

THE AMARU-ILLAPA ILLA FROM T'OQOCACHI IN CUSCO

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INTRODUCTION

The Inca city of Cusco was a complex sacred space. Initially, its symbolic elements were aspects of the natural world such as mountains, rivers, rock outcrops, and springs (Figure 1). For thousands of years, such sacred features and places (huacas) have been recognized in the Andean landscape. We have archaeological evidence of this sanctification of the Huatanay Valley, from the pre-Inca era at some communities that occupied the valley, such as Matagua on the White Road (camino blanco) which runs from Cusco to Huanacauri Mountain (Kosiba 2019:116–117), as well as from Coricancha in Cusco, from the Huaca Pachatosa located in the Chunchul Quebrada at the end of Totora Pachcha Street (Delgado and Aráoz 2012), and from Muyumarka in the Saqsaywaman Archaeological (Park García 2018). The process of sanctification of Cusco and its surroundings in Inca times predates Pachacutec. John Rowe pointedly suggested that not all the shrines and huacas were built by the most recent Inca rulers, but were begun by Viracocha and continued until Huayna Capac's reign (Rowe 2003:189). Nevertheless, a consensus exists among scholars that attributes to Pachacutec Inca Yupanqui the organization of the whole system of official shrines.

The rites and ceremonies of the Incas included a suite of paraphernalia and activities that one finds minutely described in the sixteenth and seventeenth century chronicles.

Among these are burials, the consumption of animals, and the use of ceramic, stone, and shell objects. All this information can be compared with archaeological information. Among the archaeological finds made in Cusco, the discoveries of serpent figures have been reported. One of these finds has been made in T'oqocachi in the neighborhood of San Blas. My main argument is based on contexts and historical sources and suggests that it may correspond to the Amaru-Illapa *illas* that were used as part of Inca rituals and ceremonies. A description of these objects and an exploration of the concept of *illa* follows in this article.

THE SACRED SPACE OF INCA CUSCO

The geographical landscape of the north slope of the city of Cusco consists of the Yucaypata formation (Kalafatovich 1970) with limestone rock outcrops from the Saphy River to the Callachaca Quebrada (Figure 2). It is in these rocky places that one finds the largest number of Inca huacas. The Incas used limestone as raw material in transforming the Huatanay Valley. This material was used to construct the channels of the Choquechaca, Saphy, Chakan, and Tullumayo Rivers. Limestone was also used to construct the terraces that configure the city.¹ Later the Incas used andesite, a non-local material

¹ Project PER 39 UNESCO–INC identified and recorded Cusco's terrace walls, river channels, and Inca palaces, emphasizing architectural elements, as well as construction techniques and materials.

from the southern Huatanay Valley to construct Inca palaces and temples.

The city of Cusco was the most important place in the Inca state. Access was restricted and the *panacas* and *ayllus*² of the Inca families lived in ranked locations. Areas adjacent to these were highly sanctified spaces with temples, palaces, and ritual and ceremonial areas. We have here one of the holiest places in the Andes.

Cusco is surrounded by six mountains, Huanacaure, Anahuarque, Yavira, Senqa, Picol, and Pachatusan where, in Inca times, sacrifices were made (Sarmiento 2007 [1572]:96). This sacred spatial complex of Cusco extended beyond these mountains. Bernabé Cobo (1956a [1653], 1990 [1653]) wrote a detailed description of the Cusco huacas and noted that there were 328. Polo Ondegardo states that there were more than 400 (1990 [1571]:45). Later, Murúa (2004 [1590]: Part 1, Chapter 9, folio 16r) stated that there were 340 huacas. As Bauer makes clear (2000:179) the exact number of shrines in Inca Cusco is unknown. According to Cobo these huacas were organized into a system of *ceques*.³ Nevertheless, innumerable huacas existed in Cusco that are not found in his account of the Cusco huacas (Cobo 1956a [1633]; see also Albornoz 1967 [1581–1585]). We may well ask if these were simply omitted by Cobo and Albornoz, or if not all huacas were part of the Cusco Inca huaca system.

Huacas can have different forms. They can be natural features like rocks, springs, mountains, grottos, fields, and quarries, as well as

places built by people such as fountains, canals, structures, and houses (see Bauer 2000; Gullberg 2009; Van de Guchte 1990). These are sacred spaces made divine by society and built by the elite to perpetuate their authority. In general, they are associated with an *ayllu*, a human group with kinship connections and intimately tied to ancestors.

The relationship of huacas to the population, to the *panacas*, and to the *ayllus* is not vertical, but, rather, horizontal. A submissive relationship does not exist. Humans depend on their huacas and the huacas depend on people through reciprocal relationships. The huacas-oracles had priests or wizards responsible for their cults.⁴ These men and women were mediums who communicated with the huaca, generally through dreams, or while in a trance state, in order to conduct ceremonies, rites, and offerings.

The National Institute of Culture (INC) and, later, the Ministry of Culture made interventions at almost all the huacas in the basin of the Huatanay River to the north and east of the Valley of Cusco through archaeological excavations and restoration work in the Archaeological Park of Saqsaywaman. This research has focused on obtaining archaeological material and on describing these finds, with little emphasis on treating the huacas in a holistic manner, or on their surroundings. All this work tells us about the recovered materials, their contexts, and burials. Among researchers, we can mention Ermina Esenarro, who conducted excavations at the Ñustapaqana huaca located between the Ñusta

² *Panacas* were the kin groups of Incas or deceased Inca rulers, except for those of their successors, who founded new *panacas*.

³ Brian Bauer has elucidated these, basing himself upon Cobo's account of the huacas and on his own fieldwork (Bauer 2000).

⁴ Information was provided by the Yacarcaes who were natives of Huaro and by others who were in charge of the huacas and who spoke with them (Molina 2008 [c. 1576]: 27). The Huacavillac would have been a person who spoke with the huaca, charged with maintaining and looking after the huaca, as well as making offerings and sacrifices (Arriaga 1999 [1621]:41). The wizards (*hechiceros*) ate, drank, and spoke with huacas (Guamán Poma de Ayala 1993 [c. 1615]:209).

Paqanawaiqo and Qonchaqawayqo Quebradas (Esenarro 2008) and at Chicana Grande-Cocha to the north of Saqsaywaman (Esenarro 2009). Merida Farfán excavated at Chincana Grande (Farfán 2002). Luis Guevara worked at the Laqo huaca to the northeast of Cusilluchayoc (Guevara 2008) and at the sites of Osqollo, Huaca Pachacuti, Wayraqpunku, and at Qowikarana where he recovered eighteen funeral contexts in the sector of the structures. All of these sites are on the right side of the Quebrada (Guevara 2009). Jorge Guillén (2009) excavated the Laqo huaca (Salonniyoq), recovering a large quantity of archaeological material associated with the huaca. At Inkilltambo, on the left bank of the Yuncaypata, he encountered a storehouse with a large quantity of ceramic, metal, and lithic materials (Guillén 2007, 2008). Mónica Paredes excavated a cemetery in the Suchuna and Muyucmarka sectors of Saqsaywaman (Paredes 2003), as did Lizbeth Rodríguez at Chakan in the upper Chakan River (Rodríguez 2004), and Carlo Socualaya at Chincana Grande-Qocha (Socualaya 2007). At the Huaca Pachacuti Ismael Uscachi conducted excavations in which he encountered cultural material associated with the huaca (Uscachi 2009). Alfredo Valencia excavated to the north of the Saqsaywaman esplanade, discovering anthropomorphic and zoomorphic microsculptures, as well as pieces of shell which, according to his report, are part of the foundation of the walls of this sector (Valencia 1970). Fredy Zegarra made an intervention at the sites of Chuspiyoq on the right bank of the Yuncaypata River and Wayllarqocha south of the lake of the same name (Zegarra 2008a) and at the Suchuna Kiswarcancha sector, locating terraced structures and open spaces (Zegarra 2008b).

