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## The Monoliths of Chumbivilcas, Cusco: A New Focus on Pukara Culture

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## THE MONOLITHS OF CHUMBIVILCAS, CUSCO A NEW FOCUS ON PUKARA CULTURE

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### INTRODUCTION

This article updates our knowledge of the Pukara monoliths<sup>1</sup> found in Chumbivilcas Province, an area outside the center of the Pukara culture.<sup>2</sup> In addition, we discuss newly discovered stone objects characterized by the Pukara style. Through meticulous recording of the history of each artifact, we perform an analysis that permits us to postulate the ancient presence of this culture in a remote part of the Cusco Region. Among other remains, we discuss a stela said to have been discovered some twenty-five years ago in the Velille District, retained, at present, by the Lantarón family as a structural component of

their house. We also present a reconstruction of newly discovered monolith fragments from the community of Totorá.

The Pukara culture developed in the north-eastern part of the Lake Titicaca Basin between 500 B.C. and A.D. 300. The foundation of complex societies in the Altiplano, it appeared with the construction of the Qalasaya political-ceremonial complex at the eponymous Pukara site. With its large ceremonial sector composed of three sunken patios in the upper platform, for centuries Pukara power dominated the entire area of the present Province of Lampa in the Puno Region, more than 170 kilometers from the Livitaca District in the Cusco Region. While it has been well known that its influence extended to the northwest as far as the edge of the Cusco Valley, the discoveries in the Districts of Livitaca and Velille show that it extended much farther from its nuclear area (Chávez 1988).

At the beginning of the Early Intermediate Period, or the end of the Late Formative Period, an epoch associated in Peru with the development of complex societies, the Cusco Province of Chumbivilcas appears to have been closely related to the Pukara culture. Proof of this connection, whether through the expan-

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<sup>1</sup> By “monolith” we mean a worked object made from a single block of stone, such as the Decapitator and the Gateway of the Sun at Tiahuanaco, and Tiahuanaco lintels.

<sup>2</sup> In this article, by “culture” we mean the combined whole of material and ideological phenomena including style and social aspects that allows us to distinguish one group through comparison with another. “Style” refers to the various characteristic traits that one recognizes in the production of ceramics, sculpture, iconography, and so on. A “period” is a chronological phase relating to the presence and activity of a culture. “Tradition” indicates cultural elements such as techniques, histories, ideas, etc. that are transmitted within a group for generations.

sion of Pukara domination, or through cultural influence, is the existence of various stone sculptures attributed by several researchers to phases of the Pukara culture (Chávez 1988; Cuynet 2012b; Núñez del Prado 1972). In 1988 Sergio Chávez located, in the Districts of Velille and Livitaca, seven fragments of monoliths characteristic of this epoch, which constitute, in total, five large sculptures. Adding the sculptures discovered by John Rowe (1958), Cusco archaeologist Manuel Chávez Ballón (Chávez 1988:32), and Juan Núñez del Prado, the number of sculptures known before the present publication rises to nine. In addition, Sergio Chávez recorded another slab in the community of Sawa Sawa, in the neighboring Province of Paruro, representing a pair of camelids. Nevertheless, we were not able to locate this piece during our visit to this place in 2013.

After these first archaeological surveys in the Chumbivilcas area, our vision of the cultural diffusion and prehispanic settlements has changed. The discovery by Sergio Chávez of sculptures in this remote zone allows us to postulate, for the first time, Pukara presence away from the Lake Titicaca Basin. Effectively, the two monoliths and the stelae fragments found in the region of Chumbivilcas, published since the 1970s, all undoubtedly belong to the Pukara style (Chávez 1988:27–38; Cuynet 2012a:217–224; Núñez del Prado 1972:23–36).

Now, returning to the places of the discoveries after more than thirty years, two new elements were recorded by Rainer Hostnig and his companions during a long phase of survey in the Districts of Velille and Livitaca. With the close collaboration of François Cuynet, the identification of these artifacts can be added to the corpus of stone pieces known from the area of Chumbivilcas as evidence of an important Pukara presence beyond its previously known area.

