

RESEARCH PAPER

He Perished Ere He Published: Records of the Work of Gary Stockton Vescelius in the American Museum of Natural History

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Gary Stockton Vescelius (1930–1982) was an extremely active archaeologist who conducted extensive surveys and numerous excavations in North America, the Caribbean, and Peru. Although he was influential while alive, his almost complete failure to publish the results of his work has caused him to fade into obscurity. The interventions that he made at many important sites have been largely forgotten. However, collections that he amassed have been preserved at Yale University, at the American Museum of Natural History, and in Peru. This paper presents a short biography of Vescelius and evaluates his work.

Introduction

Gary Stockton Vescelius was an almost legendary figure in twentieth century archaeology (**Figure 1**). An indefatigable fieldworker, he conducted survey and excavations in North America, Peru, the Caribbean, and Mexico (for Mexico see Tolstoy *et al.* 1977: note 3), recording about one thousand sites over a period of some thirty-five years. He was renowned for his knowledge, which was both broad and deep, and, in addition to archaeology, encompassed such fields as linguistics (Adelaar 2009; Granberry and Vescelius 2004), and astrophysics. Unfortunately, his publication record does not reflect his activities, although his thought is often embodied in the works of others (*Cf.* Alers 1965: note 3; Bird 1987: 299; Buse 1965: 316–333; Conklin 1983: 12; Covey 2000; Crock *et al.* 2008; Dauelsberg 1972–1973: 18; Gartley 1979: 73; Hardy 2009; Isbell 1978; Isbell *et al.* 1991: Figure 4; Lathrap 1973: 1761; Lumbreras 1960; Lynch 1985: 48; Menzel 1961: 120, 1968: note 3; Morse 2009; Murra 1968: 124, 1970: 19, note 54; Nelken Turner and MacNeish 1975: 1220; Patterson 1966: 775, 1968: 423, 1991: note 25; Patterson and Moseley 1968: 126; Proulx 1982: 89; Ravines 1967: 48; Rouse 1951b, 1953; Rowe 1963: note 9; Siegel 1996: 687; Thatcher 1972–1974: 114) and he frequently communicated in both formal lectures (Vescelius 1958, 1961b, 1963a, 1963b, 1963c, 1965b, 1966b, 1968a, 1968b, 1968c, 1968d, 1968e, 1968f, 1968g, 1968h, 1969, 1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1970d, 1971, 1972a, 1972b, 1975a, 1976a, 1977d, 1977e, 1980a) and in informal gatherings. In 1987, in response to his untimely death, we published an obituary of Vescelius in the very first issue of *Andean*

Past (Burger and Lynch 1987). Another obituary was published by William Chapman (Chapman 1983 [?])¹

Thanks to the efforts of the late Craig Morris, and of Paul Goldstein and Barbara Conklin, the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) acquired a portion of Vescelius' field-notes, maps, plans, drawings, audiotapes, photographs, and samples in 1991² adding them to materials Vescelius or his former wife had previously donated to the AMNH. These include materials from Vescelius' 1958–1961 survey of sites on Peru's far South Coast, work done in the Arequipa, Peru area around the same time, work done from 1961 to 1965 in the Callejón de Huaylas as part of the Cornell-Peru Vicos Project, and from work done in 1970 as part of the R.S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology's Ayacucho Archaeological-Botanical project directed by Richard S. MacNeish (Goldstein 1991; *vidimus* 2016).³ There are also materials from the Caribbean.

Some of Vescelius' slides are in their original Kodak boxes, while others are in the slotted metal cases often used for slides during the mid-twentieth century. Some of his slides, for example those of potsherds from the Peruvian Middle Horizon capital of Huari (also spelled Wari) can be identified from the labels photographed along with the artifacts. Many others, however, are only identified by year and by a site numeration system we have not yet decoded. Vescelius's Ektachrome slides and those taken on as yet unidentified film stock are badly deteriorated with only the red dyes still visible. However, his Kodachrome slides, kept in the same boxes, are well preserved.

Recently we located various versions of the *curriculum vita* Vescelius prepared while he was at the AMNH. They fill in many details of his life and career that were unavailable to us in 1987, and so it seems appropriate to prepare a new short biography, based upon Vescelius' own testimony, upon the articles he published, upon scattered references to Vescelius's work in the publications of

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Figure 1: Gary S. Vescelius at the Huari site, Ayacucho Region, Peru, 1970. Vescelius is seated, with cigarette and wearing a flat cap. The other seated figure is archaeologist Junius Bouton Bird. Standing behind Bird is archaeologist William H. Isbell. The other individuals are unidentified. Photo from the Gary S. Vescelius Collection, courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.

others, and upon the recollections of those who knew him. Because of the importance of the many archaeological sites that Vescelius visited and often excavated, and the pioneering nature of his survey, we wish to alert scholars to the presence of the Vescelius resources in the AMNH. There is as yet, no finder's list, but the Vescelius material is available to qualified researchers. Because of our own areas of expertise, and the proveniences of the bulk of the Vescelius material in the AMNH, in this paper we emphasize Vescelius' Peruvian field-work. However, he was also regarded as an important archaeologist of the Caribbean (Burger and Lynch 1987: 2; Chapman 1983 [?]; Crock *et al.* 2008; Hardy 2009; Morse 2009; see Vescelius n.d., 1952a, 1954, 1956c, 1958, 1975b, 1976b, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1980b; Vescelius and Robinson 1979) and we also touch on his activities in that part of the world, as well as on his early work in North America.

