

JAGUARS AGAIN. CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FELINE THEME IN CERAMIC ICONOGRAPHY FROM THE LATE PERIOD IN YOCAVIL (NORTH-WESTERN ARGENTINA)

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Abstract

The feline figure –mainly that of the jaguar– was central to the iconography of Andean societies for 4000 years. It has often been suggested that this continuity of feline representations corresponds to that of religious ideas. The Late Period jaguar representations in Yocavil Valley pottery (Santamariano style) disappears from the regional iconographic repertory towards the end of the first millennium of our era (early Late Period), only reappearing four centuries later. Our conclusion addresses the discontinuity of the feline topic in Yocavil.

Key words: iconography – pottery – feline – Late Period – Yocavil – Northwest Argentina.

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~ ICONOGRAPHY AND POWER: THE JAGUAR IN ANDEAN SOCIETIES

The jaguar, mysterious and imposing animal of the American jungles, has reached undreamt of places. Representations of jaguars have played a leading role in the iconography of Andean societies for at least four thousand years. For many researchers, the jaguar – and images of the so-called “feline complex” in general – reflect basic ideas which persisted over a huge lapse of time from long before Chavín up until the period of the Incas (González 1998:181). Yet if we focus on the histories of different regions, in some cases we find discontinuities. In this work we will concentrate on feline representations found in the iconography of ceramics produced by the societies of the Late Period in the Yocavil valley (north-western Argentina)², in a style known as “Santa María” or “Santamariano”.

An important aspect of the study of the iconography of societies of the past is that it constitutes, among other possibilities, a door to knowledge of their religious ideology, and thus one of the instances for the production and reproduction of social relations. Religion belongs to the ambit of the sacred, understood as a certain kind of relationship with our origins in which, in the place of real human beings, two kinds of more powerful imaginaries are installed: ancestors and gods (Godelier 1998: 245). This (imaginary) relationship with the origins of society, i.e. with ancestors and gods, is hierarchical, since they are conceptualised as superior entities to human beings, which gave them their existence (in the case of the gods), and their territory, domesticated animals and plants, and

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2 The period immediately before the Inca expansion. It coincides with the Late Intermediate Period in the central and central-southern Andes and Chile.

the knowledge of how to make tools (in the case of the ancestors).

Defined in this way, the sacred becomes the religious part of social power (Godelier 1998: 243). Thus in a society where some kind of hierarchy or stratification exists between the individuals, genders or groups of which it is composed, religion provides the conceptual framework to define these asymmetrical relationships as natural (sacred); the hierarchical relationship between human beings and gods offers a paradigm for the hierarchical relationships between the strata which make up society. An individual or group wishing to impose itself on its peers claims to be related to the gods or the ancestors, and thus seeks to appropriate the imaginary conditions for the reproduction of life and society (Godelier 1998:274); it seeks to legitimise its imposition by claiming that the relationship is sacred.

In archaeology, the religious problem has been addressed principally through iconography, since this clearly constitutes a case of social communication. Thus study of the graphic representations which appear on pottery, stone, cloth or any other material support offers us an approach to various aspects of the social relationships of the past. In this case we consider images of the jaguar, one of the great protagonists of the religious world of the Andes, and also of our analysis of the iconography of Santamariano pottery.

Although we will concentrate on representations of jaguars, we will often refer to them generically as the “feline theme”. Throughout the pre-Colombian history of Andean societies, the feline theme is manifested in a variety of ways, with incarnations in species that may or may not be recognisable, faithful to reality or created in defiance of that reality. Thus for example the Chavín feline is a jaguar, while the Tiwanaku feline is more often a puma (González 1998:172); in numerous Moche vessels the feline is a jaguar (Benson 1974) and we know that the puma and the jaguar are protagonists in the symbolic world of the Incas (Zuidema 1989; Farrington 2001 Ms). At the same time, representations exist in which other

elements are combined or certain realities are altered, but the feline character is always highlighted by recognisable attributes, for example jaws with prominent fangs, sharp claws, or in some cases a spotted coat. Except in specific cases where the symbolic relevance of the interaction of different species – jaguar, ocelot, puma or an indefinable combination – must be discussed (for example in the case of the Incas), the important aspect is the idea, the meaning associated with “the feline”, which these religious images are intended to communicate.

The earliest indications of the feline theme in the Andes are observed in a find from the Pativilca Valley (central coast of Peru) of fragment of an incised gourd, dated around 2200 BC, showing a personage with a feline face holding two sceptres in its hands (Haas and Creamer 2004:48, Fig. 3.2). However it is in Chavín in the Central Andes, around 1000 BC, that the presence of the so-called “feline complex” becomes frequent (González 1998:169). Subsequently, feline images continued to mark the history of Andean societies. In north-western Argentina the feline image was profusely represented by societies of the Early Period (Condorhuasi, Ciénaga). In Aguada (7th to 10th centuries, approximately) images of the jaguar will play a leading role in the various plastic manifestations, in which – jointly with other characteristic motifs such as the sacrificer, the amphibaena and the personage of the sceptres – they will form the “feline complex” (González 1998).

In Andean iconography, this feline is generally associated with an anthropomorphic personage (although it may also be another animal, such as a snake or a llama) representing the deity or propitiator of religious rituals (González 1992, 1998). The characteristics of these personages are clearly intimidating: they carry axes, severed human heads, feline masks and/or skins, and are often represented making human sacrifices.

If we take into account the hierarchized or stratified nature of the societies in which the “feline complex” is manifested³, the intimidating scenes linked to the complex appear to be an instance of legitimisation of the hierarchical social order. This legitimisation depends on a demonstration of the power of the officiator in the rite, either through association with supernatural powers (his sacred status) or through his power to kill in the sacrifice.

3 See for example the cases studied by Burger (1992), Castillo (1993), Cook (1994) and González (1998).

A large part of the feline iconography of pre-Colombian Andean agro-pastoral societies appears to appeal to the two instances of consent and violence. Consent to a relationship of domination depends on the production of shared representations which define the relationship as an exchange of services between dominators and dominated (Godelier 1989:11-12). Nevertheless, potential or effective violence is always present to deal with conflicts which the shared representations cannot neutralise. In religious ritual, the elites offer to act as intermediaries between common human beings and the gods or ancestors. The action of the religious officiator is presented as an activity necessary for the production and reproduction of life, however a series of signs which appeal to violence (and this is especially clear in the images of the “feline complex”) show that the basis of these social relationships are not complementary activities necessary for existence and the common good but an unequal social order which it is intended to perpetuate through consensus and force.

Considering the importance of the image of the jaguar as an iconography of power for the production and reproduction of social relationships within these populations, its disappearance from the iconographic repertoire of pre-Colombian societies of north-western Argentina in the Late Period (approximately from the 10th century AD) and its reappearance in Yocavil at the very end of the Period, associated with Inca occupation of the region, are highly significant.

Various works mention the disappearance of the feline motif after the end of Aguada (Kusch and Valko 1999: 111), or its fragmented continuity, recognisable only in some combined representations in the styles of the Late Period, more specifically in Santamariano vessels (Kusch 1990:19; Fiadone 1999). In this work we will try to demonstrate that these two possibilities are not really incompatible. This apparent contradiction is not real if we take into account the history of the Santamariano style, with production, mainly of bowls and anthropomorphic funerary vessels, which extended over approximately 500 years. The contradiction fades if we consider the history of the style, emphasising its variations in time and space. Based on various studies intended precisely to define and discuss the history of the Santamariano style (Podestá and Perrotta 1973; Perrotta and Podestá 1974

Ms, 1978; Weber 1978), we maintain that the feline motif was absent (or “disappeared” if we consider its previous history) for approximately 400 years, only reappearing on a few vessels in Yocavil at the end of the pre-Colombian epoch. This work will attempt to provide elements to sustain these points, and discuss their implications. Although this issue will be addressed in detail below, it is important to note at this point that without question the late feline images are based on a different mode of representation to those previously produced in the Aguada style. Thus as Kusch noted (1990:19), the majority of Santamariano representations show us jaguars combined with other animals like the suri (Lesser Rhea) or the llama. In any case, the importance of the image arises from the unquestionable presence of the characteristic attributes of the jaguar: the spotted coat, the claws, jaws and tail. In many vessels in the Aguada style, in which the primacy of the jaguar is beyond dispute, it is some or all of these parts – rather than the totality – which define the theme represented. There are moreover numerous examples of representations of combined species (man-jaguar, snake-jaguar, camelid-jaguar, monkey-jaguar). Certainly the fact that the jaguar appears on Santamariano vessels combined with attributes of other species does not mean that its presence in the iconography can be ignored.

❖ THE LATE PERIOD IN YOCAVIL

From approximately the start of the 10th century, new forms of social organisation start to develop in the Yocavil region (now the Argentinean provinces of Catamarca, Tucumán and Salta). They drive demographic growth and concentration, and a basic reorganisation of production with a tendency for the excess to increase. These kinds of social organisation implied growing power, and confrontation between the political and religious leaders of the various communities of the region. This is apparent in the establishment of residential nuclei in conglomerates on hilltops, and spreading over the slopes and surrounding plains, such as the settlements of Tolombón, Pichao, Quilmes, La Ventanita and El Calvario de Fuerte Quemado, Las Mojarras, Rincón Chico and Cerro Mendocino in the western sector of the valley; and those of Yasyamayo, Amaicha, Los Cardones, Masao-Caspinchango, Loma Rica de Jujuil, Loma Rica de Shiquimil, Ampajango and Pajanguillo on the eastern side.

