

Research Report

The *applique*, an ancient decorative expression from the early societies of Cusco, Peru

Gori-Tumi Echevarría López^{1*} and Luz Marina Monrroy Quiñones²

¹Professor of Archeology, Universidad Nacional Santiago Antúnez de Mayolo, Ancash, Perú.

²Ministry of Culture. Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Cusco.

* Corresponding author: E-mail: goritumi@gmail.com

(Received 1 January 2022; Accepted 2 February 2022; Published 13 May 2022)

Abstract – This article focuses on the study of the *appliques* found in the archaeological site of Marcavalle, an early settlement (1100 - 700 BCE) located at the Huatanay Valley in Cusco, Peru. For this research our sample consisted of the complete collection of *appliques* recovered during the archaeological work at the site in 2013, on which we practiced a functional classification establishing the structural and formal parameters of this series of artifacts. The results were discussed based on comparative, chronological, and provenance data, to establish propositions for the contextual consideration of the material. We concluded that the *applique* is a characteristic art expression of the earliest occupation of Cusco and a standard product for ceramic manufacturing and decoration in the southern part of Peru.

Keywords: Ceramics. *Applique*. Early settlement. Marcavalle. Cusco

Introduction

In the archaeological tradition of Cusco, ceramic production is recognized as one of the most important cultural expressions, with great technological, formal and decorative variations constantly extending with new discoveries and investigations. One of these expressions is the *applique* that, as we will see, can be considered one of the most conspicuous forms of early ceramic decoration from Cusco.

The Marcavalle *applique* was originally identified in the sixties of the twentieth century as a random material related to the general ceramic corpus of the site that was characterized by its decorative diversity, and not as a specific class of cultural material (Barreda 1973, Mohr 1977). This limited perception of the *applique* has remained unchallenged throughout the history of the archaeological research of Marcavalle; even during the last intervention at the site made by the Culture Ministry from 2013 to 2018, where the *applique* has been treated, again, tangentially in the analysis and classification of ceramics. As a result, its recognition has been not possible for a long time.

Despite the analytical trend described, in 2017 we decided to carry out a particular examination of the Marcavalle *applique* collection recovered during the interventions of the Culture Ministry in 2013, with the aim of establishing the material nature of the object, and any formal regularity with cultural implications. The sample we worked with had been partially selected as “special finds” and not as materials corresponding to a specific class of artifact, so a particular selection of material had to be made for our own purposes. Our research hypothesis considers that the *applique* is a typological and modal peculiarity in the elaboration of the ceramics of Cusco for the Andean formative epoch.

To cover our technical parameters, we use a definition of *applique*, which consist in “...Shaped pieces of clay are bonded to the surface by pressure. Common shapes are coils and spheres. Handles, spouts, and other functional parts are also applied, usually with the aim that they be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional.” (Rye 1981: 93).

The results of the analysis revealed the existence of a formal pattern of pottery decoration in Marcavalle, which is a starting point to integrate others scattered ceramic corpus in Cusco. Especially those recognized from the Chanapata site, explored, and excavated in the 1940s and 1950s (Rowe 1944; Yabar 1959, 1972, 1982). This information, added to the data from other archaeological sites in the region, allows us to

appreciate a panorama of spatial dispersion of a defined attribute of the ancient ceramic production of Cusco, which can be understood as a diagnostic cultural trait for the archeology of southern Peru.

Research History

The Marcavalle archaeological site was discovered by Manuel Chávez Ballón in November of 1953 at the right bank of the Cachimayu river, alluvial plain of the Huatanay River, 4 km to the east from Cusco. The site did not expose superficial architecture, being recognized by the presence of abundant ceramics sherds, and characterized by this material from a collection made by Chávez Ballón and Jorge Yábar Moreno (Mohr 1977: 90).

In the fifties, the archaeological site covered at least 20 hectares which is now invaded by the El Periodista, Santa Ursula, Los Pinos, Marcavalle, Barrio Cerveceros, CocaCola, and Quispicanchis urbanizations; with only three hectares surviving inside the premises of the Marcavalle Center for Diagnosis and Rehabilitation of Minors and the “block H” (reserve area), located on Av. La Cultura, between Wanchaq and San Sebastián district in the province of Cusco (Fig. 1).

