

# Maciej Sobczyk

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## Maucallacta, Peru : Information about the work carried out in the 2012 season

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MACIEJ SOBCZYK

## MAUCALLACTA, PERU: INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORK CARRIED OUT IN THE 2012 SEASON

The Maucallacta archaeological site is located at the foot of the Coropuna volcano's southern slopes, in the Pampacolca District, the Castilla Province, the Arequipa Department.

These are the remnants of a temple complex related to the cult of the holy mountain, as Coropuna was regarded in pre-Spanish times. The complex is located at a height of 3750 m a.s.l. (ZIÓŁKOWSKI 2005; 2008).

Work done by experts from the Centre for Pre-Columbian Studies of the University of Warsaw commenced in 1997, under the aegis of the Condesuyos Archaeological Project led by Prof. Mariusz Ziółkowski. The project encompasses the entire region.

Since 2006, studies done at the Maucallacta site have been designated as a separate sub-project; directed by the author, together with the Peruvian architect and archaeologist Gonzalo Presbítero Rodríguez. From that point on, the studies covered not only archaeological research, but also a whole range of restoration and maintenance work (BUDA ET AL. 2010; WOŁOSZYN ET AL. 2010). They were also synchronised with the process of adapting the site to tourist traffic, as studies enter the next phase. The work and studies carried out in 2012 were part of pre-planned stages.

A team of 44 people participated in the study, including four archaeologists, two topographers and seven archaeology students from Poland, as well as two Peruvian archaeologists and about 30-strong group of workers. Archaeological work consisted of clearing the interiors and carrying out surveys of the buildings: A at Square 3 and B at Square 7 (Fig. 1).

A survey of the step platforms leading to the pyramid was also completed. Work was also done on a group of tombs found in small caves in the slope rising above the complex on the west side. It involved clearing the terrain in preparation for excavation work, to be done in the upcoming season, and it yielded some very interesting results.

Restoration work concentrated on Building A, the lower part of the wall between Platforms I and II (the so-called banquette), the outer wall of Structure G at Square 5 (Fig. 1). As part of regular activities, clearing the complex off vegetation and maintenance work was also carried out.

### Architecture of the Maucallacta site

The main architectural complex at Maucallacta occupies an area of around 30 ha and consists of some 250



structures serving different purposes (BUDA ET AL. 2010). The majority of them are buildings centred around squares, often of quite irregular shape (Fig. 2). In many cases, the exact purpose of the squares and individual buildings can only be discussed hypothetically. We assume that we are dealing with a temple complex, which would occasionally fill with pilgrims, congregating to participate in ceremonies encompassed by the ritual calendar, and leaving once the event was over. This means that not all of the buildings were constantly inhabited. Besides the priests occupying the temples, we are dealing with residents carrying out a variety of technical work required for the proper functioning of the temple. In this case, of course, we are talking about workers involved with the expansion of the complex and its proper maintenance. But they were also employed in weaving workshops (many fragments of these workshops were found in the tombs as part of the trousseau accompanying the deceased), as well as metallurgy workshops. In addition, many hand mills used for the preparation of food produce were also found.

Rising above the entire complex is a pyramid structure, constructed using the natural terrain formation. In addition, the spatial layout of the central compound is determined by a group of platforms in the north section, forming

