.11).

With its staircase oriented to the west (or the place of the setting sun), the ritual content and offerings within the Structure B monument clearly represent elements of a far broader pattern of cosmological associations with the mythic and supernatural landscapes of the Mexica cosmos. While I necessarily defer to Leonardo López Luján's (1994) brilliant analysis of the ritual caches of the Structure B *tzompantli* for further detail, it is worth reviewing some of the more salient features of the offertory caches of just such a structure. Nevertheless, it should be

Figure 14.10. Structure A is oriented to the west and situated in direct relationship to the Structure B *tzompantli* feature located at the northwest corner of the Templo Mayor. Each structure is architecturally isomorphic in terms of architectural details and layout. (Copyright 1983 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

Figure 14.11. Carved stucco and painted human crania from the façade of the stage VI Structure B *tzompantli* platform located at the northwest corner of the Templo Mayor of México-Tenochtitlan. Within said platform were recovered a host of marine and aquatic creatures, Tlaloc images, anthropomorphic knives, and the articulated remains of both a jaguar and a wolf oriented to the place of the setting sun. (Copyright 1983 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

noted from the outset that five superimposed layers or levels, which apparently correspond to the five world ages of the Aztec cosmos, were exhumed from within the core contents of the Structure B *tzompantli* platform of Tenochtitlan.

From Level 1 of the *tzompantli* platform or *Momoztli* were retrieved hundreds of specimens of marine shell, lace corals, greenstone beads, and obsidian projectile points.[32] Carved greenstone representations of Aztec musical instruments, mainly *teponaztli* and *tlalpanhuehuetl* drums, frogs, and conch shells were also identified.

By contrast with the aquatic and marine, or underworld, thematic content of Level 1, the next level of deposits retrieved from the fill content of the Building B *tzompantli* platform, or *Momoztli,* consisted of "a uniform layer of flint sacrificial knives" (López Luján 1999:418).[33]

Of the 40 knives recovered, 13 were retrieved from the eastern half of the platform and 9 from the western half; while the remaining 18 knives were recovered at the center of the Level 2 deposit. All but one of the knives was oriented to the west. Significantly, the numerological associations of the number 13 with the celestial vault, and the number 9 with the Underworld, clearly lend themselves to the cosmological import of the *tzompantli*, with its armature of human heads.

Importantly, from within Level 3 of the multilayered core of the Structure B, Stage VIb (1486–1502 CE) *tzompantli*, Leonardo López Luján (1994:418) reports

the recovery of two "crouching" quadrupeds in "perfect anatomical correspondence." Whereas the skeletal remains of a jaguar occupied the north half of the deposit in Level 3, a wolf occupied the south half of the same deposit. Each of the two quadrupeds was in turn oriented to the west, thereby facing the setting sun and the location of the *huey tzompantli* of *Tenochtitlan*.

Of particular significance in this regard is that whereas jaguars (and the northern quadrant of the cosmos) are identified in Nahua cosmology with *Mictlán,* or the Land of the Dead, and therefore with the Jaguar or Night Sun, or *Ocelotonatiuh*, in this context the wolf is identified with both the southern horizon and the solar disk, *Tonatiuh*. Concomitantly, among those objects recovered from the Templo Mayor complex was included yet another jaguar replete with a large jade or greenstone sphere clutched within its jaws and oriented to the west. Significantly, the specific orientation of Structure B is in turn manifest in the western orientation of the *tzompantli* platform exhumed at Tlatelolco (Guilliem Arroyo 1999). The staircase of the associated Structure A shrine of the Templo Mayor was also oriented to the west, or the place of the setting sun (Figure 14.10).

THE *TZOMPANTLI* AS COSMIC PORTAL

The immolation and burial of a jaguar devouring a greenstone sphere, itself the embodiment of the life force—sun's light and energy, or *tonalli*—conjures yet another dimension of Mexica Aztec cosmology identified with *Ocelotonatiuh* as the Jaguar or Night Sun—the first of four primeval suns in this instance extinguished and devoured by ferocious jaguars in the first age of humankind (Nicholson 1971:398–399).

Leonardo Lopéz Luján's (1994) structural analysis of the offerings recovered from within the Templo Mayor necessarily corroborate key elements of contact era chronicles (such as that of the *Leyenda de los Soles*). Such accounts affirm the associations of the jaguar with the Nahua underworld of *Mictlán*—death, bones, caves, and the "rain spirits" of the sacred Serpent Mountain (Nicholson 1971:398–99). These latter aspects of the Nahua cosmos are cached in the masonry core of the Structure B *tzompantli* situated at the foot of the Templo Mayor, and in this instance include musical instruments for the conduct of the "flower songs" or *xochisones* offered during the pilgrimage to the summit of the sacred Serpent Mountain (Sandstrom 2001:2). Other offerings stored there include conch shells, marine creatures, *Tlaloc* or *tlaloctli* "divine wine" vessels and statuary, costume paraphernalia, and paper offerings depicting "rain spirits" (Lopéz Luján 1994; Sandstrom 2001:7).[34]

Taken together, the contents of the Structure B *tzompantli* (located at the northwest corner of that portion of the Templo Mayor identified with *Tlaloc*) provides *in situ* contextual evidence for the identification of the skull rack or Tree of Gourds with the cleft, chasm, or portal to that otherworldly realm identified with the Nahua *Mictlán* or Maya *Xibalba*—in each instance taken to represent

the Place of Fright, darkness, death, decomposition, decay, stench, and the ball court–centered underworld of the Lords of Darkness (Figure 14.11).[35]

For the ancient Maya, the ball court signified the *axis mundi* or portal to the underworld via which the Hero Twins, *Hun Hunahpu* and *Vuqub Hunahpu*, entered and subsequently emerged from the Maya underworld of *Xibalba*. For both the Mexica Aztec of México-Tenochtitlan, and the Quiché Maya of the *Popol Vuh*, decapitation in turn constituted the primordial first act of creation and human sacrifice that took place within the hallowed grounds of the *Teotlachco* or Place of Ball Game Sacrifice (Castro-Leal Espino 1972:458; Nájera 1987). Significantly, this first act of blood sacrifice (centered as it was on the ball court field of play) is cross-culturally identified with the Underworld (*Mictlán* or *Xibalba*), death, conflict, supernatural forces, lunar and solar cults and deities, Venus, goddess worship, maize gods, ritual bathing, apotheosis, fertility and/or the carnal act, phallic symbols, rebirth, regeneration, and concomitantly, ball courts, decapitation, and skull racks (Castro-Leal Espino 1972:460; Miller and Taube 1993:43).

Accordingly, for the Nahua inhabitants of Tenochtitlan the ball court was conceived of as the *Itzompan*, or Place of the Skull (Tezozomoc 1980:228–229; Stern 1949: 54; cf. Gillespie 1991:323), whereas, throughout Mesoamerica, "the identification of trophy heads with ball game belts concerns the wider association of decapitation with the ball game" (Miller and Taube 1993:173).

The cult associations in question are widespread, and clearly permeate the iconography of ball court paraphernalia and features originally diffused throughout Mesoamerica by way of the Gulf Coast lowlands (García Payon 1971; DiPeso 1974:414).[36] Ultimately, as noted by Miller and Taube (1993:43), Mayan ball court markers "frequently bear a quatrefoil cartouche," thereby signifying the direct or essential cosmological identification of the ball court with the portal to the Underworld, and thereby, its physical embodiment as the *axis mundi*.

THE MIXCOAPAN TZOMPANTLI

The abundance of "rain spirit" and *Tlaloc* offerings and iconography may well support the association of Structure B with that identified in the *Florentine Codex* as Structure 6 of the *Recinto Ceremonial* of México-Tenochtitlan (Sahagún 1956; cf. Matos Moctezuma 1972:104). According to Sahagún (1956), this structure was known as the *Mixcoapan tzompantli*, and was dedicated to those offerings and sacrifices made to propitiate the Cloud Serpent *Mixcóatl*, the purported paternal primogenitor most directly identified with the clouds, stars, or offerings of eagle down that planted the seed that impregnated the goddess *Coatlicue* and therefore set the stage for the primordial conflict and conflagration to follow (Fernandez 1972).[37]

Mixcóatl's respective cosmological associations are with Venus as Morning and Evening Star, *Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli* as Lord of Dawn, the primordial Cloud Serpent or Milky Way (Miller and Taube 1993:115), and, significantly, with the souls of dead warriors transformed into stars (Nicholson 1971).

This latter identification necessarily provides a critical point of departure for identifying those skulls impaled on the *huey tzompantli,* or Tree of Gourds. The primary cosmological association therefore is with the malevolent stellar beings of the *Centzon Huitznahua,* or Four Hundred Southerners, and thereby, the Star Warriors of the Night Sun and Milky Way.

Similarly, I contend that this latter identification is pivotal to any understanding of the cosmological iconography of the *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan. According to H. B. Nicholson, "Mixcoatl-Camaxtli's attire in pictorial representations so closely resembles that of *Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli*, the Venus deity, that his stellar affiliation seems certain. Preeminently as a warrior and hunter, a case has been made . . . for his association, with the soul of the dead warrior transformed into the star, which ties in with the man-star role of the prisoner destined for sacrifice" (H. B. Nicholson 1971:426). The decapitated heads of the *huey tzompantli*, therefore, signify the fleshless heads of those malevolent beings, star warriors, or *Centzon Huitznahua* who first fought *Huitzilopochtli* at the dawn of time—and thereby, that constellation of primordial elements identified with the vault of the night sky, *Mixcôatl* the Cloud Serpent, or Milky Way.

SKULLS, GOURDS, AND FIRST FRUITS OF THE *POPOL VUH*

The *tzompantli*—like the calabash or *jicara* tree, or Tree of Gourds, described in the Quiché Mayan *Popol Vuh*—thrusts skyward, and sprouts directly from the root of that cleft or "broken place" identified with *Xibalba*, or the Place of Fright, and in turn, *Pucbal Chaah*, Place of the Ball Game Sacrifice (Schele and Freidel 1991; Tedlock 1996:97). The chasm, cavern, or cleft earth so noted in turn manifests itself in the topography and iconography of the ball court proper (Gutierrez 1993:3), such as that at Copan, Honduras (Figure 14.12). Concomitantly, Mesoamerican ballcourts have been interpreted by a host of scholars and epigraphers to constitute the Mesoamerican portal to the netherworld, or Black Road to the place of the Lords of Darkness, death, and decomposition; and by contrast, that of the Lords of Light, life, and rebirth (Schele and Freidel 1991).[38] According to Schele and Freidel (1991), "both [title and location] lead down the Black Road, through the Cleft in the Milky Way (Tedlock 1985:38), from the ball courts of the Maya to the Court of Creation in the Land of Death. For in the last analysis, it is clear that the ball court, real or metaphysical, is a portal to the Otherworld."

By extension, the sacrifice and bloody decapitation of the Maya primogenitors, *Hun Hunahpu* or First Hunter and *Vuqub Hunahpu* (Schele and Freidel 1991), by the Lords of *Xibalba* was followed by the placement of the severed head of *Hun Hunahpu* within the branches of the long dead calabash tree, or Tree of Gourds. The calabash tree in fact stood at the Place of the Ball Game Sacrifice (Tedlock 1996:98). It was there in the ball court or "ash pit" that the Quiché Mayan accounts of the first death or sacrifice by decapitation, and the rebirth and regeneration of the gods, was achieved.

Figure 14.12. Mesoamerican ball courts were constructed so as to serve as symbolic portals or cleft earth openings to the underworld. The Classic-era Maya ball court at Copan, Honduras, pictured here constitutes just such a cleft earth opening. Archaeologist Arthur Demarest recently recovered an elaborately carved quatrefoil cartouche ball court marker at Cancuén that clearly serves to reinforce the cosmological and symbolic association so noted. (Copyright 1988 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

According to the *Popol Vuh*, after impaling the head of *Hun Hunahpu* in its branches, the Tree of Gourds soon blossomed and subsequently bore First Fruit. Not long thereafter, the talking skull of *Hun Hunahpu* called forth a young maiden by the name of *X'Kik* or Blood Moon—the daughter of Blood Gatherer, one of the Lords of Death. It was there that Blood Moon was impregnated by spittle spat from the mouth of the impaled skull of *Hun Hunahpu* (Tedlock 1996:99). Of particular significance in this regard is the fact that ball courts and their attendant iconographic ensemble and ritual repertoire incorporate or proclaim both lunar or terrestrial, and stellar or celestial, themes and supernatural associations (Castro-Leal Espino 1972).

Significantly, *Hun Hunahpu* constitutes the Quichean or Post-Classic equivalent to *Hun Nal Ye*, the Tonsured Maize God of Classic era iconography and art. Each primogenitor in turn suffers the same fate at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice. Looked at from this perspective, therefore, the decapitation of the Tonsured Maize God "like the maize plant he embodies, is resurrected from the cracked earth" (Foster 2002:168).

In this way, the bloody decapitation of *Hun Hunahpu* or *Hun Nal Ye* was reenacted with each and every decapitation of a captive at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice. It is perhaps appropriate, therefore, that the "skull racks" of the Maya,

such as that depicted at Chichen Itza, made use of vertical uprights and stacked skulls in a fashion reminiscent of the anatomy and structure of the maize plant with its efflorescence, tassels, and emergent cobs (Mendoza 2003c:418; Mendoza and Casas 2003:429).

At the Mexicanized Maya site of Cacaxtla, Tlaxcala, México, mural depictions of maize stalks replete with human heads in lieu of maize cobs, and turtles with associated aquatic creatures, may well signify yet another allusion to the Underworld decapitation, death, and resurrection of the Tonsured Maize God, *Hun Nal Ye*, as with the skull racks and decapitation rituals of the Maya region.[39] According to Houston et al. (2006:72), "another representation of a skull rack with leaves has been uncovered at Tonina, Chiapas, in the form of a leafy arbor emblazoned with the upside-down heads of captives.. . . Postholes in front of the display could have supported a three-dimensional extension of this skull rack."[40]

As in the Mexica Aztec story of *Coatlicue*, and her impregnation by way of eagle down collected at the summit of Serpent Mountain, *Hun Hunahpu* spat into the hand of the maiden Blood Moon and she too was impregnated. However, in this instance, the virgin maiden bore First Fruits in the form of the second generation of Hero Twins, *Xbalanque* and *Hunahpu*, the sons of *Hun Hunahpu* in turn reborn of the Tree of Gourds.

The Lords of Xibalba in turn challenged the Hero Twins to a ball game within the Place of the Ball Game Sacrifice, and in like fashion, *Hunahpu*, the son of the First Father, *Hun Hunahpu*, was in turn deceived and decapitated. However, in this instance, a calabash or *jicara* plucked from the otherworldly Tree of Gourds replaced the head of *Hunahpu*, and by way of this and a related deception, both *Xbalanque* and *Hunahpu* ultimately defeated, decapitated, and dismembered the Lords of *Xibalba*.

Unlike the First Father, *Hun Hunahpu*, who thereafter was identified with the planet Venus and the ball court portal to the Underworld (Schele and Freidel 1991), after their victory against the Lords of *Xibalba*, the Hero Twins—*Xbalanque* and *Hunahpu*—underwent transfiguration and apotheosis, and thereby ascended into the heavens in their guise as the moon or Venus, and the sun, respectively.[41] Ultimately, this final act of the first creation necessarily played out within the blood-spattered confines of the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice.

INDONESIAN SKULL TREES

Significantly, an ethnographic parallel to the Mesoamerican *tzompantli* may be found in the guise of pre-colonial Indonesian "skull trees" or *andung* upon whose branches were impaled the severed heads of fallen enemies, as well as those of sacrificial captives dispatched during public ceremonies and funerary rites (Mitchell 1999:1).

According to one account, "Captured heads were hung in celebration on the bare, blood-soaked limbs of [the] skull tree, always located in the village center."[42]

As with Aztec beliefs pertaining to severed human heads, the same account contends that "Mana, or life-essence was imbued in the heads, thus the skull tree ensured fertility and was the main religious object of the village."[43] While Dutch colonials attempted to eradicate the tradition by felling the vast majority of *andung* "skull trees" in the early years of the twentieth century, Sumbanese *ikat* artistic creations continue to perpetuate the motif in modern creations, including textiles and carved objects. On the Isle of Sumba, for instance, until outlawed by the Indonesian government in the 1930s, dead or otherwise petrified tree trunks were festooned with decapitated human heads in an act intended to promote prosperity, good fortune, and abundant harvests. The severed heads, as such, were used within an oracular or divinatory context related to war and sacrifice. As noted by David Mitchell (1999:1), "The inhabitants still remember the rituals for reading the omens before going out to put their lives on the line in battle."

As in the case of the Mesoamerican *tzompantli*, Indonesian "skull trees" were erected at the heart of public plazas for the purposes of promoting agricultural fertility, capturing Mana or the spirit-essence of fallen enemies, and auguring the fate of warriors sent into combat.

SERPENT MOUNTAIN AS COSMIC AXIS MUNDI

As a place of pilgrimage and long-term blood sacrifice or *uemmana* (scattered offerings),[44] the sacred Serpent Mountain, or *huey teocalli* (Great God House), was believed to constitute the veritable embodiment of the *axis mundi* (Carrasco 1999). As such, it was the object of intense veneration and yearly offerings to the rain spirits and the spirits of fire and light embodied in the guise and essence of *Tonatiuh* the solar deity. The cosmic cleft, or chasm, while fundamentally identified with caves—particularly in their respective roles as portals to the Nahua underworld and the house of *Mictlántecuhtli* as Lord of Death—was in this instance identified with the broken, bifurcated, or twisted summit of the sacred Serpent Mountain embodied in the form and content of the *huey teocalli* or Templo Mayor (Figure 14.13).[45]

In this instance, the cleft was reconstituted at the summit of the Serpent Mountain by virtue of the cosmological and architectural embodiment of opposed, albeit, complementary, supernatural forces rendered incarnate in the corpus of tandem temples, with monstrous reptilian *Tlaltecuhtli* Earth Lord portals or cavernous doorways framed as gaping maws to the underworld of *Mictlán* (Mendoza 1975, 1977).[46] The towering temples situated at the summit of the Templo Mayor were in turn dedicated, in the first instance, to *Tlaloc* the ancient Lord of Rain and mountain spirits, and in the other, to *Tonatiuh* the Lord of Light and the avatar of that cosmic essence identified with the *tonal* or *tonalli*. From this place on high, the Lord of Rain, and therefore thunder and lightning, and the "sun spirit" or Lord of Dawn in his guise as *Tonatij*, *Tonatiuh*, or *Huitzilopochtli*, rained down both precious rains and that primordial source of light, heat, and life, or *tonalli*, necessary

Figure 14.13. The bifurcated summit of the *Huey Teocalli,* or Great Temple, of México-Tenochtitlán was brought into being by the Aztec with the installation of twin temples dedicated to the Lord of Earth (Tlaloc, on the left) and the Lord of Heaven (Huitzilopochtli, on the right). (Copyright 1976 Rubén G. Mendoza.)

to sustain the Mexica Aztec cosmos and its centripetal role and place as the very Foundation of Heaven.

For the Nahua, whereas *Coatepec*, *Coatepetl*, or Serpent Mountain constituted the physical and metaphysical embodiment of that sacred place in which primordial conflict sparked the genesis of the Mexica cosmos, *Culhuacan* or Twisted Hill (aka *Chicomoztoc-Culhuacan*) symbolized the common point of origin and departure for those tribal peoples who migrated to the Valley of México to become the peoples of México-Tenochtitlan (Townsend 2000:59–60). Once again, both sacred mountains, or mountain spirits, and the Seven Caves of creation, or *Chicomostoc*, constitute that duality of light and darkness, and celestial and terrestrial points of binary opposition and centripetal force, necessary to the maintenance and revitalization of the Nahua cosmos (Carrasco 1999).

Ultimately, only via human sacrifice and the taking of human trophies—such as those represented by way of the offering of human hearts, blood, severed heads, and other body parts deposited at the heart of the city and center of México-Tenochtitlan—were the opposing and centripetal forces of the *axis mundi* of the Mexica cosmos reconciled, fed, and reinvigorated (Ortiz de Montellano 1990:55; Carrasco 1999).

In effect, a prime mandate of the cult of blood sacrifice was the feeding of the cosmic portal or *axis mundi* embodied in the Templo Mayor of México-Tenochtitlan. To that end, Hernán Cortés (1967 [1519–1540]) "documented the execution of some 4000 captives per annum in his efforts to calculate the sheer

number of sacrificial victims dispatched in México-Tenochtitlan in any given year" (cf. Mendoza, 2004:22).

With each new conquest and expansion of the empire came the growth and reinvigoration of the cosmic portal or *axis mundi*—embodied in the masonry and human substance of the *huey teocalli* (Great God House) and *huey tzompantli* (Great Skull Banner). This in turn was fed with new tributes and enemy captives destined for blood sacrifice, obtained by force of arms. As such, as the empire grew, so too, then, did the massive frameworks of the *huey teocalli* and *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan.

Nowhere is this fact more cogently demonstrated than it was via the mass immolations and blood sacrifice of 1487. In that year, the *huey Tlatoani* Ahuitzotl's imperial exploits and territorial acquisitions were soon followed by the expansion, rededication, and consecration of the Templo Mayor via the blood sacrifice of some 20,000 to 80,400 war captives taken in battle (Leonardo Lopez Lujan 1994:283).[47] According to López Luján (1994:283), ceremonies (dedicated to the consecration of the Templo Mayor) convened on the first day of the festival of *Tlacaxipehualiztli* in 1487 entailed the simultaneous deployment of some 20 individual groups of executioners, including the *huey Tlatoani Ahuitzotl* and the Lords *Tlacaelel*, *Nezahualpilli*, and *Totoquihuatzin*, each of whom participated in dispatching captives and letting blood over the course of a four-day harvest of human souls.[48]

COSMIC TERROR REVEALED

Excavations undertaken at the original site of the *huey teocalli* of México-Tenochtitlan by Eduardo Matos Moctezuma (1979, 1984), his predecessors (Batres 1902), and colleagues (Cabrera Castro 1979; Gussinyer 1979; López Portillo, et al. 1981; Martos López and Pulido Méndez 1989; López Luján 1994; López Luján and Mercado 1996; Román Berrelleza 1990) have produced significant new revelations about the cosmological landscapes of a city consumed by blood sacrifice, and both human and divine immolation, on an unprecedented scale.

The recovery of the aforementioned Structure B "skull rack" was found to correlate with the cosmological landscapes of the *huey teocalli* or Templo Mayor, itself the Mexica incarnation *par excellance* of *Coatepetl*, *Coatepec*, or Serpent Mountain, atop which *Huitzilopochtli* (Hummingbird on the Left) was born from the decapitated and dismembered corpse of his mother *Coatlicue* (She of the Serpent Skirt).

Though few monuments of the goddess *Coatlicue* survived the conquest, perhaps one of the most masterful—and at the same time horrific—such images consists of a three-meter tall monolith exhumed near the Metropolitan Cathedral in 1790. According to Miller and Taube (1993:64), "Writhing coral snakes appear in place of her head and hands, denoting gouts of blood gushing from her severed throat and wrists. The two great snakes emerging from her neck face one another, creating a face of living blood. A monument of cosmic terror, Coatlicue stands violated and mutilated, her wounds mutely demanding revenge against her

enemies." It was in fact atop Serpent Mountain that the newborn god set about the task of avenging his mother's murder by way of defeating, decapitating, and dismembering his ruthless sibling, *Coyolxauhqui*, the Mexica moon goddess and incarnation of the Milky Way, and her brothers, the *Centzon Huitznahua* or Four Hundred Southerners (Miller and Taube 1993:64).[49]

SKULL BANNERS OF THE PANQUETZALIZTLI

The Mexica Aztec festival devoted to the *veintena* calendrical celebration of the *Panquetzaliztli*, or the Raising of Banners and First Fruits (Quiñones Keber, 1995:147–49; Folio 5R), was a 20-day period dedicated to the devotions of *Tezcatlipoca* (Smoking Mirror) and *Huitzilopochtli* (Hummingbird on the Left).[50]

During this ritual cycle, the foregoing cosmological and mythological narrative regarding the death of *Coatlicue* and the birth of *Huitzilopochtli*, and the concomitant decapitation of *Coyolxauhqui* and the sacrifice of the *Centzon Huitznahua,* is reenacted with intensity, ferocity, and dispatch (Taube 1993:45–49). Those to be sacrificed were bathed with waters collected from the spring of *Huitzilatl*, itself located within the cavern of *Huitzilopochco*—the Place of *Huitzilopochtli*.[51] The 400 captives chosen to portray the *Centzon Huitznahua* in their respective roles as *Ixiptla*, or deity impersonators, were embellished with paint and dress in the guise of the *Centzon Huitznahua*—their eyes framed in black paint so as to portray the night sky and the stars themselves (Carrasco 1999; Serrato-Combe 2001).[52]

The *Ixiptla*, dressed in the insignia of the *Centzon Huitznahua*, were then led from the foot of the *huey tzompantli* to the summit of *Coatepec*, Serpent Mountain, and back again. On the day of the mass immolation and blood sacrifice of the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla*, an impersonator of *Painal*, or *Paynal* (*Huitzilopochtli*'s double, the Hasty One) descends the steps of the *huey teocalli* and enters the arena of the *Tezcatlachco*, or *tezca tlachtlico,* Dark Ball Game Place, otherwise referred to as the *Teotlachco*, or Sacred Ball Court located at the heart of México-Tenochtitlan's civic-ceremonial precinct (Martos López and Pulido Méndez 1989). From there, *Painal-ixiptla* hastily departed in a foot race toward Tlatelolco and other allied cities and places, including Nonoalco, Chapultepec, Coyoacan, and back again to Acachinanco, and the *Tezcatlachco* or Dark Ball Game Place situated before the *huey tzompantli* or Great Skull Banner, and *huey teocalli* of México-Tenochtitlan (Nicholson 1971:Table 4).

Along the route of the *Paynal-ixiptla* the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* engaged in mock battles only to disperse with the arrival and passage of the *Painal-ixiptla*. Upon the return of *Painal-ixiptla* and the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* to the courtyard before the *huey teocalli* of México-Tenochtitlan, the reenactment of the battle and massacre of *Coatepec* or Serpent Mountain commenced with the descent of the images of both *Painal* and the *Xiuhcoatl*, or Turquoise (Fire) Serpent "disguise" of Huitzilopochtli, from the summit of Serpent Mountain.

At this point in the ceremony, each and every one of the 400 *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* impersonators ascended the steps of the Serpent Mountain so as to be dispatched by way of an intense and protracted episode of blood sacrifice and human heart excision. Ultimately, each of the lifeless bodies of the 400 *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* impersonators was then tumbled down the steps of the *huey teocalli*, and subsequently decapitated and dismembered atop the *apetlac*, or a projecting masonry apron at the foot of the main staircase designed for that purpose (Brundage 1985:169–170).

Portions of the flesh of each human offering were then distributed for consumption in the rituals of the *Panquetzaliztli* (*veintena*) Fixed Feast festival. The decapitated heads of each of the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* were then flayed and emptied of all contents by the "ministers of the temple" (Pijoan et al. 1989). The bilateral perforations required to skewer the heads atop the principal *huey tzompantli* located adjacent the *Tezcatlachco* or Dark Ball Game Place was then effected with prismatic blades and bifacial knives, as well as chert hand axes (Pijoan Aguadé and Mansilla Lory 1997:229–234).

Long thereafter, the *huey tzompantli* provided the platform or theater atop of which the severed heads of the *Centzon Huitznahua* Star Warriors serve to recall and conjure the mythic origins of the *Ocelotonatiuh*, or Night Sun of the first world age; and concomitantly, the betrayal, death, and decapitation of the First Mother *Coatlicue* (She of the Serpent Skirt). For it was she, the decapitated goddess *Coatlicue*, who sired those Star Warriors whose blood and severed heads were ultimately destined for a hallowed place within the blood-soaked "branches" of the Tree of Gourds, and thereby, the starry vault of the Sky Serpent that conjured the Milky Way.

Significantly, the monumental representation of the dismembered, decapitated, and disarticulated remains of the goddess *Coyolxauhqui* (exhumed at the base of the southern half of that portion of the *huey teocalli* dedicated to *Huitzilopochtli*) clearly signals the advent of that cosmological drama that first inspired the sacrifice of the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* deity impersonators (Taube 1993:45–49). From that point forward, *Ixiptla* impersonators were dispatched yearly during the bloody rites of the *Panquetzaliztli*. The yearly sacrifice of the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* in turn served as a rite of intensification clearly intended to reinvigorate and relive the very act that fueled the first creation of the Mexica cosmos, and by extension, the empire of the sun.[53]

CONCLUSION

Thus, blood sacrifice, decapitation, and the sacred spaces of the *Teotlachco* ball court and *tzompantli* were called forth during the festivities of the *Panquetzaliztli* so as to conjure the cosmological landscapes and sacred arenas within which the blood-drenched battlefields of the *atl-tlachinolli*, or Burning Waters, were recaptured at the Heart of Heaven.

In this way the Mexica Aztec reenacted and conjured forth those primeval forces that engendered the cataclysmic birth of the Aztec nation state, empire, and the Foundation of Heaven. Ultimately, the sacrifice and decapitation of the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* was but one further means by which to capture and control the *tonalli* or "tutelary genius," life force, or "cosmic excretions" of those centripetal and "opposed forces" that lay at the very heart of the Mexica cosmos and its state apparatus (Carrasco 1999).[54] Significantly, therefore, the aforementioned cosmological protocol was reified via those sacrificial rituals that conjured those spiritual forces and interrelationships obtaining between the sacred Serpent Mountain, *Teotlachco* ball court, and *Tzompantli* Skull Banners of México-Tenochtitlan. The cosmogony in question was therefore immortalized through (a) the impregnation and subsequent decapitation of *Coatlicue*, (b) the bloody retribution of *Huitzilopochtli*, (c) the mass immolation, decapitation, and display of the freshly severed heads of the *Centzon Huitznahua* Star Warrior *ixiptla*, (d) the decapitation and dismemberment of *Coyolxauhqui*—in her guise as the Moon goddess or embodiment of the Milky Way (Carmen Aguilera; cf. Taube 1993:47), (e) the veneration and celebration of *Mixcóatl*, and (f) the First Fruits flowering of both the Tree of Gourds and the central Mexican *Tzompantli* tree (sp. *Erythrina corallodendrum*). Each of the aforementioned actions and reactions were thereby integrated with the cosmological framework of that massive wooden palisade or Skull Banner that ultimately captured the primordial essence, or *tonalli*, excreted from the countless *tzontecomatl* "scalp pots," and or *atecomatl* calabash gourds or *jicara*, impaled or borne of this otherworldly Tree of Gourds.

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NOTES

1. See Demarest (1984) for an evolutionary perspective on the role of ritualized violence in the Americas. Demarest's analysis in this regard was a response to those contributions to the study of ritual violence in the Americas convened at Dumbarton Oaks (Boone 1984). It is not my intention in this context to speculate on the *cause celebre* that spawned the development of the earliest "skull racks" in Mesoamerica. Nor is it my intention to present a complete analytical treatment to support my contention that the ball courts of the Maya, and those of highland central México, are cosmologically and thematically linked by the *Popol Vuh* and its emphasis on death, regeneration, and rebirth. Because the ball game was an early, and clearly pan-Mesoamerican, development shared by peoples from throughout Middle America, I contend that the iconographic vocabulary was similarly international in character, and as such, ethnographic analogs obtaining between the Maya and Mexica are clearly more appropriate than one might think.
2. The "skull rack" is also referred to in the literature as *tzumpantli* and or *tzompantlij*. The term is generally interpreted to signify "skull rack," "skull wall," or "wall of skulls." Frances Kartunen and others believe the term *tzompantli* derives from the Nahuatl terms for skull, or *tzontecomatl*—itself a contraction of the words *tzontli* or *tzom* for "scalp," and *tecomatl* for "gourd" or "pot"—as in "scalp pot." Frances Kartunen in turn interprets the term in translation to signify "skull row" or "skull banner" (Kartunen, response to Mendoza via Nahuatl-L listserv, September 25, 2005). This latter term is here used accentuate those activities identified with the feeding of the *huey tzompantli* of Tenochtitlan during the course of the *Panquetzaliztli*, or Raising of Banners feast cycle.
3. I use the term "skull chamber" in this instance as the so-called "skull rack" of Alta Vista, Chalchihuites, Zacatecas, México, consisted of the burned and collapsed remains of a timber framework associated with Structure 2C (The Temple of the Skulls). According to Pickering (1985:302–303), "a group of fallen timbers which had been part of a superstructure was uncovered. The condition of the wood, though charred, was quite good and more importantly, at the junction of the two beams, a single complete perforated skull was found." Pickering (1985:303) goes on to note that "the partially burned and perforated skull at the junction plus other perforated skulls and at least two femurs were found in situations that suggest they had been suspended from the superstructure." He goes on to acknowledge that a total of 21 perforated or "drilled" skulls were placed "directly on the floor" of Structure 2C in an assemblage that included disarticulated mandibles and long bones with and without fibers identified with cords used to suspend each of the trophies in question. In essence, the Temple of the Skulls consisted of a chamber filled with human crania and long bones

once suspended from wooden beams or *varas* by twine or cords strung through a perforation made at the apex of each and every one of those crania recovered therein. Similarly, a second *tzompantli* or "skull chamber" was recovered from Structure 4 at Alta Vista during excavations conducted during the 1975–1976 field season.

4. Archaeological investigations by Ellen Abbott Kelley (1978) at the site of Alta Vista Chalchihuites, Zacatecas, México resulted in the recovery of the aforementioned 21 decapitated and perforated or "drilled" human crania from deposits contained within the Structure 2C "skull chamber" identified with the Temple of the Skulls. The crania, in this instance, each bore evidence of a singular perforation at the apex of the skull putatively used to suspend each skull from cords attached to the ceiling of the chamber in question. Fiber evidence from both drilled human femurs and the cranial perforations support this contention (Pickering 1985:303). While both Pickering (1985) and LeBlanc (1999) place the number of perforated crania from the Temple of the Skulls (Structure 2C) at 21, Pickering (1985) acknowledges that bone counts were still largely incomplete at the time of his assessment. The particularly fragmentary nature of the otherwise large balance of remains from the collection (totaling some 3141 elements) poses many challenges for securing an accurate accounting in this instance.
5. In this instance, those limestone bas-relief depictions of skulls carved into the basal platform of the *tzompantli* of Chichen are portrayed as having been affixed to a "wooden" structure composed entirely of vertical uprights. See also Nicholas Dunning (n.d.) for a discussion on the archaeological recovery of the skull platform or *tzompantli* of Nohpat, Yucatan, México.
6. DiPeso's (1968, 1974) discovery of human crania (replete with apical perforations for suspension) from Casas Grandes (Chihuahua) deposits clearly resemble similar such treatments from late Classic through early Post-Classic contexts at Alta Vista, Chalchihuites, Zacatecas, México (Kelley 1978). Interestingly, radiocarbon determinations situate the chronology of the Temple of the Skulls at AD 840. LeBlanc (1999) in turn cites a similar collection of some 11 "drilled skulls" from the nearby Epiclassic (ca. AD 650–900) acropolis complex of La Quemada, Zacatecas, México. Each of these settlements, lying as they did on a natural trade artery into the American Southwest, are very likely the inspiration for the "skull mobile" (DiPeso 1968) and or "skull chambers" of Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, México. Clearly, such "skull chambers" were far more widespread than previously thought. In each instance, however, their chronological affinities are with Epiclassic through Early Post-Classic site developments.
7. See Mendoza (2001) for a review and discussion of Late Pre-Classic (circa 300 BCE–1 CE/300 CE) or Protoclassic (circa 1–300 CE) chronological considerations, and Spencer (1982) for a specific description of the "skull rack" recovered at the site of Loma de la Coyotera. It should be noted that the Loma de la Coyotera skull rack is thought to have employed horizontal *varas* or wooden beams for suspending the more than 61 tethered human heads and "drilled skulls" affixed thereon. According to the account of Spencer and Redmond (1997:520–524), of the more than 61 decapitated heads that once graced the Feature 8 "skull rack," 18 were identified as per sex, and of those, it was determined that an equal number of both male and female crania were represented in the deposit. Moreover, the Lomas Phase chronology of the deposit would place its dating at circa 200 BCE, and they conclude that the *tzompantli* in question was erected by the Zapotec conquerors of Loma de la Coyotera as one means by which to intimidate and terrify the local populace. As such, *tzompantli* racks that deployed horizontal crossbeams for the threading of human heads on armatures exhibit far greater chronological depth than previously supposed.
8. Thompson (1951) saw in early Spanish colonial accounts of Maya human sacrifice and decapitation, such as those recorded by Don Juan de Villagutierre Soto-Mayor (ca. 1701; cf. 1983:299–300) evidence for the corrupting influence and lingering legacy of Post-Classic Mexican invaders.
9. Significantly, head hunting and related forms of ritual decapitation practiced by the Nasca, Moche, and later Chimu of Peru have been documented in a variety of contexts (Browne et al. 1993; Benson and Cook 2001; Proulx 2001). In fact, modified human trophy heads have been recovered from Nasca burials replete with perforations for threading and suspending such heads from looped cords or ropes (in the fashion of "soap on a rope"). In a number of instances, such portable trophy

heads (strung to looped cords) have been recovered intact among the Nasca (Proulx 2001). I have in turn identified similarly tethered trophy heads in Maya art, such as that of K1082 (Justin Kerr 2006; cf. Houston et al. 2006:Figure 6.17). For my part, I contend that such "drilled skulls" replete with cords inspired the earliest stirrup-spouted representations of human heads in Peru and South America (Mendoza 2003a; see also Donnan 2004 for examples of Moche portrait vessels thought germane to the advancement of this discussion).

10. Richard Wilkinson's (Spencer and Redmond 1997, Appendix B, pp. 618–620) analysis of that skeletal material recovered from the Feature 8 "skull rack" determined that the "drilled skulls" incorporated perforations (predominantly through the temporal–parietal areas of the cranium), and these ranged in diameter from 7 mm to 12 mm, and upward of 24 mm in overall size. This indicates that either the skulls were tethered to the horizontal crossbeams of the *tzompantli*, or the holes were added to facilitate fastening the mandible to the cranium in those skulls where said features were present.
11. According to Don Juan de Villagutierre Soto-Mayor (ca. 1701; cf. 1983:299–300), "Pedro de Zubiaur returned in a short time with the news that he had not only found the road . . . but also the bones of the men who had accompanied Captain Juan Díaz de Velasco from Guatemala, with the skulls cut off, by which was seen the barbaric cruelty with which the infidels had dealt with them, murdering them." This same account goes on to chronicle the ritual sacrifice of two Franciscan friars by the "barbarian priest Quincanek [who] said that on that island he himself had tied them down in the form of a cross and taken out their hearts" (ibid, p. 300).
12. According to Alvarado Tezozomoc (1944:119; cf. López Luján 1994:270), "There the priests flayed the miserable bodies, and there they placed and dressed them. *The heads were fastened to the walls of the temple of Huitzilopochtli*. When the Spanish came to this New Spain, before the Mexican rebellion, eight soldiers climbed to the top of the cu and counted on the walls sixty-two thousand skulls of people defeated in wars and sacrificed" [emphasis by López Luján]. Moreover, López Luján (1994:272) goes on to acknowledge that during the *Tlacaxipehualiztli* calendrical period of 1487, Tlapanec, Huexotzinca, Atlixca, and Zapotec captives were "sacrificed before the statue of that demon, *and their heads were placed in some cavities intentionally made in the walls of the Templo Mayor*."
13. According to López Luján (1994:482), only about 50 decapitated heads were recovered from within primary contexts that composed the fill or substructures of the Templo Mayor proper. In each instance, the presence of cervical vertebrate and/or the hyoid bone made clear that each offering was the result of an act of decapitation as opposed to post-mortem collection and reuse. In one instance, the bilaterally perforated remains of one cranium served to document the recycling of human heads from *tzompantli* fixtures or caches.
14. Andagoya (1945:104; cf. Linares 1977:79) notes that one Spanish *entrada* into Panama was made by way of a "great street entirely paved with the heads of the dead."
15. So pervasive was the practice of head hunting among the Maya that God A was in effect the ancient God of Decapitation. Said God is depicted in Justin Kerr's "A Pre-Columbian Portfolio" as image K4884, which depicts a ceramic representation of the God of Decapitation from the burial place of *Yax Nuun Ayiin I* (Burial 10, Tikal). In that context, the toothless God A is portrayed as bearing a trophy head in his outstretched hands. One additional characteristic of the God of Decapitation concerns his symbolic representation in the form of a cluster of four shells, such as that depicted on a jade pendant pictured as K1505a, or K4388, which consists of a vessel inscribed with clusters of such shells (Kerr 2006). Where the mandible necklaces of Teotihvacán, México, are concerned, it is likely that those sacrificial captives festooned with such trophies were of Maya origin. Given 3rd and 4th century C.E. Teotihvacán forays into highland and lowland Guatemala, and the recovery of mandible caches at Tikal (Coe 1990:494–495), and Caracol (Chase and Chase 2002:5), I contend that those captives recovered from both the Ciudadela and the Pyramid of the Moon at Teotihvacán were in fact Maya lords or war cult commanders from the regions so noted.
16. The Anders et al. (1993) publication of the *Codex Borgia* containsd a significant number of skull rack and or skull frieze fixtures and decapitated human heads. For other pre-Hispanic New World and recent examples of decapitation, human trophies, and religious violence see Benson and

Cook (2001); Browne et al. (1993); Cabrera Castro (1990); Humes (1991); King (1988); Mendoza (1992, 1994); Miller (1986); Ojeda Díaz (1990); Preciado (1995); Sugiyama (1995); Talavera González et al. (2001); and Verano (2001). For an ethnographic account of contemporary and recent headhunting practice, including discussions of the role of rage, retribution, retaliation, and bloodlust in a recent historical context, see Rosaldo (1980).

17. Miller (1999:359) cites Frances Kartunen (personal communication, July 1993) in noting that the term *tzompantli* signifies "skull banner" or "flag," and does so on the basis of the terms *tzontecomatl* or "scalp pot," a Nahua metaphor or allusion to the human cranium, and *pantli* or "banner." Interestingly, the ritual cycle identified with the *Panquetzaliztli* (Raising of Banners) Fixed Feast festivals required the posting or unfurling of banners, including those pertaining to the "feeding" of the principal "skull banner" or *tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan.
18. Compare this practice to those rites identified with the spilling or "scattering" of human blood within ball courts by the Classic Maya. Related ball court iconography depicts captives bound up as human balls and rolled or tumbled down the steps of the ball court so as to feed the "chasms of creation" embodied in the cosmological landscapes and topography of the Mayan ball court (Schele and Freidel 1991).
19. See DiPeso (1974) for an enumeration of those ball court caches and burials that included female body parts and or bodies.
20. Anthony Aveni (1980:247) long ago documented the equinoctial orientation of the Templo Mayor, and noted that the path of the rising sun would have transited immediately over the twin temples located at the summit of the Serpent Mountain. He was, however, unaware of that relatively recent archaeological evidence that makes clear the axial alignment of the Templo Mayor with the *Teotlachco* ball court and *tzompantli* of Tenochtitlan.
21. If taken at face value, Andres de Tapia's (1866) accounting of 136,000 human trophies for the huey *tzompantli* of Tenochtitlan, combined with Alvarado Tezozomoc's (1944:119; cf. López Luján 1994:270) enumeration of 62,000 human heads affixed to the walls and ramparts of the Templo Mayor, result in a total "head count" of 198,000 decapitated heads for these two structures alone. Such statistics clearly conflict with Ortiz de Montellano's (1983) particularly conservative, albeit elaborate, statistical projection of 60,000 human heads for the skull rack of Tenochtitlan.
22. The head counts per *vara* attributed to Andrés de Tapia (1866), and by contrast, those documented by Fray Diego Duran (1971:79) and Juan de Tovar (1972), and more recently discussed by Eduardo Matos Moctezuma (1975:103), and ultimately, Ortiz de Montellano (1983), may well vary due to confusion had by Andrés de Tapia in distinguishing the *tzompantli* rack at Tlatelolco from that encountered by the *conquistadores* at México-Tenochtitlán. Whereas, both Tovar (1972) and Duran (1971) report that each vara within the *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlán held some 20 heads per span, only Andrés de Tapia reports that each span held five human heads. According to Pijoan, et al. (1989:563), "*Matos comentó la coincidencia de la referencia que da Tapia con respecto al hallazgo de Tlatelolco que presentó los cráneos en grupos de cinco, y aunque desafortunadamente no se cuenta con evidencias arqueológicas sufficientes, resulta interesante una possible relación* (Matos 1978:138)." Given the coincidence (noted by Eduardo Matos Moctezuma) that Andrés de Tapia's head counts correspond quite well with the archaeological data recovered from the *tzompantli* structure at Tlatelolco, it now appears likely that Andrés de Tapia's account confused the spans from México-Tenochtitlan with those of Tlatelolco.
23. I contend that the accounts and illustrations of Hernán Cortés, combined with those of Diego Duran, provide the most cogent way out of the interpretive morass at hand. In order to reconcile the foregoing discrepancies, any interpretation must consider the grid-like layout of the *huey tzompantli* depicted by Hernan Cortés (e.g., Serrato-Combe 2001), versus Diego Duran's idealized portrayal of a skull rack with four massive uprights connected by way of three spans of crossbeams bearing human heads. Taken together, each of the projected head counts per span or crossbeam (i.e., 5 versus 20 heads) may be accommodated within a three-dimensional consideration of the structure so described. Accordingly, I contend that if three approximately 20-ft spans consisting of 20 heads were required to define the width of the *huey tzompantli*, and each horizontal armature

(i.e., rods and poles or uprights combined) contained the projected 76 rods or crossbeams cited by Ortiz de Montellano (1983:Table I) for a 31-m high post or upright, then the total count of human heads that could be accommodated on the horizontal spans and uprights alone would account for 136,800 human trophy heads. This accounting assumes the four- to six-foot spacing between armatures or uprights, as well as the 154- or 180-ft length of the platform and *tzompantli* palisade cited by Andrés de Tapia (1971), Clavigero (1945), and López de Gómara (1964) from period accounts. Such a configuration, on a gridlike plan, assumes that the lengthwise appearance would be that of 30 to 35 massive *vigas* or uprights running the length of the central portion of the tzompantli platform—or the halving of the 60 to 70 uprights so often cited by the aforementioned chroniclers. Ultimately, I contend that the demographic projection presented herein compares favorably with the 136,000 human heads documented in the accounts of Andrés de Tapia (1971:538; cf. Ortiz de Montellano 1983:403), López de Gómara (1578), and others. Finally, the only other detail left for consideration in this hypothetical reconstruction concerns the orientation of the heads themselves, which I would argue were necessarily oriented with respect to the Templo Mayor itself, as was generally the case with other Mesoamerican *tzompantli* armatures oriented with respect to the *axis mundi* of any given civic-ceremonial precinct (e.g., Loma de la Coyotera).

24. Ceramic models and related codex depictions of Mexica Aztec and other Mesoamerican temples and monuments provide secondary confirmation of the use of human crania as architectural embellishments. For the Templo Mayor, and the monuments of the Codex Borgia, for instance, the "skull frieze" is typically identified with the upper façade or vault of the temple sanctuary or *sancta sanctorum*, as well as with the lower ramparts and platforms of the main mass of such monuments.
25. In their forensic analysis of those decapitated crania recovered from the *tzompantli* of Tlatelolco, Pijoan, Pastrana, and Maquivar (1989) noted that extant cut marks from said crania indicate that those freshly severed heads impaled on the skull rack in question were flayed. Given the patterns so noted, it is likely that facial "skin masks" were prepared from those heads recovered. See Figure 14.9 for the author's generic reconstruction of the patterns so noted.
26. For a modern analog that entails comparable notions pertaining to soul capture via human heart excision, decapitation, and dismemberment, see Edward Humes' (1991) chilling account, *Buried Secrets: A True Story of Serial Murder, Black Magic, and Drug-Running on the U.S. Border* (New York: Dutton).
27. Sahagún (1988:Vol. 1, 110–111; cf. López Luján 1994:270) makes reference to a bloody ritual in which the Aztec owners of slaves sacrificed atop of the altar stones or *techcatl* of Tenochtitlan danced with the heads of the dead. This ceremony, known as *motzontecomaitotia*, generally entailed clutching the severed head by the hair.
28. For the purpose of preparing illustrations for this chapter, the author cut away or excised the temporal–parietal areas of a cast human skull with both an electric drill and steel knife. The author then replicated a generic pattern of butchering marks found on a cross-section of skulls from the *tzompantli* of Tlatelolco. In this instance, however, the author was unable to acquire a Mexican Indian specimen, and therefore, the skull utilized for the aforementioned purpose was that of an Asian female.
29. The archaeological recovery of the *tzompantli* of Tlatelolco was replete with evidence that many of those human heads impaled on skull racks there were in fact impaled with the first through third cervical vertebrate intact (Pijoan et al. 1989:581). This would thereby serve to corroborate in part the Spanish claim that the heads were severed from living victims or fresh kills given that desiccated crania rarely if ever retain such post cranial elements in their assemblage. Concomitantly, Pijoan et al. (1989:581) report that the recovery of *tempro mandibular* joints or mandibles lends further credence to the idea that the crania constitute fresh kills. It may well be the case that the *tzompantli* of Tlatelolco represents the hasty (Hispanic contact era) skewering of severed heads that were only partially defleshed, or impaled sans the proper flaying and treatments accorded those noted for the skull racks of México-Tenochtitlan. Otherwise, see Ubelaker (1992) for a discussion on hyoid fracture and the evidence for strangulation versus cutting and decapitation in forensic analysis.

30. Whereas carved monuments at a host of Classic Maya sites—ranging from Copan, Honduras, to Bonampak, México, and Tikal, Guatemala—depict severed human heads affixed to ball game belts worn by *Ahau* Lords and Kings, cached offerings recovered archaeologically make clear the traditional interment and deposit of decapitated human heads in ball court floors and attendant features. It is likely that the attachment of a severed human head to the ball game belt worn by dynasts was intended to signal the bearer's respective identification with the Hero Twin of the calabash tree, *Hun Hunahpu* or 1 Hunter, in his guise as culture hero and as the avatar of those regenerative forces identified with rebirth, agricultural fertility, and the conquest of death. In the final analysis, the King's regalia was clearly intended to signify the celestial vault and or Tree of Life, replete with icons denoting *Itzamna* the Sky Serpent, *Kinich Ahau* the Sun, Venus, the *Kawil* Vision Serpent, *Yum Caax* the Maize God (God E), the Earth Lord, and the Calabash Tree replete with impaled human head. As such, the placement of the head of *Hun Hunahpu* on the belt of the *Ahau*, or Great Lord—himself the embodiment of the Maya cosmos, *par excellance*—is as such not surprising.
31. This structured pattern of ongoing maintenance, and or "cleansing," of the *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan is a factor not adequately taken into account in the Ortiz de Montellano (1983) critique and demographic projection of the totality of skulls once skewered on that device.
32. My use of the term *Momoztli* (or shrine/throne) in this context is meant to convey my contention that the Structure B *tzompantli* was intended to constitute the shrine or throne of the *Ixiptla* deity impersonator identified with *Mixcoatl*.
33. In an unpublished manuscript entitled, *War Cult Caches of the Central Highland Oloman*, I first proposed that the recovery from such deposits of "anthropomorphic" daggers or flint knives, bearing shell and coral representations of human eyes and teeth, very likely constituted blades consecrated in the blood of sacrificial victims (Mendoza 1994). In this instance, I would argue that the 40 polychrome daggers recovered from Building B, Level 2, were very likely used to dispatch fresh kills in the consecration of the *tzompantli* or *Momoztli* in question.
34. Sandstrom's (2001) analysis of contemporary Nahua mountain pilgrimage rituals is particularly germane to this discussion as contemporary veneration and offerings devoted to Mount Postectli are remarkably akin to those identified with those devotions had at the sacred Serpent Mountain of México-Tenochtitlan. The erection of altars, replete with rain spirit and solar cult iconography signals the perpetuation of pre-Columbian patterns of religious ceremonialism.
35. I here use the reference to the "Tree of Gourds" as an allusion to the Calabash Tree upon which the head of *Hun Hunahpu* was impaled by the Lords of Darkness referred to in the Quiché Mayan account of the *Popol Vuh*. Similarly, Graulich (1988:403) notes that severed heads were "exhibited on skull racks . . . which undoubtedly represented trees." He goes on to cite examples of such depictions from the *Codex Borgia* and the Ixtapantongo rock paintings where *tzompantli* skull racks are in fact depicted as trees. Moreover, while I acknowledge that the *Popol Vuh* represents the Quiché version of the Mayan cosmos and Underworld realm, a formidable cadre of scholars has since documented the fact that the ball court–centered rituals of the *Popol Vuh* clearly constitutes a pan-Mayan and Gulf Coast lowlands recounting of an ancient cosmogony and account for the creation of the Mesoamerican world (Boone 1984; Carlson and Landis 1985; Coe 1989, 1999; Fox 1991; Freidel and Schele 1988, 1989; Freidel et al. 1993; Gutierrez 1993; Scarborough and Wilcox 1991; Schele and Freidel 1990; Schele and Miller 1986; Taube 1993; Tedlock 1985, 1996; Wilkerson 1991).
36. DiPeso (1974:414) documented the recovery of a severed human head from immediately beneath an unshaped stone embedded in the "paved playing floor" of the ball court at Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, México. Such an *itzompan,* or "spirit hole," as DiPeso refers to it, was identified by the *Tenochca* lord *Tezozómoc* as the "symbolic location of the spot where Huitzilopochtli beheaded his sister, Coyolxauhqui."
37. The *yopico tzompantli* was by contrast used to house the decapitated heads of those ixiptla dispatched during the rites of the *Tlacaxipehualiztli* (Sahagún 1988:vol. 1, 186; cf. López Luján 1994:483). Clearly, therefore, each corollary *tzompantli* armature erected within the civic-ceremonial precinct of México-Tenochtitlan was dedicated to a God or festival cycle specific to the *Tonalpohualli* or

sacred calendar. The *huey tzompantli*, or Great Skull Rack, was by contrast dedicated to those rites specific to *Mixcoatl* and the *Panquetzaliztli* First Fruits festivals of México-Tenochtitlan.

38. According to VanPool (2003:702), "All three ball courts at Paquimé [Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, México] had a center hole in the court covered with a stone. These holes have been interpreted to be an *axis mundi*, which is the symbolic emergence place from the underworld and the passageway between the worlds in Mesoamerican cosmology." She goes on to note that where one of three subfloor sacrificial caches is concerned, "One individual, for example, was buried with her severed right arm draped over her shoulders" (DiPeso 1974:414; cf. VanPool 2003:702).
39. It is my contention that the maize stalk depicted at Cacaxtla, complete with maize ears and tassels in the form of human heads, was meant to conjure the myth of the Tonsured Maize God, and his decapitation and resurrection from the Underworld. It is perhaps not surprising; therefore, that many of the elite burials of Cacaxtla were in fact accompanied by the severed heads of enemy warriors (Mendoza 1994). I similarly contend that those aquatic themes repeated throughout the murals of Cacaxtla were meant to signify its symbolic role as the cleft earth place of emergence of the Tonsured Maize God. Moreover, it is clear to me that the content of the maize murals at Cacaxtla are iconographically equivalent to those of Tonina, particularly given the leafy arbors upon which each of the "severed" heads are impaled, and the corollary presence of turtle, jaguar, and other Underworld themes.
40. Interestingly, as noted by Houston et al. (2006:72), decapitated heads from the Maya region are depicted within the context of leafy arbors, or, as in the case of Bonampak, resting on cushions of leaves. Again, I contend that the leafy cushions or arbors are intended to conjure the symbolism of the Tree of Gourds and its identification with the Tonsured Maize God, *Hun Nal Ye* and or *Hun Hunahpu*. This relationship may be extended to those skull racks intended as living embodiments of the Tree of Gourds.
41. Graulich (1988:403) contends, "Decapitation was a sacrifice on behalf of the earth in order to nourish and fecundate her."
42. Cited from "Waikabubak: Sumba's Wild West," In *Bali Advertiser: Advertising for the Expatriate Community*. PakBill, 2004. http://www.baliadvertiser.biz/articles/explorer/2004/waikabubak.html. Viewed June 14, 2006.
43. Ibid, p. 1.
44. Kay Read (1991:260–300; cf. Townsend 2000: 162) interprets *uemmana* to derive from the terms *uentli* (offering) and *mana* (to spread out). Among the ancient Maya, the term for sacrifice, particularly autosacrifice, is consonant with the idea to "scatter" blood and other offerings. I would contend that the terms are essentially equivalent or congruent in that regard.
45. *Coatepec* or *Coatepetl*, Serpent Hill or Mountain, has been identified with a hill in the region of Tula, Hidalgo, México. Interestingly, the Mexica Aztec are known (from both ethnohistorical and archaeological evidence) to have settled temporarily in or near Tula or Tollan during the course of their epic migrations to the Valley of México. The Mexica Aztec presence in the region of Coatepec in the late twelfth century has been correlated with that period identified with the sacking and burning of the ancient city of Tollan, and thereby the decline and fall of the ancient Toltec capital in question.
46. See Mendoza (1975, 1977) for a discussion of the architectonic and cosmological associations of the *Tlaltecuhtli* Earth Lord portal or reptilian maw in Nahuatl and Matlatzinca sacred architecture.
47. Leonardo López Luján (1994:483–484) acknowledges that figures cited for this singular event by varying sources differ by the tens of thousands. Whereas the *Anales de Cuauhtitlan* (1975:58) report 80,000 sacrificial captives dispatched on that first day of Tlacaxipehualiztli; Torquemada (1969:vol. 2, 168) cites the figure of 60,000; whereas the *Códice Telleriano-Remensis* (1964–1967:pl. 121; see also, Quiñones Keber 1995) reports 20,000 victims (cf. Mendoza 2004:22–23). The *Códice Telleriano-Remensis* is perhaps the most reliable account in this regard; particularly given that epigraphic and numerical content that corresponds to the figure of 20,000 noted in the foregoing narrative.
48. According to López Luján (1994:283), "At the top of the Templo Mayor, Ahuitzotl, assisted by five priests, began to sacrifice the first group of prisoners, who were lined up along the Itztapalapa

highway. In the Cuauhxicalli, Tlacaelel and five helpers took out the hearts of the captives in a line going toward the Tetzcoco landing. Nezahualpilli, lord of Acolhuacan, and five priests . . . were in the Yopico, slaying prisoners lined up along the Calzada de Tepeyacac. Totoquihuatzin, Huey Tlatoani of the Tepanec, and his five assistants . . . were in the Huitznahua Ayauhcaltitlan with a line of humans along the Tlacopan road. Sacrifices were held simultaneously at sixteen other places in the city."

49. Interestingly, Elizabeth Boone (2000:150, 158) notes the identification of human skulls with the south in representations of directionality in the *Lienzo de Tequixtepec*, and place signs denoting southern orientations in the *Selden Roll*. The *Centzon Huitznahua*, or "Four Hundred Southerners," in turn symbolize or constitute stars identified with both the south and the skulls of the *huey tzompantli* of México-Tenochtitlan.
50. The *veintena* calendar consists of eighteen 20-day months specific to the central Mexican agricultural year and festival cycle. Each of the eighteen months entailed the celebration of agricultural festivals, including that pertaining to the *Panquetzaliztli* or Raising of the Banners and First Fruits harvest festival.
51. The spring that fed this water source was purportedly located beneath the Templo Mayor itself (Duran 1971). That this may have been the case reinforces the significance of the site for the placement of the most sacred monument identified with the *Altepetl*, *atl tepetl*, or "water mountain" deities of *Tlaloc* and *Huitzilopochtli* (Carrasco 1999).
52. According to Graulich (1988:395), the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* impersonators were festooned with attributes specific to *Mixcóatl* the Cloud Serpent. These attributes included "black stellar painting called the night" around their eyes, the red color around their mouths, the chalk stripes covering the body, the down balls on the head, the occipital ornament composed of two heron or eagle feathers, the red leather headband."
53. This apocalyptic genesis and First Fruits harvest ceremony was very likely relived throughout the Mexica empire atop monuments dedicated to Huitzilopochtli, solar cults and the transit of the sun, and or the immolation and sacrifice of the *Centzon Huitznahua-ixiptla* Star Warriors of the first world age. See Taube (1993:45), who argues, "Although of central importance to the Aztec, it is unlikely that Huitzilopochtli enjoyed a widespread and enthusiastic following outside the Valley of México. Indeed, representations of him are notably rare in the art of ancient Mesoamerica." By contrast, I disagree with Taube's (1993) assessment that neglects to take into account cult monuments at Malinalco and Calixtlahuaca (México), Teopanzalco (Morelos), and related circum-Basin regions. My studies of the cosmological framework of the monolithic temples at Malinalco (Mendoza 1975, 1977) elucidate the Nahua solar cult affinities of that site with a regional or hybrid Matlatzinca cosmogony of clear Mexica Aztec affinity and origin.
54. See David Carrasco (1999) for an in-depth discussion and analysis of those centripetal and opposed forces that fueled the cosmological dynamics of the Mexica world system. By contrast, Townsend (2000) argues against the idea that such opposed or centripetal forces were of any tangible significance to the core dynamic of the Mexica cosmos.

