ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE MOQI INCA SITE

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In the Andes region of South America grew one of the largest and most powerful empires in the history of the world, the Inca. These master architects, planners, logisticians, and warriors expanded rapidly from the central valleys of Peru and across a wide swath of the South American continent before ultimately falling at the hands of the Spanish invaders. During their approximately one hundred year long reign however, the Inca created a vast administrative network as they expanded and as a result, a number of smaller settlements and outposts were strategically built along the various roads that crisscrossed this mountainous region. One such site is Moqi, located in the Locumba Valley of Southern Peru. It is here that we may find answers surrounding the expansionary tactics of the Inca as well as the systems they put in place to rapidly build an empire from the ground up.
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INTRODUCTION

The Inca Empire of the Andes region in South America is widely considered one of the most influential and largest civilizations in the world. They were a highly organized and structured society that managed to create an expansive road system across their territory and were masters of logistics, yet they had no writing system of their own (though they did have the *quipu*). Because of this, much is still unknown about this once great empire, but through the excavation and study of Inca archaeological sites, we can find other ways to understand them. One such site is Moqi, located in the highlands of Southern Peru, to the Northeast of the modern day city of Tacna. In actuality, the Moqi site is divided into two parts, Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo. It is important to distinguish between these divisions because there are visible differences between them that will factor into this study.

In terms of archaeological study, last summer was the inaugural dig season, an expedition of which I was a part. Because the work has just begun at this particular location, much about the site is still unknown, such as its function and purpose in general. The project director for the Moqi dig, Dr. Colleen Zori of UCLA, believes that the site may have been a hub for the production, storage, and distribution of Chicha, essentially a beer-like beverage made from corn that was an important commodity to the Inca. In order to discover if this hypothesis is true, it is critical to understand the layout of the Moqi site as well as the type and style of architecture there in relation to other similar Inca settlements that are known to have been growing corn and producing or storing Chicha.
Does Moqi fit into any previously accepted patterns or is it unique? Additionally, what other possible explanations are there for the purpose of the Moqi site? By looking at architectural analysis data, maps, GIS survey data, and other field notes and observations, we may begin to see more clearly the function (or functions) of Moqi and its role in the Inca Empire.

**BACKGROUND**

**The Inca Empire**

The Inca created the largest empire in all of pre-Columbian America, and they did so over the course of only about one hundred years. Between approximately A.D. 1438 and 1533, the Inca spread outward from the Andean highlands of central Peru and eventually their sphere of influence covered parts of Ecuador, Colombia, Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia as well (Stanish, 2001). This vast and rapid expansion, which actually rivals ancient Rome in terms of scale, was done with a mixture of military conquest, peaceful assimilation, and economic dominance. At the center of all of this was the capital city of Cusco, which is located in the Watanay River Valley of Central Peru. A single emperor or king called the *Sapa Inca*, or “child of the sun” in the native Quechua language led the Inca and was to be worshipped alongside the sun god, *Inti* (Reinhard et al. 2010). The Inca did not generally discourage or ban the religious and spiritual practices of those they had subjugated, however the worship of the *Inti* and the *Sapa Inca* was strongly encouraged (whether this was done through military force or other means is not known). As a result, they made this the primary religion above other cults such as ones surrounding the *Pachamama*, or Mother Earth.

As stated previously, the Inca were known for their ingenuity, architectural prowess, and high level of organization. They are perhaps most famous for constructing a vast road system
that crisscrossed the Andes, connecting Cusco with the furthest edges of the empire. The Inca are also known for the wondrous site of Machu Picchu, a small city literally built on and carved into the crest between two mountain peaks. This high level of knowledge and skill allowed the Inca to quickly and efficiently put into place the infrastructure needed to smoothly manage and expand their empire; all of which they accomplished without any formal writing system. The closest thing they had to a written language is known as the *quipu*, a complex form of accounting or record keeping made using strings or threads with knots in them to represent different values. Because there is no written codex associated with the *quipu*, there is really no way of interpreting what each individual *quipu* represents or what sort of values were used in their logistical practices. Regardless, most Andean scholars assume that it was grounded in a base ten number system, which was used to keep track of payments and trade goods (Ascher et al. 1981).

