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ONLINE ADDENDUM FOUR

Architectural Anomalies in the Northeastern Cloud Forest of Peru

Robert Bradley

Seventeen years ago, Esther Pasztory streamlined my career change from wine merchant to pre-Columbian art historian by advising me to go my area of interest, the cloud forest of northeastern Peru. She had encouraged the Peruvian turn in my pre-Columbian focus, toward the Chachapoya people of ancient Peru, gleaning my latent fondness for extreme jungle terrain. It was Esther, too, who had recommended Gene Savoy's *The Antisuyu: The Search for the Lost Cities of the Amazon,* a romantic chronicle of late twentieth-century expeditions to northeastern Peru. Esther instinctively knew my path as a Chachapoya scholar had to begin with a journey to the region. So there I was in December of 1998 aboard a Fokker turboprop bound for the northern highland city of Cajamarca. I looked out of my window at the Andes Mountains below, concerned about my nonexistent Spanish and finding a driver willing to negotiate the precarious dirt road through the Marañon River canyon. Esther had set this journey in motion and at that particular moment I had serious doubts about her judgment.

Today I have completed more than fifteen years of fieldwork in the mountains and valleys of northern Peru that were once the realm of pre-Columbian Chachapoya people. Particularly, I have been intrigued by and have studied the region of Chilchos/la Meseta, first entering the area in September 2003. Like many regions in Peru, the Huayhuash, the Huayllaga, and the Cordillera Azul, for example, Chilchos has an inapproachable aura of mystery about it even though the village is only a long two-day hike from Leymebamba. But perhaps the far-off reputation is earned because to access Chilchos, and La Meseta, one must cross the eastern barrier of the Andes through a high mountain swamp (*jalca*), then over a humid and often foggy pass at almost 4000 meters above sea level (masl), and finally descend down two-thousand meters into the thick forest of the valley below. My September 2003 visit to Chilchos and the isolated community of La Meseta (See the delineated rectangle in figure 1**.** The undulating line in the diagram represents the boundary of the Peruvian department of Amazonas [left] and San Martín [right]), which is

another two-to-three day hike into the forest, was followed up by a June 2004 journey back to the region. In June 2007, I returned to Chilchos/La Meseta to survey the site dubbed La Penitenciaría/Huaca de la Meseta by Keith Muscutt a few months earlier (Muscutt 2007), and begin a preliminary survey of the major road network descending into the Valley from the highlands. In June 2008, I again returned to the Valley of Chilchos to photograph and survey the Inca bath at Cascarilla Wasi. Finally, in June 2010, I revisited the Valley and stayed at Cascarilla Wasi for several days to clear some parts of the pre-Columbian road above and below the ruin. The paper that follows is then a salute to the foresight of Esther Pasztory and will focus on unpublished research from a decade of fieldwork.