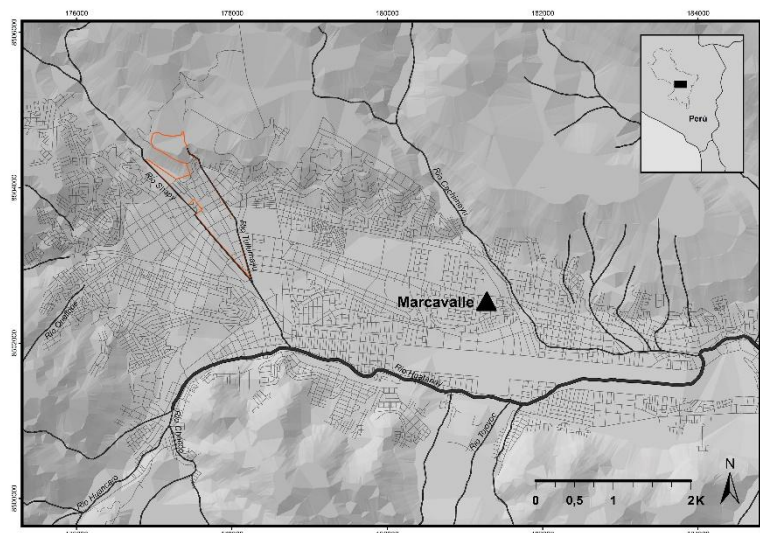


Fig. 1. Location map of Marcavalle in the Huatanay river valley, current urban area at the city of Cusco. Drawing by Gori-Tumi and Gino Huamán.

In 1954, Manuel Chávez Ballón and John H. Rowe recognized the Marcavalle pottery as “pre-Chanapata” - the Chanapata ceramic site had been discovered and excavated by Rowe in 1942 (Mohr 1977: 91; Rowe 1944, 1957) - being considered from that moment as the oldest ceramic culture in Cusco. After, in 1963, Luis Barreda Murillo and Patricia Lyon dug a pit test in what is now the Center for Diagnosis and Rehabilitation of Minors (Barreda 1973: 27), obtaining a radiocarbon date of 695 +/- 115 BC (Mohr 1977: 91), so the general chronology of the settlement was considered within the first millennium BC.

Based on his excavations, Luis Barreda Murillo made the first ceramic classification for Marcavalle, isolating 10 types (Barreda 1973: 28), which, as a corpus, he considered would later be “inherited” by the Chanapata culture (Barreda 1995: 52). The isolated types were: 1. Marcavalle plain black, 2. Marcavalle Incised black, 3. Marcavalle plain brown, 4. Marcavalle plain red, 5. Marcavalle Incised red, 6. Marcavalle iridescent or *jiwayo*, 7. Marcavalle punctated black, 8. Marcavalle punctated red, 9. Marcavalle cream on brown, and 10. Marcavalle cream on red.

Although the indicated typology does not include the materials decorated with *applique*, it does consider this attribute as one of the characteristics of its ceramics. According to the author, “some fragments [of Marcavalle ceramics] present as decorative motifs sculptural representations of felines as appendages to carry the ceramics” (Barreda 1995: 44. Our translation); from which it follows that this feature, despite its artistic properties, was mainly related to utilitarian purposes for this author.

Between 1966 and 1968, archaeologist Karen Mohr would extend the excavations in Marcavalle, executing 12 pit tests, distributed amongst the Diagnostic Center and the adjacent area to the east, close to the Cachimayu river. Of the 12 pits, only three were selected to analysis because these units “provided suitable quantities of and contexts for Marcavalle pottery” (Mohr 1977: 109).

Mohr focused his work on ceramic characterization and the determination of a chronological sequence, which she did through an analysis by attributes and statistical correlations; a non-stratigraphic approach (Mohr 1977). Although Mohr takes into account most of the ornamental elements of ceramics, she does not include the *applique* as a standard decorative category but as functional feature (like the handles or lugs) and,

when is not utilitarian, as “unclassifiable unique design elements”. Only two pieces of *applique* were considered in this last category into the subgroups XXII.3.a, and XXII.3.b, representing “applied fillet or curved relief” and “applied fillet with punctuations” respectively (Mohr 1977: 863). Group XXII is an assemblage of no statistical value in Mohr's collection, as she expresses: “Most sherds of group XXII are rare, likely foreign, ceramics of distinct decorative techniques and pastes. This exotic decorated pottery appears to occur at about the same low frequency in all four phases (.6%, 0%, 1.5%, 8%, Phases AD respectively).” (Mohr 1977: 583).