In addition to the *quipu*, the Inca devised a rather brilliant system of taxation called the *mit’a* that required individual citizens, usually the men, to pay taxes and tribute to the empire with labor (McEwan 2006). The Inca could then draft these taxpayers to build public works projects such as roads or terraces, work in mines or agricultural fields, or produce artisanal wares such as ceramics or textiles. This system allowed for a very efficient and organized workforce that could quickly be directed where necessary. Additionally, another system known as the *mitmaq* was practiced by the Inca, which allowed them to move groups of people of varying size throughout the empire at will (McEwan 2006). For example, if the Inca had recently conquered a region and were still facing civil unrest from the locals, they could either move the locals to a different part of the empire with more loyal citizens to keep them in check or alternatively move loyal citizens there to stabilize the region. These two systems were likely often used in concert with one another in order to maximize the labor output of any given settlement or region. As a
means of placating any resistance as well as thanking loyal citizens for their contributions, the Inca used vast quantities of Chicha as a show of reciprocity and appreciation (Hyslop 1990).

As a result of this, Chicha, a beer like substance fermented from corn, became one of the primary trade goods in the Inca Empire. Because it was so valuable to the Inca and could be used for bartering as well as to maintain economic and social control among conquered groups, they understandably needed to produce it in large quantities. Therefore, it is possible that there may have been dedicated sites and settlements throughout the empire for the production and storage of corn as well as the fermentation of Chicha. One such site may have been Moqi.
Moqi

The Moqi site is located in the upper Locumba Valley of Southern Peru, approximately 80 miles northeast of the modern city of Tacna (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Map showing the location of Tacna and the Locumba Valley region. (Map courtesy of Google Earth and Bluesky).

It is situated on a ridge that juts out between two modern villages, Borogueña and Cambaya, which are located on either side of the valley opposite one another. It is entirely likely that during the time that Moqi itself was settled, there were also people living at both locations where the modern villages of Boroguena and Cambaya are currently located, making the placement of
Moqi inherently strategic. Moqi has a spectacular vantage point looking down the valley, as well as the two villages, and very few ways to actually enter and exit the site from. This made Moqi a defensible location, which could have served as a forward base of operations during the time the Inca were expanding into this valley and the surrounding region. Additionally, this made Moqi a good place to maintain and defend trade routes from once everything had been established.

Furthermore, two streams that eventually merge further down valley to form the Locumba River flank the central ridge upon which Moqi is located. This is potentially advantageous for a variety of reasons, being that water is the most precious resource there is in the extremely arid climate of the region, but chiefly it enabled more versatile and widespread use of irrigation. As previously mentioned, the Moqi site is broken down into two parts, Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo (Figure 2).
Last summer, Dr. Zori and the UCLA team only conducted excavations at Moqi Bajo and performed a GIS survey and architectural analysis at Moqi Alto. It did not take long to get an idea that these two portions of the site are somewhat different, with Moqi Alto having a lot more standing architecture left than Moqi Bajo, which may or may not have been a result of the overall quality of workmanship put into the construction of each area. It is possible this is due to a difference in social class of those who lived and worked in each respective part of the site or it may be entirely unrelated, we do not yet know but that is something that will hopefully be addressed during the course of my research. Alternatively, Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo could have
each served very different functions and the difference in architectural quality and layout could be attributed to that. Either way, it is the purpose of this study to find out.