Puqro, to the north of Saqsaywaman, and part of the canal that conducts water to the city of Cusco was also studied during several archaeological campaigns. Marisa Quispe Cuno (2008) excavated at Puqro and Sisikancha, where she

encountered fill consisting of metal and stone objects and ceramic sherds which may correspond to offerings.

In the Muyuqmarka sector of Saqsaywaman, there have been excavations at various times that recovered large quantities of cultural materials consistent with elements of offerings, or that may have been used in ceremonial activities (Bonnet 2001; García 2018; Olazabal 2009; Quispe Serrano 2004, 2005; Valcárcel 1934a, 1934b, 1935a, 1935b).

Independent archaeologists have also worked on some huacas in the Archaeological Park of Saqsaywaman. Raymundo Bejar (1976) conducted salvage excavations in Suyt'uhato Street in the barrio of T'ococachi where he found an Inca transitional (early colonial) burial associated with ceramic vessels. Italo Oberti worked at Llaullipata, northeast of Saqsaywaman on the right bank of the Saphy River (Oberti 1982) and at Chincana Grande he excavated two funerary contexts with paraphernalia from the Inca era (Oberti 2001). At the Huaca Tititqaqa, to the southeast of the Huaca Pachatosa on Circunvalación Avenue, Roger Prada recorded all the architectural elements that pertained to the huaca (Prada 1986). Some of the huacas mentioned above have been identified as parts of the *ceque* system of Cusco (see Bauer 2000).

The archaeological materials found during the work mentioned, in contexts where there was no evidence of domestic activities, provide us with information through which different ceremonial and ritual acts can be recognized. Repeatedly burials and offerings are found associated with carved rocks, and in some of those one can find deposits that contain materials used in ritual activities.

Research has provided us with partial information, scarcely analyzed, but in all of it one has descriptions of the finds, of funeral contexts, of

offerings, and of buried structures such as canals and ceremonial fountains. It would have been very useful if this archaeological work had tackled construction sequences with absolute and relative dates. We do not know which of the contexts and finds were created during the Inca era and which were created during very early colonial times. In the same way, archaeological materials such as ceramics could have given us more clarity in terms of stylistic variations and changes that may have been produced over time. Detailed analysis of the human burials could have allowed us to know the anatomical and aDNA characteristics which may have demonstrated whether the burial populations correspond to the same ethnic group, or if they pertained to populations from other parts of Tahuantinsuyo. This work is still pending.

T'OQOCACHI AND THE TEMPLE OF LIGHTNING

The barrio of T'oqocachi is on the hill to the east of the Aucaypata Plaza in the San Blas barrio of Cusco. From T'oqocachi one has a view of the physical manifestations of the hierarchy of the whole Inca city and of the Huatanay Valley.

According to the accounts of Cristóbal de Molina (2008 [1576]) and Bernabé Cobo (1956a [1653], 1990 [1653]), T'oqocachi was the seat of the *panacas*, of Pachacutec and of his son Topa Ynga Yupanqui, with buildings and a terrace system. Historical sources state that the Lightning Temple was built here.

Cristóbal de Molina mentions that it was Inca Yupanqui who ordered the construction of Lightning Temples in every province and that one of these was in Cusco (Molina 2008 [1576]: 23). Sarmiento suggests that the Lightning Temple was in the House of the Sun, that is, in Qoricancha (2007 [1572]:96). It was Bernabé

Cobo who was the first to mention that the Lightning Temple was located in the present San Blas barrio, and was the third shrine on the second Chinchaysuyu *ceque*. He described it in the following manner:

The third guaca was an idol of solid gold named *Inti Illapa*, which means "Thunder of the Sun," which was set on a rich litter of gold. Inca Yupanqui made it and took it for his *guauque* or brother. It had a house in the district of Totocache, and they did it great veneration. In the same house or temple was the body of the said Inca Yupanqui. To this idol they very commonly made sacrifices of children and of everything else, asking it that the strength of the Inca be preserved and his dominion not decrease (Cobo 1990 [1653]:54, Book 1, Chapter 13, translation by Roland Hamilton).⁵

Elsewhere, Cobo affirms:

The Thunder also had a separate temple in the Totocache district. Inside the temple here was a gold statue of the Thunder placed on a litter of the same metal. This statue was made by the Inca Pachacuti in honor of the Thunder, and he called the statue *Inti Illapa*. Pachacuti took this statue as a brother, and during his lifetime he carried it with him whenever he went to war. This idol was greatly venerated, and it was served in a very stately and ceremonious fashion (Cobo 1990 [1653] Book 1, Chap-

⁵ La tercera guaca era un ídolo de oro macizo, llamado *Intillapa*, que quiere decir trueno del sol; el cual estaba puesto en unas ricas andas de oro. Hízolo el Inca Yupanqui, y tomólo por *Guauque*. Tenía casa en el barrio de Totocache y hacíanle gran veneración; y en la misma casa o templo estaba el cuerpo del dicho inca Yupanqui. Hacían a este ídolo muy ordinario sacrificio de niños y de todo lo demás, rogándole se conservasen las fuerzas del Inca y no se disminuyese su imperio (Cobo 1956 [1653]: 15, Book 1, Chapter 13).

ter 7, pp. 32–33, translation by Roland Hamilton).⁶

Cobo placed the Chuquilla thunder image in Pucamarca on the fifth *ceque* of Chinchay-suyu:

The second guaca was a temple named Pucamarca, which was in the houses which belonged to the Licentiate [Antonio] de la Gama; in it was an idol of the Thunder called Chucuylla (Cobo 1990 [1653]:57, Book 1, Chapter 13, translation by Roland Hamilton).⁷

One assumes that this Intillapa huaca would have been where today one finds the Church of San Blas,⁸ but this needs to be confirmed archaeologically. Excavations my team and I made were located approximately 230 meters southeast of the probable location of the Thunder Temple, but on the same hill. In several structures in Tandapata Street one can see sections of Inca retaining walls that may have been part of terracing or of the prehispanic road that takes us to Totorá Paccha.

Milena Manotupa and Maritza Peña conducted a systematic search in the Archivo

Histórico del Cusco and reconstructed how T'oqocachi must have been from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century. They state that at the end of the sixteenth century T'oqocachi was a place with terraces, maize, and potato fields, and with a few huts that were prehispanic structures, and with the Yarccapata canal which is that which crossed Tandapata Street. Later, during the Colonial Period, mansions (*solares*) were constructed, a rise in population occurred, and T'oqocachi became more urban (Figure 3; Manotupa and Peña 2016, see especially láminas 3 and 5). These data relevant to T'oqocachi corroborate with my excavations where we encountered terrace walls and areas without domestic activities.