Education and Early Research in the United States

Vescelius was born in Glen Ridge, New Jersey on 16 October 1930 (Vescelius n.d.). He claimed descent from Andres Vesalius (1514–1564), the famous Flemish physician. Gary Vescelius married Patricia M. Lewis of Watertown, Connecticut on 29 September 1951. They had one child, Thomas P. Vescelius, born on 30 June 1960 (*ibid.*), in Lima, Peru. This marriage ended in divorce. Gary Vescelius died in November 1982 on a flight undertaken in connection

with his study of the archaeological resources of Vieques Naval Reservation in Puerto Rico.

Vescelius received his early education at the elite Trinity School in New York City, graduating in 1948 (*ibid.*). Since the age of twelve, Vescelius had been assisting the renowned archaeologist of South America, Junius Bouton Bird, at the American Museum of Natural History (Chapman 1983 [?]: 8). For a while Vescelius lived with the Bird family, inhabiting their garden shed. Two dedicated and eccentric individuals had found one another. Vescelius essentially began his career at the AMNH, and from 1965 to 1966 he held the Ogden Mills fellowship there (*ibid.*). It is, thus, fitting that the AMNH has significant holdings of Vescelius's research materials.

Vescelius began his undergraduate studies at Yale University in 1948. There he demonstrated his brilliance as a student. Among his teachers were Irving Rouse, an expert in Caribbean archaeology, and Cornelius Osgood.⁴ Vescelius received his A.B. in anthropology from that institution, graduating *magna cum laude* in 1952. He was a Yale College Scholar (1948–1951) as well as a Scholar of the House (1951–1952),⁵ writing a senior honors thesis entitled *The Cultural Chronology of St. Croix* (Vescelius 1952a) based on field-work in the U.S. Virgin Islands that he conducted during nine weeks in the summer of 1951 as a field associate of Yale's Peabody Museum in cooperation with the St. Croix Museum Commission. Vescelius, with Colin Eisler of Yale and Allan Croft of Harvard, made

surface collections at thirty-six sites on St. Croix, and test excavated twelve of them, creating a cultural chronology and settlement analysis and amassing over 28,000 objects (Morse 2009: 157, 159; Rouse 1951a; Vescelius 1952a). Vescelius's methodology is described by Meredith D. Hardy, who also outlines some of his unpublished excavations on St. Croix carried out from 1976 through 1979 when he was the territorial archaeologist there (2009: 103–105; see also Vescelius 1952a for his own description of his early work and Morse 2009: 159).⁶ Vescelius's 1951 fieldwork was probably the first professional archaeological work done on the islands since the 1920s. Vescelius's collections from St. Croix in the Yale Peabody Museum have been studied using methods such as neutron activation analysis (Morse 2009) and ceramic compositional analysis (Crock *et al.* 2008) that were not available to him at the time he recovered them.⁷ Vescelius had family connections on St. Croix which probably eased his work. His uncle, Harry E. Taylor, was the administrator for St. Croix at the time (Chapman 1983 [?]: 8).

These were not the only archaeological excavations Vescelius experienced as an undergraduate. In the summers of 1948, 1949, and 1950 he was a field assistant of the Dyche Museum of Natural History's anthropology department at the University of Kansas. He participated in the 1948 archaeological field research by Carlyle S. Smith in the Kanopolis Reservoir area on the Smoky Hill River in Ellsworth County and along the Little Arkansas River in Rice County, Kansas (Smith 1949). In 1949 Vescelius also did further field-work in Connecticut (Vescelius 1952b) and in 1950 he worked in South Dakota.⁸ Thus, early in his career Vescelius set his pattern of short bursts of excavation at widely scattered sites.

Vescelius went on to graduate work at the University of Michigan where he was a University Scholar at Michigan's Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies (1952–1953). At the time, Leslie White dominated anthropology there with his theories of cultural evolution. Another of Vescelius's well-known teachers at Michigan was Elmer R. Service, a cultural evolutionist who specialized in South American ethnography and became famous for his theories on the origins of the state. Vescelius received his M.A. in anthropology from Michigan in 1954 and became a Ph.D. candidate there that same year. He never completed his doctoral dissertation.

While registered as a student at Michigan, Vescelius conducted archaeological research that is still cited. This took place in the area of Pattee's Caves near Salem, New Hampshire. Pattee's Caves are also known as "Mystery Hill" and "The American Stonehenge" because of claims that some three thousand years ago ancient Europeans settled in the area and created megalithic structures and astronomical alignments (Feder 1999: 113–122; Fell 2004 [1976]: 81–91). To test these claims, Vescelius was hired by The Early Sites Foundation, an organization that controlled Pattee's Caves. He excavated chambers purported to be ancient and demonstrated that the buildings were constructed and used in the first half of the nineteenth century (Feder 1999: 117–118; Vescelius n.d., 1956a, 1956b, 1982–1983). Although Vescelius no doubt

displeased his employers, it is greatly to his credit that he tackled a controversial problem regarding transoceanic contacts and reported his findings frankly. He retained his interest in debunking claims of early European colonization until the end of his life (Vescelius 1980a; 1982–1983).

Vescelius' other excavations while a Michigan student can, perhaps, be best described as "energetic". In 1953 he assisted Stanley Stubbs of the Laboratory of Anthropology of the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe, participating in the excavation of a site in the Tesuque Valley east of Cuyamungue and north of Santa Fe. The site consisted of twelve to fifteen house units of ten to twenty rooms and circular or rectangular kivas dating from the early second millennium C.E. A great kiva 52 feet in diameter was partially excavated (Vescelius n.d.; Anonymous 1954).