**METHODOLOGY**

In order to understand best the function and purpose of the Moqi site, it is imperative to look at other Inca sites to draw comparisons. The sites that I will use for comparative purposes are Ollantaytambo, a military stronghold, and Huanuco Pampa, a massive administrative center with documented evidence of Chicha production. It is my view that each site, being wholly different from one another, will provide the perspectives necessary in defining both Moqi site localities. I will be using GIS survey data, maps, photos, field notes, various reports and observations from Moqi, as well as my own notes and work from my time there, to compare to the work of other archaeologists at the aforementioned sites. By looking at a variety of books, journals, and dissertations I hope to be able to establish a pattern or set of parameters with which to look better at and judge the layout of Moqi in relation to access patterns, usage, settlement planning, and construction. Hopefully, by gaining an understanding of key features, as well as the layouts of other sites, I will be able to determine what Moqi was used for and if it fits in to any patterns of Inca imperial expansion. Additionally, it is imperative to at least briefly examine the types of artifacts found during the excavations around Moqi Bajo. These objects can tell us a little more about how the people lived and the types of daily activities they may have engaged in, which in turn may provide clues as to the usage patterns of individual sections and structures at the site.
When constructing their cities, towns, villages, and outposts the Inca did not typically plan and build in the same ways that Europeans, such as the Spanish (and the Romans before them) did. In other words they did not use a square grid in their plans, so cities were not placed on an exact East-West or North-South alignment, which is the way that almost all modern American cities are constructed including La Crosse. This grid alignment creates evenly spaced blocks and streets crossing at right angles, which allows for straight roads and makes it easier to expand the settlement outwards in any given direction. However, this is not often practical in the Andes region with its steep mountains and valleys. The extraordinarily uneven terrain poses a number of problems for anyone trying to live here, let alone build here. In response to challenging Andean terrain, the Inca devised two different styles of layout plan called the orthogonal plan and radial plan.

The orthogonal plan results in unevenly spaced, angled rectangular blocks (almost a rhombus shape) and perpendicular curving streets or paths (Hyslop 1990). This form of settlement plan allowed the Inca to build with the contours of the topography and more easily adjust their construction to the terrain variations. In short, the orthogonal plan can closely resemble an irregular or uneven version of the grid plan, but makes it possible to build on, into, and along a wider variety of terrain. An example of this is the site of Ollantaytambo, one of the aforementioned sites that will be discussed later in this thesis.
The radial plan, on the other hand, was generally more commonly used and was partially based on the layout of Cuzco, the capital city. This method of city planning involves radiating all the roads and paths outward from a large central plaza, which divides the city into different sectors (Hyslop 1990). An example of this style of planning can be seen at Huánuco Pampa (Figure 3), the other site chosen for comparison with Moqi.
Figure 3. Plan view of Huanuco Pampa. (Bornberg 2008).
When comparing Figure 3 with Figure 2, it becomes obvious that Moqi likely was not built using a radial plan and is more reminiscent of the orthogonal style due to the very treacherous and uneven terrain at the location. Huanuco Pampa was built in a flatter location and thus could be spread out evenly in all directions, much like Cuzco. However, that does not necessarily mean that Moqi was not similar to Huanuco Pampa in other ways, just that the topography and environment around a site play a much greater role in determining the layout.

Site Layout

As previously discussed, Moqi consists of two parts; Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo. These sections are primarily separated by elevation with Moqi Alto on the higher portion of the central ridge overlooking the valley, and Moqi Bajo to the North of the ridge on a lower and somewhat flatter outcropping. This can be seen to some degree in Figure 2, however it is admittedly difficult to pick out the real scope of the elevation difference from an aerial perspective. Figures 4 and 5 are taken from Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo, respectively, facing one another.
Figure 4. View of Moqi Alto and part of Moqi Bajo from the top of Moqi Bajo.
Figure 5. View of Moqi Bajo from Moqi Alto.

