

INCA RULE IN CASPANA: AN APPROACH TO ANDEAN POLITICAL THINKING (LOA RIVER, NORTHERN CHILE)¹

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Abstract

This paper presents the archaeological record for five late pre-Hispanic sites located in Caspana, in order to discuss Inca expansion in the upper river Loa basin (Atacama Desert). A first categorization of these sites enables to establish a distinction between: a) locals settlements with low presence of inca features –the case of Aldea Talikuna and Estancia Mulorojte; b) pure inca settlements, which include Cerro Verde, Incahuasi Inca and Vega Salada –mineral, agricultural and/or cattle sites, and c) shared settlements where both identities are displayed in a symbolically laden context –like Los Abuelos cemetery. Our analysis of the material culture associated to these sites suggests a set of significant differences and similarities that would be the result of a direct and planned ruling strategy deployed by the Inca State through elaborately complex symbolical means.

Key words: Inca rule – Caspana – archaeology of power.

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~ INTRODUCTION

The abundance of Inca remains – or remains associated with their expansion – over a large part of Chilean territory has made the Inca problem one of the most attractive subjects for Chilean archaeologists. Nevertheless it has received only indirect or occasional attention and there is a lack of continuity in existing studies; these factors contribute to the poor exploitation of the opportunities which these material remains offer and of the abundant documentary and oral history about the Andean world. This absence of a research line translates into minimal comprehension of the impact of the Tawantinsuyu in the country, as has been remarked on:

“The information provided in this account demonstrates how little we yet know about the Inca occupation of the region, and how much ground-work is needed to obtain data which will enable us to understand this phase of regional prehistory and the different types of strategy used by the Incas to occupy this space. A long-term programme with the participation of several work-groups using research strategies and techniques incorporating common methodological criteria would probably make significant progress” (Castro 1992: 152).

This lack presents the need for systematic reflection on the dynamic of the encounter between two different groups in the context of the expansion of a state like the Tawantinsuyu, and with a concrete spatial referent such as, in our case, the highland ravines of the upper Loa. This will enable us to consider different planes of interpretation, from historical and cultural (expansion

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stages) to more substantive (political and symbolic). In our opinion this archaeological work can be supported by the complementary data found in the large number and variety of colonial documents, and also the valuable oral history extant in the region on the “Rey Inka” (Inca King).

This is the context of the work presented below, which reports on the formulation of the problem and the progress that we have made in interdisciplinary research.⁴

Archaeology and prehistory of Caspana

The district of Caspana is located 85 km north-west of the city of Calama, El Loa Province, II Region, Chile (22° 20' S, 68° 14' W), at an altitude of 3,200 masl (Figure 1). The territorial boundaries of the indigenous community of Caspana are the mountains of Tatio in the east, the Salado River to the north (boundary with Toconce), the confluence of the Salado and Caspana Rivers in the west (boundary with Aiquina) and the community of Río Grande in the south.

Based on archaeological research done in the location since 1994, a chronological-cultural sequence has been defined with special emphasis on the farmer-potter periods (Adán and Uribe 1995; Adán *et al.* 1995). The results of this sequence enable us to consider the Inca problem with a general knowledge of the cultural history of Caspana.

In this picture we distinguish a first period which we have called Early Traditions, characterised by scarce occupation of the site compared with contemporaneous events in the middle Loa and the Salar de Atacama basin (Pollard 1982 [1970]; Bittman *et al.* 1978), and in Caspana itself in later periods. For the period in question, living sites were identified in the high mesetas with circular, semi-sunken or depressed floor plans, close to permanent watercourses. Two of these of considerable size are Turi-

cuna and Early Incahuasi. The pattern of construction on these sites evinces a relation with early sites round the Salar de Atacama, for example in the Quebrada de Tulan (Núñez 1981).

Another type of site with occupation that can be assigned to the Early Traditions are the shelters associated with manifestations of rock art in the ravines (e.g. Las Oquedades, Doña Marta and El Pescador).

These two kinds of site share stone and pottery materials, the particular distributions of which suggest a differential use of space directly related with the activities of hunter-gatherer groups which follow a migration circuit but present some degree of incipient sedentism or semi-sedentism (Carrasco 1996). The scarce ceramics recovered from these sites, although they can be assigned to the polished black tradition, have stronger links with the Formative periods than the classical Middle Period of San Pedro de Atacama (Sinclair *et al.* 2000).

In short, the early potter occupation of Caspana indicates the presence of human groups of the hunter-gatherer tradition belonging to the Late Archaic and/or the Early Formative Period. Their movement from shelter to shelter was organised and they maintained wide mobility circuits linking them to the Chiu Chiu Complex and developments in Salar de Atacama, settling and occupying other territories not only to obtain raw materials for artefacts but also to make use of grazing grounds (Carrasco 1996). Some of the datings obtained for these occupations, for example, 565±150 AD in the Early Incahuasi site (UCTL 727), indicate the persistence of these traditions in the upper Loa at a time when complex farmer-potter social formations were developing in the middle Loa and San Pedro de Atacama, during what is known as the Middle Atacameño Period. The persistence of these traditions is doubtless due to the ecological conditions around Caspana where specialised knowledge is required for farming, which was the basic productive activity of Middle Period societies.

During the Late Intermediate, this situation appears to be reversed, with more intense occupation on the high ground of the territory in question. In parallel with the more intense occupation, we see in Caspana a diversification of the spaces used and the types of settlement.

4 The research team consisted of archaeologists Victoria Castro, Varinia Varela, Patricia Ayala, Carlos Carrasco and Flora Vilches, and ethnohistorian Viviana Manríquez. We also consulted with specialists such as Joyce Strange, in physical anthropology, the geologist Alejandro Díaz, on mining and geology, and the agronomist Marcelo Gamboa for agronomic and hydric resources.

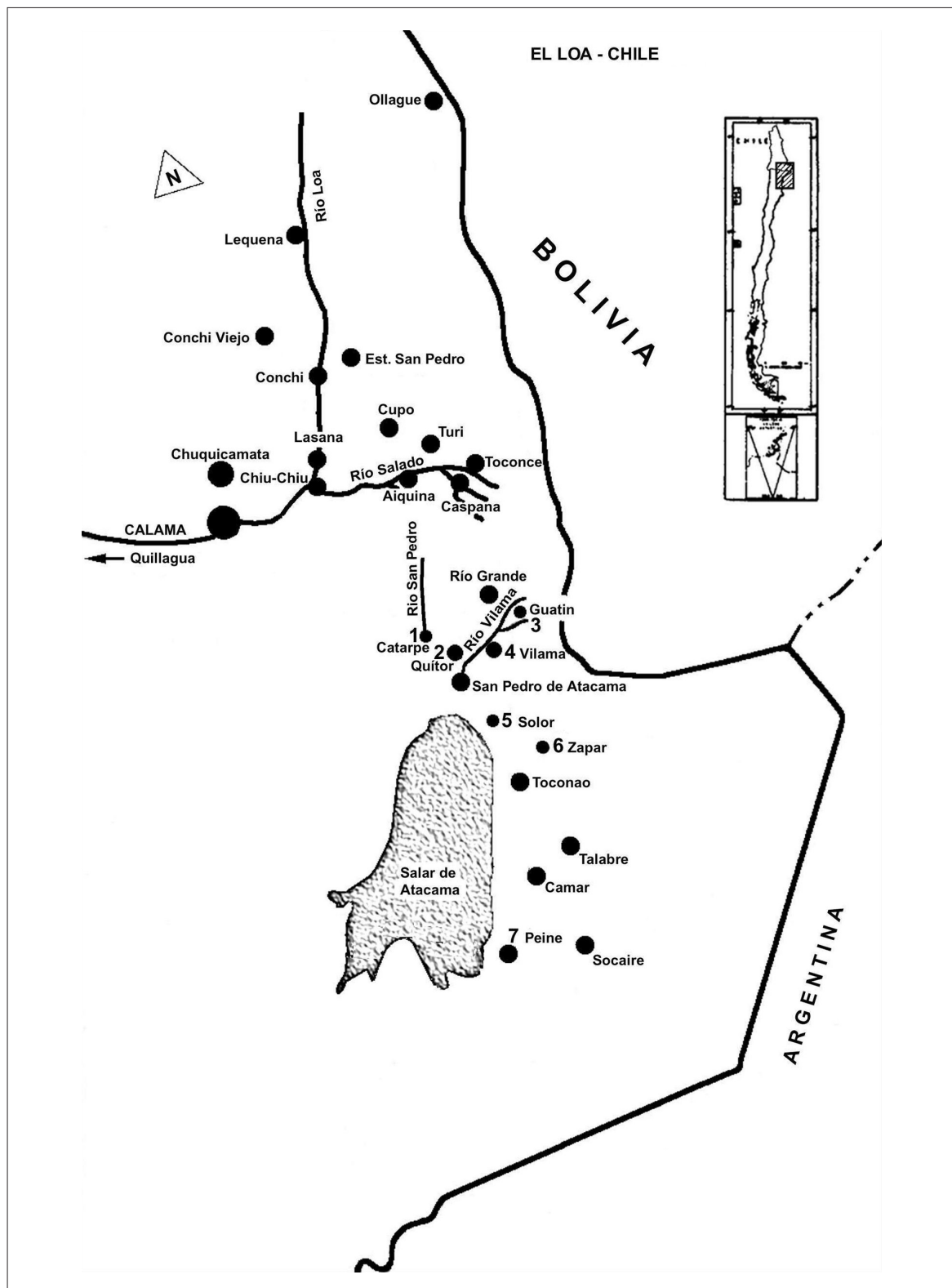


Figure 1. Map of the Atacama Region and the principal locations mentioned in the text.

An important concentration of population is recorded in Aldea Talikuna, in the Quebrada de Talikuna, with absolute dates from 1100 AD to 1450 AD; we see seasonal use of different sectors associated with extensive fields for cultivation and/or grazing, for example in Estancia Mulorojte; and both agglutinated and dispersed cemeteries are found. The Los Abuelos cemetery is an important expression of the occupation of the Quebrada de Caspana, probably related with a previous settlement on the site where Pueblo Viejo, of colonial origin, stands today. It is clear that the ravines and all permanent freshwater courses were occupied, as well as the area of Cablor and the high mesetas in general, since intense farming was carried on complemented by traditional grazing.