In 1956 Vescelius was inducted into the U.S. army. He spent most of his military time at Fort Ord in Monterey, California and in Germany. He left the Army as a specialist third class, suggesting an undistinguished experience for a man of his education. Probably he was more interested in archaeology than in soldiering, as indicated by the fact that he taught anthropology at Monterey Peninsula College while he was in the service. In the army he was involved in statistical research (Chapman 1983 [?]: 8). One of his important publications is on statistics in archaeological sampling (Vescelius 1960a, 1960b).

Field Experience in Peru

By 1972, Gary Vescelius was able to brag that he had spent more time in the field in Peru than any other American archaeologist of his day. He worked in four principal areas, the Peruvian South Coast, the Arequipa-Moquegua region, the Callejón de Huaylas, and the Ayacucho Valley (**Figure 2**). His work in Peru remains almost entirely unpublished (exception are Vescelius 1960b and Vescelius and Lanning 1963) but reports were deposited with Peruvian archaeological authorities or grant-making bodies (Vescelius 1959, 1963b, 1965a) or were presented at conferences and lectures (Vescelius 1961b, 1963a, 1963c, 1965b, 1966b, 1968a, 1968b, 1968c, 1968d, 1968f, 1968g, 1968h, 1969, 1970a, 1970c, 1971, 1972a, 1972b). Unfortunately, he rarely handed out his conference papers or even spoke from a script (Thomas F. Lynch, personal communication 20 July 2015). Thus, all that probably remains of most of these communications are their titles and citations to them in the works of people who heard them.

The Peruvian South Coast

Vescelius's initial work in Peru was sponsored by two consecutive Fulbright Research Fellowships. He became affiliated with Lima's Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (1958–1961). With this support, he surveyed the Far South Coast from Atico to the Chilean border, locating more than ninety sites (Covey 2000: 119, 124, note 7; Vescelius 1960b). Among them are La Huaca and Guardiola II and III on the Tambo Valley coast; Qarikayu and Moro Moro in the Tambo Piedmont; Mostazal, Chiribaya, and Boca del Río on the Moquegua coast; Tombolomo

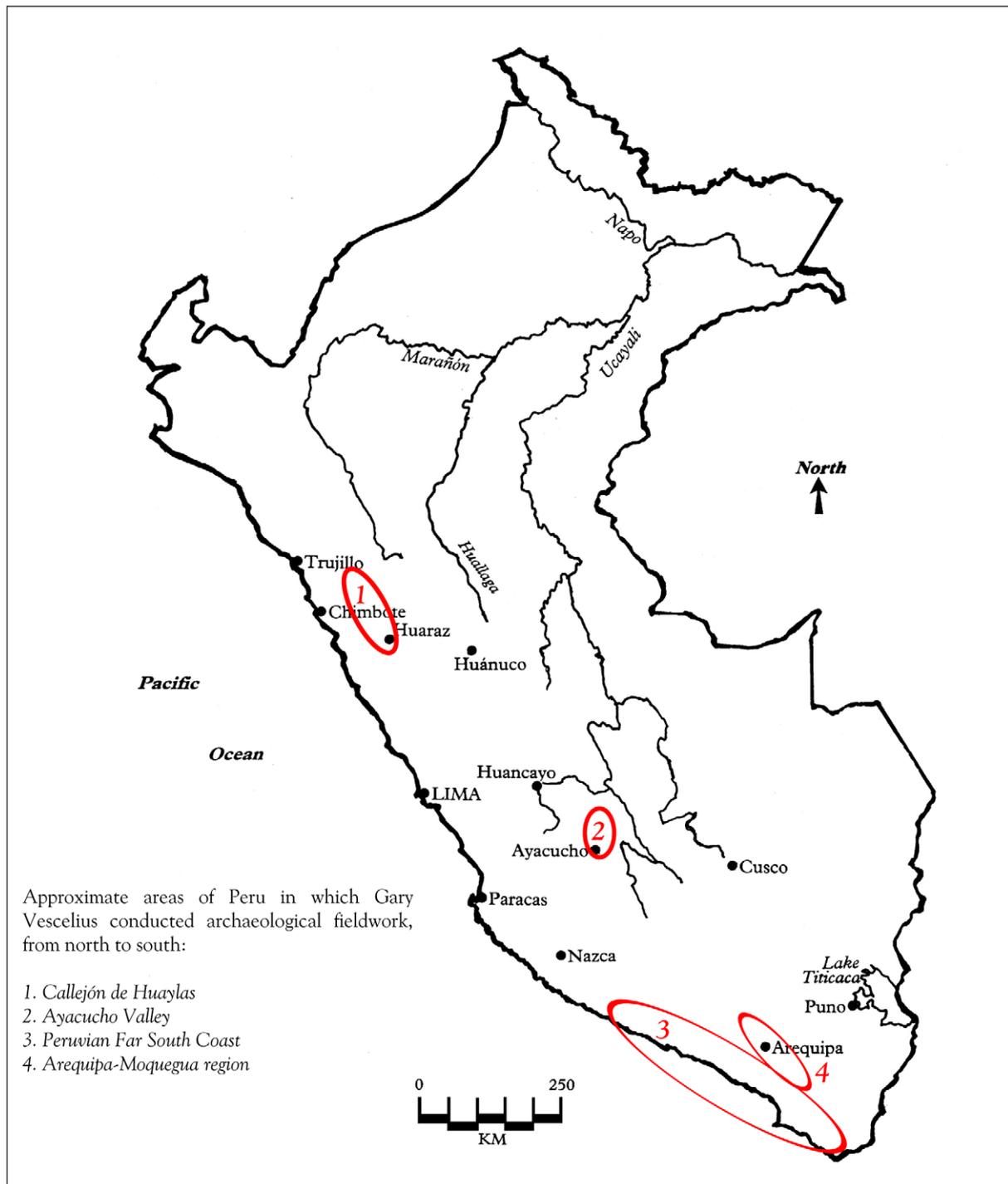


Figure 2: Areas in Peru in which Gary S. Vescelius conducted archaeological survey and research.