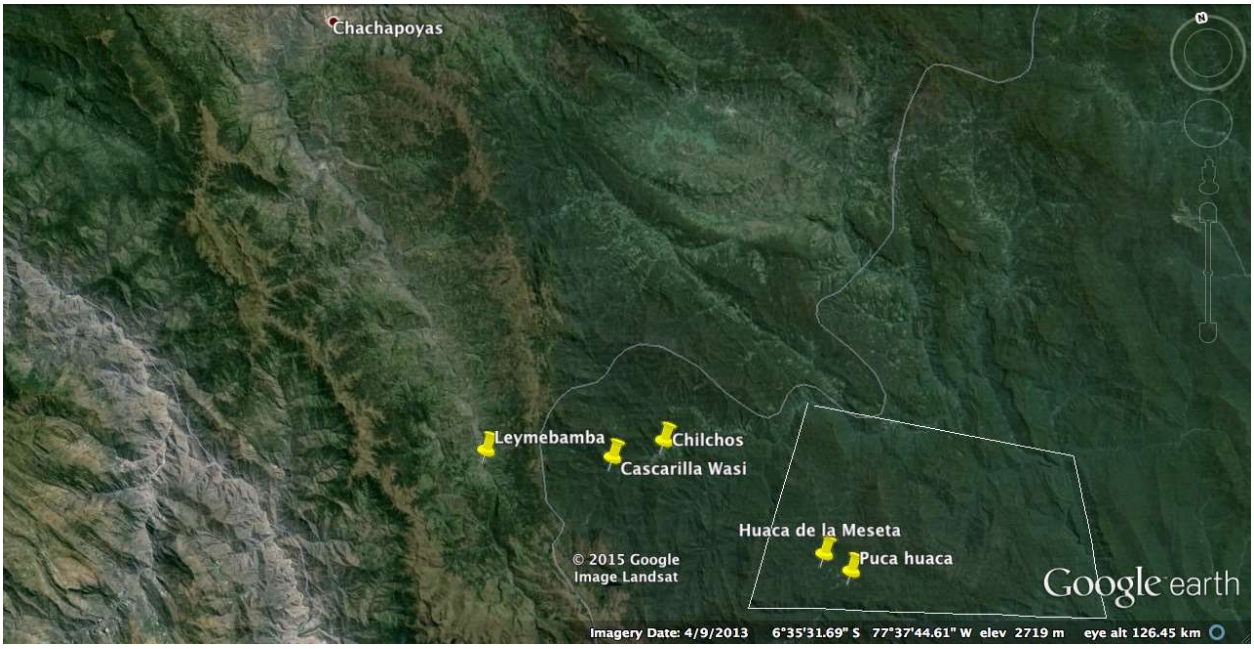

Fig. 1. Map with sites discussed in the text marked.

Chilchos/La Meseta in the Realm of the Chachapoya

This text will describe, pinpoint geographically, and analyze—in regards to the colonial, ethnohistoric and archeological records—the sites of Cascarilla Wasi, Huaca de la Meseta and Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta in the Chilchos/La Meseta region of northeastern Peru. In the past fifty years, many of the ruins in this remote corner of northeastern Peru have been mapped, recorded, and then ultimately forgotten, especially after they have been 'revealed' to the outside world for the first time (e.g. Lerche 1995; Muscutt 1998; Savoy 1970). In contrast, the academic community largely ignores these architectural surveys only responding to insular fieldwork in Chachapoyas

focused on some hard-science snapshot of the region's pre-Columbian artifacts (e.g. Nystrom, Buikstra, and Muscutt 2010; Toyne 2011). The aspects of this text which I hope the reader carefully considers, are the framing of these ruins in relation to the colonial record, Andean scholarship, and the oral tradition of the Chilchos/La Meseta region. This type of investigation is uncommon in studies concerning the pre-Columbian Chachapoya.

The pre-Columbian Chachapoya people controlled a large area of northern Peru's mountains and forest from the mid-to-late first millennium CE to 1470, when the Inca emperor Topa Inca subjugated the Chachapoya (Garcilaso de la Vega 1989, 478–481; Reichlen and Reichlen 1950). Chachapoya language and history are lost, but a number of early colonial documents provide information about the Inca conquest of this ethnic group (Espinoza Soriano 1967; Schjellerup 1997; Taylor 2000). However, the most complete data of the Inca conquest of the Chachapoya comes from the chronicle of Garcilaso de la Vega (see Bradley 2008, 66–75).

The Chilchos people were part of the pre-Columbian Chachapoya polity (Schjellerup 2005, 244–45). The geographical area that they controlled is several days east of the town of Leymebamba by foot. The town is the home of the Museo Leymebamba, which is the repository for the *Laguna de los condores* pre-Columbian artifacts that were salvaged during a rescue excavation in 1998 (von Hagen and Guillen 1998). Leymebamba is a three-hour drive south from the Amazonas capital of Chachapoyas. This city is in turn a twelve-hour bus ride from the coastal hub of Chiclayo.

When tourists or scholars mention pre-Columbian Chachapoyas, typically they are referencing archaeological sites around the modern capital Chachapoyas (population 30,000). Of course the crown jewel of all tourism to the city ends with a visit to the large hilltop pre-Columbian settlement Kuelap. This site is a few hours from the comfortable hotels of the capital, and typically visitors experience Kuelap via an extended day-trip. In contrast, there are no paved roads into the Chilchos/La Meseta region so the area must be accessed either by foot or by beasts of burden (typically mules or horses). Chilchos has a population of around 300 and the inhabitants of the small towns of the nearby tableland, La Meseta, probably amount to less than half of that number. The Valley of Chilchos is very fertile and warm at 1700 masl. In contrast, La Meseta is located at above 2,000 masl so nights are typically cold and damp. This entire region was a thriving part of the Andean pre-Columbian world as indicated by the man-made terracing and road networks peeking out from under the natural blanket of vegetation (Bradley 2008; Schjellerup 2005, 243). The foundation of Chachapoya settlements, Inca imperial constructions, and forgotten agricultural mounds serve to remind the modern Western visitor that a hardy and resourceful people once dominated this cloud forest.