The present article is the result of the joint work of the two authors. Thanks to numerous visits to the field by the first author, in addition to relocating monoliths described in previous work, he found an intact piece in a family house in Velille. By means of a large photographic registry, he contextualized the artifacts in their present states of conservation. The second author contributed his specialized knowledge of the Pukara culture, acquired during the course of his archaeological research and surveys in the circum-lacustrine region of Lake Titicaca. Through a detailed description of the characteristics of the new remains from Chumbivilcas, his iconographic archive let him make comparisons with pieces from the Pukara nuclear area.

This article aims to afford the reader a synthesis of knowledge about the Pukara monoliths of Chumbivilcas, focusing on their present situation. It also attempts to diffuse advances in research by including the analysis and description of newly discovered monoliths. Among others it reveals the case of an intact slab, discovered by the Chumbivilca archaeologist Lizandro Lantarón in the early 1990s, but kept hidden from view for decades for fear of its confiscation on the part of authorities charged with care of archaeological patrimony.

The Pukara site rapidly claimed the attention of scientists. Luis E. Valcárcel was the first researcher to consider its ancient remains visible on the surface from the point of view of modern archaeology. In 1932, he published the first two articles that established the basis of the Pukara sculptural style, recognizing it as distinct from Tiahuanaco production (Valcárcel 1932a, 1932b). A little time later, the important work of Alfred Kidder II allowed the establishment of its architectural norms as well as its settlement pattern at the site of Pukara. His excavations in 1939 revealed the monumental construction of the Qalasaya platforms

with their system of enclosures associated with sunken patios (Kidder 1942). In addition, the survey that Kidder accomplished in the Lake Titicaca Basin permitted the recognition, through the identification of sites, sculpture, or the presence of ceramic sherds of a dense occupation of the area during the Pukara Period (Kidder 1943). Through time, and thanks to subsequent work, our understanding of the Pukara culture and its artistic production has improved. At the beginning of this century archaeological excavations conducted by Elizabeth Klarich at the site of Pukara have provided new information about peripheral sectors associated with the ceremonial center of Qalasaya (Klarich 2005).

## THE TOTORA ARTIFACTS

### *The Choquepillo monoliths*

In July 2013, guided by Grover Peña of the community of Totorá, we found the first two monoliths located and described by Juan Núñez del Prado in the 1970s. The former name of this sector, Waraq'oyoq Q'asa, is no longer part of the collective memory of the people from Totorá, but the toponym Choquepillo continues to be used to indicate the place where the sculptures are found (Figure 1).

The bridle trail that goes from the town of Totorá to Choquepillo passes by Lake Matarcocha and the precolumbian settlement of Laqa Laque which consists of enclosures, remains of structures, and fragments of rustic ceramics. Near the site, built against a stone wall, is a row of looted tombs. The trail skirts the mountain side, and follows a canal that first crosses the Quesqueramayo Quebrada, and afterwards the Chajata Quebrada<sup>3</sup> where it ascends to Choque-

pilló, although the most direct ascent would, perhaps, be via the Quesqueramayo Quebrada. Following the stream that descends in small waterfalls along the bed of the quebrada, one arrives at the Quisini hollow, then climbs along the steep side of the mountain on the right side of the hollow, until one arrives at the divide of the waters of both quebradas. Here, next to a simple unworked stone wall that crosses between the two quebradas, one encounters the first monolith of the pair known as Huacarumi (Monolith A), fallen on the ground, and resting on its shoulders (Figure 2). In 1968, the second monolith (Monolith B) was also found alongside the enclosure, a few meters farther along (Figure 3), but in June 2013, we found it some thirty meters distant, on the slope that inclines towards the Quesqueramayo Quebrada (Figure 4).