In 1560, after the arrival of the Spanish, Polo Ondegardo established five Indian parishes including T'oqocachi. During the sixteenth century the parish of Our Lord of San Blas consisted of five *ayllus*: Hatun with its *curaca* (leader) Gabriel Tupa Yupanqui, Collana with Cristóbal Ynga Paucar, Pilcotopa with Juan Pilcotopa, Yanacónas with Pedro Chiri, and Cusigualpa with Miguel Mayua (Amado 2011:166). The prehispanic urban configuration was transformed, various Inca buildings were destroyed or modified, and the original appearance was lost. That which we see today is a small part of what must have once existed in this place.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

In 2006, at the request of what was then the National Institute of Culture (INC) I conducted archaeological excavations in the building complex whose address is 702 Tandapata Street, on the road to Antisuyo (Figure 4) in the barrio of San Blas (T'oqocachi) in the historic center of Cusco. It was in this way that my team and I were able to make test pits in different parts of the property, including in open areas such as the patios, in green spaces, and in some places in the interior of the house. The excavations give us

⁶ Tenía también el Trueno templo aparte en el barrio de Totocacha, en el cual estaba una estatua suya de oro en unas andas de lo mismo, que hizo el Inca Pachacutic en honor del trueno y la llamo Intillapa, á la cual tomó por hermano, y mientras vivió la trajo consigo en la guerra. Fue tenido este ídolo en gran veneración y servido con grande majestad y aparato (Cobo 1956 [1653], Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 369).

⁷ La segunda guaca era un templo llamado, Pucamarca, que estaba en las casas que fueron del licenciado de la Gama; en el cual estaba un ídolo del Trueno dicho Chucuylla (Cobo 1956[1653]:22, Book 1, Chapter 13).

⁸ For many years lightning bolts have fallen continuously upon the Church of San Blas and its surrounding area. For example, on 30 October 2006 a lightning bolt struck the metal cross on the bell tower.

interesting data about the *illa* Amaru-Illapa found in this place.

Fifteen test pits were dug to attempt to assess the archaeological potential of the area. These covered a total area of 130 square meters. In Trenches 2 and 15 we found the wall of the Inca terrace that runs parallel to Tandapata Street. In Trench 8 a rock outcrop was found with Inca limestone walls. These defined the space which was found to be totally destroyed. In the remainder of the trenches sections of paved floors were discovered, as well as Colonial and Republican Period walls that reused Inca stone elements in new constructions. This information can be contrasted with the research accomplished by Manotupa and Peña (2016), who affirm that the major concentration of mansions and houses can be dated from the Colonial and Republican Periods.

Excavation Trench 2

This was located in the garden of the lower part of the complex and had an area of 1.40 by 4 meters. At approximately 1.30 meters below the surface, the front of an Inca retention wall running parallel to Tandapata Street became apparent. This continued to Excavation Trench 14, 20 meters away. In excavation up to the front of the stone wall, the cultural material consisted of a fill contemporaneous with broken Inca ceramics, roof tiles, glazed ceramics, and camelid and bovine bones. This fill tells us that the destruction of the wall and its subsequent fill occurred during Republican times.

From Strata V associated with the Inca wall, a soft earth began to appear with ashes, flecks of charcoal, Inca ceramics, and camelid bones. Below this appeared a pile of stones, some burnt, fragments of burnt wood, and two hematite hammers (*jiwaya*). Upon clearing this pile of stones, three broken and incomplete Inca ceramic vases appeared. The first is a large deco-

rated *urpu* (also called *aryballo*) and the other two are the bases of a jar and a medium-sized olla, associated with, and beside, a semi-spherical stone with four serpents worked in high relief and oriented from north to south. This was associated with a burnt layer of charcoal and ashes (See Figure 5).⁹

Below the evidence of this event were eight pieces of shell (*Tagelus dombeii*)¹⁰. Attached to the wall was found a semi-spherical stone with a round hole in the middle, and a metal weight. Below this the semi-compact earth continued until the base of the Inca wall. The material remains of this whole event correspond to the foundation of the terrace wall.

⁹ Various archaeological excavations have produced evidence that offerings have been burnt. Among these we have the work of Rodríguez at Chakan (2004), in the barrio of Santa Ana in Cusco by Delgado (2013), by Delgado and Aráoz in the Huaca Pachatosa (2012), by Ermina Esenarro in Ñustapaqana (2008) and in Chinkana Grande-Cocha (2009), by Luis Guevara in Laqo (2008), and by Jorge Guillén in Inkilltambo (2008). In sixteenth and seventeenth century documents, reference is made to the practice of burning incense, food, coca leaves, wax, and straw (Arriaga 1999 [1621]:53; Betanzos 1999 [1551]:65; Cobo 1956 [1653]: book 1, chapter 22, p. 104; Molina 2008 [1573]:105; Pizarro 1978 [1571]:91).

Cobo states: "I can only find one kind of sacrifice in which birds were used; it was when they hunted down many wild birds, and made a huge fire with a certain thorn wood. Then the birds were tossed into the fire all together. The attendants of the sacrifice walked around [the fire] holding certain round and angular stones on which toads, snakes, tigers [jaguars], and lions [pumas] were painted, saying in their language: 'Let us be victorious, and may the guacas of our enemies lose their strength.' Then they brought out some black sheep that had been kept in prison with nothing to eat for several days, and they killed them, saying that in the same way that the hearts of those animals were weakened, so may their enemies lose heart . . ." (Cobo 1990 [1653] Book 1, Chapter 22, p. 115). Burning was an act of renovation or of communing with one's gods. Smoke was the medium of the gods.

¹⁰ Its geographical distribution is from Panama to the Gulf of Corcovado in Chile.

The semi-spherical stone is a conglomerate nodule 8.4 centimeters wide. It has four serpents in high relief which divide the stone symetrically. Two serpents are rising and two descending. The serpents have triangular heads and zigzagging bodies of seven sections (Figure 6).

The event associated with the serpent stone also corresponds with the three vessels that were deliberately broken. The complete vessels are not present, just one part of each one.¹¹ The first vessel is a polychrome *urpu*, used to transport chicha or store products. The second is a jar with a smooth, undecorated, conical base. The third is the base of an undecorated domestic olla (Figure 7).

Excavation Unit 8

This excavation unit had an area of 46 square meters. The interesting thing about it was the discovery of a rock outcrop with evidence of several limestone walls delimiting and characterizing this space (Figure 8). Only a single course of worked limestone blocks was discovered. The whole place was destroyed when stones were removed from the walls during the Colonial-Republican Period in order to be reused in other structures within the compound.