Waldemar Espinoza and Inge Schjellerup have delineated the poignant colonial history of the Chilchos' community (Espinoza Soriano 2003; Schjellerup 2005; Schjellerup, et al. 2003). In contrast, the La Meseta tableland region, two days southeast of Chilchos, was a pre-Columbian hub, but this area has no nuanced colonial history. The name Chilchos first appears in conquistador Francisco Pizarro's letter dated 14th January 1538 to his captain Alonso de Alvarado (Schjellerup 2005, 259). Both Espinoza (2003) and Schjellerup (2005) build upon this first reference and go on to identify the colonial-era tensions and abuses involved in obtaining tribute for the crown during a time of diminishing indigenous populations. Schjellerup has estimated the population of Chilchos was 7-8,000 individuals in 1546 (2005, 263–264). Smallpox and back-breaking labor shrunk the inhabitants in the decades that followed until the colonial mandate of Viceroy Toledo scattered the entire community (Schjellerup 2005, 271–72). Ironically most of the inhabitants of Chilchos were relocated, in a maneuver known as a *reducción*, to the sierra village of San Ildefonso de los Chilchos (the modern village of Montevideo; Schjellerup 2005, 269). Generally *reducciones* involve moving an indigenous community from a difficult-to-get-to highland location to a location accessible by horse (Salomon 1986, 48). By contrast, the movement of the Chilchos took the inhabitants from a tropical and fertile river valley to a cold and forbidding eastern cordillera village at 2,700 masl. This forced relocation was likely extraordinarily difficult for this already stressed population. A census of the 1686 *visita* completed by the administrator Bustente Zevallos concludes the sad plight of the villagers of San Ildefonso de los Chilchos. At this time the inhabitants of the community numbered less than fifty individuals (Schjellerup 2005, 272–273).

After the early colonial era the tropical valley of Chilchos returned to a natural state for three hundred years. Then, at the beginning of the twentieth-century, Peruvian settlers repopulated the Valley. These early migrants, and indeed most of the other pilgrims to follow, colonized this remote eastern area to escape the oppressive social stratification and orthodoxy of Peruvian society. Schjellerup has reprinted a chronology of the Valley of Chilchos resettlement including the family names of the first pioneers (2005, 277–283). Although the overview of the movement is probably accurate, the specifics rely heavily on the testimony of one informant, Don Eusebio Garay. According to Don Eusebio the first colonizers embarked on their quest to rediscover the abandoned Valley, which had belonged to the people of the Chilchos civilization (Schjellerup 2005, 278). So the Valley itself never disappeared from the collective memory of the descendants of the exiles. The discovery of Chilchos then shares an affinity to the discovery of Machu Picchu. Both are physically beautiful locales that probably were frequented by hunters and other stalwart

travelers during the three-hundred-year hiatus, and both sites were never truly 'lost' (Burger and Salazar 2004, 7–19).

Certainly the people in the first expedition suffered greatly on their quest to rediscover the Valley of Chilchos. Don Eusebio Garay recounted how this initial group became disoriented after traversing the eastern cordillera. Tired and famished they contemplated killing and eating the family dog to survive, but curiously were saved by another troop of travelers. Together all continued on the journey (Schjellerup 2005, 280). Chilchos residents Ernesto Briones Ortiz and Joaquin Briones Ortiz have told me a similar tale about the harrowing first pilgrimage over the eastern cordillera, but in their account the family dog is eaten. Perhaps the real fate of the dog is subliminally revealed later in the testimony of Don Eusebio when he divulged the legend of a ghostly dog haunting the entrance of the Valley of Chilchos (Schjellerup 2005, 280).