This time the pottery present in the settlements indicates the existence of an intense interaction in the Loa-San Pedro sphere, closely connected with neighbouring developments in the Southern Altiplano and North-western Argentina.

As we have proposed before (Adán and Uribe 1995; Uribe and Adán 1995), these are complex societies whose members know and understand the environment which they occupy and have the necessary technologies to live off it. The material record indicates societies which share a common substrate in a very extended territory, closer to or further from a few centres which have been considered cultural centres of gravity. In this sense, Caspana falls into the highland tradition where the altiplano culture merges with the strictly "Atacameño", making this its most successful period of development – as can be clearly seen from the monumental Pucara de Turi nearby.

These territories which, as we have said, are intensely occupied by societies with quite complex organisations, no doubt formed a magnetic attraction for the Tawantinsuyu, whose presence is clearly attested in the Late Period. Different material modes of Inca penetration, which certainly coincided with different domination strategies, are recorded in Caspana. The first is exclusively Inca, and the settlements are therefore found in the vicinity of mines and farming and grazing lands. In these sites (e.g. Cerro Verde, Incahuasi Inca and Vega Salada), architectural features are found which are highly diagnostic of their style (platform or ushnu, canchas or compound rectangular perimeters (CRP), storehouses and silos or collca),

associated with manifestations of rock art which often can also be assigned to the Inca horizon. In parallel, Inca influence is found in local settlements with intense prior occupation, as in Aldea Talikuna where we find Inca ceramics and certain architectural elements, with dates close to 1450 AD for little towers of the chullpa type. Inca expansion is also recorded in Los Abuelos cemetery where we find restricted burial areas with ceramic and metal offerings which, in contrast to the local settlements, clearly match the canons of Cusco.

Finally, archaeological occupations are present in and around Caspana up until the Early Colonial Period, when previous settlements were re-used to a slight extent as is shown by later dates obtained for the Aldea Talikuna and Estancia Chita sites. In this period we see a weakening of pre-Hispanic population centres, and the resulting fragmentation of settlement systems. This situation undoubtedly represents a way of life which is gradually disintegrating, resulting finally in the "reductions" (indigenous reserves) known as "Indian Villages", as is indicated in the colonial documentation of the area. This recognises only two important populations in the study area, the villages of Aiquina and Caspana, which around 1622 were represented by the same curaca or indigenous authority (Manríquez 1999-2000).

The Inca problem in the Norte Grande (extreme north) of Chile

The various archaeological and historical works referring to the Inca problem in what is today Chilean territory express a barely discussed model which stigmatises the region extending from Arica to the Cachapoal River as a marginal area of Tawantinsuyu expansion and dominion. The presence of the Empire, according to these interpretations, is generally effected through other populations. The origin of this conception is to be found in the early days of archaeology as a scientific discipline in Chile, and it left a strong mark on later reflections on the subject (Uribe 1999).

The historian Barros Arana, in his *Historia de Chile*, is responsible for spreading the idea that the Inca Empire introduced civilisation into these territories, previously inhabited only by a series of primitive, barbarian populations (Latcham 1928). Latcham's pioneering archaeo-

logical work challenged Barros Arana's thesis, sustaining on the contrary the existence of important local cultural developments and minimising the impact originally attributed to the Tawantinsuyu. Latcham's profound heritage in the discipline has influenced later work on the problem, from Mostny (1949, 1971) down to the present, popularising this poor image of Inca influence on Chilean territory. There is moreover a mistaken view which uses the Central Andes as a referent; the characteristics of this region and the monumental nature of its cultural developments cast those from further south into the shade (C. González 1996; Uribe 1999). It is in this framework then that specialist literature on the problem has developed.

Llagostera's thesis (1976) marks a fundamental milestone by assessing Inca expansion into the western slopes of the southern Andes, presenting an integrated view and applying to the study area the postulates of Murra (1975) on vertical control of the maximum number of ecological floors. Thus Inca domination would use an "archipelago" infrastructure, represented by subject peoples such as the Aymara (established before the Empire). Some islands in the archipelago would no doubt become more important than others. In this context, Llagostera likewise suggests that the position of the Inca Horizon and local developments in the timescale (Late Intermediate and Late Periods) should be reconsidered, seeing them as synchronic rather than sequential. This criticism of the excessive simplification of currently accepted chronological sequences introduced the necessary complexity into discussion of the Late Period, recognising the social dynamic which existed in multi-ethnic territories.

In addition to Llagostera's work, some interesting approaches to this subject in the study area can be found in Núñez and Dillehay (1995) and the historical perspective proposed by Silva (1985). According to the circular mobility model (Núñez and Dillehay 1995), the expansion of the Tawantinsuyu would have made use of the efficient network of social relations, complementary economics and caravan traffic which existed between the highland and lowland chiefdoms. By administering the most prestigious altiplano axes first, they would obtain indirect control over the altiplano chiefdoms of the periphery and on the other side of the puna. The Incas optimised the exploitation of resources, both those used by the local populations and those unknown to them, and encoura-

ged the movement of goods as a way of integrating these groups into their system.

The general summary offered by Silva (1985) alludes to the chronology of Inca expansion into Chilean territory and suggests three moments. The incorporation of the study area would have occurred in the second of these, under the government of Topa Inca Yupanque. With respect to the means by which the area was incorporated into the Empire, the author adopts Llagostera's thesis to explain the Inca presence in the area of the Tarapacá valleys, while for the Atacama zone he suggests imposition by force, implying military conquest. The presence of diagnostic architecture and other artefacts has been systematically used to define the Inca presence. Based on an exhaustive analysis of the architectural record, Raffino (1981) defines the first, second and third order infrastructure features and the furnishings present in various combinations in settlements in the Tawantinsuyu sphere described in his work. This summary is a basic contribution which offers the possibility of making comparisons, and is of great use in field research. He also sustains that here the "qualitative and quantitative recurrence of archaeological proofs is of great importance, specifically in the imperial infrastructure and the vestiges of mining operations" (Raffino 1981: 248). This situation is quite compatible with the archaeological record in Caspana, where three of the installations recognised as Inca are directly associated with mineral extraction sources.

Thus the models of vertically complementary ecologies, commercial caravans, military force and metal accumulation have been the most popular arguments in discussing the problem of the Incas in Chile, especially in the Norte Grande. For example, the presence of the Tawantinsuyu in the Sierra de Arica is assessed through the ideas postulated by Llagostera (1976), with the affirmation that the north of Chile was brought under Inca influence by altiplano populations (Muñoz and Chacama 1993). Settlements under the rule of the Tawantinsuyu, largely concentrated in the mountains, would therefore enable the Empire to exercise control over important local economic resources and the movement of goods, as well as controlling the coast-altiplano traffic routes.

Further south, in the oases of San Pedro de Atacama, the Inca presence has been treated by numerous research-

chers over time (Latham 1928; Mostny 1971; L. Núñez 1992; P. Núñez 1993). According to Núñez (1992), Inca rule in this territory would have become effective during the Solor Phase by indirect means, with Inca controllers arriving not directly from Cusco but from their administrative centres in the altiplano: “They do not exercise direct military and cultural dominion, since we see no evidence of military conflicts or the imposition of a cultural model” (Núñez 1992: 73). Thus the Inca occupation emphasises a political rather than a cultural strategy, based on alliances with the Atacameño authorities. This researcher considers that the Empire was interested in the inter-regional traffic to the administrative centres on the altiplano, where the increased scale of production optimised the generation of excess and the circulation of goods for the reproduction of the Cusco state.

In this area, the Loa River basin contains an important series of records of Tawantinsuyu settlements mentioned in the specialist literature for different epochs; their presence is recorded along almost the whole length of the river, as well as the San Pedro River and Salado River sub-regions (Castro 1992). In the latter, the work started in the Pucara de Turi has given rise to various papers addressing the Inca occupation of the highlands of the Loa basin, of which we will mention a few interesting examples.

Aldunate (1993) postulated three archaeological phases to systematise the constant occupation of the settlement during the Late Intermediate Period. According to this author, the Turi 2 Phase (1350-1550 AD) represents “contact between the Turi 1 Phase and the Altiplano Tradition or Toconce Phase, which at this time would have occupied the area of the intermediate ravines of the Salado River basin. The presence of the Tawantinsuyu is clearly noticeable during this phase, having arrived early through the Altiplano Tradition (Aldunate 1993: 61). Cornejo (1995) offers an interpretative synthesis, integrating the whole upper Loa region and the problem of the relationship between local and foreign. He proposes that the Inca occupation of this space differs from that of the local population and the Tawantinsuyu in other places, determined by state interests in this sector: on the one hand to exploit mining resources and on the other to control the route to the south. In this region the Inca occupation, which was clearly planned, took the form

of a line oriented north-south in an area above 3,000 masl. This would bring some sites along the banks of the Loa into their sphere, as well as strategic points in the highland ravines from which flowed tributaries of the river. He adds that a massive population presence would not be necessary to sustain the occupation of the space; this obviously implies other domination mechanisms, one of the most important of which would be architecture as a signal of Inca appropriation of the local space. Taking their cue from the presence of Inca architecture in Pucara de Turi, Gallardo et al. (1995) go more deeply into the nature of Inca rule over the local populations of the region. They consider the presence of Inca architecture to be a political expression, since the settlement presents:

“a broad set of constructional and stylistic differences – local and foreign – which we suppose to be the expression of social tension, a cultural relationship displaying the exercise by the Incas of their power of dominion” (Gallardo et al. 1995: 151).

Based on the archaeological record and ethno-historical information, they identify a set of relationships which manifest cultural decisions, organising a spatial web of significant acts for the Inca appropriation strategy. According to the authors, the Inca architecture found in the pucara suggests that:

“this material act represented appropriation of the space under the aegis of a foundational concept of Andean causality (tecci), a category whose archaeological expression would be related with the presence of foundations or callancahuasi in Inca constructions. This set of evidence would indicate that the Inca materialised their power of dominion by building on a previously constructed space, establishing a new order through an act of cultural re-founding which ideologically frames the “other” within their own history.