¹¹ It is was a common practice during Inca times to bury one part of a vessel during one event and the rest of it someplace else. At Rumiqlolqa half of one jar related to a single event was found, and the other half was found in a context related to another event. The places where the vessel parts were found are more than 150 meters distant from one another (Delgado 2018). "El acto de quebrar las vasijas, en este sentido, se relaciona tanto como un acto de sacrificio como puede constituir el punto final del ritual, cuya relevancia reside en la necesaria repetición y en la renovación" (Kaulicke 2005:399). [The act of breaking vessels, in this sense, relates as much to a sacrificial act that can constitute the final point of the ritual whose relevance resides in necessary repetition and in renovation.]

In some very deep levels, isolated and dispersed elements like flecks of carbon, alpaca bones (*Lama pacos*) from parts that were eaten during a feast, the remains of guinea pigs (*Cavia porcellus*), pieces of obsidian, worked bones, and pieces of clay mortars with the impressions of straw that was once part of the plaster of the Inca walls, could give us an idea of what this place once was. This space was part of a huaca, one of many that are in the Saqsaywaman Archaeological Park.

DISCUSSION

The prehispanic road that goes from Totora Paccha [not on map] to Tandapata Street has a limestone wall that makes an unusual turn, forming an acute angle (Figure 9). Cobo describes a huaca which may correspond to this corner and indicates that it would be the second huaca on the third *ceque* of Antisuyo.

The second guaca was a wall next to the *chacara* [field] of [Hernando de] Bachicao which had an outward bulge in it, the origin of which, they said, was that when the Inca passed that way the wall had gone out to do reverence to him, and from that time on they worshipped it, offering it colored shells (Cobo 1990 [1653], Book 1, Chapter 14, p. 65).¹²

Bauer states that a 1557 land transfer document places the lands of Hernando de Bachicao on the outskirts of the city, adjacent to this sharp corner on Totora Paccha Street (Bauer 2000: 90). The name of this street may be derived from the term *paccha* which is a ritual vessel with a zigzag channel, or from the Chunchi stream

¹² La segunda guaca era una pared que estaba junto á la chacara de Bachicao, que tenía una barriga hacia afuera, cuyo origen decían haber sido que, pasando por allí el Inca, había salido a hacerle reverencia; y desde entonces la adoraban ofreciéndole conchas de colores". (Cobo 1956 [1653], book 1, chapter 14, p. 37).

which descends along the Qenqo Quebrada and which cuts, transversally, the beginning of the street and which divides the Huaca Pachatosa. Delgado and Aráoz (2012) performed salvage archaeology at this huaca. In the lower part they found areas of fine stone masonry associated with an Inca ceremonial stone fountain. The Inca canal directing the Chunchi stream has such a steep drop that the Incas constructed artificial waterfalls.

This sharp corner is forty meters from the excavation unit where the stone with four zigzag figures was found. Towards the north part we found a rock outcrop with walls made of worked limestone blocks (Figure 10)

The semi-spherical stone with four serpents found at Tandapata in 2006 is not the only example known at present. Similar stones with carved serpents have been found during the course of archaeological work at Qotakalli, on the south slope of the Huatanay Valley, conducted from 2014 to 2016 (Pérez 2016:36). This type of stone was found at area (*recinto*) 27, level (*capa*) IV of sector “A”. It is made of a yellowish conglomerate nodule and also shows four serpents, two ascending and two descending (Silva and Enríquez 2016:112; Figure 11). The site of Qotakalli on the left bank of the Huatanay River was identified by John Rowe as the Inca town of Quisalla which is mentioned in Cobo’s account of the huacas (Rowe 2003:91).

These stones, both that from Tandapata, as well as that from Qotakalli, represent an *illa*.¹³

¹³ In the early colonial period *illa* was defined as “lightning yllapa, or chuquilla” [relampago yllapa, o chuquilla] (Santo Thomas 2006 [1560]:155).

Another colonial definition of *illa* is “the beozar that is large, or notable, like an egg, or bigger, which they carry on their persons because of the superstition of becoming rich or fortunate” [la piedra vezar grande o notable como vn hueuo, o mayor, que la trayan consigo por abusión para

Arriaga wrote that these are in the forms of maize, potatoes, and sheep, that they were inherited by sons from their fathers, and that each household had its own way of offering them adoration (1999 [1621]:36–37). Usually these were representations of camelids (*paqochas*) from the flocks (Flores 1977:222). *Illas* had the power to bring about animal reproduction.¹⁴ It is believed that they possess the vital power that is *enqa* (*ibid.*:224).¹⁵ *Illas* do not only relate to animals. Through the archaeological record it has been determined that *illas* also represent agricultural produces like maize and potatoes

ser rico y venturosos] (González Holguín 1989 [1608]:366).

Ylla [*illa*] is also defined as “everything that is old and kept for many years” [todo lo que es antiguo de muchos años guardado] (González Holguín 1989 [1608]:367).

In the Quechua lexicon the term *illa* is related to the terms “illumination”, and “gleaming”. It appears that later the term *illa* was used for bezoar, a small stony concretion that may form in the stomachs of certain animals, especially ruminants, and which was once believed to be an antidote to poison and medicine for various ailments.

¹⁴ When a ceremony is conducted by a *paqo*, or ritual specialist, to mitigate a low number of livestock, “placed over the ground and oriented towards the east, an *unkhuña* [small, traditional wool mantle] is untied. This contains the *khuyas* or *enqas* (natural stones that resemble the forms of livestock, or artificial worked alabaster stones from Puno and Bolivia) that have come to be regarded as amulets destined to conserve, protect, fertilize, and increase the livestock. Today, in some parts of the sierra these are known as *Illa*” (Casaverde 1970:145; “tendido sobre el suelo y orientado al Este, sobre la que se desata una *unkhuña* . . . que contiene las *khuyas* o *enqas* [piedras naturales que semejan formas de ganado, o piedras artificiales talladas en alabastro procedentes de Puno y Bolivia], que vienen a ser amuletos destinados a conservar, proteger, fecundizar e incrementar el ganado. En la actualidad en algunas zonas de la sierra sur se les conoce con el nombre de *Illa*.)

¹⁵ “*Enqu* is the engendering and vital principle. It is the source and origin of happiness, well being and abundance” (Flores 1977:218; “*Enqu* es el principio generador y vital. Es la fuente y el origen de la felicidad, el bienestar y la abundancia.”).

(Delgado and Arároz 2012; Oberti 1982). There are also *illas* of mountains, huacas, and *apus*.¹⁶

Concerning the site of Saqsaywaman, the first to state that those features called bastions were the Lightning or Illapa Temple was the late San Antonio Abad professor Luis Barreda Murillo during his many academic lectures. Barreda and Valencia (2007:96), referring to Saqsaywaman, note that the zigzag walls were called Muchuy and the Muchy Mikhuy. The first brought famine that ruined the fields and the second brought rain. Staller (2014:186) suggests that the importance of Illapa is rooted in its connections to origins, rains, and agricultural cycles, as well as in its lethal power, death, and the destruction of people and crops.

Barreda and Valencia (2007) suggest hypothetically that the complex of buildings at Saqsaywaman must have been called Intip-Illapan Wasin (or House of the Sun Lightning). José Silva (2007:178) and Ariadna Baulenas (2016:121) shared the idea that the zigzag walls at Saqsaywaman represented lightning (Figure 12).