in the Moquegua piedmont; and Locumba I and II, and Piedra Sapa on the Locumba coast (Covey 2000: table 1). Vescelius established that there are Inca remains in every coastal valley between the Tambo River and the Azapa Valley (*ibid.*: 126, table 1, Figure 2). Although he created excellent hand-drawn maps, these have not been published. Some are in the Vescelius Collection of the Junius Bird Laboratory of South American Archaeology in the Division of Anthropology of the American Museum of Natural History.

Alan Covey has summarized Vescelius' Inca findings on Peru's South Coast and in northern Chile (*ibid.*: 126). These include rectangular, stone-built compounds in

the Sama Valley and in the Quebrada Tacahuay associated with significant amounts of Inca surface ceramics. In addition, at La Huaca, Vescelius observed niched stone architecture and collected diagnostic Gentilar and Inca potsherds. In graves he excavated at Guardiola II and at Mostazal Vescelius found fine, decorated Inca ceramic forms including plates and aryballoids (*ibid.*: figure 3). The graves also yielded metal implements related to marine exploitation including fishing weights, fish hooks, and a harpoon fore-piece, as well as woolen textiles. There were also vegetal remains including maize, chili peppers, and gourds. Covey points out that Vescelius' surface collections and excavations at El Gentilar, a coastal fishing and

guano processing site approximately 4.5 km south of Ilo, revealed evidence of food, including 131 maize cobs and remains of gourds and other vegetal materials, in spite of the fact that the nearest known present-day water source is more than eight kilometers distant.

A snapshot of Vescelius's work on the South Coast can be seen in one of his few publications. On 23 October 1958, Vescelius, with Carlos A. Guzmán Ladron de Guevara, Dwight T. Wallace, Wallace's employee Jorge Esparza, and Patricia M. Lewis Vescelius, made a one-day visit to some shell heaps on the shore of the Bahía San Nicolás, about 45 miles southwest of the town of Nazca. There they found two obsidian projectile points and two other flaked tools. The lithic artifacts were reported by Vescelius and Lanning (1963).

Vescelius returned to the Peruvian coast after his initial work there. In 1964 Vescelius, with Dorothy Menzel, collected charcoal fragments from a pottery-bearing refuse seam at the base of the Huaca La Florida in the Rimac Valley just south of Lima. They believed that the refuse probably represents a settlement next to a smaller version of the present mound. The fragments yielded an age of 1695 ± 85 B.C.E. and are associated with what was thought to be the earliest incised pottery style on the Peruvian coast (Patterson 1966: 775).

Arequipa and Moquegua

Vescelius worked in the Arequipa-Moquegua region in 1961 and 1962 where he was simultaneously Director of Explorations and Professor of Archaeology at Instituto de Arqueología y Etnología of the Facultad de Letras of the Universidad Nacional de San Agustín, Arequipa and an observer at the Arequipa Station of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (Vescelius n.d.). In the Arequipa-Moquegua region he conducted fieldwork with Peruvian archaeologists Máximo Neira Avendaño, Hernan Amat Olazával, and Olga Linares de Sapir (Menzel 1961: 120). One can reconstruct the broad trajectory of his work through passing comments made in the publications of others and from the titles of papers by Vescelius that were presented at conferences, but not published. Vescelius and his colleagues worked at Playa Chira I in Camaná Province, and at Puyenca, Pampa Colorado, and Catarindo (Ravines 1967: 48). In April 1965, Vescelius worked at the Chen Chen cemetery two kilometers to the south of the city of Moquegua with H. H. Disselhoff and Rogger Ravines (Disselhoff 1968). Highlights of this latter work have been published by Ravines (Ravines 1967). Vescelius deposited his important archaeological collection from the Arequipa area at the Museo de Antropología at the Universidad Nacional de San Agustín in Arequipa (Anonymous [Rogger Ravines] 1985b). Unfortunately, this museum never had the space, personnel, or resources to care for these collections properly. Some artifacts and samples sat on the museum's roof for many years. In 1998 the Centro de Investigaciones Arqueológicas de Arequipa (CIARQ) began to re-inventory this collection using catalogs and notes in Peru and in the AMNH. This was done successfully in some cases, but in other cases Vescelius's finds remain unidentifiable. As of 2014 the project was half completed and continuation depended upon funding. The Vescelius

collections in Arequipa are especially important because numerous sites that he recorded have been destroyed since the 1950s (www.angelfire.com.pe/CIARQ/projects.html, accessed 9/12/2014. Now a dead link with no record on the Wayback Machine).

Peruvian highlands – Vicos

Although Gary Vescelius often worked with just a few Peruvian colleagues, he was also part of two large American archaeological projects, Cornell University's Vicos Project directed by Allan Holmberg, and the Ayacucho Archaeological Botanical Project headed by the R.S. Peabody Museum's Director Richard S. MacNeish.