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Chapter 15

Sorcery and the Taking of Trophy Heads in Ancient Costa Rica

John W. Hoopes

Disembodied human heads are ubiquitous in the Pre-Columbian iconography of Costa Rica and neighboring areas of Panama, where both ethnohistoric and ethnographic accounts make it clear that indigenous peoples practiced the taking of human heads as trophies during and after the Spanish Conquest. Human heads are represented as head-shaped ceramic vessels, sculpted stone heads, trophies in the hands of individuals represented in both pottery and stone, and as decorative motifs on fancy *metates* that were undoubtedly used for the preparation of something other than food.

The existing literature on trophy heads in Costa Rica identifies them as the result of warfare undertaken by warriors. As such, they have been associated with conflicts presumed to have occurred over territory or material resources that generated the necessity of leadership and, by implication, the emergence of complex societies in the form of chiefdoms (Redmond 1994). However, there was another significant dimension to warfare—the magical and the supernatural.

Redmond's detailed analysis of warfare in Central and South America makes little mention of the metaphysical dimensions of violent assaults. Trophy-head taking is often described as incidental, rather than central, to the warfare itself. However there is substantial support for the idea that ancient groups in Costa Rica were actively engaged in headhunting, defined by Hoskins (1996:2) as "an organized, coherent form of violence in which the severed head is given specific meaning and the act of head taking is consecrated and commemorated in some form."

In Amazonia, Shuar (Jívaro) and Achuar warfare was not about seizing territory, but about avenging sorcery (Harner 1972) and increasing personal power

(*arutam*) as discussed by Chacon (see Chapter 18 in this volume). The Chibchan-speaking Cuna of Panama had a similar concept of *niga*, a power that was manifest in acts of bravery (Helms 1979:73–75). Could this also have been the case in Costa Rica?

This question is especially difficult to answer given the poor archaeological contexts for the vast majority of representations of heads and trophy heads. Unfortunately, very few of these objects have been found in controlled archaeological excavations. Their interpretation depends upon arguments constructed from a wide range of sources, including iconography, ethnohistory, and ethnography. These sources suggest that the taking of trophy heads in Costa Rica may have also occurred in the context of sorcery and magical models of illness and disease.

Iconographic evidence suggests that both the perpetrators and the victims of trophy head taking included Bribri *usékars*, "shaman-priests" who are perhaps best interpreted as wizards or sorcerers. These *usékars* were attributed with powers, possessed by them from the time of Creation, to discern and attack causes of evil to communities as a whole. They also had the ability to become attackers through the practice of what is best understood as a form of black magic or assault sorcery (Whitehead and Wright 2004).

Myths and legends suggest their power transcended the ability of mortals, as manifest in heads that could not be easily killed. A magical perspective of trophy heads helps place Pre-Columbian iconography of southern Central America and northern South America in a perspective that signals new directions for future research, including identification of specific agents associated with sorcery and witchcraft in the distant past. Consideration of the mythology of *usékars* provides some insights into the meaning of trophy heads in ancient Costa Rica.

I have argued elsewhere that the archaeology of Costa Rica and Panama must be considered within the context of a broader cultural milieu that has been identified as either the Isthmo-Colombian area (Hoopes and Fonseca 2003) or the Chibchan world (Hoopes 2004, 2005). This, in turn, must be situated within a larger appreciation of the indigenous cultures of the Americas as a whole.

The taking of trophy heads in ancient Costa Rica (Figure 15.1) cannot be readily dismissed as wanton violence and savage behavior in the context of "uncivilized" (i.e., prestate or nonstate) societies. As in other indigenous contexts throughout the New World, trophy taking occurred within a more complex world view that sought to establish effective mechanisms for social control and the maintenance of the health—both physical and spiritual—of indigenous communities. Such mechanisms included sorcery and witchcraft as practices by quasi-supernatural beings such as the *kainamà* of the Patamuna in Venezuela (Whitehead 2002) and the magic workers of Amazonian Ecuador. Although these comparative examples come from northern South America and Amazonia, similar practices can be documented for southern Central America.

It is difficult for archaeologists, who focus on material culture, to grapple with issues of magic, sorcery, witchcraft, and the supernatural—forces whose "reality" can be traced empirically only in the traces of fossilized behavior and belief systems

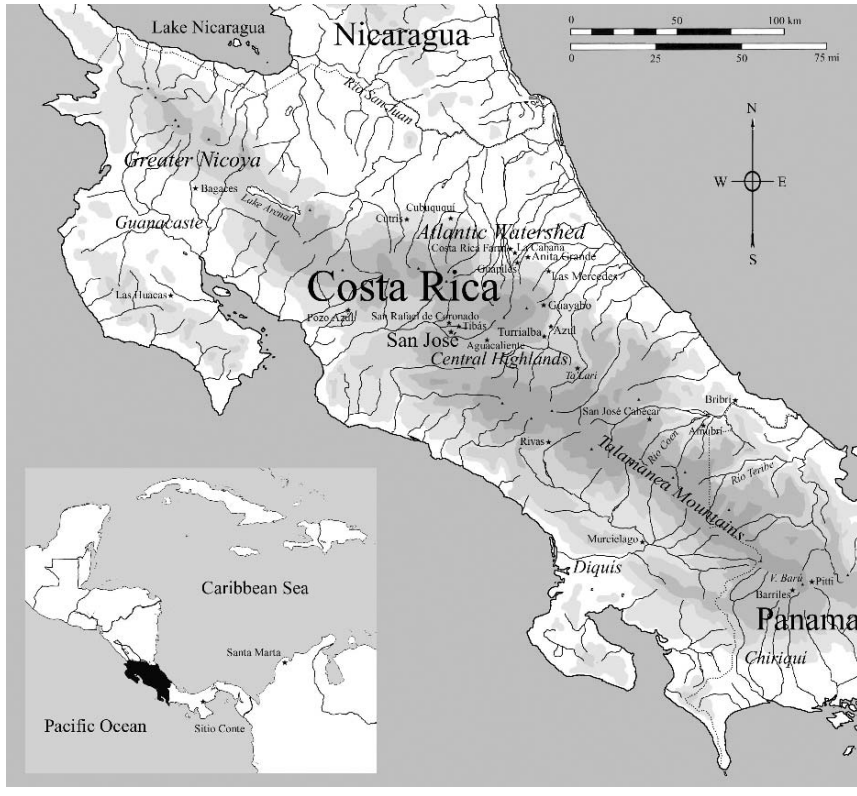

Figure 15.1. Map of Costa Rica indicating sites and locations mentioned in the text. (Drawing by the author.)

as they survive in the material remains of ancient cultures. However, there is little doubt that sorcery and witchcraft were quite real for many, if not most, of the actors who produced the objects we study. Carneiro noted that, "nothing is more firmly rooted in the mind of a Kuikuru than the notion that most of his afflictions are directly due to sorcery, and that a number of persons he comes into contact with every day are witches" (Carneiro 1977:222).

This belief can probably be applied to many indigenous groups of the New World. In Costa Rica, ornaments of jade and gold were undoubtedly considered to be talismans and amulets with supernatural power. Pre-Columbian conceptions of the sources and cures of diseases included notions of metaphysical pollution and ritual purification as well as and the ability of skilled individuals to identify and control invisible sources of illness. Magical models of disease applied to individuals as well as to communities as a whole and the world in general, and specific practitioners had the ability to cure or cause illnesses at many different scales.

Traditional Bribri thought rejects the notion that diseases have biomedical causes, attributing them instead to behavioral or supernatural causes (Cervantes 2003:182). The sources of disease included the practice of sorcery (the evil use

of spells, magical objects, and poisons) and witchcraft (the evil projection of ill will originating in personal power), actions that are not easily separated from each other in ethnographic accounts. The taking of trophy heads in ancient Costa Rica appears to have occurred within the context of the magical control and cure of illness by individuals credited with great metaphysical power.

ETHNOHISTORIC REFERENCES

Trophy-head taking was widespread in Costa Rica and neighboring regions during the Conquest and early Colonial period. The Spanish emphasized it as a practice associated with warfare, the context in which they themselves often encountered the Indians. It was practiced over a wide area and is featured prominently in ethnohistoric accounts.

Fray Francisco de Bobadilla, a missionary who traveled to Nicaragua in 1528 at the behest of Pedrarias Dávila to follow up on claims of mass conversion by Gil González Dávila, reports on cannibalism as practiced by the chiefs of the Nicarao of southwestern Nicaragua. In the midst of what is often considered an exaggerated, graphic account of eating human flesh, he explains that, "The head is neither cooked, nor roasted, nor eaten; but is placed on poles in front of the oratories and temples" (Oviedo, lib. XLII, cap. III in Lothrop 1926:35).[1]

In a letter written to King Phillip II in July 1563, describing the community of Coctu that he was battling against on the Pacific side of southern Costa Rica, Vázquez de Coronado noted that the Indians fought with each other over gold, and in so doing took women and children captive for slavery and sacrifice and cut off men's heads for trophies (Fernández 1908:50).[2] The Spanish emphasized head taking and display on a massive scale, especially in Panama. One account of a battle between the caciques Escoria and París near the Pacific coast in central Panama claims, "we saw and found where the battle was a large road paved with all of the heads of the dead, and at the end of it a tower of heads so big that a person mounted on horseback would not be seen over it"[3]

The practice extended to both sides of the isthmus. Diego Méndez reports having seen near the house of the chief (*quibian*) of Veragua "three hundred heads of dead men who had died in a battle" during a visit to the Caribbean coast of Panama in 1502 or 1503.[4] In large-scale warfare, heads were treated differently than in small-scale warfare or individual attacks. An account suggests that the heads or skulls taken by an individual were kept until his death, at which time they were placed in his tomb.[5] Understanding the scale and context of warfare is therefore critical for interpreting the role of trophies.

Redmond distinguishes the warfare of tribes, characterized by individual blood revenge and the desire to accumulate power and respect, from that of chiefdoms, dominated by the acquisitive desires of chiefs, noting that, "The purpose of chiefly warfare is expansionist; the seizing of land, resources, and captives takes precedence over avenging dead kinsmen" (Redmond 1994:51). The former may more closely match warfare waged for supernatural, rather than material goals,

but it is difficult to imagine that chiefs did not also have metaphysical agenda that may have superseded materialistic ones. Wars waged in response to supernatural attacks may have been distinct from wars of conquest. Can this distinction be recognized in iconography?

TROPHY HEADS IN ARTWORK

Disembodied human heads and depictions of individuals holding them have long been recognized as a prominent motif in the Pre-Columbian artwork of Costa Rica. Representations of heads appear in ceramic vessels, jade ornaments, stone "mace heads," stone sculpture, and gold that were manufactured over a period of almost 2000 years prior to the arrival of Europeans. Early studies include general mention by Hartman (1901) and Lothrop (1926) as well as more detailed treatments by Lines (1941), Mason (1945), and Aguilar (1952). However, little research that has concentrated specifically on effigy heads since an M.A. thesis by art historian Dana Leibsohn (1985; 1988).[6] Lange (in Leibsohn 1985) estimates that over 500 examples of effigy heads are known from Costa Rica, of which 250 were studied by Leibsohn.

Ceramic Effigy Heads

Ceramic effigy heads (Figure 15.2a–f) are known in ceramic styles that have been associated with the first centuries BC and continued to be produced in various forms until just prior to the Spanish Conquest (Leibsohn 1985, 1988). The most realistic examples are known from the Greater Nicoya subregion of northwestern Costa Rica and southwestern Nicaragua, where examples have been classified as belonging to the ceramic types Guinea Incised (AD 300–600) and both Carillo and Galo Polychrome (AD 500–800) that are well documented from a large number of sites.

Heads with painted designs recall the display of heads still decorated with war paint cited by Redmond for the Cauca Valley of Colombia (Redmond 1994:31). One full-figure ceramic effigy of an individual holding a trophy head, executed in the resist-painted Usulután variety of the ceramic type Guinea Incised (Lange 1988:Pl. 14) (Figure 15.2g), anticipates the style of what are thought to be later stone sculptures from the Central Highlands region. Unfortunately, this and the majority of complete effigy heads are known from looted, unprovenanced contexts. They can be interpreted, however, in the context of established ceramic chronologies (Leibsohn 1985, 1988).

Ceramic effigy heads appear to have been first produced around AD 300–600, a time corresponding to the "routinization" of religious practices and the formation of priesthoods, as well as the emergence of social complexity in western Panama and central Costa Rica (Hoopes 2005). However, the most naturalistic forms pertain to the period between about AD 500 and AD 800, contemporaneous

Figure 15.2. Ceramic effigy head vessels and jade pendant. (a) Tola Trichrome effigy head vessel, Guanacaste, AD 200–500 (Snarskis 1982:34); (b) bichrome effigy head, Guanacaste, AD 500–800 (Lange 1988:Pl. 13); (c) Carrillo Polychrome effigy head, Guanacaste, AD 500–800 (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 82); (d) Carrillo Polychrome effigy head, Guanacaste, AD 500–800 (Cavatrunci et al. 1992:Cat. 185); (e) large pottery head, provenience unknown (Lothrop 1926:Figure 261a); (f) large pottery head, provenience unknown (Lothrop 1926:Figure 261b); (g) Guinea Incised: Usulután variety resist-painted human effigy vessel of individual holding a trophy head, Guanacaste (Lange 1988:Pl. 14); (h) jade pendant with trophy heads in either hand, "reportedly from Hakiuv, Talamanca region" (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 177).

with elaborate "flying-panel" *metates* described below. Their production in Greater Nicoya diminished after AD 800, during a period when the region experienced an influx of Oto-Manguean speakers from Mexico followed by a wave of Nicarao speakers after about AD 1000 (Constenla 1994; Fowler 1989), although images of trophy takers increased after this time in the Atlantic Watershed region. Later representations in Greater Nicoya are more abstract. This suggests Mesoamerican immigrants may have had a different orientation to trophy head taking than groups (probably speakers of Chibchan languages) who were native to southern Central America.

Jade and Greenstone Representations

Effigy heads tend to be rare in jade or greenstone, materials whose peak popularity dated to about AD 300–600. A string-carved jade pendant from the Atlantic Watershed region (Snarskis 1998:Pl. 65) depicts a long-beaked bird perching on the back of a stylized human that may represent a corpse. Another jade pendant of a bird (Ibid:Pl. 66) depicts it perching on a human head, about which Snarskis notes: "A severed human head such as that under the bird . . . may well have been seen as a graphic and ritual synonym for seed" (Ibid:Pl. 80).

A figure in jadeite reportedly from Hakiuv, in the Talamanca region (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 177; Stone 1977:Fig. 233) (Figure 15.2h) depicts a standing figure with small heads where its hands should be. This pendant is unusual both for its shape and its location since few jade items have been reported from the Talamanca region. There are a number of "mace heads," small, three-dimensional artifacts of polished stone that have large vertical holes drilled through their vertical axis, that represent human heads (Snarskis 1981:Cats. 43–46). Mace heads with figural decorations have been interpreted as emblems of rank for social display rather than actual weapons (De la Cruz 1981, 1988). It is possible that actual heads mounted on clubs or poles may have inspired human effigy head forms.

Stone Sculpture

The most compelling evidence for actual trophy heads are stone effigy heads (Figure 15.3) and stone statues portraying individuals holding or wearing severed heads (Figures 15.4–15.6). The largest collections of these are at the American Museum of Natural History in New York and National Museum and the Fidel Tristan Ch. Jade Museum in Costa Rica. Most stone statuary with this theme comes from the central highlands and the Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica (Figure 15.4), but examples are also known from is the Diquís Delta region of the southern Pacific zone (Figure 15.5). Many of these statues form part of the Minor C. Keith collection at the American Museum of Natural History, where they were studied in detail by J. Alden Mason (1945). Almost all of them the statues are carved from vesicular andesite, a volcanic stone abundant in the area. Unfortunately, most come from disturbed or looted contexts and contexts of the figures with trophy heads

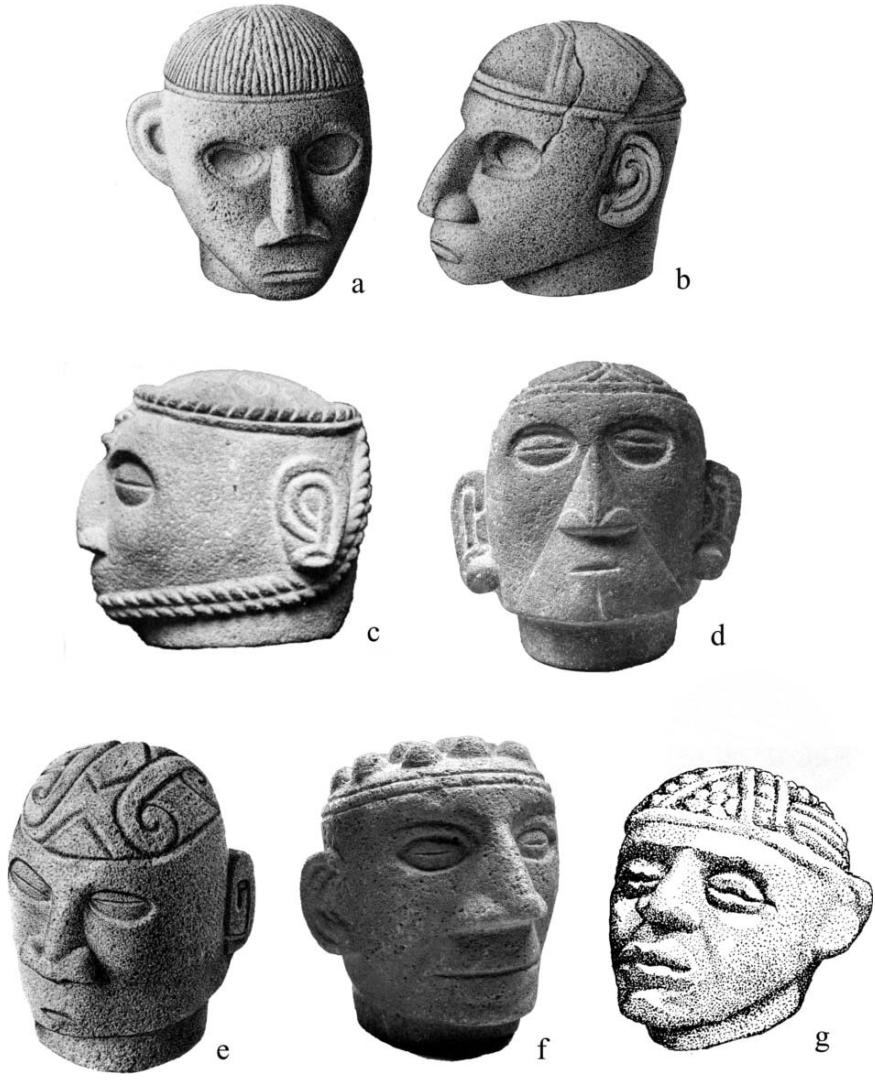

Figure 15.3. Stone effigy heads from the Atlantic Watershed region, AD 1000–1550: (a) stone effigy head, Las Mercedes (Mason 1945:Pl. 46D); (b) stone effigy head, Las Mercedes (Mason 1945:Pl. 46E); (c) stone sculpture of trophy head bound with rope for carrying (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 212); (d) stone effigy head (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 215); (e) stone effigy head, Las Mercedes (Mason 1945:Plate 45F); (f) stone effigy head (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 216); (g) stone effigy head, Atlantic Watershed (Lines 1941:Fig. 2).

cannot be distinguished from those of other statues. Many of these come from Las Mercedes, a site visited by C. V. Hartman in the late nineteenth century.

Hartman (1901) recorded what he interpreted as stone carvers' workshops and also fragments of statuary *in situ*. These included the broken portion of the

Figure 15.4. Stone statues of men with trophy heads, Atlantic Watershed region, AD 1000–1550: (a) man with trophy head and axe (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 205); (b) man carrying severed head (Stone 1977:Fig. 239b); (c) man carrying severed head, Las Mercedes, Atlantic Watershed, AD 1000–1550 (Mason 1945:Pl. 40A); (d) man carrying severed head, Las Mercedes, Atlantic Watershed, AD 1000–1550 (Mason 1945:Pl. 40C); (e) man carrying severed head, Atlantic Watershed, AD 1000–1550 (Stone 1977:Fig. 239d); (f) man with severed head on back, Las Mercedes, Atlantic Watershed, AD 1000–1550 (Mason 1945:Pl. 40B).

Figure 15.5. Stone statues of men in conical hats with trophy heads: (a) standing figure with trophy head and raised axe, reportedly from Azúl de Turrialba, Atlantic Watershed, AD 700–1000 (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 193); (b) man with trophy head carried on shoulders of another individual, Barriles, Chiriquí Province, Panama, AD 400–600 (Stone 1972:102).

Figure 15.6. Stone statues of anthropomorphic beings with trophy heads, Diquís Delta region, AD 400-1000: (a) fanged figure with inverted trophy head (peg-base statue) (Mason 1945:Pl. 54C); (b) fanged figure with inverted trophy head (peg-base statue) (Lothrop 1963:Pl. XIIb); (c) fanged figure with inverted trophy head (peg-base statue) (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 245); (d) front and back views of man with trophy heads on chest and back (Lothrop 1963:Pl. XIIa and a'). Images (b) and (d) reprinted courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University.

leg of one statue in a socket created by "oblong stones, each about 1 m long, set in a narrow square and very firmly fixed" near the top of a mound of earth faced with cobbles. The broken statue was at the base of the mound. A companion socket suggests the statues were mounted as a pair (Hartman 1901:9), flanking the mound's central staircase.

At Costa Rica Farm, a foreman clearing forest from a large, rectangular enclosure identified "four large (possibly life-size) statues or idols of grotesque human form stationed one on each side of each doorway" (Skinner 1926:462–463). This enclosure, oriented east–west on its long axis, had a paved roadway or *calzada* running one-eighth of a mile to other small enclosures.

At Anita Grande, Skinner reported a female statue as an offering in a large grave covered with large, flat *lajas* near the top of the west side of a south-facing ramp on a large circular mound. However, the sites of Las Mercedes, Costa Rica Farm, and Anita Grande, all heavily looted prior to Hartman and Skinner's investigations, have been largely destroyed and little remains of their impressive cobble architecture. Some recently excavated examples of stone statues from an undisturbed context are a group of three naked human figures, a male flanked by two females that were found *in situ* beside the wall of a stone cist tomb near the base of Mound 1 at Guayabo. One of the female figures held a trophy head, while the male figure, with a feline face on the back of his head, held his genitals (Troyo and Garnier 2002:93–94). In addition to standing human figures, there are representations of anthropomorphic crocodiles or jaguars holding trophy heads. This special category will be discussed further below.

Snarksis (1978, 1984) dates the principal occupation of all of these sites to the La Cabaña Period (AD 1000–1550) on the basis of ceramic comparisons and radiocarbon dates from several other sites, including La Cabaña, a site that also has circular mounds and a large, cobble-paved *calzada* or roadway. These sites are now recognized to have been part of a pattern of regional centers with monumental circular house mounds, high-status cemeteries, and monumental sculpture.

The best known of these is Guayabo de Turrialba, in the Reventazón Valley of the central highlands, but other contemporaneous sites with large architecture include Cubujuquí (Gutiérrez and Sierra 1988) and Cutrís (Guerrero et al. 1988) in northern Costa Rica, Pozo Azúl (Corrales and Quintanilla 1996) and Jesús María (Solís 1992) in the central Pacific region, and Murcielago (Drolet 1984, 1986; Drolet and Siles 1988) and Rivas (Quilter 2004; Quilter and Vargas 1995) in the southern Pacific region. The stone sculpture is therefore much later than the realistic heads from Greater Nicoya.

Standing stone figures holding weapons, especially axes, together with trophy heads (Figure 15.4a,b and Figure 15.5a) are most commonly identified as warriors. They often wear a broad, textured belt or girdle around their midsections that may represent a type of armor made from fiber, beadwork, or shells. They are usually naked from the waist down and are usually identifiably male. The heads

held by these figures are usually much smaller than the heads of the figures themselves. This may be an indication of head shrinking, but it cannot be considered definitive.

Another important group of related statues comes from the Volcán Barú region of Chiriquí, Province, in western Panama (Cooke et al. 2003; Hoopes 1996; Stirling 1950; Vidal 1971, 1993)—a region with close cultural ties to the Diquís (Figure 15.5b). These impressive statues, carved with peg bases so that they can be set in the ground, are among the largest ever carved in southern Central America. They represent individuals wearing conical hats carried on the shoulders of naked men. At least one of these figures holds in its hands two trophy heads (Stone 1972:102) (Figure 15.6b). The most prominent element of the costume of these figures is a conical hat similar to those depicted on examples from Costa Rica. This provides a hint at their identity that will be discussed below. The monumental statues at Barriles were associated with monumental *metates* decorated with heads (see below) and with ritual space. Although the section of Barriles with statues that was investigated by Stirling has been destroyed, it once included a raised area created with massive boulders, rectangular floors made of stone slabs, and a row of stone statues. These suggest a space used for the enactment of rituals by individuals who took and displayed trophy heads.

Statues in a distinctly different style are known from the Diquís region of the southern Pacific area (Lothrop 1963; Quintanilla and Fernández 2003), also known as the western portion of the Greater Chiriquí subarea (Haberland 1984). Peg-base statues portray fanged, anthropomorphic beings clutching inverted trophy heads in their hands (Figure 15.6a–c). There are also representations of individuals wearing heads suspended on cords across their chests and backs (Figure 15.6d). These statues may be somewhat earlier than the examples from the Atlantic Watershed, but their specific chronology remains unclear.

Flying Panel *Metates*

A special class of sculpture known as "flying panel *metates*," arguably the most elaborate examples of stone carving produced in Costa Rica, have also been associated with the taking of trophy heads (Figure 15.7a–c). These objects are tables, seats, or thrones that bear what appear to be ritual or mythological scenes sculpted in the round. Only a few examples have explicit representations of severed heads. However, most have rims decorated with a motif derived from stylized heads and these objects as a group are associated with trophy head taking.

One of the best-known examples is a *metate* reportedly found near Guápiles, in the Caribbean lowlands of eastern Costa Rica (Figure 15.7a). On each of the three legs of this *metate* a toucan pecks at a disembodied human head that is shown wearing either stiffened hair or a hat. The *metate* depicts an anthropomorphic being, either a deity or a person in a mask, with a long, crocodilian face and two jaguar-like ears standing on the top of an outstretched feline. The figure has both arms upraised, with squared shoulders and U-shaped elbows: a *mudra* or ritual

Figure 15.7. Flying panel *metates* and statues of anthropomorphic beings with trophy heads: (a) *metate* with large-beaked birds pecking at severed heads, La Unión de Guápiles, Atlantic Watershed, AD 400–700 (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 146); (b) *metate* with trophy head decoration on rim, reportedly from Azúl de Turrialba, Atlantic Watershed, AD 400–700 (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 145); (c) *metate* with jaguars holding trophy heads, San Rafael de Coronado, Atlantic Watershed, AD 400–700 (Cavatrunci et al. 1992:247); (d) male anthropomorphic being with trophy head, Las Mercedes, Atlantic Watershed, AD 1000–1550 (Mason 1945:Pl. 35B); (e) male anthropomorphic being with trophy head, Atlantic Watershed, AD 1000–1500 (Aguilar 1952:Fig. 9).

posture depicted in a wide variety of media from Costa Rica and Panama (Hoopes and Fonseca 2003:Fig. 7). In each hand, the figure holds circular disks that may be gold disks with repoussé decoration similar to examples known from the southern Isthmus and northern Colombia.[7]

Another example, reportedly from Azúl de Turrialba (Figure 15.7b), depicts a central figure in a bird mask standing upon two prone humans that Snarskis identifies as sacrificial victims. The small heads that decorate the rim are exceptionally clear. A third flying panel *metate*, reportedly from San Rafael de Coronado (Figure 15.7c), features jaguars (on the lower parts of the legs) that hold trophy heads in their paws.

As a class of sculpture, the flying panel *metates* depict mythological scenes that are probably associated with myths of Creation (Graham 1992). Featured prominently in these scenes is an anthropomorphic figure with the face of a ferocious jaguar or crocodiles—a being also represented individually with a trophy head in hand on statues from the Atlantic Watershed region (Figure 15.7d,e). *Metates* of a related style, but without the figural panel, were also excavated from an apparently high-status burial at Tibás (Guerrero 1998:31–33; Snarskis 1979:93–94; 1992). Most of the *metates* appear to date to a period ca. AD 400–700, contemporaneous with the appearance in Guanacaste of pottery heads of Guinea Incised and the Carillo and Galo Polychrome types. They also date to a period of widespread social change (Hoopes 2005). It is not known whether some of the standing figures also date to this time.

Small trophy heads similar to those that decorate flying panel metates are a prominent motif on elaborate *metates* from central Costa Rica and western Panama (Figure 15.8). One of the best-known examples is a massive *metate* excavated by Stirling from a shaft tomb at Barriles in Chiriquí Province, Panama (Linares and Sheets 1980:Fig. 4.0-3a; Linares et al. 1975:Figs. 5 and 6a; Stirling 1950; Stone 1972:109) (Figure 15.8a). It has four supports in the form of human figures with upraised arms that appear to be holding trophy heads. About 40 small heads form a continuous band around the rim. A similar object had both male and female figures on the supports, each of which was portrayed holding a small trophy head in each hand (Figure 15.8c). Stone tripod legs from the site also depict individuals with raised arms carrying axes (Linares et al. 1975:Fig. 7). Their special status is indicated by small figurines around their necks that may represent gold ornaments (Cooke et al. 2003). The designs on the supports of the Barriles *metates* recall standing figures portrayed on Quimbaya gold helmets (Lothrop 1937:Figs. 109 and 111), while the shapes of the helmets are similar to headgear worn by individuals who carry trophy heads.

In central Costa Rica, all three examples from the Principal Tomb at Tibás are also decorated with motifs that suggest human heads (Guerrero 1998:31–33). For example, a small head on the rim of the central, circular *metate* (Figure 15.8f) may be a visual clue that the other protuberances along the circumference of the rim are also to be interpreted as heads. These help us to recognize more abstract trophy head rim motifs on other artifacts.

Figure 15.8. Ceremonial metates with trophy head decorations: (a) monumental *metate* from shaft grave, Barriles, Panama, AD 400–600 (Stone 1972:109); (b) monumental *metate*, Atlantic Watershed, Costa Rica, AD 500–800 (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 233) ; (c) stone *metate* supports from Barriles, Panama, AD 400–600 (Linares et al. 1975:Fig. 5C); (d) four-legged *metate*, Chiriquí Province, Panama (Cavatrunci et al. 1992:Cat. 261); (e) four-legged *metate*, southern Costa Rica (Chaves and Fontana 1993:54); (f) circular *metate* from high-status burial, Tibás, Central Highlands, Costa Rica AD 300–600 (Guerrero 1993:Fig. 15); (g) circular pedestal-based *metate*, Atlantic Watershed, Costa Rica, AD 100–1550 (Mason 1945:Pl. 27a); (h) butterfly chimera *metate*, Costa Rica, AD 400–700, from Doris Stone, *Pre-Columbian Man in Costa Rica*. Peabody Museum Press. Copyright 1977 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College (Stone 1977:Fig. 236a); (i) jaguar effigy *metate*, southern Costa Rica, AD 1000–1550 (Mason 1945:Pl. 21E)

For what were these *metates* used? Rituals associated with the preparation or display of trophy heads are suggested by the decorations along the *metate* rims. Their polished upper surfaces suggest they were in fact used as grinding tables, but it has also been suggested that they were thrones. At Sitio Conte in Panama, many of the cadavers in the large graves had been placed on large, poorly finished flat stones with evidence of exposure to high temperatures that Lothrop (1937:49) interpreted as surfaces upon which the corpses had been desiccated based on ethnohistoric accounts of the desiccation of bodies of Panamanian chiefs (cf. Redmond 1994:48–49).

One can speculate that *metates* decorated with heads may have been used for the preparation of trophy heads through slow drying over a fire, but this remains unsubstantiated. The large, human-sized slabs from Las Mercedes, Anita Grande, and Guayabo de Turrialba described by Mason (1945:248–256) may have been used for a similar purpose for whole bodies. Following Zerries (1960), Sullivan (1988:519–521) notes that there was a widespread practice in Venezuela and the Amazon basin of pulverizing bones of deceased relatives into a powder that was added to fermented beverages consumed on special occasions. The Yanomamo, for example, added powdered bone from deceased relatives to *chichas* that were drunk prior to a revenge raid for the purpose of increasing their personal power. The decorations of small heads that appear on *metates* may signal the use of these implements as bone-grinders for making magical potions in the form of maize or pejibaye *chichas*.[8]

Representations in Gold

In general, disembodied heads and body parts are not prominent in the iconography of Pre-Columbian goldwork in either Costa Rica or Panama. One notable exception is a pendant from Grave 5 at Sitio Conte (Figure 15.9a). It represents "twin" figures in conical caps standing side by side. They hold war clubs from which are suspended inverted trophy heads. A third head hangs suspended between them. The form of suspension of these fleshed heads may be by a rope that runs through the *foramen magnum* and a hole on top of the cranium, permitting them to be suspended upside-down.

According to Lothrop, "The subject portrayed by this specimen evidently is the return of the victorious warriors, who carry as a trophy the heads of their slain enemies" (Lothrop 1937:166). However, he also remarks, "This pendant must, we believe, be a foreign importation, for it is without parallel among the objects found at the Sitio Conte," and he cites similarities to a pendant from Chiriquí province (Lothrop 1937:Fig. 9j). Bray notes the presence of similar figures from a collection known as the Parita Assemblage from the Azuero Peninsula, and remarks, "The Parita warrior figures have their counterparts farther west, in Veraguas, Chiriquí, and Diquís, with outliers as far away as eastern Panama and even Honduras" (Bray 1992:45, Fig. 3.11). In most cases, their chronology and contexts are poorly known and the majority do not carry trophy heads. However, the conical hats and

Figure 15.9. Associations of conical hats with trophy heads and power: (a) *tumbaga* pendant of two individuals with three trophy heads, from Samuel Kirkland Lothrop, *Coclé: An Archaeological Study of Central Panama*, Part 1 (1937). Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. 7. Reprinted courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (Lothrop 1937:Fig. 150); (b) statue of man with trophy head, reportedly from Azúl de Turrialba, Atlantic Watershed, Costa Rica, AD 700–1000 (Deletaille and Deletaille 1992:Fig. 246); (c) statue of man riding piggyback with two trophy heads, Barriles, Panama (Stone 1972:102) ; (d) Bugaba Engraved bowl (bottom view) with decorations of figure with conical cap and associated heads (Linares et al. 1975:Fig. 7C); (e) hammered gold crest, Sitio Conte, Panama, AD 750–900 (Lothrop 1937:Fig. 150); (f) (Mason 1945:Pl. 45D) ; (g) (Lothrop 1926:Pl. 188c); (h) Máma Ignacio Auigui (Kogi), Mamarongo, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia, 1947; one of the most powerful men in the region (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1991:105).

trophy heads on the pendant from Sitio Conte suggests a theme shared with the stone statuary from eastern Costa Rica and western Panama.

WHO WERE THE HEAD TAKERS?

The interpretation of trophy heads in the art of ancient Costa Rica must take ethnographic and ethnohistorical accounts as a point of departure. These include a broad perspective on the behavior and belief systems of indigenous peoples of tropical America. Past interpretations of trophy head taking in Costa Rica has emphasized the role of the warrior, who sought to increase personal prestige and magical power through the collection and display of trophy heads (Aguilar 1965:64–65).

Richard Chacon points out (in Chapter 18 in this volume), that heads were often taken in eastern Ecuador as a response to witchcraft and sorcery. When shamans responsible for identifying the sources of disease pinpointed other shamans as responsible parties, the shamans themselves organized war parties for the purpose of eliminating the source of malicious magic. These types of raids are ones that would be classified by Redmond (1994) as "tribal" warfare, but may have also occurred in the context of centralized chiefdoms (and even states). While this may be interpreted as warfare, it was also considered to be justifiable homicide undertaken in defense against black magic. The shamans who sought to decapitate their enemies were not necessarily aggressive individuals, or even full-time warriors. Rather, they were individuals who practiced head taking as a necessary community service in the context of a broader practice of healing and sorcery. As such, they became not only the organizers of head-taking raids, but also the targets.

THE WAR OF THE BRIBRIS AND TERIBES

Several stories from the Talamanca region of the eastern Caribbean region of Costa Rica, all of which may pertain to the same quasi-historical event, may throw light on the cultural context of trophy head taking.

In 1875, William Gabb published an account of what may have been the last recorded instance of ritual trophy-head taking in the region. It occurred during a "bitter war" between the Bribris and the Teribes. Gabb reported that, at the time of his writing, "The youngest members of the war parties are now mostly dead, and the few remaining survivors are very old men. The last of the warriors proper, mature men at that time, died about 1860, at an extremely advanced age." The conflict has been dated to 1824 by Claudio Barrantes (Bozzoli, personal communication 2004). Gabb notes:

> The Bri-bri story is that some people, a whole family, living on the extreme eastern portion of the Uren district, were found murdered, and no clue discovered to the perpetrators of the act. Not very long afterwards other murders

> occurred in an equally mysterious manner, which threw the whole country into a state of excitement. Afterwards a small party was attacked by some unknown Indians, a portion killed and some left to tell the tale. The tracks of the strangers were followed through the woods, always keeping to the east, until they were lost, Following this clue, the chief of the Bri-bris sent out a party of armed scouts, who climbed to the summit of the dividing ridge, overlooking the Tilorio. From here they discovered for the first time that they had neighbors; seeing their houses and cornfields in the distance. A large war party was fitted out; they passed the mountains, and without warning descended on the unsuspecting enemy, killing large numbers. After this a desultory warfare was kept up; each party striving to take the other unawares, and to capture as many heads as possible. This went on until the Tiribi, reduced to a handful, sued for peace arid submitted as a conquered people to the Bri-bris. Since then, the chief of the Bri-bris has always retained the right of final choice of chief of the Tiribis, after nomination of the candidate by his own people. Beyond this, no actual control has ever been exercised. The Tiribi story does not differ from the above, except in the origin; It throws the blame of the first aggression on the Bri-bris. In some respects the Tiribis are superior to the Bri-bris. The children are more respectful to their parents; the women are more modest in dress and behavior, and the men are more industrious. This is their boast, and while they look down on the Bri-bris, the latter despise them as a conquered people (Gabb 1875:488–489).

Both the Bribris and the Teribes preserved the story of this conflict. Although Gabb records the original cause of the conflict as the "murder" of a family, the details of how it was perpetrated remain unknown. From an indigenous perspective, it is important to acknowledge that disease was often attributed to the actions of shamanic maleficence or witchcraft. If the "murder" of a family were the result of an infectious disease, its epidemic spread would be interpreted from an emic perspective as other "equally mysterious" murders in the context of beliefs that all illnesses are intentional. The nature of the conflict suggests revenge warfare. Circumstantial evidence suggests the involvement of shamans or sorcerers as both the perpetrators and the objects of trophy head taking. The Bribris identified the Teribes of far eastern Costa Rica and western Panama as the more ferocious headhunters,[9] saying they used severed heads to carry water. Pre-Columbian sculpture from both the Caribbean watershed and southwestern Panama indicate that the Indians from Costa Rican were also taking heads and occasionally displaying them suspended upside-down, as if to carry water (Figure 15.5b,e and Figure 15.9e).

The oral history of the early nineteenth century war between the Bribris and Teribes survives to the present, with versions collected in various communities in the 1980s. Several different accounts of the conflict exist, but all appear to refer to the same series of incidents. These stories, especially references to a trophy head that would not die, provide valuable hints about the possible identities and motivations of trophy head takers and their victims. There are references the stories of the Bribri-Teribe war to both aggressors and victims as *sukias* or *usêkars*, a Bribri term for a special class of individuals—the last of whom lived in the 1930s—to

whom were attributed great power, both political and magical. According to one account, the conflict began when the Teribes threatened to kill the Bribris and carry off their heads. The Bribris countered with the same threat (Bozzoli de Wille 1983b:7). These stories suggest that, like the shamans of eastern Ecuador, *sukias* or *usékars* carried out homicide in the context of performing a social service for the community. When it was executed with insufficient magical preparation, the decapitation of a sorcerer could prove disastrous.

In one version of the story (Bozzoli 1983b:8), five or six Bribri men described as *sukias* (a general term for shamans or priests, etymologically related to *usékar* and *tsugur*)[10] became angry as a result of Teribe attacks on the Bribris and organized a group of 100 men for a counterattack against the Teribes. These latter were led by a "general" who was also a *sukia*. He decided, in turn, to launch an attack through an area on the Coen River where the *usékars*—"very bad and powerful Indians"—lived. They found an old man, described as "a great *sukia usekLa*" in a tree, where he was knocking down fruits with his blowgun.[11] They cut off his head, which continued to exert magical power. When they tried to bury the head, a huge swarm of wasps emerged to attack them, killing several men. They put the *sukia's* head in a patio, where each morning the head was found looking back towards where it came from. A small black creature like a rat emerged from the base of the skull but began to grow, eating chickens and pigs and eventually growing to the size of a jaguar and then a bull. The transformed head eventually became cannibalistic before it was trapped in a cave.

In other versions of the story, a war party of Teribes encounters an old man of the Bribri hunting birds with his blowgun on the branch of a large tree, while a young girl (either a niece or a granddaughter) catches the birds below. He is killed instantly and his head is cut off. However, this is no ordinary old man, but the "Rey de Usegra" (Bozzoli 1983a:7). His severed head bites the Teribes when they attempt to carry it. Ultimately, the head turns into a ferocious jaguar that eats all of the Teribes. Another version of this story is presented in the Appendix. The story is one of a transcendent power that persists after decapitation, permitting the *usékar* to protect a community and gain revenge even in death as an enchanted trophy head.

A related Bribri story recorded by Gagini (1921), associating were-jaguars with monumental architecture and gold *aguilas*, may be an allusion to an encounter with dangerous *usékars* at an archaeological site. A group of men hunting a tapir come across a road (perhaps a paved *calzada* like those found at Guayabo, La Cabaña, and other sites) that leads to a beautiful building made of stone, from which emerge strange men who offered to exchange gold ornaments for cacao. When one of the ornaments is accidentally dropped in the exchange, the mysterious men tell the hunters to go home to their village and wait. A week later, the strange men arrive and are identified as a group of jaguars who took human form, suggesting the Teribe attackers were may have been were-jaguar sorcerers. This party of jaguars-as-men first encounters a man in a tree hunting birds with his blowgun, linking it to stories of the Bribri–Teribe war (perhaps as part of a once-continuous

narrative). One of the jaguars-as-men is said to have taken a human wife "and have numerous descendants," which may be an allusion to a specific lineage of Bribri *usékars*.

This encounter with jaguars-as-men recalls a sixteenth-century incident recorded by Sir Walter Ralegh in Guyana in which what was described as a group of jaguars may have been were-jaguars or *kainamà* sorcerers (Whitehead 2002:46). References to jaguars as transformed shamans are common in the mythology of Amazonia (Whitehead and Wright 2004).

Wright, for example, cites a Baniwa story (collected by Luiza Garnelo) that recounts how the Guahibo acquired *ipithátem*, a powerful method of magical revenge killing. There was a shaman who, in ancient times, obtained *malikhai* (shamanic powers). He lost control of himself, turning into an enormous, homicidal black jaguar that murdered even his own family. The shaman told others to destroy him by cremating his body. Instead, they cut off his head and threw it into the river. "The head floated downriver still with its brains and the knowledge of how to cause all sicknesses and also how to cure them . . . . The Guahibo shamans called Dzauinaikada got the head, took out the brains, and got all the shamanic powers in them, thus learning all sorts of evil things . . . . After they had learned al these things, they began to transform into jaguars, forest-spirits, and other animals; they threw sickness-giving spirit darts onto people and ate people." Some were permanently transformed, and ancient Guahibo jaguar-shamans still prowl Baniwa territory (Wright 2004:ff. 16).

The Desana *yee* (jaguar-shaman) also transforms himself into a jaguar to accomplish magical goals. "The yee is described as being able to see the illness inside the patient's body and to divine the causes of the evil, a capacity associated in Desana thought with the inhalation of hallucinogenic snuff" (Buchillet 2004).[12] The use of hallucinogens to accomplish jaguar transformation by shamans in Colombia has been well documented by Reichel-Dolmatoff (1975). The design of Pre-Columbian snuffing tubes from Costa Rica (Stone 1977:Fig. 212) resembles bird-bone examples from Colombia.

The presence of jaguar shamans in the ancient art of the Olmecs of Mexico (Coe 1995) and the Cupisnique and Chavín cultures of Peru (Burger 1992) suggests this tradition was both ancient and widespread. Representations of anthropomorphized jaguars in the Pre-Columbian art of Costa Rica, especially those depicted as holding trophy heads, may depict beings similar to those described in Bribri mythology.

Úsêkölpa (Usékars)

According to stories collected in the Talamanca region, magic and witchcraft have long been a regular part of the daily lives of the Bribri and their neighbors, the Cabécar, and the Teribe. Their mythology is replete with stories of divination and magical conceptions, of evil wizards and supernatural animals. Especially prominent in these stories are a class of individuals at the top of the Bribri–Cabécar

social hierarchy and referred to as *Úsêkölpa* (*usékars*), a term often glossed as "shaman-priests." Discussions of the roles of Úsêkölpa can be found in several sources (Aguilar Piedra 1965; Bozzoli 2006; Cervantes 2003:106–112; Gabb 1875; Jara and García 2003:238–246).

In the late nineteenth century, Gabb noted that the Bribris had "the honor of religious supremacy" over the Cabécars in that the *Usekara*, described as a "high priest," came from that group. These were distinct from the *stsökölpa* or "ordinary priests," identified by Gabb as *Tsugurs* (also referred to as *isogros*) (Gabb 1875:488) whose "duties are confined to officiating at the feast for the dead" (Ibid:508) and who sang songs in ritual languages (Ibid:508), and the *awápa*, who acted as traditional physicians but also claimed the ability to bring or drive away rain (Ibid:509).[13] Unlike most Bribri, who according to their mythology were created from maize kernels, the *usékars* are said to be descended from jaguars. The sorcery of the *usékars* was far greater than that of these other practitioners, which placed them at the top of a hierarchy of power. "The *U-se'-ka-ra* is a sort of high priest, and is of nearly as great importance in the eyes of the people as the chief. In fact, the time was, and not very long ago either, when the chiefs themselves made journeys to visit him as suppliants" (Ibid:508). This class of beings no longer exists, having disappeared in the first half of the twentieth century. The fact that they were feared, as well as revered, may explain why their practices were not preserved.

The term "shaman," which has been the subject of recent critiques (Kehoe 2000; Klein et al. 2002) is inadequate to describe the varieties of religious and/or magical personnel that existed in ancient Costa Rica. Although this term has been used to identify figures in Pre-Columbian art (Day and Tillett 1996), its use must be further refined. Aguilar, long an advocate of the identification of shamanism in Costa Rican iconography (Aguilar 1965), has recently argued that *usékars* are represented in Pre-Columbian goldwork (Aguilar 1996).

While the Bribri–Cabécar term is inappropriate for paramount sorcerers in non-Bribri–Cabécar contexts, such as those of western and central Panama, I believe it comes closer to the specific meaning than the general term "shaman," especially where there are suggestions of a more formally organized priesthood, ideology, and iconography. The *usékars* were not caciques or chiefs. The *usékars* specialized in dealing with illnesses, wars, or crises that affected the community as a whole, while other religious specialists focused on those pertaining to individuals. The authority of the *usékars* emphasized the metaphysical realm, although they were respected and feared—and also acted—in material realms as well.

Jara and García (2003:238–246) and Bozzoli (2006) have recently compiled material describing *usékars*, the last of whom are said to have lived in the 1930s, in Bribri mythology and oral history. The *usékars* are more frequently described as priests than shamans. They are said to have come from a separate communities, called Suwëuk and K̲átsipatsipa, and stories describe them as belonging to a different class or clan of people, with a distinct origin of their own. *Usékars* are said to have been endogamous, and other Indians were not permitted to see them

or touch them. Some lived in separate enclaves, "far back in the hills of Cabecar" (Gabb 1875:507).

In Bribri communities, historical *usékars* were described as reclusive, aloof, serious, and even arrogant. They preserved the health of communities by doing battle against the "owners" of diseases. Usékars were both respected and deeply feared.[14] The training of the *usékar* recalls the process described in the training of a Kogi *máma* (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1976). One narrative notes, "In San José Cabécar there is a big, dark cave where a king and queen lived who taught those who wanted to become usékars. Four five, or six young people were chosen. Each one entered there with a teacher" (Bozzoli 1977:183). This king and queen taught by manipulating special stones (*sia*'), "one for every animal that existed, for the plants, the water, for the sea, for the winds, the stars, illnesses, for everything that exists. In this stone it is as if there is something in motion, sustaining the essence of these things."

Bribri legends occasionally refer to *usékars* as "kings" (*reyes*), a term used in other contexts to refer to traditional rulers, also referred to as *blupa* (Bozzoli 2006). This raises the question of whether the leaders of ancient Costa Rican "chiefdoms" are best described as chiefs rather than priests, sorcerers, or magical tradition-keepers (Hoopes 2005). The terms "king" and "queen" are also commonly applied to high-status cemeteries, such as Panteón del Rey and Panteón de la Reina (Quilter 2000). This raises the question of whether these were special cemeteries of *usékars*, who reportedly had to buried in their communities of origin. *Usékars* could not be buried where they died, but had to be returned to a special cemetery near the place of their birth, "because if they were not buried in the place where they were born, snakes are produced, hunger results, jaguars would come, the water jaguar, whatever harm that wanted to come as a result, for this they are not buried in just any ground" (Bozzoli 1977:183). This suggests the existence of special cemeteries for these individuals, perhaps in the form of special necropoli in the district that produced *usékars* for several different communities.

The *usékars* represented the most powerful magic-workers among the Bribri and Cabécar. *Usékars* could be addressed only through intermediaries. One way to interpret *usékars* is as healers who dealt with illnesses and issues that affected the community at large, as distinct from the *awás*, healers who dealt with the problems of individuals. They may also be interpreted as sorcerers or wizards, who had the power to bring about great benefit or great destruction.

In stories of Creation, the deity Sibö is said to have delivered the *usékars* to protect indigenous people from dangerous animals who could consume them or make them ill. The *usékars* were able to control the weather and to bring about natural catastrophes. In the mythological past, they were attributed with heroic and miraculous acts, including the creation of a universal Flood that destroyed harmful demons. They also exterminated groups that were socially undesirable, raising the question of whether they performed a function similar to that of Patamuna *kanaimàs* in Guyana, whose "poetics of violence" was a form of social control (Whitehead 2002).

In the historical past, the *usékars* are said to have worked in part by exercising power over the environment, reducing the number of birds that did harm by eating crops, the jaguars that ate the peccaries, and eliminating dangerous snakes.[15] They provided the only defense against a being known as the "water jaguar" (*dinamu* or *tigre de agua*), which could be controlled by transforming it into a stone. Among their methods was the use of magical stones to divine the sources of illness. The *usékars* also performed acts of purification through the use of fasts and a kind of laying on of hands (Bozzoli 1977:184–185).

While *awás* addressed the ills that affected individuals, the principal mission of the *usékars* was to help the whole community when it was suffering collectively (Jara Murillo and García Seguro 2003:239). Their general role was to maintain the health of the community and to protect it from evil. In this sense, they worked actively to combat the forces of colonization and exploitation. In 1935, a catastrophic flood that destroyed bridges, railroads, and warehouses of the United Fruit Company was attributed to the work of *usékars*. They are also thought to have practiced black magic in order to cause United Fruit Company crops to fail.[16] The *usékars* were therefore able to perform great acts of both good and evil, and as such were both admired and feared.

The death of a *usékar* was accompanied by special treatment (Bozzoli 1977:184–185). If this was not followed, the spirit of the dead *usékar*—like the trophy head–could turn into a voracious jaguar and return to cause harm. In fact, any disrespect of *usékars* living or dead could be punished by a jaguar attack (Pittier 1938:17). This was because the *usékars* could transform themselves into jaguars or use sorcery to avenge insults. A specific disease, called *úsẽkölpa dawe* (the disease of the *úsẽkölpa*) or *úsẽkölpa mula'* (the powder of the *úsẽkölpa*) could result from insulting or offending the *úsẽkölpa* by failing to address a *usékar* in Bribri through an intermediary or even by having eye contact with him. It was also dangerous to touch the *usékar's* divining stones, which could cause of *sio' dawe*, or the disease of divinatory pebbles. Symptoms of these diseases included itching, rashes, respiratory problems, and even tuberculosis (Cervantes Gamboa 2003:181). The concept of *úsẽkölpa mula'* suggests one method of revenge used by *usékars* against insults was sorcery by means of magical powders or poisons.

Descriptions of *usékars* as a social group charged with protection of the community suggest their identification as "shamans" is misleading. They were much more than just individual practitioners, representing a distinct social group whose terrifying nature and use of sorcery and witchcraft provided a method of social control. One possible model is a priesthood similar to that of the Kogi *mámas* of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Colombia, who consider themselves the "elder brothers" of humanity. Alternatively, they may have represented a class of individuals who practiced sorcery or witchcraft like the Patamuna *kanaimàs* (Whitehead 2002) or the Desana *yee*, or "jaguar-shamans" who, using powerful hallucinogens, transformed themselves into jaguars for the purpose of identifying and attacking sources of illness and evil (Buchillet 2004). The label "warrior" reveals just a small

facet of a complex identity shrouded in legend, myth, and magic. The *usékars* were both metaphysical and physical warriors, using a combination of magical and material weapons. Although they engaged in warfare, they were not full-time warriors except in the sense of fighting against "diseases" that affected the community and their environment in the broadest sense. The terms "wizards" or "sorcerers" seem more appropriate in this sense.

SORCERERS IN POINTED HATS?

Is it possible to identify *usékars* or similar shaman/sorcerers in the iconography of ancient Costa Rica? As noted above, Aguilar (1996) sees them in goldwork. Lines (1941) identified examples from the central highlands and Caribbean lowlands as "portrait heads" (*cabezas-retrato*) rather than trophy heads. He also identified stone heads as complete works, rather than pieces broken off of larger sculptures, and noted a level of artistry in sculpted stone heads that he felt was indicative of the desire to represent specific individuals. He felt that while heads in vertical positions were portraits of living individuals, inclined versions were *postmortem* representations of the heads of cadavers (Lines 1941:5).

In Maya epigraphy referring to the sacrifice of nobility, it is almost as important to document the lineage of the individuals defeated as it is that of the victors. Portrait heads may represent a desire to commemorate specific individuals who died in the context of trophy-head taking, or an attempt to control individuals by taking and displaying their heads symbolically rather than as a result of actual warfare. Trophy heads may be portraits of individuals who were well known, with stories attached to their defeat. Both heads and statues may also represent a method for retaining the power of a protective *usékar* controlling maleficent, assault shamanism long after his death. In Amazonian stories of sorcerers, the power of life resides in the head, even after it is removed from the body, as in the Baniwa narrative cited above.

Headgear may provide a clue. There is tremendous variation in the hairstyle or headgear of individuals portrayed with trophy heads. However, there are a few lines of evidence to suggest that conical hats, in particular, may have been the identifying apparel of ancient *usékars*, the sorcerers of Bribri legend. Conical hats appear in a number of contexts associated with trophy head taking and the display of power throughout the Chibchan-speaking world. There are several examples of individuals holding trophy heads who are depicted wearing conical hats (Figure 15.9a–c). There appears to be a close association of head-taking and conical hats. A bowl of the type Bugaba Engraved from Sitio Pití in Chiriquí, contemporaneous with the statuary and decorated metates at Barriles ca. AD 400, is decorated with three heads in the spaces between its tripod supports, while the figure in the center of the base is a stylized face wearing a conical hat (Figure 15.9d). A small modeled head with a conical hat may come from a tall tripod support of the same type (Linares et al. 1975:Fig. 8B).

The Barriles statuary have been interpreted as evidence for the emergence of social complexity during the late Aguas Buenas period, with dates of about AD 400–600 (Hoopes 1996). Barriles is also located in a region that has traditionally been considered part of the homeland of the Térraba/Teribes, the legendary enemies of the Bribri, whose populations were found on both sides of the Isthmus (Linares and Ranere 1980). High-ranking individuals of the Coclé culture in central Panama may have also worn conical hats. At Sitio Conte, Lothrop identified a conical object of hammered gold with repoussé decoration found near the top of a skull in the spectacular Grave 32 as a "crest" for the top of a conical hat (Figure 15.9e). Conical hats are also clearly depicted on disembodied stone heads from the Línea Vieja region of Costa Rica (Figure 15.9b,f,g).

The figure reportedly from Azúl de Turrialba (Figures 15.6a and 15.9b) depicts a nude male with closed eyes and extensive scarification, tattooing, or painting on his torso, arms, and thighs. Stylized faces or skulls are carved on his elbows, while his knees are decorated with raised trefoil motifs. Around his waist is a knotted or woven belt. He suspends a trophy head by the hair from his right hand. In his left hand he holds a double-bitted axe, a chipped-stone type known from several parts of Costa Rica, although a finely-crafted example in ground stone has been reported from Guanacaste (Snarskis 1981:No. 52).

Five chipped stone blades of this type were found on top of a meter-long *metate* at the site of Barrial de Heredia, as well as two preserved handles made from human femurs (Snarskis 1981:211). This find suggests that the *metates* may have been associated with trophy head collection, perhaps being used to display the heads themselves. Another standing figure, reportedly from the same site, is also depicted with a conical hat (Snarskis 1981:Cat. 194). This looted site also reportedly yielded a flying-panel *metate* decorated with small trophy heads and depicting a mythical figure atop two prone humans (Figure 15.7b). In his analysis of trophy heads in sculptures of standing individuals holding human heads, Aguilar (1952) noted that the most important associations of trophy heads with individuals indicated close relationships with jaguars. One being with large eyes and prominent canines holds a trophy head and also wears a conical hat (Figure 15.7e). These sculptures suggest an association between conical hats, trophy heads, and rituals associated with a mythology of sacrifice and decapitation in the context of priesthoods, sorcerers, and warfare, both real and magical.

Today, conical hats are today the principal item of identifying apparel of *mámas*, the high priests of the Kogi, a Chibchan-speaking group in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in northern Colombia (Figure 15.9h). The *mámas* make their own hats, which are among their most prized possessions and which publicly identify their special status in the community. The conical hat is a miniature version of the conical houses and temples of the Kogi, which are in turn considered to be models of the universe (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1990). This interpretation of indigenous houses is also found in Costa Rica (González and Vásquez 1989).[17] This is *not* to imply that the *mámas* were headhunters or that specific iconography does not vary in meaning across space and time, but only that conical hats may have had a long

and widespread association with elite priests or shamans throughout the territory of Chibchan speakers. Although this association has survived in northern Colombia, iconographic evidence suggests it was present in western Panama by at least AD 400 and eastern Costa Rica at least AD 700. It remains to be demonstrated that conical hats were the distinguishing headgear of *usêkars*, but individuals holding trophy heads are associated with both shape-shifting and conical hats in Pre-Columbian iconography.

CONCLUSION

The taking and display of trophy heads appears to have been a prominent ritual throughout Costa Rica from at least AD 300 through the late prehistoric period. In Guanacaste, the principal period for the manufacture of ceramic effigy heads began around AD 500, a time associated with significant changes in social complexity throughout the Isthmo-Colombian region.

