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ANCIENT WEST MEXICAN CLOTHING AND ITS ECUADORIAN ORIGINS:
NEW EVIDENCE OF MARITIME CONTACTS (Precis only.)*

by

Patricia Rieff Anawalt

Evidence of ancient cultural contacts between coastal Ecuador and the mountains of West Mexico exists in clothing similarities between the two areas, namely tunic-like shirts and short breeches for males and a tropical mode of dress for females. This non-Mesoamerican attire is illustrated in the early sixteenth century codex *Relacion de Michoacan* and also appears on mortuary figurines from the deep shaft tombs of Ixtlan del Rio, Nayarit (400 B.C.- A.D. 400). Coeval prototypes of this West Mexican clothing occur archaeologically along that section of the Ecuadorian coast which was the homeland of long-distance merchant navigators. Their trade goods, described by the Spanish, included local-style garments made of wool, a fabric foreign to Mesoamerica. The adoption of this exotic apparel by the West Mexican elite implies an association of great worth and power with those who introduced it. That these agents were Ecuadorian maritime traders is further suggested by zoological evidence.*

*This presentation will appear in a forthcoming issue of *American Anthropologist*.