[The Incas] establish a relation of neighbourhood with the local, but at the same time deploy a set of differences which impose a respectful distance from their material surroundings [...] to legitimise their dominion in social matters, the Incas must establish hegemony over the sacred, over the spaces which the inhabitants of the pucara dedicate to ritual” (Gallardo et al. 1995: 169).

Caspana in the Tawantinsuyu sphere

Researches in Caspana enable us to distinguish a diffe-

rentiated distribution of the archaeological sites of the Late Period (Figure 2). On first consideration, the following site categories were identified, based on which we began our reflection on the Inca occupation and which we characterised in depth at the time:

1) Sites definable as villages of the local population, which combine elements of the desert and altiplano traditions (Schiappacasse et al. 1989). They are of differing sizes and are found within the altitude gradient above 3,000 masl, associated with the exploitation of their farming and animal-rearing resources. The record contains only a few fragments of ceramics and certain architectural features assignable to the Inca Horizon.

2) Sites with indisputable Inca architecture, distant from local villages and in direct association with mining and farming spaces. The pottery presents heterogeneous components combining local, foreign and Inca ceramics (Yavi, Gentilar etc.); rock art manifestations are found with stiff, linear camelids, and they are connected by an Inca road, consisting of major road networks running north-south and minor ones running east-west.

3) Finally, sites with open expression of local, foreign and Inca elements in a closed but "transcendent" context, such as a funerary setting. This is the case of Los Abuelos cemetery, where the offerings in certain tombs, and other artefacts, present local ceramics with influences which may include the altiplano, local Inca, foreign Inca and/or perhaps Cusqueño. This situation will define the space as a privileged meeting point of several cultural manifestations, where the expression of differences is acceptable.

Local population settlements

The first is Aldea Talikuna⁵ built on the slope of the south bank of the Quebrada de Talikuna, north-east of the Caspana River, 22° 19'S, 68° 12' W). The absolute

5 Before our work, this settlement had been studied by various investigators, including Le Paige (1958), Núñez (1965) and Barón (1979).

6 The record of structures of this kind, made by Ayala (2000a and 2000b), indicated that there are 18 structures of average height 90 to 185 cm, with circular, ellipsoid and rectangular plans, some of the latter being double. The floors are made of flat or round stones, or the living rock. The doorways are oriented in different directions, but south-east facing doorways predominate.

datings that we have obtained indicate that it was occupied during the Late Intermediate and Late Periods: 1305 AD (UCTL 723; 690ff70 AP), 1465 AD (UCTL 724; 530±60 AP) and 1608 AD (UCTL 722; 835±90 AP).

In general terms, this settlement has been described as a village on a hillside (see plan in Adán 1999: Fig. 2) consisting of three built-up sectors (Le Paige 1958; Adán et al. 1995; Adán 1999; Ayala 2000a, and 2000b). In the lower part a farming sector can be made out, characterised by a complex system of crop terraces or platforms which extends well beyond the village both upstream and downstream. This system is crossed by a series of longitudinal and transversal channels displaying significant knowledge of hydraulics. Immediately above this sector is the residential area, separated from the farming area by the main channel which runs below the first structures. We note the presence of architectural assemblages on a rectangular plan, which might be domestic spaces, and a second type of structure built on the chullpa pattern (Figure 3), used as shrines, stores and even burial sites (Aldunate and Castro 1981; Ayala 2000a and 2000b).⁶ Finally, in the higher part there are other, similar constructions, built against great blocks of rock as in Los Abuelos cemetery; these are either stores or burial sites.

Today we know that Talikuna consists of 151 dry-stone architectural structures, generally of rectangular and sub-rectangular plan and irregular outline. Their areas range between 1.69 m² and 88.66 m², the majority being between 7.50 m² and 38 m². The functions of these constructions include dwelling spaces, inter-building spaces, terracing, stores, chullpa-type structures and corrals (animal pens). Some architectural features of interest for the Inca problem are the niches, stone-lintelled doorways, stairs, poyos and the lines of buried slabs forming boxes. The absence of a perimeter wall is striking (Adán 1999).

As in other contemporary settlements in Caspana, and much of the Andean world, the architecture of Talikuna – unlike Inca architecture – betrays spontaneous growth, with no general plan established from the outset, just as local villages are built today (Agurto 1987). Nevertheless, this does not mean that no specialised knowledge was used in its construction. As we have said, making this ravine habitable – and the highland ravines of the region in general – requires suitable knowledge and technology

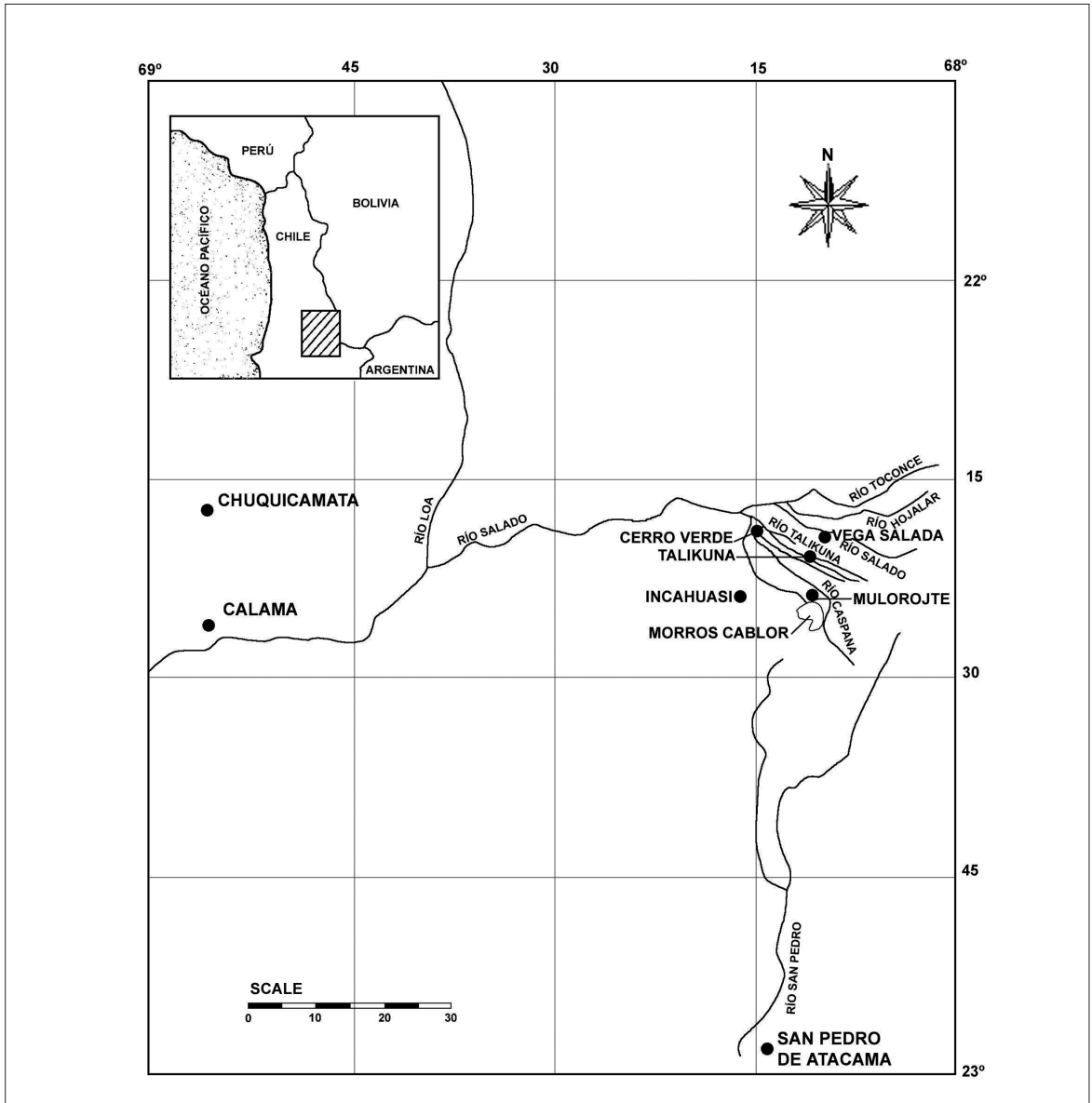


Figure 2. Map of Caspana with the sites mentioned in the text.

which at some point will require specialists. Talikuna is a site of regular size composed of five architectural conglomerates, each consisting of several domestic units; it must be appreciated from a diachronic perspective (Adán 1999).

In the first stage,⁷ six rectangular and three sub-circular or chullpa-type enclosed spaces were excavated. This material gave us a first impression of the pottery distribution (Ayala 2000a). A general approach to the Inca material recovered indicated a clear predominance of Turi Smooth

Red and its functional variant Smooth Grey, which together represented 67% of the sample. Next in proportion are Aiquina plates or bowls, 15.5%, and Dupont pieces, 5%. Below these are Turi Coarse Red and Smooth Brown with around 1%; altiplano types like Hedionda, Yavi etc. do not exceed 0.5%, likewise Turi Red Coated.⁸

7 FONDECYT Project 1940097.

8 The ceramic typology used in this work is based on the work of Varela (1992) in Pucara de Turi. For further details see Varela et al. (1993).



Figure 3. Chullpa-type structure.

Later, in the second season, a random sample of 20% was selected from these units (17 structures) collected at the surface. Their typology confirmed and enriched the results obtained previously. Nineteen ceramic groups are represented in Talikuna, with almost exclusive predominance of Loa-San Pedro pottery (Figure 4). There are vessels of considerable size and both simple and complex restricted shapes, belonging to the Turi Smooth Red type (over 33% of the sample)⁹, accompanied by smaller, unrestricted Aiquina pieces (over 23%). Thus the principal functions represented at the site are domestic, directly related with the preparation, conservation, storage and serving of solid and liquid foods (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). The rest of the ceramic material is distributed among a wide variety of types; although they are analogous with the above types in morphofunctional terms, they have particular temporal, cultural and symbolic connotations. In the 5-10% range we find Turi Coarse Red and Smooth Red Coated from Loa-San Pedro. In the 0-5% range we find a larger typological variety with Hedionda and Yavi types and local expressions of the al-

9 This group of ceramics includes cups or basins, bowls, pans and especially pitchers.

tiplano component; the rest of the Loa-San Pedro ceramic types like Turi Smooth Grey, Dupont, Turi Polished Red, San Pedro Violet Red and the local Inca Turi Red Coated Exterior-Smooth Black Interior; and finally, the Turi and Lasana protoethnographic component (Uribe and Carrasco 1999).