Snarskis (2003) attributes these changes to a decline in contact with Mesoamerica and increased influence from South America, while I attribute the process to a religious movement and ideological shift that affected the "Chibchan world" as a whole (Hoopes 2005). The specific causes of this period of rapid culture change are unknown, but the taking and display of trophy heads may have been directly linked to the formation of ideologically driven priesthoods, among which the Kogi of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta remain the only surviving example. These may in turn have been manifest in shamanic warfare or the contexts of assault sorcery and its revenge, complex phenomena that must be considered alongside models that emphasize competition over economic resources or the self-aggrandizing activities of aspiring chiefs.

Headhunting continued in remote regions of the Talamanca area and the borderlands between Costa Rica and Panama until the early nineteenth century. However, several lines of evidence suggest that there is more to the identity of the perpetrators and victims than the labels of chiefs and warriors. The representations of individuals who have been transformed into ferocious creatures holding trophy heads suggests a metaphysical dimension related to complex traditions of shape-shifting and vengeance such as that of the *kanaimà* of Guyana (Whitehead 2002) and other varieties of assault sorcery (Whitehead and Wright 2004).

Like the multiple versions of the story of the Bribri–Teribe war that were told for more than a century, the artwork may not represent a proliferation of trophy head taking as much as the continued reproduction of a mythological iconography featuring stories of a decapitated, shape-shifting sorcerer who carried out supernatural attacks and counterattacks. In central Brazil, "Counter-witchcraft is . . . both a juro-political instrument administered through chiefs and prominent men, and as an ethno medical technique applied by shamans and counter-witches to rid society of spiritual parasites and pathogens" (Heckenberger 2004:180). This does not deny a military context for trophy heads, but suggests a ritual dimension

that may help explain their prominence in artwork and also their association with individuals wearing special costumes and supernatural, fanged beings.

The association of the conical hat with the conical house, itself in turn a model for the larger universe, suggests that its wearers identified themselves as agents for change in universal sense. Their head-taking behavior transcended material concerns with territory and property, and even individual acts of revenge. In Bribri–Cabécar shamanism, the *awápa* are the healers of individuals, while the ancient *Úsẽkölpa* were the healers of the community as a whole.

For South America, there is abundant evidence that headhunting was frequently embedded within magical models for disease and illness. If this context was shared by indigenous cultures of southern Central America, trophy-head taking in ancient Costa Rica may not have been incidental, but central to acts of both physical and metaphysical warfare. The purpose of these acts was to combat illnesses that resulted from the effects of sorcery and witchcraft and in so doing to produce healing in a broad, all-encompassing sense. It may be this intent that was preserved in the both the mythology and the iconography of trophy heads in ancient Costa Rica.

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APPENDIX: THE LEGEND OF THE JAGUAR

The following story about a severed head that turns into a jaguar was originally told by Marcos Pita Morales, born in Amubri de Talamanca in 1933. He learned it from his grandmother, who told it in the Bribri language (Pita 1981). (English translation by the author.)

In a place called *usèköL*[18] there was a man and a girl, his niece, who went to shoot birds in a tree that's called "Matapalo."[19]

And in those times the Indians of Panama were fighting against the Indians of Talamanca; they were coming to kill people (that is, Indians). They arrived at this

moment where the two people were. The man was up in the tree and the girl was below collecting the birds. They said to them in Bribri: There's *sàL skërka* (which means, "There's the monkey"), "Let's stand him up!" They shot an arrow "Pow!" and he fell to the ground.

Those Indians from Panama had the custom of killing people and cutting off their heads, and that's what they did to the man. They took his head to celebrate with a dance called the *sorbón*. They put a rope in the head and carried it, but after 200 meters the head cut the rope and fell, "Boom!" They said, "How strange! No head of those that we've taken has cut the rope, so why did this one cut it?"

They said, "Let's put a stick in it," and they put the head on a stick. They were walking and in a little while the head fell off. They said, "How strange!" But they put it on another stick and that's how they arrived. They arrived in Panama where they lived and they started to dance the *sorbón*. And they put a small, straight stick in the head. And as they began making turns, the head also made turns.

And the eyes of the head shone like *cucuyos*. As they danced the *sorbón*, making turns from the left to the right, so the head was also making turns,

When they finished dancing, they took the head to keep, because they had a place where they kept all the heads, because they didn't imagine what kind of head they had taken. After eight days, an elder of the tribe went to see how the heads were. When he arrived he saw that many mice were walking around. The elder said, "Why is this happening?" However, he didn't think much of it and left. After eight more days passed a cat was walking around all of the houses. Eight more days passed and it was noticed that the cat had grown because its footprint was much larger.

Every eight days the animal grew; it began eating the chickens, not just of one house but of all of them. It continued with the turkeys, not leaving a single one. It continued growing and now it was eating the pigs. The tribe members said, "Let's kill it," but they could never see it. Every eight days it grew larger. It ate larger animals, continuing with the cattle and finishing all of them.

Then the chief of the tribe, the Tiruk tribe, said, "We have a jaguar equal to the one that's eating the cattle. Let's make them fight because ours will kill it." The jaguar of the Tiruk tribe was larger than the other one, but when they began to fight, that jaguar jumped higher than the Tiruk's one. It bit him and he died.

The jaguar that died was the tribe's one, because they couldn't kill the other one.

From then on nobody could go outside. The jaguar ate the men who went out to work and did the same to the women who went to look for bananas or plantains: it ate them. One Tiruk said, "Let's make a trap for him. Send us the girl who he was with when we cut off his head so that she can kill him." She went to look for bananas and to grind corn to make *atol*. She returned safely because the jaguar didn't do anything to her. Those of the tribe said, "Why didn't it do anything to her?"

"Let's go out!" they said. But the jaguar ate them.

The jaguar came to where the houses were, went in, and carried them off. They said, "Let's put the girl in a hammock in the door of the house so that it will grab her first." The jaguar jumped over her and ate everyone inside.

It ate everyone in the tribe. When it was finished eating them, the girl was already big and already had a husband. The jaguar didn't eat him because he said that he was *ña* (something dirty).[20] It didn't eat him because he was living with the niece, because the jaguar was her uncle and didn't eat the husband: it just killed him.

The jaguar said to the girl, because he spoke with her, and he said to her, "Tomorrow at three get ready because we're going. You make your food and let's go. When I shout, you come." She went to the house and at three he shouted and they left. They walked and they walked until arriving at the place where they had cut off his head. He couldn't stay with the *usèköL* tribe because he was an animal and if he walked into their midst they would all be afraid.

He said to his niece, "Go yourself because I cannot go, because they will be afraid of me. Go yourself and tell the men that I've already come and that I did what had to be done." She went, looked for the biggest chief, and told the highest chief of the *usèköL*. The chief went to the center of the Telire where there is a large rock. He arrived and knocked on the door. It opened, and he went in there with the jaguar. The jaguar remained locked up there for the rest of his life. So ends the story of the *usèköL*.

NOTES

1. Bobadilla's account must be interpreted in the context of his charge: to prove that Gonzalez' claims of successful conversions were false.
2. "Tienen continua guerra con sus comarcos por robarse el oro que sacan de las minas, y sobre esto se cautivan unos a otros. A los hombres que toman en la guerra a todos matan y les cortan por trofeo las cabeças; a los muchachos y mujeres tienen por esclavos y para sus sacrificios" (Fernández Guardia 1908).
3. It was recounted to Andagoya that, "fueron tantos los que por el camino volviendose a sus casas murieron que por el camino hicieron silos donde echaban los muertos; los cuales nosotros vimos y hallamos donde fue la batalla una gran calle empedrada toda de las cabezas de los muertos, y al cabo della una torre de cabezas dellos que uno a caballo no se parecía e la otra parte" (Jopling 1994). See also (Redmond 1994).
4. Méndez writes, "encima de un cerro llano con una plaza grande rodeada de trescientas cabezas de muertos que habian ellos muerto en una batalla" (Columbus and Jane 1988).
5. "Si había hecho muertes, allí cerca le ponen las calaveras de los que había muerto y clavan también sus lanzas y flechas" (Fray Pablo de Rebullida [1699] in Fernández 1975:156–157).
6. The correct term for human heads sculpted in ceramics or carved from stone is "effigy heads" rather than "trophy heads" unless there is compelling evidence that the head represents someone who is deceased (Leibsohn 1985).
7. These are represented as concentric circles in a fashion echoed by the depiction of the bird's eyes. If these are intentionally related to the metal objects, they recall the story of the Hero Twins' removal of metal disks from around the eyes of Seven Macaw in the Quiché story of the *Popol Vuh* (Tedlock 1996). (This latter has always been an intriguing element of the story, given the scarcity of metal disks in Maya contexts.)

8. Sullivan (1988) mentions several associations of human bone meal consumption with the palm fruit *Bactris gasipaes*, which was also widely cultivated in Costa Rica and was reported in large plantations on the southern Caribbean coast.
9. "En aquella época [los reyes] anduvieron purificando de las impurezas, o sea imponiendo las manos en las cosas que se llamaban ñá; en toda esta región a ellos nadie los superaba en absoluto; peleaban fuertemente en toda aquella región indígena. A los de Térraba los maltrataban demasiado. Los térrabas ataron a uno para matarlo, le cortaron la cabeza, y la cabeza la llevaron para usarla en lugar de calabaza o jícara, para jalar agua. A esta cabeza los térraba le hicieron un trabajo de quitarle el cerebro y dejarla sólo hueso, y cuando estaba como ellos querían la utilizaron para jalar agua" (Bozzoli 1977).
10. Aguilar (1965) identifies *sukia* as a Miskito term, introduced to Costa Rica from the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua, presumably in historic times. He also notes that the Miskito *okuli* was more similar to the Bribri-Cabécar usékar than the sukia, a position similar to that of *awá* (see Note 12 below).
11. A possible metaphorical reference to "blowing", one of the principal healing methods used by Bribri shamans.
12. The use of hallucinogenic substances remains poorly documented for ancient Costa Rica, although there are many known examples of ceramic "inhalers" from unprovenanced contexts (Stone 1977).
13. The focus of the magic of the *awá* is personal healing, and the practice of weather control seems to have been applied to daily, rather than unusual rains. *Awás* practiced a lower order of sorcery than *usékars*.
14. Gabb (1875) describes one of the last *usékars* as follows: "The former U-se'-ka-ra was very arrogant, and would hold no communication with foreigners. He claimed supernatural powers and held frequent interviews with spirits. On these occasions he went alone to a cave, several miles from his house, and spent days together there. On his return he would not converse even with his own family. Nobody but his familiar, now a very old man, was allowed to serve him, or even to speak to him for a certain number of days after his return from one of these mysterious journeys. He rarely traveled about, or visited his neighbors. He lived by levying contributions on the people, or by voluntary presents. His only beverage was chocolate, and the cacao was contributed as voluntary gifts from people far and near. If he entered a house, and offered to buy, or expressed even admiration for anything, whether a chicken, a pig, or any other object, it was at once presented to him. It was considered as good as forfeited. If not presented, it would be sure to die anyhow, and his ill-will would be gained besides. In case of any public calamity, like an epidemic disease, or a scarcity of food from drought, the chief only must visit him, and beg his intercessions with the spirits. He would pay no attention to private appeals."
15. "No hace muchos años se murieron todos. Dios mismo los acabó con su poder. Por eso éstas son cosas auténticas. Por eso cuando existían en ese tiempo no hubo nada malo en este lugar en absoluto. En cuanto a los usékars, eran lo mismo: en este tiempo no habia lo que dice la gente que hay ahora: los pajaros hacen daños, los tigres se comen los chanchos, y otros animales que hay actualmente no los hubo en aquella época porque ellos espantaban tales males. Cuando ellos fueron muriéndose, pronto después de eso volvieron los daños, aparecieron los tigres para comerse a los chanchos; aparecieron aves que comen maíz y guineos y los demas males, por la ausencia de ellos. Por eso los clanes indígenas, en aquella época vivier on felices. Pronto después que ellos se fueron acabando, hasta allí llegó la felicidad, como no le tuvieron cuidado a los huesos, por eso volvieron las minas, aparecieron tigres comiéndose los chanchos, los pajaros cayeron para hacer daño a los cultivos, nacieron muchísimas culebras; en aquella época no hubo muchas serpientes, en ese tiempo existían esas gentes para controlar las plagas" (Bozzoli 1977).
16. Whether the United Fruit Company in turn sought retaliation against individual usékars, resulting in their eradication, is a topic that merits further research.
17. Conical hats made of cotton were the traditional headwear of agricultural laborers in the central highlands and Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica until recently. It has not yet been possible to

establish whether these represent a modern transformation of the high-status hats of indigenous populations.

18. The term *usèkōL* refers to the highes-ranking priestly clan of the Bribris. This is not generally a place name, but may refer to a special community where members of this clan were known to have lived.
19. The matapalo tree, also known as a strangler fig, is a species of *Ficus* that grows around another tree, sometimes resulting in the death of the host tree. Mature matapalo trees, which can reach several hundred feet in height, may be hollow inside where the host tree has died and decayed, leaving an empty space sometimes large enough for a person to climb up.
20. The term *ña* refers to both filth and ritual impurity. The jaguar would not eat the girl's husband because he had had sexual relations with his niece. Eating her husband would be analogous to incest.

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Chapter 16

From Corporeality to Sanctity
Transforming Bodies into Trophy Heads in the Pre-Hispanic Andes

Tiffiny A. Tung

INTRODUCTION

The taking, transforming, and displaying of human heads and other body parts has a long tradition in the Andes, beginning at least as early as 1300 BC and extending in most areas up until the European invasion in the sixteenth century. In southern Ecuador, the Jivaro continued this practice until the mid-twentieth century or later (Harner 1972).

The use of disembodied heads and other body parts in rituals is well documented in the Andes. Evidence shows that such rituals were often tied to complex social and political systems (see Benson and Cook 2001; Proulx 1989; Silverman and Proulx 2002; Tung 2003a, 2003b; Verano 1995) that may have shared general themes over time, while differing in some key respects. For example, the demographic profile of persons selected to be disembodied skulls or trophy heads varied over time and in different geographical areas, and the ways in which they were displayed and modified, if at all, differed among cultural groups. This variability may reflect differences in why the heads were obtained and how they were used for ritual, political, or other ends.

Given the likelihood that age and sex were culturally salient traits in the selection of a victim, wherever possible I provide population-level demographic data to gain insight into the meanings and practices surrounding the manipulation of human heads. Additionally, by noting the associated iconography and the archaeological contexts, the human body as a whole, as well as separate body parts, are evaluated as social and political objects that may have been used in different contexts for a variety of ends.

The term *disembodied head* (or *skull*) is used for those heads that may or may not show postmortem modifications, while the term *trophy head* refers only to those heads that have been modified postmortem, like those from Nasca (Verano 1995).

To evaluate the role of modified or unmodified disembodied heads in ancient Andean societies, this chapter will examine some examples dating from the Late Pre-Ceramic (1300 BC) to the Middle Horizon (AD 600–1000). (See Ogburn 2007, Ch. 17 in this volume, for a discussion of the post-Middle Horizon examples.) While the examples analyzed here are by no means exhaustive, they derive from various time periods and diverse locations in the Andes, including the following: (1) the Late Pre-Ceramic site of Asia in the central coastal Andes; (2) the Initial Period site of Wichqana in the central highland Andes; (3) the Early Horizon site of Chavín in the northern highlands; (4) a large sample of Nasca trophy heads from various sites in the Nasca drainage of south-central coastal Peru; (5) disembodied skulls from the Moche polity in northern, coastal Peru; (6) defleshed body parts from the site of Tiwanaku in highland Bolivia; and (7) new examples of human trophy heads from the Wari site of Conchopata. (See Figure 16.1 for the location of the sites discussed in the text.)

THE BODY IN RITUAL

The human body is corporeal, yet it and its disembodied parts can also express sacredness. It is subjective and experiential (Merleau-Ponty 1962), yet external influences continually construct it, often objectifying the body in the process (Foucault 1978). While these concepts of the body may be viewed in opposition, perhaps theorizing the body in all its forms reveals its fluidity, multiplicities, and transformative aspects.

As a bioarchaeologist who studies human bodies of the past—literally the flesh and bones of once-living peoples—I observe the body as object, but recognize its former status as a corporeal subject affecting and being affected by cultural constructs and social interactions. This perspective acknowledges both constructivist and objectivist approaches to the body.

Foucault (1977, 1978) argued that cultural dispositions toward the body are predominantly determined by external forces. But to identify how cultural attitudes toward the body are created and reproduced (or rejected), we must first understand how individual actors have engaged forces external to them. Individuals are not mere receptacles to be filled and formed without some recursive relationship with what is external to their own being. Recognizing this blurs the line between the body as subject and object, even after death. Indeed, I suggest that significant exchanges between the body and society continue well after death, contributing to conceptions of the living body, the body as a subject of the state, and the role of the body in ritual. The latter two are particularly exemplified in cases involving human trophy heads like those found in the ancient Andes.

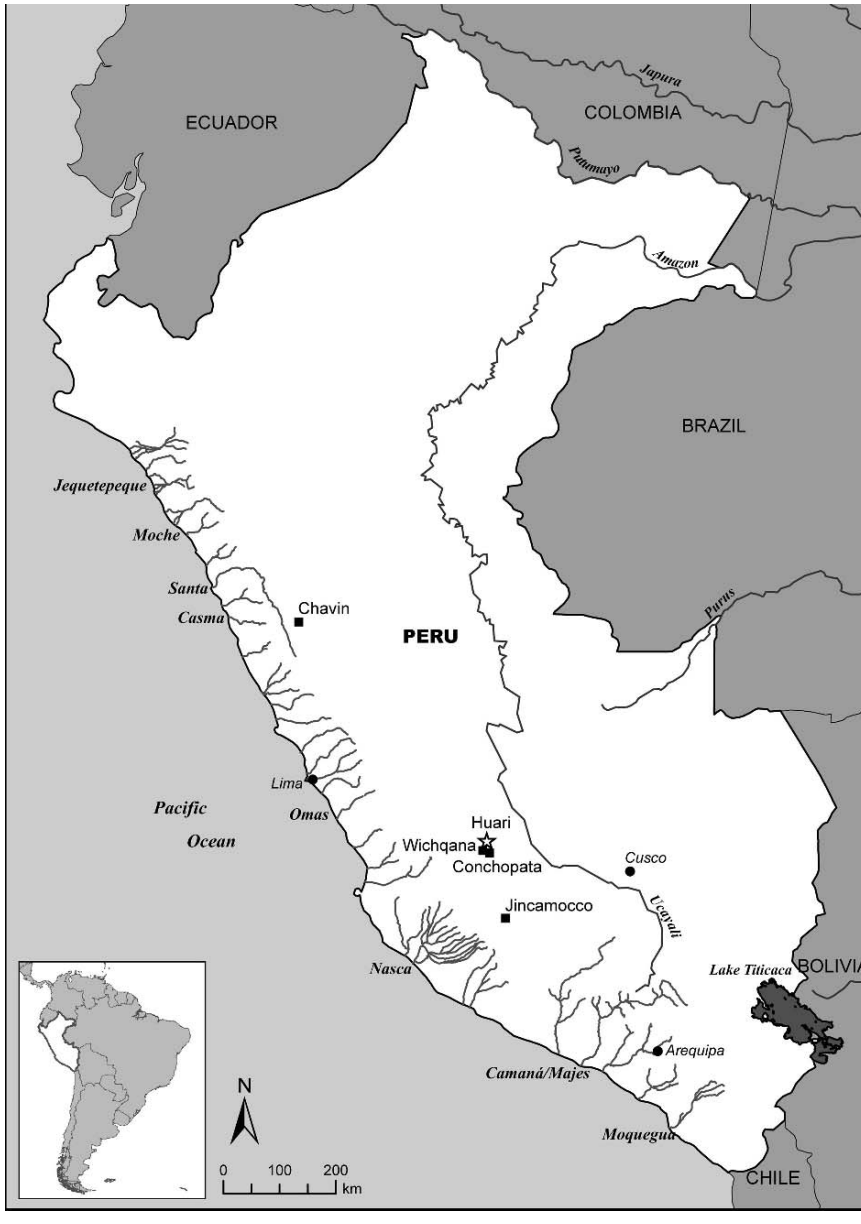

Figure 16.1. Map of Peru showing sites and valleys discussed in the text.

EARLY DISEMBODIED HEADS IN THE ANDES

The earliest known examples of disembodied heads date to the Late Pre-Ceramic, around 1300–1100 BC, and come from the site of Asia in the Omas valley of central coastal Peru (Figure 16.1). In an area that had 52 pits with human remains, four graves had a total of seven disembodied skulls: four children and three adults (Engel 1963). The high count of disembodied child crania is notable, but their inclusion is still poorly understood. They could represent grave offerings from naturally deceased children that may or may not have been related. (No biodistance analysis was done, so genetic relationships are unknown.) Conversely, given that child sacrifices have been documented in the Andes during the Inka period (Guaman Poma de Ayala et al. 1987 [1615]; Reinhard 1996) and are suspected at other Andean sites (Bourget 2001; Tung 2003b; Tung and Cook 2006), it is possible that they represent child sacrifices.[1]

Several disembodied skulls received distinct treatment, suggesting that they derived from persons of different status or resulted from different kinds of activities. Although all disembodied skulls and "regular" burials at Asia were found in association with vegetal mats, textiles, plants, and other artifacts, one adult skull (Grave 10) was buried with a decorated textile and showed evidence of trepanation, suggesting that this individual may have been of higher status than others interred in the vicinity (Engel 1963). Another of the isolated skulls exhibited cut marks on the frontal bone, leading Engel to suggest that the "skin of the [man's] face was pulled off" and that he may have been cruelly punished (Engel 1963:69, 94–95). Verano (1995:203) has suggested that the flayed skull may represent a person from the Asia settlement who was mutilated elsewhere and returned to the site for burial. Other than cut marks on the one skull, there is no report of other postmortem modifications to any heads (e.g., drilled holes) (Engel 1963; Hartweg 1958).[2]

Given that adult and child heads were separated from their bodies and individually interred in a mortuary setting, it appears that this particular body part was of special significance. Perhaps this early instance of isolating skulls contributed to the practice of what has come to be called the Trophy Head Cult. Although this may have been related to the later trophy head phenomenon, this does not mean that there was a simple, evolutionary process from one form to another—that is, from an isolated, unmodified skull, to a decapitated head that was eviscerated of its brain and drilled to make a hole for a carrying cord. The social significance attributed to disembodied skulls and trophy heads surely changed through time, but not necessarily in a linear sequence from "simple" to "complex" forms and meanings.

In the later Initial Period (or Formative Period), around 1150–750 BC, five disembodied skulls were placed in the floor of what seemed to be a U-shaped structure at the site of Wichqana, in Ayacucho, in the central Andes (Figure 16.1). The five heads were identified as female, and all exhibit tabular erect cranial modification (flattened on the frontal and occipital bones), which appears to have been common in the Formative Period (Lumbreras 1981). The common cranial modification

form may also suggest shared ethnic affiliation among the women. Lumbreras (1981:173) argues that these skulls were decapitated while soft tissue was still intact, leading him to propose that "there can be little doubt that the heads were the result of human sacrifice, of some ceremonial import." While the presence of the mandible and cervical vertebrae, all in anatomical position, supports his assertion that soft tissue was present at the time of decapitation, it is unclear if they truly represent human sacrifices.

The Wichqana skulls did not receive any kind of postmortem modification; thus, like the heads from Asia, these should not be considered trophy heads in the strict definition (see Verano 1995). Nonetheless, as Lumbreras (1981:173) argues, the disembodied skulls are evidence of an early form of ritual closely connected to the Nasca Trophy Head Cult.

During the later Urabarriu phase of the Early Horizon, around 850–460 BC, four human skulls were placed as votive offerings in a platform at the site of Chavín de Huántar in the northern highland Peruvian Andes (Burger 1984; Burger and van der Merwe 1990). The heads were associated with a cache of carbonized fruit and a ceramic fragment from a neckless olla (Haldas-style) that would have been complete when it was interred with the heads (Burger 1984; Burger and van der Merwe 1990). No other human skeletal remains were recovered in the vicinity (Burger 1984). The isolated skulls were identified as a 55–60 year old adult male, a 20–35 year old male, an adolescent female (14–17 years), and an infant (14–18 months) (Vidal 1984), perhaps representing an extended family (Burger 1984). If so, could this represent ancestor veneration or a sacrificed family? The frontal and occipital bones (cranial areas commonly modified to make trophies) were observed on two of the four skulls, and neither shows any postmortem alterations (Vidal 1984), indicating that they were not modified like the later Nasca or Wari trophy heads (described below).

In 1971, Luis Lumbreras recovered another isolated skull from Chavín, in the Galería de Ofrendas, a 24.6-m-long gallery under the rectangular court of the Old Temple. It was placed in the middle of the passageway, encircled by 40 deciduous (children's) teeth (Burger 1992; Reichlen Barret 1973). I summarize the osteological data on this individual (see Reichlen Barret 1973) and provide interpretations on what those data suggest about the lifeways of the person whose head was used as an offering.

The skull was from an adult female who exhibited a healed nasal fracture and premortem tooth loss of the right maxillary anterior teeth (right incisors and possibly the canine). This suggests that one or more blows to the face fractured her nasal bone and could have dislodged her anterior dentition. While dental disease could have led to the dental exfoliation, premortem tooth loss typically affects posterior teeth first. Moreover, based on my observation of published photos, she appears to have a dental abscess on the anterior portion of her maxilla, a common outcome from a trauma to the face. The healed nasal fracture and the probable healed trauma on the maxilla were not the cause of death; rather, they suggest that she had been a victim of violence earlier in her life.

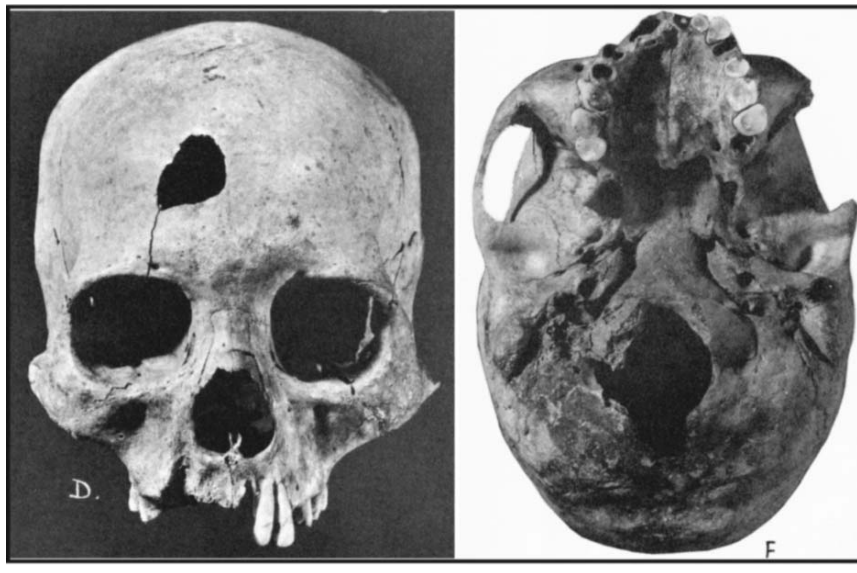

Figure 16.2. Possible trophy head from the Galería de Ofrendas at Chavín. (Photo by Paulette Reichlen.)

This female skull may be the earliest archaeologically documented occurrence of a modified trophy head from the Andes. The Galería de Ofrendas skull displays a perforation on the frontal bone, and although it is laterally displaced and somewhat irregular, this is a diagnostic trait of intentionally prepared trophy heads. More convincing, however, is the slightly enlarged and damaged foramen magnum (the hole at the base of the skull where the spinal cord enters), suggesting that it was altered to extract the brain, similar to later Nasca trophy heads (Figure 16.2).

The geographical origins (i.e., local or foreign) of the disembodied heads from Chavín are difficult to determine, but it has been suggested that the four skulls from the Urabarriu platform were local (Burger and van der Merwe 1990). The carbon isotope values ($\delta^{13}C = -18.7$ to -19) from the four platform skulls show that they consumed little maize, and because this crop was not easily grown, nor was it common in the region, they may have had a local Chavín diet with little to no maize (Burger and van der Merwe 1990). The dental health data corroborate this. Because maize is a cariogenic food (causes dental caries), it is noteworthy that none of the platform skulls show carious lesions (Vidal 1984).[3] In contrast, the female skull from the Galería de Ofrendas exhibited one carious lesion, perhaps suggesting that she had a distinct diet (or poorer dental hygiene) relative to the four individuals in the platform. Perhaps the healed trauma and dental carie suggest that she belonged to a distinct social class with a different lifestyle and access to different resources (either as a local or a nonlocal).

SECHÍN STONE CARVINGS

The early osteological samples mentioned above are not the only medium in which disembodied heads were displayed during Formative times. Engravings on large stone blocks at the site of Cerro Sechín in the Casma valley depict bodies in pain with dripping entrails, along with other isolated body parts such as arms, legs, stacks of vertebrae, and decapitated heads (the most common image), often with blood flowing from the neck (Burger 1992). The images of mutilated bodies writhing in pain are contrasted with images of victorious warriors standing upright—opposing images that reflect the cultural salience of depictions of the body as material manifestations of Sechín authority and power.

While similarities among the Sechín stone carvings and the Chavín disembodied skulls are sometimes emphasized, they may actually reflect quite distinct practices. First, Sechín predates Chavín and should not be considered as part of the Chavín-dominated Early Horizon (Burger 1992), nor should it be assumed to be part of the same cultural complex surrounding the ritual offerings of skulls at Chavín. Second, the age and sex of the Chavín human heads and the artistically portrayed ones at Sechín are distinct. At Chavín, the disembodied skulls are from two males, two females, and a child, while the Sechín carvings represent apparently male warriors and their captives. Moreover, the Chavín skulls were interred with fruit and ceramics, and the Sechín carvings of decapitated heads are shown in association with entrails, dripping blood, and other disembodied parts. This indicates that the same kinds of objects—disembodied heads—could have quite distinct meanings for different cultural groups in the Andes.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF EARLY DISEMBODIED HEADS

Because the differences in demographics, postmortem modifications, and manner of display presumably reflect meaningful distinctions for those who selected, processed, used, and viewed them in rituals, the age and sex of the 17 disembodied skulls from early periods are summarized. And although they represent a large swath of time, they are combined for analysis in order to identify general patterns in the earliest uses of disembodied heads. Among the 17 heads from the Pre-Ceramic, Initial Period, and Early Horizon, 5 are children and 12 are adults, representing 29% and 71% of the sample, respectively.

Sex was reported only for those skulls from Chavín and Wichqana, and among those nine adults, seven are female and two are male. Clearly, females constitute a much greater proportion of the skull offerings—78% are female and only 22% are male. In other words, for every disembodied head of a male, there are nearly four disembodied heads from females. This suggests that female body parts may have been preferred for use in ritual offerings. Additionally, placing heads in a stone platform or surrounding them with 40 children's teeth undergirds their ritual significance and demonstrates their physical and supernatural transformation from corporeal entities into sacred relics.

NASCA TROPHY HEADS

The best-known examples of Andean trophy heads derive from the Nasca drainage of south-central Peru, and while the majority are from the Early Intermediate Period (AD 1–600), some Nasca-style trophy heads date to the Middle Horizon (AD 600–1000).

Prior and ongoing research has made major contributions to our understanding of Nasca trophy heads and their significance in Nasca society (Browne et al. 1993; Carmichael 1988; Coehlo 1972; Drusini and Baraybar 1991; Forgey 2005; Forgey and Williams 2004; Kellner 2002; Neira and Coehlo 1972; Proulx 1971,1989, 2001; Silverman 1993; Silverman and Proulx 2002; Verano 1995, 2001; Williams et al. 2001), leading to at least three major interpretations regarding how and from whom Nasca trophy heads were obtained.

The first posits that trophy heads were procured in secular battles or raids and basically represent trophies of these violent conflicts (Proulx 1971, 1989, 2001; Verano 1995, 2001).

A second interpretation argues that ritual battles, sometimes referred to as *tinku*. (Bolin 1998; Hartmann 1972; Orlove 1994), led to the taking and displaying of decapitated heads (Browne et al. 1993; Silverman 1993). Although *tinku* can be highly ritualized, the "games" or battles can actually be quite violent.

Finally, Neira and Coelho (1972) and Guillén (cited in Silverman 1993:224) have suggested that trophy heads represent familial heads that were modified, conserved, and used as relics in rituals of ancestor veneration.

Of course, these three categories are not mutually exclusive. Trophy heads may have been drawn from various populations, both from within and external to the community. Additionally, the source of the heads (i.e., who was selected) may have changed through time.[4]

To contribute to this debate, I summarize previous research and compile the data to provide a population view of trophy heads from Nasca (see Table 16.1). First, identifying trophy heads is best achieved by employing Verano's (1995) definition—diagnostic traits include an intentionally drilled hole on the frontal bone, used as a conduit for a carrying cord, and many have an enlarged foramen magnum for extracting the brain (Figure 16.3).[5] Also, some Nasca trophy heads resemble masks, where the entire posterior half of the cranium has been removed, leaving nothing but the facial, frontal, and anterior portion of the parietal and temporal bones (Kellner 2002).

The vast majority of trophy heads from the Nasca drainage are adult males. Of the 145 described in the literature, plus the six that I analyzed in Nasca ($N = 151$), age information was available for 123 trophy heads. Of these, 93% are adults (115/123) and 7% are children (8/123). The sex distribution of the 98 adult trophy heads whose sex was reported shows that 92% are male (90/98) and approximately 8% are female (8/98). These numbers represent Nasca-style trophy heads from both the Early Intermediate Period (AD 1–600) and the Middle Horizon (AD 600–1000).

Table 16.1. Summary of Early Intermediate Period (AD 1–600) and Middle Horizon (AD 600–1000) Nasca trophy heads reported in the literature. These data were used to calculate the age and sex distributions.

Valley	Site	*N*	Juvenile	Adult male	Adult female	Adult sex?	No age/sex	Reference
Palpa	Cerro carapo	48	0	48	0	0	0	Browne et al, 1993. Verano, 1995 gives sex determination.
Nasca	Cantalloc	1	1	0	0	0	0	Kroeber find. (Described in Browne et al. 1993.)
Acari	Tambo Viejo	5	0	0	0	5	0	Ridell 1986; Kowta, 1987:66.
Nasca	Cahuachi, Feature 24, Unit 19.	1	0	1	0	0	0	Silverman 1993:157–158, 220.
Nasca	Cahuachi, Feature 21, Unit 19.	1	0	1	0	0	0	Silverman 1993:155–156, 220.
Nasca	Cahuachi, Burial Area 1 (Burial 12)	1	0	0	0	1	0	Strong 1957:Fig. 4 (Also described in Silverman 1993)
Nasca	Cahuachi, Burial 14	1	0	1	0	0	0	Strong 1952: Entry 234. Strong 1957:36. (Also described in Silverman 1993)
Acari	Chavina	11	1	6	1	3	0	Neira Avedano and Coelho 1972–1973: 142; Coelho 1972
Nasca	Cahuachi (Burial 28 in Carmichael 1988)	9	?	2	?	?	7	Doering 1966:142–144, 191. (Also described in Carmichael 1988:482–483 and Silverman 1993.)
Lower Nasca	Jumana	6	?	?	?	?	6	Pezzia 1969:145.
Ica	Hacienda Ocucaje	2	?	?	?	?	2	Pezzia Assereto 1968, Riddell 1986 (Also described in Williams et al. 2001)
Paracas	Cerro de la Cruz (looted cemetery)	13	?	?	?	?	13	Pezzia 1968 (Also described in Williams et al. 2001)
Nasca	Cahuachi	7	1	2	4	0	0	Drusini and Baraybar 1991
Nasca	Aja	1	0	1	0	0	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al. 2001)
Nasca	Cahuachi	10	1	3	2	4	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al. 2001)

(*Cont.*)

Table 16.1. (*Continued*)

Valley	Site	*N*	Juvenile	Adult male	Adult female	Adult sex?	No age/sex	Reference
Tierras Blancas	Cantayo	2	1	0	0	1	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al. 2001)
Nasca	Las Canas	1	0	1	0	0	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al. 2001)
Nasca	Majoro Chico	1	0	1	0	0	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al. 2001; Carmichael 1988:290–291, 349)
Nasca	Majoro Chico	1	0	1	0	0	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al. 2001. Carmichael 1988:290–291, 349)
Nasca	Paredones	2	0	1	0	1	0	Kroeber find. (Williams et al, 2001)
Las Trancas*	Las Medenas	14	1	11	1	1	0	Kroeber find. (Kellner 2002)
Las Trancas	El Pampon	5	2	2	0	1	0	Kroeber find. (Kellner 2002)
Las Trancas	La Marcha	2	0	2	0	0	0	Kroeber find. (Kellner 2002)
Nasca	Cahuachi	4	0	4	0	0	0	Excavated by Guiseppe Orefici; examined for this study.
Nasca	Unknown	2	0	2	0	0	0	This study.
	TOTAL	151	8	90	8	17	28	

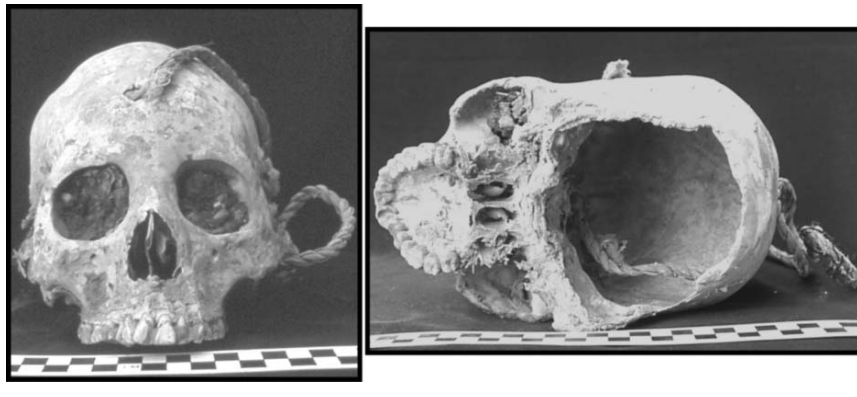

Figure 16.3. Nasca style trophy head. (Photo by T. A. Tung.)

Table 16.2. Percentage of Juvenile vs. Adult Trophy Heads and Male vs. Female Trophy Heads in the Nasca Drainage for Each Time Period.

	Early nasca	Middle nasca	Late nasca	Middle horizon
Juvenile (0–16 yrs)	25%	4%	0%	11%
Adult (17+ yrs)	75%	96%	100%	89%
Total	100% ($N = 16$)	100% ($N = 67$)	100% ($N = 6$)	100% ($N = 18$)
Female	29%	2%	20%	0%
Male	71%	98%	80%	100%
Total	100% ($N = 7$)	100% ($N = 59$)	100% ($N = 5$)	100% ($N = 9$)

Note: Total sample sizes differ and are lower than Table 1 because age, sex, and associated time period were not reported for all trophy heads.

A breakdown of the trophy head age and sex profiles by time period shows that adults were more common than juveniles, and males were more common than females in all temporal phases. However, the relative frequencies of adults to juveniles and males to females were lowest in the Early Nasca phase (Table 16.2), showing changing preferences regarding who was to be transformed from a living being or corpse into a ritually significant trophy head. In short, while adult males were preferred in all phases, they were particularly favored in the later periods, perhaps showing an increasing frequency of secular or ritual battles, where adult men would have been the primary combatants and victims (also see Proulx 2001; Verano 1995).

There is a significant difference in the demographic profiles of disembodied heads from earlier versus later eras. During the Late Pre-Ceramic to Early Horizon, 29% of the 17 disembodied skulls are juveniles, while only 7% of the 123 Early Intermediate Period to Middle Horizon trophy heads from Nasca are juveniles.

Fisher's exact test shows that the age group distribution (juveniles vs. adults) significantly differs between the early and late periods ($p = 0.008$; $N = 140$). Similarly, female–male distributions for the two temporal components are significantly different (Fisher's exact $p < 0.001$; $N = 107$). Disembodied skulls from women were more common in the Late Pre-Ceramic to Early Horizon, while men were more commonly selected for trophy heads in the Early Intermediate Period to Middle Horizon. The significant change in the demographic composition from early to later times suggests that the meanings associated with taking and/or displaying disembodied heads likely changed as well.

MOCHE DECAPITATION AND MODIFIED SKULLS

Evidence for intentional decapitation has been documented at the Moche (AD 100–800) site of Dos Cabezas in Jequetepeque Valley of northern Peru, where 18 disembodied heads were found in the end of narrow chamber in a small temple

(Cordy-Collins 2001). The cranium and mandible and some of the cervical vertebrae were still articulated, suggesting that soft tissue was present when the head was separated from the body, and cut marks on the anterior portion of cervical vertebrae demonstrate that a sharp object was used to sever the head (Cordy-Collins 2001). It is unknown if decapitation was the cause of death or if the head was severed postmortem, but based on Moche ceramic vessels showing beings decapitating humans with a *tumi* (a half-circle-shaped blade), it would seem that the disembodied heads resulted from lethal decapitation (see Cordy-Collins 2001:Fig. 2.8). Indeed, excavations at Dos Cabezas revealed the burial of an elderly male interred with a *tumi* in his left hand and a small clay modeled human head on the right side of his body; he may well be one of the Moche decapitators portrayed in Moche art (Cordy-Collins 2001).

While it appears that none of the Dos Cabezas heads were modified into trophy heads, there are two Moche skulls from the site of Huaca de la Luna that were altered to resemble bowls by cutting away the superior portion of the vault (Verano 2001). One of the heads also shows a drilled hole on the ramus of the mandible, and both exhibit cut marks—evidence that soft tissue was intentionally removed from fleshed heads (Verano 2001). Although the Moche skull bowls share some similarities with other disembodied heads in the present discussion, Verano (2001) notes that Moche iconography suggests more interest in collecting blood than heads, perhaps revealing another facet of the varied functions and meanings of disembodied heads in the Andes.

HUMAN TROPHIES IN THE MIDDLE HORIZON: TIWANAKU AND WARI

Tiwanaku

In the highland Andes, the Middle Horizon (AD 600–1000) is marked by two empires that came to power—the Tiwanaku and the Wari—and recent research is revealing evidence for human offerings in the core areas of both polities (Blom et al. 2003; Tung 2003b).[6]

For example, at the site of Tiwanaku in Bolivia, Linda Manzanilla (1992) recovered isolated crania and other human skeletal parts from two areas at the monumental pyramid known as the Akapana. These ritually offered human remains were re-analyzed by Blom and colleagues (2003) who observed cut marks on the skeletal remains, indicating that body parts were defleshed. They note that some appear to have been processed carefully (light cut marks) in private spaces at the Akapana as part of an ancestor veneration complex, while others were violently butchered (many deep cut marks) in public zones of the Akapana (Blom et al. 2003). While these human remains are not trophy heads, the authors have argued that the Akapana human elements from the public area represent ritual offerings, possibly from captives.

Wari

The 1976 excavations at the Wari site of Jincamocco revealed an isolated skull from an older adult female placed in the center of a small circle of stones in the north bench of Patio 1, the largest patio excavated at the site (Schreiber 1992). The cranium exhibited three small holes described as unhealed (Schreiber 1992:183–184), but it is unclear if the holes are perimortem (i.e., the likely cause of death) or postmortem (i.e., modified after death). Two holes can be observed in the photo of the in situ skull: one on the superior-central portion of the right parietal and the second on the right side of the coronal suture.[7] The location of these holes is atypical (i.e., they do not resemble the Nasca style or the Wari style), so it should not be identified as a trophy head. The head does, however, appear to have been an offering made at the time of construction (Schreiber 1992). This early discovery is significant, especially in light of the newly discovered Wari trophy heads described below. Perhaps the Jincamocco skull was part of a greater ritual tradition in Wari society that privileged disembodied skulls.

WARI TROPHY HEADS FROM CONCHOPATA

Recent excavations directed by William Isbell, Anita Cook, Jose Ochatoma, and Martha Cabrera at the Wari site of Conchopata in the central Andes has, for the first time, revealed human trophy heads associated with the Wari empire (AD 600–1000). The trophy heads were recovered from two architectural spaces: a circular ritual structure (EA143) and a D-shaped ritual structure (EA72) (Figure 16.4). All were burned and deposited on the floors, breaking many of them in the process. In the D-shaped structure, ritually smashed ceramic urns and camelid offerings were also present (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2002), but no ceramics were associated directly with the trophy heads from the circular structure (Tung and Cook 2006). I reconstructed and analyzed the trophy heads, showing that there are at least 31 trophy heads: 17 adult and 4 child trophy heads were in the circular room (EA143), and 7 adult and 3 child trophy heads were in the D-shaped room (EA72) (Tung 2003b).

The age distribution of the Wari trophy heads differs from the Nasca trophy heads. Among the Wari, nearly a quarter are children (7/31 = 23%) (Tung 2003b), and among Nasca trophy heads, 7% are children. This difference may reflect unique attitudes toward children and childhood or distinct functions of the trophy heads within each cultural group. In contrast to the age profiles, sex profiles are more similar, perhaps suggesting parallels in gender criteria for those deemed appropriate for head taking: Wari trophy heads are 88% male ($N = 17$) and Nasca trophy heads are 92% male ($N = 98$).

The Wari trophy heads are highly standardized, and this may suggest that the uniform modifications were monitored by the Wari state or devised and carried out by a select group of Wari ritual specialists (Tung 2003b). More than three-quarters

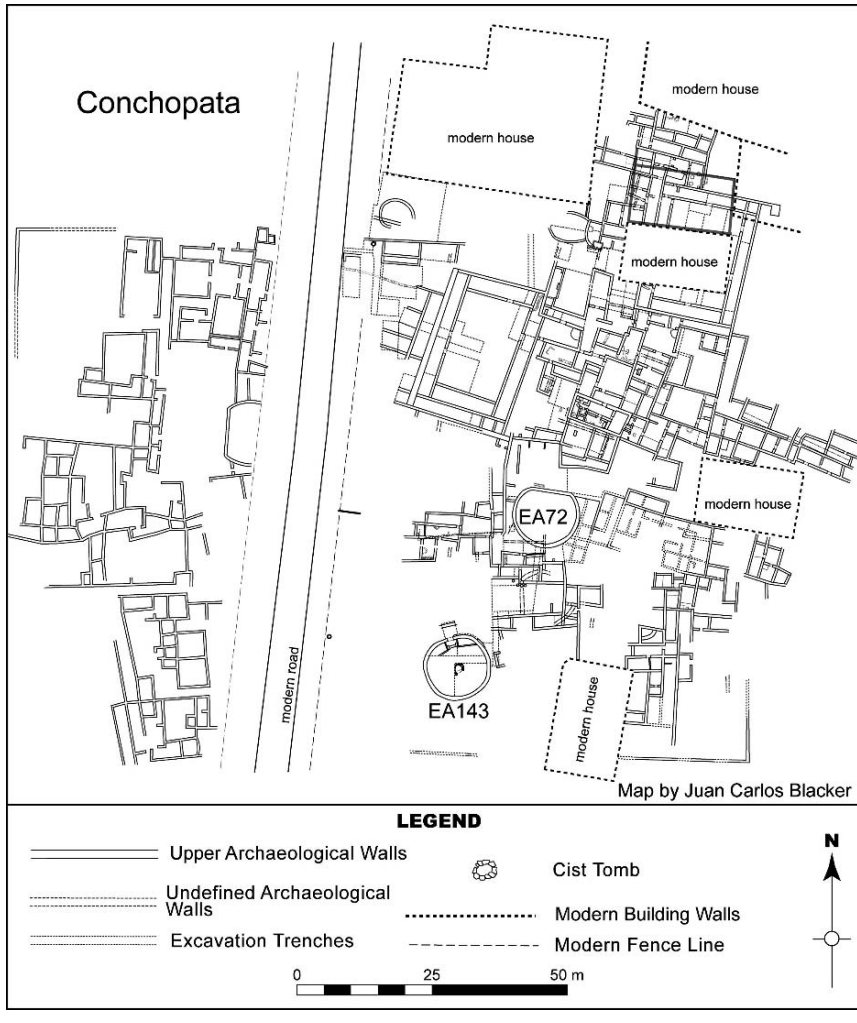

Figure 16.4. Map of Conchopata. Note the two ritual structures (EA 72 and EA 143). (Based on site map by Juan Carlos Blacker.)

of the trophy heads display a perforation at bregma, an osteometric point on the superior portion of the cranium where the sagittal and coronal sutures intersect (Figure 16.5). The perforations are also of similar size and shape (Tung 2003b). These standardized modifications differ from the Nasca trophy heads where various sized and shaped perforations were more randomly placed on the anterior of the frontal bone. A hole at bregma, rather than the frontal, also would have served to suspend the head from a rope while maintaining it in anatomical position (i.e., upright and facing forward). (A dangling Nasca trophy head would not face forward, unless it was intentionally weighted to do so.) The Wari method of display is apparent on a large, state-produced ceramic urn from the D-shaped

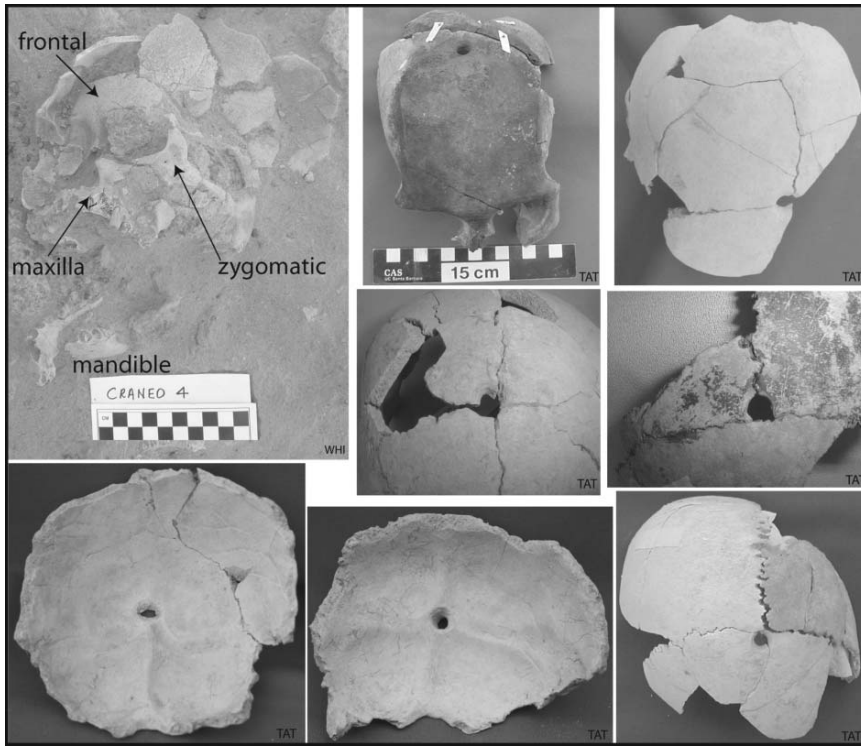

Figure 16.5. Sample of trophy heads from D-shaped (EA 72) and circular (EA 143) ritual structures at Conchopata. *Upper left*: trophy head in situ. (Photo by W. H. Isbell.) *Two lower left photos*: occipital bones with holes. *Others*: holes at bregma. (Photos by T. A. Tung.)

room (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2002) where a warrior wears a trophy head around his neck while the face of the trophy head looks forward (Figure 16.6). The parallel representations of trophy heads in both artistic and osteological media further suggest standardization, and perhaps state oversight inasmuch as the creation and representation of trophy heads were concerned.

Wari trophy heads also exhibit holes on the occipital bone. Among the eight individuals with occipital bones present, 75% displayed at least one hole. I suggest that the holes on the occipital bones were threaded with twine so they could, on occasion, be worn or dangled as isolated elements, separate from the rest of the cranium. The archaeological context supports this assertion: two occipital bones were found in situ, placed together in a cluster. A fragmented calotte (cranium without face or base) was recovered near the occipital bone cluster, but it is unclear if it belongs to either of two isolated occipital bones (neither occipital could be joined with the calotte, but warping and tiny, missing cranial pieces may have prevented making joins). If one of the occipital bones does in fact belong to the calotte, one isolated occipital bone remains unaffiliated, suggesting that it may have been used as an isolated piece. Notably, the edges of the occipital bones exhibited

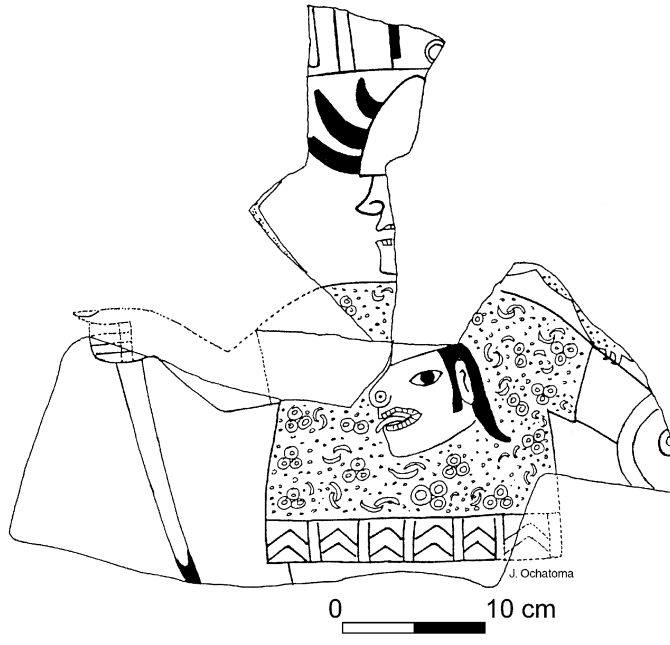

Figure 16.6. Illustration from a ceramic urn fragment of a warrior wearing a trophy head. The urn was recovered from the floor of the D-shaped room (EA 72). (Image courtesy of Jose Ochatoma.)

a patina, indicating that they were handled extensively, perhaps as amulets. A perforation on the occipital bone is unique to the Wari trophy heads. To my knowledge, no Nasca trophy heads display this feature.

The ramus of the mandible also exhibited drilled holes. Among the 9 individuals with an observable left ramus, three showed a perforation. These holes were probably used as conduits for rope so the mandible could be dangled separately, or tied back to the cranium, or perhaps both were done throughout the use life of the trophy head. One of the Moche skulls that was transformed into a bowl also exhibited drilled holes on the ramus, probably to thread it with cord and tie it back to the cranium (Verano 2001:Fig. 8.4). Reattached mandibles also were observed on Nasca trophy heads, but rather than drilling holes through the ramus, they were reattached by winding textile cord around it and tying it to the zygomatic bone (Verano 1995:Fig. 8).

Twenty-seven Wari trophy heads were well-preserved enough to observe for cut marks on either the cranium or mandible, and 15 were affected (15/27 = 56%), indicating that they were dismembered and defleshed. Incisions were particularly common on the posterior edge of the ramus, indicating that the masseter muscle was cut in order to separate the mandible from the cranium. Three specimens exhibited cut marks on the inferior edge of the zygomatic bone, further suggesting removal of the masseter muscle and perhaps indicating that the face was flayed.

The Ritual Context of the Wari Trophy Heads

Cook (1994, 2001) has examined Wari iconography reflecting themes of human sacrifice and head taking and was the first to suggest that Wari trophy heads would be found in D-shaped or other ritual structures. Indeed, Wari trophy heads were recovered from two ritual structures at Conchopata, suggesting they were part of a complex ritual practice, probably directed by ritual specialists. Those who modified the skulls (ritual specialists or some other subgroup) likely had intimate knowledge of skeletal and muscle anatomy. In addition to the elaborately prepared trophy heads, rituals included the destruction of large ceramic urns with images of supernatural and militaristic beings carrying trophy heads (Cook 2001; Ochatoma and Cabrera 2002). That, and the predominantly adult male trophy heads suggest that victims were probably taken during violent conflicts (Tung 2003b).

The presence of child trophy heads appears contrary to the possibility that heads were obtained violently. They could represent sacrificial offerings or naturally deceased children from the local community, or they may have been nonlocals taken from other communities. That is, if violent encounters occurred in the context of raids, then children and adults both would have been present and perhaps fairly easily abducted. The notion of "social substitutability" (Kelly 2000) in contexts of warfare and raids suggests that any individual from a community is a representative of that group, and thus a legitimate target. This makes all individuals (nearly) equally susceptible to attack or abduction. Social substitutability is particularly likely in cases of raiding, where men, women, and children are all vulnerable (see Harner 1972), even more so than in warfare when only certain subgroups (e.g., men) may engage in battle and become victims.

Figure 16.7. Ceramic urn fragment with the Front Faced Staff Deity carrying a captive and the Winged Attendant carrying a trophy head. (Photo by William H. Isbell.)

That Wari engaged in raids and abductions, perhaps to obtain heads for rituals, is further supported by an iconographic depiction of a captive with hands bound behind his back, suspended from the staff of the Front Faced Staff Deity (Figure 16.7). (This ceramic fragment derives from an oversize urn that was part of an offering in a patio (EA2) at Conchopata (Isbell and Cook 2002).)

To the left of the Front Faced Staff Deity, a trophy head with what appears to be a dangling trachea hangs from a staff, which is carried by what Anita Cook (personal communication 2006) has termed the Winged Profile Sacrificer.[8] The depiction of a bound captive and a trophy head under the control of Wari supernatural beings underscores the significance of ritual performance that physically and visually exploits human bodies and body parts. The literal and artistic portrayal of mutilated and incomplete bodies reveals their dual status as bodies controlled by the Wari state and their status as sacred objects and emblems of authority for those who created and controlled them.

The Social Life of Wari Trophy Heads the artistic representations of bound captives and trophy heads, combined with the physically altered and mutilated bodies, show how they may have been used in rituals, providing insights into the social life of trophy heads. As shown on the ceramic urn (Figure 16.7), the physiognomy of the human trophy head is still apparent; the person is fully fleshed with face painting and appears to wear a hat and an ear spool. The hole at bregma (on the superior of the skull) may have been drilled at this time to facilitate its dangling from the staff. This fully fleshed, recognizable head may have constituted the first phase in the use life of a trophy head.

Subsequent processing may have included defleshing and disarticulation, as evidenced by cut marks, enabling their display as isolated crania and mandibles.[9] At some point, several crania were further processed by separating the occipital bone from the rest of the cranium, perhaps facilitating their use as amulets. The patina along the edges of the occipital bone supports this assertion, and the drilled perforations on the occipital suggest that the occipital amulets were threaded with cord and suspended for display. Eventually, the trophy heads and the cranial amulets were burned at high temperature such that the bone vitrified, altering it to a chalky whitish-grey color. In the end, they were smashed and deposited on the floor of the circular and D-shaped ritual structures. Large ceramic urns, some depicting human heads and faces, were also ritually sacrificed by intentionally smashing them and leaving them on the floor of the D-shaped room (Ochatoma and Cabrera 2002) in what appears to be one of the final acts in an elaborate Wari ritual.

Who Was Transformed into Wari Trophy Heads: Locals or Foreigners?

Determining if Wari trophy heads were from locals or foreigners should provide much insight regarding their function and meaning in Wari society. If locals

were the source of Wari trophy heads, it is possible that they derived from local enemies or family members (ancestors). The later Inka (AD 1450–1532), for example, are known to have preserved bodies and exuviae of Inka lords (Guaman Poma de Ayala et al. 1987 [1615]), and among the modern Uru-Uru Chipayas in Bolivia, *las calaveras* (skull handlers) incorporate disembodied skulls in religious rituals (Wachtel 2001).

Conversely, if the heads were from nonlocals, then they may have represented enemies whose bodies and body parts were later used in rituals. For example, head taking during raids has been documented among the Jivaro of Ecuador within the last half-century, where adults and children have been taken as trophies and ostentatiously displayed (Harner 1972). The heads also could have been obtained in ritual battles (akin to *tinku*). A case in point comes from the village of Ch'iaraje where informants reported that a prisoner taken in a ritual battle was later decapitated (Orlove 1994).

These examples do not constitute an exhaustive list of the varied ways that bodies and body parts can be used in rituals. Rather, they simply highlight some of the possible ways that body parts may have been obtained and used, either as trophies obtained in violent conflicts (war, raids, or ritual fights), as ancestral objects of veneration derived from human sacrifices or natural deaths, or some combination thereof.

