

# Toxic Pigment in a Capacocha Burial: Instrumental Identification of Cinnabar in Inca Human Remains from Iquique, Chile

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© 2018 University of Oxford We report on the analysis of a red pigment found in a lavish Inca burial from Cerro Esmeralda, Chile, associated with the human sacrifice of two young girls. The outcome shows that the red pigment is mainly cinnabar, with 95% of HgS content. Cinnabar is rarely found in the archaeological record of Chile. Thus, we propose that our results are another line of evidence supporting Iquique's Cerro Esmeralda inhumation as a unique Inca ritual. It was a special lower-elevation capacocha burial, most probably undertaken to politically and symbolically incorporate the coastal people into the Tawantinsuyo Empire.