From 1961 until 1965 Vescelius was integrated as a research associate into the Vicos Project co-sponsored by Cornell and the Peruvian government's Instituto Indigenista Peruano. The Vicos Project was launched in 1952 and continued until the mid-1960s. This massive effort in applied anthropology was led by Allan R. Holmberg and aimed to direct social change and improve the quality of life in a Peruvian highland hacienda community in the Callejón de Huaylas of the Ancash Region. While most project activities consisted of practical measures such as the introduction of better seeds, new technologies, credit, the improvement of the local school, military recruitment, health and nutrition programs, and the establishment of new political institutions (Lynch 1982), there was also a research component that allowed for archaeological survey and test excavations (**Figure 3**). Vescelius managed that part of the project known as "Prehistoric Human Ecology in the Macará Valley, Peru" (Lynch 1975: 10).

Vescelius' work under the auspices of the Vicos Project was aimed mostly at reconstructing the early history of Vicos. Vescelius recorded some two hundred sites, test excavating about half of them and unearthing more than 330,000 specimens. He was able to establish a long archaeological sequence from preceramic times until the mid-twentieth century. The sequence begins with the Quisqui Puncu site, an open preceramic site on a river terrace. Archaeological materials represent several thousand years and include Lauricocha II and III lithic types, as well as long triangular points.⁹ The ceramic sequence includes Initial Period early and Late Toril styles, the former a plainware probably related to coastal Las Haldas styles. Next comes the Chavín-influenced Early Capilla Style. The Middle Capilla Complex relates to Early Horizon coastal sites, while the Late Capilla is post-Chavín. Next in time comes the Huaylas Complex. Huaras white-on-red pottery appears in the Early Huaylas Phase. This is related to the San Blas pottery of Junín and the Lumbrá (upper Chancay) white-on-red wares. Simple stone cyst graves appear at this time. During Middle Huaylas times the Huaras white-on-red style continues and is accompanied by other two-color combinations, kaolin ware, three color negative decoration, tripod styles, pots with pedestal bases, and grooved stone axes. Slab cyst tombs become common and increase in size and elaboration. Relationships are to the north, with Cajamarca and to the west with the lower Santa Valley. Late Huaylas is characterized by a new white decorated ware and by a two-color



Figure 3: Gary S. Vescelius's excavations at an unidentified site with an Early Horizon component near the Quishqui Puncu site in the Vicos Valley, Ancash Region, Peru, 1964. Photo courtesy of Thomas F. Lynch.



Figure 4: Gary S. Vescelius's excavations at the Wichqana site, Ayacucho Region, Peru, 1970. Photo by Gary S. Vescelius courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.

negative ware. Graves are gallery tombs and large cysts with antechambers.

The Middle Horizon is characterized by the Honco Complex (Buse 1965: 327; Lanning 1965: 140; Lau

2002–2004: 186). *Chullpa* (burial tower) tombs replace galleries and cysts. Middle Horizon Chaquipampa B, Nivería style and Marañón wares were recovered from the *chullpas*. A huge administrative and storage center

was built at this time. Wari Viñaque pottery appears and there are coastal affinities in the “pressed ware” [mold made ceramics?]. Late Honco postdates the collapse of the Wari State. Ceramics now resemble those from the Supe Valley. Vescelius characterized the local Late Intermediate Period as the Early and Late Aquilpo Phase and saw affinities to Casma pottery. The last prehistoric phase was the Huaman Huilca Phase. Both Inca sites and what we now call Inca provincial pottery were present. None of this information is available from any publication of Vescelius, but, rather, is only known from a research report on highland South America published by Edward Lanning, presumably based on information supplied to him by Vescelius (Lanning 1965: 140). In addition, Herman Buse de la Guerra described the results of Vescelius’s work at the residential and cemetery site of Honcopampa (Buse 1965: 320–333) and Rogger Ravines discussed Vescelius’s work in the Callejón de Huaylas more generally (Anonymous 1985a).

Vescelius also spent a few days surveying the Upper Santa Valley while he was part of the Vicos Project. He concentrated on hilltop fortresses on the south side of the valley which he believed to date to the latter first millennium B.C.E. (Lanning 1965: 140). Vescelius’ results in the Callejón de Huaylas included his discovery of the site of Huaricoto. He excavated it in 1962 with Hernán Amat of the University of San Marcos (Burger and Salazar Burger 1980: 27; Vescelius 1963b).

Vescelius was particularly interested in radiocarbon dating, then a relatively new technique (Menzel 1968: note 3; Vescelius 1968b, 1972b, 1976a, 1981a, 1981b), and had planned to make it the subject of his doctoral dissertation (Vescelius n.d.). Radiocarbon measurements were made for the Marcará-Carhuaz area in the Callejón de Huaylas, taken on samples he and Amat had collected (Lau 2002–2004: 183; Ziolkowski *et al.* 1994: 324).

In 1965, after his participation in the Vicos Project, Vescelius returned to the American Museum of Natural History. From 1967 until 1972 he taught at Queens College, Flushing, New York, and in 1972–1973 he was a visiting professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (Chapman 1983: 8; Vescelius n.d.).

Ayacucho

At this time, during a break from teaching, Vescelius and his Queens College students excavated in Ayacucho (MacNeish, Nelken-Terner, and Garcia 1970: 4, 7, 29). In 1970 Vescelius dug at Wichqana, a site occupying a small promontory at the bottom of a valley at the junction of the Totorá or Yucay River and the Pongora River (**Figure 4**) (Ravines 1970–1971: 53) under the auspices of the Ayacucho Archaeological-Botanical Project directed by Richard S. MacNeish.¹⁰ Photographs by Vescelius of his Wichqana excavations are retained by the AMNH. Wichqana was discovered in May 1958 when John H. Rowe and Dorothy Menzel observed Formative artifacts in a road cut. Luis G. Lumbreras excavated the site a few weeks later and the results of this excavation were partially published (Flores 1960; Lumbreras 1981: 170–171; see also Lynch 1984). Vescelius never published his work at Wichqana, but he

reportedly told Lumbreras that he found sixteenth-to-eighteenth century colonial structures overlaying prehispanic constructions (Lumbreras 1981: 171). In fact, none of Vescelius’ work in Ayacucho was ever published by him, but he did make at least one presentation of it at a professional meeting (Vescelius 1970c).