As we have seen, in the societies of north-western Argentina before the Late Period, especially those linked with the Aguada culture, the figure of the feline – and more specifically the jaguar – played a protagonic role in the iconography. Great variety is displayed in how they are represented in the different regions such as Hualfín, Ambato, Portezuelo and the northern part of La Rioja (González 1998; Kusch and Abal 2000).

Although research into the Aguada culture in the Yocavil Valley is less developed than in other regions further south, evidence exists to support the view that this zone formed part of the macro-regional phenomenon known as Aguada. This evidence is provided both by objects recovered from different parts of the valley and by those illustrated in the bibliography of the earliest researchers (e.g. Ambrosetti 1896-1899; Lafone Quevedo 1908) as well as samples recovered in recent decades (e.g. by Raffino *et al.* 1979-1982; Tarrago *et al.* 1988 Ms; Tarrago and Scattolin 1999; Tartusi and Núñez Regueiro 2000; Williams 2003; Nastri *et al.* 2004 Ms).

Within the repertoire of Yocavil Aguada ceramics, and considering the thematic categories proposed for this style by González and Baldini (1991), representations may be observed of the snake-shaped jaguar⁴, the anthropic-feline motif⁵, the jaguar motif⁶, the central head with ornamentation⁷, and the armed anthropomorph.⁸ However the most frequent to date are superficial

findings of regional style ceramics painted in the Aguada style called “Guachipas polychrome” (Serrano 1967: 29), in which the feline is represented in a very abstract manner by its jaws, claws and spots.⁹

What we seek to stress in this work is that the representations of felines, which have existed in Andean societies for centuries, and in Yocavil at least since the middle of the first century AD, do not form part of the iconographic repertoire of the societies which existed in this region from approximately the 10th century until their reappearance 400 years later in a context contemporary with the Inca presence. This fact is clearly evident from the seriations of Santamariano vessels (Yocavil variety) carried out in the 1970s, which we will discuss below.

~ THE SANTAMARIANO STYLE AND ITS PRODUCTION OVER MORE THAN 500 YEARS

An important part of the pre-Hispanic vessels of Yocavil consists of the unmistakable style known as Santamariano, with bowls and large jars 40 to 60 cm high. The latter, which are burial urns for children¹⁰, are an essential reference in any consideration of the pre-Colombian indigenous art of north-western Argentina. This style, which belongs approximately to the 11th to 17th centuries, is found extensively throughout the Calchaquí Valley region. Numerous changes and variations developed within this time and space, and Caviglia (1985 Ms) distinguishes four expressions or traditions among the regional variations of the style: Calchaquí, Yocavil (Santa María), Cafayate (Valle Arriba) and Pampa Grande-Santa Bárbara. Practically all the Santamariano vessels which are of significance for the problem addressed here belong to the Yocavil variant.

The first systematic attempt to study changes in the production of Santamariano urns in Yocavil based on morphological and decorative criteria was that of Ronald Weber. In 1970 he presented a five-phase seriation derived from his study of the Zavaleta collection in the Natural History Museum of Chicago and of the illustrations in the literature published to that date (Weber 1978). Later, Perrotta and Podestá took up Weber's work, supporting and extending his seriation and incorporating bowls into the analysis, while also considering contextual associations (Podestá and Perrotta 1973; Perrotta and Po-

4 See for example Lafone Quevedo (1908: 367, Fig. 41), González (1998: 232, Fig. 208), Serrano (1966: Pl. XXVIII.2) and piece No. 36984, from San José, which is kept in the Museo Etnográfico “Juan B. Ambrosetti”.

5 See Ambrosetti (1896-99: Fig. 56). Piece No. 12411 in the Museo Etnográfico “Juan B. Ambrosetti”.

6 See Lafone Quevedo (1908: Plates V and VI).

7 See Lafone Quevedo (1908: Plate VII.a).

8 See Tarrago and Scattolin (1999:147, Fig. 2.e). This theme is observed in a fragment of ceramic with incised decoration. Its small size makes it impossible to determine whether the motif is the “personage with two sceptres”, the “personage with the feline mask” or the “personage of the sacrificer”, according to the variants defined by González and Baldini (1991).

9 A clear example is the bowl from Tolombón mentioned by González as representing the snake-shaped jaguar (1998: 232, Fig. 208). Piece No. 22009 of the Museo Etnográfico “Juan B. Ambrosetti”.

10 These large vessels, commonly used for burying children, were also deposited empty as offerings in burials of adults in individual or collective cists, and were also used for various domestic functions.

destá 1974 Ms, 1978). They worked with the collections excavated and documented by Weiser and Wolters in their investigation of the Yocavil Valley from Punta de Balasto to El Bañado de Quilmes (Muñiz Barreto collection, kept in Museo de La Plata). The authors add a new phase (o) at the start of Weber's five phases. Analysis of the urns gives rise to a sequence of six phases: o, I and II are tri-coloured (black and red on a white slip); III is either tri- or bi-coloured, and IV and V are exclusively bi-coloured (black on white slip or, less frequently, black on red slip). There is a very interesting study of 75 urn-bowl associations which provide a more complete picture of the seriation. These ways of ordering the pieces are based on morphological criteria inter-related with the various characteristics of the painted and modelled decoration, particularly the themes, the mode of representation and their distribution in the plastic space of the vessel. According to the authors the change in the production of Santamariano urns is gradual, meaning that the phases do not form clearly defined entities. In fact the seriation is no more than an ideal model to try to describe a real change. For example, one of the key morphological trends is a gradual increase in the length of the neck, while the body becomes smaller.

Although later studies based on more varied samples of ceramics raise difficulties in the definition of the strict temporal succession of the morphological-decorative types, and suggest that they may in some cases have been concurrent, they still confirm the chronological order of the sequence and the times and associations of particular phases. At this stage it is clear that both urns and bowls with tri-coloured decoration are earlier than bi-coloured, as already established by Márquez Miranda and Cigliano (1957). The last two phases proposed by Perrotta and Podestá and Weber are exclusively bi-coloured:¹¹ phases IV and V would be contemporaneous with the Inca occupation, while Phase V would extend into the earliest part of the Spanish conquest (16th-17th centuries). In other words, seriation has given us an approach to the chrono-

logical development of the designs on the Yocavil variant of Santamariano urns, which successive contextualised findings have supported (see e.g. Johansson 1996; Marchegiani 2004; Nastri 2006).

To this seriation of "typical" urns must be added the so-called Piriform and Black on Red urns. Weber and Perrotta and Podestá place the latter in Phase V (Perrotta and Podestá 1974 Ms: 28). Although some of the pieces, such as that illustrated by Calderari and Williams (1991:8 8, Pl. 1, Fig. D) with black on red decoration and human personages on the cheeks, could be included in Phase IV. The piriform urns, all bi-coloured to date, are also associated with the last two phases of the sequence.

~ THE SANTAMARIANO STYLE AND THE JAGUAR

In referring to the decoration of urns from Phases IV and V, both Weber and Perrotta and Podestá mention a particular mode of representing the suri or ñandú found only in these phases; although they do not associate it with the feline, other authors are starting to recognise feline features represented in these motifs (González 1974:60-62; Kusch 1990: 19). Thus the representations of feline suris are the first motifs to appear in the characterisation and discussion of the linking of the jaguar with the Santamariano style.

The painted jaguar that we see on the urns and bowls of Santa María is in fact a combination of at least two species, suri and jaguar, llama and jaguar or even suri, llama and jaguar. This zoomorphic motif is exclusive to late, bi-coloured manifestations. Weber only talks of different types of representations of suris, corresponding to Variety A – which we consider to be feline. Weber defines it as follows: "Variety (a) has an amorphous, curvilinear body, with broad, outlined feet and neck" (1978: 75). According to this author, this variety of suri is only found in urns from Phases IV and V.

Using Weber's illustration, Perrotta and Podestá refer to this variety of suri (Variety C according to the authors) as the "camelid-suri", which "appears on certain urns in which the representation of the suri is reminiscent of a camelid with jaw and teeth, thick legs with toes and a thick tail" (1974 Ms: 24, our emphasis). According to Perrotta and Podestá, this variety of suri, together with Va-

11 However we should mention that some cases are recorded from the final moments in which red paint is used in the decoration. This is the case, for example, in an urn from Quilmes which is clearly Phase V, in which red appears as the background colour in the lateral border frieze (piece 14 of the sample; See Figure 4).