Benigno Añazco was the driving force behind the founding of the villages of La Meseta and it was his vision of opening a route from the northern highlands to the Amazon Basin that drove this evangelical Christian's fifty-year expedition into the region (Muscutt 1998, 79–80). Because of the Añazco family's strong Christian identification, they initially had a very negative view of pre-Columbian art and architecture. But in the past few decades, they have become aware of the value the outside world places on these artifacts. The tales of the Añazco family read like a novel, and Keith Muscutt and Kate Wheeler have provided a glimpse into the difficult life of this family and its patriarch (Muscutt 1998; Wheeler 1996).

Architectural Anomalies in the Northeastern Forest

Cascarilla Wasi

Cascarilla Wasi (House of the cascarilla tree) was the name given by Inge Schjellerup to a pre-Columbian site with Inca water work construction located at 6° 44'18.58" S, and 77° 40'36.47" W. An Inca style *cancha* pattern walled architectural group on a common courtyard supplements the fountain at Cascarilla Wasi (Niles 1999, 273–74; Schjellerup 2005, 252–53). Schjellerup also recorded two circular structures, a typical Chachapoya architectural signature, near this 'Inca bath' (2005, 253). I visited Cascarilla Wasi two times shortly after Schjellerup's initial mapping project: once for only a few hours in July 2008 and the second time for several days in July 2010. The ruins are at 1704 masl so the architecture is covered with thick forest in this verdant *montaña* environment. Any walls or foundations are therefore very difficult to observe, but with the extra time to survey the settlement in 2010, our team uncovered a large circular structure (10

meters in diameter) west of the Inca water work near the river, and evidence of a pre-Columbian road leading in and out of the site. 'Inca bath' constructions are used for the manipulation of water. Jean-Pierre Protzen has noted the sheer delight that these 'baths' must have produced at Ollantaytambo (1993, 35), and Pasztory has added that in the Inca world "springs, caves, geological faults and ice-age striations" are often incorporated into shrines (2005, 98). Surely the height of elite Inca architectural aesthetic was approached when a carved stone basin and canals were constructed to channel and augment a natural spring.

Cascarilla Wasi marks the *entrada* of an Inca trail into Chilchos Valley (von Hagen 2002, 32). The main northeastern branch of the Inca trail lies about twelve miles to the east of Cascarilla Wasi but remnants of a major Inca road network artery have been surveyed in the area around this site (Ccente Pineda, et al. 2005; Hyslop 1984; Schjellerup 2005; von Hagen 2002). Cascarilla Wasi also lies less than thirty meters from the confluence of two rivers and many of the buildings at this site would have had exquisite views of stunning river rock formations when the forest was cleared.

Tincuni, a Quechua word, is a pan-Andean concept concerning the matching of two different things (Platt 1986). The items could be animate or inanimate. This force drives the battles between youths in Andean communities today just as it did hundreds of years in the past. The idea of *tincuni* is also manifested in the duality of male and female. Derivative from this concept is the term *tincumayo,* which was defined in the early seventeenth-century by Jesuit Diego González Holguín as the place where two rivers come together (Holguín 1989, 342). Cascarilla Wasi was, figuratively and literally, the embodiment of this characterization. The settlement was put in place to celebrate this *huaca,* which must have been extraordinarily important to the Inca because of the spring, rock formations and the confluence of rivers.

Guaman Poma de Ayala has noted that the joining of two rivers is where a widow goes for ritual washing of her body. At this *tincoc yaco* (*tincumayo*) the widow cleansed herself from her dead husband (1993, 224). In the Andean world matched couples are joined on a physical and metaphysical level, so this purification ritual was vital in determining the continued longevity of the remaining partner (Guaman Poma de Ayala 1993, 224; Platt 1986). The area of Chilchos/La Meseta will be discussed later in reference to the Inca ruler Huayna Capac's military campaign into the region. In his initial years as ruler, Huayna Capac was a bereaved son completely at a loss when his mother died right before the Chachapoya military action (Betanzos 1987, 171–73). Therefore it is intriguing to consider this *tincumayo huaca* in reference to Huayna Capac's grief at this historical moment, especially considering his reputation as a master builder and inventive architect (Niles 1999, 262–63).