Based on radiocarbon dating, Morh establishes the Marcavalle chronology between 1000 and 700 BCE, fitting its four phases into 100-year lapses (Morh 1977: 153-157), placing the site between the end of the Initial Period (circa 1800 -800 years BCE), and the beginning of the Early Horizon Period (circa 800-200 BCE); being until today, the oldest settlement with pottery in Cusco. After Morh's work, large-scale investigations were not executed in Marcavalle until 2013, when the Culture Ministry of Cusco decided to carry out the “Archaeological Research Project, Marcavalle 2012”, under the direction of Luz Marina Morroy Quiñones, one of the authors of this article.

The sample

As we already mentioned, the sample we work with came from the excavations accomplished by Culture Ministry of Cusco in 2013. According to the report for the 2013-2014 work season (Monroy 2014), the excavations in Marcavalle required 17 trenches and three square units, covering a total of 312 m². From these units, 87,343 ceramic sherds were obtained, separating 24,171 diagnostic fragments and 67,302 non-diagnostic fragments; the latter, very small pieces without decoration, deteriorated and with no greater indicative value.

All diagnostic material was classified based on stylistic premises, documenting a strong difference between the percentage of known ceramic styles and their provenance in the archaeological deposit, which was excavated by arbitrary levels. Towards the upper part of the deposit, a disturbed occupation was documented, which contained modern materials (garbage) mixed with contemporary ceramics (0.07%), and pottery of Colonial style (0.17%), Inca (1.13%), Killke (0.26%), Huari (0.01%), and Qotakalli (0.05%) styles.

A second moment of occupation, completely sealed, without any type of removal, included pottery of “derived” Chanapata style (0.92%), Chanapata (50.17%), Marcavalle (46.01%), and Pacallamoco (0.45%) styles, plus a type of red ceramic (0.60%); which together make up the bulk of the site's pottery collection.

Although the stylistic correspondences will be discussed later, it is important to note that, for our purposes, all the ceramic material that showed *appliques* was considered as part of the “Marcavalle style” collection, with a total of 11,120 fragments. Their classification, which included 20 categories, established two categories to specifically identify pieces with sculptural *applique*, being the “Marcavalle zoomorphic” and the “Marcavalle with modeled anthropomorphic figurines”. In this case, the *applique* was considered only when this involved a representative sculptural character, leaving aside the utilitarian pieces. Both groups of artifacts were separated as special finds.

The collection that we analyzed was incorporated, as we have just mentioned, into the group of special finds, which, according to the 2014 report includes 99 specimens, “... made up of fragments of vessels that present peculiar characteristics, as designs or motifs not commonly fabricated. Some motifs are embodied in handles of pots, bodies of vessels called decorated bodies; the designs are in high relief or figurines with anthropomorphic, zoomorphic characteristics, etc....” (Morroy 2014: 738).

The special finds in ceramics were classified into five broad categories: “parts of vessels” (which included the subcategories: strap handles with anthropomorphic application, decorated bodies, anthropomorphic applications, zoomorphic applications, and bowl), “industrial instruments” (which contained spindle whorls, preforms of spindle whorls, and polishers and smoothing tools), “ornaments” (which grouped together figurine pendants and pendant), “utensils” (only spoons), “solid figurine”, and “others”.

Except for the bowls, which fell within the category of “parts of vessels”, all the sub-categories that comprise it have pieces with *appliques* of different functions, morphologies, and representative arrangements. It is clear that when the classification of this material was made the structural and functional question of the pieces was prioritized and not the non-structural elements, concealing the decorative pattern of the *appliques*.

Analysis and results

As we have already seen, all the materials examined are considered *applique* regardless of their function or aesthetic value; which makes it possible to estimate this ceramic category as a particular object for a specific formal and classificatory analysis. In this sense, the classification proposed in 2013's Marcavalle work report (Monrroy 2014), will be obviated to favor an approach that emphasizes the *applique* as the primary variable of analysis.

The sample that we have reviewed consists of 64 pieces, which are part of the collection of special finds. Within this corpus, the analyzed materials were divided into two simple categories, "utilitarian applications" and "non-utilitarian applications". This classification is made to establish a division that takes into account the use of this attribute in Marcavalle pottery. The functional distinction is independent of the aesthetic or decorative aspects of the material, which are visually dominant. Most of the pieces in the sample are intrinsically decorative, and the features that define this quality can, at the same time, be additional to the structure of the *applique* itself, or configure its entire structure; and the same is estimated when it comes to figurines, understanding that this is the support of the *applique* as with any other kind of vessel.