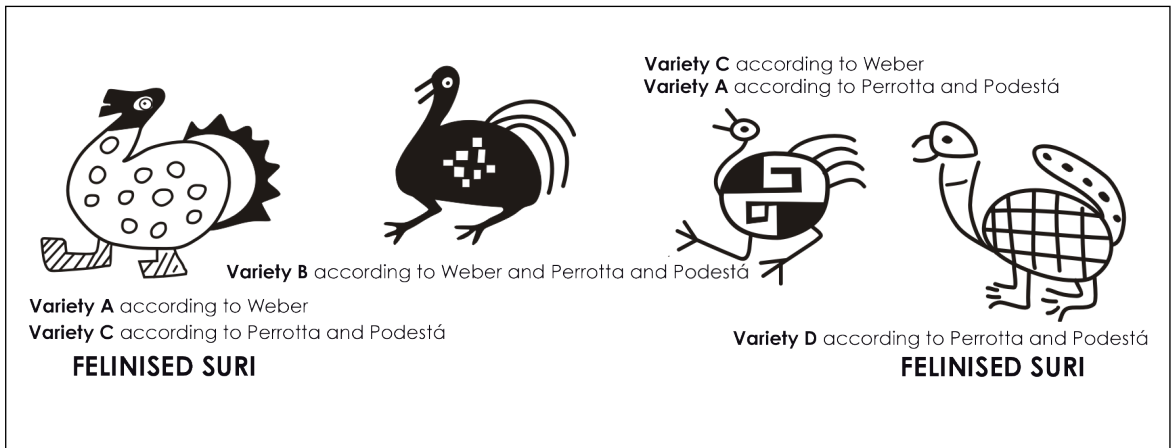


Figure 1. Varieties of representations of suris according to Weber (1978) and Perrotta and Podestá (1974 Ms).
The first and last are the varieties currently defined as felinised.

riety D: “curvilinear body, thick neck formed by two thin lines. The legs are thick and rectangular; the tail, thick” (1974 Ms: 24), appears in the last phases of the sequence. Neither Weber nor Perrotta and Podestá mention spots on the body as a distinctive characteristic of any kind of representation of suri, even though they illustrate them. For us these are the spots of the jaguar (Figure 1).

Earlier authors also address this motif, although without identifying its feline character. Thus Ambrosetti for example (1896-99:XXIV “El símbolo del suri”) describes the evolution of the symbol of the suri in Santamariano pottery. He starts his analysis with the representations which we here call felinised – or more precisely jaguarised – which are succeeded by more realistic images of suris (1896-99:177). This author considers that the first images represent Piguerao, the storm-bird, companion of Catequil, the lightning. Ambrosetti starts with a long description of the protagonist animal painted on the inside of a bowl (piece 15 in the sample; see Figure 5 below) and continues with examples of representations of Piguerao with other zoomorphic motifs in the same style. The ferocity of these images is very striking: bodies principally composed of circles, dots, reticulations and Greek frieze patterns; broad necks crossed by horizontal lines or filled with spots; some with horns; broad, erect tails, sometimes curled and containing spots or circles; open beaks; broad legs also with horizontal lines or spots, or ending in circles with stripes or surrounded by spots (there is even a “suri” with four legs). Ambrosetti sustains a curious interpretation of the circles, spots or circles

with central dots painted inside the bodies and tails of these animals – that they are the eggs of the mythical birds (1896-99:173). Here, as mentioned previously, we interpret these features as the spots on the jaguar’s coat. In another work, Ambrosetti (1902:141-42) illustrates the representations of Santamariano suris (among ornithomorphic motifs of other styles and from rock art) grouped into two series “each with their own characteristics, making them unmistakable”. The first series consists of: “Animals with horns, teeth and a very distinct tail, in a spiral or arched upwards, or with any of these elements, and no indication of feathers”. These are the animals which we here consider to be felinised suris. The second series consists of: “Animals without horns, teeth or tail, with or without feathers, and with the appearance of a rhea or suri”. Thus we see that the formal distinction of two types of representations of suris – on the one hand those which can be fully assimilated with the suri as such, and on the other those which present attributes foreign to the species – is very old, even if the distinction is not associated with the feline character of the latter type (much less backed by chronological arguments).

An additional feature allowing us to identify the jaguar in the suri is the number of toes. González (2004: 27) presents the same argument to differentiate the representations of llamas with two toes from those of felines with their characteristic “four toes”. We see that some of the Santamariano “suris” of Yocavil have three toes and others have four (there are a few cases where they have more). Only the zoomorphic images painted on Phase

IV urns have four toes (although in some cases the same animal has three toes on one foot and four on another). We have also found a case of a “suri” with four feet (remarked on by Ambrosetti; piece 2 in the sample, see Figure 3 below). Another feature which appears in some of the animals in Phase IV are ears, which do not belong to a suri, but would belong to a jaguar or a camelid.

These are some of the references to felinised suris. However, to go into greater depth in this study we had to examine a broad selection of Santamariano vessels illustrated in the bibliography, kept in different museums, to reach an explicit, systematic definition of the presence of the feline in the iconography of the Late Period in Yocavil.

↪ ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLE

As a result of our search, we assembled a sample of 54 vessels or vessel fragments in the Santamariano style, basically in the Yocavil variant, which are decorated with feline motifs. The list was compiled from the bibliography¹², from the records of various museums¹³ and from excavation material produced by the investigations of the Yocavil Archaeological Project.¹⁴ The representations of jaguars which make up the sample are not restricted simply to felinised suris painted on urns; we also observed representations painted on bowls, felinised snakes painted on urns and jaguars modelled on piriform urns and bowls. In all cases they were bi-coloured vessels with decorations painted in black on a white slip¹⁵, except for a few vessels with decorations painted in black on a red slip.

The small size of the sample is due to the fact that pieces with feline motifs form a very small percentage of all Santamariano vessels. On the one hand, this could be explained by the greater abundance of tri-coloured than bi-coloured urns; and on the other by the fact that vessels with feline motifs are a very small group within the bi-coloured variant.

The vessels analysed in the sample fell into two groups, according to how the jaguar motif is expressed in the decoration: “painted jaguar” (two dimensions) and “modelled jaguar” (three dimensions). These two groups in turn correspond to different ceramic morphologies. Thus in the “painted jaguar” group we find the typical funerary vessels or urns, and bowls (with one exception: a piriform urn which combines painted and modelled jaguars); while the forms in the “modelled jaguar” group are the piriform vessels, zoomorphic vessels, globular bowls with appendages, and big appendages modelled on vessels whose form cannot be observed.

Of the whole sample, 31 vessels present painted feline motifs, while 23 present modelled jaguars. The pieces come from the whole Yocavil Valley: Anjuana, Quilmes, El Bañado, Amaicha, Rincón Chico, Lorohuasi, Las Mojaras, Fuerte Quemado, San José, Quebrada de Shiquimil, Loma Rica de Shiquimil, Punta de Balasto, Famabalasto, Santa María and the Santa María region. Some of the vessels in the sample come from sites outside the Yocavil Valley: Pueblo del Molino de Corral Quemado and Andalgalá (Catamarca); Casa Morada de La Paya, Tero, and the Cachi region (Salta). One piece comes from Catamarca, another from Argentina, and finally there is one piece of unknown origin (Figure 2, Tables 1 and 2). From this search we see that the pieces are not restricted geographically to a single location or sector of Yocavil, and that we even find some vessels from outside the region. In this list of the origins of the pieces we have kept the references compiled from the various sources (bibliography and museum catalogues), despite their different levels of precision and the resulting overlaps. In only a few cases do we know the site, and in fewer still the context of the find. Most of the references give the modern name of the location, for example: Santa María, San José, Amaicha. Many of the vessels in the sample could only be viewed in drawings or photographs (especially those published by the pioneers), and for this reason could not be observed

12 Liberani and Hernández 1950 [1877]; Ambrosetti 1896-99, 1902, 1907; Bruch 1911; Quiroga 1994 [1929]; Wagner and Wagner 1934; Márquez Miranda 1936, 1946; Márquez Miranda and Cigliano 1957; Serrano 1966; Ibarra Grasso 1971; González 1974, 1980; Kusch 1990; Tarrago 1995; Tarrago et al. 1997; Stenborg and Muñoz 1999; Tancredi et al. 2004 Ms; Velandia 2005; Nastri 2006.

13 Museo Etnográfico “Juan B. Ambrosetti”, Buenos Aires; Museo “Eric Boman” and Museo “Adán Quiroga”, Catamarca province; Museo de las Ruinas de Quilmes, Tucumán; Museo de Cachi, Salta.

14 Museo Etnográfico “Juan B. Ambrosetti” (Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, Universidad de Buenos Aires), directed by Dr. Myriam Tarrago.

15 It should be mentioned that a Phase V urn from Quilmes, referred to in Note 3, has red paint. A bowl with a modelled jaguar from the Cachi region (piece 52) also presents red paint inside a stepped Greek frieze.