As we can see from Figures 4 and 5, there is a definite separation between these two portions of the site, yet they are two parts of one whole and a number of paths connect the two. As can be observed from Figure 4 particularly, Moqi Bajo has very little in the way of standing architecture as opposed to Moqi Alto (Figure 6).
It is quite obvious that Moqi Alto had more grand monumental architecture; which is not to say that Moqi Bajo was some poorly constructed slum. In fact, part of the reason why much of Moqi Bajo’s architecture is in a more horizontal state these days is due to the locals using a large portion of the stones and blocks from there to construct the nearby modern cemetery (it can be seen partially in the background of Figure 5). It was simply more practical for the people to reuse the materials from Moqi Bajo because it is a less taxing hike between there and the location of the cemetery as opposed to walking all the way up and down the steep paths to Moqi Alto. Based on some of the findings of the excavations at Moqi Bajo, it can be surmised that this portion of the site was likely domestic in nature, at least in part. It should be noted that the plaza at the top
of Moqi Bajo was of a higher quality construction and much of the artifactual evidence collected indicates that more formalized feasting may have taken place there.

Because of this, some of the structures may also have been made primarily from reeds and other less permanent materials, which could also explain why the architecture is less monumental. Of course, without having conducted any excavations at Moqi Alto, it is impossible at this time to conclude that people were not also living in that portion of the site, because they probably were, but there may have been a hierarchical difference between them.

In comparison to both the Ollantaytambo and Huanuco Pampa sites, Moqi is significantly smaller. Ollantaytambo was a large military stronghold to the Northeast of Cuzco in the Urubamba Valley, which was built along and into the steep valley. It was designed specifically to be one of the Inca’s last lines of defense and only had two natural approaches, one to the west leading to Machu Picchu and one to the east from Pisaq. Each of these approaches were heavily fortified and built to keep enemy armies out (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2006). On the opposite end of the spectrum, there is Huanuco Pampa, which is located far to the northwest of Cuzco and built on a large flat plain. This site served as an administrative center that was also a known production and storage site for chicha. Moqi is, in some ways, a combination of the two, yet in others radically different from either. Moqi is built in a location that is easily defensible and can realistically only be accessed from the East or the West; much like Ollantaytambo, because of the natural channel of the valley. Due to modern construction and modification as well as the ravages of time, it is impossible to know for sure where the main roads in and out of Moqi once were and whether or not they could have been closed off in the event of attack. Regardless, it is likely that the remaining paths that run up and down the valley are an indication that people probably came up from the coast (West) and down from the highlands (East). Though Moqi did
not necessarily have the massive outer walls of a fortress, the terracing all around the ridge and on top of the hill may have served a similar enough function to dissuade attackers and protect the site.

Certainly, the location alone would allow for any respectable military garrison to hold against a modest siege, maybe even repel it if they were knowledgeable enough in military tactics and warfare. But alas, the size of the site coupled with the lack of fortifications would seem to indicate that Moqi was likely not primarily military in function. Moqi probably did have at least a small garrison and may have acted as an outpost defending the valley and the regional trade routes between other parts of the empire, as most Inca sites did, but the primary function of Moqi was probably more mundane.

As previously suggested, although the layout of Moqi is more reminiscent of sites such as Ollantaytambo (albeit on a much smaller scale), its overall purpose seems to be more in line with administrative and production functions. This indicates that the layout of the site was probably dictated and determined more by the topography and layout of the location than it was by its intended purpose. Additionally, Moqi may have been constructed to look more imposing than it was as a form of social control or “psychological warfare” in order to keep control of the valley. This is purely conjecture, but it is easy to picture the Inca encountering resistance in the Locumba Valley during their expansion into the region, as they did in other parts of their empire, which would have necessitated the use of arguably more totalitarian administration practices to maintain peace. There is admittedly little to no evidence to support such an interpretation at Moqi, for the time being at least, mainly due to the fact that excavations at the site have only just begun, but it is interesting to consider nonetheless.
Architecture