Practically no stone material was detected at the surface, except for remains of copper ore and a large and varied quantity of milling artefacts (e.g. mortars and pestles, cup marks in the rock), which due to their considerable size are still in situ and have not yet been closely analysed.

Six relief units or panels of rock art were found in the village. They are located in the centre of the village and consist of carvings on small blocks of stone forming part of the walls of some of the enclosed spaces, or to a lesser extent on movable rocks now placed on some of the pathways. The carvings are mainly representations made by chipping deeply into the rock surface. In one of the blocks there is a very deep drilled hole with smaller pinholes arranged around it, evidently not at random. The other panels present thin, deep, vertical lines, either

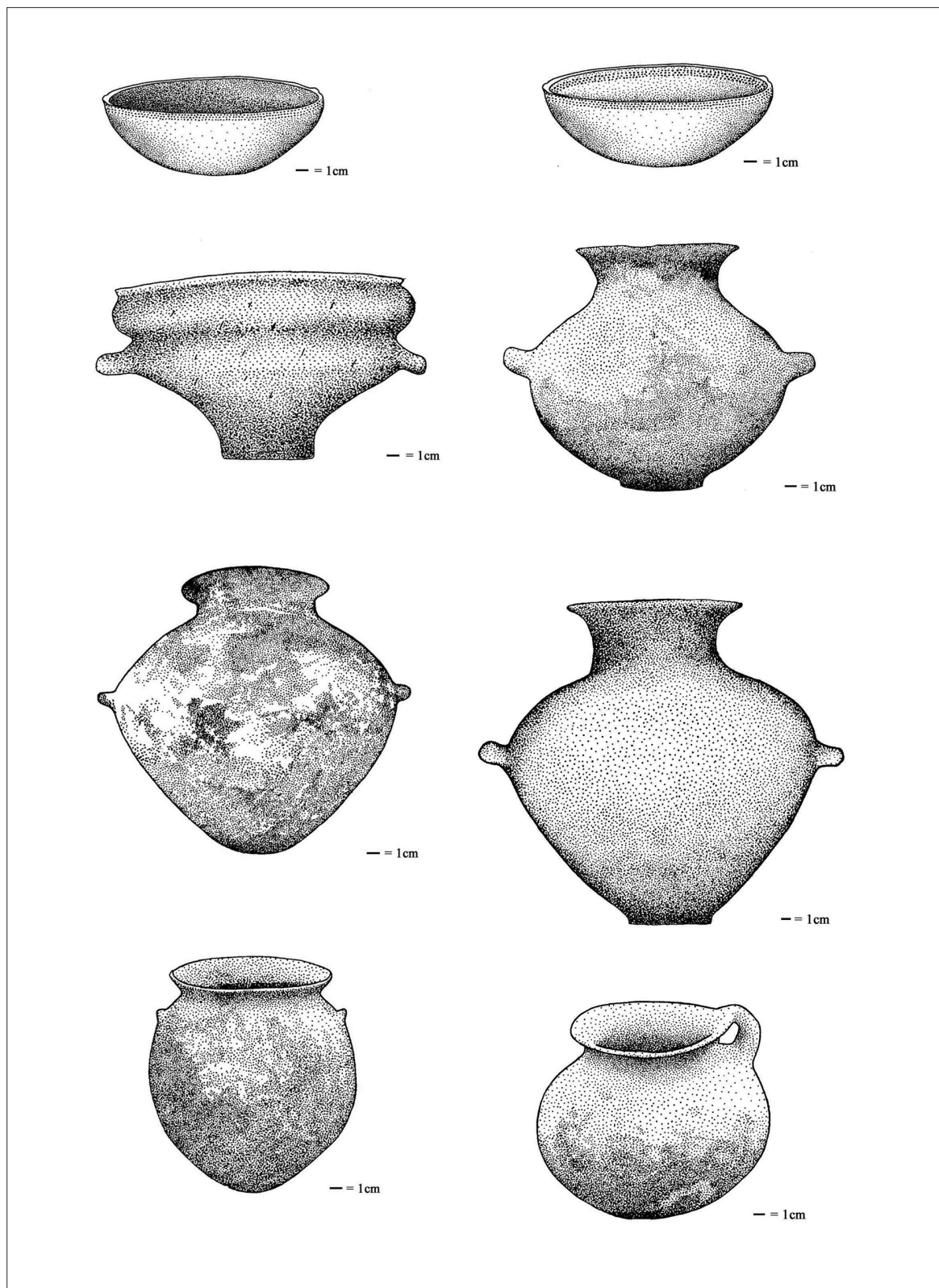


Figure 4. Loas-San Pedro ceramic component.

straight or slightly curved (Vilches and Uribe 1999). This Talikuna rock art, which is fairly scarce, is similar to some of the varieties defined for Pucara de Turi and other variants which were only systematised later (Gallardo and Vilches 1995).¹⁰

A second site in this first category (local occupations with slight presence of diagnostically Tawantinsuyu material) is Estancia Mulorojte. This site is also set on a hillside (see plan in Adán 1999: Fig. 3) and consists of the agglutinated forms of 66 architectural structures. It is smaller than Talikuna, suggesting also a lower population density, probably seasonal as is the case of modern estancias (herders' summer camps). The only dating is 1240 AD (UCTL 725; 755±80 AP), confirming that it was occupied during the Late Intermediate and belonged to the local populations of that epoch.

The site is located in the north-eastern foothills of Morros de Cablor, at 22° 23' S, 68° 9' W). There is a small cirque at 3,800masl, which forms the head of the Quebrada de Mulorojte. Three km away are the Vegas del Cablor, and at a similar distance the Vegas de Chita and Coyer Lake, which forms the principal tributary of the Caspana River. Thus Mulorojte was built on a site associated with important spaces for high altitude stock-raising, thanks to its grazing potential which to this day supports summer-grazing systems; what is more, it lent itself to seasonal exploitation for agriculture (e.g. potatoes and quinoa). We have suggested that Estancia Mulorojte is related with grazing activities considering its proximity to the vegas (marshy areas), and for some dryland agriculture, to judge by the tool fragments and mortars found at the surface. Fields divided by pircas (dry-stone walls) have been identified close to the site, which could have been used as animal corrals or traps, or for a crop which tolerated the altitude and did not require artificial irrigation.

It is also suggestive to think of the association of the site with the Morros de Cablor as guardian mountains or local divinities, just as they are considered today by the indigenous community; the site is a sort of obligatory stop in the climb to the summit, where ceremonies linked to water and earth are held.¹¹

Like Talikuna, Mulorojte is built on a large system of terracing where rectangular plan structures, of varying sizes and with single-thickness walls, can be observed. There are also a few sub-circular constructions which are architecturally reminiscent of *chullpa*-type structures. The space is organised in three sectors (Adán 1999). The first is the lowest sector, now cut by a vehicle road. It is dominated by large structures which would have served as corrals. Smaller enclosed spaces are built against them which in some cases appear to be dwellings and in others *chiqueros*.¹² Some interesting Late features in the lower part of the site are a room with a niche, others with *poyos*, "boxes" in the floors and a few double walls, although most are single and rustic. Looking at the organisation of this sector today, the site appears to be the expression of various construction events with successive modifications to the buildings. The second sector is above the first; it consists of four levels of terracing which also display the pattern of a small, sub-rectangular enclosed space with a much larger, irregular structure serving as a corral. It is undoubtedly the continuation of the lower sector, forming another unit very similar to the building system of the current estancias.

Finally we have recognised an eastern sector higher up. It is rather confused, consisting of a group of constructions which differ from the types defined above. The only recognisable structures are a small group of *chullpa*-type structures at the summit, and various scattered areas of terracing.

Turning to the pottery, the first excavations dug in the three sectors indicate, in general terms, the predominance of Turi Smooth Red (42%), followed by Aiquina bowls (14.8%) and Turi Smooth Grey pots (11.6%). Dupont forms only 3.6% of the sample, while altiplano and Red Coated ceramics were both less than 1%. Nevertheless there is considerable representation of Turi Red Coated Exterior-Smooth Black Interior (around 8.5%), confirming that the site formed part of the Tawantin-

10 The absence of iconographical correlates for these figures was the reason why they were excluded from the typology devised for the Pucara de Turi (Gallardo and Vilches 1995).

11 One of the routes used today to reach the summit of Cablor passes through this sector, according to ethnographical information obtained in Caspana.

12 The term *chiquero* is used to designate small structures built against larger corrals, serving as a refuge for females giving birth and small animals.

suju, based on the “aribaloid” forms of these ceramics and the dating of 1650 AD for Pucara de Turi (Varela et al. 1993). Surface collection in 20% of the site structures reaffirmed this situation, with predominance of the Loa-San Pedro component being observed. In particular, once again we identified the presence of Turi Smooth Red, Coarse Red, Aiquina, Turi Smooth Grey, Dupont, Turi Polished Red Coated, Red Coated Exterior, San Pedro Violet Red and Red Coated Exterior-Smooth Black Interior, but this time no altiplano samples from southwestern Bolivia or the Argentinean puna were recorded; on the other hand, ceramic fragments of the Early component were found, consisting of types characteristic of the Late Formative in this area (Sinclair *et al.* 2000).

Meanwhile, the stone material at Mulorojte indicates that the categories of artefacts most represented here are un-retouched secondary flakes, stone tools and primary flakes. Together these denote a tendency to secondary carving activities, although possible agricultural work using the stone tools cannot be ruled out (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). The most popular raw materials are basalt and andesite. Part of the former comes from Early manifestations, earlier than the Late Intermediate occupation, as the pottery also suggests.

Unlike Talikuna, no rock art was recorded in Estancia Mulorojte or its immediate surroundings.