Vescelius also worked at the large Middle Horizon capital of Huari (**Figure 5**) (MacNeish 1969: 7; Ravines 1970–1971: 54), mapping a portion of the site (Lynch 1971: 241; MacNeish, Nelken-Terner, and Garcia Cook 1970: 7) and excavating at the Ushpa Qoto portion of the site (**Figure 6**). Photographs of his excavation and a selection of the ceramic artifacts he found there are part of the Vescelius Collection in the AMNH (*vidimus*) (**Figures 7, 8**). Indeed, Vescelius was well-known among archaeologists for his hand-drawn maps (**Figure 9**) and exquisite artifact illustrations (**Figure 10**) but these, too, remain unpublished (Vescelius 1961a, 1964a, 1964b).

In the 1960s and 70s, most archaeologists maintained an almost cult-like personal austerity (Barford 2011: 221–222; *vidi* first author) (**Figure 11**). By contrast, Gary Vescelius attempted the life of a *bon vivant*. He rented a traditional luxurious mansion in Lima (**Figure 12**) and rumor has it that while in Vicus he hired an Indian to climb to a glacier each day to obtain ice for his Scotch. Thomas F. Lynch has mostly positive recollections of working with Vescelius in the Callejón de Huaylas (personal communication 2015), but Vescelius’ relations with Richard S. MacNeish seem to have turned sour (MacNeish, Nelken-Terner, and Garcia Cook 1970: 7).

Cusco

To judge from his slides at the AMNH, it is obvious that Vescelius visited almost all the major archaeological sites in Peru. He seems not to have done formal fieldwork in the Cusco Region, but he pondered the *ceques* of that city, a system of aligned Inca shrines (Burger and Lynch 1987: 2; Sullivan 1974).¹¹ Although he did not publish that work either, an article in *The New York Times* (Sullivan 1974), based on a lecture and interview by Vescelius, gives us a very good idea of his line of thought. Vescelius thought that the *ceques* marked a lunar calendar of twelve months with three weeks each. The weeks had variable numbers of days, but most weeks consisted of ten days. Those shrines maintained by lineages known as “Qallaw” were associated with the waxing moon, those known as “Payan” with the waning moon, while “Qollana” lineages were associated with shrines to the resplendent moon. Vescelius argued that this system pre-dated the Incas and linked symbols on Tiwanaku’s Gateway of the Sun with the Andean calendar.

Back to the Caribbean

It has already been mentioned that, as an undergraduate, Vescelius worked in the U.S. Virgin Islands. After his time in Peru he returned to the Islands as Territorial Archaeologist (1975–1979) (Vescelius 1975b, 1976b, 1977c, 1980b). Later he worked as a private consultant to the U.S. Navy, and was carrying out archaeological investigations on the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico at



Figure 5: Structures at the Huari site, Ayacucho Region, Peru, 1970. Photo by Gary S. Vescelius, courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.



Figure 6: Gary S. Vescelius's excavations at Ushpa Qoto sector of the Huari site, Ayacucho Region, Peru, 1970. Photo by Gary S. Vescelius courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.



Figure 7: Fine polychrome ceramic sherds found at the Huari site, Ayacucho Region, Peru, 1970. Photo by Gary S. Vescelius courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.



Figure 8: Sherds excavated by Gary S. Vescelius at the Ushpa Qoto sector of the Huari site, Ayacucho Region, Peru, 1970. Photo by Gary S. Vescelius courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.