The first megalithic wall stands on the esplanade called Chuquipampa and has the form of a zigzag with twenty-three angles with rounded corners. The second megalithic wall, called Mikuy (food in Quechua) is built in a form that parallels the first megalithic wall, following the zigzag form that can be related to the god Illapa. The third megalithic wall follows the same parallel zigzag form, only varying in its height (Barreda and Valencia 2007:98–101). This explanation finishes by noting that of the three walls, the first two were incorporated into ritual,

while the third would be the retention wall (*ibid.*).

Thus, we are confronting the largest example of a Lightning or Illapa Temple that exists in the Andes. At the same time, we have at several huacas in the Saqsaywaman Archaeological Park, walls in the form of zigzags or steps that, in some cases, are boundary walls or part of the architecture of the huacas.

In terms of the carved stones from the Saqsaywaman Archaeological Park, we have some depicting zigzagging serpents worked in low relief like those at Quenqo Grande. Steven Gullberg (2009:169) asserts that liquids, probably chicha, were poured on them as part of the offerings to the huaca.

In the drawing of Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua (1993 [c. [1613]:208), on the viewer's left, is the representation of lightning, Chuq'ylla or Illapa, drawn as two zigzag lines (Figure 13). This representation, although not exactly like the plan of the "ramparts" of Saqsaywaman, or of those at Qenqo, or the stones with zigzag figures, nevertheless presents certain similarities.¹⁷

¹⁷ On the composition of this drawing Pierre Duviols suggests, "Pachacuti's drawing, through its frame and outline, by the distribution of its figures, by the selection of some of them, resembles, above all, the category of retables that, in churches, are located behind the main altar or behind the altars of the lateral chapels." He continues, "in his drawing, Pachacuti does not bring to mind anything that can be considered authentic Andean religious thought." ["El dibujo de Pachacuti, por su marco y contorno, por la distribución de sus figuras y la elección de algunas de ellas, asemeja sobre todo a la categoría de retables que, en las iglesias, están colocadas detrás del altar mayor o detrás de los altares de las capillas laterales" (1993:38) y prosigue "Pachacuti en sus dibujos no ha evocado nada que pudiese sugerir un auténtico pensamiento religioso andino" (*ibid.*: 56).

¹⁶ In the community of Kuyo Grande the spirits who lived in the mountains were called *apu* or *ruwal* (Casaverde 1970:141). This use of the term *apu* is widespread in the central Andes.

Nevertheless, some elements of Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua's drawing such as Chuq'ylla or Illapa drawn with two zigzag lines corresponds to the cosmovision of the

Christóbal de Molina was the sixteenth century chronicler who best described Inca rites and ceremonies. He stated that Thunder was a god whose importance was comparable to that of the Sun, and that the *camascas*, who were wizards, received their special abilities from Thunder, saying, “. . . when a bolt of lightning strikes and frightens someone, after returning to himself, he said that Thunder had shown him this art, whether it was to cure with plants, or whether it was to give his replies to the questions that were asked of him” (Molina 2008 [c. 1576]:25–26).¹⁸

In the Andean cosmovision, every person who had been struck by lightning acquired superhuman characteristics, especially in relation to worship. In the community of Cuyo Grande (Pisac), during the 1960s, anthropologist Juvenal Casaverde compiled information from the elders of the community. They stated that the Alto Mesayoq was a wizard who received his powers directly from the Ruwal through the intervention of lightning. The future Alto Mesayoq must be chosen by one, two, or more Ruwal. He who demonstrated the power given by ten Ruwal was considered to be very powerful. The candidate had to be touched by lightning, in a remote place, without the presence of other men, because if it happened that others were present, the lightning would kill them (Casaverde 1970:212).¹⁹

prehispanic Andean people.

¹⁸ . . . que cuando algún rayo caía y quedaba alguno atemorizado, después de vuelto en sí decía que el Trueno le había mostrado aquel arte, ora fuese de curar con hierbas, ora fuese de dar sus respuestas en las cosas que se les preguntaban.

¹⁹ Es un mago que recibe poderes directamente de los Ruwal, por intermedio del Rayo. El futuro Alto Mesayoq debe ser escogido, por uno, dos o más Ruwal, siendo muy considerado muy poderoso, el que ostenta el poder donado por diez Ruwal. El candidato debe ser alcanzado por el Rayo, en un lugar solitario sin la presencia de otros

The Panpa Mesayoq is the name taken by the wizard who has received his powers, having been struck by a single bolt of lightning, and is the possessor of a *mesa*, a stone in an strange form, the source of the power which has mana (Casaverde 1970:218).²⁰

This relationship with lightning is important up to the present day so that Altomisayoq and Pampamisayos can become curanderos. In the mid-twentieth century Harry Tschopik (1951: 225–228) recovered the information that in Chucuito (Puno) five wizards had been struck by lightning. They were personages who were chosen. They had not looked to be impacted by lightning.

Lightning in the Andes has various names, depending on the region. In Cusco it is called Illapa. In Huamachuco it is Catequil.²¹ In Huarochiri storms were personified as Pariacaca. In the central sierra, in Huaylas it is known as Libiac. Although the names vary, its attributes are the same. When Bernabé Cobo, Cristóbal de Molina, and Sarmiento de Gamboa refer to the Thunder Temple they are all referring to the same atmospheric phenomenon.

The *illas* of Tandapata and Qotakalli have a double connotation. The head has the form of that of a serpent and the body is that of lightning (Illapa). In the Andean world the Amaru and Illapa do not oppose one another. Rather, they

hombres, porque si esto sucediera el rayo le quitara la vida.

²⁰ El Panpa Mesayoq, toma este nombre el mago que ha recibido sus poderes, al haber sido alcanzado por una sola descarga del rayo y es poseedor de una mesa, piedra de forma extraña fuente del poder que tiene mana.

²¹ John Topic indicated that the Catequil huaca was worshiped as the god of sheet lightning (Topic 2008:75).

Lightning is the origin of thunder (sound) and sheet lightning. These are atmospheric events that occur after a lightning bolt and are not isolated or independent events.

are complementary. Information from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries makes reference to this idea, as do ethnographic works that tell us that these elements are always in a certain relationship and are not isolated elements.

To understand this serpent-lightning relationship we have the vision of Inca Yupanqui at Susurpuquio before he became the *sapa Inca* (Inca ruler) as described by Molina:

They say that before he was the lord, while going to visit his father Viracocha Inca who was at Sucsahuana, five leagues from Cusco, when he arrived at a fountain called Susurpuquio he saw a tablet of crystal fall from this fountain. Within it he saw the figure of an Indian in the following form: At the top of his forehead, three very shiny beams emanated, like the rays of the sun, the ones and the others [sic]. In his armpits were coiled some serpents. On his head there was a *llauro* [head band that was an insignia of the *sapa Inca*] (Molina 2008 [c. 1576]:21).²²

Sarmiento de Gamboa describes in the same manner that when Pachacuti Inca rebuilt the House of the Sun:

. . . And in addition to these bodies he made two gold idols. One was called Viracocha Pachayachachi and represented his creator as they said, and he put it to the right of the idol of the Sun. The other [gold idol] was called Chuqui-Ylla, which

represented lightning and he put it to the left of the form of the Sun. This idol [of lightning] was highly venerated. Inca Yupanqui took this idol for his brother, because it was said that he had encountered it, and speaking in an uninhabited place, he had been given a serpent with two heads so that he could carry it with him always, saying that as long as he carried it with him nothing negative would happen to him when he was going about his business (Sarmiento de Gamboa 2007 [1572]:96).²³

Every Inca had a *guaocui* or divine double. That of Manco Cápac was a bird called Inti. The *guaocui* of Sinchi Roca was a fish. Pachacuti's *guaocui* was thunder under the name of Chuquiylla. According to Sabine MacCormack this was represented as a serpent or *amaru*²⁴ and the gift that Chuquiylla gave to Pachacuti, a serpent with two heads, was his own image (MacCormack 2016:265).