STRONTIUM ISOTOPE ANALYSIS

To determine if adult trophy heads from Conchopata were from a local or distant geographical locale, five were analyzed to determine their strontium isotope ratio (Tung 2003b; Tung and Knudson 2006). (A sample of five represents nearly 20% of the adult trophy head sample.)

Strontium isotope analysis is ideal for the question at hand because strontium isotope ratios in a person's tooth enamel and bone will reflect the strontium isotope signature of plants that they consumed and the soils in which they were grown. Thus, if primarily local foods were eaten, then the human strontium isotope ratio should match that of local soils (Grupe et al. 1997; Price et al. 1994; Price et al. 2002). Specifically, the dental enamel reflects strontium absorption during childhood because that is when teeth are forming; once dental formation is complete, strontium is no longer incorporated into the teeth (Hillson 1996). Bone, in contrast, remodels throughout an individual's life, so it reflects strontium uptake for approximately the last 10 years before death, depending on the skeletal element analyzed (Mulhearn 2000; Mulhearn and Van Gerven 1997). Thus, if individuals from the Wari heartland were obtaining heads from enemies, it is possible that they were taken from peoples living outside the Wari imperial core in a distinct geological locale. If so, the strontium isotope values of trophy head victims should reveal this nonlocal strontium signature. Local strontium isotope values were established by local geology (Mégard et al. 1984; Wise 2000), local

small fauna and local burials from tombs at Conchopata. These samples indicate that the local strontium isotope ratio is $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr = 0.7050–0.7068$ (Tung 2003b; Tung and Knudson 2006).

Among the five trophy heads sampled, three showed nonlocal strontium isotope values in their bones, suggesting that at least some adults who were transformed into trophy heads had lived at least part of their adult lives in a foreign locale (Tung 2003b; Tung and Knudson 2006). While it is possible that they lived in the local region and consumed imported foods, this seems unlikely because the majority of their diet would have had to be transported from another geological zone. It is also possible that they voluntarily migrated to Conchopata shortly before a natural death, but the iconographic images suggest otherwise. In short, the strontium isotope data, combined with the iconography of trophy heads and prisoners, suggest that at least some of the Conchopata trophy heads possible represent foreign enemies whose body parts were used in elaborate rituals within sacred spaces (Tung 2003b; Tung and Knudson 2006). The literally manipulative transformation of these bodies into sacred relics, and the spectacular display of this process in art and lively rituals, likely served to establish the authority of those who transformed them, while also highlighting Wari state control over the bodies within their domain.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

There is much physical and iconographic evidence for the display and offering of human body parts in the Andes during the Late Pre-Ceramic to the Middle Horizon: practices that were generically similar but which carried variable meanings throughout time and across space.

In the earlier periods (Late Pre-Ceramic to Early Horizon), disembodied skulls were unmodified (save for one possible case from the Galería de Ofrendas at Chavín), and based on the demographic profile from Wichqana and Chavín, it appears that females were preferentially selected over males. Additionally, based on the demographically diverse group of heads in Chavín's stone platform, as well as the absence of trauma or cut marks, it is possible that a kin group was ceremoniously interred there as part of an ancestor veneration complex. These once corporeal heads may have been reinvented as ancestral objects that contributed to community identity. In contrast, the Sechín stone carvings that preceded the Chavín Horizon display bloody decapitated heads in association with warriors, suggesting a more prominent role for violence in obtaining and artistically displaying human heads.

The Nasca trophy heads and the earlier disembodied heads are similar in that both emphasize the corporeal yet supernatural quality of the human head. But they are categorically distinct: Nasca heads were modified to extract the brain and display them from a hanging cord, while all but one of the skulls from earlier eras appears to show no modification. Nasca trophy heads were not only prepared differently, they were also represented by a significantly different demographic

group, mainly young adult males. While this suggests that heads were probably obtained in violent battles (either secular or ritual), others have suggested that they represent ancestral relics.

In Wari society, trophy heads were also of ritual significance, but Wari ritual specialists modified the heads in a novel way, perhaps creating new meanings and paths to power in the process (Tung and Cook 2006). The potentially exclusive class of preparers likely had knowledge of human anatomy and other special skills, both practical and supernatural. This perceived supernatural quality may have enabled them to transform corporeal beings into relics that embodied sacredness and power, while simultaneously reifying their own. In this way, human bodies in the hands of ritual specialists continued to be objectified for ritual and political ends. With each new head they prepared, their ritual expertise and supernatural qualities increased.

This diachronic perspective on disembodied skulls and trophy heads in the Andes could be interpreted as representing some form of Pan-Andean unity, and while this may be possible, it is important to observe the distinctions in how heads were obtained, modified, displayed, and used in rituals. Based on the broad temporal and spatial variety of disembodied skull contexts, physical modifications, and representations in art, it appears that there is no single, clear-cut tradition that is shared among all Andean populations as it relates to obtaining and displaying human heads. While generic similarities are present, a profound essential quality is not. To suggest so would imply a sense of timelessness or ahistoricity that ignores the changing and/or competing social, ideological, and political relevance that ritualized human body parts could potentially express.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

1. No ages or trauma data were reported for these crania, so the data are insufficient to draw conclusions.
2. Burger (1992) notes that one of the Asia skulls had a hole punched in the frontal bone, like a trophy head; however, Engel (1963) suggests that the hole is a trepanation and Hartweg (1958) makes no mention of it.

3. While Vidal (1984) notes the absence of caries, the type and total number of teeth observed was not reported, so it is difficult to make comparisons and conclusions (e.g., because molars are more commonly affected with caries, relative to anterior teeth, it is important to know if any molars were observed).
4. Ongoing studies are using ancient DNA analysis of Nasca burials and trophy heads to determine if locals, foreigners, or both were transformed into trophy heads (Forgey and Williams, 2005). Documenting this aspect of identity (biological affiliation) should aid in identifying some of the meanings associated with trophy head rituals.
5. Verano (1995) notes the difficulties in distinguishing between trophy heads (flesh intact) and trophy skulls (flesh intentionally removed) among archaeological specimens with variable preservation, so, for the purposes of this chapter, I use the general term *trophy head* to refer to any disembodied head or skull that has been modified as described by Verano. These criteria have been widely accepted and serve well for the identification of Nasca trophy heads.
6. Because I have personally reconstructed and analyzed all of the Conchopata trophy heads, I provide a much more detailed account of those specimens relative to those from Tiwanaku.
7. The skull was poorly preserved, so no detailed osteological observations could be made (Schreiber, personal communication 2005).
8. While the Winged Profile Sacrificer is sometimes called the Winged Attendant, Cook notes that the latter term implies a secondary status or attending role, even though the relative status between the supernatural beings is unknown. For this reason, I avoid the term "attendant."

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Chapter 17

Human Trophies in the Late Pre-Hispanic Andes

Striving for Status and Maintaining Power Among the Incas and Other Societies

DENNIS E. OGBURN

Examining the taking and displaying of human trophies in the late pre-Hispanic period of Andean South America (Figure 17.1) is a challenging task because the nature of the evidence for these practices changes significantly over time. During the earlier part of this time span (ca. AD 1000–1438), the scant data available is archaeological, including osteological remains from burial contexts and iconographic elements on ceramics and other objects. In the latter part (ca. AD 1438–1532), the period of Inca imperial expansion, ethnohistorical sources are the primary means for gathering information on the taking and displaying of human trophies, and as Verano (1995:192) notes, there are few known examples of Inca trophies.

This chapter explores the taking of human trophies during these two time periods, with an emphasis on the period of Inca expansion. For this latter period, the data allow for a more detailed discussion of these practices among three major groups: (1) the Inca elites, (2) the commoners who served in the Inca military, and (3) non-Inca native groups in the provinces of the empire. As a whole, the data available for the late pre-Hispanic period of the Andes show that human trophies were taken and displayed by many groups within similar contexts, were crafted in a variety of forms, and were meant to send messages to several different audiences. Overall, despite the variety of forms of human trophies and the geographical range of societies where they were taken and displayed, it appears that the primary purpose of these practices in the late pre-Hispanic Andes was that of establishing or reinforcing positions of status and power.

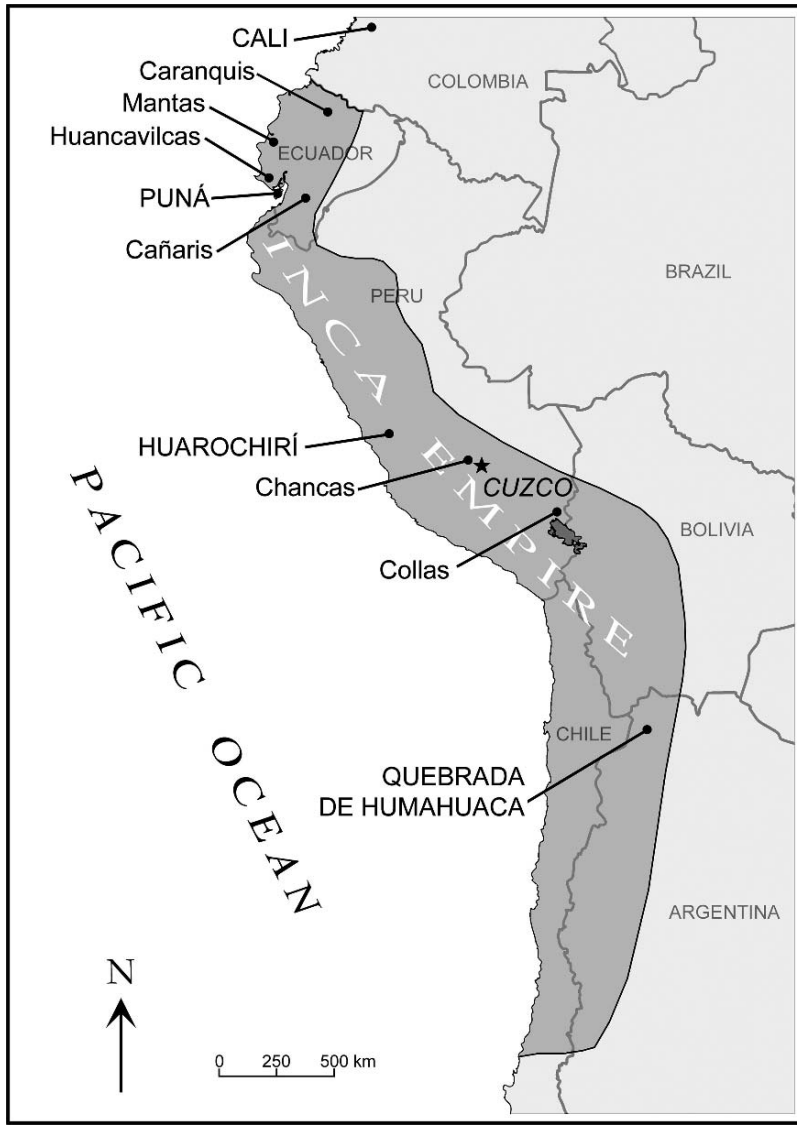

Figure 17.1. The domain of the Incas and location of places and ethnic groups discussed in the text.

THE LATE PRE-INCA PERIOD (CA. AD 1000–1430)

The late pre-Inca period in the Andes (comprising the Late Intermediate Period of Peru, the latter part of the Integration Period of Ecuador, etc.) was a time of major changes and conflicts. In the central Andes, the major states of Wari and

Tiwanaku had collapsed, and groups formerly under their sway were reconfiguring their political, religious, and economic systems to adjust to the new conditions. Most regions became organized into complex chiefdoms or small states, and there was frequent warfare between neighboring groups. Settlements were commonly established in fortified or defensible ridge or hilltop locations.

While it is clear that trophy heads had a deep history in the Andean world, evidence for the taking and displaying of these and other human trophies during the late pre-Inca period is very limited compared to some earlier periods such as the Early Intermediate Period (ca. 200 BC–AD 600). There are a few reported cases of trophy heads from excavated contexts, such as Quebrada de Humahuaca in Argentina (Nielsen 2001). But it is likely that this dearth of osteological information can be attributed to the fact that there have been fewer excavations at sites dating to this era than at those dating to some of the earlier periods. In addition, imagery of severed heads in this late pre-Inca period becomes rare when compared to the iconography on ceramics and other materials in the earlier periods. Some examples, such as a gold medallion from the Cañari area of Ecuador (Bravomalo de Espinoza 1992:213), indicate the continuation of the practice of representing trophy heads in at least some regions. The fact that portrayals of trophy heads became scarce in the late pre-Inca period is not too surprising, given that styles of ceramic decoration became much less figurative than in previous eras and were predominately geometric in many regions.

Although there is a dearth of archaeological information on taking and displaying human trophies in late pre-Inca times, it is reasonable to assume that those practices continued into the time of Inca imperial expansion. There was also likely to be a great degree of continuity in terms of contexts in which trophies were taken and displayed and how they were used, as illuminated through the ethnohistorical information examined in the following sections.

THE INCA PERIOD (CA. AD 1438–1532)

The Inca period comprises the expansion of the Inca empire from the Cuzco region, which ultimately led to the creation of the largest state in the pre-Hispanic New World. The empire spanned more than 4000 km of the Andes, and incorporated, by way of military conquest or diplomacy, dozens of different ethnic groups who were previously organized into their own separate polities.

The Incas imposed a select range of state practices on conquered groups, such as certain religious beliefs and the use of the Quechua language, which encouraged a degree of vertical cultural integration of the provinces within the dominant state society (Rowe 1982). But the Incas did not follow a policy of total assimilation of the cultures of the provincial peoples, mandating instead the maintenance of native practices and identities. For this time period, data from the chronicles written by Spanish and indigenous authors as well as information from other native and Spanish documents serve to illuminate the range of practices and the contexts in

which human trophies were created and displayed among the Incas and non-Inca groups. This data set provides a somewhat different perspective than what can be generated from purely archaeological data, and complements and expands what is known for the late pre-Inca time period.

The Ethnohistoric Record

When drawing from the historical record to explore a subject with gruesome and brutal overtones, as with the taking of human trophies, the potential for major biases in these sources must be addressed. Specifically, during the period when the major chronicles were being produced, from the mid-sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century, there was great contention over how Spanish colonizers were allowed to treat and exploit the natives of the New World. Foremost, the New Laws of the Indies issued by King Charles I in 1542 had declared that the indigenous people could not be enslaved. In reaction, there were strong arguments made that virtual enslavement was justified if those people practiced certain customs, such as human sacrifice, sodomy, and cannibalism, or were particularly "barbaric." Thus, an author emphasizing brutal practices of warfare or punishment could have been seen as supporting the case for continuing the exploitation of Andean peoples. Many of these authors lived in the Andes and some of them stood to directly gain from taking such a position.

Along these lines, there were certainly differences in how the chronicles treated the taking and displaying of human trophies, in both the frequency with which the practices were mentioned and the level of detail provided. For example, Pedro de Sarmiento de Gamboa (1942 [1572]), whose agenda included portraying the Incas as brutal despots in the interest of legitimating Spanish rule, made frequent mention of the taking of heads and the creation of other trophies.

In contrast, Garcilaso de la Vega, son of a Spaniard and an Inca noblewoman, wrote one of the later chroniclers and strove to present a positive, romanticized view of Inca history to counter the negative images perpetrated by the likes of Sarmiento. In his work, Garcilaso de la Vega made few mentions of the taking of human trophies by the Incas.

These differences can certainly create suspicions about the veracity of the different accounts and whether or not trophies were made from slain people. However, indigenous chroniclers such as Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (1936 [1615]) and Joan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua (1995 [early seventeenth century]) included numerous mentions of human trophy taking, and there is little reason to suspect that they were trying to create an unfavorable portrait of the Incas. In fact, Guaman Poma produced his account specifically to petition the Spanish court to stop the mistreatment of Andean natives by the colonizers. He would have had little reason to make the Incas appear brutal by fabricating stories of human trophy taking.

Moreover, I suspect that in the context of mid-sixteenth century European customs, the taking and displaying of human trophies was not necessarily considered

an unacceptable nor especially barbaric practice. In particular, cutting off and displaying heads of rebel leaders was a familiar practice. For example, in England, heads of defeated rebel leaders were displayed on London Bridge up through the seventeenth century. In the Andes, the Spaniards were by no means removed from the practice themselves; in a number of cases they cut off and displayed heads of their fellow countrymen during periods of civil unrest. In one of the most notable examples, the first viceroy of Peru, Blasco Núñez Vela, was decapitated in battle by the forces of the rebellious Gonzalo Pizarro in 1546, and his head was prominently displayed on a pike in the plaza of Quito. Gonzalo Pizarro was himself executed in 1548, and his head was put on display in Lima (Prescott 1857:312, 442).

On the whole, reports of the taking and displaying of trophy heads among the Andean natives was unlikely to be used in an effort to make the indigenous people appear barbaric, although it could have been applicable to other forms of human trophies that were unfamiliar to the Spaniards.

Inca Elites

The ethnohistorical references to the taking of human trophies largely relate to the actions of the Inca emperors themselves, their military leaders, and other Inca elites, referred to collectively by the Spaniards as *orejones*. Thus, our picture of the practice by this group is better developed than for other groups. The trophies taken by the Inca elites came primarily from chiefs or other leaders killed or captured in battle, either during wars of conquest or in suppression of rebellions. Trophies were also taken in the context of factional fighting among the highest-ranking Incas.

From these victims, the Incas created several different forms of trophies. The primary forms appear to have been severed heads, drums made from flayed human skins, and drinking cups made from skulls. The Incas also crafted flutes or panpipes from the long bones of victims and necklaces from teeth (Guaman Poma 1936:164, 187–188, 334 [1615]). Although these trophies made from long bones and teeth were reported less frequently and with little detail, there are a few known archaeological examples. For example, Max Uhle (1912) notes that he excavated some necklaces of teeth at the site of Sacsayhuaman above Cuzco. The items from a male warrior's grave from Paucartambo displayed in the Museo Inka in Cuzco include an incomplete set of discolored human teeth with holes drilled through them, apparently the remains of a necklace of teeth. There is also a flute made from an arm bone in the collection of the Museo Amano, Lima (McIntyre 1975:59).

Severed heads, recalling the trophy heads prominent in the iconography of some earlier Andean societies, featured in a number of historical accounts. Most of these trophy heads were described as being taken by Inca elites from enemy leaders defeated in battle, and they were used in a number of ways.

In the epic battles between the Incas and Chancas in the Cuzco region, which are portrayed as the seminal events leading to the creation of the empire, the

victorious aspiring prince Inca Yupanqui (Pachacuti) cuts off the heads of several Chanca chiefs (two according to Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:90 [1572]; three according to Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua 1995:61 [early seventeenth century]). Their heads were then mounted on lances and displayed to the opposing Chanca (and Hancoalla) forces, in order to frighten them such that they would cease fighting against the Incas. The trophies were then used as a symbol of triumph when the Inca Yupanqui sent them to his father, Viracocha, so that the latter could revel in the victory according to custom (Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua 1995:61 [early seventeenth century]). In another version, the severed heads of the chiefs (four in this account) along with those of many of their warriors were mounted on posts in the battlefield to commemorate the victory (Betanzos 1996:41 [1557]).

The idea of sending trophy heads to the emperor as a sign of victory is also seen in Guaman Poma's description of how the captain Auqui Topa Inca sent the severed heads of enemy leaders to his father, the Inca Capac Yupanqui (Guaman Poma 1936:135 [1615]; Figure 17.2). Trophy heads are well-suited to this task because they present incontrovertible evidence that an enemy was killed. In addition, their faces can be recognized, which is particularly beneficial (to the empire) when they are displayed to the victim's own followers.

Even if the faces were not immediately recognizable to the emperor, the practice of presenting the regalia and weapons of the defeated leaders in concert with the human trophies served to verify the identity of the victims. Moreover, in the context of a territorially expansive state like the Inca Empire, captains of far-flung armies could not return quickly to the capital to attest to their victories, thus a portable object such as a trophy head could provide an expeditious means of demonstrating success.

Trophy heads were also very prominently displayed in victory celebrations, including the triumphal entrance of the emperor and his army into Cuzco. When the emperor Huayna Capac made his posthumous victory entrance into the capital (as arranged by his son, Huascar), the procession was led by a number of *orejones* carrying the heads of enemy leaders (Murúa 1946:116 [1590]). In addition, the head of a chief of a province was carried in the hand of the effigy of Huayna Capac when it made its entrance (Murúa 1946:118 [1590]; the emperors had effigies made of themselves, which traveled with them during their lifetimes).

In another case, the Inca Pachacuti made a triumphal entrance into Cuzco after conquering the Collas. Instead of arriving with a trophy head, the lord of the Collas was brought in as a prisoner. His head was then cut off during the victory ceremonies and kept as a trophy (Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:104 [1572]). However, according to Betanzos (1996:95 [1557]), the Colla leader was captured and killed in battle, with his head preserved as a trophy and taken back to Cuzco.

Severed heads were also kept as trophies when rebellious groups were subdued, as when Topa Inca defeated the disloyal Collas (Betanzos 1996:147 [1557]). Murúa (1946:93 [1590]) stated that it was standard practice to cut off heads of rebels, although without explicitly mentioning the creation of trophies. Many other incidents are recorded wherein enemy leaders were beheaded with no clear

Figure 17.2. The Inca Captain Auqui Topa presenting the head of a slain Colla leader to the ruler Capac Yupanqui as a sign of victory. (Guaman Poma 1615.)

indication of trophy taking (Cieza de León 1985:190 [1553]; Vega 1966:567 [1609]). In two cases, Inca emperors were said to have cut off the heads of other Inca elites who were plotting against them or becoming significant rivals (Cabello Balboa 1945:237 [1586]; Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:109[1572]). However, it seems likely that these heads were in fact preserved and displayed as trophies.

A well-known variant on the trophy head was the creation of skull cups, which were used for drinking *chicha,* the Andean corn beer (Guaman Poma 1936:164, 188, 334 [1615]). As with severed heads, these trophies were usually said to have been made from conquered enemy leaders (Guaman Poma 1936:164,188 [1615]).

Two chronicles relate that the Inca Pachacuti had drinking cups made from the heads of a pair of Chanca leaders (Cabello Balboa 1945:288 [1586]; Murúa 1946:46 [1590]). Cabello Balboa (1945:288 [1586]) noted that the captured chiefs were brought to Cuzco and subjected to much ridicule prior to their decapitation. Skull cups were also a common element in the accounts of the struggle for succession between the half-brothers Atahuallpa and Huascar. For example, Huascar is said to have ordered some of Atahuallpa's own close relatives to kill Atahuallpa and bring his head back so that he could drink out of it (Betanzos 1996:195 [1557]). Several of the Spaniards who came with Francisco Pizarro (Anonymous 1987:107 [1534]; Mesa 1940:200 [1572]) reported seeing Atahuallpa drink from the cup that he had made from one of his brothers, presumably a general named Atoc, who was sent against him by Huascar.

Several accounts (Anonymous 1987:107 [1534]; Cieza 1985:210 [1553]; Estete 1924:36 [ca.1547]) provide details on the process of constructing skull cups. The brains were removed from the skull, the inside was smoothed out, and the upper part of the scalp with the hair was retained. A whole was created on top, into which was fitted a large cup of beaten gold, and the heads may have been embellished with additional gold work. *Chicha* was poured into the cup and was drunk out of a silver or gold tube exiting from the skull's clenched teeth, so in effect, when an Inca drank from the straw, he would have been staring his vanquished enemy in the face. Such finely crafted cups are not known to have survived to the present, but there is one example of a skull in the collection of the Museo Inka in Cuzco with a large circular hole cut into it such that it may have served as a drinking vessel (McIntyre 1975:59).

The skin drum, known as *runatinya* or "person drum" (Guaman Poma 1936:334 [1615]), was another trophy form that appears to be characteristically Inca. Various accounts note skin drums being made from defeated enemy leaders (Betanzos 1996:209 [1557]; Cabello Balboa 1945:318 [1586]; Montesinos 1882:126 [1642]; Murúa 1964:60 [1611–1616]), such as the Caranqui lord Pinta who was conquered by Huayna Capac (Cabello Balboa 1945:358 [1586]; Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:147 [1572]). As with skull cups, this trophy form also figured in the maneuvering between Inca elites (Guaman Poma 1936:164 [1615]; Murua 1946:62 [1590]), including the struggle between Atahuallpa and Huascar. Each side of that fight reportedly made skin drums from representatives of the opposition (Betanzos 1996:193–195 [1557]; Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua 1995:108 [early seventeenth century]; Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:153 [1572]).

The preparation of skin drums appeared to involve a particularly elaborate process, as described by a number of writers, including Cieza de León (1985:135 [1553]), Guaman Poma (1936:334 [1615]), and Mesa (1940:200 [1572]). The victims were flayed (Figure 17.3), sometimes while the victim was still alive (Estete 1924:36 [ca. 1547], Montesinos 1882:126 [1642]). The skins were prepared to replicate the natural body shape by being stuffed with either ash or straw, and the filled skins were dressed in the clothes of the victims and made to look as if they were alive. The actual drum was prepared in the stomach area, and the hands,

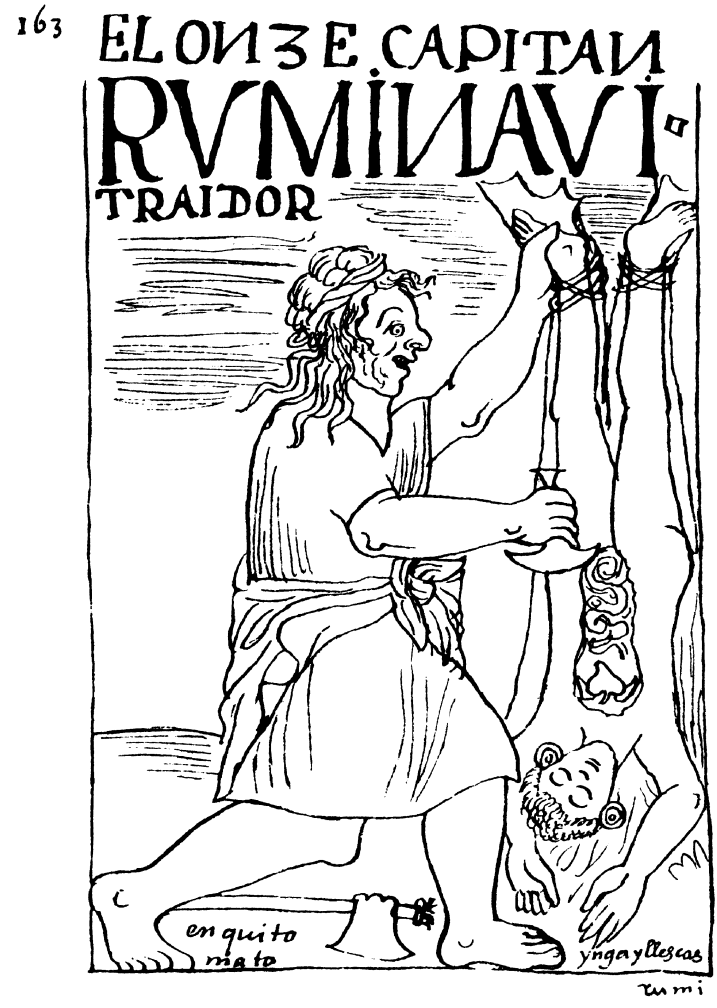

Figure 17.3. The Inca General Rumiñahui flaying the skin of the prince Inca Illescas in preparation for making a drum. (Guaman Poma 1615.)

while presumably still attached the body-skin, were used to beat the drum. It was also said that they were prepared and displayed such that the blowing wind would make the drums play themselves with their dangling hands.

Functionally, these *runatinya* were war drums for use in battle (Betanzos 1996:194–195 [1557]; Murúa 1964:60 [1611–1616]). They were also played in festivals (Betanzos 1996:195 [1557]), and at least one, made from a particularly valiant leader from northern Ecuador, was used in Cuzco for the Inti Raymi celebration, held to honor the sun (Cabello Balboa 1945:358 [1586]; Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:147 [1572]).

Cieza de León (1985:135–136 [1553]) described other human skin drums being used to memorialize the victory over the Chancas in the Cuzco region, with flutes placed in the mouths of some of them. In addition, Cieza noted that many human skin drums were seen by Spaniards who first entered Cuzco in the company of Francisco Pizarro.

It is also possible that before his capture by Francisco Pizarro, the Inca Atahuallpa had threatened to kill the Spaniards and turn their skins into drums. Various first-hand accounts from Pizarro's expedition note that as they made their way through the Andes toward meeting Atahuallpa in Cajamarca, the Spaniards received a set of gifts from an emissary of the Inca. Among these gifts were a number of dried, skinned ducks stuffed with wool. Some of Pizarro's men reported nothing sinister in regard to this gift, which Francisco de Jerez (1987:176 [1534]) said was a luxury item for Inca nobles, who would grind the ducks into a powder to use as a fragrance. But others (Anonymous 1987 [1534], Trujillo 1954:135 [1571]) stated that the skinned ducks signified that Atahuallpa intended to flay the Spaniards. Diego de Trujillo (1954:135 [1571]) specifically relates that the Inca emissary declared that Atahuallpa said that that was what would be done to the bodies of all of the Spaniards if they did not return all that they had taken from the Inca's land.

It is notable that some accounts list several forms of trophies being made from the same defeated adversaries. For example, trophies made from the bodies of Chanca leaders were said to have included severed heads, skull cups, and skin drums. It is difficult to say whether these reports are in conflict or if the Incas in fact created multiple trophies from the same individuals. In support of the latter possibility, the indigenous chronicler Guaman Poma (1936:164, 187–188 [1615]) wrote two separate passages indicating that the bodies of individual victims were used to create four forms of trophies, including skull drinking cups, skin drums, bone flutes, and teeth necklaces.

It is conceivable that severed heads functioned as the initial, expedient form of trophy where immediate proof of victory was called for, and that those heads were often later subjected to the more laborious treatment needed to turn them into drinking cups. However, it is difficult to create a skin drum that takes on the appearance of a living human when the head has been removed. Betanzos (1996:193–194 [1557]) noted a case where a victim was beheaded and then had his skin made into a drum, supporting the statements of Guaman Poma and suggesting that it may have been the custom to attach some sort of effigy head to the skin drum to make it "complete." In contrast, Mesa (1940:200 [1572]) recounted that the head was kept with the skin drum when these trophies were crafted.

Commoners in the Inca Military

While most of the ethnohistorical references to the taking of human trophies relate to the activities of Inca elites, there are two examples that indicate that

Figure 17.4. Andean warrior holding a trophy head as a sign of prowess in battle, illustrating the primary stage in a man's life. (Guaman Poma 1615.)

nonelites serving in the Inca army also took trophies. These accounts give some suggestions as to the context and importance of the practice by these warriors, who included both people from the Cuzco region and non-Incas from the provinces.

The first example is Guaman Poma's (1936:194 [1615]; Figure 17.4) illustration for the "Primera Calle," or the primary stage of a man's life. Men 25–50 years old were said to be in this stage, during which they pursued their primary occupation; this was the age range for men to serve in the imperial army, which was above all their highest calling. As Cobo (1990:215 [1653]) noted, the people of Peru "considered the military profession the most serious and noble of all." That

Guaman Poma chose to represent this stage with an image of a warrior further demonstrates the significance of military service. At the same time, depicting that soldier with a trophy head implied that this practice was the commonly understood sign of success in warfare. In essence, the unambiguous message of the drawing was that the most important thing a man was expected to do in life was to be a good warrior, who decapitated his defeated opponents.

In addition to that image, Cabello Balboa (1945:292 [1586]) gave some evidence of nonelite trophy taking in his description of a certain triumphal entrance of Pachacuti into Cuzco. Among the groups making an entrance was a squadron of soldiers carrying lances topped with severed heads, which sported loose and disheveled hair. This indicates that not only did the common soldiers take trophy heads in warfare, but that they were also given the opportunity to display these trophies in front of the imperial and provincial elites in the most grandiose venue.

Native Practices in the Provinces

It is unclear whether the taking and displaying of trophy heads by the nonelites in the Inca military was an indication that this was a pan-Andean practice in the late pre-Hispanic period or whether it was an Inca custom that was disseminated through imperial expansion and compulsory military service on the part of provincial subjects. The same question also arises for other forms of human trophies, and we also must consider whether the Incas were adopting provincial practices to suit their own ends. Fortunately, there are some ethnohistorical references to native practices of the taking and displaying of human trophy in various areas. This information allow us a basic glimpse of the range and context of these practices, which were likely to have originated prior to Inca expansion.

Trophy heads, as mentioned above, had a long history in the Andes, and during the Inca period, they were taken not only by the Inca elites and soldiers in the Inca military, but were also used by non-Inca peoples in various provinces. For example, the inhabitants of the Island of Puná off the coast of Ecuador were reported to have revolted and impaled on stakes the heads of dead Inca leaders, which were exhibited outside their temple gates (Vega 1966:554 [1609]).

In another case, Garcilaso de la Vega (1966:1417–1418 [1609]) describes how a Cañari chief named Chilche displayed a replica of a trophy head in a Corpus Christi procession in Cuzco in the year 1555. The head represented that of an Inca whom Chilche had killed in 1536 during the Spanish conquest of the Incas, and the act of displaying it in Cuzco was not taken lightly by the Inca nobility who were present. While this case did not occur in the provinces, it did involve a non-Inca who was not serving in the Inca military, illustrating how the practice of taking and displaying of trophy heads was commonly practiced and understood by people in the capital as well as the provinces.

As for other practices, Garcilaso de la Vega (1966:560 [1609]) wrote that the Mantas from the central coast of Ecuador flayed the prisoners they took in battle, and filled the skins with ashes so that they resembled living people. Those

trophies were displayed at the entrances to temples and in plazas where they held their victory celebrations. Similarly, Cieza de León (1984:160 [1553]) noted that in some Huancavilca settlements on the southern coast of Ecuador there were a great number of human skins filled with ashes. He also observed a similarity between the Huancavilca trophies and those made by inhabitants of the Cali region of Colombia (Cieza de León 1984:160 [1553]), which suggests that this was a common practice in the northern Andean area.

Redmond (1994) notes additional reports of filled human skins (among a variety of other trophy forms) being created and displayed by other groups in the Cauca Valley, which surrounds Cali. Of course, these ash-filled human skins recall the ash or straw filled skin drums created by the Incas from the bodies of slain Chanca warriors, which Cieza had also reported (Cieza de León 1985:135–136 [1553]). Because Cali was never subjected to Inca conquest or control, this suggests that filling flayed skins with ashes was a widespread, pre-Inca practice. Notably, the Inca war with the Chancas took place many years before the empire expanded to the Huancavilca region, so if the details about the Chanca skin drums are correct, the Incas could not have learned of that form of trophy through direct contact with the Huancavilcas or other groups in the north.

Another significant example is found in a native manuscript from the Huarochirí region in the central highlands of Peru, which includes the description of a practice wherein captured warriors were killed sacrificially and their faces turned into masks (Anonymous 1991:120 [ca.1598]). Known as *huayos*, these human face masks were made from both the skin and bones of the victim (Arguedas and Duviols 1966:247). The *huayos* were then used in rituals, which involved dancing with them in the town plaza, carrying them in litters, and hanging them "up together with their maize, potatoes, and all the other offerings" (Anonymous 1991:120 [ca.1598]). The masks were prepared to conserve the victims' personae (Anonymous 1991:120 [ca.1598]), and were given offerings in exchange for sharing their vital powers (Arguedas and Duviols 1966:247).

The information regarding the *huayos* is noteworthy because it reveals a form of human trophy that was significantly different from the more common form of trophy heads or the Inca skull cups. This hints at a greater variation in local practices that went undocumented in the former provinces of the Inca Empire and has yet to be revealed in the archaeological record. Moreover, it demonstrates an explicit supernatural component of the taking of human trophies. Although the trophies taken by the Inca elites were used in ceremonies such as Inti Raymi and at times taken or created in ritual contexts, there is little clear indication that the Incas attributed any supernatural advantage to their possession. This contrasts with the nature of the *huayos*, which continued to be imbued with the life forces of the victims. However, given the reports that the Incas believed in life after death (Cobo 1990:19–21 [1653]), which had its greatest manifestation in the custom of preserving the mummies of the emperors and treating them as active participants of society (Cobo 1990:39 [1653]), it is highly likely that there were some supernatural implications to the taking of human trophies by the Incas.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It is clear that individuals of varying positions of social status and from a variety of different ethnic groups were taking and displaying human trophies in the late pre-Hispanic Andes. In most cases, the display of these trophies was sending a similar signal, but to a variety of audiences in the service of enhancing or maintaining individual positions of status and/or leadership. The signal being conveyed by this practice was primarily one of triumph and of individual prowess in combat. In addition, the message could be one of aggressiveness and ruthless determination, as in the case of Inca factional fighting. Certainly there were other meanings embedded in the various trophies that were created and displayed, especially regarding beliefs about the human body and its various parts and their relation to spirits and essences of the deceased. However, the available information about human trophies provides little basis for making useful inferences along those lines, and the signaling of triumph and prowess in warfare was clearly the primary, overt message being conveyed.

It is in the intended audiences that these displays show the most variety. In general, the number of potential audiences increased with the complexity of social and political organization (i.e., the network of power relationships), and with the number of potential enemy groups. In the context of practices of non-Inca groups, individuals used trophies to show their strength to their fellow warriors as well as to their chiefs, to aid in their maneuvering to achieve higher positions within local sociopolitical structures. Success in warfare was known to be the primary way for men to advance and achieve higher status and power (Cobo 1990:215 [1653]; Rowe 1946:256, 279), and taking trophy heads was a concrete demonstration of that success. Likewise, the local chiefs or lords needed to continually emphasize their strength to maintain their high-status positions. Human trophies could also serve to display prowess to members of enemy groups when engaging in combat, or even in nonviolent interactions.

Common soldiers within the Inca army also sought to display their prowess to their fellow warriors and chiefs, which could lead to higher positions within the ranks as well as the granting of material rewards and wives by the state (Rowe 1946:279–280). In addition, there were occasions when the soldiers were able to present their trophies to all of the elites of Cuzco. However, in this context they were serving to a great extent to bolster the reputation of the Inca emperor rather than to help their own advancement, as they were parading in numbers to celebrate the victory of the Inca army under the command of the emperor or his generals.

The provincial subjects conscripted into the Inca army also had the opportunity to exhibit their trophies to members of their own communities when they returned home after military campaigns. They likely brought these trophies with them and displayed them in their home communities to enhance their positions there. These warriors may also have used such opportunities to display their trophies to their traditional enemies, even if they were unlikely to be engaging them in combat. Moreover, these warriors may have used their trophies in ways uniquely

specific to their societies and cultures, with different meanings than in the Inca military context

For the Inca elites, the display of human trophies was aimed primarily at each other. The emperors needed to send a message of superiority and ruthlessness to other elites to maintain their position of ultimate authority. It was through the other *orejones*—the captains, generals, governors, princes, etc.—that most of the emperor's power was exercised, and thus where the emperor's power was primarily situated. To maintain those power relations, the emperor had to continually demonstrate achievement and aggressiveness. That is why human trophies figured so prominently in the factional fighting between Huascar and Atahuallpa. Not only were they sending messages to each other (Betanzos 1996:195 [1557]), but they were trying to maintain the support of the other elites who had sided with them.

Other Inca elites exhibited trophies to maintain and improve their positions in the Inca power structure, and displays such as triumphal entrances into Cuzco were important venues for addressing the primary audience. In other cases, the emperor was the primary audience, receiving trophies taken in battle by generals or by their sons, who were likely to be competing amongst themselves for succession.

The Inca emperors ensured an extended opportunity for displaying their own human trophies, by conserving them in the *Llaxa Guasi* ("house of booty") in Cuzco (Betanzos 1996:95 [1557]; Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:104 [1572]). Here they kept severed heads and war regalia taken from defeated enemy leaders (Betanzos 1996:95 [1557]; Sarmiento de Gamboa 1942:104 [1572]).

The practice of conserving trophies in a central building was reported in other parts of the Andes, such as the Cauca River Valley and Tairona regions of Colombia (Cieza de León 1984:95–96 [1553]; Redmond 1994), yet the Inca *Llaxa Guasi* was open to a greater and more varied audience. The trophies contained therein could have been seen on a frequent basis not only by other Inca elites, but also by provincial elites visiting Cuzco. It was particularly beneficial to make these displays to the provincial chiefs, because it sent the explicit message that the same fate could befall them if they chose to rebel against the empire.

The children of these provincial elites were another audience for witnessing these displays, as they were taken by the Incas to be raised in the capital. As adults, they eventually returned home to assume positions of leadership, by which time they would have had this message ingrained after repeated exposure to triumphal displays of severed heads and skin drums used in regular rituals. Making an effective display of strength to this audience reinforced the perception of Inca strength, decreasing the chance of provincial rebellions and ultimately bolstering imperial control.

The same message was sent to provinces in rebellion or to outlying lands that were engaged in battle with the Incas or in line for future conquest. In some cases, the trophies, such as skin drums played in battle, were directly displayed "to warn the others and to frighten with this punishment the rest of Peru" (Murúa 1964:60 [1611–1616]). In other cases, news of the taking of trophies was used as propaganda. For example, the Incas made efforts to disseminate stories of these

trophies to enemy groups, and in the case of the conflict between Huascar and Atahuallpa, news was intentionally sent to the opposing faction when trophies were made from their representatives (Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua 1995:108 [early seventeenth century]). News could also have been spread indirectly by people from the provinces who witnessed the use or display of human trophies at major festivals in Inca centers, and then reported back to people in their home villages.

Finally, human trophies continued to hold currency into Spanish colonial times. In Huarochirí, Peru, human face masks were actively used in ceremonies through much of the sixteenth century (Anonymous 1991:120 [ca.1598]). Also in Huarochirí, in the year 1750, the local people rose up against an abusive *corregidor*, killing him and turning his skull into a cup for drinking *chichca* (Tello 1918:6). In that case, a trophy form closely associated with the Incas was used by a non-Inca group more than two centuries after the Spanish conquest of the Andes.

In Cuzco, the display of a mock trophy head by the Cañari chief Chilche in 1555 caused a very strong reaction among the Incas, who attacked the Cañari (Vega 1966:1417–1418 [1609]). In that case, Chilche displayed the head to an audience of Spaniards and Inca nobles, in a demonstration of his military accomplishments while fighting on the side of the Spaniards. As a native who had been elevated to a higher position of status by the Spaniards, Chilche was emphasizing his status to the Inca elites, a manner of maneuvering and positioning consistent with how human trophies were used in pre-Hispanic times.

Overall, it appears that the creation of human trophies in the late pre-Hispanic Andes took many forms, but they were taken in similar contexts and were meant to convey similar messages to certain audiences. Perhaps because we have the most information regarding their practices, the Incas seem to have had made the widest variety of trophies, and exhibited them to great effect to the most varied audiences, as necessitated by the complexity of their imperial enterprise.

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Chapter 18

Seeking the Headhunter's Power

The Quest for *Arutam* Among the Achuar of the Ecuadorian Amazon and the Development of Ranked Societies

RICHARD J. CHACON

ABSTRACT

The supernatural force of *arutam* is believed by the Achuar (Shiwiar) Jivaro to confer many special abilities to those individuals possessing it (particularly the ability to headhunt successfully). This chapter describes the various benefits that individuals with *arutam* receive. It also documents the ritual that initiates undergo in an effort to obtain this supernatural force. This work also analyzes the effects that *arutam* has on individuals along with its functions in society. Finally, the relationship between supernatural forces such as *arutam*, positions of military leadership, and the development of ranked societies will be addressed.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of *arutam* in the lives of Jivaroan peoples was first documented by Harner in his classic work, *The Jivaro: People of the Sacred Waterfalls* (1972). This chapter presents data collected in the Achuar (Shiwiar) Jivaro village of Alto Corrientes in Ecuador on their belief in a*rutam*. It describes this supernatural force and then explains how individuals obtain it. This chapter also examines a*rutam's* effects on both the individual and on the greater society. Additionally, this study illustrates the relationship between supernatural power and political power by documenting how an individual who possessed *arutam* organized and led a

response to a military threat. Lastly, I present the possible role that a supernatural force such as *arutam* may have played in the evolution of nonegalitarian societies.

THE STUDY POPULATION: THE ACHUAR OF ALTO CORRIENTES

The Achuar, currently numbering approximately 5,000, are one of four subgroups of the Jivaroan linguistic family. Achuar populations are found on both sides of the Pastaza River (and also straddling the Ecuadorian and Peruvian border). The other Jivaroan groups include the Shuar, Aguaruna, and Huambisa (Hendricks 1993; Ross 1976). The data presented in this chapter were gathered in the Achuar village of Alto Corrientes located in eastern Ecuador in the Pastaza Province along the banks of the Corrientes River (Figure 18.1).

During the study period, the population in this community fluctuated from 44 to 58 individuals who pursued a subsistence strategy based on hunting, fishing, and slash-and-burn horticulture. Although light aircraft used by missionaries provide some sporadic access to Westerners, their basic subsistence patterns and the many aspects of their traditional belief system remain largely traditional.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection on Achuar traditional beliefs was conducted during four periods: June–August 1993, June–October 1994, April–July 1996, and July–August 1998. Information was obtained by conducting both formal and informal interviews. In order to better understand the ritual by which initiates obtain *arutam*, in July of 1998, the author accompanied an Achuar leader named Chuji and a young uninitiated individual named Peaas into the forest on the youth's quest for this supernatural force.[1]

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Achuar society can be categorized as egalitarian in nature with no permanent or hereditary chiefs. Status differences, however, do exist among individuals. For example, some men (such as Chuji) are exceptional hunters and thus they are treated deferentially by fellow villagers. Less effective hunters are not accorded such respect and extremely poor hunters are often the subject of gossip and may even be surreptitiously ridiculed by fellow villagers. Indeed during the study, an Alto Corrientes woman left her husband and cited his poor hunting ability as one of the reasons for abandoning him.

However, it is important to note that Achuar men who occupy positions of high social standing have no power to coerce others. They simply lead by virtue of their personal charisma and influence. Under normal conditions, all the decisions that the group makes are only arrived at after having reached a consensus. The

Figure 18.1. Location of the Achuar village of Alto Corrientes. Map drawn by Christopher Storie.

informal leadership that these men exercise during routine village life can best be characterized by Sahlins' famous quote: "One word from him [the leader] and everyone does as he pleases" (1968:21). This situation can change dramatically during a time of military crisis as will be described below.

HEADHUNTING RAIDS AND RETALIATORY KILLINGS

Because Jivaroans are well known for their association with headhunting (Harner 1972), in 1994, the author showed the residents of Alto Corrientes a photograph taken of an actual *tsantsa* (shrunken head) that was on display at the National Museum of Anthropology in Quito, Ecuador. This action was taken in the hopes that it would serve to evoke memories of past raids, and so it did.

As soon as the villagers saw the image, they became very excited (but not upset) and claimed to recognize the unfortunate victim depicted in the photo and proceeded to state that his name was "Yaori." Whether or not this photo actually was of this particular man is debatable, but what was important is that they were eager to explain that in life "Yaori" had been a Peruvian Achuar who had lost his head to a Shuar raiding party (probably in the late 1970s) led by an Indian named Samarí who currently resides in a village near the Peru–Ecuador boarder. The victim is survived by his wife and children still living in the neighboring village of Conambo. Furthermore, one Achuar informant named Zaca added that these human trophy heads were said to be capable of biting their enemies long after having been severed from their respective bodies.

In the 1960s and 1970s, warfare in the region was one of the factors that allowed both Catholic and Protestant missionaries to make inroads among the Achuar by pledging economic support with the understanding that villagers would build and maintain an airstrip as well as adopt a more sedentary lifestyle. Airstrips provided missionaries with the ability to visit villages quickly and with relative ease (both for proselytizing and medical check-ups). Airstrips also facilitated the acquisition of Western trade goods, most importantly shotguns, for the Achuar (Taylor 1981).

Large-scale headhunting raids in the Pastaza region involving dozens of shotgun-wielding warriors are a thing of the past, but ambush killings (usually targeting shamans accused of sorcery) continue to occur in the area. In addition to the 1996 killing of a shaman named Yakakwa that will be discussed later in this chapter, in 1997 three shamans believed to have been responsible for an outbreak of disease in the region were reportedly killed over a three-month period (John Walden, personal communication, 1997). Among the targeted was an Achuar man named Zundi (a close relative of one the residents of Alto Corrientes) who was killed in retaliation for allegedly having taken the life of a Quechua shaman whom he believed to have been a sorcerer.

Recently, word of the killing of yet another Quechua shaman that took place in 2005 was obtained from both Achuar informants as well as from medical personnel operating in the Pastaza. In July of that year, the Lowland Quechua village

of Jutun Molina experienced an outbreak of paralytic rabies which resulted in the deaths of seven individuals. Villagers concluded that a shaman from the community of Montalvo named Isa was responsible for the tragedy, and so they proceeded to execute this medicine man. Reportedly, the shaman was bound, tortured, his body mutilated and thrown in the river (Richard Douce, personal communication, 2005; Jerry Koleski, personal communication, 2005: John Walden, personal communication, 2005).

ARUTAM

Arutam is held by traditional Jivaroan peoples to be a supernatural force that is necessary for a male's survival. In fact, it is considered to be so important that a boy's parents do not expect him to live past puberty without it. The Achuar firmly believe that this mystical power confers invincibility in battle to anyone who possesses it. Furthermore, individuals are not born with this power; they must acquire it by subjecting themselves to a ritual involving several days of isolation and fasting (Harner 1972). *Arutam* is given to individuals by the spirits of their ancestors (*arutama*), who in life had great reputations for being fierce warriors and killers (*kakaram*). In other words, *arutam* is possessed by and is passed on from one generation to another by deceased "ancient ones" who were *kakaram* in life (Harner 1972; Redmond 2002).

As stated previously, humans are not born with *arutam,* so this supernatural power must be actively sought through ritual means (Harner 1972). An individual wishing to obtain *arutam* may place himself under the tutelage of someone who possesses this force and who is considered to be *kakaram*. An individual who is *kakaram* also enjoys high social status in Achuar society for having proven himself to be a courageous warrior and by having killed in battle. Thus, this *kakaram* individual serves as an appropriate mentor, instructing (and often accompanying) the uninitiated youth in his quest for *arutam.* It is important to note that a *kakaram* mentor will adhere to the same restrictions (both dietary and behavioral) that initiates are made to follow throughout the ordeal.

Invariably, the ritual that initiates undertake involves the participants first isolating themselves from the rest of society by wandering though the forest for three to five days, and refraining from food and water with only the ritual ingestion of *tsaan* (tobacco) being allowed during that period. The ingestion of *tsaan* is believed to be necessary for the acquisition of *arutam*.

VARIOUS TYPES OF BENEFITS FROM POSSESSING *ARUTAM*

An analysis of the data collected from the village of Alto Corrientes documented up to five types of benefits that an individual could obtain from *arutam.* It is important to note, however, that an individual may actually be granted only one or two of these perquisites throughout his life. In other words, receiving one

type of benefit from *arutam* does not necessarily mean that an individual will be granted other types.

Below is a brief description of each the benefits that *arutam* may bestow.

Benefit #1. Invincibility in battle. As Harner's (1972) Shuar informants told him, the Achuar of Alto Corrientes believe that those who obtain *arutam* will not be killed in battle. They maintain that any lead shot fired at these individuals will not penetrate their bodies, and guns that are targeted at them will misfire. Thus, men who possess *arutam* confidently conduct raids or lead counterattacks with the certainty of successful military outcomes. The Achuar cited the following incident as an example of the power of *arutam* to protect individuals from harm.

During the course of the author's fieldwork in 1996, at a location few miles downriver from Alto Corrientes, a man named Poangir allegedly killed a shaman named Yakakwa. This medicine man was blamed for the sudden demise of a young woman who had been, until then, seemingly in good health. The reason for suspecting Yakakwa's involvement in her death was because the woman had rejected the shaman's recent proposal of marriage. Yakakwa's grieving family immediately sought to avenge the death of their relative, but the alleged killer (Poangir) sought refuge in the forest where he escaped from harm. Poangir's successful raid and subsequent safe retreat was attributed to the protective forces of *arutam* that he possessed.

Benefit #2. Long life. The Achuar believe that diseases are caused by the actions of malevolent shamans who hurl magical *tsinsak* (invisible blowgun darts) into the bodies of their victims (Descola 1996; Harner 1972). Individuals with *arutam* are protected supernaturally from this type of shamanistic attack, and therefore they enjoy long and healthy lives.

Benefit #3. Multiple wives. The Achuar believe that men who successfully manage polygynous households are believed to be able to do so through the power of *arutam*. If a man were to add a new wife to his already established household without the benefit of *arutam*, the senior wife would not stand for it and would leave the marriage. It is the supernatural force of *arutam* that binds polygynous households together.

Benefit #4. Many children. The Achuar believe that the prophylactic qualities of *arutam* extend to the offspring of individuals who possess it. Thus, the children of *arutam* possessors are protected from the disease-causing magical *tsinsak* sent by malevolent shamans.

Benefit #5. Economic prosperity. The Achuar believe that an individual who obtains *arutam* will be granted the good fortune of having bountiful gardens and or a fine home(s) that is (are) filled with valuable trade goods.

GENERALIZED DESCRIPTION OF AN *ARUTAM* QUEST

The following data on the *arutam*-seeking ritual were compiled from information gathered during interviews and from the author's participation in the actual ritual experience: The *kakaram* mentor and the initiate(s) depart from the village early in the morning and the young males are admonished not to eat or drink, or to joke during the entire process. They are also told to not think of women but instead they should focus only on *arutam*. They are specifically warned that they are not to express any fear whatsoever no matter what frightening experiences they may encounter during the ritual period.

Participants are permitted to take firearms, machetes, knives, and blankets into the forest, but under no circumstances will anyone be allowed to bathe or to build a campfire during the ordeal. Campfires serve to help stave off the onslaughts of nocturnal insects and vampire bats but even more importantly, they help to dissuade jaguars from attacking humans. Therefore, there can be no doubt that sleeping in the forest without a fire is a tremendously hazardous situation that participants subject themselves to in order to obtain *arutam*.

After arriving at a hilltop location far away enough to ensure privacy from fellow villagers, participants proceed to make a clearing in the forest where they build a specialized dreaming hut called an *umbak* out of *kongoki* (*unguragua*) leaves along with clearing a ritual path called *jindiak* (*arutam* path). This trail leads out in opposite directions from the *umbak*.

After the *umbak* and *jindiak* have been completed, participants are instructed to meander through the forest quietly reflecting on *arutam* and to seek portents of its arrival (see below for specific augers heralding *arutam*). If an individual detects a sign foretelling *arutam* while wandering about in the forest, he will tell no one of this event at this juncture but will simply return to the *umbak* to ritually ingest *tsaan* (tobacco) mixed with river water and to await for an *arutam*-bestowing "ancient one" to appear to him in a dream.[2]

The initiate must not vomit the nauseating tobacco juice lest the "ancient one"'grow angry and refuse to visit the youth in a dream. If no dreams occur that night, all participants move on and the entire process is repeated the next day at a different location in the forest. This practice of building a new *umbak* and clearing a new *arutam* path will be repeated every night as devotees will never spend two nights in the same location during a quest for *arutam*. After an individual experiences an *arutam*-bestowing dream, he will describe the particulars of his nocturnal encounter with an "ancient one" to his mentor who will in turn interpret the event. After having dreamt successfully of *arutam*, the participants return home.

As the men draw close to their village, the mentor will paint the faces of the initiates (including his own) red using *achiote* plant (*Bixa orellana*) to mark the successful completion of the ordeal. Their entrance to the village is marked by a loud trumpetlike cry (issued by the mentor) which publicly announces their triumphal return. Villagers will then come out to warmly greet the arriving party.

Then each participant returns to his home where he is served a very small portion of *jamanch* (a fermented native beverage made from manioc) in a new ceramic bowl (*pinin*).

After this, the individual may resume daily village life but with a marked increased in both his self-confidence and social standing. In some cases, returning participants are instructed to eat only cooked plantains and to avoid certain foods such as *papa china* (*Ipomea batata*) for a day or so lest their skin develop boils.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PORTENTS OF *ARUTAM*

As was stated above, young men seeking *arutam* are instructed to keep watch for certain signals that foretell *arutam* as they wander through the forest. If during the course of his walking through the forest, a participant sees any of the following signs (i.e., "*arutam* messengers"), he can expect to be visited by an *arutam*-bestowing ancestor that night in a dream.

Fauna

It is believed that the arrival of *arutam* is sometimes announced through various forms of wildlife. Seeing any type of animal (bird, reptile, or mammal) while strolling through the forest can be a harbinger for the onset of an *arutam* dream. It is also considered to be particularly auspicious for a young man to encounter a predator consuming another creature or any type of animal engaged in combat. Moreover, if a young man encounters wildlife behaving in an atypical manner, this is a strong sign foretelling the advent of an *arutam* dream.

Flora

Another signal predicting an impending *arutam* dream is the detection of trees swaying back and forth on windless days or the unexpected falling and crashing of trees and or limbs in the forest. Some trees are said to magically explode.

Waterfalls

Mist is considered by the Achuar to be the physical manifestation of *arutam,* so some men may make pilgrimages to a particularly large waterfall (Pakcha Falls) that is said to emit a large and fine spray of water along with mysterious noises.

Unusual Atmospheric Conditions

The presence or activity of *arutam* is believed to manifest itself in various atmospheric phenomena. For example, when the sky grows dark during the day and strong roaring winds become present as initiates roam the forest in search of

arutam, this signifies that the devotees will meet with success. Another indicator signaling the presence of *arutam* is when rains falls while the sun is shinning. The Achuar characterize this phenomena as "raining badly" and believe that it foretells that a raid/killing (usually targeting a shaman) is about to take place. The activity of *kakaram* warriors summoning their *arutam* power for battle is believed to bring about these atmospheric conditions.

Payar

This particular "*arutam* messenger" manifests itself as a large ball of fire that dramatically and quite suddenly appears and falls from the sky, often landing at the very feet of the initiate only to suddenly explode. This phenomenon is believed to herald the arrival of the rarest and most potent form of *arutam.*

REACTIONS TO THESE APPARITIONS

If, while wandering in the forest, initiates encounter animals either fighting or acting in unusual ways, they are instructed to approach the combating creatures and to gently touch (not strike) them with a stick. If these creatures are ordinary animals, they will simply scurry away or may even attempt to strike the devotee, but if they are in fact supernatural "*arutam* messengers," they will magically disappear.

For example, certain snakes that are observed during the ordeal have been reported to magically expand to great lengths only to immediately contract to small size and then will mysteriously disappear when touched with a stick (thus confirming their "*arutam* messenger" identity). Likewise, if a tree's branches are swaying in the absence of wind or if the tree has suddenly exploded, men are instructed to approach the tree and to gently touch it with a stick. If an individual observes a *Payar* (ball of fire) he is supposed to embrace it before it explodes.

REQUEST

Regardless of whether the "*arutam* messenger" appears in the form of a plant, an animal, or some type of atmospheric phenomena, the initiate must respectfully address the "ancient one" in a soft voice and plead for arutam by saying: "My father, my father, here I am, here I am, wandering the forest in search of you. Have pity on me and grant me a dream so that I may live." After having obsequiously petitioned the "ancient one" in this manner, the initiate returns to the *umbak* confident that he will dream of an *arutam*-bestowing "ancient one" that very night. As stated previously, an initiate must not speak to anyone of his encounter in the forest with an "*arutam* messenger" until after he has experienced an *arutam*-bestowing dream.

ARUTAM DREAMS

The Achuar people of Alto Corrientes were quite willing to discuss the details regarding their *arutam* ritual experiences and dreams, and they specifically granted the author permission to record and to publish this information. A further testament to the extent of just how pervasive this sharing of *arutam* experiences is comes from the observation that many individuals could give accurate and detailed accounts of many of their fellow villagers' *arutam* dreams.

All of the Achuar dreams follow a relatively narrow and rather short format with little deviation from culturally sanctioned parameters. Below are the main components of an *arutam*-bestowing dream: An "ancient one" will always first appear approaching along the *arutam* path brandishing a shotgun. He will divulge his identity to the dreamer by stating his name (in a harsh tone) in such words as, "Here I am, here I am. I am [name]."

The "ancient one" will then proceed to point out one or more of the particular personal characteristics or accomplishments for which he was famous in life by stating something to the effect of, "I have killed so many enemies and no one has hurt me." At this point the ancient one may show the dreamer the tip of his shotgun dripping with blood from slain enemies as proof of his prowess in battle. Then the initiate wakes up with the particular form of *arutam* that was conferred to him during the dream.