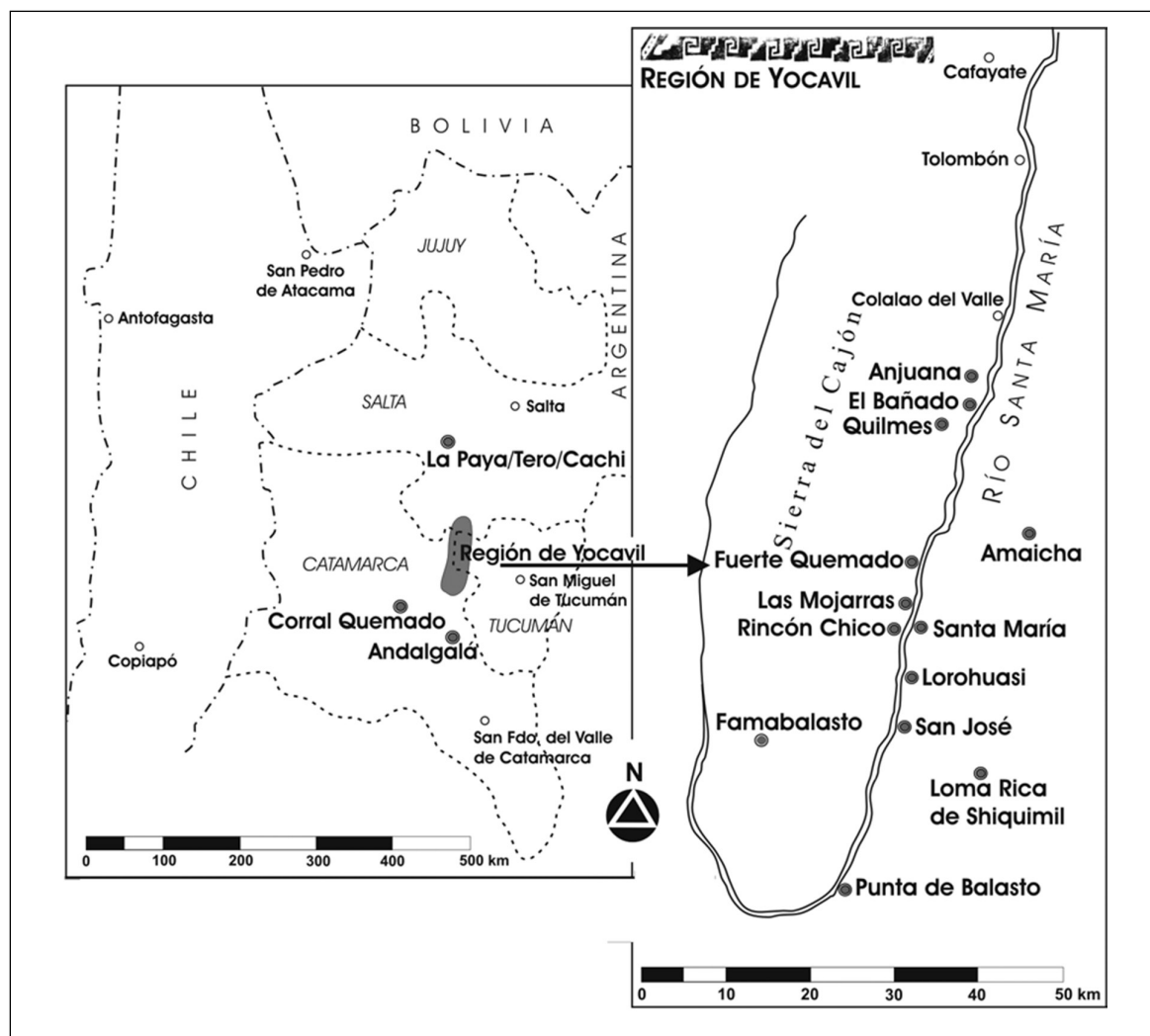


Figure 2. Origins of the vessels in the sample.

and recorded complete. This was a serious drawback for iconographic analysis. However it was the only possible way of observing some of the vessels.

This work will nevertheless build a discussion from an empirical framework which we consider to be neither closed nor exhausted. Pieces incorporated in the future may or may not sustain our discussion.

Painted Jaguar. All the Santamariano urns with painted feline motifs in our sample come from phases IV and V of the seriation mentioned previously. Of the twenty Phase IV urns, three come from San José, four from Fuerte Quemado, three from Punta de Balasto, one from

Quilmes, one from Lorohuasi, one from Quebrada de Shiquimil, one from Loma Rica de Shiquimil, one from Amaicha, two from Santa María, two from the Santa María region and one is of unknown origin (Figure 3).

We see that the painted jaguar on Phase IV urns always occupies an important place in the plastic space of the vessel on the outside of the body, except in one case where it is located on the neck (piece 22; Tarrago *et al.* 1997: 229, Fig. 5.b; Nastri 2006: piece 73, Pl. 27). The basis of these motifs is indubitably the suri, which is frequently represented on the urns of earlier phases. The novelty in Phase IV is, as we have seen, the incorporation of feline features into the representation of these birds: jaguar's

Nº	Provenance	Shape	References
1	Santa María (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 176, Figs. 173 y 173a; Nastri 2006: Piece N° 32, Pl. 21. MEJBA 73-34
2	San José (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 176, Fig. 174. MEJBA 73-52 IG
3	Amaicha (Tucumán)	Phase IV Urn (Isolated design)	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 173, Fig. 168
4	San José (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 175, Fig. 171; Nastri 2006: Piece No. 369, Pl. 49
5	Lorohuasi (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Márquez Miranda 1946: 149, Fig. 55.a. Velandia 2005: 179, Fig. 51. MLP n° 5968
6	Loma Rica de Shiquimil (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Liberani y Hernández 1950 [1877]: n° 4; Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 175, Fig. 172; Nastri 2006: Piece No. 371, Pl. 49
7	Desconocida	Phase IV Urn	Ibarra Grasso 1971: 368; Nastri 2006: Piece N° 82, Pl. 28. MEJBA 28048
8	Quilmes (Tucumán)	Phase V Urn	Nastri 2006: Piece N° 635, Pl. 82. MAJBA
9	Quilmes (Tucumán)	Phase IV Urn	MAJBA
10	Región de Santa María	Phase IV Urn	MAPEB n° 226
11	Punta de Balasto (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Márquez Miranda y Cigliano 1957: Lám. II.a; González 1980: 331; Kusch 1990: 19, Fig. 5. Velandia 2005: 183, Pl. 19. MLP n° 4415
12	El Bañado (Tucumán)	Phase V Urn	González 1980: 331. MLP n° 4536
13	Región de Santa María	Phase IV Urn	MAAQ
14	Quilmes (Tucumán)	Phase V Urn	Nastri 2006: Piece N° 884, Pl. 91. MAJBA
15	Orillas Río Aguasana, Andalgalá (Catamarca)	Bowl with neck	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 172, Fig. 167; Quiroga 1994 [1929]: 71, Fig. 49; Tancredi et al. 2004 Ms: Piece N° 63. MEJBA 30010
16	Rincón Chico-Sitio 21 (Catamarca)	Bowl	Proyecto Arqueológico Yocavil (MAPEB). RCh 21, Cista 15
17	Las Morrajas (Catamarca)	Bowl with marks of basketwork	Tarragó 1995: Fig. 8. MAPEB N° 57 CB
18	Santa María (Catamarca)	Bowl (isolated design)	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 174, Fig. 170; Quiroga 1994 [1929]: 46, Fig. 46.
19	San José (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn (Isolated design)	Quiroga 1994 [1929]: 71, Fig. 51.
20	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Nastri 2006: Piece N° 22, Pl. 18. MEJBA Z-8473 (067)
21	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Nastri 2006: Piece N° 554, Pl. 78. EM VC 5935 o 3641
22	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Tarragó et al. 1997: 229, Fig. 5.b; Nastri 2006: Piece N° 73, Pl. 27. MEJBA 44-1885
23	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Phase V Urn	Bruch 1911: 96, Figs. 96 and 96 bis. MLP N° 41
24	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Wagner y Wagner 1934: 110, Fig. 121. MEJBA Z-8473/067
25	San José (Catamarca)	Bowl (isolated design)	Ambrosetti 1902: 142, Fig. Series A.7.
26	Santa María (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn (Isolated design)	Ambrosetti 1902: 142, Fig. Series A.10.
27	Santa María (Catamarca)	Bowl (isolated design)	Ambrosetti 1902: 142, Fig. Serie A.1.
28	Punta de Balasto (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Márquez Miranda 1936: 318 and 320, Fig. 11 and 12. Velandia 2005: 175, Pl. 17. MLP N° 4414
29	Punta de Balasto (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Márquez Miranda 1936: 321, Fig. 13. Velandia 2005: 183, Pl. 19. MLP n° 4426
30	Qubrada de Shiquimil (Catamarca)	Phase IV Urn	Márquez Miranda 1946: 155, Fig. 59.a. MLP N° 5701
31	Las Mojarras (Catamarca)	Bowl	Márquez Miranda 1946: Pl. X.f. MLP n° 154

Table 1. List of the Santamariano vessels with painted feline motifs in the sample.¹⁶

16 Abbreviations of Museum names:

MEJBA: Museo Etnográfico "Juan B. Ambrosetti" (Buenos Aires, Argentina).

MLP: Museo de La Plata (La Plata, Buenos Aires).

MAPEB: Museo Arqueológico Provincial "Eric Boman" (Santa María, Catamarca).

MAJBA: Museo Arqueológico "Juan Bautista Ambrosetti" (Quilmes, Tucumán).

MAC: Museo Arqueológico de Cachi (Cachi, Salta).

MAAQ: Museo Arqueológico "Adán Quiroga" (San Fernando del valle de Cajamarca, Cajamarca).

EM: Ethnologisches Museum (Berlin).

EMG: Etnografiska Museet Göteborg (Gothenburg).