Justo Torres excavated at Suchuna or Rodadero and found in the northeast part of the site a series of tombs. In one of these he discovered a gold pectoral with a motif of two felines and a serpent with two heads (Figure 14); Barreda and Valencia 2007:141).

²² Dicen que antes que fuese señor, yendo a visitar a su padre Viracocha Inca que estaba en Sucsahuana, cinco leguas del Cuzco, al tiempo que llegó a una fuente llamada Susurpuquio vió caer una tabla de cristal en la misma fuente, dentro en la cual vio una figura de indio en la forma siguiente: en la cabeza del colodrillo de ella, a lo alto, le salían tres rayos muy resplandecientes a manera de rayos del sol los unos y los otros; y en los encuentros de los brazos unas culebras enroscadas; en la cabeza un *llauro*.

²³ Y además de estos cuerpos hizo dos ídolos de oro. Y al uno llamó Viracocha Pachayachachi, que representase su creador que ellos dicen, y púsole a la diestra del ídolo del Sol. Y al otro llamó Chuqui-Ylla, que representase el relámpago; y púsole a la siniestra del bulto del Sol; al cual ídolo veneraban sumamente todos. El cual ídolo tomó Inca Yupanqui por ídolo huanqui, porque decía que se habían topado y hablado en un despoblado y que le habían dado una culebra con dos cabezas, para que trajese siempre consigo, diciendo que mientras la trajese siempre consigo, no le sucedería cosa siniestra en sus negocios.

²⁴ . . . A few early colonial queros have jaguars painted along the rim in a repeated fashion. Others may have had serpents like those painted on the textiles mentioned by Alborno. If so, this particular animal had already been singled out in the 1550s as pervasive and idolatrous (Cummins 2002:153).

We have descriptions by Ramos Gavilán of idols near Lake Titicaca encircled with serpents who were worshiped in order to request water for the fields.

Apart from this Copacabana idol, the Yunguyos have another called Copacati, that takes the name of the mountain in which it dwells, the same idol that was later at the exit of the town. It was stone with a very bad figure, and all encircled with snakes. They come to him during the dry season to ask for the water necessary for their sown fields (Ramos Gavilán 1988 [1621]:196–197).²⁵

In the mountain called Tucumu, opposite the Island of Titicaca a stone idol three and a half varas high was discovered. It had two faces . . . one was of a man, and the other was of a woman, with two serpents that climbed it from the feet and in the crown was a very large toad in the form of a headdress (Ramos Gavilán [1621]:197).²⁶

In the same manner, in the *Relación de los Agustinos* about Huamachuco in the northern Peruvian sierra it is stated that the Inca buildings had painted serpents.

One found a very common thing in all the buildings or in those additional ones of the

Inca and the king of them and up to the present the Indians paint some very large serpents and say that the Inca had two snakes for his coat of arms and thus I have seen it in many tambos, especially in Cusco and in Huamachuco (Agustinos 1992 [1560]:31).²⁷

As we have seen, Illapa and Amaru are viewed as related to obtaining water. Thunder brings the rain and the serpent is always in water fountains. The two representations are in play in relation to the provisioning of water. Lakes are venerated to assure that the fields do not experience a water scarcity.

The terms Amaro and Illapa refer to archetypes, symbols of power, or hierarchy, and of lineage that manifest themselves in their physical representation in archaeology and also in the landscape. The names of these were recurrent in the Inca Horizon in the huacas of Cusco. Additionally, several Incas had the word Amaro as part of their names. Idilio Santillana's analysis of a polysemous concept of the Amaro in Cusco, Vilcashuaman, and Pomacocha is interesting, as it may be represented figuratively in different contexts (Santillana 2012). In the towns of the Andes, where meteorological phenomenon like thunder and lightning are frequently manifested, the lightning bolt is considered to be divine and it is venerated (Limón 2017:112).

These stones, with their four serpent figures in high relief, are divided into four symmetrical spaces. Two serpents move in one direction and the other two in the opposite direction. Therefore, we are confronting the mental representation of the division of space in the Inca era,

²⁵ Fuera de aqueste ídolo Copacabana, tenían los Yunguyos, otro que llamaban Copacati, tomando nombre el cerro en que estava, del mismo ídolo que estava luego a la salida del pueblo, era de piedra con figura malísima, y todo ensortijado de culebras, acudían a él en tiempo de seca a pedirle el agua necesaria para sus sementeras.

²⁶ En el cerro llamado Tucumu, frontero de la isla Titicaca, descubrió un Ídolo de piedra de tres varas y media de alto que tenía dos rostros . . . salvo que el un rostro era de varón, y el otro de mujer, con dos culebras que le subían de los pies, y en la corona un sapo muy grande en forma de tocado.

²⁷ Halláronse una cosa muy común en todos los edificios o en los más del ynga y rey de aquella, y aun hasta oy los pintan los yndios; ques unas culebras muy grandes y dizen quel ynga tenya dos culebras por armas y así la he yo visto en muchos tambos, especialmente en el Cuzco y en Guamachuco.

Hanan-Hurin (above-below), Paña-Lloque (right-left), and the division of Tahuantinsuyo (the Inca realm), into Chinchaysuyo-Qollasuyo and Contisuyo-Antisuyo.

FINAL THOUGHTS

It has always been thought that *illas*, or representations of deities of agricultural products, or those of animal husbandry in the pre-hispanic era invariably represent a single thing or personage. On the basis of the evidence presented here, I suggest that in the case under consideration, the stones with the zigzag figures with the heads of serpents present a duality very specific to the Amaru-Llapa which is not in conflict, but, to the contrary, is complementary. These archetypes are strongly related to the acquisition of hydrological resources. Lightning brings rain which penetrates the ground and, because of this, it is associated with the fertility of crops (Staller 2014:179).

The *illa* Amaru-Illapa is the symbolic representation of lightning or Illapa and of the Amaru or serpent that cannot be separated and that, in historical documents, are always in a harmonious symbiotic relationship. These two representations had been permanently interrelated as symbols of power and of a hierarchy symbolizing authority. We can see this in these representations that the Incas created with their huacas, in their constructions, and in their works of high or low relief. These zigzag and stepped forms are always present in a hierarchical form in all these places. In the same way, these forms are intimately linked to shamanic powers, to worship, and to the ancestors. These representations of serpents and lightning bolts render power to people, and are the mechanisms through which some individuals relate to the deities, and turn themselves into mediums. Finally, these archetypes are strongly related to the obtaining of hydraulic resources.