To sum up, the two sites described indicate a characteristic practice of the local populations in the Late Intermediate Period of occupying different ecological spaces at different times, with sites of an architectural complexity appropriate to their traditional domestic functions (dwellings, farming, stock-rearing) and a pottery record which fixes their identity, while influenced by major intercultural relations. Likewise, in both cases the Late component is evident from scarce but diagnostic pottery types assignable to the Inca Horizon, fairly frequent in chullpa-type structures, which have not yet been evaluated for information on the period in question.

Inca installations

The second set of sites studied includes Cerro Verde, Incahuasi Inca and Vega Salada; like the first group they contain local pottery, however they differ radically in that

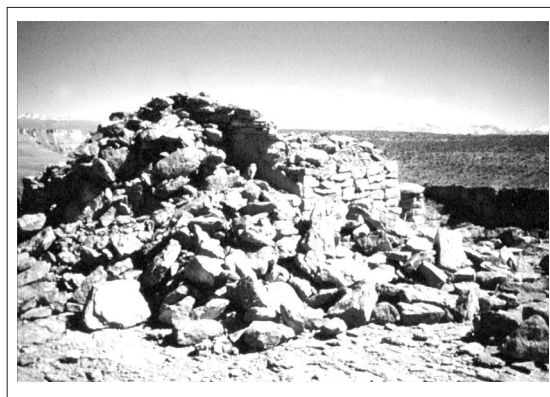


Figure 5. Ushnu at Cerro Verde.

they present construction proper to the Tawantinsuyu. The Cerro Verde site is located on a flat area of the mountain after which it is named, at the confluence of the Curte and Caspana Rivers. The altitude is 3,140 masl and the coordinates are 22° 18' S, 68° 14' W.¹³

The settlement has three sectors with buildings (see plan in Adán 1999: Fig. 4), with 55 distinguishable structures organised in a rectangular layout. The structures themselves are mainly on a rectangular plan, with areas of between 3.96 m² and 26.98 m². The first of these three sectors is called “high” because it is located on a rocky promontory where there is a pyramidal construction or ushnu of dressed stone, associated with a walled dwelling. The ushnu presents two superimposed levels and has small staircases on two sides; mortar was used in its construction and, like other structures on the site, it was rendered with mud (Figure 5).

The dwelling is on a rectangular plan, with a double wall and internal sub-divisions. The walls are also covered with the typical mud rendering. The second sector, 20 m lower down, includes a system of compound rectangular perimeters (CRP), i.e. rectangular enclosed spaces forming a central patio with a U-shaped design. The first group has single dry-stone walls. Some 40 m above this group there is an L-shaped set of structures, with rather dilapidated double walls filled with small stones (Castro 1992). Finally, to the east of the latter sector, outside the walls which enclose what appears to be the central part, there is a group of 15 rectangular enclosed spaces which

¹³ Because of the systematic looting of the site, we have not made any datings until we obtain safer contexts than the surface.

also present some CRP. In this area, Silva (1979 Ms) recorded evidence of fireplaces and a large quantity of charred bones, ceramic fragments and a mortar, suggesting more permanent occupation than in the other sectors. Cerro Verde, unlike the local sites mentioned, was built on a flat site making it easy to reproduce the rectangular layout which characterises Inca construction (Adán 1999). Not only is the ground flat, but it is also sufficiently high to overlook the surrounding area, such as the Pucara de Turi vega and the nearby mountains and volcanoes. The corollary is that can also be seen from a great distance. All this, combined with the characteristics of the walls, the shape of the ground-plans and the provision of spaces between the enclosed spaces, indicates that the design of this site differs radically from that of pre-existing sites. The construction bears evidence of the participation of specialists who were thoroughly familiar with Tawantinsuyu architecture and engineering, whose organisation displays what Agurto (1987) called planned urbanism. This is doubtless related with the location of the site, associated functionally with copper-mining areas and the agricultural spaces of Caspana, even though no crop terraces are found in the immediate vicinity. Finally its connection with one of the main branches of the imperial road or inkañam is also important, linking it to Pucara de Turi and Incahuasi Inca (Varela 1999).

Manifestations of rock art have been found some 150 m south of the eastern sector of Cerro Verde, another important characteristic of the site. They are located on a small, isolated rocky outcrop, where three panels are visible with stiff, linear carvings of complete camelids, comparable to the types found in Turi (Gallardo and Vilches 1995). They are formed of simple lines and/or larger scraped areas (Vilches and Uribe 1999); some of them present ochre paint filling the scraped areas, and are accompanied by other figures among which a circle and indeterminate quadrupeds with linear or filled bodies can be distinguished (Vilches and Uribe 1999). Approximately 50 m south of the panels is a mine-shaft entrance with a series of subsidences (site 02-CAS/CUR-12).¹⁴ In one of these a painting was found of a concentric cross in three colours: white, black and red, and a rather stiff camelid in white paint. Under the layer of soot covering the walls of this subsidence can be seen the remains of further paintings, but their shapes cannot be determi-

ned. Further south, at the confluence of a dry ravine with the Curte River, is the El Mirador site with characteristic, rectangular dwelling structures, and a few chullpa-type structures. Four panels were found here, three of which repeat the design of stiff, linear camelids with scraped bodies, in one case painted red. Finally, on the east bank of the dry ravine to the east of Cerro Verde (site 02-CAS/CUR-11), there are three panels executed on the rock wall. They present stylistic superimpositions combining geometrical designs, large naturalistic camelids and small stiff camelids (Adán 1996 Ms).

Analysis of the scarce pottery collected at Cerro Verde maintains the predominance of the Loa-San Pedro component, represented by Turi Smooth Red, Coarse Red, Aiquina, Turi Smooth Grey, Polished Red Coated and Red Coated Exterior (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). Clear local examples of the Inca component were also recorded, namely plates with ornithomorphic adornments of the Turi Polished Red Coated on Both Faces type, and Red Coated Exterior-Smooth Black Interior "aribaloid" vessels. The Yavi type of the altiplano component was also represented in what appears to us to be an inca-influenced expression, but from north-western Argentina (Figure 6). Finally, the protoethnographic component is present in the form of ceramic made of paste containing mica.

An important feature of this first Inca installation is that Cerro Verde is located in an area which – to judge by the manifestations of rock art and some isolated superficial remains – was occupied previously by human groups assignable to the Early Traditions. This situation recurs in the other sites with an Inca stamp.

The second *Tawantinsuyu* installation in this location is the site known as Incahuasi Inca. It is sited in a ravine of the same name south-west of Caspana, specifically in the stretch known as Laguna Verde. It has been dated to

14 The identification of the site includes the first code representing the administrative region of Chile; the second represents the locality, in this case Caspana; the third the name of the sector where the site is located, e.g. the ravines, and the last is a serial number of the sites identified from north to south and from west to east in the area prospected (Adán 1996 Ms).

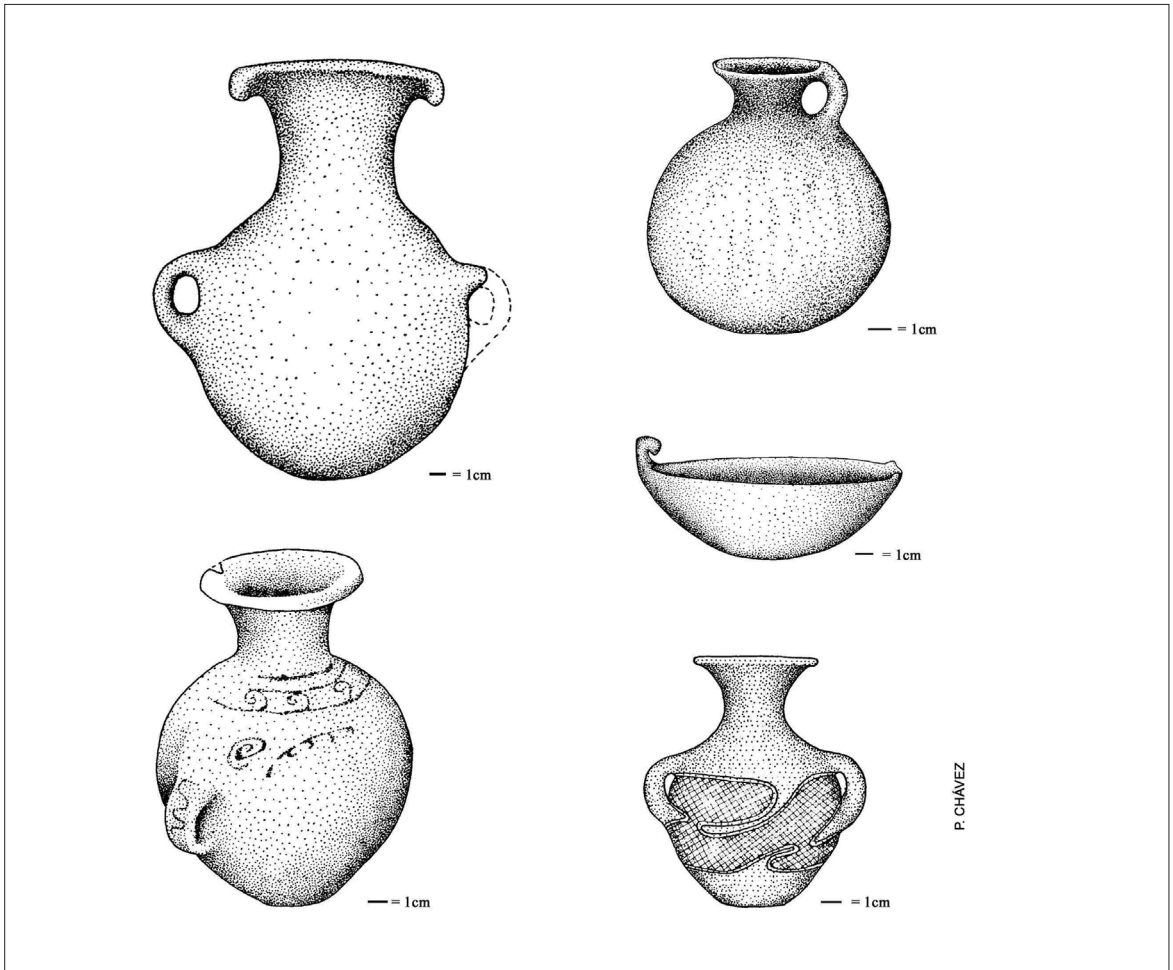


Figure 6. Inca Ceramic Component.