Nº	Provenance	Shape	References
32	Palo Seco, San José (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	MAPEB
33	Región de Santa María	Zoomorphic appendage	Ambrosetti 1896/99: VIII "Representaciones de tigres": 533, Fig. 34
34	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	Ambrosetti 1896/99: VIII "Representaciones de tigres": 534, Fig. 35 and 35a. MEJBA Z-34-D, 47/1180
35	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	Ambrosetti 1896/99: VIII "Representaciones de tigres": 535, Fig. 36 and 36a. MEJBA 25368
36	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Piriform Urn	Wagner and Wagner 1934: 178; Serrano 1966: Pl. VI.1.
37	Santa María (Catamarca)	Piriform Urn	Ambrosetti 1896/99: XXIII "Amuleto ofidio fálico para la lluvia": 170, Fig. 163; Nastri 2006: Pice N° 70, Pl. 27. MEJBA 36980
38	Piedra Blanca, San José (Catamarca)	Piriform Urn	Stenborg and Muñoz 1999: 147. EMG n° 1930.39.1
39	Famabalasto (Catamarca)	Variety of Piriform Urn	Márquez Miranda 1946: 171, Fig. 69.b; Nastri 2006: Piece N° 639, Pl. 83. MLP N° MB 5266
40	Anjuana (Tucumán)	Zoomorphic appendage	Liberani and Hernández 1950 [1877]: Pl. 22
41	Quilmes (Tucumán)	Variety of Piriform Urn	MAJBA
42	Amaicha (Tucumán)	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	MEJBA 44-2080 (101)
43	Pueblo del Molino, Corral Quemado (Catamarca)	Piriform Urn	González 1974: 60-61, Fig. 15; Nastri 2006: Piece N° 638, Pl. 83. Velandia 2005: 188, Figs. 57 y 58. MLP González 116
44	Santa María (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	Quiroga 1994 [1929]: 68, Fig. 45
45	San José (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	Quiroga 1994 [1929]: 172, Fig. 156.
46	Tero, Cachi (Salta)	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	MAC N° 2402
47	Catamarca	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	Wagner and Wagner 1934: 57, Fig. 60.
48	Quilmes (Tucumán)	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	MEJBA 25079
49	Argentina	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	MEJBA 36809
50	Amaicha (Tucumán)	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	MEJBA 37022
51	Rincón Chico, Sitio 15 (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	Proyecto Arqueológico Yocavil (MEJBA). RCh 15, E3, M12, 225.1, 10610
52	Región de Cachi (Salta)	Bowl with zoomorphic appendage	MAC N° 809
53	Fuerte Quemado (Catamarca)	Zoomorphic appendage	MEJBA Z-7687-B
54	L Paya, Casa Morada (Salta)	Zoomorphic vessel	Ambrosetti 1907: 52, Fig. 28. MEJBA 4102-11, 1904/48

Table 2. List of the Santamariano vessels with modelled feline motifs in the sample.¹⁶

spots, jaws, claws, ears and tails (curled or arched upwards). Nevertheless, the representation of the suri as such is not abandoned.

In all but two (pieces 4 and 5, respectively, Ambrosetti 1896-1899: XXIV "El símbolo del suri": 175, Fig. 171 and Márquez Miranda 1946:149, Fig. 55.a) of the cases considered, the felinised (jaguarised) suri motifs appear in pairs. These animals are always accompanied by human images commonly called "warriors", located on the cheeks of the urns. These motifs are also novel, and characteristic of this phase. We find only two pieces (13 and 30; for the latter see Márquez Miranda 1946:155, Fig. 59.a)

in which the urn presents snakes instead of human personages, and five cases in which we cannot see the whole vessel. At the same time there is an interesting vessel in which we see an equivalence between the felinised suri and the same human personages. This is a Phase IV vessel (piece 22) which presents two felinised suris on the cheeks of one face, while on the cheeks of the other appear two human personages (Nastri 2006:140). These personages or "warriors" are also found on some local Inca aribaloid pieces, and are therefore a key element for constructing the seriation of Santamariano urns (Podestá and Perrotta 1973:10; Weber 1978: 81-82, Fig. 15). We should mention that another motif present in both ari-

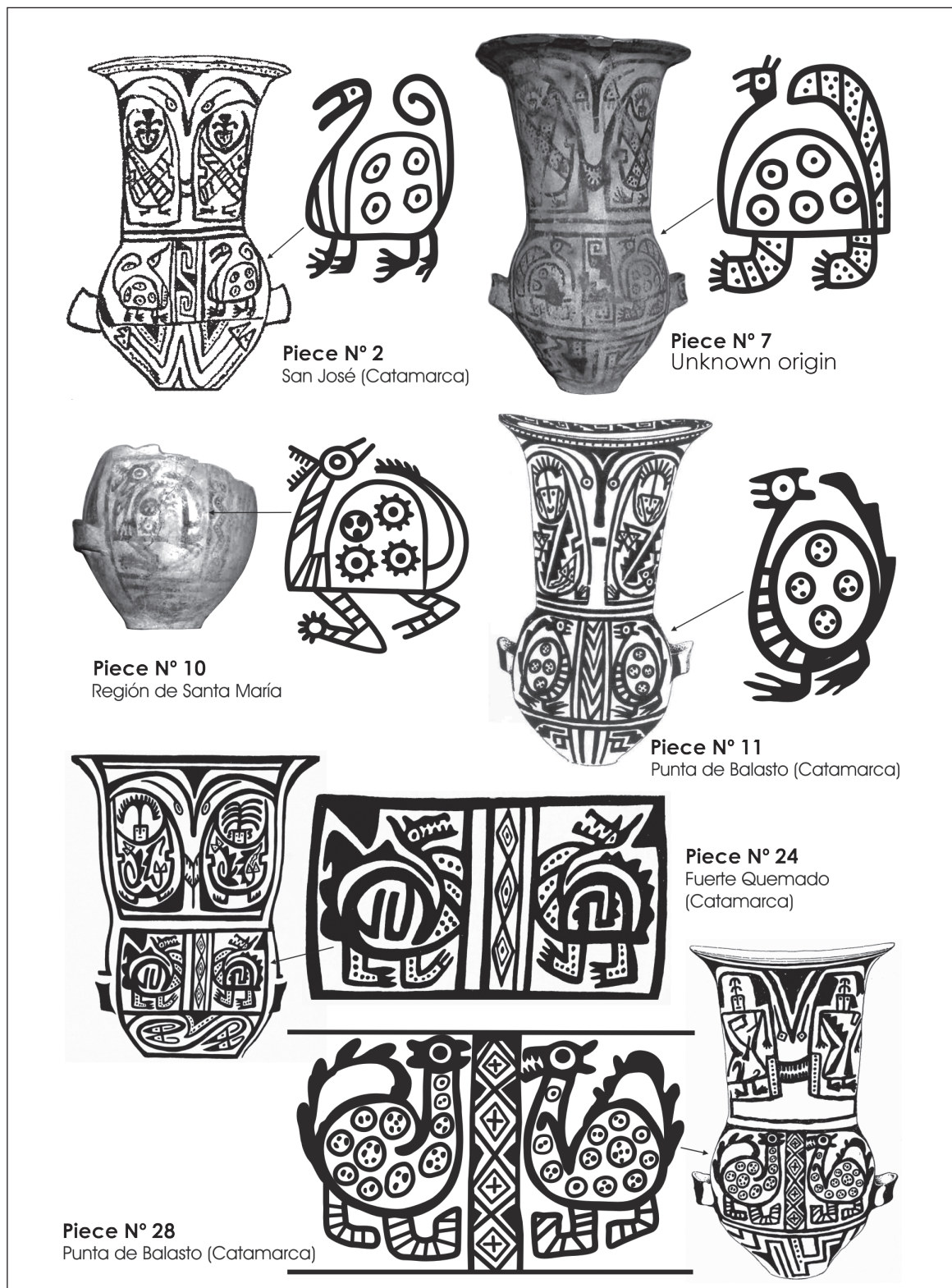


Figure 3. Painted feline representations. Some Phase IV Santamariano urns from the sample.

baloid pieces and Phase IV and V Santamariano urns is the two-headed bird with a triangular body.¹⁷ This same motif is observed on urns of the Cafayate or Valle Arriba variant, in one of which it is associated with representations of felines (Serrano 1966: Pl. IV.3).

A recent work analysed a sample of 773 vessels from the Late Period, 717 of which were Santamariano urns of the Yocavil variant (Nastri 2006). This work, the object of which was to study the symbolism of Santamariano iconography and its variations in space and time, confirms

that feline motifs are only found in Phases IV and V as defined by Weber and Perrotta and Podestá. Emphasis is also placed on the association of feline motifs with others denoting situations of violence, such as the so-called “warriors” of Phase IV, some of which carry a severed head in one hand.

Of the four Phase V urns with representations of feline motifs, two come from Quilmes, one from El Bañado and the last from Fuerte Quemado (Figure 4). In general, the felinised motifs – this time painted on the necks and



Figure 4. Painted feline representations. Some Phase V Santamariano urns from the sample.

17 For an example of an Inca aribaloid see Weber (1978:82, Fig. 15) and for Santamariano vessels see Márquez Miranda (1940: 158, Fig. 62.a).

bases of the urns – are the jaws with a single concentric eye forming a head attached to a snake-like body (these motifs remind us of some feline jaws of Aguada and other old representations from Andean cultures). Although the felinised suri does not belong to urns of this phase, in the sample we observe one of these vessels with a suri motif painted on the inside of the rim which presents some similar features to those on Phase IV urns: with ears and a long tail curled upwards (piece 23, Figure 4).

