





### **Painted Textile**

Peru, likely late Middle Horizon period (800-1000 CE)

Gift of Dr. Thomas Barbour, 1938. PM 38-51-30/1696

Courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, Harvard University

From the collections of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology

This happy, smiling face on an ancient textile from the coast of Peru was made in about 800-1000 C.E. Experts aren't sure if a sun is depicted and they might argue about whether the face is really smiling. But it seems reasonable to think that it is the sun, because of the rays, and that it is smiling too! The "stepped pyramid" motif, just below it, suggests that the sun is rising above a temple and the stepped designs in the corners may represent agricultural terraces. The waves at the edge of the textile complete the image to include both the ocean and land, the two great providers of food and, therefore, life, in ancient Peru and everywhere else.

**Harvard Museums of Science & Culture (HMSC)** is a partnership of four Harvard museums that present captivating programming for all ages and a dynamic array of permanent and changing exhibits. HMSC invites you to connect with Harvard University's distinctive collections and vital research on human civilizations, biodiversity, and the history of Earth and science.

Share your creations with us on social media **#ColorOurCollections** and **#HMSCconnects**

### **Continue exploring our museums:**

[HMSC connects!](#)

[Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments](#)

[Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East](#)

[Harvard Museum of Natural History](#)

[Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology](#)

**HMSC** HARVARD MUSEUMS OF SCIENCE & CULTURE

Copyright © 2020 The President and Fellows of Harvard College