1445 AD (UCTL 718; 550 ± 50 AP) and 1480 AD (UCTL 719; 515 ± 50), which coincides perfectly with its cultural and chronological assignment.

Late occupation of the ravine is also documented by the presence of various agricultural complexes, consisting of crop terraces on the slope, and flat fields and crop ridges or rumimokos¹⁵ in the river valley. On a rocky promontory close to the rumimoko systems there is a dwelling complex which was occupied intermittently down to the present for mining activities; its architecture suggests

certain links with the study period. It is associated with a copper mine, which is still exploited. Finally, following the ravine upstream to the site in question we find a considerable number of storage structures built against the cliff. Their complete formal similarity with constructions built recently for ethnographic use known as trojas (grain-stores) makes them analogous to Tawantinsuyu collca.

A branch of the imperial road connects this ravine at least with the Quebrada de Caspana over a stretch of approximately 8 km in a straight line (Varela 1999). This fits very well with ethnographical data which state that an Inca road heads south from Incahuasi, passing through Machuca and Río Grande, to San Pedro de Atacama. This would undoubtedly be the route of the main branch of the inkañam on the western slope of the Andes.

¹⁵ According to the work done in Panire, these crop ridges may have been built to conserve humidity, distribute irrigation water and regulate thermal factors, in order to optimise the conditions for high-altitude cultivation (Allende et al. 1993).

The Incahuasi Inca installation is sited on the south-west edge of the ravine. It was built by terracing the natural slope and creating a flat area at the point of contact with the cliff (see plan in Adán 1999: Fig. 5). There are 34 structures here, including some with an irregular or sub-rectangular plan, probably enclosed spaces and/or terraces; other square-plan sites, similar to chullpas, or sub-rectangular enclosures built against the cliff can be assimilated to grain-stores, and were probably all used as collcas (Figure 7).

The predominant shape of the constructions is irregular, followed by rectangular and then sub-rectangular. The areas range between 1.36m² and 56.87 m² (Adán 1999). The construction of the collcas at the site, to judge by their style, techniques and materials, are clearly related to the other grain-stores in the ravine and must therefore belong to the same construction period, *i.e.* the Late Period. This is interesting because their architectural features differ from those of the rest of the structures on this site (enclosed spaces and terraces), so their construction must be part of a wider plan. On the other hand, the other buildings display more spontaneous techniques and layout, repeating the patterns of local villages. This suggests that the local population would be responsible for them (Adán 1999). If we look at a plan of the site, this translates into a compact, agglutinated settlement in which no different spatial sectors are apparent at first sight. However it is evident that there is some organisation of the space, as the collcas are placed at the top-centre, the chullpa-type structures at either end of this zone and the enclosed spaces and terracing at the bottom-centre, offering a fairly complete view over the valley.

Another important feature of Incahuasi Inca is the abundant presence of expressions of rock art. All of these representations are pictographs painted on up to 15 panels over a 5-metre length of the rocky cliff. Three regional pictorial styles may be identified (Vilches and Uribe 1999), related to different moments of occupation. The first makes use of “frames” drawn in thin, wavy lines, which surround a scene, generally with anthropomorphic protagonists. These paintings are very similar to designs recorded in the Cueva Blanca site, in the Quebrada del Ojalar, which has been established as a particular style with that name dated indirectly to 0-500 AD (Gallardo 1999). The second style on the site is characterised

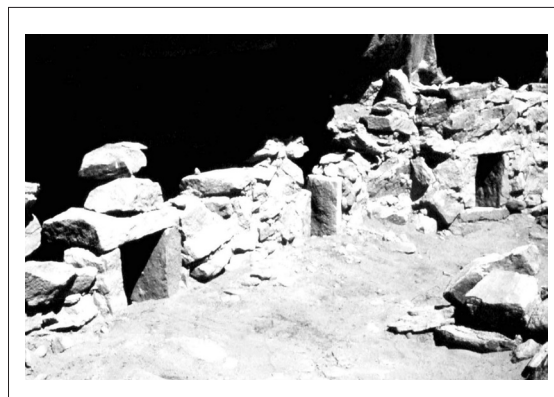


Figure 7. Collcas at Incahuasi Inca.

by white paintings of anthropomorphic beings in profile and carrying “weapons”. The exaggerated projections of their toothed, rectangular mouths extend beyond the profile of the face. This feature is similar to representations of warriors wearing feline masks belonging to the Aguada Culture of the Middle Period in north-western Argentina (A. R. González 1972, 1977). Finally, the third style observed includes the stiff, linear camelids typical of the Late Period, this time painted in three different colours: black, red and white. These expressions coexist and are even superimposed on one another over time, making it possible to detect representatives of the three great farmer-potter periods: Early, Middle and Late (Vilches and Uribe 1999). An important aspect of the Late period, with undeniable Inca connections, is the location of the figures inside the collcas. Indeed they cannot be seen anywhere else and they use the same clay as that used in the construction of the store-houses.

If we observe the stone material at the surface, we find a secondary deposit of malachite derived from waste from knapping and manufacture, and remains of andesite stone tools (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). The knapping waste is represented by un-retouched secondary flakes, although knapping on site cannot be discarded as shown by the presence of the secondary flakes and a tool re-used as an anvil for bipolar percussion. A further point is that 12 fractured projectile points, mainly of basalt with a large pronounced peduncle, pronounced barbs and bifacial retouching, were collected in the terraces around 200 m away from Incahuasi Inca. A half-moon shaped scraper was also found, and two flakes, one with facial retouching and the other with a double edge, all of the same

raw material. All this of course has early cultural connotations, previous to the Late Intermediate and even pre-ceramic, shared with the middle Loa and the Salar de Atacama. This again would suggest that the Incas settled on the remains of much older local populations than those of the moment studied.

Once again, the ceramic material recovered displayed a predominance of the Loa-San Pedro component, with presence, as in the other sites, of Turi Smooth Red, Coarse Red, Aiquina, Turi Smooth Grey, Polished Red Coated and Red Coated Exterior. These form the essence of local Late Intermediate pottery, consisting of pitchers, cups, plates and pots. Other types were also recorded, such as Dupont and San Pedro Violet Red, followed by a significant representation of the altiplano component in the form of the various expressions of Yavi, confirming that there was contact with north-western Argentina at this time. Furthermore there is an Inca component consisting of Turi Polished Red Coated on Both Faces, Red Coated Exterior-Smooth Black Interior and the presence of true aribalos made using the typical raw materials and techniques of Loa ceramics (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). There is equally clear manifestation of an early pottery component, since the Sequitor types of the polished black tradition of San Pedro de Atacama have been identified, as well as the Loa Smooth Red and Los Morros types which have been defined in this territory (Sinclair *et al.* 2000).

Finally Vega Salada, the third Inca installation in the study, is located on the southern side of the Salado River ravine, on a broad flat area on the slope where a small marshy area has been formed by springs, now dry at the surface. The coordinates of the site are 22° 18' S, 68° 9' W, 500 m upstream of the San Santiago mine which operated in historical times but has now been abandoned. The datings we have for the site are one of 1590 AD (UCTL 720; 405±30 AP) and another of 1665 AD (UCTL 721; 330±40 AP). These are very late for the purposes of the present research, but the samples were selected intentionally to document the most recent events in the location (ceramic made of paste containing mica). Nevertheless, its occupation at such an early period of Hispanic-indigenous contact justifies the supposition that this place was also exploited by the Incas, as the material remains show. This is consistent with the settlement pattern, which in practice is identical to that in Incahuasi Inca. As at the

latter site, there is a system of terraces for agricultural use between the mine and the settlement. Here however, construction differences can easily be distinguished in terms of the materials used and the work done, resulting in two terraced sectors which we suppose have chronological and cultural implications. The sector closest to the mine presents terraces of rustic appearance made with round stones such as may be found anywhere in the vicinity; in the sector closer to the site on the other hand, the stones are rough blocks which appear to have been worked.

Apart from the fact that there is no collca on the transect between the mine and the installation, the other features are almost identical to those found at Incahuasi Inca. Vega Salada consists of dry-stone structures on two levels, one on a meseta on the slope, and the other close to the cliff. The meseta itself contains three sectors. In the central part there are three structures of rectangular plan: two of them share a single-thickness wall, while the third is independent and exemplifies the Inca presence. It is not orientated along the course of the ravine like the other two; it presents double-thickness walls, mortar filling and pointing, trapezoidal shape and an access doorway in the centre of the east-facing wall. All activity was concentrated around this group, while at the two ends there are simpler, larger, irregular constructions which appear to be corrals, with very scarce cultural deposits. At the western end or sector, there are two small chullpa or turret-like structures on a rocky promontory, both of square plan and with doorways towards the cliff. They are reminiscent of those at Incahuasi Inca and the nearby terraces, since they are constructed of the same rock. Constructions like these recur as grain-stores throughout the upper level of the site, and even at the end of the eastern sector, where there is another chullpa-type structure on an enormous rock, but with a more irregular plan and made of round stones, with a doorway towards the ravine. The grain-stores were built in this sector to take advantage of the hollows in the cliff, and are smaller in size.

Once again, this is certainly a spatial organisation consisting of a centre with up-and-down divisions, also found in Cerro Verde, and two ends marked by turrets. In addition, as at Cerro Verde and to a certain degree at Incahuasi Inca, we note the choice of a flat sector for the

construction of the settlement. Furthermore, in all three cases the location indicates that mining and arable-farming and/or stock-rearing activities were carried on.

In this respect, it is of interest to note that the occupation of Vega Salada, especially the farming activity, is not connected with any other settlement of the local population in the Salado River ravine. These do not yet exist, apparently because the water is very brackish. This suggests that under the influence of the Empire, new agricultural lands were optimised or created in Caspana, as in other parts of the Tawantinsuyu, in areas previously scorned or under-exploited by the local population. In this case the springs at Vega Salada become important, since by applying new knowledge they were used to feed the channels to the terraces; species of plant resistant to the water quality were also introduced (Alvarez 1997). In this way the Incas sought to maximise productivity in new spaces, and their new conquests established installations of this kind to control these spaces although they were well off the main expansion route: Vega Salada lies to the east of the Inca road. Their existence is probably also related with the dynamic between the Incas and the population which lived around the nearby Toconce River (Aldunate and Castro 1981).