The understanding between the parties is that the dreamer will inherit the same type of *arutam* benefit that the ancient one enjoyed in life (i.e., the power to have invincibility in battle, or a long life, many wives, many children and or economic prosperity).

Below are the accounts of actual dreams from several Achuar individuals who obtained *arutam*.

TLINGAS (TO DREAM OF HEAD HUNTERS)

While a young man, Tlingas sought *arutam* for five days (under the tutelage of his uncle) ritually ingesting only tobacco during the entire period. He dreamed of a deceased warrior from the village of Capawari named Peaas.[3] The warrior was walking back and forth along the *arutam* path brandishing a shotgun with a bloody tip wearing a *shakap* (warrior regalia).

Peaas spoke to Tlingas in a harsh tone announcing, "Here I come, here I come, here I come. I have killed two men. I am *kakaram*, an ancient one. When I killed people, no one ever killed me." Tlingas further reported seeing Peaas carrying a *shigra* (net bag) that normally is used by hunters for the transportation of small game. The "ancient one" then instructed Tlingas to look carefully at the contents of this *shigra* and he reported that it contained the severed and bloodied heads of numerous shamans. After showing these human trophies to the initiate, Peaas simply stated, "I leave now," and Tlingas immediately awoke.

Tlingas was very happy at having experienced such a propitious dream. Prior to his return to the village, Tlingas had his face painted red by his mentor before resuming routine village life. Upon his arrival, he was allowed to only drink a small amount of *jamanch* (native beverage) in a new *pinin* (ceramic bowl).

Tlingas concluded the story by explaining, "This is why even though shamans try to send *tsinsak* [disease-causing invisible blowgun darts] my way, my family and I do not die. With *arutam* we live, we do not die." This particular type of *arutam* not only gave Tlingas the confidence to conduct raids with impunity (as communicated by the "ancient one" carrying human trophy heads), but he also attained the added perquisite of a long life for himself and for the 12 children he has fathered since having had this dream!

It is important to note that even though historically the Achuar were usually the targets of headhunting raids rather then the perpetrators, they nonetheless look favorably upon and actively pursue this supernatural force (*arutam)* that enables men to be effective warrior-headhunters.

ISA

At a young age, Isa was placed under the tutelage of an individual named Sauki who instructed him to go into the forest for three days in order to obtain *arutam*. During his wanderings, he encountered two red-headed woodpeckers that were fighting each other. Reportedly, these birds suddenly disappeared before his very eyes after a large branch came crashing down from the forest canopy. Isa then returned to the *umbak* to ritually ingest tobacco and to wait for an *arutam* dream.

That night, he was visited by an unspecified deceased brother-in-law who appeared walking to and fro along the *jindiak,* brandishing a blood-tipped shotgun. This warrior had his shirt tied up at the waist (as is customary during a daytime battle) and announced, "I am from Peru. I am *kakaram*, Look and see how I was wounded in my arm but I did not die."

Then Isa reported that the "ancient one" instructed him to look at his arm, and upon close inspection he saw a lump just underneath the skin of the warrior's forearm. Apparently, the projectile had entered the body and had become lodged in the arm but it had not killed him. He then woke up from the dream and was very happy and return toward his home that same morning. As Isa drew near his village, he stopped and painted his face red (using *achiote*) and let out a loud trumpetlike call announcing his triumphant return. Isa stated that after having spent so much time fasting, one of the first things he wished to do upon retuning to the village was to drink copious amounts of *jamanch,* but Sauki would only allow him to drink a small quantity of *jamanch* that had been mixed with tobacco juice.

Upon being informed of the details of Isa's dream, Sauki was pleased and is reported to have said to the young man: "You will live a long life just like me." After that, Sauki informed Isa that he could now go bathe in the river, but he was warned that for the next few days he could only eat cooked plantains but not *papa*

china (lest he develop boils on the skin). Isa concluded the telling of this story by stating, "This is why I have lived so long!" Isa obtained the benefit of invincibility in battle (as was signaled by the bullet lodged in the arm of the "ancient one") along with being granted a long life.

CHUJI

While still a young man, Chuji first went to seek *arutam* by heading alone into the forest in the early morning. As he wandered about, he encountered a *makanch* (venomous snake) so he returned to his *umbak* and ritually ingested tobacco. He stated that it was this snake that caused him to dream of an unspecified "ancient one" who granted him invincibility in battle. Emboldened by the acquisition of *arutam*, in the early 1980s Chuji led a raiding party to kill a shaman named Chumbi (who was believed to have been responsible for an outbreak of disease). The attack was a success and, to date, none of the victim's kinsmen has been able to mount a successful retaliatory strike against Chuji.

Because the slaying of an individual results in the loss of the killer's *arutam*, Chuji found it necessary to regain this supernatural force after having slain Chumbi. While on this second quest, Chuji reported hearing the chomping of white-lipped peccaries in the forest, so he headed off with his shotgun hoping to bag an animal. However, when he arrived at the patch in the forest where the noises had originated from, not only did he fail to locate any peccaries but there was not even so much as a single animal's hoof print to be found in the area! He therefore concluded that these noises were made by "messengers of *arutam,*" so he returned to the *umbak* to ritually ingest tobacco. That night an "ancient one" appeared to Chuji in his dream (walking back and forth along the *jindiak*), sternly announcing that his name was Wakiach and that he had killed many people with impunity. Wakiach then proceeded to show Chuji his shotgun with blood dripping from the tip. Wakiach said, "You see how I have killed men. I have even killed my father's brother using this very shotgun that you see, and nothing has happened to me."

Wakiach suddenly announced that he was leaving and departed in the direction of the Shiona River. Chuji immediately woke up and was exceedingly glad at having had such an auspicious dream for it meant that he had regained *arutam*. On yet another occasion while out fishing, Chuji came across an anaconda resting on the riverbank that was breathing in an unusually loud manner. Suspecting that the snake may in fact be a "messenger of *arutam,*" he carefully approached the snake and touched it gently with a stick.

That night, an "ancient one" appeared to Chuji in a dream, saying, "Look at me, look at me. I have killed my brother-in-law. Now I leave for the Pastaza River." He then awoke after being granted the power to become an even greater warrior (see below for a discussion of how *arutam* empowered this particular individual to assume the role of military leader during a time of crisis). It is important to clarify that while Chuji is believed to have acquired especially potent *arutam* powers, he

is not considered to be a shaman. Chuji enjoys a position of high social status in the village of Alto Corrientes stemming from his aforementioned hunting prowess along with having killed in battle.

SAUKI (DECEASED)

Consent to publish the following dreams was given by Sauki's two sons, Kaisar and Zaca.

While wandering in the forest on a quest *for arutam*, Sauki encountered two red-headed woodpeckers fighting. He then returned to the *umbak* and ritually ingested tobacco in order to prepare for his *arutam* dream. That night, an unspecified "ancient one" appeared to him saying, "Look at me, look at me. See all the grey hairs on my head. Look at me; see how many wives I have without any difficulties. See how many huts I have built. Look at how many children I have."

At that moment, the "ancient one" instructed the initiate to gaze at a nearby hill and Sauki reported seeing many children laughing and playing there while older boys (armed with blowguns and blowgun dart carriers) practiced hunting nearby. After this encounter, the "ancient one" suddenly disappeared and Sauki immediately woke up. This nocturnal visitation resulted in Sauki receiving invincibility in battle, a long life (as evidenced by the grey hairs), many wives, many children as well as many homes (huts).[4] In fact, Sauki grew up to become a *kakaram* individual of great renown for having killed in battle. He lived to a ripe old age (reportedly he had many grey hairs at the time of his death) and he had nine wives throughout the course of his life and indeed had owned many homes (huts).[5]

After having killed in battle, Sauki once again went into the forest in order to renew his *arutam* and this time he encountered two jaguars fighting. That night, "an ancient one" granted him the power to become an even greater *kakaram* warrior.

LIVIO

This young man's dream involved the appearance of a *kakaram* "ancient one" who appeared to the initiate (armed with a shotgun walking back and forth along the *jindiak*) and declared, "Look at me, here I am, here I am. I am Sauki who had many wives without having any difficulties."[6] The young man woke up and grew quite happy because he had been granted the ability to enjoy the perquisite of having multiple spouses.

WOMEN AND *ARUTAM*: AITNIA

Even though Achuar women do not actively participate in *arutam* quests, they can obtain and enjoy some of the benefits that this supernatural force bestows.

While still a young girl, Aitnia was suffering a toothache and was instructed to retrieve some water from the river in order to mix it with *tsaan* (for curing purposes). While at the water's edge, she encountered a giant river otter fighting with an alligator. She also noticed that there were other river otters nearby that where emitting particularly unusual vocalizations and she reported to have thought to herself, why are they making such strange noises? That night, she dreamt of an "ancient one" who appeared to her brandishing a shotgun with a bloody tip (walking back and forth along the *jindiak*) and said to her, "Look at me, look at me, I am Chui Pujupan, I have killed many men and nothing has happened to me. After killing my enemy, I have taken his woman away with me." She then woke up after having thus been granted *arutam*.

Aitnia concluded the story by saying, "This is why I live so long." Indeed, Aitnia is probably in her 80s and has literally dozens of grandchildren.

THE RITUAL INGESTION OF TOBACCO, PHYSICAL EXERTION, AND ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The use of tobacco by indigenous peoples of the New World was first recorded by Columbus on his first visit (Wilbert 1987). Throughout Amazonia, tobacco is sometimes employed for recreational/secular purposes, but its use is also associated with shamanistic activities and rites of passage. Individuals consume tobacco during initiations, vision/dream quests, during war preparations and or victory feasts. When ingested, the alkaloid nicotine that is present in the plant affects human physiology in various fashions. One of the effects that nicotine has on individuals is that it numbs hunger pangs by inhibiting the hunger contractions of the stomach (Danielopolu et al. 1925; Wilbert 1987). The act of consuming tobacco and its depressive effects on hunger pangs was first recorded among the Tupinamba by missionaries such as Jean de Leary (1555). He noted that its use allowed individuals to "go for two to three days without eating anything else" (cited in Wilbert 1987:13).

It is important to point out that during an Achuar *arutam* quest, considerable time and energy goes into the construction of each *umbak* and *jindiak,* and new huts and paths are built on each day of the ordeal. Furthermore, these huts are not put together in a haphazard manner as each one of the poles that makes up the *umbak* has to be carefully peeled of its bark, thus exposing a clean and smooth surface. No such time- and energy-consuming activity is invested in the temporary hunting camps that men routinely build in the forest. Furthermore, the *arutam* paths are meticulously swept clean with every single leaf assiduously removed from the trail that measures approximately 2 m wide and up to 50 m in length. All this exhausting work is done by individuals deprived of all food and only allowed to drink approximately100 ml of strong nausea-inducing tobacco juice per day. The ingestion of psychotropic tobacco, the physical exertion that the participants undergo, and the food and water deprivation that is inflicted on *arutam* seekers

places them in a psychological and physiological condition that is conducive to experiencing vivid dreams and/or altered states of consciousness.

EFFECTS OF *ARUTAM* ON INDIVIDUALS AND ON SOCIETY

Below are five recorded effects that the supernatural force of *arutam* has on individuals and on Achuar society.

1. *Arutam* provides self-confidence. As stated previously, the most salient effect granted by *arutam* is protection from harm (either disease or physical violence). Kaisar stated that, "Once you have obtained *arutam*, you will feel joy and you will be afraid of nothing. If you hear threats from others who are coming to kill you, you will laugh and not feel fear of death because you know that no one can harm you because you have dreamed of *arutam*. This is why this is the most important thing for us."

The Achuar tell of men who have been in skirmishes were they have been fired upon at close range but the shotgun pellets did not penetrate the body. This is said to have occurred because they had the protective power of *arutam*. As mentioned previously, Chuji killed the shaman Chumbi in the 1980s, and it is believed that no one has been able to avenge the death because of the protective *arutam* elements that the killer possesses. Kaisar stated, "Just look at Chuji. He killed the evil shaman Chumbi and nothing happed to him. He is still alive."

2. *Arutam* as a safety valve. Individuals on a quest for *arutam* must temporarily isolate themselves from the rest of their community. Therefore, this ritual provides individual males with a culturally sanctioned "cooling off" period. For example, late one evening, an Achuar child burned herself quite severely by accidentally placing her hand in a pot of boiling water. This incident resulted in the father of the girl (Kaisar) becoming enraged at the mother who he claimed had been negligent in her duty to watch over the child. Upon seeing how badly injured the young girl was, the distraught father angrily stated, "My wife does not care about my child." He then showed the author the *tsaan* that he held in his hand and remarked, "Tomorrow morning I will leave for the forest with *tsaan* to seek *arutam*." Indeed, Kaisar spent most of the next day alone in the forest away from his wife until his anger had subsided sufficiently to return home shortly before nightfall.

3. *Arutam* as a mechanism for social control. On the surface, it may seem paradoxical that a force clearly and unambiguously related to warfare and headhunting is also associated with self-control and maturation. But for those who have lived with indigenous people still engaged in raiding, this association is by no means unusual. Accomplished warriors attain and maintain their high social status by repeatedly making wise and well thought out decisions. The author's experience of over a decade of fieldwork with three different Amazonian groups (the Yanomamo of Venezuela, the Yora of Peru, and the Achuar of Ecuador) is that men who have killed in battle often have stable and very pleasant personalities because

they have established themselves in their respective communities. Because these killers are well respected in their villages, they no longer have to prove themselves to anyone. In other words, they no longer have to continuously joust with other men because they have already secured their elevated positions in society.[7]

It has been the author's experience that the individuals in tribal settings who tend to be the most unstable, unpredictable (and therefore the most potentially dangerous) are the young uninitiated men who have not achieved adult warrior status and, therefore, are very insecure about their social standing. These are the individuals who are actively vying for positions on very competitive social ladders. Successful participation in the ordeal to obtain *arutam* provides a young man with the self-confidence needed to participate in raids that will then permit him to occupy a respected position in the village hierarchy. Having established himself in this manner, he no longer must seek to prove himself in the eyes of others. Thus, the acquisition of *arutam* helps mold immature, highly competitive, unpredictable, and insecure adolescent males into responsible and stable adults.

Kaisar stated that, "Obtaining *arutam* is very important for us because without it, our young men do not think properly, acting like crazy, drinking and fighting with relatives. With *arutam*, young men will grow into mature, sincere, pleasant, respectful, and humble individuals." Zaca echoed this belief by stating that, "Once they [young men] acquire *arutam*, their hearts change."

ISA, *ARUTAM* AND SOCIAL CONTROL

The following is an example of how the *arutam* ordeal can be employed as a form of social control: When Isa was around 18 years of age, indignant village elders sent him and another young man into the forest to seek *arutam* because they both had been engaging in antisocial behaviors such as drinking excessively as well as fighting. Before departure they were admonished to not be afraid if they heard jaguars while out in the forest as this would be a portent of *arutam*. As a result of this prolonged period (three days) of reflection and isolation, Isa is said to have returned from the experience as a changed man. Namely, he ceased beating his wife and drinking to excess.

The author documented a similar association between the *arutam* quest and attempts at social control in the case involving an uninitiated adolescent male named Kayashi who was engaging in antisocial behavior. Despite repeated appeals from village elders, this young man persisted in maintaining a sexual relationship with an unmarried girl against the wishes of her kinsmen. The village elders also felt that the youth had grown lazy and had become disrespectful of authority. Community leaders stated that it was their hope that Kayashi would seek *arutam* of his own accord so that he would have the opportunity to reflect upon his actions.

Suffering is an essential component of the ritual. After having survived a grueling *arutam* quest, the young man named Peaas stated, "I have undergone many hardships throughout my life but I have never suffered so much as during

this ordeal." Isa reported that at one point during his quest he became so thirsty that he was tempted to drink his own urine! The reason why suffering is such an integral element of the ritual is because of its perceived transformative powers. Kaisar remarked that, "This is why the elders send young men who are causing trouble to seek *arutam* as punishment so that during this time they will think, there they will suffer. They will reflect upon their actions and about life and will have a change of heart. Afterwards, they will respect their elders." Kaisar (one of the village leaders) hoped that the aforementioned Kayashi would embark upon an *arutam* quest so that, "He would suffer and thus would have to think about his actions."

4. *Arutam* acquirement and prestige. After the above mentioned Peaas survived his *arutam* quest, he enjoyed a marked increase in social standing vis-à-vis his fellow villagers. Individuals who successfully complete the ordeal are accorded respect and admiration not only by the members of their own village but word of their participation in the quest is spread to the surrounding communities.

5. *Arutam* and military leadership roles. As previously noted, many of the portents of *arutam* involve initiates encountering animals involved in violence with other creatures. This reflects the clear association between *arutam* powers and physical combat. Significantly, only men who possess *arutam* are convinced of their invincibility in battle and thus individuals from this pool become the natural candidates for leadership roles in military situations. *Arutam* possessors (confident of their invincibility) proceed to outcompete men who lack both *arutam* (and the confidence that it bestows) for highly prestigious positions of military leadership.[8] By securing the supernatural power to wage war with impunity, *arutam* possessors occupy positions of prestige and authority in their egalitarian settings. The following incident illustrates how a man possessing *arutam* becomes a powerful leader exercising clear and unambiguous power over his village mates during a military crisis.

RAID ON ALTO CORRIENTES

In 1996, the Achuar village of Alto Corrientes was suffering from an outbreak of high fevers and the shaman from the neighboring village of Conambo was believed to have been the cause of such maladies through acts of sorcery. Conversely, the inhabitants of Conambo blamed the presence of illnesses in their community on an Alto Corrientes shaman named Tserimbo.

Tensions between the two communities flared after a young Alto Corrientes girl developed a high fever that left her partially paralyzed. Her father Zaca accused the resident shaman of Conambo of sorcery and publicly issued a death threat against this medicine man. Soon, Conambo villagers retaliated with counter threats against Alto Corrientes' resident shaman (Tserimbo).

On the evening of June 29, 1996, an armed and unidentified man (very likely a raider from Conambo) was seen stealthily approaching Tserimbo's hut located along the periphery of Alto Corrientes. It is not unusual for raiders to sneak up to the hut of their intended victim and to lie in wait for the opportunity to shoot their

targets when they step outside to relieve themselves, or they may fire at them from underneath their house platform.[9] Because it was very dark, at first Tserimbo's wife mistook the crouching individual for one of the medicine man's children, but when she realized that this was an intruder she let out a loud alarm cry.

Immediately, the terrorized women and children of the community ran toward the center of the village where they huddled for safety. This centralized location provided them with the maximum amount of protection as any raider wishing to do them harm would have to navigate all the way into the very middle of a hostile settlement before reaching them. At this same time, every able-bodied adult male quickly began loading their muzzle-loading shotguns for use in the defense of their village. When going into battle, Achuar men place extra firing caps along with extra tack in their ears so as to reduce the time needed to reload (it is quicker to pull these items out of one's ear than out of one's pocket). The few men who own cartridge-firing shotguns transport extra shells in their mouths during a raid in order to hasten reloading.

Realizing that the village was under attack, Chuji assumed absolute control of the military defense of the community by ordering individuals to patrol the specific locations and access routes where a raider could be hiding. As they departed, Chuji recited the following admonition to the men: "You will shoot and not be afraid. Kill men in the same way that you kill monkeys or peccaries. If you see your comrade fall, when you see him lying on the ground, do not be afraid." Chuji instructed that each patrol be comprised of two armed males who were to remove their shirts as any lightly colored clothes on a moonlit night would make men more visible and therefore more susceptible to enemy fire. He then began chanting an *anent* (ritual song) to summon the protective forces of *arutam*. After completing the invocation, Chuji proceeded to courageously lead the counterattack without the benefit of any sort of weapon whatsoever (there were simply not enough firearms to go around, and blowguns are not used in battle).

While heading off to defend their village, the more experienced men admonished the younger individuals to speak only in whispers and to not look back at their homes or wives, and to carefully avoid tripping for this would bring them bad luck in the fight. While walking, they were also instructed to immediately duck to the ground upon seeing a flash of light before they hear a blast (as light travels faster than sound) in order to avoid the oncoming lead shot.

As ordered by Chuji, the paired men patrolled all of the potential hiding places and access routes of the village seeking the whereabouts of the raider. They walked along trails in a zigzag pattern, always crouching and never stopping in the middle of the path for this would make them easy targets. The men stopped at all the locations where a raider might be lying in ambush (such as hollowed out logs and other blind spots along the path). Men then fired a shotgun blast into each of these potential hiding places in order to clear out any hostiles.

After firing, they retreated off to the side of the trail and quietly reloaded. As they resumed their patrols, experienced individuals admonished those who had never been in combat to "watch their backs" as they may be attacked from behind.

If a pair of men had only one firearm between the two of them, they would position themselves close together as they patrolled the area with one individual walking immediately behind the other so that if fired upon, the individual in front provided a protective shield for the person behind him. If the man in front was hit, the person directly behind him would be in a position to quickly grab hold of the firearm from his stricken comrade and return fire.

After an extensive search of the entire periphery of the village, footprints of the raider were found and it became apparent that he had escaped by fleeing in the direction of the Shiona River (towards Conambo).

Alto Corrientes' shaman Tserimbo (who is too old to take up arms) did his part to protect the village by supernaturally ordering wild jaguars to seek out and attack the retreating raider in the forest (the Achuar believe that shamans command great power over wildlife).

POWER IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Not all men obtain *arutam*, so those who possess it enjoy positions of prestige and authority over those who lack this supernatural force and *arutam* possessors exercise their influence in times of crisis as recorded above. When the raider was discovered stalking Tserimbo outside of his hut, Chuji seized complete control of the military response to the impending attack by immediately ordering every adult male in the community to take his weapon and to secure a defensive perimeter. Despite the fact that he lacked a weapon, he then proceeded to lead the patrol in an attempt to intercept the raider thought to be ensconced somewhere along the village outskirts. This situation in which an unarmed Chuji led his fellow villagers into a potentially lethal encounter with the enemy is an example of the extraordinary courage and confidence that an *arutam*-holding individual possesses.

This incident clearly documents how an Achuar man with *arutam* employed his privileged social status to decisively take charge of the village's response to an armed attack. Significantly, Chuji specifically commanded men to act (he did not ask them) and every adult male in this normally autonomous and egalitarian society acquiesced unhesitatingly. Notably, Chuji's decision to venture into an extremely dangerous situation unarmed stems from his belief that the protective force of *arutam* makes him invincible in battle.

PLANS FOR FUTURE KILLINGS

Chuji's boldness and self-confidence became apparent on the last day of my fieldwork in 1998 when he issued the following statement to me as I departed from the village: "There are two men I wish to kill," and then he pointed in the direction of the community of Montalvo and then in the direction of the village

of Conambo. Each of his intended victims was a shaman in the aforementioned localities whom Chuji believed responsible for both the illness and deaths of his kinsmen. When asked if he feared retaliation from his intended victim's relatives he unequivocally answered, "No," and added, "They will never find me for I am *kakaram*; I am *kayuk* [an Agouti, a diurnal rodent known for its ability to scurry through the forest undetected]."

INCREASED POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF *ARUTAM* LEADERS

Self-confidence epitomizes men who possess *arutam,* and it therefore makes these individuals (such as Chuji) natural leaders in moments of military crisis (such as the above-mentioned 1996 attack).

These life-and-death situations truly require a clear chain of command for there to be an effective defense. During such life-threatening situations, there is simply no time for villagers to organize a meeting to establish a consensus on which particular strategy would be best-suited for defending the community and then to address the issue as to who should be in charge of the actual implementation of such a strategy.

Instead, what happens is that a man possessing the prestigious and self-confidence inducing force of *arutam* assumes a leadership position by taking charge and by ordering other men about in the same manner as a Western army officer would command lower-ranking enlisted men. The effect is that during times of military threat, otherwise autonomous Achuar men willingly subordinate themselves to a fellow villager in order to mount an effective defense of their village.

This is truly a remarkable phenomenon as it is a complete departure from the typical day-to-day social interaction of the members of this normally staunchly egalitarian society.

SIMILAR FINDINGS AMONG OTHER AMAZONIAN EGALITARIAN TRIBES

A similar phenomenon has been reported among other Amazonian groups. Redmond (2002) states that the normally egalitarian Shuar Jívaro form hierarchically differentiated raiding war parties that are invariably led by men who possess *arutam*. These findings seem to be in accord with the reports of extraordinarily powerful leaders among some egalitarian Yanomamo populations.

Chagnon attributes such power (and villagers' tolerance of it) to the fact that these regions are undergoing an intense level of raiding. Chagnon writes:

> Yet another is the development of increased authority of the political leaders, and this appears to be the direction that the Yanomamo are following. Headmenship among the Shamatari in general and the Mishimishimaböwateri in

> particular appears to have taken a few halting steps in the direction of greater authority and autocracy than is true in other Yanomamo areas where villages rarely get larger than 100 or so people. (Chagnon 1992:211)

It should be noted that larger villages tend to be associated with areas of intense warfare and, conversely, villages of 100 people or less tend to be found in areas with lower levels of violence (Chagnon 1992).

SIMILAR FINDINGS AMONG THE EGALITARIAN NUMIC PEOPLE OF THE GREAT BASIN

Whitley (1998) reports that some Numic men obtained a type of supernatural power called *poha* by successfully completing a vision quest that involved initiates undergoing a period of seclusion and engaging in acts that required much physical exertion. Whitley goes on to report that there were various forms of *poha*: the power to cause rain, or to cure snake bites, and there also was a variant form of power that allowed individuals who obtained it to become impervious to arrows and bullets. This protective manifestation of *poha,* which grants invincibility in battle, is similar to a certain type of *arutam.*

Whitley (1999) also states that even though Numic society can be classified as egalitarian in nature, not all individuals had equal social status. He reports that not all Numic men possessed *poha,* and those who did occupied positions of higher social standing vis-à-vis men who did not have *poha*. Therefore, the acquisition of *poha* by some men of Numic bands resulted in the formation of socially asymmetrical relationships between those who possessed supernatural power and those who did not (similar to the Achuar situation).

Whitley (1999) documents how men with *poha* most commonly assumed leadership positions in Numic society. They organized communal feasts and communal hunts. Most importantly, they frequently took control of raiding parties. (This is very similar to the Achuar association between possessing *arutam* and the ability to successfully occupy positions of military leadership.)

The fact that not all men had supernatural power resulted in incipient social inequality in traditional Numic society because individuals who had *poha* enjoyed more political clout than others. The reason for this was because the Numic believed that a man who possessed a certain type of *poha* could be impervious to arrows/bullets and/or could have the ability to supernaturally cure or cause illness. Therefore, it would not be wise to antagonize such a person; rather, it would make sense to follow their lead (particularly in times of military crisis).

Whitley (1999) argues that the possession of *poha* empowered individuals to assume leadership positions (especially during time of military conflict). In other words much like the Achuar, possession of a supernatural force allowed individuals to assume politico-military roles in a way that ensured a following. For the Numic, Whitley (1999) establishes a clear correlation between supernatural power and

political power. In the same way, the present study documents how possessing supernatural power leads to possessing political power among the Achuar in times of military crisis.

INCREASED AUTHORITY OF LEADERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RANKED SOCIETIES

The possible relationship between men with supernatural powers (such as *arutam*) and the development of middle-range societies can be illustrated by the following scenario that builds on the work of both LeBlanc and Register (2003) along with Redmond (2002).

In the past, whenever villages were confronted with military situations (particularly those that called for decisive and unambiguous leadership), experienced war leaders possessing supernatural powers (such as *arutam*) were favored over men who lacked both the experience and the purported supernatural power bestowed by the "ancient ones." These leaders were then able to take charge of temporarily ranked war parties not only because of their self-confidence but also because of their ability to inspire others to willfully follow them into battle.

As the frequency of fighting intensified, the need for effective war party leadership also increased, and men who possessed *arutam* were the most logical candidates for assuming military leadership roles as they were the most likely to be able to command the respect of others. These leaders were thus able to effectively command their fellow villagers during dire situations.

After having attained such power, leaders attempted not only to maintain their command but also to pass it on to their children, thus institutionalizing their control. In times of chronic tribal warfare, individuals in the community were better served by allowing war party leaders to make their social ranking permanent, thus taking the first step in the establishment of a ranked society (LeBlanc and Register 2003; Redmond 2002). Men who rallied behind a competent experienced and powerful warrior gained a competitive edge in defeating a more egalitarian, and therefore a less coordinated adversary (LeBlanc and Register 2003; Redmond 2002).[10]

PROUD WARRIORS

It is important to note that many Achuar are not at all apologetic about their violent past as many elders speak with great pride of their former days of warfare. Nor are many embarrassed about their bellicose present. Several of the men in the village who have participated in raids to avenge killings and or who have recently engaged in counterattacks to defend their communities simply state that, "This is how it is among us. You Whites have your battles; we have ours."

SUMMARY

Achuar individuals who wish to obtain *arutam* must undergo a considerably difficult ordeal. Those who obtain it are granted invincibility in battle along with other possible benefits. Men possessing this supernatural force provide a logical pool of war leaders, and during times of acute military threat these individuals assume the leadership roles in provisionally ranked war parties. Therefore, this study has established for the Achuar a clear association between the possession of the supernatural power to headhunt (*arutam*) and the exercise of powerful political leadership in times of military crisis. In the past, a similar relationship between individuals believed to possess similar supernatural powers and the occupation of wartime leadership positions may have played a role in the development of ranked societies.

NOTES

1. The publication of a detailed account of this particular *arutam* quest is forthcoming.
2. Sometimes tobacco juice is ingested through the nose.
3. This deceased Peaas is not the same individual (also named Peaas) whom the author accompanied on an *arutam* quest in 1998.
4. The Achuar point out that it was quite fitting for woodpeckers to have been the chosen "messengers" of this particular form of *arutam* in this case as these birds are believed to "own" many homes because they are continuously hollowing out numerous dwelling places in various trees throughout the forest.
5. Any individual who had reached old age would have relocated from one village to another many times throughout the course of their lives. Often, relocation involves building a new home (hut).
6. The deceased individual named Sauki who appeared in this dream is the same individual who in life served as Isa's mentor as previously mentioned in the text.
7. It is important to note that there are exceptions to this general rule as over the years the author has encountered some extremely unpleasant and quite volatile men who were experienced and well-established war party leaders, but these instances have been quite rare.
8. Currently, there is a decline in *arutam* seeking and the reasons for this are twofold: First, many young males refrain from embarking upon a quest out of fear that they will not be able to endure the hardships associated with the ordeal. Secondly, American Evangelical missionaries working in the region actively discourage participation in such rituals.
9. Chuji reports that he killed a Conambo shaman by similarly lying in ambush near the residence of his victim. He waited until his target (Chumbi) left the safety of his hut to urinate at the periphery of the village where Chuji fatally shot him.
10. See Feil (1987) for a situation in the western highlands of Papua New Guinea where warfare had become so intense that in order to survive, "egalitarian" tribesmen allowed the development of despotic political warrior leaders to rule over them. These leaders ran roughshod over the people they led (for over 20 years), brazenly taking other men's wives, but they were generally beyond the reach of any sort of public outcry. Skilled military leaders were a vital necessity for survival; therefore, their fellow tribesmen tolerated abuse. Also, see White (1932) who reports that during times of military crisis, Puebloan Acoma war chiefs were in complete charge and drew on the O'pi Warrior Society to assist them. Additionally, at Zuni, Bunzel (1932) documents how during times of war it was the Bow Priests who were in charge not only of raiding parties but also of the entire village. Lastly, see Ferguson (1984a, 1984b) for similar associations between warfare, powerful war leaders, and the emergence of social inequality.

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Chapter 19

"Handsome Death"

The Taking, Veneration, and Consumption of Human Remains in the Insular Caribbean and Greater Amazonia

JAMES B. PETERSEN AND JOHN G. CROCK

> Against death, the Tupinamba adopted the best defense: attack. Making a virtue of necessity and a necessity of virtue, they transformed the natural given of death into a social necessity and a personal virtue: warfare vengeance was a method of instituting society. Indeed, vengeance was not made necessary *because* men die and need to be rescued from the flux of time; rather, it was necessary to die *in order that* there could be vengeance—and to die, preferably, in enemy hands. This is what Anchieta [a Portuguese missionary] called the "handsome death" . . . ; the stomach of one's adversary was the "bed of honor." [original emphasis]
>
> (Viveiros de Castro 1992:286–287).

INTRODUCTION

The earliest contact between Europeans and the Amerindian inhabitants of the Caribbean and South American lowlands greatly transformed all parties in many different ways. Profound alterations in economics, sociopolitical organization, warfare, religion, and world view, among other aspects of each society, produced new cultural forms in both the "Old" and "New" worlds.

Soon, catastrophic consequences and adjustments were widespread among Amerindians over the entire broader region, but rapid cultural collapse occurred particularly early in the Caribbean islands and adjoining shores of mainland South America. Columbus and the Spanish initiated a complex series of interactions with the indigenous inhabitants of the Caribbean as early as 1492–1493, while

the Portuguese, Spanish, and others did the same along the Atlantic coast of South America and nearby areas starting in 1500 and especially after the period 1520–1530.

The flood of European explorers, soldiers, settlers, missionaries, and African slaves overwhelmed indigenous islanders and coastal dwellers from Cuba and Hispaniola to the Guianas and Brazil during the sixteenth century. By 1600, the extent of interaction spread well into some remote areas of lowland South America and away from the coast, including the Amazon and Orinoco rivers and other areas (which together here constitute "greater Amazonia"). Indeed, by 1600–1650, or perhaps earlier, many Amerindian polities and whole cultures had been completely lost, and the disruption continued. By 1700–1750, an even larger portion of this extensive region had been depopulated in terms of its indigenous inhabitants, with the Caribbean and the coastal areas of eastern South America effectively stripped of most, if not all, Amerindians (Allaire 1999; Monteiro 1999; Whitehead 1999; Wright 1999).

At the same time, the European invaders were likewise transformed through their interaction with Amerindians in the tropical lowlands. European language, food and industrial crops, material culture, economy, and more were affected by their interaction with the Amerindians. European curiosity, awe, repugnance, and greed, among other responses, both positive and negative, accompanied the conquest of the New World.

For the Europeans, perhaps nothing was more evocative than their discovery (and putative recognition) of Amerindian "cannibalism," or the consumption of other Amerindians (and soon of Europeans as well) in the islands and tropical lowlands. "Cannibals" were supposedly present in various areas, ranging from the Caribbean to the mainland of Brazil and elsewhere in the New World (e.g., Arens 1979:22–31, 45–48, 53–54).

In the minds of Europeans, "cannibals" were the worst sort of Amerindian "savages" and where they existed (or were believed to exist), few, if any, of the invaders felt restraint in subjugating and destroying them. In fact, first Columbus and the Spanish, and then the Portuguese, French, and others quickly began to distinguish between cannibals and noncannibal Amerindians as the dividing line between "savages" slated for enslavement and destruction versus those worthy of redemption through conversion to Christianity. Over time, this dividing line ultimately failed to really protect *any* of the Amerindians in the American tropics, but it was an important and very early distinction. A negative stereotype for all cannibals still survives in the consciousness of non-native people in both the Old and New worlds today. As recently noted, "Cannibalism represents the ultimate taboo for many in Western societies—something relegated to other cultures, other times, other places." (White 2003:88).

Too few anthropologists, historians, and others have deigned to explore and appreciate the synchronic and diachronic cultural differences related to cannibalism and other postmortem uses of the human body around the world. As one might observe speaking generally about indigenous peoples, an imprecise, reactionary, and prejudicial understanding of cannibalism and related practices

is typical among Western peoples. This prejudice clearly includes the numerous Amerindians who once inhabited the broad region of the insular Caribbean and greater Amazonia, stretching across much of tropical America. Some Amerindians still survive in the region today, but the vast majority was destroyed long ago (Sauer 1966; Whitehead 1998; S. Wilson 1990; Wright 1999).

There, European misunderstanding and nonacceptance of the Amerindians has contributed to their tragic interaction for a long time—nearly 500 years. Even where Europeans and others have become curious about details of indigenous lifeways, they now have little to study due to the paucity of documented history for many indigenous groups. Ethnohistorical analysis is correspondingly hampered for most aspects of Amerindian cultures regionally. Likewise, the imprecise and short-term understanding of most Amerindian groups in the lowlands and the islands is due to a correlative lack of archaeological research across most of the region, especially in the inhospitable tropical forests of South America. Obviously, much more primary archaeological and ethnohistoric research is needed.

Perhaps as important, however, is the relative neglect of this region by most past researchers because of the mistaken assumption that all Amerindian groups across the tropical lowlands were more-or-less similar, even homogenous, both on the mainland and in the islands. While this was true on a gross general level, it was clearly false on many other levels and not supported by increasingly precise evidence. Glimpses of the substantial cultural diversity—more than commonly recognized before—and diverse cultural beliefs and practices have emerged from closer analysis of the hundreds and hundreds of Amerindian cultures and polities that once held sway across the tropical lowlands.

All recent research demonstrates this newfound understanding, whether across the breadth of the Greater and Lesser Antilles for the Amerindian islanders, or among their distant progenitors in northeastern and eastern South America. Thus, it is profitable to learn to look more carefully at all aspects of the historical and archaeological records regionally, as uneven and incomplete as they may be.

AMERINDIANS IN GREATER AMAZONIA AND THE INSULAR CARIBBEAN

Here we recognize greater Amazonia as comprising the tropical forest and savanna-covered portions of northeastern and eastern South America (Figure 19.1). Greater Amazonia thus includes virtually all of the Amazon and Orinoco river drainage basins, plus intermediate areas in the Guianas and the coast to the south of the Amazon proper. Culturally, the Caribbean islands are closely related to (but separable from) greater Amazonia (see Figure 19.1). The Amerindian islanders of the Antilles shared a broadscale set of cultural similarities that united them with each other, and also more distantly with Amerindian groups in the lowlands of South America.

This broad set of lowland cultures in South America was cumulatively represented in the anthropological taxonomy of the *Handbook of South American Indians*

Figure 19.1. Location of historically and ethnographically known Amerindians in the Insular Caribbean and Greater Amazonia: 1, Taino; 2, Island Carib; 3, Tupinamba (multiple locations); 4, Wari'; 5, Mundurucú; 6, Yanomamö; 7, Achuar.

using three broad categories based on traditional economic orientation and sociopolitical development. These include the "Marginal Culture," the "Tropical Forest Culture," and the "Circum-Caribbean Culture" categories in progressively more complex systems, working from "simple" hunter-gatherer groups to "complex" farmers (e.g., Steward 1948:6–11; Steward and Faron 1959). While the cultural evolutionary scheme inherent in these categories is now seen as problematic, the categories themselves stand as useful divisions for comparative discussion in some cases (cf. Gosden 2001:248; D. Wilson 1999:29–32).

Of these three categories, the "Tropical Forest Culture" (TFC) form supposedly occurred most widely at the time of European contact, ca. AD 1500–1600. The TFC category was horticultural and presumably "tribal," and it saw innumerable small polities in the lowlands at the time of first contact with Europeans. Autonomous and generally sedentary villages, typically including inhabitants numbering in the hundreds, were once widespread on the South American mainland, and some recognize them in the Lesser Antilles as well, where the Island Carib lived, along with some Taino.

The Europeans largely effaced the TFC peoples in the most accessible areas very early on, including in both island and coastal contexts. Nonetheless, some TFC groups survive today in the tropical forests and savannas of lowland South America but not generally within the insular Caribbean. Among the surviving Americans in the lowlands who live somewhat "traditionally" today, the TFC groups are most common in terms of these three taxonomic categories.

The most basic form, the Marginal Culture (MC) category, once included diverse Amerindians who reportedly or demonstrably lived by hunting and gathering in "bands" and "simple tribal" groups. The MC cultures were historically known across some of the more restrictive regional environments (e.g., arid, upland, nonriverine, etc.), as on the South American mainland and perhaps western Cuba at the time of contact (Rouse 1992; Wright 1999). The MC groups were once much more widespread before the advent of farming regionally, when hunting and gathering were the only modes of subsistence.

Thus, the MC category potentially represents the ancestral base of the other (supposedly more complex) categories in the evolutionary sense of this taxonomy. Such an interpretation is too restrictive, however, because at least some MC groups are known to have developed historically from former TFC groups who gave up farming, sedentism, and related traits for one reason or another. In any case, a small number of MC groups still survive in remote portions of greater Amazonia, unlike all other regions of South America, but the forces of European contact have cumulatively destroyed most such groups there too.

The third and most "advanced" (and diachronically derivative from TFC) form was the "Circum-Caribbean Culture" (CCC) category, including "complex tribes" and "chiefdoms." The CCC groups exhibited social and political hierarchies and other material and nonmaterial traits quite unlike the TFC and MC groups. They were concentrated in the Greater Antilles, along with variable numbers in the Lesser Antilles and coastal areas on the Caribbean coast of South America and Central

America (the latter not considered here due to cultural differences), depending on the views of different classifiers. All CCC groups were quickly disrupted and largely decimated by the Europeans, as gold and other precious materials were taken from the Amerindians, and disease, enslavement, warfare, and other forces struck them (Whitehead 1998, 1999).

Tragically, very few CCC people survived the ravages of the early Contact period and absolutely none live in autonomous "complex" societies today anywhere in either region (or any other portion of the Western Hemisphere for that matter!). Consequently, in many ways we know less about the Amerindians in the CCC category than in the other categories, because there is only limited ethnohistorical and no ethnographic evidence for them. Yet, CCC groups in some fashion were almost certainly more widespread in the region at the time of European contact than is often recognized. Where some TFC groups have survived historically in the lowlands of South America and elsewhere where they were effaced, CCC groups were apparently represented prehistorically, with a greater degree of sociopolitical complexity than seen in historically known and modern groups. For example, groups best related to the CCC category were once present on Marajo Island, in the central Amazon, and the Upper Xingu of Brazil, and the Llanos de Mojos of Bolivia, among others (Erickson 1995; Heckenberger et al. 1999; Neves and Petersen 2004; Petersen et al. 2001; Roosevelt 1989). In other words, archaeology is the only method to learn more about most CCC groups, as it is for many TFC and MC groups.

THE CONFLATION OF CANNIBALISM AND OTHER PRACTICES IN THE LOWLANDS

Recently, over the past few decades, revisionist scholars have rightly challenged the authenticity of various forms of evidence related to "anthropophagous" (people eating) practices and "cannibalism" not only in the New World but worldwide. This evidence has often been likened to European propaganda about different indigenous people, characterized as "savages" from the European standpoint, whether in Africa, the lowlands of South America, or in the Pacific islands (e.g., Arens 1979; Hulme 1986; Lane 2003; Patterson 1991; Sahlins 1985; Sued Badillo 1995). Such revisionism regarding cannibalism has begun to correct mistakes and misrepresentations in many contexts and this is a useful first step. However, some have carried this view to the extreme, claiming that there is little, if any, evidence for cannibalism anywhere worldwide. For example, Arens (1979:9) tells us: "I am dubious about the actual existence of this act as an accepted practice for *any time or place*." (Emphasis added). Later, Arens (1979:182) says that "the idea of the cannibalistic nature of others is a myth in the sense of, first, having an independent existence bearing no relationship to historical reality, and, second, containing and transmitting significant cultural messages for those who maintain it."

There is certainly truth in the claim that Europeans have been quick to identify cannibalism in many contexts and that they have misinterpreted and misrepresented it in many cases. Nonetheless, a present scholarly consensus recognizes that Amerindians in both pre-Columbian and post-Columbian contexts in the New World have long been involved in cannibalism of different sorts, along with a gamut of other human trophy and ancestor veneration practices. In a recent review of worldwide archaeological evidence, White (2003:93) aptly notes: "It remains much more difficult to establish why cannibalism took place than to establish that it did."

At the time of first contact between Amerindians and Europeans, "cannibals" were reported in many areas of greater Amazonia and the insular Caribbean. Some of these accounts are surely accurate to variable degrees, while others are not supported when placed within the context of archaeologically and historically known practices. It is really much more complicated than this, however, because diverse cultural practices have been apparently lumped together under the rubric of "cannibalism" by outside, ethnocentric observers, and this is part of the reason that revisionist scholars have scoffed at *all* such evidence. Rather distinctive practices and diverse cultural meanings are recognizable among what narrowly focused observers have typically lumped together as "cannibalism" (Conklin 2001; Fausto 1992, 2001; Viveiros de Castro 1992).

For example, evidence of human body parts observed among some Amerindian groups is not necessarily reflective of cannibalism. These body parts may be instead related to the display and veneration of one's deceased ancestors as a form of "ancestor worship," or quite differently, the display of one's enemies killed in war as trophies, not necessarily cannibalism. When actual consumption of human flesh is factored in and can be substantiated, rather than just assumed, then actual cannibalism is virtually certain in various Caribbean and Amazonian contexts. However, was it a member of one's own group or an outsider who was consumed? This is a highly significant question and yet it is quite liable to misinterpretation, except under detailed ethnographic conditions.

Amerindian cultural practices related to cannibalism, trophy taking, and ancestor veneration are discussed in this chapter. All of these practices were almost surely represented among Amerindians across the full breadth of South America, both culturally and geographically, regardless of nay-saying critics. Such practices were specifically represented within the insular Caribbean and South American lowlands, but the full details are often sketchy, and mistaken attributions seem quite likely. The insular Caribbean is very poorly known because of the early disruption of Amerindians there, as is the case for coastal Brazil and elsewhere on the mainland, whereas Amerindian cultures away from the coast are typically better known because of their later survival, sometimes to the present in exceptional cases.

Cannibalism of outsiders beyond one's group was reportedly common among the Tupinamba of coastal Brazil, for example, and other cultural groups attributable to the broad Tupi-Guarani language family in Amazonia (Fausto 1992, 2001;

contra Arens 1979). For the Tupinamba, we know about their cannibalism from various early historic accounts obtained during the sixteenth century, although the underlying rationale and significance of this practice both still need more complete consideration and relation to other Tupians and other Amerindians as well. Captive taking during indigenous warfare and consumption of one's enemies or other outsiders, known as "exo-cannibalism," sometimes after a long period of ritual preparation and even adoption into the host group, helped foster the well-being and longevity of the hosts among the Tupinamba and other Tupians.

In other early accounts of dismembered human bodies found among the Island Carib of the Lesser Antilles, for example, and apparently among the Taino of the Greater Antilles as well, it is much less clear that the evidence represents cannibalism per se. This is regardless of the conviction and repetition of past historical interpretation, where Carib cannibalism has become an archetypal representation, as for the better-known Tupinamba case. In fact, under recent re-analysis, it seems likely that the scant evidence of dismembered humans among the Island Carib and Taino may well be related to human trophy taking in warfare and/or some form of veneration of their ancestors.

In other words, human heads, limbs, and other body parts were likely kept without necessary consumption of human flesh, whether strictly trophy taking or not, and these may or may not have been from outside of the group. Other Amerindian groups in greater Amazonia such as the Yanomamo and the Wari', for example, have recently maintained different traditions of "endo-cannibalism," or consumption of their own kin to maintain the spirit of the dead among the living. This might well be considered another form of ancestor worship, or "compassionate cannibalism," as Conklin (2001) has recently called it (see Chagnon 1992:114–116).

Thus, the different cultural context(s) behind these still incompletely understood ritual practices for the disposal of Amerindian (and other) dead in the insular Caribbean and greater Amazonia are potentially quite diverse, with what we might call "real" cannibalism or "exo-cannibalism" on one end of the spectrum. As noted above, "exo-cannibalism" can be defined as the consumption of people from *outside* one's group—people that were usually captives taken in warfare, a practice that both fascinated and worried the European invaders. In many ways, exo-cannibalism is generally akin to human trophy taking, because both often involve dominance over outsiders, or one's enemies, through warfare on some level, but trophy taking per se is often done without the actual consumption of the enemy's flesh. Of course, it is quite conceivable that both exo-cannibalism *and* trophy taking were practiced together in some circumstances. In both cases, one has gained ascendancy over one's outsider enemies through killing them and keeping them close at hand thereafter, whether by consumption and/or display.

At the other end of the spectrum, we find forms of ritual disposal of the dead *within* one's group, with or without consumption of their flesh, as in "endo-cannibalism." An internal, intragroup origin for the deceased is very important here, but in this case the consumption and/or display obviously has a different

motive—typically perpetuation of the spirit of the deceased, rather than dominance over him/her. We should emphasize that in the absence of accompanying documentation it would be very difficult to separate the consumption of outsiders represented in exo-cannibalism from other practices such as endo-cannibalism. The latter would look much (exactly?) like the former in the archaeological record, for example, as would be the historical case where limited first hand data pertained, and these forms may only be differentiated by more precise context information in either case, if at all (White 2003:90).

Obviously, we are seriously hampered by the very incomplete and Eurocentric biased historical record for Amerindian cultures in the insular Caribbean and greater Amazonia, but a review of some of the available evidence should serve us well. There are so few archaeological data available concerning this topic from anywhere in the region that, by necessity, we largely confine our remarks to the historic record and ethnohistoric interpretation thereof. Likewise, due to space constraints, we give greater emphasis to the Caribbean record here, given its historical primacy and the seminal effect it has long had on Europeans and others in both the Old World and the New. Nonetheless, a brief review of evidence from greater Amazonia is also useful, because it too has had seminal effects on the European interpretation of Amerindians both in the region and more broadly still.

CARIBBEAN CONTEXTS

The insular Caribbean was the scene of the first recorded encounter between Europeans and Amerindians anywhere in the tropical lowlands of the Americas, when the Spanish met a series of island-dwelling indigenous groups during Columbus's first and second voyages in 1492 and 1493. Landing first in the Bahamas and then in Cuba and Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles, the Spanish were initially struck by the degree of cultural commonality over this region during the first voyage. Anthropologists have come to call these people of the Bahamas and the Greater Antilles the "Taino" in recent decades, replacing earlier (and still common colloquial) usage of the term "Arawak" for culturally similar insular peoples, all (or nearly all) within the CCC taxon. Parenthetically, theirs and other related Amerindian languages are related to the Arawak language family, which is widespread across the South American lowlands.

Soon, however, the Spanish came to hear of another, supposedly distinctive and hostile group(s) of Amerindians, the "Caribs," who lived to the east and south of the Taino. The Carib are sometimes classified as part of the CCC taxon, like the Arawak (Taino), but they are more commonly related to the TFC category. More recently, the Carib group(s) have been more properly called the "Island Carib" by some, given that their language was actually another Arawakan-related language, as for the Taino, with Carib language elements included within it as a "men's" (or trade) language. The Carib language family is widespread in the tropical lowlands, like the Arawakan languages. The Taino were made culturally extinct and

largely destroyed biologically by AD 1550–1600 or so, within 100 years or less of the time of Columbus. In contrast, the Island Carib were extensively disrupted by European contact from the 1500s through the 1700s, but live on today. Some of them are the "Red Carib" who still live in Dominica and nearby islands, while the "Black Carib," or "Garifuna," live on the Caribbean coast of a part of Central America (Whitehead 1999).

Thus, in traditional interpretation of late pre-Columbian and early historic times in the insular Caribbean, two separate Amerindian cultural blocks occupied the region, the "Arawaks" and the "Caribs." Historically, these two groups have been characterized in classic oppositional, or dialectical, terms. For example, the Arawak are represented as stereotypically "kindly and peaceful," while the Carib are "hostile and warlike," sometimes cannibals (Hulme 1986:48; Keegan 1996; Lane 2003; Patterson 1991; Petersen et al. 2004; Whitehead 1995, 1999:873–879).

This dichotomization of peaceful Arawaks and warlike Caribs appeared as early as the beginning of European contact in the tropics, that is, with the chronicle of Columbus's first voyage in 1492, but owes its modern existence to centuries of continued misunderstanding, regular repetition, and Western reinforcement. Until recently, the historical and anthropological "party line" on the subject of the Arawak and Carib was identical to that of Columbus and the early Spanish themselves. For example, Metraux (1949:403) said: "Ever since Columbus's voyage, the *Carib* have been so famous as passionate maneaters that their very name has become synonymous with anthropophagy." Although not believing in the stereotype himself, Keegan (1996:17) likewise reports: "Not until Columbus reported the discovery of a society that regularly consumed human flesh did cannibalism move to the fore of Western thought. There it has remained at least since the publication in 1580 of the essays of Michel de Montaigne."

In the *Handbook of South American Indians,* the Arawak (or Taino) were described as having a multitiered social hierarchy, elaborate religion, and advanced agricultural techniques. In contrast, the Carib "made continual raids and took female captives as wives, but tortured, killed and ate male captives and took trophies of their bones" (Steward 1948:25; Steward and Faron 1959). Speaking of this dichotomization, Hulme (1986:48–49) says that it "subsumes the Amerindians into a model of conflict relationships that probably has very little relevance to pre-1492 history" and that the *Handbook of South American Indians* constantly worked in these terms and therefore reinforced the traditional dichotomy.

The polemics related to this dichotomy have been generally innocent, if misleading (such as perpetuation by those who are trying to reconstruct the ethnographic "reality" of peoples who are now largely extinct in cultural terms), but the context in which the dichotomy was first concocted was decidedly not. The Arawak (Taino) and the Spanish conquistadors both likely had intentional political and economic motives behind their telling of the Carib "myth." The essential meaning of this myth for both the Taino *and* the Spanish, and their contributions to its construction and reification, can be briefly deconstructed from examples where it was first recorded. This helps us understand something of indigenous

warfare and treatment of the dead in the insular Caribbean, as in South America, and also helps us see how myth formulation has long legitimized colonial violence and exploitation of many different Amerindian groups.

To investigate this myth-making, one can look to a transcription of the daily journal, or "diario," of Columbus during his first voyage in 1492–1493 made later by Fray Bartholomé de Las Casas. For example, during Columbus's initial visit to Cuba, the Taino told him of a land far to the southeast where there were "one-eyed men, and others, with snouts of dogs, who ate men, and as soon as one was taken they cut his throat and drank his blood and cut off his genitals" (*Diario*, 4 November 1492, cited in Dunn and Kelley 1989:133). Later on, Columbus reported (through Las Casas) that the Spanish approached "a cape . . . which those Indians that he was bringing [i.e. 'captured' guides] called Bohió [Hispaniola], which they said was very large and there were people on it who had one eye in their foreheads, and others whom they called *cannibals*, of whom they showed great fear" [emphasis added] (*Diario,* 23 November 1492, cited in Dunn and Kelley 1989:167). In this same passage, Las Casas also notes that these Amerindians had "believed the same thing about the Christians and the Admiral when they first saw them" (*Diario,* 23 November 1492, cited in Dunn and Kelley 1989:167).

Notably, the November 22 citation from Columbus's diary represents the first appearance of the word cannibal, or "cannibales," a term that Columbus later used interchangeably with "Caribs" to denote "those who eat men" (Hulme 1986:41). Thus, from its inception, the word and concept of cannibal are portrayed as synonymous with the people to the southeast, the "Caribs." However, the term "Carib" soon came to denote *anyone* who resisted the Spanish (Boucher 1992) and through this association, all those resisting the Spanish were also "eaters of men." Their presumed guilt in crimes against humanity (i.e., anthropophagy) thus legitimized Spanish violence against the "Caribs" (and others).

Of particular note, the Taino also apparently reported (through Peter Martyr) that "cannibals" lived among them on the island of Hispaniola. For example, the famous Taino "cacique" (chief) Guarionex took refuge among a group known as the Ciguayo. Thus, Guarionex lived then among "natives [who] are ferocious and warlike, and it is thought they are of the same race as the cannibals, for when they descend from the mountains to fight with neighbors in the plain, they eat all whom they kill" (S. Wilson 1990:102–103). The Ciguayo are sometimes recognized as intrusive or at least different than the Taino per se, but this difference is more likely one of local ethnicity, rather than broadscale cultural differences (S. Wilson 1990:105, Figure 7).

Interpreted in this way, the construction of the Carib and/or Ciguayo "cannibal," though abstract and unsubstantiated, seems to have served the role of more concrete enemies whose alleged transgressions could be avenged and whose inhuman status provided justification for their murder and enslavement. It is difficult to fully comprehend what this legitimization meant for the Spanish colonists who may not have needed any justification for aggression against these people and other Amerindians.

Notably, many of the men who first accompanied Columbus were lawless criminals and became members of his crew in exchange for suspended jail sentences (Sauer 1966:18), and thus they did not likely have good motives of any sort. For the Spanish Crown and the European public in general, however, the image of the "Carib" as "savage cannibal," whether myth or not, seems to have been quite important in legitimization of the destruction of Amerindians generally. At this broader level, the Carib cannibal myth helped fulfill European expectations about the unknown qualities of the New World and justified colonial policies as the economic potential of the Caribbean became more apparent and Amerindian labor was progressively more important.

In fact, there is no reliable evidence to suggest that the Island Carib, or any other group of Amerindians in the Caribbean, actually practiced cannibalism, ritual or otherwise. For example, Dr. Chanca, the surgeon for Columbus's second voyage, provided the single early "eye-witness" account in November 1493. Chanca described "bones of the arms and legs of men" (Hulme and Whitehead 1992:32), which were taken from a presumed Island Carib house in Guadeloupe and interpreted as direct evidence of cannibalism. Much later, in 1642 Father Raymond Breton supposedly witnessed cannibal consumption of a man among the Island Carib on the island of Dominica, but the veracity of Breton's account is sometimes dismissed because of the fine details (cf. Boucher 1992:7; Breton, cited in Hulme and Whitehead 1992:108–109; Metraux 1949:403).

More than likely, the human bones seen on Guadeloupe in 1493 and others observed later were those of ancestors kept in Carib houses for veneration, sorcery, and other rituals (e.g., Boucher 1992:7; Sieur de la Borde and J. Labat, cited in Hulme and Whitehead 1992:149, 159–160). For example, Sieur de la Borde (cited in Roth 1915:168) reported: "They sometimes put the hair, or some bones of their deceased parents into a calabash. They keep these in their huts and use them for some sorcery. They say the spirit of the dead one speaks through these, and forewarns of the designs of their enemies." These practices were sometimes correlated with the common mortuary practice of burning the flesh off the bones of the dead among the Island Carib (Hulme 1986).

Likewise, the Taino kept human bodies, heads, and other body parts in their houses, temples, and ceremonial caves for similar reasons, as far as we can tell (Curet and Oliver 1998:223; Loven 1935:552; Roe 1991:885). In fact, among the Taino, bodies of high-status individuals (or portions thereof) were typically kept after death for use in or as idols, or *zemis*. *Zemis* were manifest in various forms and fashions, and similar practices were seemingly represented among the Island Carib as well (e.g., Loven 1935:541–559; Pane 1999:21; Roe 1991:885; Roth 1915:168–169; Rouse 1992:13–14, 116, 118, Figure 29e; Steward and Faron 1959:250, 324; Vega 1987:1–16).

Siegel (1999:215) tells us: "Ancestor worship typically is associated with shamanism, and the veneration of deified ancestors was a strong integrative component of Taino chiefdoms. It was the basis for their cosmological system called *zemiism*. *Zemis*, as a group, refer to 'gods, symbols of deities, idols, bones or skulls

of the dead.'" Human bone ornaments, considered to be "war trophies," are also known from Puerto Rico and Hispaniola (Roe 1991), suggesting that quite different factors potentially account for the presence of human remains in Amerindian contexts regionally.

In reviewing the work of others, including Arens, Boucher (1992:7) concludes that the modern consensus considers the case for Carib cannibalism in particular to be quite weak. However, some uncertainty causes Boucher (1992:7) to pose the question: "Then what about the fractured bones found at some Carib archaeological sites?" The simple answer to this particular question is *what* Carib archaeological sites and *what* real evidence?

In reality, there is very little conclusive archaeological evidence for the Island Carib in any sense and this scarcity is sometimes called the "Carib problem," or some equivalent (Allaire 1977, 1999). Archaeologists have addressed the "Carib problem" by investigating the validity of a late prehistoric or protohistoric invasion into the Lesser Antilles and perhaps nearby islands. For example, a battle between the Spanish and the "Carib" reportedly took place at or near the archaeological site of Salt River in St. Croix during Columbus's second voyage in 1493. Yet, archaeological investigation at Salt River has yielded a typical sequence of indigenous proto-Taino and Taino occupation, which is quite similar to that of islands in the Greater Antilles such as Puerto Rico, as well as some in the northern Lesser Antilles. In other words, the archaeological evidence from Salt River (and all other nearby sites) does not support occupation by any non-Taino group (Morse 1997, 2004; Rouse 1992:124–125; see Crock and Petersen 2004; Hofman and Hoogland 2004).