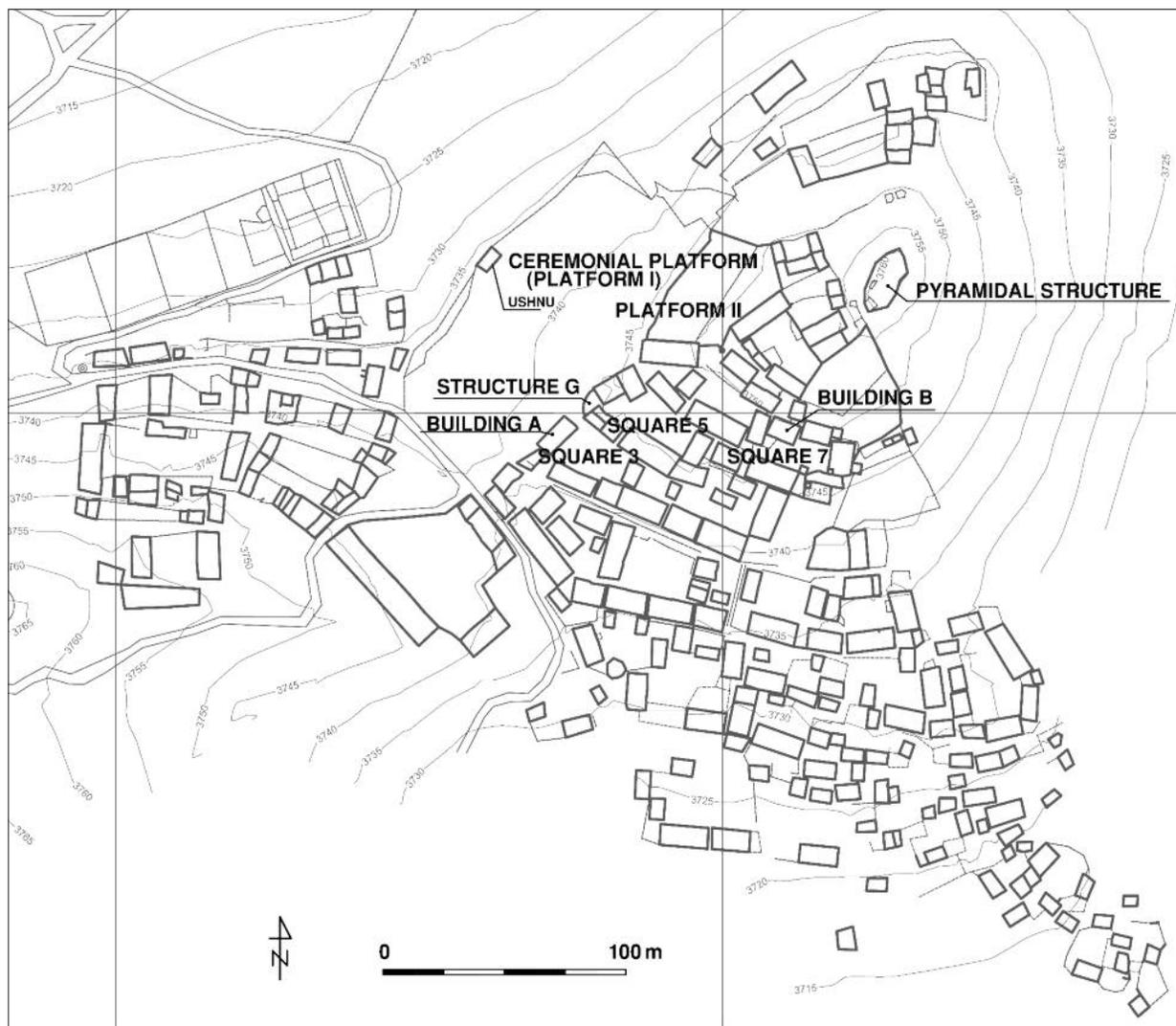


Fig. 1. Plan of the Maucallacta site, showing the location of the structures described (Drawing E. Żuławska-Sobczyk).

Ryc. 1. Plan stanowiska Maucallacta, z omawianymi w tekście obiektami.

ceremonial squares pointed towards the Coropuna volcano (WOŁOSZYN ET AL. 2010).

### Organisation of site divisions for the requirements of the study

Due to the large surface, and its fairly irregular and varied organisation, a single standard system was introduced for describing and numbering the structures composing the main complex. Roman numerals were used to mark the platforms forming the open squares with no structures or with buildings clearly defining agricultural and/or ceremonial structures. Latin numerals marked sites connected with buildings forming enclosed compounds called *kanchas*. Buildings, and possibly other enclosed spaces organised around squares, were marked with letters. Using this “key” allowed for quick location of each facility mentioned.

### Archaeological work in the 2012 season

#### Square 3, Building A

Work carried out consisted of three essential elements; the first was cleaning the interior of layers of rubble made of fragments of the upper walls of the structure. They are composed mainly of large stones and earth that is partly traces of clay mortar. All of the earth material, as in other sections of the site, was put through a sieve due to the possibility of finding small objects, as well as in preparation for use as mortar in restoration work. The stones were also sorted in search for preserved architectural fragments, and to select those for use in partial reconstruction of the walls.