It should be mentioned that our analytical approach is not strictly technological, and what we are going to emphasize first are the structural or formal aspects of the *applique*, leaving the ornamental part of the analysis to the end.

Utilitarian *applique*

In this category, two classes of *appliques* have been distinguished: handles and lugs, and as can be inferred, the entire isolated corpus has the same functional objective, which is to support or help carry the vessel. The structural variation is evident enough to justify the classification, and this can be seen in the morphological nature of the pieces examined. The bands have not been included here, because they could not necessarily be used as supports for the vessel; as all the samples were decorated, these pieces were included among the non-utilitarian *appliques*. In the description the main forms are emphasized, trying to establish typological regularities, in this way we avoid an individualized description, which is unnecessary for the purposes of this work.

The strap handle is the most common type of *applique* in Marcavalle pottery, present in almost all types of vessels, especially pots. The most common variety are large and wide handles, many of which have punctuated, incised or ribbed decorations (Fig. 2), and as will be seen later, also additional *appliques*. Other variations of handles in the collection were made from a small coil of clay, some with decorations formed by small holes (Fig. 3); and the twisted handles, formed by two coils of clay (Fig. 4). A singular handle formed by a long solid tubular form was also observed in our collection. This piece shows no decoration and was attach to the vessel body, forming a horizontal profile (Fig. 5). Outside the sample, handles formed by aligned, parallel coils of clay have been recorded (cf. Monrroy 2014: 525).



Fig. 2. Utilitarian *applique*, strap handles with punctuated and ribbed incision decoration. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 3. Utilitarian *applique*. Lug handles, one decorated with circular holes. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 4. Utilitarian *applique*. Twisted handle. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 5. Utilitarian *applique*. Tubular handle. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

Finally, the lugs were one of the most numerous types of *applique*, 21 in our sample, which could indicate their relative frequency. However, because of their small and compact design, they are also more likely to survive deterioration compared to other parts of a vessel. The specimens that have been observed show a plain-convex morphology, with the wide part towards the wall of the vessel and narrower towards its top, forming an ellipsoid hemisphere (Fig. 6); this separates it from the bands, which in some cases can resemble this morphology. The pieces are all similar, varying the dimension but without losing their volumetric characteristics. These appliqués are decorated with grooves or linear, parallel or convergent incisions (Fig. 7), located in the upper part of the piece; or with short grooves at the top or outer top of the lug (Fig. 8); and examples with punctuated are also found (Fig. 9). A compound lug has been observed in only one case (Fig. 10).



Fig. 6. Utilitarian *applique*. Lug with ribbed decoration, notice the flat-convex shape of the *applique*. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 7. Utilitarian *applique*. Lug handle. Most of this kind of *applique* have incised or ribbed decoration. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 8. Utilitarian *applique*. Two examples of lug handle *applique* with ribbed decoration. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 9. Utilitarian *applique*. Lug handle with decoration of small holes. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 10. Utilitarian *applique*. A compose lug handle. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

Handles and lugs were examined by [Mohr \(1977\)](#), who showed a more complex formal and decorative variation. Our collection fits completely in her parameters, except for the fact that Mohr did no record any handle with decorative applications. In the case of the lugs, this author includes our lugs and band *applique* in a similar category, inferring the same functional aim that contrast with our approach. Although we can consider our observations in this category as a complement of Mohr extensive analytical research, our emphasis is to consider the *applique* as a unique analytic category besides the vessel as a central unit of reference.

Non-utilitarian *applique*

Four classes of non-utility *applique* have been established: solid appliqué, composite *applique*, bands and spheres. The difference between these categories is defined by the volume of the form and the composition of elements in it. All the *appliques* are primarily decorative, and although the bands and spheres could also have been used to support the vessel (lugs), this function has been relegated in view of the aesthetic value of the element.

The solid *applique* was made up of an individual modeled bulge, generally featuring heads, which may contain naturalistic facial details such as eyes, mouths, noses, and ears ([Fig. 11](#)); being a very elaborate version of this ceramic feature. Other examples include heads that are much more schematic and less elaborate, highlighting facial features ([Fig. 12](#)). Solid *appliques* can also have details achieved by this technique, such as the eyes for example, but this never stands out from the composition by altering the regular volume of the piece.