Translated from the Spanish by Monica Barnes

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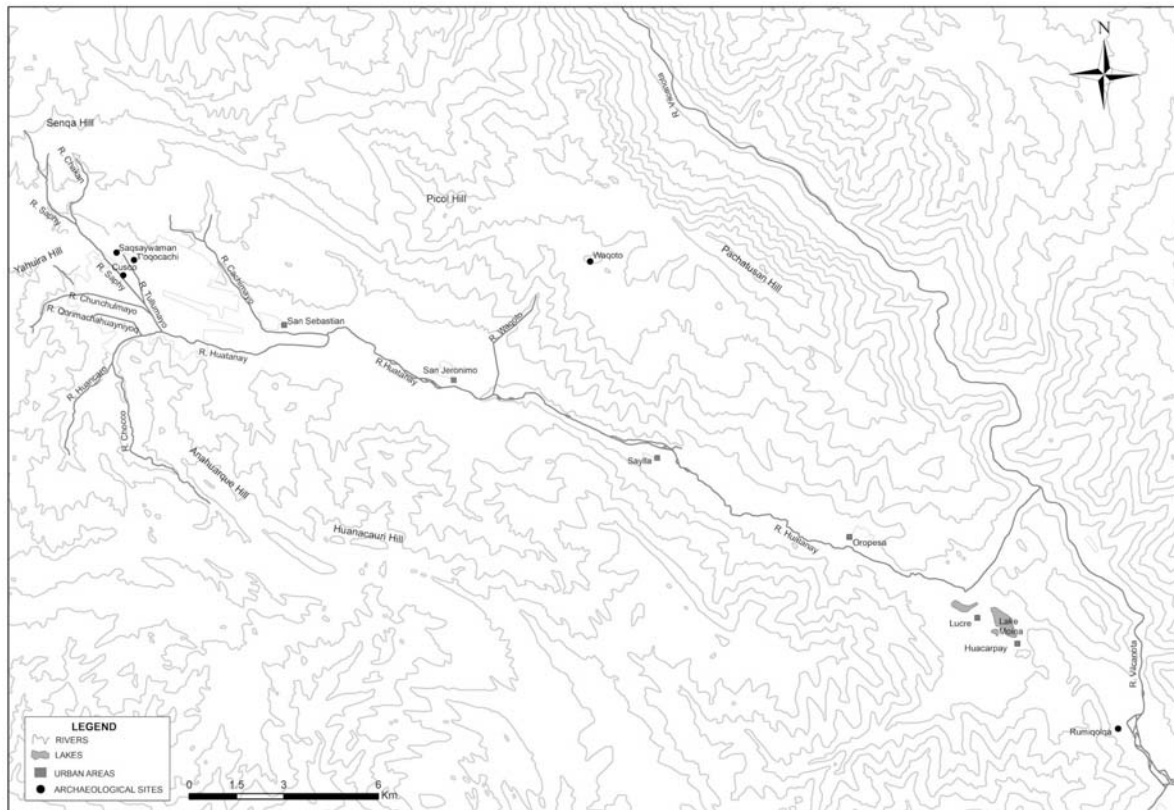


Figure 1: Map showing Cusco and other communities in relation to the hills that were most important in Inca times.



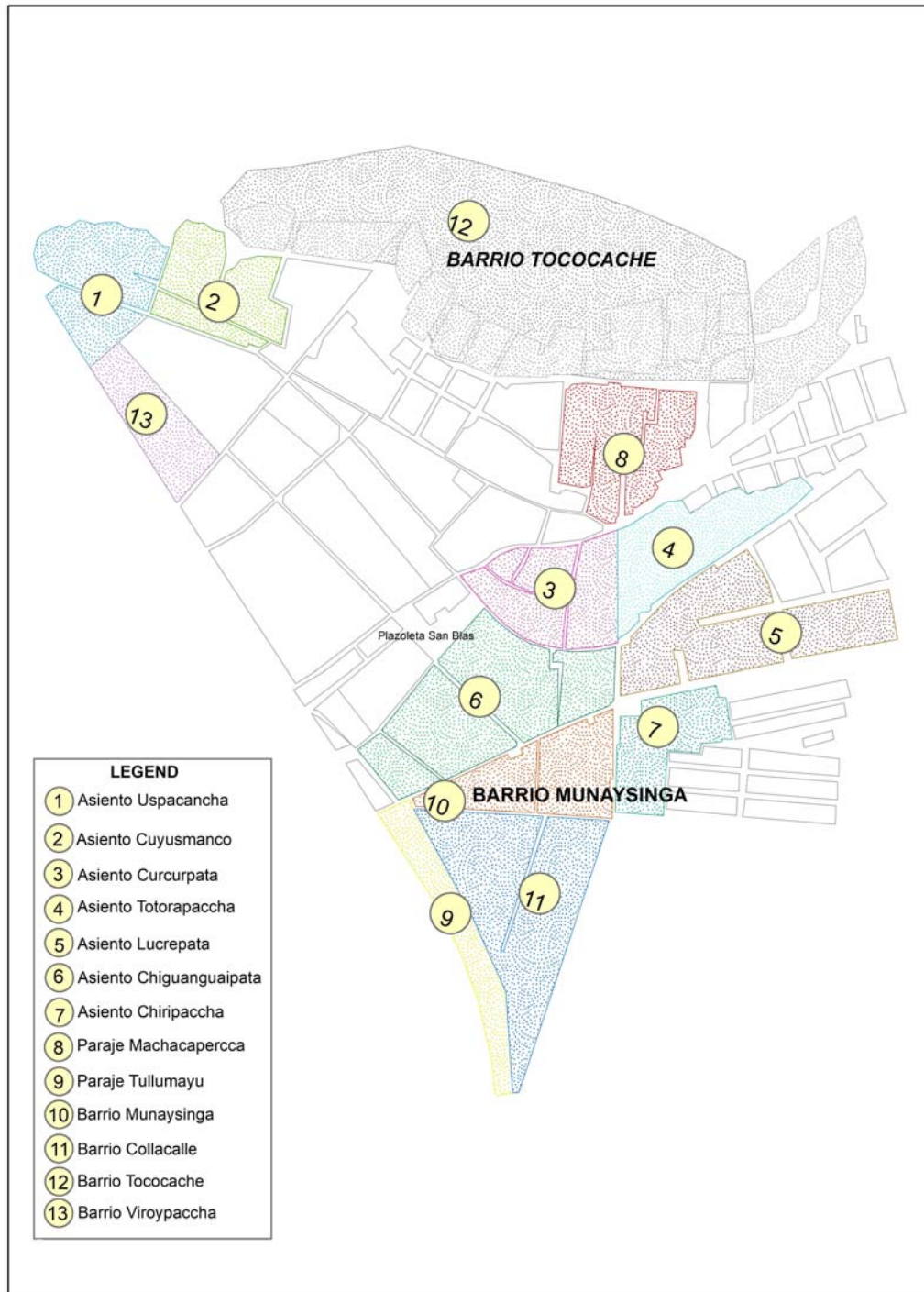


Figure 3: Location of T'oqocachi in the sixteenth century in relation to San Blas and other parts of Cusco. A paraje is a group of houses at some distance from the parish plaza.