Huaca de la Meseta

Huaca de la Meseta (La Penitenciaría) is a large Chachapoya mound located in the cloud forest of northeastern Peru at 6° 52'36.43" S, 77° 28'43.04" W. The altitude of the Huaca de la Meseta ruin is approximately 2,000 meters above sea level. The site is southeast of the village of Chilchos. From Chilchos the trail to Huaca de la Meseta crosses both the Rios Blanco and Lejía and, to provide a glimpse of how demanding and remote this area is, only recently have these Rivers been identified as being one and the same. From the Blanco/Lejía the trail to the southeast climbs five hundred meters to the La Meseta tableland. The local farmers normally make this trip in two to three days but those not accustomed to the rigors of this trek should be prepared for a five-day journey. The ecosystem of La Meseta is far from uniform but the general topographic characteristics are rolling *ceja del selva* terrain, cold and damp at night and hot during the day. The animal population in this area, spectacled bears, puma, picurú, monkeys etc. have felt the impact of the growing human population and these species have dwindled considerably over the past few decades.

Huaca de la Meseta is a large and anomalous Chachapoya construction: a truncated pyramid 8 meters high, 60 meters wide, and 100 meter long. Muscutt first visited the site with Fabian Añasco in August 2006 and he noted that the structure overlooks a rectangular plaza approximately 70 meters by 100 meters and numerous rectangular and circular buildings (Muscutt 2007). I visited the ruin with Joaquin Briones, Fabian Añasco, and two University of North Texas students, Matt Jackson and Dan Ives, in June 2007.[1] We noted the intense forest setting as well as the *pirca* style of expeditiously fitted fieldstones, which formed Huaca de la Meseta. In various places the mound is decorated with Chachapoya crosses, which were a common architectural embellishment for these pre-Columbian sites, perhaps indicative of a world tree or *axis mundi* (Lerche 1995).

A structure of this type is certainly unique considering the existing canon of Chachapoya architecture. Solid buildings are typically associated with early pre-Columbian architecture on the North Coast of Peru. Ubiquitous is the U-shaped platform mound and courtyard complex, which dominated the pre-Hispanic ruins in this region (Burger 1992, chapters 2 & 3). Mike Moseley noted a North Coast building style at Chavín de Huántar, a highland site; he considered the stone temple and rectangular plaza at Chavín a "final brilliant synthesis and capstone of long architectural traditions that first arose elsewhere" (Burger 1992; Mosley 1985, 32). In the Inca era, which follows Chavín de Huántar by several thousand years, there are also no architectural precedents for solid buildings. Agurto and Hyslop have noted that the important Inca platform

construction known as the *usnu* (*ushnu*) could also have had a coastal origin (Agurto Calvo 1987, 70; Hyslop 1990, 73). Recently Staller has reaffirmed the connection between Inca *usnus* outside the Valley of Cuzco and an ancient coastal tradition (2008, 285).

Defining the term *usnu* is a daunting task. An *usnu* can be a simple stone or a structure, an altar or a throne, or a combination of either (Gasparini and Margolies 1980, 267–69). Tom Zuidema has pointed out that Molina, Albornoz, and the Anonymous Jesuit were the first chroniclers to use the term *usnu* and that the concept could have come from northern [coastal] Peru (1979, 325). In 1653, Father Bernabe Cobo recorded that on the fifth Antisuyu *ceque* emanating out from Cuzco, "was a stone named Usno [sic], which was in the square of Hurin Aucaypata; this was the first *guaca (huaca)* to which those who were being made *orejones* made offerings" (1990, 66). Guaman Poma created the most famous image of an *usnu* when he depicted Atawallpa on a stone throne *usnu* at Caxamarca [Cajamarca] in his early seventeenth-century letter to the King of Spain (1993, 292). Richard Burger compared the prototypical U-shaped pyramidal platform complex discussed earlier to an *axis mundi*, or center column (1992, 133). In a parallel manner Tom Zuidema compared an *usnu* to this pillar connecting the celestial with the corporeal: again an *axis mundi* (1979, 322, 331, and 357).