From Huacarumi we walked to the main sector of Choquepillo where we observed an entrance door made of worked stones. The sloping terrain beyond is covered with mounds of stones that may be the remains of the site's ancient houses. Near here, towards the north, rises a high promontory. On the peak is the fortress of Sacsapukara, protected by defensive walls between fifty and eighty centimeters thick. At the top one encounters

... a central terrepleine on which is located what appears to be an enclosure with an elliptical plan, with a greater diameter of sixteen meters and another lesser of ten meters. One observes a door opening of this enclosure and, in its interior, a small construction with a quadrilateral plan which measures three meters

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<sup>3</sup> Juan Núñez del Prado (1972:26) mentions having ascended via the Parqokancha Canyon. It is probable that this is the same as the Quesqueramayo Quebrada which

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ascends directly to the Choquepillo sector, passing through a place where the stream forms a small waterfall.

by two meters (Núñez del Prado 1972:26).<sup>4</sup>

The first reference to the Choquepillo sculptures is found in the transcription of the lecture that was given by Father Luis Guillermo Márquez Eyzaguirre in 1937 in the Archaeological Institute of Cusco. In this essay, dedicated to the first inhabitants of the Cusco highlands, the priest mentioned the existence of two large monoliths that, according to his opinion, would be of great antiquity (Márquez Eyzaguirre 1942:12, 48–51).

Núñez del Prado gives a meticulous description of both artifacts. Summarizing his main observations, we see that both monoliths, made of blocks of gray andesite, represent seated persons, with the legs folded. They have their hands placed over their bellies. The arms, hands, knees, legs, and feet are worked in relief. The statues, without heads, measure 107 and 104 centimeters high, respectively, with a width at the waist of 61 and 60 centimeters. Both personages have incisions on the surface, in the form of simple geometric and figurative designs (human heads and stylized toads enclosed by rectangular frames). Monolith A has a belt at the level of the navel, which has a circular ring in the middle. Other extra-corporeal attributes are elements of ornamentation decorated with deep, incised, parallel lines. The back of the effigy was also decorated with various motifs. On the shoulders of Monolith B project the two shoulder blades that serve as supports for two human heads incised in profile, as well as figures of stylized batrachians, among other characteristic elements known on various sculptures of Pukara origin.

On the grounds of the former Hacienda Ituntata, barely 2.5 kilometers in a straight line north of the district capital of Livitaca, one finds two other broken monoliths. Photographs of these stone sculptures have already been published by Sergio Chávez (1988:36). We found one of the pieces in July 2013, a few meters above the left bank of the Siwamayo River, across from Cerro Ituntata (Figure 5, top). The block of stone has a rectangular form and is stepped at one of its ends. In its present state it measures 1.25 meters long and 60 centimeters wide (36 centimeters at the narrow part) and is 30 centimeters thick, and corresponds to the upper part of a stepped stela. On the widest surface of the upward-facing side one sees the incised figure of a *suche* (a Lake Titicaca fish common in Pukara iconography) or serpent with a triangular head with “whiskers” (Figure 6). Common in Pukara iconography, this motif is seen on more than fifty-five percent of stelae from this culture, and constitutes a characteristic stylistic trait (Cuyner 2012b:202–203). Following the norms of association, this stone sculpture finishes with a ring on the apex.

At a distance of 250 meters, on the right margin of the stream, on the slope of the mountain, we discovered the lower part of the stela (Figure 5, bottom). It measures 1.85 meters long, so that the complete monolith has a total length of 3.10 meters. The monolith doesn’t have any decoration on the sides. Unfortunately, due to its position, one cannot see the reverse side. As was first noted by Sergio Chávez, the sort of piece found at Ituntata resembles various well-known monoliths at the archaeological site of Pukara.

Within the old house of the Hacienda Ituntata, now in ruins, one finds the second monolith affixed to the center of the patio (Figure 7). Because of its stepped form, according to what has been said, it served the women

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<sup>4</sup> . . . un terraplén central en el que está ubicado lo que parece ser un recinto de planta elíptica, con un diámetro mayor de 16 m. y el otro menor de 10 m. De este recinto se observa un vano de puerta y en su interior una pequeña construcción de planta cuadrangular que mide 3 m por 2 m.

of the hacienda as a mounting block, a use that caused its deterioration. The stone sculpture, of which only the top part shows above a thick layer of animal dung, has, on both faces, identical engravings, creating a low relief. Sergio Chávez documented both monoliths in the 1980s, when they were better conserved (1988:35–36, figures 8, 9). On the less eroded face one can make out the same *suche* head as on the other stela, with round eyes, eyebrows, and nose joined in the form of a T, thick lips, and a hint of appendices with two curved lines that go off of the chin. As one can observe, the visible part of the monolith shows the association of the ring within the elevated border of the piece, with two small, stylized representations of a serpent (Figure 8). On the opposite face, the reliefs are well preserved on the top portion, but completely eroded lower down.