Moreover, the late prehistoric "Suazoid" ceramic style was once thought to provide evidence for Carib occupation in the Windward Islands of the southern Lesser Antilles (Bullen 1972; Petersen et al. 2004:20). However, Allaire (1977, 1980, 1999:721–722) critically evaluated these data and failed to find any significant correlation between the Suazoid style and the styles of historically known Carib groups on the South American mainland. In fact, he discovered transitional forms that indicate that the Suazoid style was an outgrowth of earlier indigenous ceramic developments. Allaire (1977, 1980, 1999) has argued that the historical presence of the Island Carib in the Lesser Antilles is best accounted for by one or another scenario: a protohistoric Carib migration from the mainland ca. AD 1500, or rapid acculturation of preexisting Arawakans toward mainland Carib culture around this time.

Davis and Goodwin (1990) have rejected both of these models on linguistic grounds. Instead, they propose that the Island Carib inhabitants of the southern Lesser Antilles were actually Arawakan speakers who resided in the Windward Islands for at least 400 or more years before Columbus, and that they had adopted some Carib language elements for trading purposes. Davis and Goodwin conclude that the use of a Carib pidgin likely emerged during the historic period as the result of interaction between island and mainland groups (i.e., different Arawak and Carib speakers). They further speculate that this interaction, "in different instances,

took the form of trade, raiding, alliance, intermarriage, and even ceremonial gift exchange with enemies" (Davis and Goodwin 1990:46). In agreement with the current consensus, they further suggest that the designation of people as "Carib" by the Spanish and other colonials after about 1520 is "more often than not a reflection of political expediency," or a justification for their enslavement and violence against them (Davis and Goodwin 1990).

Initially, even Columbus apparently questioned the veracity of the Taino's characterization of their neighbors to the southeast (Hulme 1986), but whether convinced or not, Columbus soon put the Carib cannibal myth in operation to justify Spanish policies toward the Island Carib and others so labeled (Boucher 1992; Patterson 1991; Sued Badillo 1995). Columbus seems to have adopted the Taino-inspired idea that the eastern, "cannibal" islands contained the vast gold deposits he was searching for. This may have been the primary reason that he chose the Lesser Antilles as the goal of his second voyage where he "intended to investigate reports of gold there and enslave any 'cannibals' he could catch" (Boucher 1992:15).

In fact, Columbus at first proposed to use slavery to finance his voyages and the administration of the first colony of Hispaniola (Sued-Badillo 1995:65). Columbus suggested that Spanish livestock could be traded for cannibals and that this transaction would be beneficial in that "heathen souls" would be saved and proceeds would go to the Spanish Crown. Sauer (1966:77) writes: "This was a direct proposal of a slave trade in Caribs and also a discreet feeler about sending over Indians from Espanola." The direct association of Carib and cannibal, thus justifying enslavement, was further epitomized in a royal decree issued by Queen Isabella in 1503 that "allowed for the enslavement of the 'cannibals' . . . to boost new explorations by private interest" (Sued-Badillo 1995:69).

Based on this cursory examination of the context of the origin and use of the term "cannibal" during the first years of Spanish contact with Amerindians in the insular Caribbean, some conclusions can be drawn about its meaning. For Columbus and by extension, the Spanish Crown, the meaning appears relatively clear. Collectively, they expected to find monsters at the edge of the earth, and they found them in the Amerindians labeled as "Caribs." The cannibal quickly became a scapegoat used to legitimize the actions necessary to satisfy the desire for gold and new territory. Hulme (1986:21) differentiates two prominent discourses at work here: a discourse of Oriental civilization that he attributes to Marco Polo, and another of savagery that he attributes to Herodotus. Comparable Western mythic structures have been attributed, for example, to Captain Cook and the predisposition of European "discovery" in Polynesia (e.g., Obeyesekere 1992; Sahlins 1985). The literary history of the Western world makes it possible to be specific in reconstructing the mind of the European conquistadors, but what of the Amerindians?

One might ask, Why did the Taino choose to attribute cannibalism to their neighbors—or did they? In fact, is it possible that Columbus completely misinterpreted what his informants were telling him, or rather that he heard what he

wanted to hear and interpreted what he thought were confirmations of his predetermined notions? As Hume (1986:17) notes, "Columbus's 'record,' far from being an observation that those people called 'canibales' ate other people, is a report of other people's words; moreover, words spoken in a language of which he had no prior knowledge and, at best, six weeks practice in trying to understand." The accuracy of early efforts at translation between the Amerindians and the Spanish is further complicated by the likely ineptitude of Columbus's main interpreter whose only qualification seems to have been that he was a "converted Jew who knew some Arabic" (Sauer 1966:21).

This interpretation is supported by the account of the Amerindian informant who told Columbus that the Taino initially thought that he and the Spanish were the one-eyed eaters of men. This statement provides circumstantial evidence that this Taino individual had never actually seen the dreaded Caribs himself; otherwise he would not have confused them with the Spanish. Instead, some Taino apparently viewed the Spaniards initially in mythic terms. Other circumstantial evidence for this comes from Columbus's numerous notations about the Taino thinking that the Spaniards were "from the heavens." Such statements must be viewed with caution, however, given the multitude of possible distortions that likely underlie these self-gratifying remarks, as recorded by the Spanish. Cumulatively, this limited information tentatively suggests that initial European contact was of mythic proportions for the Taino, but a wealth of information also establishes that the Spanish were received within the nexus of traditional systems of Amerindian interaction. Amerindian interaction systems in the insular Caribbean funneled all discourse with outsiders through the "cacique," or chief.

As mentioned above, if the Taino did in fact report to the Spaniards that their enemies to the east and south were people-eaters, then this must be interpreted as political propaganda on the part of the Taino. If indeed propaganda, the Taino were likely trying to legitimize their own aggression against the Caribs, enlist the Spaniards in fighting them, or perhaps both simultaneously. Inter-island alliance and exchange was certainly very critical to the success of Taino chiefs in local and regional Caribbean competition before the Spanish (Crock and Petersen 2004).

Columbus was fit into the existing exchange systems soon after interacting with indigenous leaders. For example, Columbus requested parrots from the first Taino that he encountered. This was interpreted as confirming his elite status in the eyes of the Taino, given that "beautiful multicolored birds were very highly valued and seen as suitable gifts from one cacique to another" (S. Wilson 1990:61). Sam Wilson (1990:62) suggests that "Columbus took on an ambiguous position in the Taino cultural order, having qualities of both a Taino cacique and a god . . . . He must have seemed a powerful and dangerous presence to the local caciques."

Considering that the Taino expressed negative sentiments about their distant island neighbors to the southeast, could it be that they shared a European fear of the unknown and, like the Spanish, envisioned the margins of their world as inhabited by people-eating monsters—the Caribs? Or alternatively, like the Spanish, did they utilize aspects of the Carib cannibal myth to legitimize violence

against these enemies? So much of the debate has focused on the European cultural "text" that Amerindian actions during this period are consistently viewed as having been radically different from those that pertained before European contact and this may or may not be true.

Authors such as Boucher (1992), Ferguson (1992, 1995), and Hulme (1986) place so much emphasis on the transformational nature of European contact that they have neglected the long-term antecedent indigenous processes that underlie Contact period developments. The early historic records and the resultant ethnohistoric reconstruction based on them would surely benefit from the diachronic perspective of archaeology, which forces one to deal with preexisting systems despite preservation limitations, along with the cultural effects of contact itself. Specific details are generally lacking in all contexts, however, though archaeology may contribute more in the future.

To conclude this review of potential evidence for cannibalism, trophy taking, and idol making with human remains in the insular Caribbean, it is rather questionable whether any of the Amerindian inhabitants were anthropophagous cannibals, either Island Carib or Taino. On the other hand, ancestor worship involving idol making, and less certainly trophy taking as well, are documented in the scant historic records related to the indigenous inhabitants of the insular Caribbean before they were thoroughly transformed and largely effaced by Europeans.

Archaeological evidence based on human remains from the insular Caribbean is even more equivocal, although the complex *zemi* forms surviving from Taino contexts, sometimes including human body parts such as skulls, provide dramatic testimony to the power inherent in Amerindian human remains per se (Rouse 1992; Vega 1987). Likewise, recent systematic and large-scale excavations in places such as the islands of Puerto Rico and Guadeloupe have begun to produce adequate and thoroughly analyzed osteological samples of pre-Columbian remains.

Although not completely reported yet, recent Guadeloupe research seemingly reveals human remains used as trophies or objects of display, whether internal or external to the group (Hofman and Hoogland 2004:53; Hofman et al. 2003). The same may be demonstrable in Puerto Rico and elsewhere nearby under a finer degree of osteological and contextual analysis (e.g., Crespo 1991; Crock 2000:85–86; Curet and Oliver 1998; Morban Laucer 1979; Siegel 1992, 1999:216–219). As noted above, fragmentary human bone ornaments from archaeological contexts in Puerto Rico and Hispaniola are highly suggestive of such practices (Roe 1991).

AMAZONIAN LOWLANDS CONTEXT

The Amerindian cultures of greater Amazonia have suffered the same sorts of disruptions and destruction experienced among Amerindians in the insular Caribbean over the past 400–500 years, and many have been made extinct, especially those in the way of earliest and most intensive European settlement. The larger, more socially complex groups, generally analogous to the CCC groups in

the Caribbean, were the first to vanish from, or were radically transformed along, the major waterways such as the main stem of the Amazon and the Orinoco rivers proper (Roosevelt 1989; Whitehead 1998, 1999).

Likewise, numerous coastal peoples such as the Tupinamba and their neighbors were rapidly displaced and destroyed by warfare with the Europeans and Amerindian allies of the Europeans (Fausto 1992; Monteiro 1999). However, some tribes, including those classifiable in the MC and especially the TFC categories, have survived into recent times in the remote portions of greater Amazonia, particularly in upland and inland settings. Consequently, we have a much more complete historic and ethnographic record for some, if not many, Amerindian groups in greater Amazonia when compared to the insular Caribbean.

In greater Amazonia, we can find historic evidence of all previously discussed practices of exo-cannibalism and human trophy taking, and endo-cannibalism and ancestor worship among the hundreds and hundreds of historically and/or ethnographically known Amerindian cultures (e.g., Metraux 1949; Steward and Faron 1959:244, 304–306, 321, 326–329, 331, 339, 345–346, 369). However, the forces of European domination and religious conversion obviously have worked long and hard to efface exo-cannibalism and human trophy taking in particular and the broader range of practices related to intertribal indigenous warfare over time. This has occurred to the point that these were virtually extinguished once and for all during the twentieth century, if not earlier. Several hundred Amerindian "tribes" survive today in greater Amazonia, but all of them are relatively small to tiny groups and variably survive within the contexts of broader, often intrusive nation states.

The most dramatic of all such Amerindian practices related to human remains in greater Amazonia may be the well-documented exo-cannibalism and trophy taking of the Tupinamba along the Atlantic coast of eastern Brazil, from near the mouth of the Amazon almost to Uruguay. Collectively, the Tupinamba were encountered as early as the Portuguese "discovery" of Brazil in 1500, at which time they were present over an immense area more than 4000 km long and numbered perhaps more than 625,000 (Monteiro 1999:977–979). The Tupinamba, along with other related Tupi-Guarani language speakers, were seemingly a classic TFC form, living in largely autonomous village polities but linked in broader confederacies for warfare.

Before being completely wiped out during the seventeenth century, the Tupinamba were a strong force to reckon with and Tupinamba wars were conducted in part to obtain captives that could be eaten after extensive and prolonged ritual preparation, sometimes lasting many months or even years. We have records about various aspects of Tupinamba culture, including cannibalism and broader warfare, given that a few European captives escaped from the Tupinamba and wrote sensational accounts about their adventures. In addition, European missionaries produced important accounts after working among some Tupinamba and their coastal neighbors (Balée 1984; Fausto 1992; De Lery 1993; Metraux 1948; Monteiro 1999; Paris and Ohtake 1999; Steward and Faron 1959:325–330).

Describing war and cannibalism among the Tupinamba, Metraux (1948:119) summarizes:

> Religious and social values of high importance clustered around war and the closely connected practice of cannibalism. Prestige and political power were derived mainly from the ritual slaughtering of prisoners, which was so far reaching in its influence that it even affected sexual life. The Tupinamba's excessive interest in ritual cannibalism contributed toward keeping the different tribes and even local communities in a constant state of warfare and was one of the chief causes of their ready subjection by Europeans. Their mutual hatred of one another, born of a desire to avenge the insult of cannibalism, was so great that the Tupinamba groups always willingly marched with the White [European] invaders against their local rivals. Their bellicose disposition and craving for human flesh loom large in many aspects of their culture, such as education, oratory, poetry, and religion. The rites and festivities that marked the execution of a prisoner and the consumption of his body were joyful events [that] provided these Indians with the opportunity for merry-making, esthetic displays, and other emotional outlets.

Metraux's anthropological account generally summarizes the salient aspects of Tupinamba cannibalism with an ethnohistoric slant, but he obviously interjects some of his own questionable ethnocentric interpretations as well.

For example, the motives behind frequent Tupinamba fighting have been explained as a form of revenge warfare by other writers backing Metraux (1948, cited above; Balée 1984:246; Monteiro 1999:987–989; Viveiros de Castro 1992), but alternative hypotheses also have been suggested. For example, Balée (1984:241) presents an alternative motive, suggesting that the Tupinamba "made wars not to avenge their dead, but to ensure the well-being of the living." They fought over both coastal marine and forest environments, an area where foodstuffs were abundant in this view (Balée 1984:249–259).

Alternatively, Tupinamba warfare and cannibalism have been explained in terms of providing critical food protein, but this seems unlikely where as many as 3000–4000, or even 10,000–12,000 people would share in eating a single sacrificed captive (Balée 1984:247; De Lery 1993:123). Even "magico-religious" causes have been hypothesized for Tupinamba warfare, where the captive was a "means of communication between the living and the dead (the recent dead, to be avenged, or the mythic ancestors, to be commemorated)" (Viveiros de Castro 1992:274–275; see Fernandes 1970:317–330; Monteiro 1999:987).

In 1556, French missionary Jean De Lery (1993) reported the Tupinamba ceremonial killing of a captive in great detail. De Lery (1993:122–123) tells us:

> First, all of the villages in the vicinity of the one holding the prisoner are told of the day of execution: men, women, and children arrive from all directions, and begin to dance and to drink *caouin* [manioc beer] and revel throughout the morning. Even he who is not unaware that this gathering is on his account, and that in a short time he will be clubbed to death in all his feathered regalia, is by no means downcast; on the contrary, leaping about and drinking, he

> will be *one of the merriest ones* there. However, after he has sung and caroused for six or seven hours, two or three of the most respected in the throng will take hold of him, and bind him with ropes made of cotton or of the bark of a tree. . . . [W]ithout his offering any resistance, even though both his arms are left free, *he will be walked for a little while through the village, and displayed as a trophy*. But for all that, do you think that he bows his head, as our criminals over here would do? By no means, on the contrary, with an incredible audacity and assurance, he will boast of his past feats of prowess. . . . Finally, after he has been thus exposed to everyone's view, the two savages who hold him bound . . . each pull hard enough so that the captive, caught by the middle of the body, is held up short, and cannot move. . . . Next, they bring him stones and shards of old broken pots. . . . So he throws these missiles, hurling them hard at who are gathered around him, sometimes in numbers of three or four thousand. . . . [H]e who is to strike the blow . . . comes out of a house gripping one of those great wooden swords, richly decorated with beautiful feathers of the finest quality. . . . He approaches the prisoner with, for instance, 'Are you not of the nation . . . which is our enemy? And have you not yourself killed and eaten of our kinsmen and friends?' The prisoner, more fearless than ever, replies in his language. . . . 'Yes, I am very strong, and have slain and eaten a great many.'. . . 'my kinsmen will avenge me in turn.' [*Emphasis added.*] (*Reprinted by permission of the publisher*.)

De Lery's description goes on in greater detail to chronicle the final repartee between the captive and his captors, his sudden death by clubbing, and the butchering, cooking, and consumption of his body.

Of further note, De Lery (1993:127) reports on the remnants of the Tupinamba captives:

> Furthermore, our Tupinamba save the skulls, piling them up in heaps in their villages, like the deaths'-heads we see in our cemeteries over here. The first thing they do when the French go to visit them is to recount their valiant deeds, and *show them those fleshless skulls as trophies*, saying that they will do the same thing to all their enemies. . . . They also carefully save the biggest bones of the thighs and the arms for making fifes and flutes, and they keep the teeth as well, which they pull out and string like rosary beads. [*Emphasis added*.]

If true, this provides unequivocal evidence of the close relationship between captive taking, cannibalism, and trophy taking and display among the Tupinamba.

Other details provided by Hans Staden, held captive by the Tupinamba for nine months in 1554–1555, corroborate De Lery's details and various other contemporary accounts as well. Moreover, Staden's story is particularly gripping in that it is a first-hand and thoroughly illustrated, if sensationalized, account of captivity, ceremony, cannibalism, and (fortunately for him *and* his audience) ultimate escape (Paris and Ohtake 1999; see Metraux 1948: Figures 6, 8, 9, 11–14). Of note, Staden recorded that the greatest honor for the Tupinamba was the adoption and accumulation of new names through the death of one's enemies, so both

revenge and status underlie Tupinamba warfare and captive killing based on his information (Viveiros de Castro 1992:279).

Staden's narrative, first published in Germany in 1557, quickly became famous, and was made more so by Theodore de Bry in the 1590s and thereafter, and was widely reprinted in various languages all across Europe during the sixteenth century and thereafter. It was a bestseller, in other words, and over quite a long period. Ultimately, based on the narratives of Staden, De Lery, and others, the Tupinamba came to represent the most [in]famous example of cannibalism known anywhere in world literature of the time and long thereafter.

Repugnance quickly and logically, if ethnocentrically, followed. Like stories of the Caribs, the Tupinamba case came to represent a quintessential example of New World savagery and had an immeasurable impact on European conceptions of indigenous peoples generally then and ever since. Sadly, this is to deny these Amerindians their full due. It obviously also has affected long-term colonial and postcolonial policy toward all Amerindians.

Moving beyond the Tupinamba, there are few other examples of comparable or better-documented exo-cannibalism known anywhere in the South American lowlands (or all of South America for that matter). Notably, the broad Tupi-Guarani language family, which included the Tupinamba, has often featured cannibalism and/or the practices of endo-cannibalism, trophy taking, and veneration of the bones of powerful ancestors within its broad cultural repertoire (e.g., Clastres 1975:12–14; Metraux 1949:400–403). Thus, cannibalism on some level has been an essential part of the collective cosmology of the Tupians (Viveiros de Castro 1992:24–29). However, many other examples of variably known trophy taking, endo-cannibalism, and idol veneration ("ancestor worship") are known elsewhere in lowland South America. In fact, leaving aside exo-cannibalism here, a vast amount of information about such practices can be mustered for the South American lowlands, though it is again uneven due to the disruptive forces of European contact and transformation.

For example, among the Mundurucú, speakers of another Tupian language, inter-tribal warfare was common and enemy adult men and woman were killed, and their heads were kept as trophies, while children captives were adopted. As noted by Murphy and Murphy (1985:30), from "the Mundurucú point of view, almost all of the surrounding Indian societies were their enemies, and the destruction of enemy villages, the capture of their children, and the taking of trophy heads were traditional and hallowed ways of dealing with a foe." Further, Murphy and Murphy (1985:106–107) tell us:

> Whatever the importance of young captives in maintaining population levels, the taking of trophy heads was thought by the Mundurucú to be the ultimate goal of warfare. The heads were not shrunken, as among the Jívaro of Ecuador, but, rather, were desiccated. The brains were taken out through the foramen magnum. . . , and the head was dipped several times in boiling water and dried near a roaring fire. This was apparently sufficient to preserve the head for years; indeed, there are at least two specimens in museums to this day [as

> in the American Museum of Natural History]. The trophy head was kept in the men's house and was treasured both as a memento of Mundurucú prowess and as an object of religious ritual. The taker of a trophy head . . . occupied the most honored rank in Mundurucú society. During a ritual period of almost three years after his exploit, he was considered to be in a sacralized state and could not engage in ordinary social discourse. . . . One of the principal values of the trophy head was its beneficial effect upon the spirits of the game animals. Informants said that the head did not contain the spirit or soul of the fallen enemy, but that it simply 'pleased' the game spirits and made them more vulnerable to hunting. It was customary for the [trophy taker] to take the head out to the forest with the hunting parties and wait while the charm of the trophy was felt by the game. . . . The influence of the trophy head over the spirits of the game linked together the two major male activities, warfare and hunting. (*Reprinted by permission of the publisher*.)

Additional details about the Mundurucú and their trophy heads are available elsewhere (e.g., Horton 1948:277–278, Plate 23; Menget 1993; Murphy 1960; Steward and Faron 1959:338–339). Of further note, for Mundurucú warriors who failed to kill an enemy and thus did not obtain a trophy head, a belt adorned with the teeth of the enemies served as an alternative trophy. Likewise, such a belt served as a form of compensation for the widow of a warrior killed in battle (Horton 1948:278, Plate 23).

One other important point should be mentioned as well: When a Mundurucú warriors was killed in battle, his confederates tried to secure his head and bring it home so that a feast could be given in his honor. Female relatives in mourning could also wear the head of the slain warrior. It was ultimately buried about four years later after a series of ceremonies (Horton 1948:279; Steward and Faron 1959:339). Obviously, many of these details are particular to the Mundurucú, but nonetheless the cultural interconnection between hunting and warfare is of particular interest, as is the highly ceremonial status of the act of trophy taking and its taker.

Various other examples of warfare and human trophy taking, exo-cannibalism, endo-cannibalism, and forms of "ancestor worship" through maintenance of the remains of their deceased kin can be cited for the South American lowlands of greater Amazonia. However, these are of variable precision and reliability (e.g., Conklin 2001; Metraux 1949:403–405, 408–409; Roth 1915:158–160; Vilaça 1993). Perhaps among the best known cases are the Achuar (Jívaro) in Ecuador, where trophy heads taken in warfare were traditionally shrunken in a complex set of purification and celebratory ceremonies, and the Yanomamo in Brazil and Venezuela, where endo-cannibalism of one's cremated kin is still practiced today. The Yanomamo do take live captives (typically girls and women), but they do not take human trophies. Both of these two large culture blocks have been long involved in intratribal and intertribal warfare (Bianchi 1982:451–457; Chagnon 1992:114–116; Ferguson 1992, 1995; Harner 1973:187–193; Redmond 1994:3–23; Stirling 1938:41–61, 67–78; see Chacon, this volume).

In summary, the contexts of warfare in greater Amazonia produced a gamut of related postcombat practices, ranging from exo-cannibalism and trophy taking to others not necessarily related to fighting such as display and veneration of one's own dead kin and endo-cannibalism. The full reasons behind warfare, trophy taking, and eating one's enemies, among others, are rather diverse and cannot be detailed here. These and other historically recorded practices among the Amerindians of the lowlands have long been a source of wonder and even disdain for Europeans and other outsiders.

Again, like the case for the insular Caribbean, archaeological evidence for any of these practices is scarce to nonexistent across greater Amazonia, due in large part to the unfavorable conditions for organic preservation, along with the paucity of archaeological research in most areas thus far. Recent research has begun to produce circumstantial evidence of prehistoric warfare in greater Amazonia, but it is generally confined to defensive earthworks, and so on, rather than human skeletal remains directly showing evidence of interpersonal violence of one sort or another (e.g., Heckenberger et al. 1999; Neves and Petersen 2004).

Human skeletons have been recovered from greater Amazonia in various excavations, especially in semi-arid and coastal shell middens, but generally they are without important provenience data and often only receiving sketchy analysis (e.g., Prous 1991:216–223; Roosevelt 1989:37–39). Some skeletal remains even suggest evidence of cannibalism of some sort, but this is rare to date (e.g., Prous 1991:28–29). Nonetheless, these and other yet to be identified skeletal samples hold promise for future research.

CONCLUSIONS

This brief review has by necessity emphasized historical and ethnographic evidence from the insular Caribbean and greater Amazonia related to exo-cannibalism, human trophy taking, and other display of human remains, rather than archaeological evidence. Archaeological research in the more thoroughly studied insular Caribbean has produced some intriguing possibilities related to the ritual disposition of human remains based on Amerindian skeletons from pre-Columbian contexts, but these are certainly rare among reported excavations. In contrast, virtually no archaeological evidence of such practices is known from greater Amazonia on the basis of Amerindian skeletons, although this may change soon, as modern archaeological research becomes more widespread in the lowlands.

What can we make of the largely historic and ethnographic examples from the insular Caribbean and greater Amazonia surveyed here? Can we offer any concluding generalities?

First, it seems clear that exo-cannibalism as a consequence of warfare was *seemingly* quite limited in its distribution, perhaps only confined to rare cultural contexts, largely the Tupi speakers, in greater Amazonia and not the insular Caribbean at all.

Second, trophy taking of human remains from one's enemies was apparently an integral aspect of Amerindian warfare all across both regions, albeit quite variable from place to place and cultural context to context.

Third, the display and use of human remains internal to one's own social group as objects of veneration, or idols, was also apparently widespread in various contexts across both regions, but it was not necessarily related to warfare. Instead, some sort of ancestor veneration was likely the common thread in this widespread practice.

Fourth, although it has not been thoroughly discussed here, endo-cannibalism was also variably represented in greater Amazonia and perhaps the insular Caribbean, among a gamut of other burial practices. Endo-cannibalism was not necessarily related to warfare either. Notably, differentiation of endo-cannibalism from exo-cannibalism will be difficult in all archaeological cases, except where carefully studied context issues enable it (White 2003).

Any or all of the latter three differentiated practices related to "handsome death" might well be mistaken for the first, exo-cannibalism, by outside observers who might have witnessed human remains on display and/or consumption of human remains from one of these different practices. In other words, looking for the worst among the new and terrible "savages," it is quite conceivable that early European observers and those who came later as conquerors would have simply assumed that the presence of human remains of *any sort* was inevitably related to exo-cannibalism by the Amerindians.

Thus, the Europeans likely assumed that the Amerindians were "cannibals" consuming their "enemies" in all cases and this potential (and perhaps frequent) mistake would be easy to make where there were communication problems, since many Europeans had little, if any, command of indigenous languages. In reality, a much more complicated set of behaviors was likely represented among the panoply of Amerindian groups.

Thus, like others before us, we conclude that human remains among various Amerindian groups were intentionally and unintentionally misunderstood and misrepresented by the European intruders in the lowlands of South American and the insular Caribbean. Regardless of the issue of intention, the lumping of various Amerindian practices related to human remains together as exo-cannibalism did not serve the Amerindians well. Instead, it provided a rationale for their displacement, enslavement, and destruction, and it created a lasting archetypal image of different Amerindians as human eating "savages," a misconception that still persists today. First the Island Carib, then quickly the Taino (in part) and the Tupinamba, and soon others all fell under this fearful image. Even when they renounced indigenous traditions due to European missionization, relatively few Amerindians survived the ensuing European ferocity engendered by the equation of "cannibalism" and "savagery." The struggle continues today.

Hopefully, we can gain new perspectives on the relationships between Amerindians and human remains as additional research and re-analysis unfolds. Though scant at best, re-interpretation of the existing historical and ethnographic

records will likely provide whole new avenues of research and conception. From the standpoint of archaeology, it will be essential to study additional human remains derived from well understood contexts and these analyses need to be sensitive to the whole range of information potentially preserved therein. One can only wonder what sort of evidence would be found through archaeology if preservation conditions in the insular Caribbean and greater Amazonia matched those of the arid Andes and coastal zone of western South America. It seems virtually certain that it would include diverse pre-Columbian antecedents to the array of historic and ethnographic practices related to "handsome death" outlined here.

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Chapter 20

Human Trophy Taking in the South American Gran Chaco

MARCELA MENDOZA

HUMAN TROPHY TAKING IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN GRAN CHACO

Many South American indigenous groups practiced the taking and displaying of human body parts as trophies, and this custom extended into the Gran Chaco (Steward and Faron 1959:305). The primary focus of this chapter is the documentation of scalping among the Chacoan hunter-gatherers. Additionally, the practice of head hunting in the region along with the role that women played in the victory celebrations associated with the acquisition of such trophies will be reported.

Based mostly on ethnographic data, this discussion describes endemic warfare and human trophy taking in the Pilcomayo River area from the period beginning roughly in the 1870s through the 1930s. This work also reports on how the ritual manipulation of human trophies affected the status of warriors who obtained such items in combat. This study concludes by pointing out the relationship between the warlike hunter-gatherers of western Chaco and the notion of "social substitution" (Kelly 2000).

While the Swedish ethnographer Erland Nordenskiöld (1919:184) viewed the occurrence of scalping as a postcontact phenomenon, ethnohistorical evidence suggests that it existed prior to the arrival of Europeans as the acquisition of human trophies by native Chacoans was documented by explorers in the late sixteenth century.[1]

At the time of first contact, nomadic band societies of western Chaco were reported to have engaged in endemic warfare. This situation created the need for young males to be trained in fighting and then to be formally initiated as warriors. Of course, not every young man had the fortitude and valor to kill and take a trophy during a raid. Only those young men who successfully obtained such

items were considered to be particularly courageous, and were thus rewarded with prestige and allowed to keep the spoils of war that included booty as well as human trophies. Band leaders usually were men with reputations for courage in battle, but they also had to show other important characteristics such as intelligence, charisma, generosity, and hunting prowess.

OVERVIEW OF ETHNOHISTORICAL AND ETHNOGRAPHIC SOURCES OF DATA FOR TROPHY TAKING IN THE GRAN CHACO

As previously mentioned, early explorers (dating to the sixteenth century) as well as later ethnographers documented the practice of trophy taking in the region and also collected human trophies from local groups. (See Figure 20.1)

For example, in 1875, the Italian traveler Giacomo Pelleschi (1886) collected trophy heads and scalps of fallen Toba warriors who had been killed by the Wichí. Also, the French explorer Arthur Thouar, a member of the first Bolivian military expedition that in 1883 traversed "the unexplored, ill-famed and terrifying regions along the Pilcomayo" (Thouar 1980:13), obtained the head of a Toba warrior killed during battle, with the purpose of donating it to the Museum of Trocadéro, France.[2] In 1909, Nordenskiöld (1919:184) acquired the scalp of a Nivaklé man from the

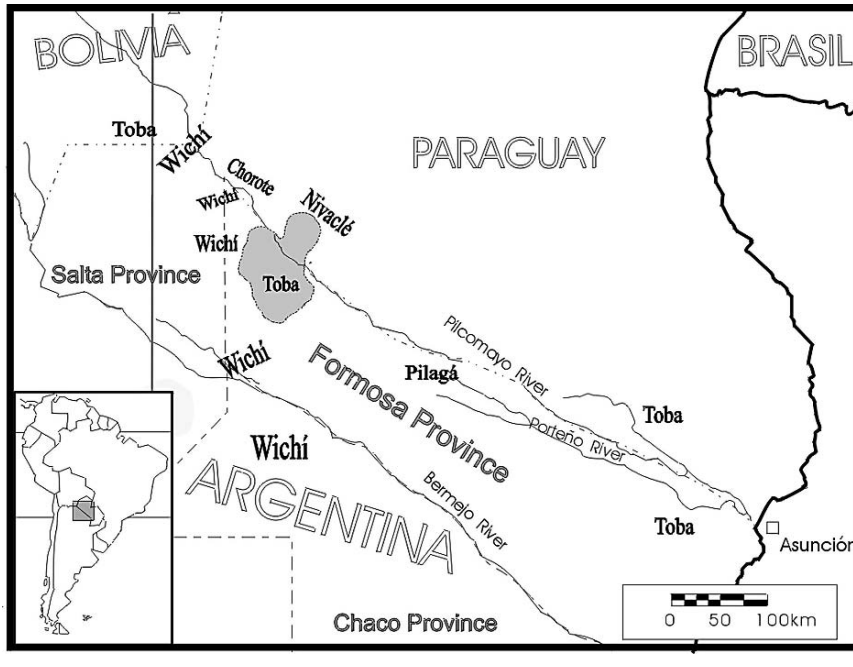

Figure 20.1. Map of the Gran Chaco with the location of the western Toba and neighboring indigenous groups in the 1930s.

Wichí as well as the scalp of a Toba man killed by the Nivaklé. In particular, the hunting and gathering groups of the Pilcomayo River area engaged in this practice until the early twentieth century. Rafael Karsten, who visited the area in 1911–1912, reported that in those days some indigenous peoples still obtained and displayed heads and scalps.

The German ethnographer Hans Krieg (1980:12) traveled along the Pilcomayo River in 1925–1926 and collected for the Linden Museum of Stuttgart. He brought back two Nivaklé scalps obtained from the Pilagá—reproduced in Plate XIV I11.45 of the original edition of Krieg's picture atlas.

According to the French ethnographer Pierre Clastres (1981:236), the indigenous warriors of the Pilcomayo River may have continued the practice of obtaining trophy heads and scalps until the early 1940s. In 1966, Clastres unsuccessfully tried to purchase Toba scalps from the Nivaclé of the Paraguayan Chaco among whom he was conducting fieldwork at that time.

While conducting anthropological fieldwork in the Argentine Chaco in the 1990s, I became interested in the topic of warfare and the practice of taking of human trophies, so I interviewed elders from the western Toba group of the Pilcomayo River.[3] They enjoyed reminiscing about the past and were eager to share information about the festivities that were held in celebration of successful scalping raids that took place during their parents' generation.

WESTERN CHACO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

As recently as the 1870s, the land north and south of the Upper Pilcomayo River between latitudes 23°15' and 23°35' South was inhabited almost exclusively by hunter-gatherer societies. The expansion of Europeans into the region had drastically reduced the territorial ranges of the Toba and Pilagá (Guaycurú linguistic family), and the Chorote, Wichí, and Nivaclé (Matako-Maká linguistic family), pressuring their relocation into what European settlers would consider as less desirable or marginal areas. While other hunter-gatherer bands living in eastern Chaco had adopted the horse (introduced by European colonists in the late sixteenth century) and had embraced an equestrian-foraging way of life, most of the hunter-gatherers in the Pilcomayo River area of western Chaco had remained nonequestrian foragers. They were primarily endurance walkers and runners. These "foot foragers" would eventually become familiar with horses, but at the time of the initial incursions of cattle ranchers into their territory circa the 1870s, these foot nomads generally owned few if any domesticated animals.

Each of the Chacoan ethnic and linguistic groups—referred to as "tribes" by some authors—was comprised of bands that spoke mutually intelligible variants of the same language and considered each other related by social ties and cultural affinities. At different times and under varied circumstances, as long as we have published records of their activities, Chacoan linguistic-ethnic groups have made alliances, fought, and traded with each other one.

In the late 1800s, the home ranges trekked by Chacoan linguistic-ethnic groups were separated by noninhabited buffer zones (Mendoza 2003). In 1911, the ethnographer Rafael Karsten (1932:103) observed: "These limits are commonly recognized, and trespassing, when it is willfully done, may become cause of war." Krieg reported that these bands would normally avoid trespassing territorial boundaries, although the Toba and the Pilagá of the Pilcomayo River often tried to enlarge their hunting grounds by engaging in combat, mostly over the ownership of fishing locations (Krieg 1980:17–18).

Chacoan ethnic groups that spoke variants of the same language often formed alliances with one another in order to attack other groups (Nordenskiöld 1930). For example, the Toba and the Pilagá defined the neighboring ethnic groups that spoke non-Guaycurú languages as "scalpables" (Sterpin 1993). Toba bands were the traditional enemies of the Wichí and Nivaclé bands; nevertheless language and ethnicity were not the only markers to that demarcated rivalries. Some Wichí bands from the Upper Pilcomayo fought with other neighboring Wichí. Among the Pilcomayo River groups, only the Wichí would be hostile to other bands that spoke variants of the same language, a behavior consistent with the restricted manner by which they classified kin (Fock 1963).

At times, some bands would seek to forge alliances with even some of their most inveterate adversaries. They would invite them to participate drinking feasts and in playing a stickball game that resembled hockey (which was a form of ritualized war), or to trade garden products and crafts, such as textiles made of wool and natural fibers, and tobacco pipes. In the 1990s, I recorded various accounts from Toba elders of just such alliance-forming events involving feasting and the playing of "hockey" that were held with their traditional enemies, the Nivaclé and the Wichí. Bands also formed alliances to combat settlers as well as the Argentine, Bolivian, and Paraguayan armies.

WARFARE IN THE WESTERN CHACO

In the western Chaco, warfare was a collective enterprise against any other group that was considered to be either an established enemy or one that posed a potential threat. Various authors have cited competition over subsistence resources, a desire to retaliate a previous raid, or the desire to obtain various forms of booty as well as human trophies as common causes of aboriginal warfare. I suspect that colonial expansion—of not only European settlers but also of other indigenous groups that were displaced by Europeans from their home ranges (such as the Tupi-Guarani), fueled the violent competition over food resources among Chacoan groups.

According to Karsten (1932:103), deep-seated and long-standing quarrels often underlie many ongoing blood feuds, especially those stemming from the infringement of one band's territory by another group. Foraging, fishing, or pasturing the flocks in the ranges habitually trekked by another group without obtaining

permission from the local band was considered trespassing and it could result in hostilities that, in turn, could unleash a blood feud.

In band societies, the killing and or scalping of someone during a conflict was considered as an affront to the victim's local group. The deceased's relatives could target any member of the killer's band (not just the individual who did the actual killing) for retaliatory blood revenge. For example, a family of settlers could be targeted for revenge in response to trespassing by unrelated settlers in another area. Such an act of retaliation implied the notion of group responsibility for the infliction of damage and of group liability in the retribution.

Niels Fock (1974:225) recorded that if, say, a man from one Wichí band had killed someone from another Wichí band, the killer could escape retaliation from the victim's family by offering the aggrieved party a scalp taken from a third Wichí band altogether as blood payment. The fact that the victim's relatives were willing to accept as blood payment scalps taken from a third party who in no way had been involved in the initial raid clearly indicates that the notion of "social substitution" (Kelly 2000) was firmly established among these Chacoans.

WARRIOR INITIATION

The Toba, Pilagá, Nivaclé, Wichí, and the Chorote were societies that subjected young men to rites of passage designed to prepare them for the hardships of war.

For example, the ancient Guaycurú would pull off the hair of a newborn male child, leaving only enough to form a small crest of hair on top of the head and two thin circles around it. When a boy was 16–17 years old, he would undergo initiation to become a warrior. During the ritual, an older warrior would pull the remaining hair out from one of the circles on the youth's head. He then would scarify the body of the novice with a sharp bone and then smear the initiate's head with his own blood. Then, the older man would seize the hair-crest in the middle of the head and would wrap it in a net bag. Lastly, the body of the novice would be smeared with clay. A few years later, when the young man was about 20 years old, he would be considered a warrior, and on that occasion the whole crest of hair was cut off and the remaining circle of hair was cut short. The young warrior would then proceed to paint himself from head to toe. He would tie a red band around his head, and would don feather ornaments. According to Karsten (1932:106), the red band tied around the warrior's head, the red paint or clay applied to his body, and the blood smeared on the warrior's hair served to protect him from harmful supernatural forces.

After completing their initiation, these young men were believed to possess great physical as well as spiritual strength. They were expected to fight not only against visible earthly enemies but also to combat malevolent supernatural forces as well. In fact, a great deal of the emphasis of the initiation was aimed primarily at hardening them against spiritual attack (Karsten 1932:106).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, experienced warriors in the hunter-gatherer bands of the western Chaco would prepare initiates—through various activities designed to increase their physical endurance, mental aptitude and spiritual abilities.

Physical stamina was promoted, for example, by challenging the young men to run barefooted on hot sand at mid-day, sometimes carrying heavy loads. During communal gatherings, the best runners from each band would challenge one another to race for a prize.

Mental acuity was promoted, for example, by making the novices take the lead in organizing and carrying out hunting expeditions. Spiritual growth was promoted by encouraging them, through isolation and fasting, to have mystical encounters with spiritual beings while in the bush. In this manner, the young warriors would be physically, mentally and supernaturally well equipped to battle on behalf of their people in a land that was being increasingly encroached on by settlers.

WEAPONS

At the turn of the twentieth century, the weapons employed by Chacoan warriors consisted of bows and arrows along with hard wood clubs. Those who fought on horseback also carried long lances. They also used knifes made from sharp-edged cane and knives fashioned from the jaws the *palometa* fish, which have very sharp teeth. This latter type of weapons was documented among the Chorote (von Rosen 1924:79, 127).

For protection, Chacoans employed body armor "shirts" made from tightly woven plant fibers which provided protection down to the waist—about 56 centimeters in length. According to von Rosen, "These shirts of *caraguatá* fiber string are exceedingly well manufactured, and undoubtedly form a good protection against the Chaco Indians' arrows, which are usually wooden-pointed. Arrows with rod-shaped, iron wire points, or with leaf-like edged iron heads, on the other hand, would probably pierce even the thickest and most closely knitted *caraguatá* shirt. The shoulder straps in these mail shirts are knitted considerably thinner and less closely than the rest of a shirt and this is only natural, as the function of the straps is to suspend the shirt, and not to give protection against arrows" (von Rosen 1924:53). Underneath such armor, warriors wore short leather "jackets" made from the skins of either jaguars or anteaters and sometimes even cowhide (Arnott 1934:494; Karsten 1923:36; 1932:104).[4]

WARRIOR STATUS, TROPHY TAKING, AND LEADERSHIP

It is important to note that not all men were successful in obtaining scalps and only those who had done so were considered to be "true warriors." It is no

accident that in the past, band leaders were men who had killed in battle and who could display heads and scalps taken in battle during victory celebrations. Thus, there was a clear and unambiguous relationship between sociopolitical leadership and military ability in Chacoan society.

The fortitude or "courage" that Chacoans associated with the ability to raid successfully and take trophies was attributed to certain mystical powers that only some individuals were believed to possess. The reason for this belief was that the killing of someone was considered to be an extremely dangerous act, as the assassin would become polluted by the victim's blood. Therefore, even after a battle had taken place, an enemy's undefeated and avenging spirit posed a threat to the man who had defeated him in combat. See below for how these vengeful spirits were neutralized.

Chacoan warriors gained prestige as well as supernatural power from the scalps of their enemies for they held that these items contained the souls of defeated enemies. Therefore, the Nivaclé believed that a warrior who owned a scalp could actually converse with the victim's soul and would be granted spiritual advice. Scalps would also convey various magical chants, which allowed for deeper communication between the warrior and the soul of his former enemy, for his former rival in life would become his spiritual ally after death. Their new relationship resembled the relationship between a shaman and his spirit guide (Renshaw 2002:235–236). In fact, Chacoans attributed success in both warfare and hunting to the supernatural aid rendered by their "allies."[5]

The possession and display of a number of human trophies from different victims provided unquestionable evidence of a warrior's courage and supernatural power. Scalps provided tangible proof that a warrior had prevailed over an enemy and therefore, by extension, the warrior's band had also prevailed. The warrior's victory augmented his spiritual power as it allowed him to "incorporate" the victim's spirit which would then grant the victor aid in time of need.

RAIDING FOR BOOTY, CAPTIVES AND HUMAN TROPHIES

During the dry season (called the "hungry season") that occurs from the months of May to October, individuals from different bands would gather together to play "hockey," to dance, and to drink fermented beverages made of honey. During these festivities, war parties were organized against enemy groups. According to Toba informants, women at these gatherings would encourage their husbands to go raid and pillage their enemies, in part because these females often overestimated the amount of food available in their enemy's villages during the season of scarcity. These women presumed that their neighboring enemies were enjoying an abundance of food while their own children were going hungry. Also, the ideal time to engage in raiding activities was during the dry season as war parties could travel faster and could cover longer distances than during the wet season (Mendoza 2002:129).

PREPARING FOR A RAID

Raids were organized, well thought out strategies. When the Toba planned an attack on another group, old men and warriors from allied bands gathered together at the campsite of the organizing group. Raids were designed to surprise the enemy in their villages. Warriors hoped to return with booty, captives, and human trophies. Abducted women and children would be incorporated to the captor's band (Arnott 1934:496; Métraux 1980:47).

Preparation for a war expedition, like every other dangerous undertaking in life, included the practice of rituals and the observance of various taboos in order to ensure a positive outcome and to neutralize any malevolent supernatural forces. Shamans would be called upon to provide supernatural protection for the attackers, and afterwards the men would drink a fermented beverage. They would then perform war dances in anticipation of their upcoming victory.

The Toba would seek omens indicating the outcome of the ensuing battle. Before setting off for war, the raiding party would divide itself into two groups with each side shooting arrows straight up into the sky, and depending on where the arrows landed, thus would go the battle. According to Kedok, "If one of the groups shot towards the Nivaclé side, it was a sign that the Toba would win, but if they shot in the other direction, the portent was not favorable" (Métraux 1980:45).

Before heading off to war, men were admonished not to consume the heads of any animal they may kill throughout the course of the raid in order to prevent being hit in the head by the enemy's arrows, and neither were they to touch the paws of any killed animal; otherwise they would fall to the ground during the fight.

Additionally, raiders were told to avoid eating fat because this would cause them to become lethargic and sweaty during an attack and also to avoid smoking tobacco as this would make them grow weary. Furthermore, Toba warriors practiced sexual abstinence before embarking upon on a raid. "Whoever wanted to return from the campaign without wounds was obliged to observe strict continence, and even avoid crossing his legs with those of his wife; that is why, before going to war, the men slept apart from their wives" (Métraux 1980:45).

According to Kedok, "There were women who clung to their husbands and said: 'Stay here, do not go, the enemy will kill you.' The husband replied: 'Why do you say this to me? If you speak thus, the Nivaclé will surely kill me. It would be better if you asked me to bring a little Nivaklé boy or girl or simply a sheep. That gives a man courage'" (Métraux 1980:46).

Before a raid, some men were sent out as spies in order to obtain intelligence on the daily activities of the enemy. Typically, the Toba attacked at night—preferably under a full moon, whereas the Pilagá and the Wichí always assaulted their enemies at daybreak.

During the course of a raid, the wife of a Toba warrior was not allowed to spin wool or to rub their thigh with ashes while working strands of *caraguatá* fiber

on their legs, because this would cause her husband to run slowly in battle and this could result in his death. Another taboo concerned menstruation. If a woman was menstruating while her husband was on a raid, she was allowed to sit only on mats made from hide; otherwise her husband would become lethargic during the fight.

In order to increase their strength and ferocity, members of a war party would pierce themselves with peccary bones as they traveled toward enemy territory. They would pierce their arms and chest with *charata* bird bones in order to be alert during the early hours of the morning, and they would also pierce themselves in the legs so as to run faster. Warriors would pierce themselves with owl bones in order to be able to see and fight in the dark. Also, piercing themselves with jaguar bones was believed to make men particularly strong (Arnott 1934:494).

Chacoan warriors wore feather ornaments around their ankles and arms into battle. They also wore headbands decorated with feathers and sometimes with bundles made from the hair of fallen enemies. "They paint their bodies black and red, and adorn themselves with plumes and other ornaments; this is, at least partly, done as a preparation for going to fight not only earthly enemies, but also supernatural powers," according to the Swedish ethnographer Eric von Rosen (1924:103), who explored the Upper Pilcomayo River in 1901–1902.

Before leaving on a raid, the Toba and Pilagá warriors would do the "dance of courage," which consisted of wrestling and giving each other blows. These "dances" were then imitated by the children, much to the delight of their elders (Arnott 1934:498; Métraux (1980:45).

RAIDING STRATEGIES

According to Karsten, raiders always proceeded into battle with the utmost caution in the hopes of suffering as little loss of life as possible. Rarely fighting as a compact single unit, instead they typically approached the unsuspecting enemy in a stealthy and dispersed fashion (1932:106). Silently, they would surround the targeted enemy village, communicating with each other by imitating the calls of nocturnal animals or by blowing certain wooden whistles that mimicked the calls of certain birds known to be active only at night (Arnott 1934:494). When the signal was given, the raiders would descend upon the unsuspecting inhabitants and would kill anyone they found unprotected. The warriors would not take breast-feeding babies, and they would be especially careful to leave the babies in a location where they could be found.

In order to regroup with fellow raiders after an attack, Wichí warriors would simply follow the footprints of their companions left on trails and they would also be on the lookout for any signals such as twisted branches, snapped twigs or tufts of grass strategically placed at the intersections of paths. By following these previously agreed upon signs, retreating warriors would eventually meet up with their fellow attackers (Pelleschi 1886:77). After a battle, the Pilagá would hide

their fallen comrades at secret locations so that their enemies would not be able to find the bodies of the dead to scalp them (Arnott 1934:496).

When Chacoan warriors attacked a cattle ranch, they would surround the ranch and set fire to the house by shooting flaming arrows at the roof (Karsten 1932:106). Indigenous attacks on settlers were frequent in this period, although few of these attacks were documented in published sources.

THE TAKING OF HUMAN TROPHIES

The heads of slain enemies were cut off, the scalp stripped from the skull, and both were kept as war trophies. "Whosoever kills an enemy wears as a trophy, if he has time to secure it, the scalp with the hair, the ears, and possibly a fold of skin from the back of the neck," said Pelleschi (1886:80), who actually was present during the planning and successful return of an 1880 raid by the Wichí of the Upper Bermejo River on their enemies, the Toba.

Scalps were valued differently, according to their provenance. For example, the Nivaclé valued Toba scalps more than any other type. In 1966, when Pierre Clastress carried out fieldwork among the Nivaclé, elder warriors still had in their possession the scalps taken from Bolivian soldiers killed during the Chaco War (1930–1932). Those trophies were carefully stored in leather bags or in baskets. Upon the death of a warrior, these items would be burned over his grave. This was done so that the smoke would facilitate the entrance of the warrior's soul to the otherworld which was the abode of former fighters (Clastress 1981:236). For the Nivaclé, the most sacred and powerful smoke emanated from the burning scalps of their Toba enemies.

The Pilagá preferred scalps from male victims with long hair over those from victims who wore their hair short. The Nivaklé considered the scalps of European settlers of a lesser value as compared to those taken from indigenous warriors (Clastres 1980:236).[6]

VICTORY CELEBRATIONS

When Chacoan warriors triumphantly returned to their villages brandishing their spoils of war, there would be great excitement among the people. The victors would bring back sheep, goats, horses, weapons, ponchos, and human trophies. Their group's ecstatic cries of joy may have also have been tempered by the ear-piercing ritual wailing of women who had lost a husband or son on the raid. The celebration of their coup was marked by dances and by the drinking of *algarroba* beer—prepared by the women in anticipation of the festivities.

Pilagá warriors who successfully returned from battle with scalps to their villages were entitled to wear the red feathers of an almost extinct bird that they

call *pakalú*. "When we went to war, everything was red, red!" said a Pilagá warrior to missionary John Arnott (1934:494).

Rafael Karsten (1932), Alfred Métraux (1980[1937]), and John Arnott (1934) all described the victory celebrations among the Toba and the Pilagá of the Pilcomayo River area. Arnott may have actually witnessed one of these celebrations as his article on the subject included a photograph of three men with a scalp attached to a pole along with another photo of three men ready to participate in the "scalp dance." Their heads were covered with woven net bags, feathers around their ankles, and their bodies were painted.

It is important to note that instead of an actual celebration to mark the successful return of a scalping party, Arnott (a missionary then stationed among the Toba) may have only been witness to a reenactment of such a victory celebration at El Toba Mission in 1933, performed at the request of ethnographer Alfred Métraux. The ethnographer had sought to obtain a scalp, but he had to settle for "a false scalp of black sheepskin mounted on a bamboo hoop" (Métraux 1980:46).

SCALPS AS CONDUITS OF SPIRITUAL POWER

As previously mentioned, scalps were believed to contain the spirits of the victims, which were hostile to their killers, and these supernatural entities could only be subdued through ritual prayer and spiritual purification. After a period of fasting and seclusion, a killer could establish a relationship with the victim's spirit. This spirit would confer to the warrior a supernatural chant, and from that moment the warrior would recite this song in order to communicate with his victim's spirit, much in the same manner as shamans communicate with their own spirit guides. In effect, by taking an enemy's scalp and subjecting it to the aforementioned cleansing rituals, a man transformed his rival's spirit into a powerful ally that would render him assistance in both hunting and in warfare.

In order to add to the celebration of a successful raid, Chorote warriors would bring out other scalps that had been acquired in previous battles, and would wear scalp-lock ornaments tucked in their head bands.[7] Young Toba and Pilagá warriors—who participated in the recent raid but who had returned without a human trophy were only allowed to perform the victory "scalp dance" held during the daytime. At night, however, the scalps were placed on tall poles located in the center of the village, and only men who had taken trophies were allowed to perform the "scalp dance" held during the night to the sound of a drum consisting of a clay pot partly filled with water,[8] while *algarroba* beer was drunk from the skulls of the victims.

Singing, dancing, drum-beating, and rattle-shaking were regarded as powerful supernatural actions. In preparation for the "scalp dance," the warriors painted wide zebra-like black stripes across their bodies with a black stripe drawn across their faces from ear to ear, while the rest of their faces were painted red. Arms and ankles were adorned with *Rhea americana* (an ostrichlike bird) feathers along with

small bells that were fastened to the legs below the knees. According to Arnott, the sounds produced by these bells were considered to possess mystical qualities. Because these bells were only for use in victory celebrations, after the "scalp dance," these items were carefully stored out of sight.

The dancers covered their heads with woven bags (made from *caraguatá* fiber) that incorporated feathers and bones which concealed the identities of the men in order to avoid being "hunted" (recognized) by the spirits of their scalped victims. The victors painted their bodies and hid their faces behind disguises so as to protect themselves from the scalps, which were considered to be particularly dangerous at this point. The warriors then proceeded to form a circle around the scalps that hung from poles at the center, and would dance to and fro to the sound of the drum, with each man reciting his own chant. An individual owned a particular "scalp song" which he had received either from a spirit in a dream or by it being handed down to him by another warrior, who had in turn received it from a spirit. If during the course of the celebration, a dancer grew weary, he would momentarily retire from the dance circle to scarify himself using an awl made from jaguar bone, which would renew his strength (Karsten 1932).

The dancers would then vociferously direct curses at the scalps in order to expel the malignant spirits that were believed to reside in these trophies. According to Arnott, the purpose of the "dance of the scalps" was to render the malevolent spirits harmless and to send misfortune to the people from whom those scalps had been taken. The "scalp dance" would continue for several nights, and then the human trophies, the paraphernalia, and weapons would be carefully stored out of sight, to be brought out again only at another victory celebration.

Men who had taken a life during a raid, as well as hunters who had killed a predator (such as a jaguar), had to undergo purification rituals that involved both chanting and ritual seclusion for a period of time afterward (Susnik 1990). Commenting on such rites of Chacoan killers, von Rosen (1924:104) established a parallel between indigenous warfare and the hunting of animals. Chacoan men would recite chants over the animals they had hunted in the forest before bringing them into camp. Successful hunters would then refrain from any strenuous physical activities for a period of one or two days. Similarly, after obtaining a human trophy and participating in the commensurate victory celebration, warriors would ritually purify themselves (along with their weapons) by seeking isolation for a period of a few days where they would undergo a fast and recite chants.

WOMEN'S ROLE IN VICTORY CELEBRATIONS

Women had an active role in these celebrations as a Wichí man would take the scalp that he had just obtained in battle and he would give "it to his wife who danced to express her joy at her husband's killing an enemy" (Métraux 1939:117).

In 1929, the Toba and the Pilagá raided a Nivaklé village to avenge the murder of Tenayó, one of their leaders. Tenayó was killed while out river fishing,[9]

and during that battle a Toba warrior nicknamed "Presidente" obtained a Nivaklé scalp.

In 1933, Métraux interviewed the Toba and collected data on how victory celebrations were conducted. Upon the return to the village, a scalp would be given to a woman who then would joyfully rub it against her thighs. Afterwards, another woman would seize the scalp and scratch it as if it were a man's cheek and then she would affectionately address it by asking the following question: "Do you want to marry me?" Also, the widow of any Toba man who had been killed during the raid would request the scalp in order to sleep with it in her hut. Reportedly, the joy of widows would be great whenever warriors granted this request. After a while, the widow would return the trophy to the warrior and say: "I am happy now, the death of my husband has been avenged" (Métraux 1980).

Elder Toba men took great pleasure in explaining the appropriate techniques for drying human scalps into the cup-shaped objects which were then used for the drinking of fermented beverages during victory celebrations.

SUMMARY

Since the sixteenth century, ethnohistorical sources have described the hunter-gatherer societies of the South American Gran Chaco as being warlike takers of human trophies. Young individual males were trained and formally initiated as warriors in order protect and defend their people in a setting characterized by the presence of endemic warfare. Warriors from different bands would coordinate their efforts in order to attack other groups. Conflicts seem to primarily have been motivated by competition over subsistence resources, and resulting antagonisms were fueled by the desire to seek revenge. The disruptive effects stemming from the incursion of European settlers into the region exacerbated preexisting tensions.

After a raid, truly brave warriors (i.e., those who had killed an enemy and obtained a trophy) would return to their villages brandishing either heads or scalps which gave testament to both the warrior's courage and to the humiliating defeat of the enemy. All warriors participated in victory celebrations, but only those men who had obtained a trophy were permitted to participate in the "scalp dances" held at night.

Although trophy taking was an act undertaken by an individual who sought recognition as a courageous warrior, any trophy taken from a defeated enemy also brought prosperity and well-being to the entire band. Because of this, all band members—men, women, and children—celebrated the acquisition and public display of such items. During the time between celebrations, the human trophies and the ritual paraphernalia employed by warriors in the "scalp dance" were carefully stored out of sight, to prevent misuse and contamination, as these objects were believed to be powerful objects imbued deep spiritual power. In the minds of Chacoans, the ability for men to successfully lead war parties was attributable to the aid they received from their sprit allies.

CONCLUSIONS

In the distant past, hunter-gatherer bands that exploited bountiful environments most likely would have striven to avoid armed confrontations with other bands. However, as resource availability diminished in relation to increased population density, the likelihood of violent conflicts would have increased.

According to Kelly (2000:5, 141, 143), among otherwise peaceful hunter-gatherers, the frequency and severity of spontaneous conflicts over resources vary in relation to resource availability. As the opportunities diminished for hunter-gatherer bands to retreat, armed violent confrontations increased along with the number of retaliatory strikes from those who had been attacked.

What eventually entailed is what Kelly (2000) has termed "social substitution"—instead of targeting the actual killer or the trespasser, any member of the offender's group could be the subject of vengeance. According to Kelly, war is cognitively and conceptually understood as a confrontation between independent groups, and this notion of group liability differentiates warless from warlike hunter-gatherer societies.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Chacoan hunter-gatherers of the Pilcomayo River area had already adopted this policy of "social substitution" with regard to conflict and violence. For example, the Toba would raid any Nivaclé village in vengeance for an attack by any other Nivaclé band. Also, the family of any settler or colonists could be punished for an aggression initiated by any other settler or colonist.

For another example, see the case of Wichi warfare described by Niels Fock (1974). Individual warriors, who assumed the responsibility for killing an "enemy" in retaliation for an offense, faced great danger from those who, in turn, would seek to avenge the retaliatory strike. However, men who successfully avenged the death of kin would enjoy being accorded great prestige as well as receiving deferential treatment from fellow band members.

Band life in the Gran Chaco was characterized by many conflicting tensions, with each individual warrior seeking a certain degree of autonomy, and yet at the same time it would be reasonable to assume that each man also desired to be part of a group. Additionally, each individual warrior no doubt had motivations based on self-interest, and yet it would also be reasonable to assume that each man would have had some concern for his fellow band members. This tension was most likely present amongst all hunting and gathering societies, whether they were peaceful or warlike.

NOTES

1. For example, the expedition of Captain Hernán Mejía in 1584 sought to punish western Chaco Indians for "taking from them many scalps, hands, and heads of other Indians that they had killed" ("*tomándoles muchos pellejos sobados de cueros de indios, manos y cabezas, que ellos habían muerto*") (Cabrera 1910:17).

