



Figure seated on a stool

Not on display

Title/Description: Figure seated on a stool

Materials: Earthenware

Measurements: h. 114 x w. 200 x d. 104 mm

Accession Number: 781

Historic Period: AD 800-1500

Production Place: Ecuador, South America, The Americas

Credit Line: Purchased with support from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1980

Figures of this type are found in the Andes on both sides of the Ecuador/Colombia frontier, but the position of this pottery group in Ecuadorian archaeology was not established until 1969, when the designation Capuli was introduced to replace the confused terminology of the older literature (Francisco, 1969: 6-7). The term was subsequently adopted by Colombian archaeologists (Uribe, 1977-8: 68; Groot de Mahecha and Hooykaas. 1991: 97-103).

Capuli figures are hollow and hand made. The most common theme, as in this case, is a male personage seated on a stool, chewing a wad of coca leaves which makes a conspicuous bulge in his cheek (cf. Uribe, 1977-8: 182, pls. 47-8). Since coca does not grow at high altitudes, the leaf was obtained by trade with the peoples of the Pacific slopes of the Andes and coastal plain. These figures, for no obvious reason, are often interpreted as shamans, though neither coca-chewing nor the use of simple wooden stools seem to have been restricted to any particular group. This figure is made of highly polished ware covered with a red-brown slip. The hair and the loincloth are painted black, and there are black designs on the face.

Warwick Bray, 1997

Entry from Steven Hooper (ed.), *Catalogue to the Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection*. University of East Anglia, 1997.

Provenance

Purchased by the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia from John Stokes, New York, on the advice of Robert Sainsbury in 1980 out of income from the Sainsbury Purchasing Fund.