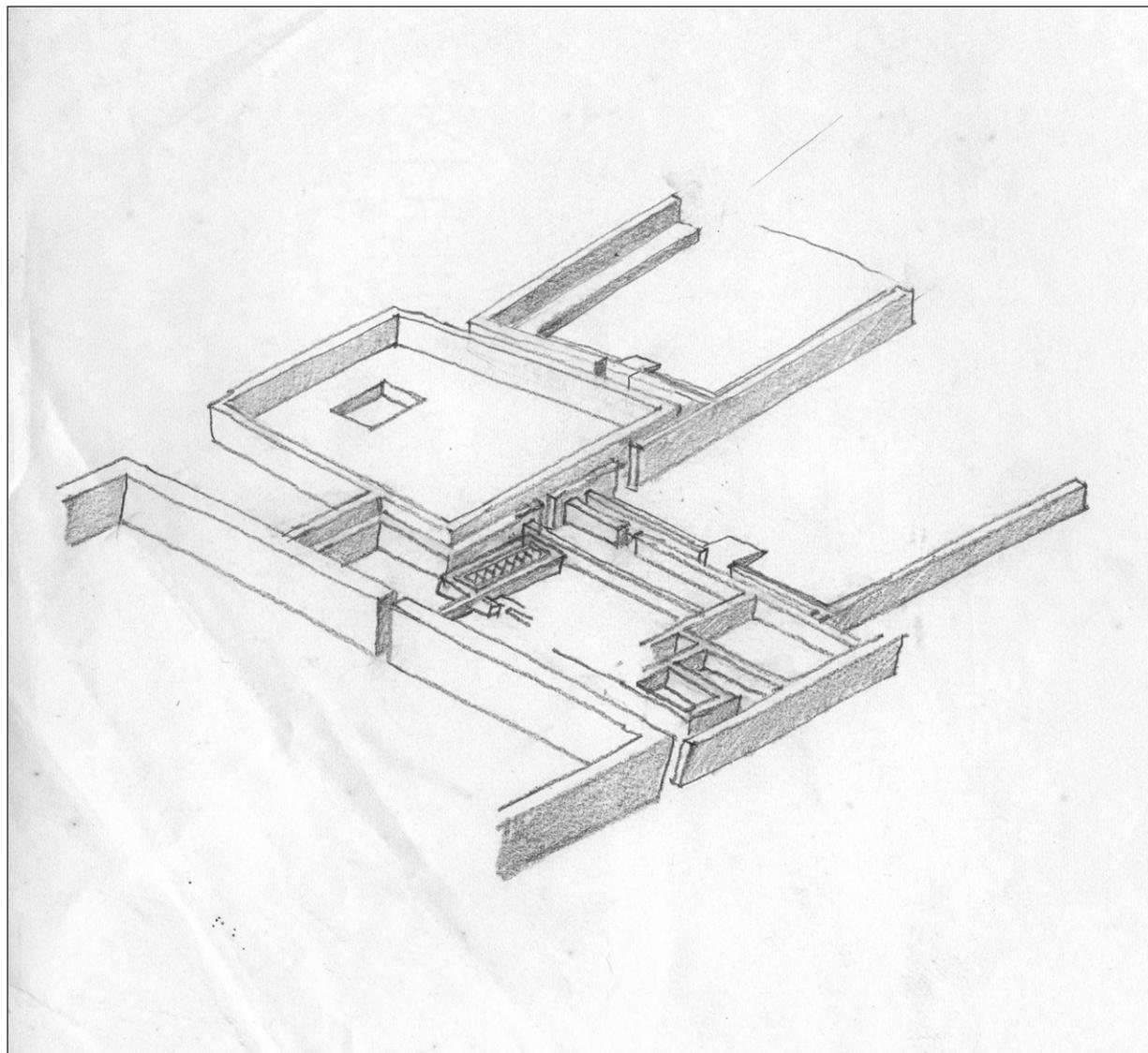


Figure 9: Portion of a plan by Gary S. Vescelius of an unknown site, courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.

the time of his death (Chapman 1983 [?]: 9). Vescelius worked to promote responsible archaeology in the Virgin Islands and beyond, which is ironic, given that he failed to publish the many excavations he undertook in Peru. Beginning in 1978, he helped to develop a for-credit college-level history course broadcast on Virgin Islands public television. He worked with high school students enrolled in the Antilles School on a youth conservation program. He was beginning to publish more frequently, albeit in somewhat ephemeral journals (Vescelius 1977b, 1977c).

Vescelius was an active participant in learned societies and it was through them that he seems to have primarily communicated his professional results. Evidently he was very “clubable”. He was the vice-president of The Metropolitan [New York] Archaeological Survey (1970). He was elected a member of the Institute of Andean Research (Letter from Gary Vescelius to E. Craig Morris, 27 November 1978, Vescelius file, E. Craig Morris Archive, Junius Bird Laboratory of South American Archaeology,

Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History, New York City) and was a fellow of the American Anthropological Association, as well as a fellow of the Virgin Islands Archaeological Society (List appearing on page 62 of volume 10 [1980] of the *Journal of the Virgin Islands Archaeology Society*). He was a member of the Explorers Club, the American Geographical Society, the Archaeological Institute of America, the New York State Archaeological Association, the Society for American Archaeology, and the Société des Américanistes de Paris. He often participated in the Congresses of the International Association of Caribbean Archaeology (Chapman 1983 [?]: 10). In addition to holding short-term teaching appointments at various colleges and universities, Vescelius educated the general public by leading tours (Anonymous 1969).

Vescelius was an astute critic (Vescelius 1966a, 1967) who helped to found the *Quarterly Review of Archaeology*, dedicated to in-depth analysis of current literature (Chapman 1983 [?]: 9). He had a talent for summarizing



Figure 10: Drawing by Gary S. Vesceilius of an Inca aryballo, courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.



Figure 11: Interior of hut at the Inca site of Huánuco Pampa, Huánuco Region, Peru. This photograph, taken in the 1970s, shows the conditions under which most archaeologists lived while in the field. The figure is Delfín Zúñiga Díaz, field and laboratory assistant to archaeologist Craig Morris. Photograph courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.



Figure 12: The salon of Gary S. Vesceius's house in Lima, Peru, 1964. Photograph courtesy of Thomas F. Lynch.

the technical work of others (Vescelius 1952b, 1957, 1981a, 1981b).

Conclusion

From this paper it should be clear that Gary Vescelius was enormously influential during his lifetime, and even after his death, especially in the fields of Peruvian and Caribbean archaeology. This was in spite of the fact that he did not complete his doctorate or hold any long-term, full-time positions, and that his publications are, at best, scant. He communicated his immense knowledge through conference papers and in private letters and conversations. His ephemeral communications, combined with his years of energetic fieldwork, have created problems for the archaeologists who followed him. Vescelius dug pits, sometimes large ones, in hundreds of sites, many quite important, and his collections are scattered. Such activity, of course, permanently alters the archaeological record, but Vescelius did not, for the most part, compensate for the damage he did to the integrity of sites by publishing the results of his explorations. Although others have been able to work with his collections (Covey 2000; Crock *et al.* 2008; Hardy 2009; Morse 2009), their full potential remains to be determined.