An asiento is a place where a group of people is established, a seat.

Plan is after Manotupa and Peña 2016:226, lámina 3.



Figure 4: View of the structure at 702 Tandapata Street.



Figure 5: View of the offering consisting of ceramic vessels and a stone and a stone with zigzags.



Figure 6: View of the semi-spherical stone with four serpents in high relief.



Figure 7: Inca ceramic vessels comprising part of the offering.



Figure 8: Huaca above the rock outcrop with wall foundations.



Figure 9: View of the corner with the acute angle that corresponds to the second huaca of the third Antisuyo ceque that is part of the road to Antisuyo.



Figure 10: View of Tandapata and Totor Paccha Streets with the zigzag walls.

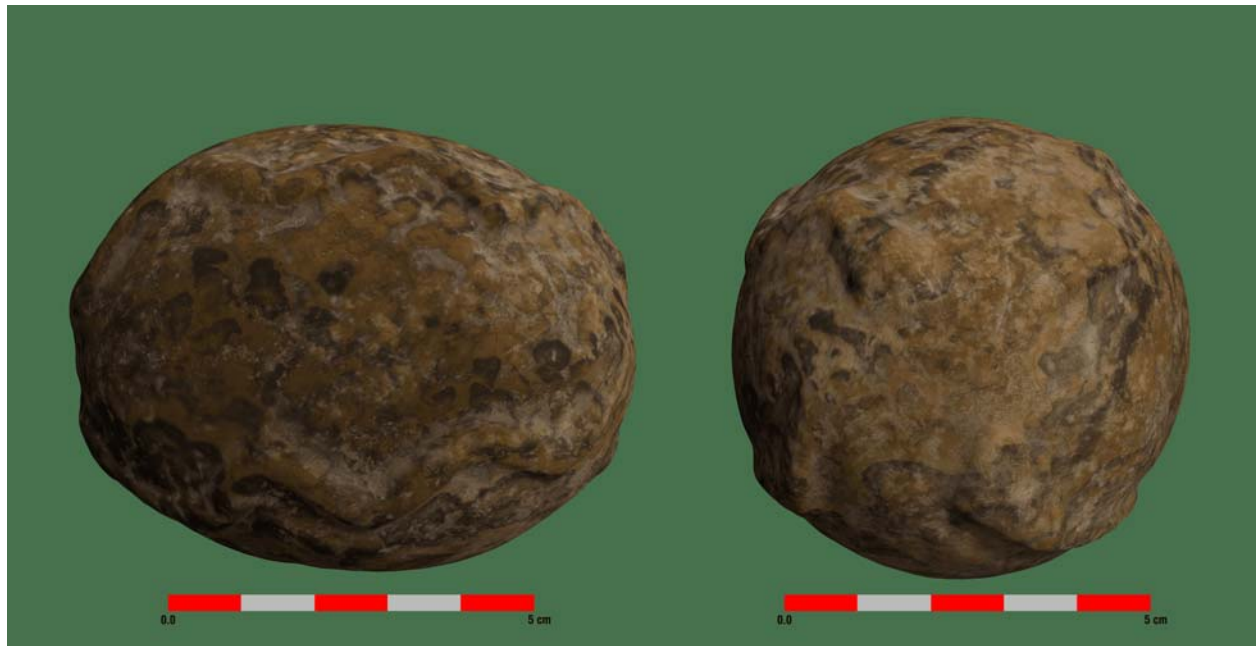


Figure 11: View of the illa with zigzag figures found at Qotakalli.

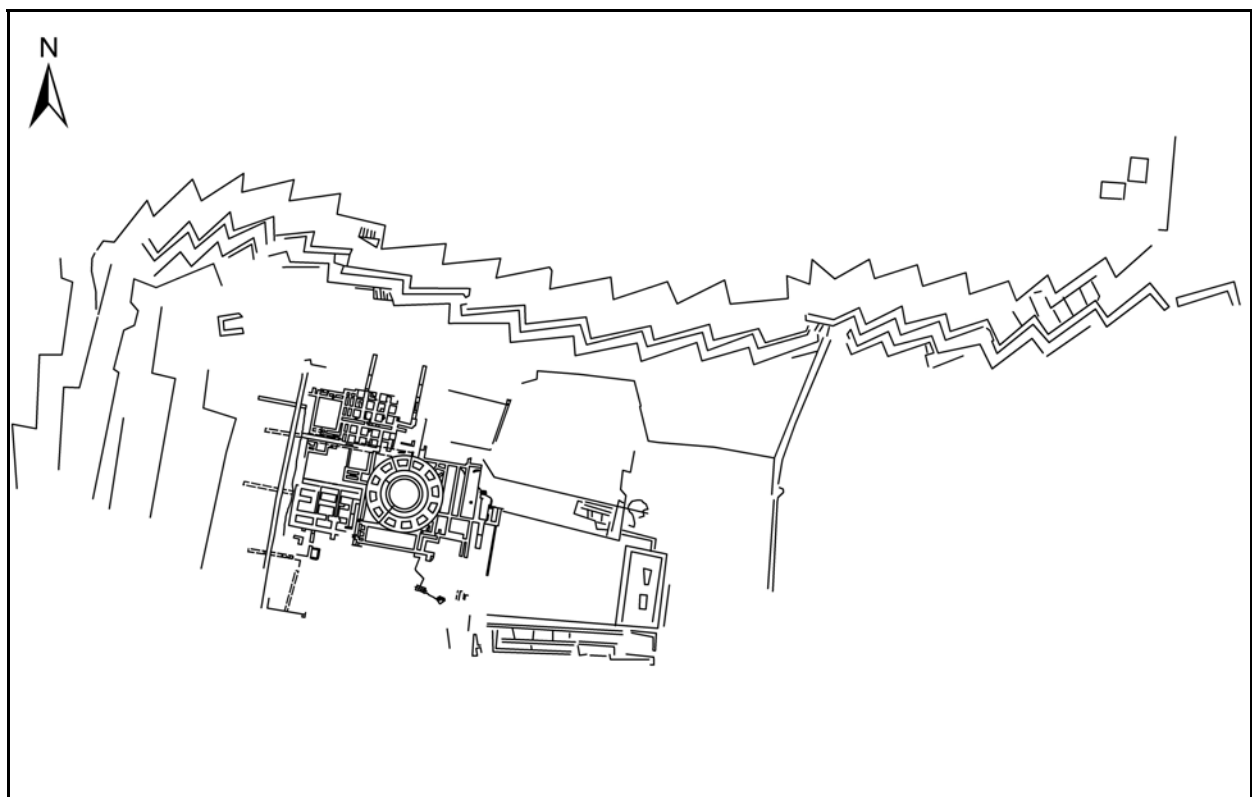


Figure 12. Plan of Saqsaywaman (after the Plan Maestro de Saqsaywaman (INC 2004)).



Figure 14: Gold pectoral with a motif of two felines and a serpent with two heads.