In the construction of various settlements, the Inca employed a few basic forms and styles of architecture, most of which can be easily observed at Moqi. It is no exaggeration to say that the Inca were skilled builders and masons; they have earned the distinction through their impeccable talents at carving and shaping stones of all sizes with remarkable precision using decidedly basic tools. Of course, the grandiose examples of Inca architecture that often come to mind are usually only those found in the most monumental architecture at places such as Cuzco or Machu Picchu, which were in part constructed to show off the wealth and power of the elite. It simply would not be practical to build every structure in every settlement out of the same materials and using the same methods as those employed to build the great temples and citadels that the Inca are known for. Therefore, most Inca structures were built in one of two ways: single layered walls made with fieldstones and mortar or double layered walls made with semi-worked blocks with a mortar filling in between the two walls (Hyslop 1990) (Figure 7).
These are almost exclusively the style of walls and architecture seen at Moqi, with the majority being double walls with filling. However, it is interesting to note that of the remaining architecture standing at Moqi Bajo, much of it is single layer walls rather than double (except for
the structures surrounding the upper plaza which are double filled), which may also be part of the reason why so little of it is still standing upright. Moqi Alto is composed almost entirely of the double filled walls and possibly as a result is in much better condition even after hundreds of years. Even the grandest architecture at Moqi is not made of the massive, perfectly fitted stones that are often seen at the larger sites throughout the Inca empire (most typically the Inca heartland in the region surrounding Cuzco), which may be the result of a number of factors including the types of materials available in the Locumba Valley region. Or perhaps Moqi was in something of a “backwater” and it was impractical to expend the effort and resources needed to turn this far flung settlement into something rivaling their greatest marvels. Whatever the reason, the full truth of it will likely never be known, and in fact it may have been a combination of all of these factors. Regardless, none of this is to say that Moqi is not significant or that it is somehow inferior in any way to other Inca sites. On the contrary, this is merely the equivalent of comparing a small town such as Galesville to a larger one like La Crosse, or even comparing La Crosse to the Twin Cities. They have different populations and serve different functions.

Aside from these basic styles of construction, the Inca also had two core styles of building that often made up the majority of settlements: the kancha and the kallanka (Hyslop 1990). The kancha is essentially a rectangular enclosure, usually accomplished using an outer wall of some sort, that has three or more rectangular structures inside and an open plaza or courtyard in the center. The kancha can vary in size from relatively small and simplistic to being quite large. Even the number of buildings enclosed within often varied, some reaching up to eight structures. At the site of Ollantaytambo, and other sites built using the orthogonal layout specifically, a kancha or groups of them form the basic “block” units that the city is organized into. They could be used for anything ranging from domestic houses to temples to workshops.
Regardless of the function or scale, the template for the *kancha* remained essentially the same throughout the Inca Empire. The other form of basic Inca architecture is the *kallanka*, long rectangular halls with gabled roofs that varied in size much like the *kancha*. These were often built on the edges of plazas in settlements or alongside main roads and though we can only speculate on their usage, they may have been used like barracks to house soldiers or even used for ceremonies, feasts, and festivals (Hyslop 1990). Both forms of architecture are found at Moqi, at least in some form. There are many *kallanka* type structures in Moqi Alto, whereas Moqi Bajo appears to have very few if any at all. The structures at Moqi Bajo appear to be smaller and fit more with the *kancha* form, though it can be argued they do not exactly fit that model either (Figure 8).
Figure 8. Plan view of Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo showing just architecture (map used courtesy of C. Zori and H. Bernard).
As we can see from Figure 8, Moqi Alto’s architecture is predominately made up of long, rectangular structures whereas Moqi Bajo is more scattered and consisting of smaller, more irregular structures. The top area of Moqi Bajo, which is seen in Figure 8 with a circle representing terrace walls around it and where excavation unit one was located, does however seem to be some form of *kancha* or miniature version of a *kallanka*, as it is a group of structures with an open plaza in the middle. Figures 9, 10, and 11 potentially show this from a better perspective.