There are seven bowls in the sample with painted feline representations, originating from Rincón Chico (Site 21), San José, Andalgalá, two from Las Mojarras and finally two from Santa María. In this form the animals are always painted on the inside. Felinised suris appear painted on these bowls as in the Phase IV urns, but this time some of the representations also appear to possess camelid features (Figure 5).

These bowls, which all present internal decoration with zoomorphic motifs, in one case on the border which has an everted rim, correspond to the last phase of the bowl

seriation proposed by Perrotta and Podestá, and coincide with the latest moments of the period. The internal or external border frieze on two of them (pieces 15 and 17; see Figure 5) is connected with the type of internal friezes painted round the border of later urns.

Modelled jaguar. Turning to urns with modelled feline motifs, we have four large vessels of the kind called piriform, and two other pieces which could be variants of this form, one quite small. They come from Fuerte Quemado, Piedra Blanca (San José), Famabalasto, Quilmes, Pueblo del Molino de Corral Quemado and Santa María. The piriform vessels present two heads representing jaguars or felinised bats on the sides of the body, above the handles (Figure 6). The piece from Corral Quemado not only has jaguar heads modelled on the body, but also two suri-camelids painted towards the base below the handles, which are similar to the motifs described above, and in this case flank a human personage (piece 43; Figure 6). The vessel from Famabalasto also has a jaguar's head on the body, and on the opposite side a modelled coiled tail (piece 39; Márquez Miranda 1946:171, Fig. 69.b).

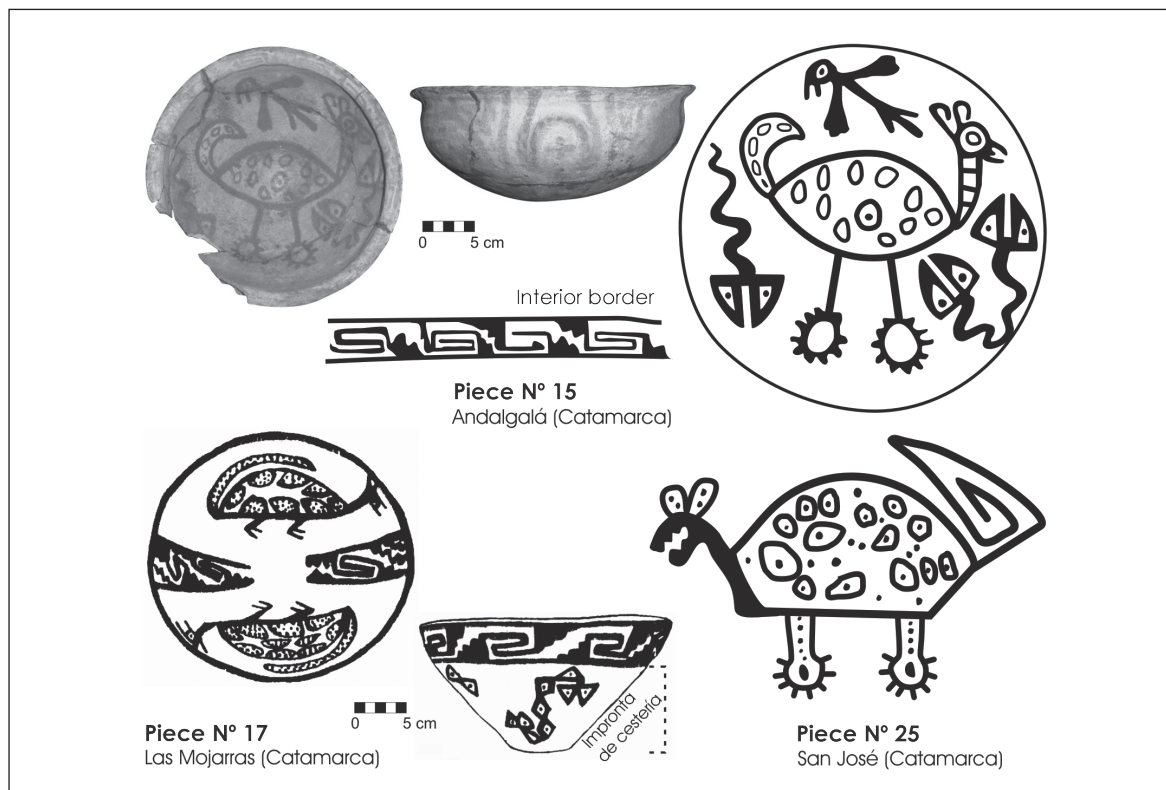


Figure 5. Painted feline representations. Some Santamariano bowls from the sample.

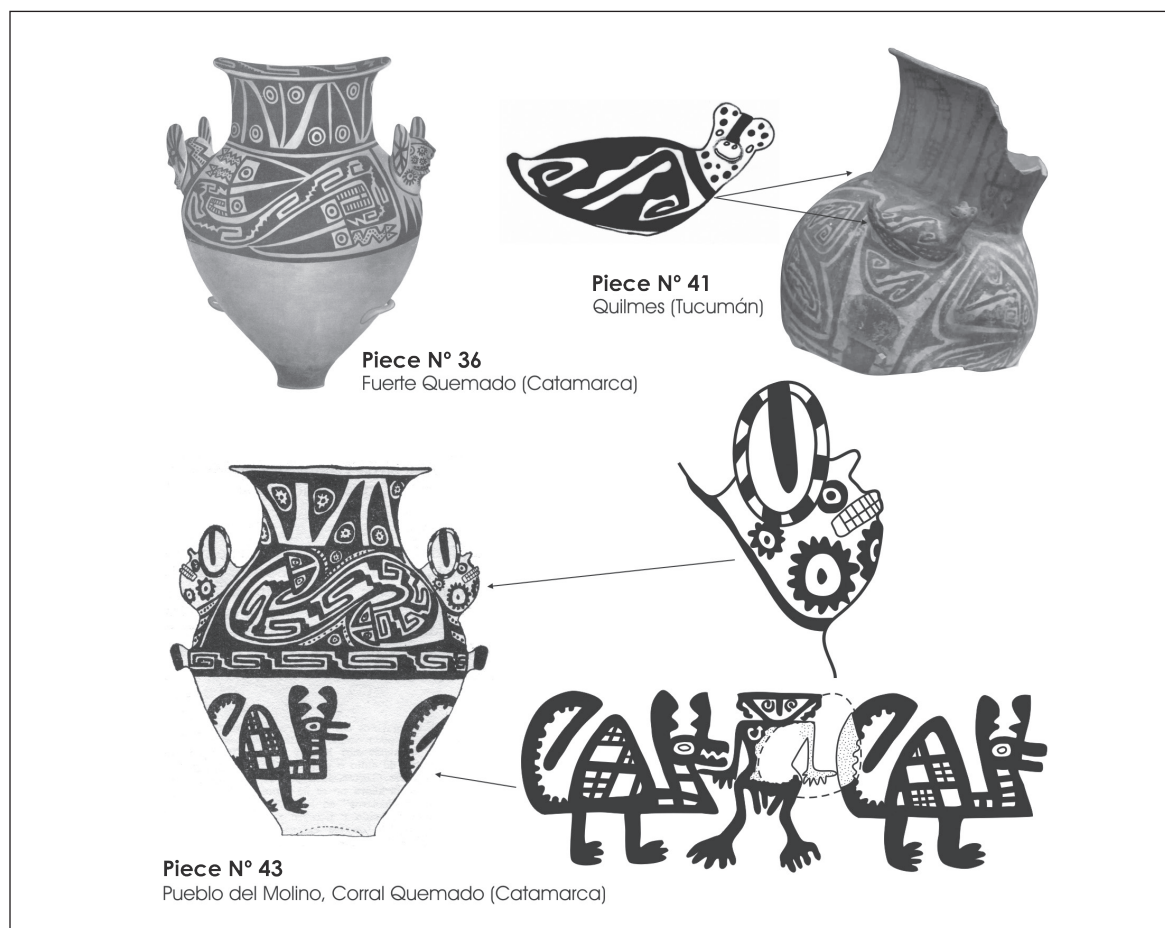


Figure 6. Modelled feline representations. Some Santamariano piriform urns from the sample.

Another piece from the sample with modelled jaguars can be seen in the museum at the site of the old village of Quilmes (Tucumán). It is a variant of the piriform urn, with a straight neck ending in an everted rim, globular body and invisible base; it has two modelled appendages above the handles representing jaguars' bodies and heads. The neck is decorated in black on a red slip and the body in black on a white slip. Following this colour scheme, the jaguar's head is black on red, while its body has black on white decoration (piece 41; see Figure 6).

The sample also contains seven globular bowls with modelled appendages. Two of them are from Amaicha, one from Quilmes, one from Catamarca province, one from Tero (Cachi), one from the Cachi region and finally one from Argentina (Figure 7). Four of these bowls present a jaguar's head, with a modelled tail on the opposite site in the form of a spiral (pieces 42, 46, 48 and 49; Figure

7). Two others present the typical modellings known as libation cups in the place of the tail.¹⁸ Finally, the other bowl has a complete jaguar's body modelled on the rim, opposite the libation modelling (piece 50; Figure 7). Based on the seriation proposed by Perrotta and Podestá, we may say that the bowls with zoomorphic handles and no internal decoration may be considered to belong to the penultimate phase, also in the final moments of the Late Period.