Understanding what Inca perception was concerning their *usnus* is difficult to ascertain, but defining the meaning of an *usnu* to a people subject to the Inca Imperium is unequivocal. "The *usnu* is a platform symbolizing the imposition of Inca power; *usnus* were established in every conquered province, but are often difficult to identify" (Meddens, et al. 2008, 143). In a more differential treatment of the Inca imperial order, Hyslop imagined the *usnu* in conquered territories uniting Inca nobility to great plazas, holding common Inca and non-Inca people (Hyslop 1990). There are several celebrated *usnus* in the *Chichaysuyu* quadrant of the four corners of the Inca world: *Tawantinsuyu* (Savoy 1970). The most famous is the finely cut *usnu* excavated by Morris and Thompson at Huánuco Pampa (Morris and Thompson 1985). Closer to Chachapoyas was the plaza and *usnu* platform at Huamachuco, which has now supplanted by the central buildings of the modern village (Topic and Topic 1993, 25). Huaca de la Meseta is equally important to any of these constructions. The remote setting of Huaca de la Meseta adds a pristine quality to the site, which merits archaeological attention. The architectural signature of Huaca de la Meseta compares very favorably to that of an Inca provincial *usnu*, and the history of the Inca conquest in this region would favor the construction of a great plaza to hold conquered and conquerors together. Stylistically, however, Huaca de la Meseta is Chachapoya. But regional styles are often used in the artistic production of Inca imperial art and architecture. There are many examples of Inca ceramics (*aryballos*) finished in a provincial Chachapoya style in the

Museo Leymebamba (von Hagen 2002), and the adobe construction techniques used to erect the *usnu* at Tambo Colorado are decidedly un-Inca (Protzen 2010).

There is another possible origin for Huaca de la Meseta. The plaza and truncated pyramid could have come into fruition when the U-shaped platform / plaza tradition migrated into the northern highlands. In this case the complex would have been in use before the arrival of the Inca and the structures were then co-opted later for Inca imperial purposes. But whether the Huaca de la Meseta is Inca/Chachapoya architecture or pre-Inca architecture, a systematic excavation in this area would be a great benefit to the field of Andean studies.

Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta

Puca Huaca (Quechua for red shrine) is also located on the tableland called La Meseta about five days journey by foot from the town of Leymebamba. From its architectural signature we know Puca Huaca was made by the Inca as a finely cut stone structure typically reserved for some high status function in their *Tawantinsuyu* (Niles 1999; Protzen 1993). As previously mentioned, Chachapoya architecture is marked by a decided preference for circular structures but Inca buildings are rectangular (Narváez Vargas 1987, 118 and 135; Bradley 2008, 106). Also, the Chachapoya lacked the highland technological expertise to create a finely cut stone building like Puca Huaca. This kind of special ashlar building is normally found in only the most important Inca centers near Cuzco, the heartland of the former Empire. Pasztory has observed that these types of stones are carved with slightly curved lines and as a result the architecture seems to be a living breathing being (1998, 156). Certainly a building like Puca Huaca, located deep in the cloud forest, is extraordinary. Ethnohistorian Peter Lerche presented the first scientific description and settlement plan of Puca Huaca in his 1995 work *Los chachapoyas y los simbolos de su historia,* and he associated the site with the record of Garcilaso de la Vega concerning a brave Chachapoya woman (the Matron of Cajamarquilla) who pleaded for the lives of her people following a failed insurrection against the Inca Empire (Lerche 1995, 65; Wheeler 1996, 68). Lerche was also responsible for designating the site Puca Huaca. The color label is appropriate because this site's central building is made of red sandstone. Anthropologist Inge Schjellerup has presented a different viewpoint concerning Puca Huaca. In her 1998 paper, "Aspects of the Inca Frontier in the Chachapoyas," Schjellerup suggested that the cut stone building was an Inca elite compound set in a fortified location. For this identification Schjellerup relied heavily on the chronicle of the Spanish soldier Pedro Cieza de León who recalled that "…the upland provinces that bordered on the Chachapoyas were not wholly pacified; the Incas ordered them and certain of the *Orejones* (nobles) of Cuzco to establish a frontier garrison as a safeguard" (Cieza de León

1959, 99). Schjellerup was never comfortable with the name Puca Huaca, so she replaced the name Puca Huaca with Inca Llacta (Quechua for Inca settlement) as the ruin's designation (Schjellerup, et al. 2003, 33 and 263). Schjellerup visited the area in 2002, and my team (Joaquin and Ernesto Briones) did a site survey at Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta in September 2003.