![Figure 9. Plaza at the top of Moqi Bajo before excavation.](image)
Figure 10. Plan view of Moqi Bajo with both excavation units highlighted (map used courtesy of C. Zori and H. Bernard).
Figure 11. Plaza at top of Moqi Bajo during excavations, with excavation unit one to the right. Obviously, with what little standing architecture left being in poor condition or buried beneath layers of stratigraphy at Moqi Bajo, this is difficult to demonstrate with any sort of image, but hopefully these images allow for a better depiction of what this portion of the site looks like. There is definitely a stark contrast in the types of structures seen (or not seen) here and what is still standing on Moqi Alto (Figures 12 and 13).
Figure 12. View of the top of Moqi Alto from the main plaza.
The aesthetic differences between Moqi Alto and Moqi Bajo are quite apparent based on the images alone, yet in truth they hardly do the site justice.

Regardless of the forms and styles of structures throughout the Moqi site there is one constant upon which it is all quite literally built. I am of course referring to the terracing, upon which the entirety of Moqi is built. The Inca, and many of the other Andean civilizations before them, used terracing for a great many purposes, not just for agriculture. Terracing is a method of construction that involves building artificially flat and level platforms, called terraces, on steep slopes and generally uneven terrain. This creates a series of stair like structures upon which the
Inca were able to build or conduct agriculture in locations that would otherwise be entirely unsuitable or unusable. The location on which Moqi is built is one such place. Without the terracing, the steep and uneven terrain on and around the ridge of the site would not have been a viable location to build. Like everything at Moqi Bajo, most of the terracing has eroded away and is generally in bad shape but at the top of Moqi Alto it is quite apparent that it was necessary for the Inca to first build a series of flat platforms up the slope and on top of the ridge in order to build there (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Example of some of the terracing on top of Moqi Alto.
In addition to providing a flat and level surface upon which to construct, the terracing also allowed for different levels within the site. Thus, Moqi and many other similar Inca settlements were almost being built vertically. Instead of expanding outward, the terracing allowed the Inca to expand their settlements upwards or downwards on sloping terrain. At such sites, it is common for the majority of important structures and features to be in the most prominent or central locations. In the case of Moqi, at the far western end of Moqi Alto is the main plaza and at the far eastern end is what may be a structure known as an *ushnu* (Figure 15).
Figure 15. The spot where the satellite dish and building are may be an *ushnu* platform.

An *ushnu* is a raised ritual structure often built either in the center of a settlement or at a sacred location within the site itself (or in relation to some other sacred location) (Reinhard and Ceruti, 2010). One of the most well known and documented of these is located in Huanuco Pampa within the very center of the massive central plaza of the city (Hyslop, 1990). This central raised
platform is where many ritual ceremonies would have occurred, as well as other official state and military business. At Moqi, the possible *ushnu* is not necessarily in the center of the site, or at least not as we currently know it, but there may be a reason for this. If you stand on the opposite side of the small building with the satellite on it as shown in Figure 15 and look to the East, you can see three *apu*, or sacred mountain peaks. The largest of these peaks is a dormant volcano called Yucamani (Figure 16).

![Figure 16. View from the possible *ushnu* platform of the three *apu.*](image-url)
The Inca believed that the mountains were sacred and so Moqi’s orientation with relation to these three eastern peaks may be at least somewhat intentional. The presence of such a construct may indicate that Moqi had ritual significance to the Inca, which would mean that it likely had a fair amount of administrative and bureaucratic power, at the very least at a regional level. It was often the case that spiritual and religious leaders of the Inca were also part of the governing body of the empire.

**Storage**

As previously discussed, Dr. Zori’s current running hypothesis regarding the function of Moqi is that it may have partly been a chicha production and storage facility. There are a number of reasons why this may be the case, such as the presence of a large number of stone lined storage pits (which may have been burials that have since been looted) in and around the site as well as literally hundreds of pottery sherds and fragments from what appear to be Inca *aribola* vessels. In fact a couple of nearly intact specimens were recovered from mortuary contexts during the excavations of Moqi Bajo (Figure 17).
Figures 17. One of the aribola vessels found at Moqi.