2. The accounts of Arthur Thouar's travels along the Pilcomayo River area between 1882 and 1887 were published in 1991 under the title *A Travers le Gran Chaco: Chez les Indiens Coupeurs de Têtes* (Through the Gran Chaco: Among the Head-Hunting Indians).
3. I conducted fieldwork among the Western Toba of the Argentine Chaco in 1984–1985, 1987–1988, and 1993–1995. This research was supported by grants from the Argentine Council for Scientific Research (CONICET). In 1993–1994 and 1996–1997, I also received support from the Graduate College, the University of Iowa.
4. In 1933, upon a request by ethnographer Alfred Métraux, Kedok described the attack of a Toba war party on a Nivaclé village. One Nivaclé warrior who, despite having received directs hits, fought on with great courage nonetheless, before being mortally wounded by an arrow to the forehead. When the Toba examined the warrior's body, "They then understood why the arrows had not injured him: the dead man wore two armours, one of jaguar skin, the other of cowhide" (Métraux 1980:44).
5. "When a Chorote Indian takes a scalp or fixes the scalp lock of a slain foe under his frontlet, it is probable that he considers that he has not only succeeded in obtaining a material trophy, but that the possession of the scalp or scalp lock to some extent confers upon him power over the spirit of his fallen adversary" (von Rosen 1924:178).
6. John Arnott (1935:115) reports that in 1933, Pilagá warriors killed and scalped several Bolivian soldiers in revenge for the murder of two Pilagá men who were attacked while river fishing. Also, he documents that in 1935, Pilagá and Nivaclé warriors acquired the scalps of two Argentine settlers, a woman and her daughter, in revenge for a previous attack on the Pilagá by the Argentine Army. These raiders then fled to Paraguayan territory "and that night danced round the scalps."
7. Those scalp-locks resembled shaving-brushes, said von Rosen (1924:103)—writing at a time when small brushes were part of the standard shaving kit.
8. These drums consisted of clay pots partly filled with water and covered with hide. The hide was tied around the pot with a string of *caraguatá*. When the drum was used, it usually was placed on the ground and sat on a ring of straw. The sound was produced by using a single drumstick (von Rosen 1924:147).

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Chapter 21

Ethics and Ethnocentricity in Interpretation and Critique

Challenges to the Anthropology of Corporeality and Death

ARTHUR A. DEMAREST

The other chapters in this book show an extraordinary level of scholarship, as well as sensitivity, dealing with the topic of how indigenous cultures of the Americas have treated the dead human body and its parts in rituals and in warfare.

Nonetheless, many of the presentations by these distinguished authors have an implicitly defensive tone. Some chapters, especially Chacon and Dye in "Introduction to Human Trophy Taking" (Chapter 1) and also in the "Conclusions" (Chapter 23), are openly a defense of the right of osteologists, archaeologists, ethnohistorians, and ethnographers to even present this information accompanied by modest interpretations and conclusions. (See also Chacon and Mendoza n.d., "Introduction" and "Conclusion.")

This defensive tone is not without justification. In the wake of the scandals over Malinowski's ethnocentric, indeed racist, diaries (Malinowski 1967), the crisis over Chagnon's interpretations of the Yanamamo (Tierney 2000; Gregor and Gross 2004; Hames 2006), and the general growing concern over Euro-centrism in interpretation, ethnography took a self-critical, indeed self-castigating, turn in the 1980s and 1990s (Abu-Lughud 1999; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Cottom 1989). In the developing world these interpretations of native traditions and history acquired a new importance with the end of Colonialism and a consciousness of continuing post-Colonial western cultural and economic domination (Beverly et al. 1995; Cottom 1989; Sam Colop 1990; Knauft 1996).

This consciousness of hegemonic agendas led to the empowerment of "native" traditions (be they historically grounded, creations of resistance, or, as is usually

the case, an amalgam of both). The political use of archaeology, ethnohistory, and "tradition" as an ideological weapon by diverse parties, with diverse ends, became commonplace. The unsuspecting ethnographer, historian, or archaeologist who stumbled into this new world of enhanced meanings has often been bewildered by the unexpected attention, and even outrage, shown by a new class of critics of their previously obscure work (McNiven and Russell 2005; Chacon and Mendoza n.d.; Deloria 1992; Ames 1998).

Thus, the last 20 years of hostile criticism and careful self-critique have had an unfortunate impact on researchers. But it is equally clear that there has been a sobering effect from this closer examination, which has led to far more detailed and well-documented presentations of evidence and also to a far more sensitive approach to interpretation of the practices and traditions of indigenous peoples, however alien they may be to the western range of "norms," beliefs, and practices.

RADICAL POSTMODERN AND REVISIONIST CRITIQUE

Many current perspectives extend far beyond professional codes requiring sensitive and accurate descriptions (American Anthropological Association 1998; Lynott and Wylie 2000). Though no one can credibly argue that such an objective approach did not occur in the past, some argue that "dispassionate" presentation is impossible for western anthropologists. Some proponents of post-Colonial and/or postmodern theory have concluded that discussion of the customs of others is necessarily a subjective reading that cannot help but incorporate a researcher's personal world view and biases. (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Hodder 1991; Cottom 1989; de Certeau 1986; Marcus and Fisher 1986).

Contemporary discourse in these areas is considered by some practitioners of post-Structuralist and postmodern approaches to inevitably reflect the dynamics of power and the construction of knowledge to reinforce such power (Foucault 1970; Lyotard 1984; Rorty 1979; Reyna 1994; Fabian 1983; Downey and Rogers 1995). Building on this theoretical foundation, the more radical proponents of this perspective have argued that most scientific, and especially popular, presentations of indigenous customs are fundamentally condescending and even sometimes degrading to the members of that group (Castaneda 1996; Hervick 1998; McNiven and Russell 2005; Thomas 2005).

Another line of critique, the post-Colonial perspective, argues that only indigenous peoples, or more generally members of nonwestern societies, can understand and describe with sensitivity their own culture (Archibald 1995; Cojti Cuxil, 1991; Sam Colop 1990; Montejo 1993). Of course, given the inevitable subjectivity and power of politics that often exists in postmodern and post-Colonial theory, some believe that volumes from western researchers should not be published at all, even if their contents are, from a western perspective, "objectively" and "scientifically" true. Finally, in the most extreme versions of post-Colonial and postmodern theory, any publication about another culture, by anyone, can be considered an act of hubris, as Watanabe (1995) recently cautioned.

Other self-identified postmodern and post-Colonial anthropologists have argued that because "truth" is subjective, presentations should be constructed with careful consideration of their eventual political and social impact. This suggestion is both logical and reasonable. Still others, however, argue further that such considerations should be the primary goal of publications on other cultures, whether in the past or in the present. They assert that because all archaeology, history, and anthropology is basically a subjective "reading," and "objectivity" is unattainable, the primary focus should be the *effect and uses* of the interpretation or publication in the present (Scheper Hughes 1995; Price 1990). This is a seemingly logical conclusion from postmodern premises (Fabain 1983; Seidman 1993; Clifford and Marcus 1988; Foucault 1970, 1972). The impact of an interpretation on contemporary society should significantly guide and limit any presentation of that interpretation. Evidence or interpretations that present even a *potentially* "derogatory" view of nonwestern peoples should be stopped or greatly modified.

In the field of Mesoamerican archaeology some archaeologists have been vilified as insensitive, racist, and, worst of all, "essentialist." Recent presentations of the Maya, emphasizing warfare and blood sacrifice (Schele and Miller 1986; Schele and Freidel 1990; Demarest 1993; Webster 1977), have been attacked as exaggerated and insensitive to the indigenous image (Hervick 1999; Castaneda 1996; Montejo 1999b). Beyond that, the emphasis in these publications on such "violent" practices in ancient Maya culture has been cited as helping to justify the massacres in Central America in the 1980s (Cohodas 2001).

Such defamatory claims are often backed up by citing popular presentations in *National Geographic* and other popular texts, rather than the original publications of scholars. Worst still, such criticism often ignores the actual lack of chronological alignment between archaeological presentations and the contemporary political violence in Guatemala, or even the Middle East, which critics often view as causal factors (Cohodas 2001; Norris 1993). For example, the criticized publications of Schele, Miller, and Freidel postdate the major massacres in Guatemala in 1981–1986. Of course, when such basic faults in these critiques have been raised, the response (Foucault 1970, 1972) has been that such temporal issues are of secondary importance in postmodern discourse (Demarest and Garcia 2003, 2004).

Even more attention has been paid to presentations of a "culture of violence" in Pre-Columbian Central Mexico. Some so-called Chicano and Neo-Mexica intellectual and political leaders in the United States, Mexico, and Canada—as part of what R. Mendoza (in press) calls a "revisionist-denial-based" movement—reject the historical reality of the Aztec sacrifice and cannibalism cults. Again, such a perspective draws on post-Colonial theory, especially the position that discourse should be "transcultural" by having nonwestern participants engage in descriptions and debate of their own culture (R. Mendoza, in press; Cooper-Alarcon 1997; Alberta Education 1994; Archibald 1995; Montejo 1999a).

Once again, however, this "transcultural" perspective has been pushed to an extreme by some radical revisionists to argue that *only* indigenous peoples or their self-appointed "cultural descendants" can speak of their culture, and that they

retain a "veto power" over "essentializing" or potentially damaging descriptions (Sam Colop 1990, 1991; Deloria 1992, 1995).

The Neo-Mexica movement—and, more broadly, many transcultural analysts—also assert that the dialogue should be broadened to include any spokesperson identified as a "member" or "descendant" of the nonwestern tradition, regardless of qualifications or access to historical or archaeological evidence (Hassler 1993, 1994; R. Mendoza n.d.; Watanabe 1995; Thorley 2002).

In a similar vein, North American archaeological and ethnohistorical descriptions of scalping and other forms of body part trophy taking have been rejected as a myth created by western, Colonial conquerors, priests, and oppressors of these indigenous peoples (Means and Wolf 1995; Berkhofer 1978; Cojti Cuxil 1991a; Deloria 1969; Sam Colop 1991; Riding In 1992). Furthermore, whatever "scalping" actually occurred is argued to have been a European introduction or even a forced imposition (Deloria, 1969).

The absurdity of this "denialist" perspective of North American, Mesoamerican, and South American Pre-Columbian scalping, trophy taking, cannibalism, and human sacrifice has been thoroughly discredited by the copious evidence in many publications including the present volume as well as elsewhere (see Chacon and R. Mendoza n.d.). There can be no doubt about the historical reality of intensive Pre-Columbian warfare, sacrifice, cannibalism, and the body part trophy taking described in this volume.

The "denialist" rejection of the presentation of evidence about "unacceptable practices" by anthropologists and archaeologists goes far beyond Pre-Columbian archaeology. Revisionist perspectives of radical post-Colonial, postmodern, and transcultural critics are currently common worldwide.

An early traditional "denialist" classic, William Arens' *The Man-Eating Myth* (1980), asserts that all around the world the description of cannibalistic practices is a creation of European conquerors, colonists, and clerics. Now, with the more theoretical justifications of postmodern and post-Colonial theories, critics from many disciplines deconstruct and deny characterizations or descriptions of violence or cannibalism or other practices in disfavor among nonwestern peoples (Knauft 1996; Biolsi and Zimmerman 1996; Layton 1989; Morell 1995; Price 1990; Rothstein 2004; and Chapters 1 and 23 in this volume).

The criticisms anticipated by the authors of this volume are only part of the broader debate over the nature of scientific discourse and the relationship between science, power, and knowledge (Foucault 1970; Lindholm 1997; Lyotard 1984; Fabian 1983; Ricoeur 1995; De Certau 1988; Ortner 1984).

THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS' AND ETHNOGRAPHERS' DEFENSES

Archaeologists and anthropologists who present evidence of violence, aggression, or "exotic practices" in a culture have been put on the defensive in recent years. Some are even afraid to publish their evidence. As described above, in the field of Maya archaeology those publishing studies that include discussion of Maya

and Aztec blood sacrifice, North or South American scalping or trophy taking, and all forms of intense Pre-Columbian warfare have been attacked as being apologists for the genocidal violence against Native Americans that began at contact and continues to the present (Deloria 1995; Hassler 1993, 1994; Sam Colop 1991). Actual examples of insensitive descriptions are used to condemn most, if not all, scholarship documenting Pre-Columbian violence, sacrifice, or use of body parts.

Archaeologists and ethnographers have responded with three major defensive positions, all represented in this volume:

1. the objective scientific evidence overwhelmingly documents such practices;
2. in any case, such practices are nearly universal; and
3. we must present such evidence of violence, sacrifice, cannibalism or trophy taking among Native Americans with great sensitivity and respect.

All three defenses have great merit, but also raise other problems. More importantly, they will not successfully defend scholars from many forms of post-Colonial or postmodern attack. So, after reviewing the defenses seen in this volume, I will take a different, more theoretical, and, perhaps more "aggressive" approach to these issues of ethics in interpretation.

The primary approach to rebuffing what Chacon and R. Mendoza (n.d.) view as revisionist denials of these Pre-Columbian behaviors is to present irrefutable scientific evidence of such practices from archaeology, epigraphy, ethnohistory, and ethnography. This current volume, other recently edited works on warfare and sacrifice, and literally thousands of articles, monographs, and dissertations render absurd the revisionist denial of Pre-Columbian warfare, sacrifice, and trophy taking (see summaries in Schele and Miller 1986; Demarest 1984, 1996; Webster 1993; and, most recently, Chacon and R. Mendoza n.d.). Some of this evidence contradicting revisionist denials has been reviewed by Chacon and Dye in Chapters 1 and 23 of this volume.

While the scientific evidence is overwhelming, it does not address other concerns of contemporary critics. The "objectivity" of scientific discourse and its conclusions, which is relied upon by Chacon and R. Mendoza (n.d.), as well as other refutations of radical revisionism have been suspect, and justifiably so, since Foucault (see Lindholm 1997; Reyna 1994; Ortner 1984; Seidman 1993; Wylie 1992).

The past three decades of critiques and "deconstruction" of science, history, and ethnography have uncovered conscious and unconscious "hegemonic" uses of science as well as the general western historical framing of interpretation and consequent power/knowledge (Foucault 1972). Thus, defense on the grounds of the "objective truth" (i.e., the evidence) of archaeological, ethnohistoric, or ethnographic presentation of practices will not satisfy many revisionist, post-Colonial, or postmodern critiques if those descriptions of "the Other" can be considered pejorative by western readers, and thus potentially damaging

to contemporary peoples of that nonwestern tradition (Castaneda 2002). Thus, while overwhelming documentation, such as that presented in this volume, is the essential step in legitimating the study and interpretation of body part trophy taking in the New World, defense of the ethics of such presentation and discussion must also address contemporary theoretical critique and post-Colonial concerns.

Another approach to presentation that is well exemplified in this volume is to present with great sensitivity the Amerindian perspective and our understanding of the meanings of these practices. This Nativist explication, rather than mere western description of practices is most effective when there is good direct evidence of "emic" views (granted, a challenged concept) from detailed ethnography, ethnohistory, or history about the period or tradition analyzed.

The studies by R. Mendoza of the spiritual significance of ritual decapitation in Mesoamerica (Chapter 14), by Chacon on Amazonian spirituality/warfare (Chapter 18), by Peterson and Crock on Amazonia (Chapter 19) and by M. Mendoza on human trophies in the Grand Chaco (Chapter 20) are particularly detailed, sensitive, presentations of the explicit rationale and meaning of the uses of the body by Amerindian groups. There are many recent examples of such respectful descriptions of the Amerindian logic of such practices (Kensinger 1995: Ernst 1999: Zubrinich 1999; Conklin 1995, 1996, 2001). Detailing the spiritual dimension of such practices is a possible defense against ethnocentric reinterpretation and at least a partial response to the concerns of anthropological critics or Amerindian groups.

There are, however, several problematic aspects of such detailed respectful descriptions as adequate protection against real or claimed ethnocentricity. For example, one is open to the accusation of actually misrepresenting aspects of the society under study which might negatively impact on the perceptions of that group. A greater concern is the potential for idealizing the feature under study and limiting the "multivocality" of its meanings and the "overdetermination" of its practice (Knauft 1996; Freud 1957, 1963; Ricoeur 1995; Wylie 1992; Cottom 1989; Freud 1957, 1963). For example, the highly detailed and sensitive study by Conklin (2001) of Wari mortuary cannibalism may have focused only on the "compassionate aspects" of their practice at the expense of analysis of intergenerational antagonisms, fear of the dead, and other possible more "negative" motives and perceptions of Wari ancestor cannibalism.

Since Freud (1957, 1963) and Rank (1945), we have understood that human emotions are overdetermined, and this layering of emotional "causality" is not contradictory. Failing to reveal the negative aspects of positive exterior emotions is valid, but incomplete analysis. Hard as it may be for a polarized discipline to accept, views on cannibalism like those in Sagin's *Cannibalism: Human Aggression in Cultural Form* (1974), emphasizing cannibalism as an expression of psychological aggression, and those of Conklin in *Consuming Grief* (2001), expressing love and collective grief in interpersonal relationships, are complementary, not contradictory. Psychological and cultural phenomena are layered in ways that allow us to

always peel further to gain deeper insights (Geertz 1973, 1983). Oversensitivity to potential critique or even genuine sensitivity for the culture in question can result in "editing" the rich analyses of practices that are repulsive to our own cultural sensibilities, potentially missing critical or even central features of intellectual significance and insight.

In Chapters 22 and 23 of this volume, Chacon and Dye demonstrate the myriad forms and many different "motivations" for indigenous trophy taking. Some of these presentations might be deemed "acceptable" by Amerindians, and others might be considered potentially negative by critical anthropologists or contemporary Amerindian leaders. Yet, even *within* a given society in the same period there are multiple forms, motivations, and native "explanations" of these practices.

There is even more multiplicity and "layering" when one moves to a deeper level of analysis examining broader issues of world view, psychology, and theory (see below). Conscious or unconscious editing of description and presentation can destroy the value of even studying other societies, while it distorts and simplifies their practices and the multiple meanings and interpretations, the richness, and even the beauty of nonwestern practice and thought. In an unintended form this is actually a classic example of "essentializing." The result is to remake aspects of other societies into an idealized vision of our own—allowing age-old prejudices and stereotypes to be maintained and reinforced and our own practices held up to no comparative standard.

We can conclude, then, that while sensitive and respectful description is critical, we must avoid simplifying, editing, romanticizing or "essentializing" other world views and corollary practices. The interpretive and comparative mission of anthropologists would be negated by such an overly defensive presentation. Furthermore, as discussed below, such editing and/or censorship even undermines the goals, shared by many of us, of public education for the struggle against prejudice and the political empowerment of Amerindian groups. Thus, while accurate and sensitive description is necessary, carrying it out is walking a razor's edge. In any case, again, ardent post-Colonial critics and radical revisionists have not been appeased by such efforts by scholars.

A third approach, less commonly used by anthropologists, is citing similar practices in our own society or even the universality of practices as a mitigation of potential accusations of ethnocentricity. In this volume an unusual emphasis is given to the presentation of the European and western practices of trophy taking of human body parts. By including our own society in those participating in these universal practices, researchers try to limit any prejudicial use of our presentations as well as protect against accusations by critics of such prejudice. This is an effective and fascinating approach.

We must take care, however, to use such comparative data to explore differences, more than merely to flatten the very value of the study of diversity. Trophy taking of human body parts should be considered a form of mortuary practice. As such, it provides insights into concepts of life, death, the body, and almost

all aspects of world view and culture in other societies, as well as our own. The Amerindian practices of body part trophy taking were very different and far more widely practiced and accepted in many Pre-Columbian societies. In the West, in general, there is fear and loathing of such practices and most western examples cited have drawn upon such repulsion to make a powerful political statement or to inflict militaristic intimidation. Of course, such uses were common in the New World as well, but often were part of a broader, *less* fearful perspective on the body.

Thus, while acknowledging the universality of such practices, they do appear to be more common in many Amerindian groups. Much of the value of this research is in *the exploration of these differences* in practice and perspective between European and Amerindian societies, as well as the differences between the many groups in trophy taking, cannibalism, and other varied treatment of corpses. Again, our own Western prejudice toward and dread of corpses, discussed below, should not deter us from the sensitive, yet detailed, exploration of the distinctive and diverse nature of these practices.

In any case, presentation of the universality of trophy taking will not deter many critics because scholars often are held responsible not only for their presentations of data, but also for the uses and reactions to such presentations by others. In contrast to our own comprehensive presentations of alien practices and our assertions about universality, popularizers or even other scholars are likely to use, or abuse, only parts of our descriptions of human trophy taking. Furthermore, some critics will assert that the situation is not symmetrical; that the dominant Western culture does not have the same vulnerabilities as indigenous peoples. So, in the view of some, admission of similar practices in our own history does not justify our frank presentations about other societies.

Thus, I would argue that (1) striving for thoroughness and as much objectivity as possible; (2) sensitive, sympathetic presentation; and (3) acknowledgement of some degree of universality are all necessary—but insufficient—elements in the defense of presentations of nonwestern practices that are sometimes repulsive to western readers, some indigenous leaders, and some scholars. I would argue then that the best arguments regarding the presentation of practices repulsive to western prejudice are to be found in a broader critique of the ethics of interpretations and anthropological ethics in general. Furthermore, rather than censor or distort our presentations to pander to western prejudices, we should explore such prejudices and the differences in perspectives about the human body that may underlie them.

This observation returns us to the broader approach of a theoretical and ethical defense of the presentation of human body treatments that may offend the sensibilities of western critics, westernized indigenous critics, and indigenous leaders and groups. Indeed, I will argue that the reaction of western and indigenous critics provides important insights into cultural variability in perceptions of the body, the corpse, and the relationship of corporeality and spirit. First, however, let us critique the critiques (in postmodern terms) of the presentation of "offensive" Amerindian practices.

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF RECENT CONTROVERSIES ON THE INTERPRETATION OF "THE OTHER"

In the 1980s and 1990s, the negative perceptions, harsh critiques, and even professional attacks seemed to have reached a peak. The controversy over Chagnon's portrayal of the Yanamamo became a true crisis in anthropology, bitterly dividing the field and resulting in ad hominem attacks, public embarrassment, and ethical lapses on all sides (Gregor and Gross 2005; Hames 2001). The crisis more or less ended with the American Anthropological Association denunciation of some of the allegations that were damaging to vaccination programs and other humanitarian efforts.

From such instances as these above, controversies over extreme reburial cases such as the Kennewick Man, and many other cases, the field is beginning to understand the bewildering complexity of the problems of "the presentation of the Other." Stereotypes (positive or negative), "essentializing," romanticizing, advocacy, insensitivity, and hypersensitivity of presentation all have their costs. As Goodman (2004) recently observed, we should "not succumb to stereotyping whether admiring or hostile," because each stereotype is a denial of human individuality and freedom. In this regard, philosophical ethics align with the concerns of anthropologists regarding "essentializing."

The presentation of "the Other" has become so problematic that some anthropologists have concluded that politically acceptable publication might be impossible (Watanabe 1995). Yet others have proposed a number of differing guidelines for ethical presentation and interpretation (American Anthropological Association 1998; Lynott and Wylie 2000; Knauft 1996; Goodman 2004; McNiven and Russell 2005). Even these suggestions, however, will not prevent negative reactions from revisionists or extreme post-Colonial critics; nor will they assure that our presentations will not be fodder for abuse and even racist application by the sensationalizing media or those with an ethnocentric agenda.

Nonetheless, most of us do seem to be emerging from the controversies of the eighties and nineties, albeit cautiously, with a greater appreciation of the multidimensional nature of the issue. For some of us, these battles have raised consciousness leading to a greater concern in general for the ethics of science. In addition, the critique of western perspectives on these practices provides new opportunities for reflexive anthropology on western views of corporeality and death.

A POSTPROCESSUAL HUMANISTIC CRITIQUE OF CRITICISMS OF PRESENTATIONS OF AMERINDIAN CULTURE AND PRACTICES

Before proceeding to examine the conceptual basis of probable objections to this volume, and to suggest alternative approaches to anthropological ethics, let me first summarize flaws in many revisionist and post-Colonial criticisms of

archaeology. Drawing from recent debates and conferences on ethics, postmodern anthropology, and philosophy we can note some of the salient problems. These include:

1. unethical practices in discourse, often arguments ad hominem;
2. the creation of divisive, disabling dichotomies;
3. "speaking for the other";
4. the corollary misperception of indigenous sensitivities;
5. North American anthropological imperialism;
6. the failure to create an intersubjective dialogue.

Unethical Practice in Discourse

Knauft in his *Genealogies for the Present* (1996) presents a sympathetic perspective on "postmodern" and other recent philosophical perspectives, and he attempts to integrate them into programs of research ethics in ethnography. He warns that post-Colonial critiques were initially important in stimulating debate, but some are so transparently manipulative that they end up hurting the very causes that they espouse:

> Odd texts, including drawings and photos, were taken out of context and juxtaposed to provide newly ironic or subversive meanings. Temporal and geographic contexts were disrupted. History was not a fact, but a western story that now seemed strange. We had to defamiliarize this story by going back to it, jerkily, and holding "scare quotes" around our unseemly past. (Knauft 1996:20).

Knauft (1996:35) also argues that we must avoid the "symbolic capital of the avant-garde" in uses of critique in place of practice and field contact:

> Many new orientations are inflected through humanities fields of literature, art interpretation, and philosophy, which place little emphasis on ethnographic rigor. Their primary research experience is with texts rather than emerging from fieldwork with living people. . . . They can be ironically distant from the lives of everyday people, even as they creatively mine sites such as the media, the museum, or the history of literature.

Unfortunately, some recent critiques of archaeology in North America, Mexico, and the area of the Maya are of the just this type of distant, elitist critique (using old texts, decontextualized quotes, forced histories), sometimes with little or no dialogue with those ladinos, foreigners, tourists, and indigenous peoples who are already engaged in constructing an ethical archaeology. The use of "false histories" to create spurious correlations between popular archaeological publications, and the historical oppression of Native Americans, represent some of the worst, most damaging, and unethical aspects of outmoded critique.

Egregious examples discussed above include claimed causal correlations between the work of the archaeologists on Maya blood sacrifice and warfare, with the massacre of tens of thousands of Maya in the civil war in Guatemala. (Cohodas 2001). The problem with such correlations is that the massacres began decades earlier and peaked several years before the publications on this topic (in addition to the fact that Guatemala's military leaders would have been unlikely to have read or even indirectly heard of these works). Similar criticisms of archaeological and ethnohistorical publications on the Aztec, Maya and North American groups have only damaged the efforts of those of us struggling to present a sensitive and complex presentation of the richness of Amerindian belief systems. In Latin America, such perspectives are particularly unwelcome in the contemporary environment of postwar intercultural debate in Guatemala.

Divisive, Disabling Dichotomies

Recent approaches in postmodern theory have rejected the creation of divisive, disabling dichotomies in anthropological discourse. Building on the post-Structuralist theory of Foucault (1970, 1972, 1973) and especially Derrida (1978, 1981, 1997), contemporary scholars seek to avoid logocentric positioning that marginalizes a priori some speakers in the discourse.

In the case of recent critiques of archaeology and ethnography, many critics have created just such divisive dichotomies by defining a designated intellectual elite, generally self-selected Canadian and American ethnographers and archaeologists and some indigenous leaders and scholars to analyze the work of others and *disempower the subject/object* of their critique in a classic Foucaultian sense. The subject/object of their criticism in this case has been practicing archaeologists and ethnographers. Their scientist/scholar vs. subject/object distinction is empowered through elitist "power/knowledge" (Foucault 1972; Derrida 1981) to condescendingly divide the intellectual community into good versus bad logocentric dichotomies such as ladino/indigenous, Canadian/American, ethnographer/archaeologist, tourist/resident, and so on. Such dichotomies automatically deny a voice to "undesirable" groups such as practicing nonindigenous Latin American archaeologists. "Traditional" western scholars are marginalized regardless of the nature of their arguments.

Speaking for the "Other"

Another flaw of many recent attacks on the practice of "scientific" anthropology is that they commit the fallacy of speaking for the cultural "other," without dialogue with a meaningful segment of that other, if defined as a group (Alcoff 1991).

Often, critics are engaged in dialogues only with American and Canadian indigenous leaders or the immigrant community, but not with local or indigenous leaders, especially not with those in Latin America. Community committees,

ancianos, and other groups also claim to represent the cultural sensitivities of their communities, but their views often are dismissed as resulting from repression or cowardice. Instead, western scholars or western-trained indigenous scholars sometimes designate themselves as spokespersons seek to legitimate their claims of "speaking for the Other." North American and European scholars sometimes further legitimatize their claims of authority through addition of an indigenous student, author, or colleague, a representative sample of one.

The problem of "who speaks for the Other" remains one of the most difficult ethical challenges of contemporary anthropology. As it is further explored and contemplated below we must move beyond simply "privileging the discourse of some and discounting the discourse of others." (Knauft 1996; Alcoff 1991; Beverly et al. 1995; Lindholm 1997; Montejo 1999a; Watanabe 1995).

In fact, in the actual ongoing dialogues, many archaeologists are participating closely with community leaders and groups (see, e.g., Dongoske et al. 2000; Lynott and Wylie 2000; McNiven and Rusell 2001). There one finds that the concerns of indigenous leaders and communities are diverse and complex, multicentered, and rich with *internal* dialogue and debate. The right to have access to sacred sites and the hope for some economic benefits from culturally sensitive archaeological tourism are principal concerns voiced by many community committees and local spiritual leaders, especially in Latin America (Woynar 2002). Community groups seldom express a desire to censure or limit discussion of warfare, human sacrifice, or trophy-taking practices.

In recent large-scale collaborations with the Q'echi' Maya communities, their religious leaders and committees have asked us to respect their rituals by participating in them, and helping them to protect and to have access to their sacred sites (Demarest and Garcia 2003, 2004; Garcia et al. 2004). Actual participation is a critical statement of mutual respect, which we have happily and gratefully accepted. Yet they have not asked us to cease excavation, not even of burials, as in the North American field. Rather, they have requested that for specific burial excavations in spiritually charged loci we share with them "*Mayehak*" rituals that propitiate the "*Tzuultaq'a,*" the lord of the earth, and show respect for the ancestors (Garcia 2003).

As with westerners' excavations of Greek, Roman, or medieval sites, or even more recent sites, respect by the Maya for distant ancestors does not necessarily preclude respectful scientific excavation, nor cultural and archaeological tourism. Of course, such perceptions vary between Amerindian groups and even between communities. Many Maya leaders and committees know that these contacts have helped to educate ladino Guatemalans and Mexicans, and the world in the general, about ancient Maya culture and modern Maya spirituality. With most Maya communities, contrary to the perspectives of some North American ethnographers, archaeology and tourism (when comanaged with communities) usually are seen locally to be economically and politically beneficial. They reinforce Maya identity while promoting local autonomy and greater self-sufficiency.

What is important then is not to identify "who speaks" for the archaeological past or for the ethnographic present, but to establish a close and collaborative dialogue between the local residents of a given site (or any other ecological or cultural attraction) that allows research goals to be defined to mutual benefits. In such a dialogue, those who conduct research speak for themselves and those who reside in the area speak for their own needs and sensitivities (and the balance between those ends). In such a transparent context, the "speakers" and their "privilege" to speak are easily identified as local residents versus visiting scientists without sinking into the intellectual morass of "ethnicity."

In dialogues of interpretation without direct action in distant locales or in western publications, the problems are even more difficult concerning *who* speaks and *what* is ethical to say. But in addressing those questions of ethics of interpretation we should be aware that they are (1) almost irresolvable in their paradoxes and (2) often of less importance to indigenous survival and goals than our own sensibilities and priorities and the world of academic discourse might lead us to believe.

Economic, political, and cultural survival for indigenous groups more often involves actions on the part of all engaged to use cultural sites and information to benefit the struggle "on the ground." The recent pan-Maya assembly of April 2006 debated, voted, and selected a list of priorities regarding Maya political, economic, cultural, and linguistics rights (*Prensa Libre,* Guatemala 4/30/06). Notably, neither anthropological publications nor archaeological excavations made any of the lists of Maya concerns.

Misperceiving or "Projecting" Indigenous Sensibilities

As a corollary of the fallacy of speaking for others, critics often have misconceptions about indigenous cultural sensitivities. The critics' assertions concerning the sensitvity of indigenous groups to "damaging" cultural images often are based on a limited and "westernized" sample: their own sensibilities as scholars, work with indigenous immigrants who sometimes hold romanticized views of the threatened culture of their homeland, the views of their indigenous students or scholarly collaborators, or occasionally the views of indigenous political leaders—again, with dialogue most often taking place in the United States, Canada, or Europe.

The assumption that indigenous communities or populations or even leaders in Latin America will be offended by references to Amerindian warfare, human sacrifice, or trophytaking practices is usually false. In Guatemala, Chiapas, Peru, Bolivia, and elsewhere community leaders and others involved in resistance often use the information of archaeologists and ethnohistorians as weapons in their struggles. Most often they embrace the vision of being descended from warlike and fearless people. Maya guerillas in the 1980s and resettled Maya communities in the 1990s put up signs saying "*Nietos de los Mayas.*" They look to ethnohistorical great warriors like *Tecun Uman* in Guatemala and the ancient "Maya warrior kings." Maya leaders do not want to be recaricatured as the "peaceful Maya" of earlier

popular archaeology (e.g. the more popular works of J. E. S. Thompson, Sylvanus Morley, and so on). Most groups also resist the passive image of the pantheistic, peaceful Indians of American popular culture.

Again, many native groups are not offended, or more often are simply not concerned, with imagery of warfare, human sacrifice, trophy taking, and so on. Furthermore, blood offerings are still very central to many indigenous groups. As with Greek, Roman, and Judaic religions, sacrifice is central to ritual (Garcia 2003), although later it has been reformulated (as with modern Judeo-Christians) into metaphoric form or has become limited to animal sacrifice. Often, we find that economic survival, land rights, and linguistic rights are the central areas of concern to indigenous communities. Admittedly, the positions on interpretation and action vary greatly even within such indigenous communities.

At the end of March 2006. leaders from many Maya groups in Guatemala held a major assembly to promote indigenous rights. They elected 21 "official spokespersons" for the Maya population of the nation. They did so because "they were tired of having so many others speak in their name" (*Prensa Libre,* Guatemala 4/20/06:8). Of course, controversy then arose as to how representative these spokespersons (and the assembly that selected them) would be for all of the Maya communities and language groups. Truly, the issue of who speaks for indigenous "Others" is inscrutable even in the present ethnographic and political context. It is even more so when we try to project back to ancient "ancestors" of the same tradition or traditions.

CULTURAL VISIONS OF DEATH AND CORPOREALITY

These ongoing debates underscore the fact that we must distinguish between the sensibilities of indigenous peoples and our own. If North American critics of archaeology and ethnography are offended by presentation of warfare, human sacrifice, or trophy taking, the problem is not in our honest description of such rituals but in our own ethnocentricity. It is our own prejudices that we must explore and confront. Indeed, that is what contemporary anthropology has as one of its principal goals.

We need to turn to the issue of western sensibilities, especially of critics of the discussion of "gruesome" treatments of the dead. It takes two sides to define what is "offensive" in writing or in a presentation. Furthermore, the "readers," the audiences, and their responses are also accessible to critique. If one objectively views human trophy taking or even cannibalism, these are forms of *mortuary practice*—treatments of the dead body. The individuals involved are already dead and the ethics of their killing are unexamined in this debate. Thus, *our repulsion is not over the ethics of the central act, but over the treatment of the corpse*. The revulsion of western or "westernized" scholars to such practices is, in itself, a fascinating topic. Consideration of this issue brings us to the broader question of the centrality of concepts about death, and repression of the confrontation with death in all societies.

The "reader"—"western," "westernized" or "nonwestern"—has powerful conscious or unconscious beliefs on death, the body, and the treatment of the dead. All cultures and subcultures do. The centrality of death and all related to it has, of course, been the topic of thousands of tomes in all of the social sciences. Many scholars of psychology, anthropology, philosophy, and comparative religion hold that attitudes toward death and the cultural confrontation with death are central to both collective and individual identity, as well as psychological survival. To some, beliefs about death form a kind of ideological "culture core," to upturn Julian Steward's (1955) ecological perspective on cultural priorities.

Indeed, one prominent school of social thought in psychological anthropology, psychology, and social philosophy sees death as the central factor for defining both cultural and individual psychology (see Zilboorg 1943, 1950, 1967; Choron 1963; and, especially, Becker 1971, 1973, 1975).

Becker's treatment of this topic, as well as similar theories, is far too complex to faithfully summarize here. A crude simplification would be to say that Becker, and others of this persuasion, believe that a central defining characteristic of each culture, subculture, religion, or secular creed, and even each individual's psychology (or psychopathology), is the creation of a mythic mission, a heroic self-image. This mission or image provides either an answer to the reality of death or participation in a quest and/or an identity that defines our lives as if they were infinite and death did not exist. Fundamentally, the reality of death is psychologically and emotionally unacceptable at both the individual and collective levels.

According to Becker and others, this fear may have less to do with "fear of the unknown" than that it derives from the rejection of our own corporeality, of the fetid and even vile perceptions of our bodies, their functions, their diseases, their continual decay. Building on Freud (1957, 1963), but shifting from Freud's controversial (arguably, at times sexist) emphasis on sexuality, scholars of Becker and Zilboorg's persuasion emphasize more broadly the infinite anxieties, fears, and repulsions of our own corporality—of which sex is but one component. Death, on the other hand, is the ultimate manifestation and embodiment of corporeality. This brutal corporeal reality of the human condition is unacceptable even from a western "secular" perspective:

> What are we to make of a creation in which the routine activity is for organisms to be tearing others apart with teeth of all types—biting, grinding flesh, plant stalks, bones between molars, pushing the pulp greedily down the gullet with delight, incorporating its essence into one's own organization, and then excreting with foul stench and gasses the residue. . . . Creation is a nightmare spectacle taking place on a planet that has been soaked for hundreds of millions of years in the blood of all its creatures. The soberest conclusion that we could make about what has actually been taking place on the planet for about three billion years is that it is being turned into a vast pit of fertilizer." (Becker 1973:282–283)

The fear of death is a reminder—replaced or repressed by culture, religion, science, career, marriage, and other activities and institutions—that the work and achievements of our lives are ultimately pointless, that all disappears into the infinity of time, annihilation, nothingness, and/or the unknown (all of these concepts being themselves unexperienced, and thus metaphysical).

The constant presence of death not only looms as an uncertain future, but it also undermines any meaning to our various self-defining quests in the present: the heroic quest of careers, the sacred creation of offspring with imagined generations moving into the future, the timeless search for knowledge of science (explicitly secular, implicitly based on faith), the more honestly irrational faith of religions with an infinite personal future, the political and ecological concern for the future of a doomed planet, and all of the other guideposts and motivations of every individual and culture. All of these could be rendered meaningless by the full acceptance of death, not only our own, but also all of the anticipated end-products and meanings of our personal, familial, and group "life trajectories."

The psychoanalyst Zilboorg, drawing on a corpus of clinical data, concluded that the need for self-preservation makes the presence of death constant:

> For behind the sense of insecurity in the face of danger, behind the sense of discouragement and depression, there always lurks the basic fear of death, a fear which undergoes most complex elaborations and manifests itself in many indirect ways. . . . No one is free of the fear of death. . . . We may take for granted that the fear of death is always present in our mental functioning. (Zilboorg 1943:465)
>
> . . . Constant expenditure of psychological energy on the business of preserving life would be impossible if the fear of death were not as constant. The very term "self-preservation" implies an effort against some force of disintegration; the affective aspect of this is fear, fear of death. (Ibid:467)

Yet, paradoxically, the *repression* of this same constant awareness of death is necessary for daily existence:

> If this fear were as constantly conscious, we should be unable to function normally. It must be properly repressed to keep us living with any modicum of comfort. We know very well that to repress means more than to put away and to forget that which was put away and the place where we put it. It means also to maintain a constant psychological effort to keep the lid on and inwardly never relax our watchfulness. . . . Therefore, in normal times we move about actually without ever believing in our own death, as if we fully believed in our own corporeal immortality. We are intent on mastering death." (Zilboorg 1943:467–468)

As Zilboorg implies, "repression" is not merely the passive unconscious process of colloquial conception, but also involves beliefs, symbols, and activities; it motivates behavior, both individual and social (see also Zilborg 1950, 1967).

Religious philosophers, such as Kierkegaard, argued that only through existential faith, explicitly blind and irrational faith, can we overcome our anxiety and

dread over corporeality and its ultimate manifestation in death and the decay of the body [see especially his *The Concept of Dread* (1968), *The Concept of Anxiety* (1981), and *The Sickness Unto Death* (1980)]. Only through faith, he argued, can we continue to live with the paradox of our human spirit, activities, and higher aspirations hideously joined to our decaying bodies.

Existential psychologists and psychological anthropologists, like Becker, Zilboorg, and others, would argue that in addition to religion, many, if not most, social institutions and cultural concepts generate a strong (yet false) sense of permanence, immortality, and purpose that implicitly deny death or distract from it. Ultimately, such belief systems and individual and collective practices are unconsciously accepted as part of a broader cultural system, if not consciously accepted cult or religion as Kierkegaard proposed.

Drawing on psychoanalytic data, Becker and Zilboorg assert that only by participation in such institutions and activities (with their implicit or explicit beliefs) can "healthy" individuals function in accepted activities in any society. Such psychic health is defined by the collective acceptance of a variety of beliefs, activities, and life perspectives that allow us to participate in society as workers building a family, as scholars seeking the truth (or building CVs), as worshippers seeking a more direct religious path around death, as soldiers fighting for the infinite concept of a "homeland" that is historically finite and doomed. In such perspectives deviance, perversion, depression, and so on, often simply result from the loss of faith in the death-repressive "heroic quests" of one's society. "Psychotics," in this context, often are individuals who have fallen away, for one reason or another, from the collective belief systems (secular or sacred) that distract us from death and implicitly or explicitly "deny" death.

A WESTERN DENIAL OF DEATH: DREAD OF THE CORPSE AND OUR "EXOTIC" MORTUARY PRACTICES

Contrary to popular discussions, no universal assertions can be made about the world view of "indigenous peoples" or of western cultures. But some generalizations do apply to most western or Judeo-Christian–based belief systems (sacred and secular), and others apply more often to a number of Native American groups. Attitudes toward death and the dread of corporeality in cultures of a European, especially Judeo-Christian, background have much in common. In general there is a dread of the corpse, the ultimate reminder of both death and corporality. Of the many psychological and cultural mechanisms described by psychologists and psychological anthropologists to block out our awareness of corporeality and death (so that we can function as "healthy individuals"), the most obvious are western mortuary practices.

In our funerals, rituals, and imagery of death we invoke the metaphor of sleep. Often the body of the "newly departed" is stuffed and waxed, dressed, placed in a beautiful cushioned coffin/bed and then often placed on display for a

day before being set into the ground or in a tomb in cemeteries with sleepy tranquil names like "Peaceful Valley," "Shady Grove," "Green Hollows," or the like. Even cremated remains are often "set to rest" in crematoriums with names, architecture, landscaping, and other details that invoke the metaphor of sleep and peace. Our rituals are "strange and exotic," even to ourselves, when we subject them to the kind of critical thinking that we apply to other cultures.

My own Cajun/French family practiced a hyperbolic form of these rituals, especially transparent to me because my father was the officially designated "keeper of the tomb" of the family for 40 years. The Demarest tomb in the prestigious Lafayette Cemetery No. 1 in New Orleans (now a National Historic Monument) contains innumerable dozens of Demarests despite its approximately 30 m^2 volume. Each of its denizens, however, is remembered from the "wake" as a beautiful image: stuffed, waxed, and dressed, looking better than in their final decade of life. Hours are spent at the wake talking, praying, crying, laughing, sometimes drinking, in front of the beautiful "body at rest" (*not* a corpse!). The family and friends tell jokes and remember the dead, but the image is disguised of the corpse, the rotting and decay of the body, or even the slow ravages of recent disease. Instead, the sleeper is resplendent in dress and appearance, always with a restful and contented look upon his or her face. With nine great-aunts and -uncles, innumerable cousins, my grandparents, and then my parents, it was always the same (as it will be with me): all comment on how "he never looked better" and/or "now she is at peace," and so on.

Few consider how much effort, skilled technique, evisceration, stuffing, wax, and cosmetics have been used to create this illusion. But an objective "anthropological" study should describe these artifices, as well as those of the funeral and deposition of the corpse in the tomb. In the case of most tombs, shortly after the funeral, the metal fixtures must be pulled from the coffin or the body must be transferred to a simple pine box. In New Orleans about every ten years the coffins are "flopped," collapsed, to make room for others. It is necessary that all parts of the coffin, body, clothing, etc., be biodegradable, so as to rot and sink into the sodden soil and to make a room for the next denizen in the endless chain of death that needs to fit within a tomb. While all know, to some degree, the truth, the direct physical awareness of corporeality, decay, and death must be kept behind a veil of metaphor.

While the Cajun high Catholic version may be a bit extreme, it does reflect the most generally accepted forms of western metaphor for mortuary practice—wrestling with death, while at the same time denying it and the corporeality and finitude that lies behind it. The reality of death threatens the very meaning of the individual and collective life missions/illusions that motivate us and allow us to function within our culture in our daily lives; it must be suppressed. In the same way the most disturbing and descriptive imagery, banished to our horror films and Halloween "haunted houses," is that of the reality of the rotting corpse, the dead body, the true face of corporeality and the finitude. Thus, we have moved the true image off center and defined it as bizarre or humorous, making way for the daily delusion of an infinite life for ourselves, while our loved ones are asleep.

From the perspective of Becker and others, building on Kierkegaard, Freud, and earlier psychologists and philosophers, all of this mortuary practice is simply a tiny fraction of the great cultural design to deny death, or to distract us from the nature of a reality so brutal, or simply incomprehensible, that its full and unmasked acceptance would paralyze us in our daily functioning as "healthy individuals" in society.

THE LIMITS OF CULTURAL RELATIVISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

Now, in the light of such an existential psychological critique (very briefly and crudely compressed here) imagine the predictable reaction of the "reader"—even anthropologists, let alone the general public—to descriptions of indigenous burial practices, ancestor cannibalism or any cannibalism, trophy head or body part taking, as we see in many of the practices of groups described in this volume. The horror, the revulsion that westerners feel toward such practices has nothing to do with rational secular ethical judgment, because the individuals whose corpses are involved are dead already.

Our reaction comes from the fact that such practices contradict our own central metaphor/denial of death by another culture's acceptance, indeed, *use*, of the corpse. The reaction of the public, the western educated native leader, and the culturally sensitive anthropologist has less to do with inappropriate or ethnocentric description by the archaeologists, osteologists, or ethnographers describing the practice, than it has to do with the direct 180-degree contradiction of our own unconscious metaphors of distance from the corpse, from its decay, and from the corporeality of ourselves. It is not the description of the behavior of the Other that repulses us, but rather the *negation by the Other* of our own central metaphors of denial.

Simply put, when it comes to certain practices directly related to treatment of the corpse the western public, western scholars, and even some contemporary indigenous leaders, confront the limits of their own ability to accept "Otherness." What is simply a difference in mortuary practice, treatment of the dead body, becomes elevated to an ethical issue, rather than one of simple cultural variability.

As philosopher Alain Badiou recently has convincingly demonstrated (2001) multiculturalism and cultural relativity in ethics is largely, at best, an unachievable goal and, at worst, a hypocritical delusion. In the ethics of humanistic discourse and critique, of human rights, "humanistically sensitive" anthropology (Knauft 1996), and even indigenous advocacy, the cultural "Other" is invariably shifted to a form acceptable to us or else some aspect of their "alterity" is isolated, deleted, or only partially presented. Otherwise we face either scholarly or internalized (Foucault 1979) criticism.

Badiou exposes that contemporary humanistic, multiculturalist, culturally relativistic, post-Colonial, or postmodern thinking usually still rejects certain

practices in other cultures such as clitorectomy, abusive (from our perspective) treatment of children or women, internal or external military aggression, religious intolerance (i.e. exclusive and extreme faith in one's own Truths), and so on. Note that many of these relate to corporeatility. From a philosophical perspective true cross-cultural acceptance of either universal values or cultural relativism in values may be impossible.

As Badiou argues (2002:24) [emphasis in the original]:

> Self-declared apostles of ethics and of the "right to difference" are clearly *horrified by any vigorously sustained difference."*
>
> As a matter of fact, this celebrated "other" is acceptable only if he is a *good* other—which is to say what, exactly, if not *the same as us*?
>
> The problem is that the "respect for differences" and the ethics of human rights do seem to define and *identity!* And that as a result, the respect for differences applies only to those differences that are reasonably consistent with this.

In this perspective, the controversy over presentations of cannibalism, human sacrifice, human body trophy taking, and the like is simple: some practices are too different in their view of corporeality to be acceptable even to anthropologists.

Thus, the revisions or criticism of archaeology and ethnography on such practices usually seek to either deny or distort description or to condemn the describer. In anthropology, difference is celebrated, but not if it truly contradicts our most central metaphors of the denial of death by practices of "vigorously sustained difference" (Badiou 2002:24).

THE ANTHROPOLOGISTS' ALTERNATIVES: SILENCE, THE "PURIFICATION OF THE OTHER," OR EDUCATION

What can archaeologists, osteologists, ethnographers, or historians do in the face of such deeply ingrained feelings of horror at the very practices that they describe in their writings?

The alternatives are clear. One can simply abandon the "hubris of publication" as ironically suggested by Watanabe (1995). Another alternative is to eliminate description of the practice or practices involved from our publications or presentations. Unfortunately, this would render many interpretations incomplete or even incomprehensible.

An alternative form of "silencing" the unacceptable information can be to edit discussion of "gruesome" treatments of dead bodies from articles and discussion intended for *a broader* audience or that might come to broader audiences through the press.

One problem with this latter "controlled" approach to censorship is that it is impossible; the more alien and "horrific" the evidence, the more likely it is to reach such a broader audience. There is no controlling the movement of our

information especially given our dependence on institutions, multiple collaborators, foreign ministries and/or funding sources with their own reporting or publicity requirements and their own agendas. Obviously, there are also clear intellectual and ethical objections to silencing, editing, or misrepresenting our descriptions and interpretations of such practices.

More commonly, there is an implicit pressure from critics' or even from the scholar's own personal biases to shift or to alter somewhat our descriptions or our interpretations. In some of the revisionists' positions described by Chacon and Dye (Chapters 1 and 23 in this volume), we see much more directly such a tendency. Given their own feelings about certain practices, scholars and advocates tend to resist acceptance of evidence on those practices in the group under discussion—either because their "ethnic identity" lies with that group, or because they have intellectual ties to that tradition as an enthusiastic scholar of the subject, or because of a conscious or internalized fear of the reaction to the information or the misuse of the information by the press or other entities.

This whole range of tendencies leads to the same result: the "purification of the Other" or aspects of other cultures. The ultimate form of ethnocentricity and interpretative bias is to remake in our writings other cultures or aspects of other cultures to fit the boundaries of acceptability for our own sensibilities and those of western readers. This type of intellectual cowardice raises the question of why we should have a field of anthropology at all, if we are afraid to address such fundamental issues as the varying practices and beliefs on corporeality and death. Even putting aside the ethical issues and the fundamental problems of "truth," on a *practical* level such "purification of the Other" becomes increasingly difficult as anthropologists, indigenous groups, students, and the public come to understand more completely details of ethnohistoric and ancient practices and beliefs of the societies studied.

THE CHALLENGE OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE REALM OF CORPOREALITY

This returns us to what I believe to be the only viable alternative—more aggressively and effectively pursuing our mission as educators, not only in the classroom, but also with the public at large. This mission, like our other ethical obligations to indigenous peoples and communities near our research locations, requires a great deal of sustained effort beyond the confines of our disciplines. We often receive little or no credit for such activities—and sometime even criticism from colleagues, administrators, and students jealous for the project director's or professor's time, effort, and/or project resources.

Yet, as with the more important work of development and collaboration with communities, we must work to create a fuller understanding by scholars, students, and the public of "alien practices" of other cultures. Neither ethnocentric revulsion nor ethnocentric purification can substitute for the work of elucidating, as best

we can, the nature and meaning of the beliefs and practices of other societies. Of course, this is our fundamental goal as anthropologists.

Our job, however, becomes very difficult when scholars must explain practices that directly confront our own cultural sensitivities about death and corporeality. In this capacity, we must confront our own cultural myths, metaphors, and mechanisms that shield us as a society and as "functioning individuals" from the debilitating existential awareness of death, corporeality, and its most obvious and forceful embodiment: the dead body, the rotting corpse, the trophy head, the dead meat and bone that we become—which we are. As analyzed by the existential psychologists and psychological anthropologists referenced above, our secular career and family trajectories, our institutional investments, our religious beliefs, and our psychological well-being all depend on shielding us and distracting us from the finitude that would destroy our motivations and the corporeality that undermines our self-image as thinking beings.

Thus, the scholars in this volume have taken on a task perhaps far more difficult and more important than they themselves may have realized. Earnest osteologists, archaeologists, and ethnographers often report their surprise at the angry criticisms of their reports or articles by some anthropologists, revisionists, or acculturated indigenous leaders. More often, these are criticisms of the scholar's responsibility for sensational reporting by the grimly fascinated/repulsed public media.

I also am very much aware of the difficulty of dealing with the media due to my own discoveries on Maya warfare and especially with the finding of the ritual assassination and dismemberment of over 50 members of the royal court of the ancient Maya city-state of Cancuen. I have seen how solid reporting on our finds; but more often articles and films on our work, have been embarrassingly sensationalized. Despite concerted efforts to the contrary, one's findings often are sensationalized to capitalize on the public repulsion/fascination that is the corollary of its assault on our own cultural, subcultural or personal beliefs, attitudes, or metaphors that "deny" death.

Still, perhaps naively, I believe that if we continue to present a detailed description of evidence and our best interpretations of the practices and the beliefs of other societies, we can succeed in bringing an understanding to our own readers, and eventually the public, of human trophy taking and other alien corporeal practices. Such continued efforts will not only give them alternative visions of death, but will also provide consciousness and insights into our own culture's masks, metaphors, and myths.

As anthropologists we cannot stop research, nor stop writing, nor sanitize our evidence for western sensibilities. Instead, we must embrace the beast, take on the western sensibilities by trying to bring readers to understand other approaches, other "denials," metaphors, and mechanisms by other societies and individuals to strive and to survive by repressing full awareness of finitude and corporality.

In communicating our information and interpretations, despite the media and the critics, we can take pride in the fact that we are addressing issues central

to the comparative study of world views in the social sciences. Human trophy taking, cannibalism, and mortuary practice, in general, are not the repulsive and/or fascinating "curious facts" as perceived by the media or criticized by others. They are so central to the belief systems of functioning individuals in all societies (as the power of the negative reactions demonstrates) that they offer an important path to the understanding of the Other and ourselves. In, following this path we are fulfilling the mission of anthropology defined by Geertz (1973) which is:

> . . . not to turn away from the existential dilemmas of life. . . ; it is to plunge into the midst of them. The essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others . . . have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said.

The articles in this volume, and the future synthetic statements that will arise from it, will make a major contribution to this mission of anthropology. They will add to the comparative understanding of how "others," and how we ourselves, find alternative approaches to live with the two central facts of human existence—its finitude and its corporeality.

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Chapter 22

Supplemental Data on Amerindian Trophy Taking

Richard J. Chacon and David H. Dye

In an effort to make this volume truly an extensive treatise on Amerindian human trophy taking, it would be remiss if we did not include a brief listing of the reasons for engaging in this activity that were not specifically highlighted by any of the contributors in the previous chapters.[1]

Below are some of the additional reasons cited by various scholars for why Amerindians took and displayed human body parts as trophies. Additionally, we address the fact that the mere recovery of disarticulated human remains does not necessarily constitute sufficient evidence for human trophy taking. We put forth various other plausible explanations for such findings that include the severing of body parts as a prophylactic measure or the presence of complex mortuary practices that may involve secondary burial and/or ancestor worship.

Trophy taking was considered a rite of passage: Some Puebloan groups required that males must first take a scalp in order to be initiated as "real warriors" (Allen and Birkby 1985; Hanson 2003; Keely 1996).

Trophies were believed to bring about good fortune: Forde (1931) reports that the Yuma occasionally took scalps with them on raids for good luck in battle. See also Fathauer (1954).

Amerindians modified human bone into various utilitarian implements: Items such as awls, scoops, daggers, bowls, drinking vessels and weaving tools were fashioned from human bone (Arkush n.d.; Owsley et al. 1994; Verano 2001). According to oral tradition, an Iroquoian sorcerer named Thadoda:ho fashioned dishes and spoons from the crania of his enemies (Beauchamp 1922). See also Cybulski (1978).

Amerindians modified human body parts into various musical instruments: Items such as flayed-skin drums, notched bone rasps, whistles, flutes and rattles were fashioned from human body parts, and these implements were very

likely employed during various rituals (Engelbrecht 2003; Hester 1969; Owsley et al. 1994; McVicker n.d.; Redmond 1994; Rodriguez 2004; Whitehead 1984).

Sometimes, however, these instruments were used as a form of psychological warfare designed to demoralize and humiliate the enemy. For example, the fiercely independent Araucanians of Chile were known to fashion flutes from Spanish shinbones that sometimes were extracted while the victim was still alive. "After the Indians developed their own cavalry, they used the shinbones in lieu of trumpets. . . . [T]he sound they made . . . was doleful and morose, producing depression in those who heard it" (Padden 1957:120). Moreover, the Araucanians reported that flutes made from Spaniards shinbones were more "melodious" than those constructed from the shinbones of Indians (González 1889).

Warring chiefdoms from the Cauca Valley of Colombia were known to intimidate their adversaries by playing musical instruments (such as whistles and trumpets) fashioned from the long bones of vanquished enemies or by playing drums made from the flayed skins of captives (Kelekna 1998). Likewise, the final humiliation heaped upon corpses of certain Inca enemies was to make them into *runatinyas* (man drums). Their skins were stripped off and stuffed with dried grass, and flutes were tucked into their mouths. The mummy's arms and hands were placed in such a manner that they could be used to pound their own distended bellies (which functioned as drum heads). Thus, every drumbeat served as a reminder of their humiliating defeat (Rowe 1946).

In North America and in Mesoamerica, modified human bones were possibly used in rituals: There are numerous examples of notched and/or incised long bones (McVicker n.d.) and intricately designed bone tubes that may have been used ritually (Dixon 1959). See also Engelbrecht (2003), Hall (1997), Hester (1969), and Owsley et al. (1994).

Human bone served as mnemonic devices: Various long bones from the Tlatelolco and Xico sites in Mexico were modified (notched) and used to record hunts and to tally the number of individuals killed (Starr 1899, cited in McVicker n.d.). Similarly, in the Great Basin, each warrior kept a tally of the number of men he had dispatched by carving a notch on a human long bone (Driver 1969).

Trophy taking occurred because various supernatural beings had willed it to be so: Many indigenous groups report that trophies were taken because various mythological beings/culture heroes had introduced the practice and had ordained that native peoples to do likewise. In short, native myths often served as charters for the dismemberment and public exhibition of severed body parts taken in combat. Among the Osage, for example, the hawk instituted the practice of scalping; therefore, war leaders sought his protection in battle:

> The hawk, without effort, rose in the air, and when he had reached a certain height, he paused. At that moment the courage of the owl seemed to depart from him and with much flapping of his wings he took to flight. Like an arrow released from a strong bow the hawk shot downward in attack, struck the fleeing owl in the head, severing it from the body. With an exultant cry the hawk soared around a few times in the light of the rising sun, alighted on a

> tree nearby and spoke to the man: "Fail not to remember me when you attack the foe." (La Flesche 1939:11)

Among Puebloans, the origins for scalping were traced to mythological times when:

> Masewi and Oyoyewi [twin war gods], full of zest, go about the country killing people for nothing. This angers the gods and they decide to teach the twins a lesson. They cause a hideous corpse woman (a ko'ok'o) to pursue them to the four corners of the earth. At last the boys are spared. The gods now lay down the rules for killing and scalping people. They instruct Masewi and Oyoyewi in all that pertains to war: how the scalping is to be done, how to fast and observe continence, how to dance for the scalps and how to take care of them. Chastened, the war gods organize the Opi (Warriors) society and teach the people how to take scalps, how to fast and observe continence, how to take care of the scalps and how to dance for them. In this way Keresan war customs were established. (White 1942:304)

The taking of scalps is initiated and thereby sanctioned by the Heart-of-the-Sky God who "kills and renders fertile" in contemporary Hopi mythology (Parsons 1939:178). For the Mohave, warfare was instituted by the mythological Mastaxmo who decreed that certain individuals in each generation would experience specific dreams associated with doing battle. Thus, warfare was perpetuated by individuals who received unsolicited power-dreams. Other Mohave supernatural beings named Nyohaiva and Raven subsequently introduced scalping (Kroeber 1948; Kroeber and Fontana 1986). See also Hall (1997), Schaafsma (2000), Whitehead (1984).