The chronicle of Garcilaso de la Vega is the most important colonial record concerning specific information and events about the Chachapoya. Garcilaso did not visit northeastern Peru, the Chachapoya homeland; therefore his biography inadequately explains his informed account of Inca/Chachapoya interaction. But in his text, Garcilaso admitted he used fragments of documents written by the Jesuit priest Blas Valera (Garcilaso de la Vega 1989, 19). As a native of northern Peru, Valera would have had an intimate knowledge of Chachapoya history and geography (Hyland 2003, 9). Valera's observations then come down to us copied into Garcilaso's *Comentarios Reales de los Incas.* The second-hand information from Valera recorded in Garcilaso provides a detailed picture of the Inca conquest of the Chachapoya missing in all other chronicles from this era. According to the account, after the Matron of Cajamarquilla had successfully pleaded for her people, Huayna Capac sent four important ambassadors to the Chachapoya:

…return [the Matron] with my blessing to your people and pardon them in my name, and do them any other favor that you think fit. Tell them to be grateful to you, and as further proof that they are forgiven take four Incas with you, my brothers and your sons who shall take no soldiers with them, but only the officials necessary for the restoration of peace and good government.
(Garcilaso de la Vega 1989, 558)

The four Incas mentioned in this passage where indeed a very special envoy. According to the conquest record of Father Bernabé Cobo the term Inca not only referred to the Emperor "…but also by all those of his lineage and royal blood, whether they descended in a male line or a female line" (1979, 110). The number of emissaries is also significant. We know the Inca called their realm *Tawantinsuyu*, or the four parts together (D'Altroy 2002, xiii), therefore sending four ambassadors would be a logical extrapolation of Inca order on the Chachapoya. One would then assume the four ministers would travel to the four different corners of the Chachapoya territory emanating out from the shrine of the Matron of Cajamarquilla at Bolivar. If this is the case, Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta could have been the embassy for one of the Inca administrators! Certainly the area near Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta was a major center for the Chachapoya and Inca interaction. Keep in mind that the previously discussed *usnu*, Huaca de la Meseta, is only two miles from

Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta. Muscutt has suggested that when the Inca took control of the area, they established Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta nearby to 'co-opt' the status of this important Chachapoya shrine (personal communication, 4/19/2007). This general vicinity is also the location of a very elaborate cliff-side Chachapoya funeral site, which has been named Yaku Wasi (Kauffman Doig 2002, 564). Likely the area of La Meseta was a pre-Columbian hub for Chachapoya culture and a perfect location for a strong Inca presence.

As a conduit connecting the lowland forest with the cordillera, La Meseta would have been of great value to the Chachapoya, and then in turn to their conquerors, the Inca, and we have archaeological evidence that suggests the Inca stationed themselves in the midst of their Chachapoya subjects. For example, data from Inge Schjellerup's excavation at the settlement La Peña Calata revealed an Inca structure sited in the middle of this Chachapoya site. She added that other Inca structures were built below the site, but consider for a minute the chilling effect of an Inca force placed in the midst of the conquered (Schjellerup 1997, 176). Many embassies serve this type of function. Before the end of the Cold War, I remember hearing the fantastic stories associated with the function of Soviet Embassy in Washington when I was stationed there as a Marine, and a visit to the fortified embassy in Lima gives pause as to the primary purpose of the compound: diplomacy, or intimidation. Of course the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad epitomizes this concept. Therefore, Lerche's use of Garcilaso to frame Puca Huaca/Inca Llacta seems accurate and Schjellerup's assignment of a fortified aspect to the site also seems correct.

Closing Remarks

Placed amidst the sumptuous architecture of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, a pre-Columbian bath, a pyramid, and an elite compound would all attract considerable interest from scholars. But the construction of these architectural anomalies in a cloud forest setting distant from any known Inca provincial center is unprecedented in Andean studies and surely these sites likely represent only a fraction of the pre-Columbian constructions in this forested and understudied realm. Therefore this research is an attempt not to finalize, but instead to begin a thorough academic discussion referencing these ruins. My assignment of function and significance for these three sites are only suggestions, albeit suggestions grounded in years of study and fieldwork in this remote region. Additional commentary and criticism focused on the architecture of Chilchos/La Meseta is not only welcome but also requisite.

[1] These students volunteered to do this trip without funding. Matt went on to join the Peace Corp in Ghana and Dan is now a white-water raft guide specializing in helping US Mideast veterans adjust to civilian life.

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