The second element consisted of surveys placed on the eastern half of the building. In the process, a structure taking up the entire space at the foot of the eastern wall and



Fig. 2. View of Maucallacta, showing the pyramidal structure and the main ceremonial platform (Photo M. Sobczyk).

Ryc. 2. Widok na stanowisko Maucallacta; widoczna piramida i główny plac ceremonialny.

measuring  $5.80 \times 1.90$  m, was uncovered (Fig. 3). According to preliminary studies, it may have served as handy storage. Numerous traces of burning, with fragments of fabric among them, were found on the floor level of the “storehouse.”

Scattered across the whole area were loose ceramic fragments. A very interesting discovery was made at the foot of the southern wall, near the entrance to the building, where stone pillars were found imbedded in the floor, in two rows



Fig. 3. Square 3, Building A, the inside of the discovered “storage” (photo M. Sobczyk).

Ryc. 3. Plac 3, budynek A, z odkrytym wewnątrz „magazynem”.



Fig. 4. Pyramid, a group of small platforms (stairs), for the entrance to the top of the pyramid (Photo M. Sobczyk).  
Ryc. 4. Piramida, niewielkie platformy (schody), służące jako wejście na szczyt piramidy.



Fig. 5. Reconstructed front wall of Building A, Square 3 (Photo M. Sobczyk).  
Ryc. 5. Rekonstrukcja frontowej ściany budynku A przy placu 3.



Fig. 6. North wall of Building A, Square 3. Work consolidating the structure of the face of the wall, within the banquette (Photo M. Sobczyk).

Ryc. 6. Północna ściana budynku A, plac 3. Prace konsolidujące strukturę lica muru, w obrębie bankiety.

of six. It seems their function could be linked to weaving workshops.

The third element, or restoration work, shall be discussed jointly below (see p. 220).

### Square 7, Building B

This site too, was first cleared of rubble filling the interior of the building, as was the area around the structure, along the rear and side walls. Earth collected during this work was sieved, and the rock material sorted; details of elements forming the original construction of the “hinges” of the Inca doors at the entrance to the building were found among the stones. An interesting observation has been made at the beginning of the ground floor clearing process and the placing of survey in the layers beneath the usage level. The entire floor area was incrustated with fragments of ceramic containers; this was probably linked to the ceremony of a symbolic closing of the premises at the time of departure, and may be tied to the abandoning of the temples after the fall of the Inca Empire, when the site lost its original significance.

### Pyramid

It was built using the natural hilltop formation, its main element being protruding rock. By enclosing it within

a wall of layered stone, an oval feature was created, towering over the entire central part of the complex, its shape echoing slightly the Coropuna volcano in the background. During the work in previous years, a group of small platforms was uncovered on the west side that was clearly one of the elements of the entrance to the top of the pyramid. A trial pit (1×5 m) was placed in the stairs to identify the internal structure of the feature (Fig. 4), and ceramic fragments as well as human bones were found in layers of the fill. Material for radiocarbon analysis was also collected.

### Tombs (*Tumbas*) 5, 6, 20

Located halfway up the slope rising on the western side of the complex, *Tumba* 5 and 6 are part of a group of three tombs, all using one very long niche underneath heavy boulders (SOBCZYK 2000). The third, *Tumba* 7, was already examined in 1997 and 1998 (WOŁOSZYN 2001). Two small structures found in its immediate vicinity have gone through clearing work in preparation for larger scale excavations next season. In general, there is a large concentration of human bones on the surface of both sites, dominated by fragments belonging to children.

The fourth tomb, *Tumba* 20, is 50 m above those previously described, created from a small cave, whose entry has been partially constructed. Among objects found

on the surface, there was an entire series of stone tiles, with geometrical, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic motifs, painted using colour dyes. These plates found in the tomb are characteristic for that region in particular and are one of the best-preserved well-known landmarks of its kind.

### Restoration work

The objective of the restoration work carried out at the site is to present its diverse architecture in the form of secure and cleared building structures that could help in showing the original character of the complex. Therefore, the features that were chosen for this kind of work presented a coherent whole. These are mainly buildings and a platform located on the main square, framing the view from the south and leading into the interior of the complex in a way as to stimulate the imagination of the visitor.