Trophies brought economic prosperity: Shrunken heads were believed to bestow power upon Jivaro women to work harder and to be more successful at crop production and in the raising of domesticated animals (Harner 1972; Karsten 2000).

Trophies were believed to possess curative properties: Boas (1891) reports that powdered human bone was ingested as medicine along the northwest coast. In the southwest, scalps were believed to function as medicine against worry, grief, or toothache (Ellis 1951; Parsons 1939). Allen and Birkby (1985) note that the very act of scalping itself may have served as a form of treatment for severe headaches, certain diseases, and also for head trauma.

The Papago kept Apache scalps in "spirit baskets" with great care, and they would make food offerings to them lest the spirits of the scalps bring about disease. If a member of the community was ill, a warrior who had killed and scalped an Apache would be summoned, and this man would bring his "spirit basket" containing a scalp attached to a wooden effigy. He would then lift the effigy (with the attached scalp) from the basket and press it against the body of the sick individual saying, "Cure this man" (Densmore 1929:103).

Trophies were used by some Amerindians as warning signals: Some Eastern groups were known to place scalps on stakes along trails as a declaration of war

(Knowles 1985), and the Chacoan Toba placed skulls on sticks along the perimeter of their territory as a warning to all those who would trespass (Arnott 1934).

Trophies served to supernaturally lure the enemy: In the southwest, the "scalp chief" would prayerfully petition scalps to add to themselves. That is, to call more victims to the trophy takers (Parsons 1939).

Trophies were used as a form of adornment: A scalp might be attached to fringe a man's war clothing (shirts and leggings) or to decorate the handle of a war club. Sometimes scalps were attached to a horse's bridle before embarking upon a raid. If a warrior had taken a large enough scalp, he might employ some of the surplus hair to decorate war clothing, bows, or horse bridles (Drimmer 1961; Grinnell 1910; Jamieson 1983; Knowles 1985; Kroeber and Fontana 1986; Marquis 1931; Reese 1940). On special occasions or for ceremonies, scalps were hung over tipis on scalp poles (Reese 1940). Meares (Drucker 1951:221) described a large Nootka dwelling housing hundreds of people: "The chief appeared at the end of the room, surrounded by natives of rank. . . . Festoons of human skulls, arranged with some attention to uniformity, were disposed in almost every part where they could be placed, and were considered as a very splendid decoration of the royal apartment."

Trophies provided an emotional outlet for individuals: In the southwest, women expressed their anger towards the enemy by mistreating and abusing scalps. "Warfare was an important activity in the past and war associations are found in every pueblo. Indeed, among the Tanoans there is a counterpart women's organization—the women's Scalp Association. Until about a century ago when warfare was still present, members of this association among the Tewa Pueblos met a returning war party, [and] took the enemy scalps while emitting vindictive epithets at the enemy" (Dozier 1970:81).

When a successful war party returned to their community at Taos, they hollered so as to notify the settlement of their success in battle. "Everyone came out making fun, shouting at the scalp. The young women were bashful, but the old women kicked the scalp, spit or pissed on it, calling it bad names. They bared their buttocks to it. They said it was their second or third husband and laid down on it as if having intercourse. All this was to take power away from the enemy" (Parsons 1939:644).

Activities such as head hunting and scalping provided survival and reproductive fitness advantages to trophy takers: Durham states that Mundurucú head hunting was a behavioral adaptation to conditions of competition for limited resources (1976).

Trophies served as a means of expressing solidarity with Europeans: During the Pequot War of 1637–1638, the Reverend Philip Vincent reported that, "These cruel, but wily Mohocks, in contemplation of the English, and to procure their friendship, entertain the fugitive Pequot and their captain [Sassacus] by cutting off all their heads and hands, which they sent to the English, as a testimony of their love and service" (Vincent 1897:107). Specifically, the Mohawk sent Sassacus' head to Hartford, Connecticut, as an expression of the goodwill they felt towards the British (Sultzman 1997).

The efficacy of this indigenous strategy of communicating commitment on their part towards Europeans can be ascertained by the following statement made by a participant of the above-mentioned war: "Captain Mason having sent down a shallop to Seybrooke Fort, and sent the Indians over land to meet and rendezvous at Seybrooke Fort. The Indians . . . were desirous to fall out on the Lord's day to see whether they could find any Pequeats near the fort; persuading themselves that the place was not destitute of some of their enemies. But it being the Lord's day, order was given to the contrary, and wished them to forebear until the next day. Giving them liberty, they fell out early in the morning, and brought home five Pequeats' heads, one prisoner, and mortally wounded the seventh. This mightily encouraged the hearts of all, and we took this as a pledge of their further fidelity" (Underhill 1897:68).[2]

Trophies served as a means of amusement: After decapitating enemies, the Inland Tlingit would toss the head of the highest-ranking individual around "as temporary footballs for the victors" (McClellan 1975:196). However, the following is perhaps one of the most incredible examples of trophy humor:

In the 1870s, a Crow war party returned to Fort Pease (located along the Upper Missouri River) after having killed a group of Sioux. "After mutilating the bodies according to time-honored custom, the Crows marched back to Fort Pease as solemnly as they had gone forth. They said no word of their success upon entering the stockade but three of the warriors advanced, thrusting their hands from their blankets. As the white men who met them grasped the proffered hands, these fell from their blankets and were left dangling in their startled grip, while the Crows gave themselves up to uproarious laughter. They had cut the forearms from the dead Sioux and used these gruesome trophies for announcing their victory" (Mills 2003:223–224).

Severing body parts as a prophylactic measure: As previously stated, it would be a mistake to assume that the removal of a body part was invariably motivated by hostility. Knowing that enemies were likely to make trophies out of killed warriors, some Creeks were known to scalp their deceased comrades thereby preventing them from falling into the hands of the enemy (Friederici 1985; Knowles 1985). Likewise, the Amazonian Tupinamba removed the heads of fallen allies and returned them back home to safety for proper burial (Petersen and Crock chapter 19).

Secondary burial and ancestor veneration as confounding cultural practices: As stated earlier, the recovery of disarticulated and/or preserved body parts did not necessarily serve as evidence of human trophy taking. Many groups practiced secondary burial along with ancestor veneration and curated the bones after they had been methodically cleaned. Therefore, the interpretation of skeletal material bearing cut marks must proceed with great caution before arriving at the conclusion that they provide proof of trophy taking and/or cannibalism.

Workman (1992) posits that the various patterns of dismemberment and secondary internment may indicate a complex mortuary pattern rather than violence. We concur that some of the patterns of dismemberment, rearticulation and/or

public display of body parts do in fact argue for a rather complex mortuary custom rather than trophy taking, and we provide the following examples to illustrate this point.

The curated skulls of deceased Northwest Coast chiefs were believed to supernaturally attract whales and other forms of wildlife (Lovisek, Chapter 3 in this volume). Ceremonial houses containing the skeletons of ancient chiefs and great hunters were approached by a Hesquiat chief who asked for them to give him a whale. For an illustration of one such whaler's shrine, see Jewett (1987:154). Crania were also used to become a successful hunter, warrior, or shaman (Wike 1967).

Several examples of the respectful curation of disarticulated crania can be found among several Plains groups. The Mandan engaged in the annual Okipa ritual which took place within a medicine lodge. This event was conducted in order to appease the Great Spirit, to secure a pleasant afterlife, to celebrate the subsidence of a great flood that had occurred in mythological times, to supernaturally attract buffalo herds and to initiate young males into manhood through a grueling ordeal. The youths were made to hang suspended from cords that had been skewered into their flesh. These acts occurred in the presence of various buffalo skulls as well as the crania of revered ancestors that were prominently displayed on the lodge beams (Gerard Baker, personal communication 2004; Campbell 1983; Catlin 1967).

Among the Crow, the skull of a departed close relative was occasionally preserved so as to help assuage the painful loss produced by the death of a loved one. These skulls became part of "medicine bundles" that would serve as augers "informing" the living of the proximity and location of enemies, of the outcomes of prospective battles, of the whereabouts of game, of the prognosis of individuals and of the future in general. They could even help in the recovery of lost or stolen items (Wildschut 1975).

Prior to embarking on a raid, warriors would approach such skull medicine bundles and would petition the skull's spirit by saying, "I want to get a horse. Others would say, I want to get a scalp. . . . I am going on the warpath now. I want you to take care of me and to protect me from the enemy's bullets" (Wildschut 1975:81). Some individuals were known to take a tooth or a fragment of the skull with them into battle in order to ensure a successful outcome. It is important to note that the ritual use of these skull medicine bundles by the Crow continued up through the 1920s (Wildschut 1975).

A Crow woman named Root Digger retained the disarticulated crania of her departed sibling named White Child and was said to have occasionally heard her dead brother's voice prophesying. The Crow came to regard White Child's cranium as powerful war medicine and would provision Root Digger with numerous gifts requesting her to consult the skull on their behalf (Taylor 1975; Wildschut 1975). Similarly, the Pawnee were known to attach the skulls of venerated ancestors to the outsides of their sacred medicine bundle (Murie 1989). See also Riley (1989).

One Crow medicine bundle included a large fragment of an adult's lower mandible. The jawbone contained in this bundle was believed to have come from the greatly revered Crow Chief Rotten Belly who was killed in a battle with the

Blackfoot in 1835. This bundle was believed to possess particularly potent spiritual power (Wildschut 1975).

A chronicler of the De Soto expedition reported that the temple of the southeastern paramount, Chief Cofitachequi, contained the preserved corpses of the leader's ancestors along with many sumptuary goods (Varner and Varner 1951). Likewise, the Taino kept the bodies of local high-status individuals after death for use as idols (Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19 in this volume). Among the Island Carib, human bones of deceased kinsmen were placed in calabashes and kept in their huts for use in sorcery (Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19 in this volume).

During the Colonial era, Bishop Landa reports that the crania of deceased Cocom Maya lords were removed, cleaned, and sawed in half, leaving the front part with the jaws and teeth. Then flesh that had been removed from these half-skulls was replaced with a sort of bitumen, giving them the appearance of having faces. These were then housed in special enclosures where they were venerated (Moser 1973). In Panama, the desiccated corpses of ancestral chiefs were carefully stored in special enclosures. The bodies, bedecked in gold armor and ornaments, were suspended from the rafters with ropes in the rank order they held in life (Helms 1976; Redmond 1994).

The Peruvian Incas publicly venerated the royal mummies of important ancestors. It was believed that caring for, rendering obeisance to, and offering food and drink to ancestral mummies were requirements for maintaining cosmic order, as well as for the continued fertility of the crops and herd animals (Conrad and Demarest 1984; Mosely 2001; Rostworowski 1999; Salomon 1995; Verano 1995; Zuidema 1973).

"The Inca had the law and custom that when one of their rulers died, they embalmed him and wrapped him in many fine garments. They allotted all these lords all the service they had had in life, so that their mummy-like bundles might be served in death as if they were still alive" (Pizarro 1921:202). For insights useful for determining whether or not recovered human remains should be categorized as trophies, see in this volume Berryman (Chapter 13), Maschner and Maschner-Reedy (Chapter 2), Petersen and Crock (Chapter 19), and Seeman (Chapter 7); see also Verano (2001).

There are still a few modern Amerindian groups that publicly curate the bodies of their relatives. See Adams (2004) for an example of the public veneration of the bones of deceased kinsmen among contemporary Maya of the Yucatan Peninsula. See also Wachtel (2001) for a description of how the Chipayan Urus of Highland Bolivia preserve and publicly exhibit the crania of ancestors during religious festivities in the hopes of securing blessings for the community. Another contemporary example of ancestor worship can be found at a high-altitude cave located in the Andean foothills of southern Peru. Here local indigenous residents leave offerings to a female mummy that has been radiocarbondated to ~AD 250 in the hopes that she will protect their community (Discovery 2004).

For further discussion of secondary burials, the veneration of ancestors, and the handling of their remains see Andrushko et al. (n.d.), Hall (1997), Olsen

and Shipman (1994), Plourde (2004), Redmond (1994), Salomon (1987), Trigger (1990), Tung (n.d.), VanPool (2003), and Whitehead (1984).

MODERN DAY AMERINDIAN TROPHY TAKING

Lastly, we would like to point out that trophy taking by some Amerindian individuals and groups has continued well into the modern period. During World War II, a Winnebago serving in the U.S. armed forces took a German scalp and returned with it to a traditional victory dance. Such trophies become cherished family heirlooms and are placed within a family's war bundle, or they are placed on a grave so that the spirit of the scalped man may serve the deceased in the hereafter (Lurie 1961). It is of interest to note that in contemporary Hopi ritual, certain kachinas like Hemsona enact symbolic scalping by cutting the hair of spectators or other ceremonial participants (Schaafsma n.d.; Wright 1973).

In 2004, a band of Amazonian Waorani who live along the "Auca Road," built by the petroleum company Texaco, raided the Taromenane band of Waorani located near the Curary River, killing eight women, five children, and an unspecified number of men. One of the raiders placed the decapitated head of one the victims on a stake and transported it back to the road to be photographed by members of the press. It appears that the attackers were induced to raid their fellow tribesmen by a group of Colombian loggers who had been operating illegally in the region and who presumably would have benefited from the permanent removal of the Taromenane (Cabodevilla et al. 2004; Whitten 2004).

NOTES

1. Note that we have included these findings in this volume to aid scholars in further research.
2. The willingness on the part of Native Americans to incur favor with westerners in this instance may have been based in part on the Amerindian desire for access to trade goods. This example vividly illustrates the underlying complexity involved in a native person's decision of whether or not to engage in trophy taking.

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Chapter 23

Conclusions

RICHARD J. CHACON AND DAVID H. DYE

This volume categorically rejects any argument that presents the taking of human body parts as trophies as being evidence of wanton savagery or barbarism. Instead, this work contextualizes such activities within the greater cultural milieu of the peoples discussed and thus provides insight into the reasons behind why various human body parts were taken and subsequently displayed publicly by indigenous peoples of the Americas.

We firmly believe that the most effective means to combat negative stereotypes of native peoples is not by denying trophy taking ever took place, nor is it by ignoring these activities or by labeling those who report on Amerindian trophy taking as being "racists." Rather, the most forceful way to vitiate portrayals of Indian "savagery" is to examine native customs from an emic perspective, so as to gain an understanding of why these practices were conducted.

The present volume has generated a multitude of new insights and observations regarding Amerindian ritual violence and trophy taking. What can we then conclude from the studies presented? We have identified patterns and dynamics that lead to several conclusions.

MULTICAUSALITY OF TROPHY TAKING

Based on the broad temporal and spatial recovery of severed human body parts, physically modified remains, and iconographic representations of trophy taking in art, there appears to be no single, clear-cut cultural tradition shared among all Amerindian populations as it relates to obtaining and displaying human trophies. This study documents that Amerindians were motivated to take and display various human trophies for a number of reasons.[1]

The various justifications include both materialistic as well as nonmaterialistic factors. Moreover, we hold that it is entirely reasonable to assume that human beings are motivated to take trophies because of multiple and/or conflicting factors,

conditions, and/or variables (regardless of whether these factors are materialistic or nonmaterialistic in nature).

MATERIALISTIC MOTIVATIONS

The Desire for Access to Natural Resources:

Among various Northwest Coast societies, obtaining the head of a high-ranking individual resulted in the appropriation of some of that victim's property (in the form of natural resource procurement rights) by the trophy taker (Lovisek, Chapter 3 in this volume). See Swadesh (1948) for an example of how Northwest Coast raiders preferred taking booty over trophy heads. See also Harner (1972) for the report of the opportunistic looting of enemy blowguns and blowgun poison (curare), machetes, steel axes, beads, and feathered ornaments, along with the abduction of women during Jivaro headhunting raids.

Cost-Effective Raiding?

Despite the above-mentioned cases that unambiguously document economic payoffs to trophy takers, we are nonetheless hard pressed to discover solely functionalist/ecological/materialistic explanations for explaining ethnographic instances of trophy taking. Many examples of trophy taking involved men spending several months traveling vast distances only to return with a few scalps or human heads and little more.

Note that the nonmaterialistic motivations underlying some Colonial-era tribal conflicts become evident in various comments made by westerners. One of the most salient cases in this regard can be found among the Iroquois. Mooney (1894:14) describes the Iroquois as being "pitiless destroyers making war on everything outside the narrow limits of their confederacy, pursuing their victims on the one hand to the very gates of Boston and on the other to the banks of the Mississippi, and making their name a synonym for death and destruction from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico." Moreover, Dean Snow states that the Iroquois were known to conduct raids from Maine to Wisconsin (personal communication 2006).

In 1720, Pennsylvania Governor William Keith told the Iroquois, "Surely you cannot propose to get either Riches or Possessions by going thus out to War. For when you kill a Deer you have the flesh to eat and the skin to sell, but when you return from War you bring nothing home but the Scalps of a dead man [and get] nothing by it" (Merrell 1987:118). A Frenchmen noted that "one or two scalps or the smallest prisoner satisfies them in an equal degree, and they return as victorious as if they had wholly destroyed the Nation that are about to attack. This is the mode of thinking among all Indians" (Merrell 1987:119).

Similar findings are reported in the American southwest where Alarcon states that wars were fought for "trifles" (Riley 1957:137). Stewart (1971:431) reports that for the Mojave, "Warfare was for glory, for scalps, and to sate the war lust

of the *kwanamis* [war leaders]. There was little plunder, prisoner taking was not important nor was territorial aggrandizement."

The Amazonian Mundurucú of the Lower Tapojós River were known to spend up to six months traveling to the Madeira River (a round-trip involving hundreds of miles) or to the Mato Grosso (a round-trip involving thousands of miles) in order to return with trophy heads thrown in carrying baskets. They additionally raided as far eastward as Maranhão province. If children were captured in a raid, they were adopted into the tribe (Church 1912; Le Barre 1984; Murphy and Murphy 1974).

While it may be true that the Mudurucú often raided their traditional enemies and received trade goods from whites in exchange for their contribution towards the elimination of hostile groups, would it not have been more economically profitable (not to mention safer) for them to simply tap more rubber and/or grow surplus manioc instead of serving as mercenaries? The fact that the taker of a trophy head "occupied the highest rank in Mundurucú society" (Murphy and Murphy 1974:80) was undoubtedly a significant factor that motivated men to embark upon this high-risk and energetically costly pattern of warfare.

These examples appear to negate the assertion that trophy taking was a mere pretext for engaging in warfare, as put forth by Ferguson (1984). These cases suggest that Amerindian trophy taking represents more than a mere epiphenomenal artifact stemming from a military encounter; nor can it be dismissed summarily as a mere pretext for fighting.

Perhaps Métraux's comments on South American tribal warfare summarizes it best when he states: "In certain groups the alleged reasons for hostilities and the enemies themselves were less important than the system of values connected with warfare. Warfare was the principal means of acquiring prestige and high social status; consequently, pretext[s] for wars were eagerly sought and expeditions and raids were part of the normal functioning of the society. Tupinamba men waged war in order to obtain victims for the ritual sacrifices and cannibalism by which they gain prestige in the community. Because of the magico-religious and social factors involved, it was necessary that warfare be maintained with some regularity. When non-Indian authorities forbade the Tupinamba to sacrifice war prisoners, they complained that war had lost it meaning" (Métraux 1949:385).

We concur with Ferguson (1984) and Métraux (1949) that there were instances where leaders employed magico-religiously based pretexts to instigate and justify warfare. However, we believe it would be a mistake to dismiss all cases of trophy taking as excuses for doing battle in order to secure material benefits. It is important to note that we are not denying that competition over the control of resources can be the underlying cause for a group to engage in armed conflict and concomitant trophy taking in some instances. What we are stating is that it is a mistake to dismiss the practice of trophy taking simply as a convenient excuse for engaging in warfare.

Even a cursory review of the literature will uncover the powerful nexus between trophy taking and Amerindian spirituality, and this volume has documented the significant position that trophy taking occupied in the ritual life of many indigenous groups (see below for further discussion of this topic).

We hold that the procurement of human trophies was a strategy that individuals pursued to enhance their prestige and to experience the sense of emotional and psychological well-being resulting from the faithful adherence to their deeply held magico-religious convictions associated with obtaining and displaying human trophies.

We argue that various indigenous belief systems (along with the desire to attain prestige) provided the motivation for men to risk serious injury and even death to obtain trophies. Rather than considering trophy taking activities and magico-religious fidelity as pretexts and/or epiphenomenal outcomes, we argue that status seeking and the desire to remain faithful to an indigenous belief/value system were among the factors that motivated many men to risk their lives by engaging in warfare and trophy taking. See also Fathauer (1954), Forde (1931), Harner (1972), Kelly (1949), Murphy and Murphy (1974), Reedy-Maschner and Maschner (1999), and Stewart (1971).

NONMATERIALISTIC MOTIVATIONS

Given the stated importance of nonmaterialistic reasons for fighting and acquiring trophies, the following is a list of nonmaterialistic motivations for trophy taking.

The Desire to Obtain Prestige

Obtaining an enemy trophy resulted in the enhancement of the trophy taker's prestige, and in some cases the prestige of the victim would be conferred on the trophy taker. (See in this volume: Maschner and Maschner-Reedy, Chapter 2; M. Mendoza, Chapter 20; Mensforth, Chapter 9; Seeman, Chapter 7; Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19; Williamson, Chapter 8).[2]

In March 1687, Joutel Margry (1875–1886) noted that the Caddo bring "back scalps as trophies, so that one can tell the cabins of the warriors and brave men by the number of scalps there, for they tan them very neatly and display them in one of the most conspicuous places in the cabin." After raiding his enemy, the Timucua chief Satouriona in northeastern Florida "before going into his lodging had all the enemy scalps set up before his door, crowning them with branches of magnolia, thus showing by this spectacle the triumph of the victory he had achieved" (Laudonnière 2001:85–86).

In fact, the prestige gained was such an important factor among some groups that if a war party failed to make contact with the enemy for the purpose of obtaining scalps, rather than returning home empty-handed, they sometimes killed members of their own tribe who were encountered along the route home. "The extreme pressure placed on warriors to procure scalps as a means of recognition occasionally resulted in another form of scalp hoax . . . . Cherokee warriors from Chilhowee town attempted to deceive their fellow citizens . . . . These warriors claimed to have gone into Shawnee country and obtained four scalps; instead,

they had doubled back into their own country and had taken four Cherokee scalps" (Mooney 1972:375–376; see also Driver 1969; Knowles 1985; Stewart 1971).

The relationship between trophy taking and prestige seeking can be seen in the Cherokee war song: "Their painted scalps shall be a step to fame" (Williams 1927:82) and also in the following Cheyenne victory song: "Brother, pull up my dog rope. I will clean it and use it again. Where are the enemies that taunted me? They are dead now. I will see one more summer; it's too soon for me to go. I will surprise my sweetheart; she thinks that I am dead. I have another scalp for my mother; she will be proud" (Moore 1996:108). See also the above-mentioned Tupinamba example of Amazonian warriors seeking prestige by securing trophies (Métraux 1949).

The Desire to Avenge a Death

Marcela Mendoza (Chapter 20 in this volume) reports that the widow of any Toba man who had been killed during the raid would request the scalp in order to sleep with it in her hut. Reportedly, the joy of widows would be great whenever warriors granted this request. After a while, the widow would return the trophy to the warrior and say: "I am happy now. The death of my husband has been avenged."

When a successful Seneca, Natchez, or Choctaw war party returned from battle, scalps were often offered to relatives of deceased warriors who had been killed by the enemy, to dry their tears (Driver 1969; Knowles 1985). The following Quapaw war chant clearly documents the revenge motive for trophy taking:

"I am going to war to avenge the death of my brothers. I'll kill, exterminate, rob, and burn the enemy. I'll bring back slaves, I'll eat their hearts, I'll roast their flesh, I'll drink their blood, I'll take their scalps, I'll make cups of their skulls" (Feiler 1962:63). (See also Kelly 1949; and in this volume: Hoopes, Chapter 15; Maschner and Maschner-Reed, Chapter 2; Owsley et al., Chapter 6; Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19.)

The Desire to Heap Insult and Humiliation Upon a Vanquished Enemy

The Iroquois vented their anger at their enemies by digging up the graves of an Illinois village and placing the disinterred skulls on stakes (Hall 1997). See Kroeber 1976; Parsons 1939; and in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; Jacobi, Chapter 11; Lambert, Chapter 4; Maschner and Maschner-Reedy, Chapter 2; M. Mendoza, Chapter 20; Mensforth, Chapter 9, Owsley et al., Chapter 6.

Trophies Served to Bring an End to the Period of Mourning

Among the Iroquoians, scalps were adopted as living relatives symbolically equating them with a prisoner awaiting adoption and the status of the dead person

being mourned. Therefore, providing the bereaved with an enemy scalp marked the termination of their mourning (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). See also Friederici (1985).

The Desire to Punish an Individual in the Afterlife

The Iroquoians believed that mutilations visited upon the bodies of defeated enemies would handicap the victims in the hereafter (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). Among the Creeks, the spirits of slain individuals who had been scalped would be denied admission into the empyrean "Mansions of Bliss, and sentenced to take up residence in its invisible and darksome abode, in the dreary Caverns of the Wilderness; until the Indignity be retaliated on the enemy, by some of his surviving Friends" (Pope 1792:62–63).

As a Means of Establishing and Reinforcing Positions of Status and Power

Individuals in tribal and chiefdom societies sought recognition as great warriors based on their personal achievements through the possession of human trophies. The acquisition, public display, and hoarding of trophies were each vital for the creation, maintenance, and retention of both tribal and chiefly positions of leadership. The prominently displayed body parts of defeated rivals also served to intimidate enemies and to strengthen ties with allies (Padden 1957; Trigger 1990; and in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; Mensforth, Chapter 9; Ogburn, Chapter 17; Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19).

Trophies Were Proof of Both Fighting Prowess and of a Successful Military Outcome

The Iroquoians placed the severed heads of their vanquished rivals atop wooden images to commemorate a victory (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). The Mandan would attach locks of hair from enemy scalps to men's clothing as a sign of prowess in warfare (Wood and Irwin, 2001).

Among the chiefdom societies of Colombia, "They stored their war trophies in special structures or sanctuaries. They also displayed the skulls of their enemies on stakes they erected in front of their residences and hung other human trophies inside their homes along with other war spoils as tokens of their bravery and victory in warfare. They bedecked themselves with necklaces of human teeth" (Redmond 1994:36).

Warriors from the Cauca Valley were known to go into battle equipped with special ropes for securing captives. Occasionally, a victim's skin was flayed and stuffed with ashes, and later this trophy would be placed on display outside a chief's residence (Kelekna 1998).[3] See also Townsend 2000; and in this

volume: Brown and Dye, Chapter 10; Lambert, Chapter 4; Maschner and Maschner-Reedy, Chapter 2; M. Mendoza, Chapter 20; Mensforth, Chapter 9; Ogburn, Chapter 17; Owsley et al., Chapter 6; Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19.

Trophies Provided Supernatural Aid As They Were Believed to Be Conduits of Spiritual Power

This benefit is associated with the widespread belief that the soul/spirit of the deceased resided in the trophy fashioned from the victim (Hall 1997). M. Mendoza (Chapter 20 in this volume) reports that the enemy's soul was found in the scalps of Chacoan hunter-gatherers, and this entity could be transformed into the trophy-taker's spiritual ally who would render aid in future battles and in hunting.

When a Sac or Fox donned a portion of a slain enemy as an amulet, it endowed the wearer with that fallen rival's desirable qualities, thereby imbuing him with powers or qualities not his own (Harrington 1914).

In 1634, the Spanish reported on the role that trophies played in securing a successful military outcome. "Whenever they [the Tewa Nation] went to war they offered corn meal and other things to the scalps of the enemy nation which they had brought back as trophies of those they had slain. In this way they persuaded themselves that they would obtain great victories" (Hodge et al. 1945:43).

When a Cocopa warrior returned from battle with a scalp, he would retire to a place isolated from the rest of the community where he spent several days and nights alone with his trophy. It is said that he would never lose contact with it as he kept it either resting on his back or on his chest. During this period, the scalp would speak to him particularly in the evening instructing him how to become a great warrior and granting him special powers (Kelly 1949; Kroeber and Fontana 1986).

Further data on some of the perquisites obtained from trophies in the southwest is provided by Bandelier: "Religion or other magic was essential to [Puebloan] warfare. Many of its details, important as well as unimportant, were connected with articles of Indian faith. Such for instance, was, and is yet, the act of scalping. In securing the scalp of the dead, the captor secures the faculties, mental as well as physical, of him of whom he has slain, and renders them so to say tributary to himself and to his tribe" (1890:153). See also (Parsons 1939).

Among the Mudurucú, trophy heads taken into the forest were believed to please the "game spirits," thus making wildlife more vulnerable to hunting (Murphy and Murphy 1974; Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19 in this volume). See also Karsten (2000) for a similar association between trophy heads and hunting luck.

The Iroquoians employed rattles fashioned from human skulls when dancing, feasting, during curing ceremonies, and to invoke the aid of spirits (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). See Tung (Chapter 16 in this volume) for a discussion of the transformation of severed body parts (by ritual specialists) into trophies imbued

with sacred power. For further documentation of the presence of trophy-handling specialists see (Fathauer 1954; Kroeber 1976; Kroeber and Fontana 1986; Lovisek 2003).

Trophies were sometimes incorporated into a band's medicine or special collection of sacred objects (Drimmer 1961). The important relationship between war trophies and supernatural power is evident in the belief that the spirits of dead kinsmen and/or allies could benefit from being offered trophies.

The obligations toward one's kinsmen did not cease upon the death of a relative. Some Amerindians felt compelled to provide aid for their beloved dead in the afterlife. Various Native American groups believed that a recently deceased person could receive assistance from a servant while traveling along the "Spirit Trail" (Hall 2000).

It was also held that a successful warrior possessed the soul of his defeated enemy by having obtained his scalp. Furthermore, it was believed that the soul of this enemy could be dedicated to a recently deceased relative and/or ally by offering the victim's scalp to the dead person. Therefore, a warrior could allocate these captive souls by ritually provisioning his dead kinsmen with scalps. In this way, the defeated (scalped) enemy would serve the warrior's fallen loved ones as slaves or "spirit trail servants" in the afterlife (Hall 2000; Radin 1970). Pledging such "spirit trail servants" to accompany dead relatives was widespread in the Mississippi Valley and Midwest (Hall 1997). A baton war club festooned with scalps was used by the Menominee to attach an enemy's soul to a fallen warrior (Hall 1997).

See also Karsten (2000) for a discussion of the various material benefits supernaturally obtained by the proper curation of Jivaroan shrunken heads along with the belief that the spirit of the victim would offer guidance to the warrior in his dreams. Furthermore, Karsten reports that the spirit in the Jivaroan trophy head becomes an unconditional servant of the trophy taker (2000). During a *tsantsa* (shrunken head) feast in the 1940s, a successful Jivaroan head hunter named Utitiája expressed this belief by stating: "You have triumphed over your enemy by killing him. You now triumph over his evil spirit and make it a good spirit to help you more" (Cotlow 1953:242).

For further documentation of similar beliefs among North American groups, see Taylor (1975), and for South America see Proulx (2001).

TROPHIES PROVIDED SUPERNATURAL PROTECTION

For some Northwest Coast groups, severing the head of an enemy prevented its soul from returning to the body and subsequently harming the killer (Lovisek, Chapter 3 in this volume). Likewise, for Iroquoians, the taking of trophies served as a defensive strategy against an enemy's potentially harmful soul (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). See also Harner (1972) for a similar belief among the Jivaro who believed that taking the head prevented the avenging soul from harming the killer.

When a portion of a person was worn by a Sac or Fox warrior as an amulet, it provided him with protection in battle (Harrington 1914). In ritual dramatizations, scalps were often treated as if they were the enemy. For example, Osage priests would wrap a scalp around the middle of the war club, and holding the war club aloft, strike the scalp which was wound around the club with the Wa-xo'-be bundle and utter the magic cry: "*He hi hi hi hi e e*" (Bailey 1995:215). This symbolic act of sympathetic magic provided protection for men on the warpath who likewise would be able to vanquish the enemies of the tribe with their war clubs (Bailey 1995).

Among the chiefdom societies who once inhabited present-day Costa Rica and Panama, the power of life was believed to reside in the head (even after death). So trophy heads obtained from sorcerers served as a form of protection against the malevolent powers of such nefarious ritual specialists (Hoopes, Chapter 15 in this volume).

Some Eastern groups believed that the spirit of a slain warrior haunted his former abode and would not depart until his kinsmen placed an enemy scalp in one of the eaves of his former dwellings (Knowles 1985). Ghosts of the dead could be appeased by offerings of scalps. In 1765, Adair notes that the Chickasaw, upon returning from Illinois country with two French scalps "fixed on top of the house, a twig of the pine they had brought with them, with a small piece of one of the scalps fastened to it; and this order they observed from house to house, till in their opinion they had appeased the ghosts of their dead" (Williams 1930:175). Among the Hopi, scalps were considered as protective amulets (Allen and Birkby 1985; Keely 1996). See also Owsley et al., Chapter 6 in this volume).

Trophy Taking Served as a Form of Social Control

The power of malevolent ritual specialists could be curtailed by the act of (or by the threat of) mutilating individuals suspected of conducting sorcery (see in this volume: Hoopes, Chapter 15; Ross-Stallings, Chapter 12).

Trophies Served as Symbols Linking Warriors to Nonhuman Predators

Some trophies expressed a metaphorical understanding of the "predator as successful warrior" relationship by fashioning nonhuman predator jawbones along with human jawbones into various trophies. (See in this volume: Mensforth, Chapter 9; Seeman, Chapter 7.)

Trophies Were Believed to Enhance Human Fertility

Young Chacoan women joyfully rubbed scalps against their thighs and apparently this act served to promote fertility (M. Mendoza, Chapter 20 in this

volume). See also (Karsten 2000) for similar beliefs among Jivaroans. For examples of trophy-taking celebrations and human fertility–enhancing activities involving ritually sanctioned periods of sexual license, see Fathauer (1954), Harner (1972), and Parsons (1939).

Trophies Were Associated with Enhanced Agricultural Fertility

Southwestern groups believed that enemy scalps possessed supernatural powers and that they could be transformed into plant fertility–generating and rainmaking allies after being subjected to various punishments and incorporation rituals (Schaafsma, Chapter 5 in this volume). The triumphant return to the village by victorious warriors brandishing scalps obtained in battle was celebrated as women threw the scalps onto ground drawings of clouds as they proceeded into the pueblo (Stephen 1936). The taking of scalps is practiced by the Heart-of-the-Sky God who "kills and renders fertile" in contemporary Hopi mythology (Parsons 1939:178). See also Proulx (2001).

Trophies Were Believed to Maintain and/or Regenerate the World

Southeastern mythic narratives celebrating the heroic combat of the gods with the ultimate triumph of life over death inspired and provided the ideological template for head taking which was conducted to ensure the renewal of the cosmos (Brown and Dye, Chapter 10 in this volume). In other words, trophy heads provided the vehicle for the transfer of sacred powers necessary for health and cosmic renewal (see in this volume: Brown and Dye, Chapter 10; Mensforth, Chapter 9).

The Aztec account of how their patron deity Huitzilopochtli defeated and dismembered his sister (the Moon goddess) along with her 400 brothers was reenacted by the killing and dismemberment of human sacrificial victims and the subsequent display of various body parts. These rituals were deemed necessary for the rebirth and regeneration of the cosmos. See in this volume: R. Mendoza, Chapter 14; Berryman, Chapter 13; Hoopes, Chapter 15; Ogburn, Chapter 17.

Trophies Allowed for Entry and/or Assisted in the Passage into the Hereafter

Upon the death of a Chacoan warrior, a scalp that he had taken in life would be burned and the smoke that emanated from the trophy was believed to facilitate the journey of the deceased into the afterlife (M. Mendoza, Chapter 20 in this volume). The Jivaroan tribesman named Utitiája reported that once you have obtained a trophy head, "You tell the souls of the people you loved that they can stop wondering unhappily. Those are splendid things to feel. It seems as if you are soaring high like a condor" (Cotlow 1953:242).

As stated previously, some Amerindians believed the spirits of scalped individuals could not enter into the hereafter until the kinsmen of the victim erased this ignominy by taking an enemy scalp (Hall 1997; Knowles 1985). Among the Chickasaw, the ghosts of those slain in battle were believed to haunt the dwellings of the living. Their souls would be refused admission to the afterworld until they had been appeased, their deaths avenged, and the appropriate offerings of trophies made (Gibson 1971; Pope 1792; Williams 1930). Prior to contact, an essential element in an Osage warrior's funeral ceremony was the formal dedication of an enemy scalp; "If this was not done, the spirit of the deceased could not find its way to its final resting place" (La Flesche 1921:49). Among the Osage, "the mourners sought the scalp, the gift that would allow the dead to be reborn" (Mathews 1961:765). As recently as 1960, there were reports of several white women supplementing their income by selling their hair to Osage mourners in place of the traditional scalp (Thompson et al. 1984).

Trophies Served as Appropriate Offerings to Supernatural Beings

Trophy skulls were believed to ritually nourish the Kwakiutl spirit known as the "Man-Eater" during the winter ceremonials dances (Lovisek, Chapter 3 in this volume, Lovisek 2003). The Iroquoians severed their enemy's bodies in full view of the sun god in order to honor said deity (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). Among various Eastern groups, the procurement of scalps was believed to appease the spirits of slain individuals (Knowles 1985; Owsley and Berryman 1975).

The Timucua appointed certain men to scalp and dismember their enemies. Upon returning to the town, these war trophies were attached to poles, while the priest implored supernatural sanctions against their enemies in the midst of the assembled village. The sun was then thanked for success in warfare and offered human war trophies (Le Moyne 1875; Laudonnière 2001). The Osage included a bit of a scalp of the enemy with the first grain of corn that was planted as an offering (Bailey 1995). See also Cook (2001); Friederici (1985); Knowles (1985); Proulx (2001); and in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14; Petersen and Crock, Chapter 19.

Trophies Served as Appropriate Gifts and/or Rewards to Deserving Individuals

A severed body part may have been provided as a funerary gift or spiritual trophy to someone who in life was well respected (Cushman 1999; Hall 1997; Proulx 2001; and in this volume: Jacobi, Chapter 11; Berryman, Chapter 13).

"In 1741, wishing to establish peaceful relations with the Iroquois, the Cherokees sent them various trade goods along with a war trophy as a sign of friendship. The Iroquois reciprocated by sending the Cherokee a wampum belt" (Perdue 1987:141).

Among the chiefdom societies of Colombia, "As with other war spoils, the chief bestowed human trophies according to an individual's status or office, and sent them as gifts to neighbors and allies" (Redmond 1994:36).

TROPHIES WERE EMPLOYED AS AUGURS

In the southwest, scalps were believed to foretell the coming of rain (Schaafsma, Chapter 5 in this volume) and would become noisy at the approach of the enemy along with being able to predict the future in general (Ellis 1951; Parsons 1939).

Among the Quechuans of Arizona, trophies were placed in the care of a man considered to be of high moral character. Before embarking upon a raid, this individual would carefully examine scalps that came from that particular enemy group that was being considered for attack, and if he observed shiny bright scalp hair, this was considered a bad omen for Quechuan war parties. However, if the scalp uttered a faint cry, this was considered an auspicious sign for waging war (Kroeber and Fontana 1986).

Among the Araucanians of Chile, a severed enemy head was thrown into the air and permitted to land on the ground. If it came to rest with its face toward the enemy, this was considered a propitious omen for attacking. Then, the crania would be placed on a stake and there would be much celebratory dancing and playing of flutes fashioned from the long bones of defeated rivals (Ackernecht 1944).

Trophies Served as Compensation to the Relatives of a Person Who Has Been Killed

See Petersen and Crock (Chapter 19 in this volume) for how Amazonian Mudurucú widows were provided a trophy head for the loss of their husbands. Among the Cree, if a husband had killed his wife, he could pay his spouse's bereaved family a scalp instead of a horse (Ackernecht 1944).

Trophies Augmented an Individual's Stamina and Courage

In the southwest, scalps provided runners participating in spring war ceremonies with increased endurance (Schaafsma, Chapter 5 in this volume). See also Parsons (1939); Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume). Among the Hopi, women offered fresh scalp fragments to young boys to ingest so that they would become brave (Di Peso 1974; Owsley 1994).

Trophy Taking May Have Served as an Ethnic Marker

North American Plains Indians developed a form of sign language to communicate between various tribes that spoke different languages (Mallery 1880, 1972). Each tribe was designated by a specific hand signal. The one that identified

the Sioux involved the placing of the right hand, palm down, at the height of the throat with the index finger placed just below the chin. Then the hand was rapidly moved to the right in a horizontal fashion, thus symbolizing the act of severing a human head with a knife, as the Sioux were known to decapitate their vanquished enemies (Cody 1990; John Doerner, personal communication 2004; Richard Gould, personal communication 2004; Marquis 1986; Taylor 1975).

The hand sign for the Cheyenne involved the repeated cutting motion of the extended left index finger (imitating the motion of a knife) over the extended right index finger. The Cheyenne were known to cut off the fingers of their enemies, and they sometimes made necklaces out of the severed digits (John Doerner, personal communication 2004; Richard Gould, personal communication 2004; Owsley et al., Chapter 6 in this volume). However, for different interpretations of these above-mentioned Plains Indian hand signs, see Clark (1982); Cody (1990); Fronvall and Dubios (1985); McCoy (1966); and Scott 1930, 1931.

In Amazonia, one of the cultural markers that differentiated the Jivaro Shuar from their Achuar neighbors was that the Shuar were headhunters who shrunk the heads of their enemies while the Achuar generally did not take heads and were usually the victims of such head-hunting raids (Harner 1972). See also Fathauer (1954); Moser (1973); Sivers (1973).

Benefits Stemming from Possessing the Power to Headhunt

Among the Achuar of Ecuador, a man who obtained the full measure of the supernatural force called Arutam (which enabled men to conduct successful head-hunting raids) would be guaranteed a long life, invincibility in battle, the acquirement of many wives, the siring of many children, and he would experience overall economic prosperity (Chacon, Chapter 18 in this volume).

TROPHIES AND THE CREATION OF SUPERNATURAL KINSMEN

This volume has shown that one of the possible fates that could befall a human trophy was to be incorporated into the family of the trophy taker. For example, in the southwest scalps were addressed by kinship terms (Schaafsma, Chapter 5 in this volume). Among Iroquoians, scalps were adopted as living relatives, symbolically equating them with a prisoner awaiting adoption and the status of the dead person being mourned (Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume).

Marcela Mendoza (Chapter 20 in this volume) reports that an old woman would seize the scalp and scratch it as if it were a man's cheek, and then she would affectionately address it by asking the following question: "Do you want to marry me?" This practice of incorporating former enemies into one's kin group was a means of transforming and thus gaining valuable spiritual allies in the hereafter. For other examples of the adoption of scalps and for the practice of addressing them using kinship terms, see Hall (1997) and Kroeber and Fontana (1986).

THE INTENSITY OF TROPHY TAKING MAY VARY WITH TIME

This anthology has documented that the rate at which trophies are obtained is not constant (Tung, Chapter 16 in this volume). Williamson (Chapter 8 in this volume) links the decline in Iroquoian trophy taking to the increased need to keep captives alive as a means of maintaining population levels in the face of European-introduced disease.

Among Northwest Coast groups, aboriginal human trophy taking was associated with the belief that enemy souls could harm killers and that certain deities required to ritually be fed human skulls along with the fact that males who took heads were accorded great prestige. However, the advent of Europeans and their trade goods into the region may have led to an increase in raiding along with a concomitant decrease in the amount of trophy taking as the value of live slaves increased and the general population plummeted (Lovisek, Chapter 3 in this volume). See also Dye (2002) and Owsley et al. (Chapter 6 in this volume).

However, increased contact with Westerners sometimes intensified the occurrence of trophy taking. The Jivaro Shuar dramatically increased their headhunting raids against the Achuar and Huambisa enemies from 1850 to 1915 because of the trading of guns for shrunken heads. Local colonists traded firearms and other western manufactures in exchange for trophy heads (Steel 1999).

POSSIBLE NORTH AMERICAN AND MESOAMERICAN CONNECTIONS

Hall (1997, 2000) has documented many similarities in the belief systems found in the North American and Mesoamerican culture areas. The findings presented in this anthology illustrate how Mesoamerican ideology and associated trophy-taking practices were similar to many Native American beliefs and concomitant trophy-taking patterns.

Some Eastern Woodland and southwestern groups addressed their sacrificial victims (or the trophies made from them) by using kinship terms and painting scalps red on the flesh side (Parsons 1939; Schaafsma 2000; and in this volume: Schaafsma, Chapter 5; Williamson, Chapter 8). Similarly, the Shawnee were known to address scalps using kinship terms and to paint them red (Hall 1997; Knowles 1985; Williams 1927). Plains groups such as the Mandan preserved scalplocks by painting them red and stretching them on small hoops (Wood and Irwin 2001). Likewise, Aztec sacrificial victims were referred to by kinship terms (Coe 2002) and were depicted with red hair (Parsons 1939) or their faces were partially painted red (Ruben Mendoza, Chapter 14 in this volume).

The Iroquoian practice of removing and eating the heart, and killing the victim on an elevated platform, all in honor of the sun deity, suggests a Mesoamerican influence in the northeast (Coe 2002; Inomata and Triadan 2004; Rodriguez 2004; Schele 1984; Williamson, Chapter 8 in this volume).

Further similarities between Eastern Woodland and Mesoamerican beliefs can be seen in the association between the mythological origins for each region's respective ball games. The similarity to the *Popul Vuh* creation story can be seen in the Seneca myth "Pursued by His Uncle" in that they both contain a set of twin male siblings who enjoy partaking in contests along with the apparition of a disembodied talking head. Moreover, ethnohistorical accounts of actual games in both regions state that the outcomes of ballgames were frequently wagered upon along with the fact that players could be seriously injured and even killed (Miller and Taube 1993; Recinos 1951; Sharer 1994; Smith 2003; Wulff 1977).

The association between decapitation and the regeneration of life is present in the southeast (Brown and Dye, Chapter 10 in this volume) and throughout Mesoamerica (in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14). These similarities become evident when the Eastern Woodland "Children of the Sun" narrative (Brown and Dye, Chapter 10 in this volume; Radin 1950, 1954a, 1954b) is compared with that of the Mayan *Popul Vuh* creation story (Recinos et al. 1951; Sharer 1994; and in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14,). In order to illustrate this ideological connection, the above-mentioned two myths are briefly summarized below:

A.

In the "Children of the Sun" myth, a stranger approaches two siblings (a brother and sister) and challenges the male sibling (who is identified as being a hunter) to a smoke-inhaling contest. After an initial victory, the brother is defeated and decapitated. Shortly after this event, the sister becomes impregnated by the sun's rays and gives birth to twins. These twins (who are the Children of the Sun) avenge the death of their uncle through use of their supernatural powers and trickery. They then proceed to resurrect their uncle by reattaching his severed head to his body and then they depart for the heavens in order to be with their father (Radin 1950, 1954a, 1954b)

B.

According to the Maya *Popul Vuh* creation story, there were two brothers. One was named Hun-Hunahpú ("aphu" means "blowgun hunter"). The siblings made so much noise while playing a ball game that the Lords of Death grew angry and challenged the brothers to a ball game contest in the Underworld (referred to as Xibalba). The Lords defeated and sacrificed the brothers, burying the bodies under the ball court. The decapitated head of Hun-Hunahpú was hung on a calabash tree. Soon afterwards, one of the daughters of the Lords went to see the severed head and when she approached, the head of Hun-Hunahpú impregnated her by spitting on her palm. She then gave birth to the brothers known as the Hero Twins who proceeded to avenge the death of their father by outwitting the Lords of Xibalba through supernatural powers and trickery. They then reassembled the remains of their father and restored him to life and assured him that his memory would not be forgotten but that he would be worshiped from here on. They emerged from the Underworld as the Sun and Moon (Recinos et al. 1951; Roberts 2004).

[Note that some versions of the *Popul Vuh* have one of the Hero Twins becoming the planet Venus (Sharer 1994).]

It is important to highlight the fact that both myths mentioned above involve a pair of twin siblings with at least one of the pair being identified as being a male hunter who accepts the challenge to some sort of contest that invariably results in the decapitation of the loser(s). This death will eventually be avenged by the offspring of a woman who was supernaturally impregnated. This woman always bears twin sons who employ their supernatural powers to outwit the killer(s). After restoring their fallen male kinsmen back to life, the twins go on to assume their rightful place in the heavens. It is important to note that both of these myths herald the triumph of life over the power of death and provide an ideological foundation for the linkage of bloodshed and decapitation with the regeneration of life.

In the southeast, the ball game was played with sticks. For documentation of the similarity of southeastern stick ball rackets and war clubs to scalp hoops, see Vennum (1994). In Mesoamerica, there is widespread association between the presence of ball courts and the taking and displaying of human trophies (Di Peso 1974; Moser 1973; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14 in this volume). Support for the presence of an Eastern Woodland belief system that linked trophy taking to ball games can be found in the report of a scalp being buried by the Alabama under the ceremonial ball court post (Knowles 1985).

Historically, the Pawnee of central Nebraska were located outside the southeastern region, yet they spoke a Caddoan language related to that of the Hasinai (the westernmost member of the southeastern coastal plains groups). This, along with several other cultural practices indicates that they split from the Caddo at a time when the Caddo had developed a Mississippian culture. The Skiri Pawnee practice of killing a young person by tying them to a frame placed on an elevated platform and shooting them with arrows all in honor of a deity suggests a Mesoamerican influence (Coe 2002; Driver 1969; Hall 1997; Knowles 1985; Inomata and Triadan 2004; Rodriguez 2004; Schele 1984).

The southwest and Mesoamerica appear to have a shared ideology that linked trophy taking to fertility along with the association of stars with warfare. Some Puebloans connect the planet Venus with the Warrior Twins who have fertility roles linked to rain. These mythological beings took scalps that were believed to bring about precipitation. In short, southwestern peoples linked the shedding of blood with the ushering in of rain (Schaafsma, Chapter 5 in this volume; Schaafsma 2000).

Likewise, Mesoamericans associated the taking and displaying of trophies with fertility enhancement (in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14) and the Aztecs believed the souls of dead warriors became stars (R. Mendoza, Chapter 14 in this volume).

Further evidence suggesting the presence of a shared belief system can be seen in the fact that both the southwest and Mesoamerica had an ideology based on the existence of a nexus between bloodshed (i.e., warfare and trophy taking) and

the maintenance of the sun with its proper movement in the heavens along with rain and overall fertility (Coe 2002; Parsons 1939; Schaafsma 2000; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14 in this volume). In fact, for both the Zuni and the Aztecs, not only was the sun a warrior but also a decapitator (R. Mendoza, Chapter 14 in this volume; Parsons 1939). Further parallels between the southwest and Mesoamerican beliefs and ritual practices can be found in Dorsey and Voth's (1901) report stating that the powdered human hearts of slain enemies were placed on Hopi altars during the Soyal Winter Solstice Ceremony.

Additional evidence suggesting Mesoamerican influence in the southwest is put forth by Ross-Stallings (Chapter 12 in this volume) who points out that certain iconographic motifs associated with shamanism appear on ceramics from the northern Mexican site of Paquime as well as on Mimbres pottery. Moreover, similarities such as the presence of ball courts along with the practice of decapitation and cannibalism provide additional support for the presence of Mesoamerican influence in the region (Di Peso 1974). For further discussion on the similarities between North American and Mesoamerican culture areas, see (Engelbrecht 2003; Hall 1997, 2000; Schaafsma 1999; Sears 1977; Wilcox and Hass 1994). For linguistic evidence of Mesoamerican influence in North America, see Lambert (Chapter 4 in this volume).

ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY OF THE ETHNOHISTORICAL SOURCES

Various revisionist scholars dismiss Colonial-era documents that report endemic pre- and early-contact indigenous warfare and human trophy taking as propaganda devised to denigrate native cultures, thereby providing European conquerors and colonials with the "moral justification" for the brutal subjugation of New World peoples (Montejo 1993, 1999; Cojti Ren 2004; Means and Wolf 1995). There can be no doubt that many ethnohistorical documents were produced by individuals who were Eurocentric and who had a vested interest in portraying Amerindian societies in the worst possible light. See Las Casas (1971) and Petersen and Crock (Chapter 19 in this volume) for exposés on this matter.

Nonetheless, our collective assessments acknowledge that ethnohistorical accounts reporting armed conflict and human trophy taking in the Americas have been largely corroborated in this volume by way of multiple lines of scientific evidence and empirical analysis ranging from osteological, archaeological, and ethnographic studies. The information presented in this volume provides a broad body of key data substantiating European and other nonindigenous accounts of native warfare and trophy taking (in this volume: Berryman, Chapter 13; Chacon, Chapter 18; M. Mendoza, Chapter 20; R. Mendoza, Chapter 14; Ross-Stallings, Chapter 12; Williamson, Chapter 8).

Furthermore, the findings put forth here provide scientific evidence that indicates a significant time depth for the various behaviors associated with human

sacrifice, trophy taking, and/or for cannibalism as is reported by various Colonial-era documents (in this volume: R. Mendoza, Chapter 14; Tung, Chapter 16; Williamson, Chapter 8). In other words, according to the osteological and archaeological data presented here, behaviors such as precontact indigenous trophy taking and cannibalism (denied by various revisionist scholars to have ever occurred) were indeed practiced by Amerindians long before the arrival of Europeans in the New World.

Moreover, the notion that the European charge of trophy taking and/or cannibalism was leveled against indigenous people solely for denigrating them is vitiated by Champlain's reporting of such behaviors occurring among his Huron Indian allies (see Williamson, Chapter 8). If the reporting of trophy taking and cannibalism among the Huron was simply a means of demonstrating European superiority over the "Other," then why would Champlain openly report such behaviors among the people he voluntarily chose to associate with? What benefit could he possibly have sought to gain by denigrating his allies?

The above-mentioned Huron example notwithstanding, we nonetheless concur with Montejo (1993, 1999) along with Means and Wolf's (1995) observations that the documentary record produced by Europeans in the Americas was often based on racist assumptions formulated to legitimize the expansion of European empires in the Americas. Nevertheless, we need only consider those chronicles produced by Peter Martyr, Bartolome de Las Casas, Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, Chimalpahin, Fray Diego Duran, Padre Bernabe Cobo, Garcilasco de la Vega, Cabeza de Vaca, Eusebio Francisco Kino, Jacques Marquette, or Samuel de Champlain in order to appreciate the utility of these same European chronicles in reconstructing the Amerindian past, and for documenting the catastrophic consequences of the first culture contact episodes in question. We therefore call for the judicious use, and critical reassessment, of these Colonial-era sources, as it would be a mistake to assume that such works convey only half-truths and propaganda.

ETHICS

As stated previously, some activists as well as various scholars contend that the documentation of indigenous warfare, trophy taking, or cannibalism is nothing more than part of a longstanding colonialist strategy based on the promulgation of fabrications designed by westerners to denigrate Amerindian cultures, and that the type of research put forth in this present work serves only to justify the genocidal policies conducted by non-Indians against native peoples (Means and Wolf 1995; Montejo 1993, 1999).

This argument, however, is vitiated by the fact that there are many cases of trophy taking and cannibalism reported not by outsiders but by the indigenous peoples themselves (see Maschner and Maschner-Reedy, Chapter 2 in this volume). Also see Ogburn (Chapter 17 in this volume) for mention of several indigenous authors such as Gracilasco de la Vega, Guaman Poma, and Pachacuti Yamqui

Salcamaygua who report Andean trophy taking. There is little reason to suspect that these indigenous authors would have been willing to fabricate stories involving trophy taking that were designed to denigrate their own people.

As we stated at the beginning of this chapter, we hold that the most effective way to combat many of the long-standing and insidious negative stereotypes associated with indigenous warfare and trophy taking is not by denying that these activities ever took place, nor is it to slander those who state otherwise. Rather, we believe the best way to render Amerindian conflict more understandable is by conducting a dispassionate, rigorous, and respectfully honest examination of all available osteological, archaeological, ethnohistorical, and ethnographic evidence for indigenous warfare and ritual violence. The evidence presented in this volume leads us to conclude that it would be a mistake to deny that Amerindians were and still are equally capable as any other group of human beings of participating in lethal engagements resulting in trophy taking.

As social scientists, we believe we have an obligation to the profession and to our respective communities to accurately, objectively, and faithfully convey our research findings in a respectful and scholarly manner. As such, when we encounter evidence for warfare, trophy taking, and/or cannibalism in the anthropological record, we are obliged to report the facts. To do otherwise would constitute a violation of ethical protocols on our part.

We contend that the promotion of an idealized depiction of society, however well intended, will backfire when distorted claims made by scholars and community researchers are exposed, or, as Conklin (2003:5) aptly states, "when the gap between rhetoric and realty is revealed." Given the many serious threats confronting indigenous peoples today, social scientists would do well to heed Conklin's assertion that "idealized (mis)representations are shaky ground on which to stake indigenous rights claims. Rather than distort our research to support political agendas, a stronger contribution is to help indigenous politics escape the 'noble savage slot' trap" (2003:5).

The failure to objectively report on the substantive defensive and offensive capabilities of Amerindian groups, even when motivated by the noblest of intentions, may only exacerbate conditions where violence may provide the only alternative as a form of self-defense; particularly where violent conflict may entail engagements with outsiders. As Otterbein (2000) has acknowledged, "Classifying peoples as nonviolent could position them to be victimized as easily as calling a people fierce could make them a target of attack" (2000:842).

Furthermore, as Owsley et al. (Chapter 6 in this volume) aptly points out, the warrior who preserved and subsequently crafted a human trophy from the body of a vanquished enemy did so with the clear understanding that his handiwork would be placed on public display. By continuing to preserve such trophies, we are in effect, carrying out the victor's wishes. Therefore, it can be argued that the inclusion of Amerindian war trophies in public and academic discourses (as well as their curation) respectfully honors tribal customs as well as the warriors who originally fashioned these items.

Ultimately, we hope that this anthology, which is devoted to the study and reporting of human trophy taking, will serve to supplement extant theoretical frameworkss of understanding pertaining to the causes and consequences of human, not just Amerindian, conflict and ritual violence.

NOTES

1. Note that we have included various findings in this section from sources not presented by contributors to this volume in order to aid scholars in further research.
2. Individuals who obtain prestige can use their positions of elevated status to obtain an entire constellation of benefits including various types of material resources. Therefore, we do not consider "prestige" and "material gain" as mutually opposed goals for embarking upon a mission of trophy taking.

   However, as previously mentioned, we believe it unwise to distill all trophy-taking actions as mere pretexts for going into battle due to the questionable cost-effectiveness of long-distance raiding and because it is impossible for us to accurately calculate all of the factors that are involved in a warrior's decision about whether or not to go into battle.

   For example, is a warrior motivated by the desire to obtain prestige, to secure material gain, or by some perceived spiritual need or any combination thereof? A warrior's decision to participate in a potentially dangerous trophy-taking campaign lasting several years and in some cases ranging for hundreds of miles was a very serious and complicated one indeed that must have involved the consideration of multiple factors.

   Was a man's final decision to go into battle 80% based on his desire for prestige and 15% on his obligation to appease the soul of a fallen kinsman, with the remaining 5% driven by his perceived need for material gain? Or was his decision to engage in trophy taking 80% based of the his perceived need to secure various material resources and 15% based on his desire to obtain prestige, with the remaining 5% driven by the desire to placate the soul of a deceased kinsman? How can we know the exact answers to these types of questions? What complicates matters even further is that an individual's motivations may shift over time in response to changes in personal, political, and economic circumstances; thus the folly of asserting a dogmatic stance assigning prestige, material gain, and/or ideational considerations as mutually exclusive goals for engaging in trophy taking.

   One thing, however, is clear: successful trophy takers enjoyed positions of significant prestige vis-à-vis their fellow villagers, and it would appear that this factor (along with perceived supernatural benefits in some cases) helped make trophy taking worth the risk despite the availability of safer and more economically feasible ways by which an Amerindian individual could attain social advancement and/or secure material gain. See the section "Trophies Served as a Means of Expressing Solidarity with Europeans," along with endnote #2, in Chapter 22 of this volume for an example of trophy taking that likely occurred as the result of both materialistic and nonmaterialistic motivations.
3. The Cuaca Valley chiefdoms were also known to extract human body fat from enemies for use as fuel for illumination in mines (Kelekna 1998).

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