#### *The newly recorded Totora monolith*

In the community of Totora, in the Livitaca District, pieces of a new monolith in the Pukara stylistic tradition have been discovered (Figure 9). At present it is kept in the storeroom of the Small Council of the Rural Community of Totora (Consejo Menor de la Comunidad Campesina de Totora). Its provenience is inexact, but according to the testimony of the inhabitants, it came from the upper part of Totora. The four pieces of the monolith still preserved suggest a sculpture in human form. Only the top half of the personage is preserved. This measures 70 centimeters in height by 27 centimeters in width, and 17 centimeters in thickness. On the basis of these measurements one can estimate that the piece originally had a height of between one meter and 1.2 meters (according to the norms of proportion established for this category of the Pukara style; see Cuynet 2012b:347–370). Likewise, the work in relief of the sculpture allows us to note the general geometric form of the elements with which it is composed. Apparently, the piece was carved from a matrix of very compact gray sand-

stone, following the natural strata of the stone. This particular process corresponds to the technique encountered on various examples of Pukara sculpture in the Puno area (*ibid.*: 190–192). Although at present one finds the statue broken and incomplete, we can state that the surface of the object is found to be in a good general state, which allows us to see various iconographic details that help to classify the piece stylistically.

Placing the fragments in order (the body is at present found upside down), we can clearly identify a very characteristic anthropomorphic form, in spite of only having the upper part of the figure. The person appears to be represented standing,<sup>5</sup> with the two arms placed on the thorax (Figures 10, 11). In the first place, the general aspect of the sculpture and the parts that comprise it are characterized by a geometric treatment. For example, one notes that the head has a rectangular form with little relief, owing to the prominent headdress above the cranium. As is common in the Pukara stylistic tradition, it is composed of a wide lower part, in the center of which is located a feline head sculpted in low relief. This little head, rotated one hundred eighty degrees, can generally be recognized as one of the elements particular to Pukara human statues. It is found three times on the Decapitator of Pukara (Degollador de Pukara; Figure 12), one of the most famous sculptures of the Pukara culture. In the case of the Totora statue, the rest of this part of the headdress has a decoration of incised oblique lines.

Just below the headdress we find the borders of a *chullo* (man's soft cap with ear flaps) delimiting space for the face. Associated with

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<sup>5</sup> In the case of a seated representation, we would have a proportionately greater general thickness of the torso. For the artifact under discussion, a measurement of 17 centimeters is a good indication of a standing position.

a very wide triangular nose, the eyebrows make up the form of a curvilinear Y. The eyes are made according to classic Pukara representation, that is, by large oval rings in relief. The ears, represented in a rectangular manner and attached to the head, include a very interesting detail. At the center of each ear is found an incision in the form of the letter E. This element appeared to have little importance at first, but in reality it denotes another connection with the Pukara style. Effectively, it belongs to a group of elements that one frequently encounters in the representation of human beings in Pukara iconography (Figure 13; Cuyne 2012b: 124, 207–211).

Below the figure's head, a series of incisions indicate its hair in a simple manner. It is a little difficult to describe the characteristics of the mouth clearly because of a large fracture line at its level. Nevertheless, we can note the presence of lips with a typical rectangular aspect.