Judging by the stone material present on the surface, all the raw materials are introduced apart from the pieces of malachite and the copper ore; thus the production of artefacts is directed basically towards farming activities (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). The most frequent categories and raw materials are microwaste and primary flakes of andesite. This situation, together with the frequent presence of tools and tool fragments of the same material, is evidence of continuous re-sharpening of agricultural tools. The proximity of the crop terrace complex to the dwelling site suggests continuous carriage of tools from one place to another, to look after and maintain them. The same instruments may also have been used for mining, since only superficial seams were exploited (Díaz 1998 Ms).

The ceramic material recovered from the surface at Vega Salada presents the highest variation in type of the Inca installations, although the local Loa-San Pedro component remains predominant (Uribe and Carrasco 1999). Turi Smooth Red, Coarse Red, Aiquina, Turi Smooth

Grey, Polished Red Coated and Red Coated Exterior were recorded, together with the Dupont plates from the same component and the inca-influenced Red Coated Exterior-Smooth Black Interior. There is a clear increase in the protoethnographic component, as at the Estancia Mulorojte site, which means that the material is very diverse. Of the altiplano component, Hedionda and Yavi types can be distinguished, the latter belonging to the Inca epoch. This component is therefore represented by manifestations from the local region and from north-western Argentina, as in the other sites studied.

Finally it should be noted that the installation was constructed on occupation sites previous to the Late Intermediate, as in the cases discussed above, assignable to Archaic or Early Formative cultural traditions. This situation is documented from the superficial ceramics and the material recovered from digs, where fragments assignable to those moments appeared, as well as the lithic material and rock art found nearby (Uribe and Carrasco 1999; Vilches and Uribe 1999). In any case, the properly Inca settlements show a tendency to become established immediately on top of very old occupations, even altering them by their presence, which is not so evident in the sites settled by the local population.

Los Abuelos Cemetery: A shared space

The third class of site that we selected for our research is the funerary site known as Cementerio de los Abuelos, mentioned in the specialist literature by several authors (Le Paige 1958; Núñez 1965; Barón 1979).¹⁶

The cemetery consists of more than 70 sub-circular stone constructions (Figure 8), no more than 1 m high, with doorways like those of the towers known as chullpa-type structures, similar to the grain-stores or silos found aga-

16 For the moment, our appreciation of the site draws on these sources, due to the degree of alteration presented and the fact that, out of respect for the indigenous community, we did not wish to carry out new field work until study of the materials already recovered was complete, for example the Emil de Bruyne collection in the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural de Santiago and the material collected by Barón and Serracino, deposited in the Museo de Caspana. For the same reason, we still have no absolute datings for the site.

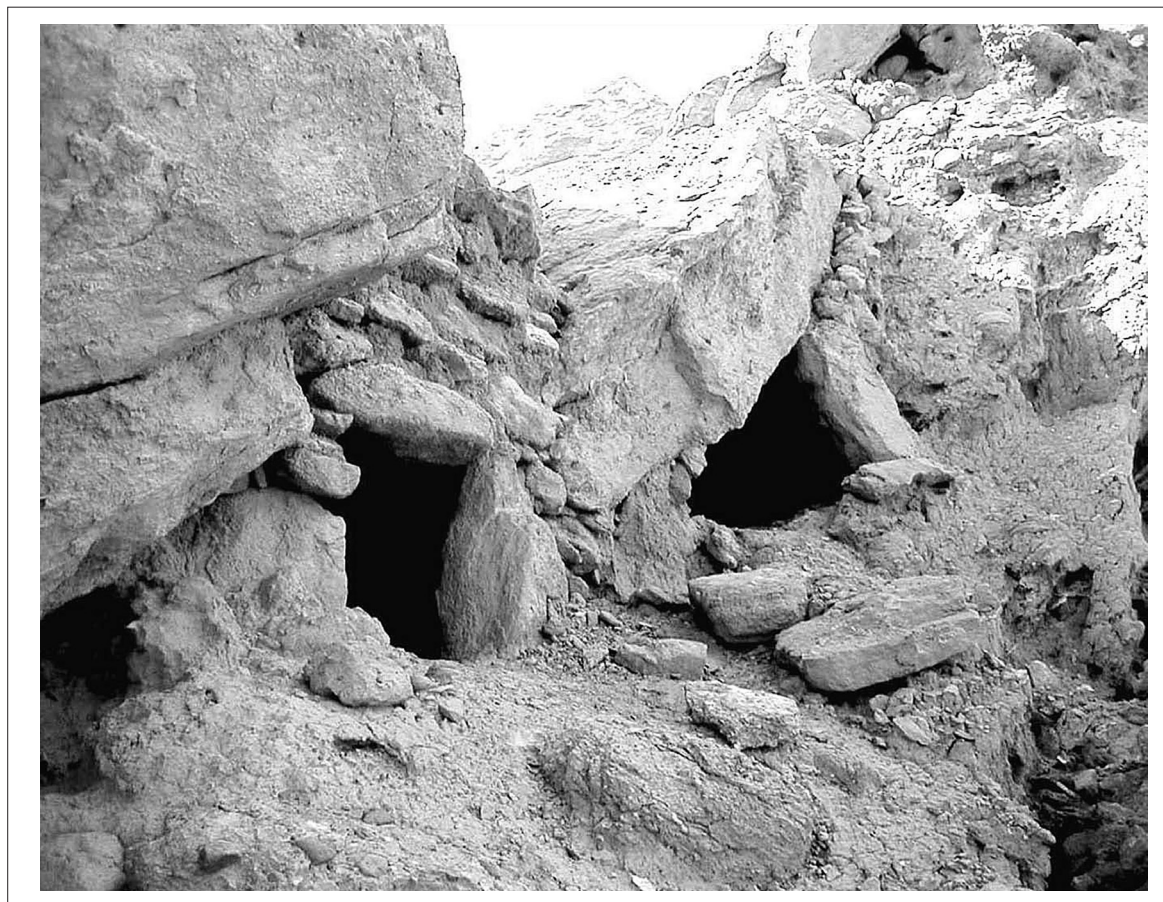


Figure 8. Burials associated with blocks of rock.

inst the cliff-walls of the ravines. There are also burials in rocky shelters which would be characteristic of this territory (Aldunate and Castro 1981). In this particular case, the majority of the tombs are built against big blocks which have broken away from the rocky cliffs of the ravine, but others may be observed which are free-standing, making them look even more like chullpas. Others present no kind of structure, as appears to be the case in the majority of Inca and early colonial tombs. We may say that overall they are collective, largely because the site was used for the same purpose until the beginning of Spanish rule (Barón 1979).

The site is located at the village of Caspana, at an altitude of 3,260 masl. It is on the north-eastern side of the ravine opposite the existing town, where the sector known as Pueblo Viejo was later built in colonial times with the catholic church and the old cemetery. Study of the mate-

rials recovered by other investigators suggests to us that the cemetery was used only from the Late Intermediate Period, but that from then onwards there was unbroken activity until the colonial period. The ceramic sequence includes: 1) the start of the Late Intermediate, reflected in the considerable frequency of Dupont; 2) classic Late Intermediate, represented by Aiquina and specimens of the Southern Altiplano tradition (Hedionda type); 3) end of the Late Intermediate with altiplano-influenced local expressions accompanying traditional pottery; 4) Late Period with a notable number of local Inca pieces, as well as some from north-western Argentina; and 5) one Early Colonial piece which seems to derive not just from Hispanic-indigenous contact, but from the preceding moment, since from this time pottery undergoes changes both in form and raw materials which by and large have been maintained to the present (e.g. paste containing mica; Uribe and Carrasco 1999).

In certain tombs, we see that the offerings combine ceramic pieces from the local tradition, the altiplano tradition, local Inca, foreign Inca (e.g. from north-western Argentina) and probably even Cusqueño. This space is therefore a privileged location for encounters and expressions of the various cultural manifestations which characterise the period, evidence of a context in which differences were accepted and diversity was stressed. In the case of the Incas, this is also suggested by the presence of other materials adapted to Cusqueño stylistic patterns, for example metallurgy represented here by pins or topus, etc.

The description of the archaeological record presented here indicates a concentration and variety of sites, ceramics and architecture, linked by the Inca road with the important and imposing Pucara de Turi (Aldunate 1993; Castro *et al.* 1993). This situation suggests to us a circuit of sites whose spatial distribution, functional hierarchy and contextual situation might provide answers on the interests of the Tawantinsuyu, and especially on its strategies for the occupation and control of local spaces. No doubt an important requirement was the process of negotiating with the populations in this territory, not necessarily through the violent presence of numerous armies. More subtle political mechanisms appear to be operating, based on knowledge of the local populations of the Andean world, which serve to reduce the physical violence and increase the symbolic efficiency of encounters. We believe that a true reflection of this is the situation described in Los Abuelos cemetery, where several of the protagonists of this process are buried, demonstrating the success of the *Tawantinsuyu* in these lands.

Comments and conclusions

In our opinion, as we said in the introduction, one of the basic requirements for development of the Inca problem as a consolidated line of research is its previous treatment, since we must overcome the lack of interest shown in the country. As part of this methodological requirement, one of the fundamental concerns of our study has been to compile as much archaeological information as possible from the sites recognised as Inca or subject to the impact of the Empire, and at the same time to understand the cultural history of Caspana and the situation of its populations at the moment when they were incorporated into the Tawan-

tinsuyu. This information, which includes location of the sites, characterisation of their architecture, the functions of the structures and the way in which certain cultural materials are deposited, has enabled us to start to sketch our own interpretation on the rule of the Tawantinsuyu in the highlands of the Loa River.

Our object in this investigation was to propose an alternative model for the Inca presence in these latitudes, viewing it from the angle of political anthropology which recognises, behind the various forms of material culture of the Tawantinsuyu, an ideologically conscious expansion. We believe therefore that the populations of Caspana in the Late Intermediate Period, as in the rest of the upper Loa, were under direct Inca rule to the extent that the Inca State decided to impose its presence, using various mechanisms and consequently various expressions which are evidence of a complex symbolic situation, politically and culturally significant for the actors in the process.