Aribola vessels are a characteristic form of Inca pottery that were often somewhat large (though they definitely varied in size) and were meant to hold liquid, such as chicha. In addition to this, an intact Inca qero or ceremonial drinking cup was also found (Figure 18).
The presence of these artifacts indicates that chicha was indeed being consumed at Moqi, but that does not necessarily mean it was being produced there, unless of course we take into account the storage pits. Looking back at Figure 2, near the upper right hand corner of the aerial view of Moqi is a grouping of outlined structures (actually more like pits with rockfall in and around them that hint at walls) that are too small to be dwellings or any other sort of habitation. Most of them are round or slightly square in shape and are not very deep, but due to all the rockfall around them, were likely some form of upright standing structure. The most logical assumption to make here is that they were storage, potentially for agricultural goods. If chicha was being stored here, then perhaps they were used to store the corn harvest from the nearby terraced fields. Because this region is still used fairly heavily for agriculture today, it is reasonable to assume that the Inca also used the Locumba Valley and the area around Moqi for agriculture. During the
excavations at Moqi Bajo a large assemblage of burnt and visibly modified corn cobs (as if they had been chewed on for example) were found. In all likelihood if the Inca were eating this much corn, they were probably growing at least some of it themselves rather than relying solely on trade with other sites, so it is not a stretch to imagine that they were also using part of this corn crop to manufacture chicha in some capacity. Aside from the larger storage pits/structures that are located in the far Eastern portion of the site, there are also smaller stone lined pits throughout the site proper as previously mentioned. These may have been used to hold large vessels that had rounded or otherwise non-flattened bottoms in place. Unfortunately, in order to truly find out if Moqi was a chicha production and storage facility, further excavations must be conducted at both Moqi Bajo and Moqi Alto, as well as in and around the aforementioned storage pits. Residue analysis of the various pottery and sherds found at the site should also be conducted to test for chicha. Yet as it stands, I must concur with Dr. Zori’s hypothesis that Moqi was in all likelihood at least partially used for the production or storage (or both) of chicha.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on all of the data that is currently available on Moqi from the excavations and the various surveys conducted thus far, it would seem that Moqi likely served a number of functions in its time. Based on comparisons with the site of Ollantaytambo, Moqi was likely not a grand military fortress or base despite its commanding view of the Locumba Valley and strategically strong position. However, Moqi probably did have some soldiers stationed there for defense or peacekeeping purposes. Furthermore, Moqi was not likely a ritual center for the Inca Empire, despite the possible presence of an ushnu with a line of sight to three sacred mountain peaks. However, those apu were almost certainly important to the local population that had already
been living in the valley before the arrival of the Inca, so this incorporation of the sacred landscape into the layout of Moqi was almost certainly intentional. In fact, it may be at least part of the reason why Moqi was built where it was in the first place. Finally, Moqi may have been a chicha production and storage facility, and the current evidence seems to support it, but without a significant amount of additional work done at the site, it is not possible to say. Moqi does ultimately seem to be more similar to the site of Huanuco Pampa than it is to Ollantaytambo. Much like at Moqi, a significant number of storage and drinking vessels commonly associated with chicha production and consumption have been discovered at Huanuco Pampa. Additionally, Huanuco Pampa’s centralized location along multiple main Inca roads leading to each of the four corners of the empire, made it a hub for the trade and transport of goods. Moqi may have been a much smaller site in comparison to Huanuco Pampa, but regardless of differences in aesthetics, layout, and scale Moqi probably served more administrative and production functions than anything else. Either way, without further excavations of other parts of the site, this cannot yet be said for certain.

In relation to the rest of the Inca Empire, Moqi does seem to fit a pattern in terms of construction styles and architectural forms, yet at the same time seems to subscribe to no singular vision of the “typical” Inca settlement. It has textbook styles of wall construction, terracing, and buildings yet doesn’t really seem to fit either the orthogonal or radial patterns of settlement planning.

We have really only seen the tip of the iceberg at Moqi, with only one year of excavations and survey complete and many more seasons there in the coming years. It is my hope, and the hope of the other archaeologists involved with the project, that more of the mysteries surrounding Moqi and the Inca in general become clear as time goes on.
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