Finally we have a series of modelled appendages, fragments of larger pieces whose shape is unknown. However the form and decoration of the fragments are very similar to those described in the analysis of piriform vessels and bowls with modelled appendages. Of the nine

¹⁸ A very unusual shape in the Calchaqui variant of the Santamariano style.

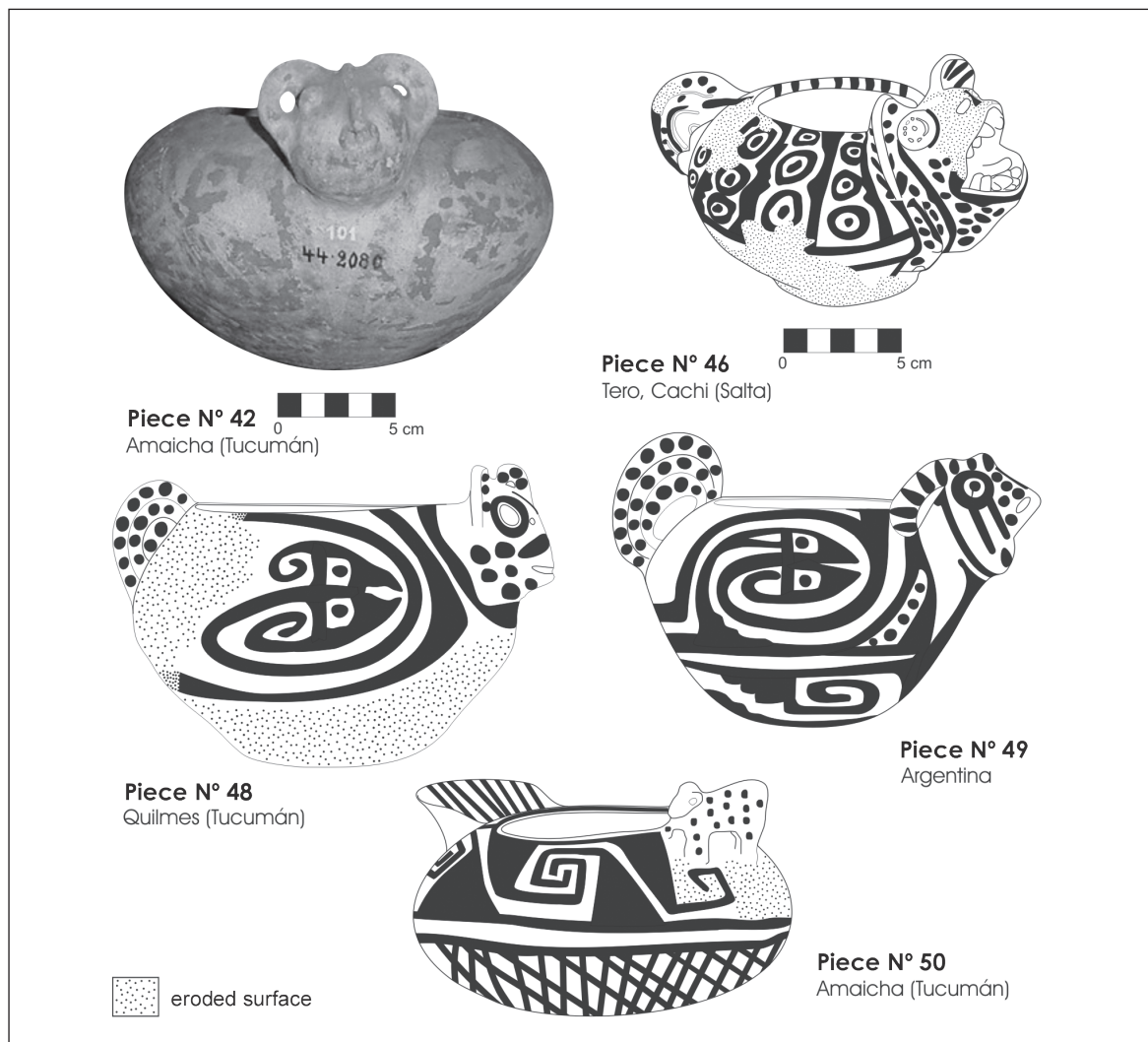


Figure 7. Modelled feline representations. Some Santamariano bowls with modelled appendages from the sample.

appendages, one comes from Santa María, one from the Santa María region, one from San José, one from Palo Seco (San José), one from Anjuana, one from Rincón Chico (Site 15) and three from Fuerte Quemado (Figure 8). Although, as we have said, these heads are very similar to the appendages of bowls and piriform urns, they may also be fragments of zoomorphic vessels like the one included in the sample, which formed part of the Inca collection recovered in Casa Morada de La Paya, Salta province. To date this piece is the only feline zoomorphic vessel in the Santamariano repertoire which can be seen complete (piece 54; Figure 8).

In the excavations carried out by Ambrosetti in La Paya

(1907), three fragments of libation cups with modelled appendages representing jaguars were recovered from different burials¹⁹. These vessels were not included in the sample because the illustrations are no longer available; however from the descriptions it is almost certain that they were bowls in the Santamariano style. These cases (together with pieces 46 and 52 from the sample) underline the fact that the Cachi region is important for the presence of feline representations, although curiously enough only in the variant modelled on bowls.

19 The burials are: No. LV, No. CXCI and No. CCXLVI (Ambrosetti 1907: 124,196-198, 254-255).

To summarise, we can see that the feline theme in Santamariano iconography is represented as a jaguar in the case of modelled representations (except for some piriform urns on which the jaguar appears to be combined with a bat); and among painted representations, in the form of feline (basically jaguar) attributes given to other animals: suri, snake, and less frequently camelid or suri-camelid combination. In this context the piriform vessel

recovered by the team of A. R. González in Corral Quemado (González 1974:59-62, Fig. 15) is of particular interest, since as mentioned above it not only has modelled appendages in the form of jaguar's heads, but also presents painted felinised suri-camelid motifs towards the base (piece 43; see Figure 6). In other words, in this, the only case in the sample where the same vessel presents both modelled and painted feline motifs, the differential

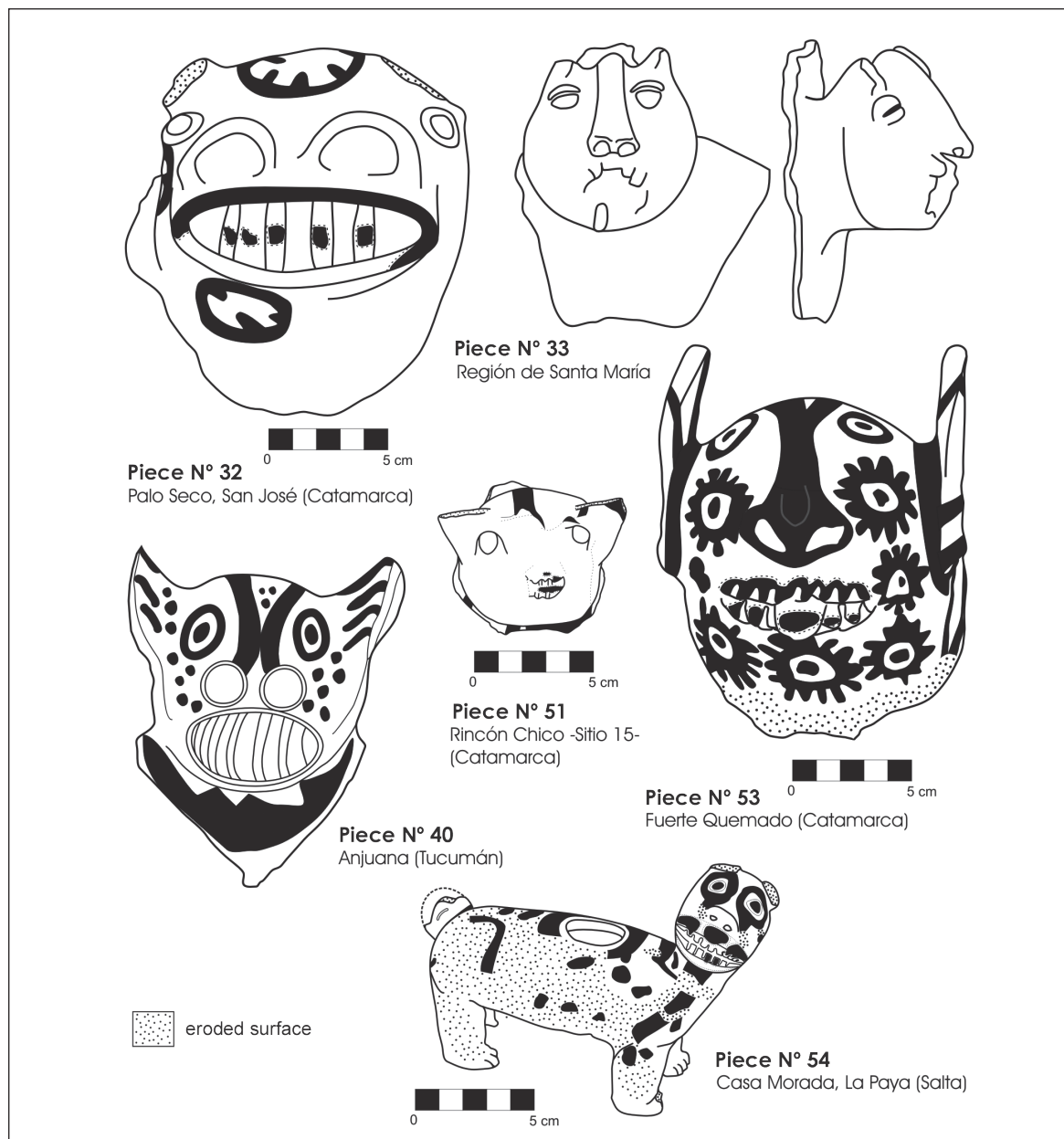


Figure 8. Modelled feline representations. Some modelled appendages from vessels which cannot be observed, and the zoomorphic vessel from Casa Morada (La Paya, Salta).

characteristics mentioned above are maintained: the jaguar is modelled and the attributes of the jaguar given to other animals appear in painted motifs.