Fig. 11. Non- utilitarian *applique*. Zoomorphic heads, possibly felines. Note the details of the composition. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 12. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Schematic head, recognized through applied eyes. Photo by Gori-Tumi

Although the heads are dominant in this class of *applique*, there is a strong formal variation among those that describe felines, which are generally wide, with a rounded contour and very rich in facial details (See **Fig. 11**); and those that represent other animal species (including humans). The examples we have for the second type of head show a zoomorphic model with an elongated snout-nose, sunken cheeks and eyes formed by holes (**Fig. 13**), and one anthropomorphic with applied eyes (**Fig. 14**). An interesting aspect of the zoomorphic head is that, except for its elongation due to the projection of the face, the facial technical details also concur in other representative forms outside of this specific kind of *applique* in the sample.



Fig. 13. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Zoomorphic head, note the details of the composition, elongated face and holes as eyes. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

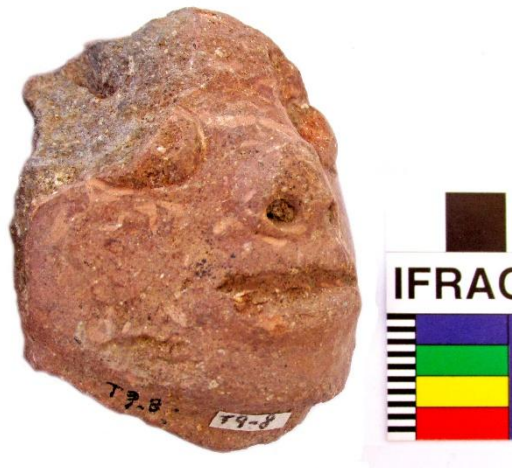


Fig. 14. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Anthropomorphic head with applicate eyes. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

For its part, the composite *applique* is characterized by a complex structure, achieved by the accumulation of various modeled layers, which include clay coils and spheres in the work. Coils are generally the dominant elements, while spheres are used for details. The entire composition is finished by incisions, excisions, punctated and even ribbing, which is the same type of final treatment for the solid *appliques* seen in the previous category.

The most common type in the sample is the *applique* formed by a clay coil and a bulge or projection, which is generally located on the handle of the vessel (**Fig. 15**). In general, the profile of the *applique* is flat-convex, since the central bulge is surrounded by the roll in its upper part, extending to form the upper extremities of the figure.

This *applique* is clearly representative, describing in a very schematic way a zoomorphic-anthropomorphic figure. Other *appliques* of this type use a single coil and on it they configure the face of the representation, disregarding the bulk. This feature may be due to spatial issues or to an interest to achieve a greater schematism in the manufacturing process. A notable example of this type (**Fig. 16**) has a central indentation in the curve of the roll, where the facial details have been marked. The facial features have been made by means of three incised holes, evidently describing a schematic face, while the ends of the scroll have been incised or ribbed to represent fingers and limbs, which has been repeated in all the cases examined. In the sample, only one piece presented two coils, one of them featuring what appears to be a tail (**Fig. 17**).



Fig. 15. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Semi-naturalist, anthropomorphic-zoomorphic representations, located on the top of a strap handle. The composition was made by two applied elements. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 16. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Schematic image obtained from a single clay roll with facial details marked by three holes. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 17. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Schematic and semi-naturalistic representation formed by a composition of three pieces of *appliques*. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

An interesting piece in the formal trend previously described, was achieved by the main bulge with facial details and a short lateral arm (Fig. 18). The most outstanding feature in this piece is the eyes, achieved by two spheres embedded within concavities, further outlining the naturalistic image which highlights the figurative appearance of the composition.

In the case of the bands, this is simply a piece of clay placed on the wall of the vessel, which always presents an external decoration, highlighting the relief of the *applique*. This band was formed from a coil of clay on which consecutive cuts were made; cuts that can be thick incisions or true grooves, most of them diagonal, although some vertical ones have also been recorded (Fig. 19). Other examples of this feature include a punctuated decoration, although in this case the long of *applique* is greater than those with decorative cuts (Fig. 20). This piece matches with the “applied fillet with punctuations” category of Mohr (1977: 863), inside her “unclassifiable unique design elements”, which imply a formal and typological distinction. Unfortunately, our collection did not present any more examples of this case.



