

## ***Cabuza*** **(500–1000 AD)**

### **Environment and Geography**

The Cabuza settled in the western valleys of the far north of Chile and southern Peru, roughly between the Ilo and Camarones valleys. This culture is especially well known for its cemeteries, which were discovered in the middle reaches of Chile's Azapa Valley.

### **Economy**

The economy of the Cabuza communities was agriculture-based, and they adopted several new farming tools and more complex irrigation techniques to grow maize, several kinds of squash, beans, quinoa, jicama, and coca, among other crops. Under the rule of the Tiwanaku Empire, the goods they produced were taken to the settlements of the Titicaca basin by llama caravan. The Cabuza also introduced new textile techniques that prompted changes in decorative designs, and manufactured new items made from the cloth they wove, such as bags called *chuspas*. They practiced gold and silver metallurgy, making jewelry such as pendants and rings with llama figurines. From copper they manufactured small bells and from bronze, farming implements.

### **Art**

The artistic development of the Cabuza culture was marked by the influence of the Tiwanaku Empire. Motifs from the ruling culture became features of different Cabuza artistic forms. Wooden spoons displayed finely incised decorations on their shafts, placed there for reasons that could not be purely practical. Another example is the finely woven textiles that feature lateral striping and geometric motifs in red, blue, green, yellow and brown. Ceramics typical of this period are usually painted with black (and occasionally white) designs over red, with different combinations of geometric elements, mainly lines, triangles and waves forming decorative bands. This style of ceramics is interpreted as a local expression of the Tiwanaku culture, on the coast. Two other items point to the influence of this Altiplano culture on the Cabuza groups: The wooden or ceramic *kero* cups that replicate Tiwanaku iconography and the bicolor and multicolored four-cornered hats.

### **Social Organization**

Archeologists believe that the Cabuza had the same hierarchical structure as the Tiwanaku Empire, as their cemeteries contain graves of high ranking officials with grave goods and offerings similar in design and quality to those produced in the imperial capital. These graves are thought to be those of Tiwanaku officials who were responsible for overseeing the work performed by the colonists and their families. Study of the mummies of this elite group reveals that they enjoyed a better quality of life than regular Cabuza peasants, although their shared identity is expressed in common cultural traits. The Cabuza lived in small family groups that were also associated with larger groupings that included all those inhabiting a given valley or series of neighboring valleys.

## **Beliefs and Funeral Rites**

The Cabuza people buried their dead in circular pits, the bodies placed in fetal position or crouching, and wrapped in elaborate woolen tunics (*unku*) wound with reed cords and accompanied with funerary offerings. The deceased wore semi-circular or four-cornered hats. The Cabuza cemeteries often displayed a mixture of local and Tiwanaku elements, although in some cases the foreign features predominated. It is believed that the spoons, *keru* cups, *siku* (musical instruments made of cane) and the fine, distinctive Cabuza woven attire were used by individuals who served as shamans in the society.

## **Settlement patterns**

The Cabuza lived in small villages and hamlets located close to water sources. Their dwellings had a rectangular floor plan and a stone foundation and reed-and-cane walls tied together with rope, and were located beside their farm fields.

## **History**

The Cabuza lived during a period known as the Middle Horizon, which was characterized by the influence of the Tiwanaku culture. They shared their valleys with the Maitas-Chiribaya coastal culture, occupying adjoining lands for their farms, residential settlements and cemeteries. Around 1100 AD, the Tiwanaku fell from power and the groups under their rule became independent, which led to more local developments as the Late Intermediate Period was ushered in. In the valleys of the far north of Chile, this new period saw the emergence of the Arica culture. Many material and decorative aspects of the Cabuza culture remained present in later times, such as the spoons and *keru* cups, although over time these experienced changes in both form and function.