In the introduction to his bibliography of Virgin Island archaeology (Vescelius 1977a: 1) Vescelius stated the following concerning work in that part of the world:

... Most of the fieldwork has been of poor quality, few of the collections have ever been properly analyzed, and hardly any decent reports have been published on the results of research. A substantial amount of information, some of it very important, remains buried in field notes, manuscripts, theses or other documents not readily accessible even to a specialist.

Did Vescelius have his own research in mind? It is hard to think that he did not.

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Competing Interests

Monica Barnes is the principal editor of *Andean Past*, a voluntary position. Sumru Aricanli is a senior scientific assistant at the American Museum of Natural History, a paid position.

Author Note

All published sources cited in this paper have been verified. However, we have not been able to locate copies of all unpublished papers and reports known to have been written by Vescelius. We have identified them from various versions of his curriculum vita on file in the Vescelius Collection of the Anthropology Division of the American Museum of Natural History and from references to them in the published work of others. Many of these may now only exist as titles and/or as citations. We, nevertheless, thought it useful to begin the compilation of a list of Vescelius's unpublished papers to demonstrate the range of his knowledge and professional contacts.

Considerable uncataloged papers, photographs, and archaeological samples from Gary S. Vescelius are held by the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Records of the Vicos Project are held at Cornell University's Olin Library and some sherds from Vicos are at Dickinson College. Records of the Ayacucho Project directed by Richard S. MacNeish are held in the archives of the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. There are extant Vescelius materials in Arequipa, Peru, in Lima, and, most likely, in the U.S. Virgin Islands, but we have not been able to confirm details.

Notes

- ¹ The publication year of Chapman's obituary is uncertain. The only example we were able to find is a photocopy in the files of the late Craig Morris housed in the Junius Bird Laboratory of South American Archaeology in the Anthropology Division of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. This copy has not been annotated with the name of the publication and the year it appeared. However, William Chapman remembered the name of the newsletter but had not retained a personal copy. An interlibrary loan search was unsuccessful. Because Vescelius died in November 1982, it is likely, but not certain, that Chapman's obituary of Vescelius was published in 1983.
- ² These had been stored at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. As of 1991 eight whole pots were retained by Dickinson College. These include a possible colonial vessel; a Tiwanaku kero; a Nasca round-bottomed beaker; a Chucuito Inca plate with a catfish motif; a Late Intermediate Period carinated bowl; a zoomorphic effigy vessel; a round-bottom carinated bowl, possibly Amazonian; and a Curajon or Chiribaya open bowl with eight-pointed stars (Goldstein 1991: 3–4). Some sherds collected by Vescelius during the Vicos Project remain at Dickinson College (personal communication, Hendrik Van Gijsegem, 12 November 2015).
- ³ There are four New England museums that carry the name "Peabody". These are the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History in New Haven, Connecticut; Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology at the Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts; the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University

in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts.

- ⁴ Cornelius Osgood (1905–1985) was a curator of anthropology at the Yale Peabody Museum (1934–1973). He brought significant collections to the museum from his research expeditions to the Arctic, China, and Korea. Osgood may be best known for his research among the Athapaskan speaking people of interior Alaska and was also active in Connecticut archaeology. (<http://peabody.yale.edu/collections/archives/biography/cornelius-osgood> accessed 3 July 2015).
- ⁵ Scholars of the House were fourth year undergraduates of exceptional ability and maturity who were exempted from classes so that they could work full time on a special project (Goldfrank 1958, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1958/11/22/the-scholars-of-the-house-program/> accessed 25 October 2016). The program has since been discontinued.
- ⁶ When Vescelius returned to the Virgin Islands in the 1970s as Territorial Archaeologist he excavated the Prosperity Site on St. Croix and established a survey and site inventory of all the prehistoric sites on St. Croix. After his death this task was taken over by Barbara Johnston and Emily Lundberg (Morse 2009: 159).
- ⁷ Later G.I.S. survey by Meredith D. Hardy, combined with study of Vescelius's collection at Yale have been the basis of least cost path analysis, the reconstruction of the inter-island interaction sphere, and a model of the actions and behaviors involved in the processes of settlement and social organizational change in prehistoric St. Croix (Hardy 2009).
- ⁸ In 1942 Alexis Praus, working under the auspices of the Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, dug at a shell midden in Pine Orchard Swamp near Branford, Connecticut and deposited excavated materials at the Peabody. Vescelius himself excavated the Pine Orchard site and analyzed his own finds, as well as those of Praus, to fix the site in time and space. Non-intrusive European artifacts and cow bones suggest a seventeenth century occupation.
- ⁹ For an outline of temporal sequences and cultural periods current for the Peruvian cultural area at the time Vescelius was working in that country see Willey 1971: figures 3–6, 3–7, and 3–8. For an outline of major sites and styles as they were then known see Willey 1971: 76–193.
- ¹⁰ The Ayacucho Archaeological-Botanical Project followed MacNeish's very influential Tehuacan Valley Project conducted in central Mexico and was designed to study the transition from hunting and gathering to early agriculture (Byers 1967; Johnson 1972; MacNeish 1961; MacNeish *et al.*: 1967, 1972; MacNeish, Peterson, and Flannery 1970). The goal was to follow the same process in Ayacucho. Although three volumes on the work in Ayacucho were published (MacNeish *et al.* 1980, 1981, 1983) as well as annual reports (MacNeish, Nelken-Terner, and Garcia 1970, MacNeish 1969), and a short monograph (MacNeish *et al.* 1975) the full publication plan for the Ayacucho work was never completed.

- ¹¹ For major published interpretations of the *ceque* system see Bauer 1998 and Zuidema 1964.

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