Fig. 18. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Schematic semi-naturalist representation, highlighting the eye spheres and the outlined arm. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 19. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Various examples of decoration by applied bands, decorated by grooves and incisions. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 20. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Bands decorated with punctated, part of larger compositions. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

Finally, the spheres have also been registered as a special type of *applique*, and the specimens in our sample have always been found in the bodies of the vessels, edges and other sections (**Fig. 21**). These *appliques*, which are tiny spheres, can appear in pairs, and can even entail an additional decorative cut, similar to the bands (**Fig. 22**), which establishes a direct formal relationship with this decorative variant. Other *appliques* of this type are the flattened spheres, with a perfectly circular section, which have been decorated with two cross-shaped grooves (**Fig. 23**), this piece being a fairly defined element in the collection.



Fig. 21. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Spherical pieces applied to various parts of the vessels.
Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 22. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Spherical applications, in pairs and with grooves. Photo by Gori-Tumi.



Fig. 23. Non-utilitarian *applique*. Spherical application with cross-shaped grooves as decoration. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

As can be seen in this series of *appliques*, there is a functional variation that distinguishes these elements, which are also typologically diverse. This is an indication of the formal richness for this kind of ceramic element. A simple classification scheme follows below to summarize the classes of *appliques* and their typological variants (Table 1).

Table 1: Classes and types of *applique* discovered in the archaeological site of Marcavalle.

Marcavalle <i>applique</i>			
Class	Type	Quantity	%
Utilitarian	Handles	7	11
	Lugs	21	32.8
Non-utilitarian	<i>Solid applique</i>	5	7.8
	<i>Composite applique</i>	8	12.5
	Band	15	23.4
	Sphere	8	12.5
<i>Total</i>		64	100

Discussion

So far, the analysis seems to show that we are facing a consistent pattern of decoration by *applique*, something that had not been noticed in previous works, especially those of Barreda Murillo and Mohr, which recovered between 11,000 and 78,803 ceramic fragments respectively (Barreda 1973, 1995; Mohr 1977: 91). The lack of non-

utilitarian *appliques* in those collections can be explained by the scale of the sample in Barreda Murillo's works, who excavated a pit test of 2 x 2.5 m and 1.50 m deep in a site of more than 20 hectares; or due to the bias in the material selection during Mohr's excavations, who discarded all the materials that, according to Rowe's (1944) classification, had "Chanapata" affiliation, which includes *appliques* such as those we have studied.

Due to the fact that our selection was based on the collection of special findings, and not on an isolated corpus based on an oriented classification, we have to assume that our sample is limited, although it is still indicative that we are facing a true phenomenon of early ceramic decoration. Of the total diagnostic pottery recovered from the site in 2013, we have only examined 0.3% of materials, and the proportion, at first glance, does not seem to be that relevant, however, it is with respect to the total classification categories used in the analysis for Marcavalle ceramics (Monroy 2014), where only the categories Marcavalle plain black (31.60%), Marcavalle plain brown (38.55%), Marcavalle orange (18.52%), and Marcavalle plain red (7.04%) exceed 1% of this sample. If we calculate the total of the analyzed *applique* over the total of the "Marcavalle style" ceramic collection (46.01% of the total diagnoses), our indicative value grows to 0.6%, and is higher in proportion to 13 of the 20 categories consigned in the classification, including the Marcavalle incised red (0.37%), the Marcavalle iridescent or *Jihuaya* (0.38%), the Marcavalle punctuated black (0.23%), or the Marcavalle cream on brown (0.42%) among others. Importantly, we must not forget that until 2013, only 1.0% of the approximately 3 hectares that have survived of the archaeological site had been excavated.

Regarding the provenance of the *appliques*, we have to mention that this artifact was obtained through an excavation at arbitrary levels, which was applied to recover material for analysis and provide new data about the cultural content of the site. Unfortunately, this methodology obviates the recognition of the original contexts of material deposition, mixing all the artifacts during soil removal. This fact must be considered, since it allows us to define the collection as a singular sample, whose archaeological origin is indisputable but whose precise context of origin cannot be established; and we mean, for example, their functional correspondence in the settlement (domestic uses, rituals, etc.). However, since it has been found as part of the archaeological sediments of the site from its earliest strata, this material constitutes one of the most important samples of ceramics from Cusco.