The need remains to study in greater depth the material expressions of the encounter between the local population and the Incas, including the negotiation between them of political dominion. Nevertheless, there is consensus that this encounter tests the established conception of social relations in the Andean world, which exists within a cultural construction of reality based on a system of complementary opposites which often extends to their material culture (Platt 1987; Cereceda 1990; Martínez 1995). In a *prima facie* look at our case this would be expressed through the classes of archaeological sites that we have described in extenso, which present a suggestive opposition: exclusively Inca sites with local elements, and sites exclusive to the local population with Inca intrusions. In the imposing Pucara de Turi not far away, this system of opposites is even observed within the same settlement, generating principles of exclusion and inclusion of the original culture which express the forms of appropriation of this space and its political-symbolic control (Gallardo *et al.* 1995). This situation can be extended to an intersite level to judge by the circuit of sites in Caspana, as has been remarked by other authors from an even more general perspective covering the whole region (Cornejo 1995).

With such a panorama, encounter and negotiation is

one of the most frequently recurring themes and must be considered when addressing the problem (Martínez 1994). More particularly, thanks to works like Platt (1987), we know that the societies of the Southern Altiplano and the Circum-Puna have a concept of society and human relations in which the principles of reciprocity and redistribution predominate to construct very subtle but effective strategies of domination and social control. Reciprocity in these societies operated not only on an economic plane but also on the social, political and religious levels, making these strategies highly effective without the need for a state. As the author says, however asymmetrical the reciprocity, these human groups internally prevented alteration of the social order and the development of extreme hierarchisation which would support of the formation of a unified state, and instead led to the formation of the groupings known as Aymara Federations.

These strategies, which prevented total political domination of one group over the other, permitted the components of these grand interethnic alliances and their ayllos a certain degree of autonomy, forming segmented societies. However the Inca State used the same strategies more skilfully, transforming them into domination mechanisms principally through redistribution, in other words by the imposition of their "generosity". The Tawantinsuyu would have made use of the principles of reciprocity and redistribution, and all their economic potential, to "indebt" the local populations that they sought to conquer in order to gain access to their spaces, resources and people. Because they were able to "give" much more than the dominated groups, the latter were unable to "pay them back" and remained indebted indefinitely, obliged to accept any "plea and request" by the Incas. In this context, the direct presence of the State, and consequently the symbolic power which it represents and its reality for local social units (Uribe 1996), appear to be more important than the actions mediated by other groups, whether or not executed.¹⁷ At the same time, within the bounds of this practice, its behaviour would have altered explicitly those sectors associated with local religiosity – for example chullpa areas as occurred in the Pucara de Turi or Los Abuelos cemetery – allowing them to cover the whole spectrum of social relations, including the sacred. For the same reason, the transformation of such spaces belonging to the local populations seems

to be one of the strongest acts or resources of their domination strategy, especially because it is here that the reciprocity is finally resolved, between the gods and the Inca, since it is the gods who control the order of the cosmos (e.g. water, crops, domestic animals). Through the appropriation of sacred spaces we see how the Incas legitimise their power, making explicit the divine nature of the Cusco State.

With these strategies, the Tawantinsuyu appear to have "created culture" in the spaces of others to their own advantage, while leaving some of them relatively "free" to allow the conquered groups to develop the "autonomy" to which they were accustomed. In this way spaces such as state, religion and community were separated from one another, as colonial documents and researchers mention (Murra 1978). State in these terms would include sites like Cerro Verde, Incahuasi Inca and Vega Salada, while religion and community would define Talikuna and Mulojite, indicating that although the sites were not occupied in their entirety, the Incas never withdrew or relaxed their control.

The obvious architectural differences between the sites, like the location of the settlements, shows the plastic form of Inca rule, allowing some private Inca spaces to appear, while others are apparently free of their material presence. Nevertheless the ceramic deposits in limited sectors of the installations indicate that communal activities took place involving the local population, in which no doubt ritual events and protocols were recreated to exercise the act of reciprocity. The Inca presence, sometimes barely perceptible, in the pottery deposited in the sites, shows how subtle their rule was, while revealing the elaborate and efficient exercise of power.

In the context of these ideas, succinctly developed, we see the material evidence of the Tawantinsuyu in these areas, giving regional coherence to the behaviour of the sites where their stamp is apparent. This is indeed stronger

17 An interesting situation is the frequent presence and importance of narratives referring to the "Rey Inka" in the oral tradition of the people of Caspana. The figure of the "Inka", apart from representing political values during the indigenous rebellions of the eighteenth century, and being adopted by these social movements, evokes a glorious, memorable past (Castro and Varela 2000).

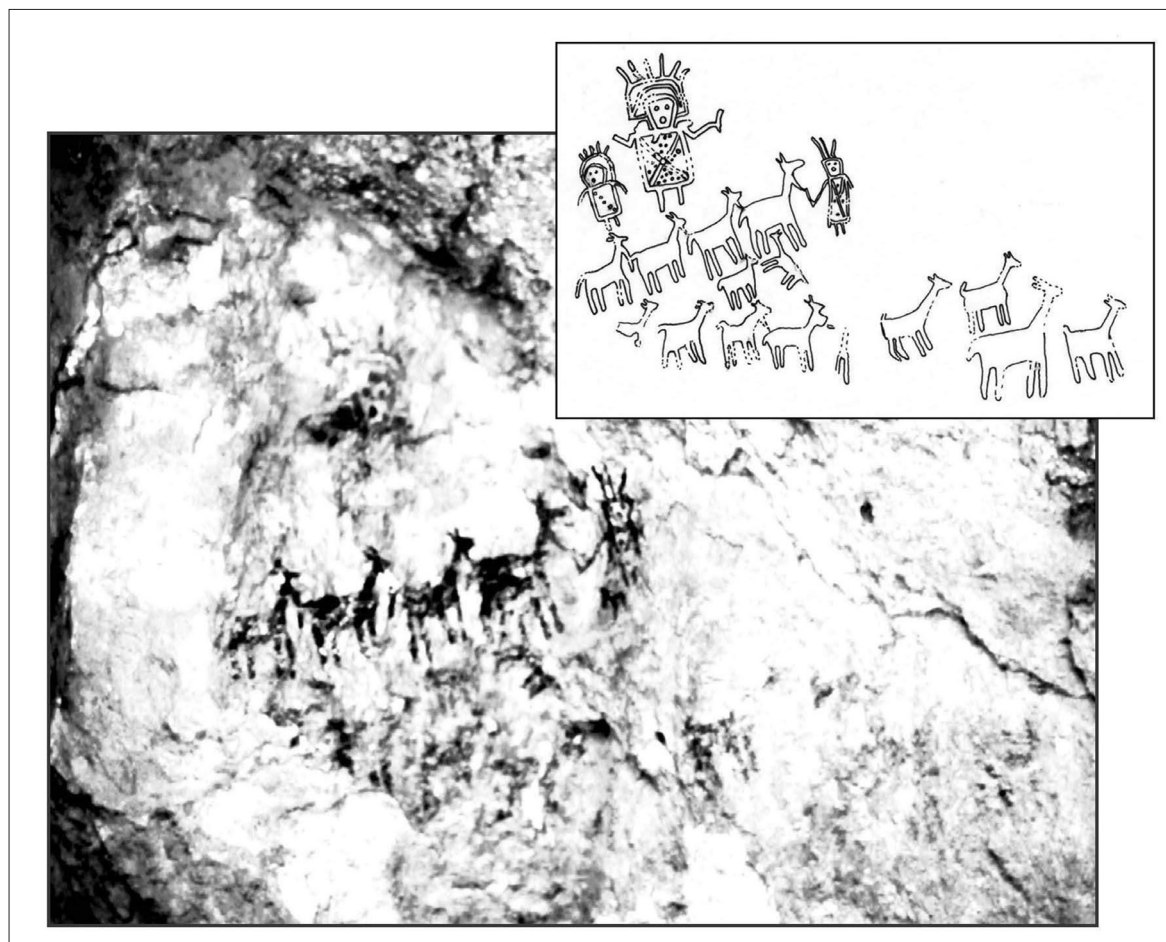


Figure 9. Pictography associated with the Incas. Cueva del Diablo, Caspana.

and more abundant than had previously been thought for an area at first sight so “poor” and inhospitable, to judge by the extensive presence of Inca architecture and the slight but recurrent repertoire of their ceramics. The Inca presence is apparent in local villages like Talikuna exclusively from pottery evidence; in others like Pucara de Turi we also find larger-scale interventions such as the construction of a callancahuasi or large hall for ceremonial and civil purposes; finally, in places like Cerro Verde they built on a new space, following completely Cusqueño patterns, raising structures of the highest symbolic value for the Incas such as an ushnu. In this context, the architecture – and the rock art (Figure 9) – eloquently show that the intention of these occupations is to display symbolic and political dominion with elements of material culture which are significant for both parties (Adán 1996).

The sites recorded in Caspana are of vital importance for studying and testing these ideas, and also for systematising other records and hypotheses related with the expansion of the Tawantinsuyu in the region and the rest of Chile’s Norte Grande. They help us to understand the principles which modelled this expansion. There are few up-to-date investigations directly related with this theme, despite the abundant archaeological, ethno-historical and oral information in existence. Fewer still take a different line of archaeological interpretation, other than the analogies between political expansion and the exploitation of mineral wealth and expansion (Silva 1985) or altiplano chiefdoms and dominion (Llagostera 1976). We propose to transfer discussion to an interpretive framework which combines the material associations mentioned above with the planned, direct, differential and socially functional conception of Inca rule to a greater

extent than has been argued to date. We further believe that by identifying the different behaviour of Inca material in the sites we can establish a sequence of the periods of the expansion, at least for this territory, distinguishing stages in the process. The local villages must contain the first signs of the encounter, since it must have been here that the negotiations took place in which Incas deployed all their capacity for “giving”.

The theoretical and empirical arguments which sustain our understanding of this problem have become the framework of reference for studying the subject in greater detail, discovering the material remains which accompanied or derived from the political mechanisms deployed

by the Incas in their desire to conquer the highlands of the upper Loa.

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