The preserved portion of the body has a basic geometric form. At least one can read the position of the personage clearly, with its hands placed over the thorax. This arm position is unusual for a Pukara tradition sculpture. In general the subject is presented with the hands over the belly, either filling the whole space, or holding a trophy head. Nevertheless, the presence of ornaments at the level of the fists, made with parallel incisions, relates to the same code encountered in almost all the iconographic motifs of this style. In fact, this part of the statue includes very interesting elements. First, we can see the explicit representation of the clavicles and the salient ribs. The representation of these anatomical traits has been noted various times on Pukara sculpture, especially of the category that treats the theme of the Devourers (*Devoradores*: Cuyne 2012b:143–140). Also known are some examples that show the same configuration of traits as the Totora sculpture, that is, with the additional representation of a ring in low relief at

the place of the navel. We see this, for example, in the case of a piece originating at the site of Qaluyu, now in the Museo Lítica de Pukara (Figure 14, left), as well as with the “defleshed” statues from Pokotia in Bolivia (Figure 14, right). Secondly, on each back, the figure of a bactrachian can be identified. Their heads, endowed with semi-circular ears, have feline traits, but the posture of the animals is characteristic of frogs or toads (Figure 15, left). Similar motifs are found very frequently in Pukara style iconography. Likewise, the same zoomorphic figure is located on the shoulder and on the breasts of the monolithic statues of Choquepillo, previously discovered in the community of Totorá, which demonstrates the stylistic uniformity in the Chumbivilcas area (Figure 16).

Finally, on the shoulder of the Totorá statue we can distinguish a representation of the famous *suche* (Figure 15, right). In this case we have a simplified version of the motif, with few details. Nevertheless, one recognizes the head of a feline with its rounded ears, the forked tongue leaving the mouth, as well as the undulating body with the end of the tail towards the right. With this element we have, yet again, a clear affiliation with the Pukara style. This particular theme of the *suche* present on the newly discovered Totorá monolith as well as on the Livitaca stelae, demonstrates the uniformity of this group of Pukara sculptures from Chumbivilcas.

#### *A Livitaca Monolith in the Museo Inka de Cusco*

John Howland Rowe told of the journey of a third monolith that, in 1940, was sent as a gift from the hacendado Nicanor Molero of Totorá to President Manuel Prado y Ugarteche when he visited Cusco. He did not have any interest in the gift, and so the monolith was first kept in the patio of a private house, and



later in the Archaeological Institute, now the Museo Inka.

Rowe describes the monolith:

[It] . . . is the finest representation of the human figure which has survived from the Pucara culture . . . It represents a man wearing a breech-cloth with side flaps. Two snakes descend from his head and rest their heads on his shoulders . . . the snakes and the breech-cloth are shown in low relief, while the other details, such as the rib bones and the design or fringe on the breech-cloth flaps, are indicated by incision (Rowe 1958:258–259).

Rowe's article was illustrated with two black and white photos of the monolith taken by Martin Chambi in the 1940s. They show the front and back of the torso. This monolith measures 52 centimeters in height. When Rowe identified the piece in 1946 in the Instituto Arqueológico de Cusco, he didn't find any information about it in the catalog. However, thanks to his contacts, he learned a little more about the history of the fragment. In his publication, he indicates that the statue originally came from the community of Choquepillo. According to information given to Rowe by Alberto Núñez del Prado (uncle of Juan Núñez del Prado), at this time the zone had six sculptures, among them two statues (certainly the pieces A and B from Choquepillo discussed in this article) were the only ones preserved in their original place. Thus, the provenience of the fragment identified by Rowe corroborates Pukara presence in this sector.

Nevertheless, when co-author François Cuynet visited the Museo Inka de Cusco in 2008, where the sculpture was still preserved, he found it displayed in the Inca Salon, accompanied by an offering of coca leaves (Figure 17). In talking with officials from the museum he was told that

six decades after John Rowe's description, information about the provenience of the fragment had fallen into oblivion, and it is now erroneously attributed to the Inca.

What is interesting in terms of our study is that the three Livitaca statues lack heads. According to testimony recorded by Rowe (1958: 229) and by Juan Núñez del Prado (1972:26, 27), they could have been decapitated by local people, in accordance with a deeply-rooted belief that is still current. Referring to the two Totora monoliths, Juan Núñez del Prado tells us:

There are two that are fixed into the ground, but without heads, because the Indians have removed the heads because 'they ate the heart' and many people died because of the existence of these sculptures" (1972:24).<sup>6</sup>

The same belief was mentioned by Rowe, fourteen years earlier, in his publication.