An interesting question is the similarity of our sample with respect to the Chanapata ceramics, excavated by John H. Rowe in the eponymous site in 1941. This author illustrates seven pieces with *applique* within his type “Chanapata incised black”, which fall into the category of non-utilitarian *applique* (Rowe 1944: figure 11), whether solid *applique* (Rowe’s Figure 11: 5), composite *applique* (Rowe’s Figure 11: 2, 4), bands, in this case forming motifs on the wall of the vessel (Rowe’s Figure 11: 3, 6, 7); and spheres with incised cross (Rowe’s Figure 8); that is to say, the entire range exposed in our analysis. As can be inferred, this is not a coincidence and it is the same ceramic corpus that we have for Marcavalle.

The relationship with Chanapata is very relevant in the discussion. Since this ceramic culture does not have a defined chronology, Chanapata cannot be assumed as the center of the formal relationships exposed, especially when the incised decorative features in black paste, such as was defined by Rowe (1944), have been dated by Morh at Marcavalle to approximately 1000 BC, that is, on the basis of his four-phase chronology (Morh 1977, 1982). Since Rowe could not resolve the Chanapata chronology, merely establishing a generic sequence of the material after other local styles were discovered (after "Marcavalle" and before "Wari", Rowe 1956), it is evident that these artifacts have their origin at Marcavalle and they are spreading since their first appearance at the site, probably during the Initial Period or Early Formative, as Morh's chronology suggests.

In a regional context, we need to mention that other *applique*, similar to the Marcavalle type, have also been reported for the Yuthu site (Davis 2010; Davis and Delgado 2009) at the pampa of Xaquixaguana, to the northwest of Cusco. Davis mentions that these decorative features “were applied to the body or rim of pottery of many different styles” (Davis 2010: 78), referring to the ceramic variation within the Chanapata ceramic, as defined by Rowe in the 1940s. According to Carlos Delgado (personal communication, July 30, 2019), there is no stratigraphic distinction in the recurrence of this type of artifact, but there is a variation in the frequency of appearance in excavated archaeological contexts; with a greater proportion in ceremonial areas than in domestic ones. According to Delgado, the same facts occur in Bandojan, a contemporary site at the pampa of Anta. Both sites correspond to the Early Horizon or Late Formative Period (circa 500 BCE - 0 BCE). The data from Yuthu and Bandojan confirm that we are facing a widely distributed phenomenon in the Cusco region.

Finally, we must mention the corpus of *appliques* from Chanapata existing in the “Yabar collection” in Cusco. Jorge Yabar put together an interesting group of archaeological materials from this site, outstanding the *applique* in the collection. The author examines these artifacts in artistic-representative terms, without mention much the structural part or the formal pattern of the pieces (Yabar 1959, 1972, 1982). Following the description, however, it can be seen that there is a coincidence in the manufacturing of the *appliques*, when he mentions the use of “ropes”, as well as “balls” of clay for the elaboration of these artifacts (Yabar 1982: 9). The mention of the heads in volume (solid *appliques*), the facial details, such as the slit for the application of eyes and the conical projection of the face; the location of the *applique* and the formal-functional variation of these pieces (which can be noticed in the graphics published by the author), are completely consistent with our examples, so we can estimate that, once again, we are dealing with a singular material corpus with a uniform cultural affiliation. Although there are no relevant contextual references, these materials should also be considered culturally Marcavalle.

Conclusions

According to the analysis carried out, we have no doubt that we are facing a very specialized phenomenon of early graphic expression in Cusco. One that had barely been noticed in the ceramic classifications and that had not reached a sufficiently formalized status to serve as a key or diagnostic element to identify a representative language or a ceramic style inside an ancient pottery tradition. This is a situation that we consider must change after this analysis.

Marcavalle ceramics are very diverse and there are still numerous technological, formal, and decorative trends that have not been examined in detail, such as the clay modeled figures (Del-Solar-Velarde *et al.* 2018) to put an example. This implies a gap in the knowledge of this material, especially as it is the most used to value the cultural aspects of the society that produced it.

In this sense, the definition of the *appliques* can contribute to the understanding the complex parameters of expression and representation of the ancient Marcavalle society, which still has much to teach contemporary Cusco archeology.