↪ DISCUSSION

Study of Santamariano iconography led us to concentrate on the chronological development of its design, which implied revisiting the seriations proposed in the 1970s by Weber and Perrotta and Podestá. Their temporal trends were generally corroborated by different contextual studies. Thus all the pieces in the Santamariano style (basically the Yocavil variant) on which we found representations of jaguars – either painted or modelled – are restricted to the final moments of the Late Period. It is therefore possible to talk of the disappearance of the feline theme from the iconography in the first moments of the Late Period in Yocavil, and its reappearance at the end of the period, contemporaneously with the Inca presence in the region. At the same time, the analysis obliged us to discuss a series of issues related with the social significance of these changes in the style, which turn on these two basic issues: the disappearance and the reappearance of the feline theme in Yocavil.

To address the first issue we must remember the argument of the “feline complex” mentioned at the beginning of this work. In Andean iconography this was always associated with situations linked to the formation and legitimisation of hierarchical power relations. In many societies of north-western Argentina which preceded the regional developments of the Late Period, the jaguar and the human personage with feline attributes were the great protagonists of religious iconography. Thus the disappearance of the feline theme (together with many other lines of evidence) would indicate a cultural discontinuity between the societies of the Middle and Late Periods in the Valliserrana sub-area of north-western Argentina. In terms of socio-political organisation, this discontinuity may be linked to the failing effectiveness of the religious ideology linked to the “feline complex” for the formation of new social relationships. The political and religious elites of the Late Period may have tried to dissociate themselves from the ideology of the previous period, or more precisely from the iconographic references linked with that ideology, which had lost its social legitimacy as a result of the social and political cri-

sis which we believe closed the historical process in the region known as Aguada or Regional Integration, starting around 600 AD. The feline element disappears from the iconographic repertoire. The pottery of the regions in which the different variants of the Aguada style held hegemonic sway, such as the north of La Rioja, Hualfin and Ambato, seem never to readopt feline iconography after production of this style of pottery ceased. The Sanagasta, Abaucán and Hualfin styles are disconnected from feline themes. The case of Belén is interesting, because – as we will see – there is a piece with a feline representation; however discussion of this element is difficult, as the diachronic development of the Belén style is unclear.

In the Yocavil region, the feline theme is also absent from the styles found later than 1000 AD, such as San José, Shiquimil, Loma Rica and the tri-coloured variant of Santa María. However, after an absence of 400 years these feline motifs reappear in the Santamariano style, at the time of the Inca occupation. This reappearance is linked in turn with the incorporation of other motifs with connotations of violence, such as “warriors” and severed heads, although for the moment there is no way of establishing clearly whether these iconographic changes are in response to factors linked with the Inca occupation of the region, or to pre-existing local situations which may have been accentuated during the Inca conquest.

As early as the 1970s, A. R. González interpreted the feline suris on a piriform urn from Corral Quemado as a reminiscence of the Aguada style (1974:59-62). Currently, Natri is suggesting a similar argument by proposing that the feline features in the zoomorphic motifs of Phase IV Santamariano urns (with other motifs like the “warriors”) “may be considered to be indicators of a modernisation of aspects of the ideology of the Period of [Regional] Integration” (2006:100), which would have implied “the recovery of the narratives of an earlier time, in the framework of social circumstances that must have been new” (2006:187).

Nonetheless, one has to wonder how the iconographic repertoire of Aguada and its signification could have been retained in the collective memory for 400 years after the “feline complex” was abandoned – as we assume here is evident – as a legitimate and legitimising religious iconography, and when the great majority of the objects

bearing this ideology had been buried or destroyed.

The fact remains that feline motifs are incorporated into Santamariano iconography in the final moments of the Late Period in Yocavil. As we have said, it remains to be defined whether their reappearance corresponds to the Inca presence or arises immediately before the arrival of the Incas. Phase IV and V urns with feline motifs develop strongly during the Inca conquest. If the appearance of these motifs in Santamariano iconography is directly related with the presence of the Incas in the region, it will be very difficult to establish whether they were an expression of the resistance of the local communities through the resignification of an old or new theme, or whether, on the contrary, they constitute the incorporation of an element of the Inca ideology into the local repertoire as a result of effective domination. Discussion of these possibilities will depend on progress in research into the domination strategies of the Incas against the response of the local populations in the different regions of north-western Argentina, and Yocavil in particular.

We have also recorded the presence of the feline element in other styles in the region which are contemporary with the Santamariano vessels. Thus we have a Famabalasto Black Incised globular bowl with a feline head and a modelled protuberance representing the tail on the opposite side. This piece comes from Fuerte Quemado (Bruch 1911:77 Fig. 73 Museo de La Plata No. 87), and unlike the Santamariano bowls, the feline head is looking upwards. We also find a vessel in the Belén style with a modelled white face combined with a jaguar's body painted on one side (González and Zuviría 1999:67 lower figure). These two vessels with representations of felines correspond to styles which were contemporary, at least in part, with the Inca occupation of the region.

In this respect special mention must be made of the context of the zoomorphic vessel (piece 54; Figure 8) found in Casa Morada, which was built by the Incas in the Late Period site of La Paya. This vessel forms part of the group of exceptional finds recovered in this structure (Boman 1991 [1908]; Ambrosetti 1902, 1907), which includes some pieces clearly of Inca origin such as two keros of painted wood and a small pot in the Cusco Inca style, together with numerous vessels in the local Inca style (e.g. aribaloids). This group also includes a bronze head with

two feline faces (Ambrosetti 1902: 126-127, Fig. 10). The close links of these felines with Inca material culture is therefore evident.

Thus the second issue addressed here, the reappearance of the jaguar in Inca times, finally brings us closer to the symbolic importance of the jaguar and its representation in Inca culture. The importance of felines, the puma and the jaguar, in Inca myths and ceremonies is reported in various ethno-historical and archaeological sources (Zuidema 1989; Farrington 2001 Ms). Here we note the feline representations in their pottery, although they are not very frequent. According to Farrington (2001 Ms), modelled representations are more common in this group. One example is found in the small appendages of aribalos; in most cases they are so standardised that it is impossible to say whether they are jaguars or pumas. Another are the modelled felines which form the handles on certain vessels such as small pots and bowls. The vast majority of these zoomorphic handles represent jaguars, and according to this author, the location of the finds is significant because they come from places of ceremonial importance like temples and palaces in Cusco, Tomebamba, Isla de la Luna, Chinchero, Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu (2001 Ms: 19).

It is interesting therefore that some Inca and late Santamariano vessels share not only the feline theme, but also the naturalistic character of the representations of the felines, which are always modelled as appendages. In the case of the Santamariano pieces, the modelled felines are observed on piriform vessels, on small pots of a similar shape and on bowls, but never on funerary urns, where only the jaguar appears, painted as an attribute of the suri, the camelid and the snake.²⁰ These elements show that it would be fruitful to study the Inca style and its interaction with local styles more deeply, in order to discuss the presence of the feline theme on vessels from the final moments of the Late Period in Yocavil.

~ FINAL WORDS

This work has offered the systematisation of certain observations on the one hand, and on the other it has

20 The modelled appendages technique is found on some Phase V urns, but in these cases always representing human faces.

developed a number of questions as to the explanation of these observations. Analysis of a material corpus of the iconography on Santamariano pottery allows us to sustain that the feline theme disappeared from Yocavil for approximately 400 years. We also develop a series of ideas which make sense of the abandonment and later reincorporation of the theme.

Future steps require us not only to broaden the sample of ceramic objects, but also to determine whether other material supports (e.g. rock art, metal and wooden objects) could add data to the discussion. At the same time the chronology of the ceramic vessels bearing the feline motif needs to be determined, principally whether they

are contemporary with the Inca presence in the area. This requires new dated contexts.

Finally, all these efforts may help us to understand the various, changing significates, past and present, of the jaguar in the history of Andean communities. This work has involved the evocation of the old in order to discover once again that one can only return to the new.

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