Work carried out in the 2012 season dealt mainly with Building A at Square 3; after clearing had been completed, work on stabilising the remaining walls began by filling gaps in the clay mortar, then completing the walls with stone fragments taken from the rubble, so that it formed a building block (Fig. 5). In accordance with the Venice Charter, walls above the level of preserved original fragments are not restored.

Also, work consolidating the structure of the face of the wall was done at the time of restoration of the banquette (earth and stone bench), adjacent from the north along the entire length of the walls of the building (Fig. 6).

Work on filling in the mortar and some of the stone motifs was also done on the wall within the semicircular plan of Structure G, connected with Square 7.

The last element to be restored was the banquette forming the base of the wall of Platform II; this earth-and-stone bench also creates a large rise accessible from the surface of Platform I, via stone steps that have also been treated. The restoration work included strengthening the stability of the banquette by supplementing the missing fragments of mortar, and also resetting the stones of the structure's surface in their original place. Under the pressure of filling in the banquette, some of the stones slipped out of the wall and the entire structure threatened collapse.

The archaeological work that was carried out brought a lot of new information regarding the functioning of the temple complex, much of it to do with the economic aspect of life in Maucallacta. Some 500 kg of artefacts were stored, mostly ceramic fragments, stone monuments, samples for all types of analyses. There are ceramic pieces among them that come from remote areas, about 1200 km to the north, indicating the far-reaching contacts of this Andean temple, and that could serve as additional evidence of its powerful position. The material found in the tombs will form the basis of two licensing presentations at the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw. And the extensive restoration work allows visitors and local population to better understand the role of the temples, and in so doing, provides an additional element to the security of the site.

Mgr Maciej Sobczyk  
Centre for Pre-Columbian Studies  
University of Warsaw  
m.sobczyk@uw.edu.pl

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MACIEJ SOBCZYK

## STANOWISKO MAUCALLACTA, PERU: INFORMACJA O PRACACH W SEZONIE 2012

Stanowisko archeologiczne Maucallacta znajduje się u stóp południowych stoków wulkanu Coropuna, w dystrykcie Pampacolca, prowincji Castilla, departamentu Arequipa.

Są to pozostałości zespołu świątynnego związane z kultem świętej góry, jaką w czasach przedhiszpańskich była Coropuna. Kompleks znajduje się na wysokości 3750 m n.p.m., a jego centralna część zajmuje powierzchnię ponad 30 ha (**Ryc. 1**).

Prace realizowane przez zespół specjalistów z Ośrodka Badań Prekolumbijskich UW rozpoczęły się w roku 1997, w ramach obejmującego cały region projektu archeologicznego „Condesuyos”, kierowanego przez prof. Mariusza Ziółkowskiego.

Od roku 2006 prace na stanowisku Maucallacta zostały wydzielone jako odrębny sub-projekt, którym kieruje autor wraz z peruwiańskim architektem i archeologiem Gonzalo Prezbitero Rodríguezem. Od tego momentu prace objęły nie tylko badania archeologiczne, ale również cały zakres działań restauracyjnych i konserwatorskich związanych także z adaptacją kompleksu dla ruchu turystycznego (**Ryc. 2**).

Prace archeologiczne w roku 2012 związane były z oczyszczeniem wnętrza i wykonaniem sondaży w budynkach: A przy placu 3 oraz B przy placu 7 (**Ryc. 3**). Wykonano także sondaż w odsłoniętych w poprzednim sezonie schodach prowadzących na szczyt piramidy (**Ryc. 4**).

Badaniami objęto także zespół grobowców znajdujących się w niewielkich jaskiniach w zboczu wznoszącym się nad głównym kompleksem od strony zachodniej. Były to prace oczyszczające, przygotowujące teren do badań wykopaliskowych w najbliższym sezonie, przyniosły jednak bardzo interesujące wyniki: znaleziono tu m.in. liczne kości, głównie dziecięce, oraz charakterystyczne dla regionu kamienne płytki, malowane kolorowymi motywami geometrycznymi, antropomorficznymi i zoomorficznymi.

Działania restauracyjne (**Ryc. 5, 6**) koncentrowały się na pracach przy budynku A z placu 3, dolnej części muru między platformami I i II (bankieta) oraz zewnętrznym murze obiektu G przy placu 7. Prowadzono także – będące stałym elementem – bieżące oczyszczanie kompleksu z roślinności i prace porządkowe przy ścieżkach turystycznych.