Finally, it is important to consider that this is an initial approach to the study of the *appliques*. After the 2013 season, three more campaigns of archaeological excavations were carried out in Marcavalle, which provided new archaeological information on the site, and new samples of *appliques*, which shows that the evidence reached in 2013 is not random or accidental, but rather diagnostic for a specific field of ceramic production and decoration. In this sense, an extraordinary piece with a series of composite *appliques*, recovered from excavations in 2016 (**Fig. 24**), allows us to confirm the graphic language of this ceramic trait in Marcavalle, and we are confident that further studies will expand and improve on that knowledge.



Fig. 24. Non-utilitarian *appliques*. Pot with semi-naturalist designs. The representation has been achieved by several layers of *applique*, especially on the head of the animal. All the figures on the vessel have been modeled independently. Photo by Gori-Tumi.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank Alexis Nagy for read and make observations to the original manuscript and to the anonymous reviewer of IJMA for their comments and suggestion to improve the paper. All errors remain responsibility of the authors

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

Barreda Murillo L. 1973. Las culturas Inka y pre-Inka del Cusco. Tesis de Doctorado en la Universidad Nacional San Antonio Abad del Cusco, Cusco, Perú.

Barreda Murillo L. 1995. Cuzco, Historia y Arqueología Pre-Inka. Instituto de Arqueología Andina Machupicchu, Cusco

Davis A.R. 2010. Excavations at Yuthu A community study of an early village in Cusco, Peru (400-100 BC). A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Anthropology) in The University of Michigan. USA.

Davis A.R. and Delgado C. 2009. Investigaciones arqueológicas en Yuthu: nuevos datos sobre el período Formativo en el Cusco, Perú (400-100 a. C.). *Boletín de Arqueología PUCP* 13: 347-372.

Del-Solar-Velarde N., Monrroy L., Echevarría López, G-T., Alccacontor E., Chapoulie R. 2018. Estudio arqueométrico de producciones de barro del Horizonte Temprano en Cusco (Perú): análisis por FRX portátil de figurinas zoomorfas provenientes del sitio arqueológico de Marcavalle. Actas CNA, III Congreso Nacional de Arqueología, pp.199-209: Ministerio de Cultura, Lima. ISBN: 978-612-4391-07-1.

Mohr K. 1977. Marcavalle: the ceramics from an Early Horizon site in the Valley of Cusco, Peru, and implications for South Highland socio-economic interaction. A dissertation in anthropology presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Mohr K. 1982. Resumen de los trabajos arqueológicos realizados en Marcavalle, un sitio correspondiente al Horizonte Temprano en el valle del Cuzco. In Italo Oberti (Ed.) *Arqueología del Cuzco*, pp. 1-8. Instituto Nacional de Cultura, Región Cusco, Cusco.

Monrroy L. 2014. Informe final del Proyecto de Investigación Arqueológica con Excavación Zona Arqueológica Marcavalle – 2013. Report presented to the Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Cusco, Cusco.

Rowe J. 1944. An Introduction to the Archaeology of Cuzco. Expeditions to southern Peru, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Report n° 2. Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Vol. XXVII, N° 2. Published by The Museum, Cambridge.

Rowe J. 1956. Archaeological Explorations in Southern Peru, 1954-1955. *American Antiquity* 22(2): 135-151.

Rowe J. 1957. La arqueología del Cuzco como historia cultural. *Revista del Museo e Instituto Histórico del Cuzco* X (16-17): 34-48.

Rye O.S. 1981. Pottery Technology. Analysis and Reconstruction. Manuals on Archaeology 4. Taraxacum Inc, Washington DC. ISBN: 0-9602822-2-A.

Yábar Moreno J. 1959. La cultura pre-incaica de Chanapata. *Revista del Museo e Instituto Arqueológico* 18: 93-100.

Yábar Moreno J. 1972. Época pre-Inca de Chanapata. *Saqsaywaman* 2: 211-234.

Yábar Moreno J. 1982. Figurillas de la cultura Pre-Inca del Cuzco. In Italo Oberti (Ed.) *Arqueología del Cuzco*, pp. 9-12. Instituto Nacional de Cultura, Región Cusco, Cusco.

To cite this article:

Echevarría López G. T. and Monroy Quiñones L. M. 2022. The *applique*, an ancient decorative expression from the early societies of Cusco, Peru
International Journal of Modern Anthropology. 2 (17): 752 - 776
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ijma.v2i17.3>



This article, as all articles published in this journal, is under The Creative Commons Attribution: Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>