The Totora monoliths, and above all the statue kept in the storeroom of the community house, continue to inspire terror and respect on the part of the local people. To emphasize the sacred character of the newly discovered Totora monolith, our guide, Grover Peña, told us:

My cousin Mario Mir Delgado had it in his house for years. It was considered a sacred stone that one must not touch, nor have in the house. However, later it took his wife away from him and he put it in the community house because the whole family began to die. It caused the deaths of the entire family. They say that at

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<sup>6</sup> Son dos que están plantados en el suelo, pero sin cabezas, pues los indios les han quitado las cabezas porque les comía el corazón y morían muchas personas por la existencia de estas esculturas.

night the monolith would cry like a baby (personal communication).<sup>7</sup>

As one can note, in spite of the time passed, the belief in a curse related to these sculptures remains alive in the minds of the inhabitants of Totorá. Our interest in the newly discovered Totorá monolith is related to its state of preservation, in this case of the head. Although it has suffered deterioration (surely intentional because of the beliefs mentioned above), it is the only known case in the region in which the anthropomorphic head remains preserved. As we have seen above, the stylistic traits described allow us to document cultural affiliation with artifacts from the Pukara culture. Furthermore, the similarities which the body of the statue shares with the other monoliths of the zone support our hypothesis of a uniform sculptural style for all these pieces from Chumbivilcas Province.

#### THE VELILLE STELAE

In the District of Velille there exists a second concentration of stelae, mostly broken (Figures 18–28). They are all said to have been found in and around the district capital, especially in clandestine excavations at the top of Cerro Wiracocha Orqo which lies to the east of the town. They were first recorded by Manuel Chávez Ballón in 1959, and afterwards by Sergio Chávez. Years later Lizandro Lantarón, one of Manuel Chávez Ballón's students, began archaeological explorations in the district, and mentioned the existence of monoliths from this mountain in his pre-professional thesis (1988).

During the twelve years that separate the visit to the region by Manuel Chávez Ballón and

the survey by Sergio Chávez, the pieces originally located at the foot of Cerro Wiracocha Orqo were thrown into the Qaqalloqano River. During Sergio Chávez's visit, they were rescued and put in the educational center of Velille. These consist of stone sculptures, worked in low relief on all four faces. The iconography represents zoological and anthropomorphic motifs. Illustrations and descriptions in the work of Lizandro Lantarón and Sergio Chávez are all that are left of this great patrimony, because today the locations of the majority of the pieces are unknown.

The monoliths were made using the technique of low relief and incision. According to Sergio Chávez, the fragment shown in Figure 20:

. . . constitutes the upper portion of a stepped stela having a rectangular cross-section. The designs, which are incised . . . and carved in low relief . . . include a ring and the upper portion of an anthropomorphic face. . . . The headband has three incised "feline" heads—a central upside down front-view head flanked on each side by two others in profile. . . . Above and in the center of the headband, a small trapezoid supports five "feather" elements. On the right side of the "feather" and set on small stems are two parallel "snakes" in profile that face upward and have coiled tails. . . .

The opposite face of this fragment . . . has a similar ring, but it occurs above a mythological animal head that faces upward. The head has a pair of coiled appendages emanating from under its mouth. On one narrow side of the stela . . . a mythological animal head is depicted in profile facing upward. For the first time we can observe very close similarities be-

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<sup>7</sup> Lo tuvo en su casa por años mi primo Mario Mir Delgado. Era considerada una piedra sagrada que no se debía tocar ni tener en la casa. Peru luego la quitó a su pareja y la entregó a la casa comunal porque toda la familia comenzó a morir. Causó la muerte de toda la familia. Cuentan que el monolito en las noches solía llorar como una criatura.

tween this animal and those on Pucara-style pottery from Pucara (1988:31).

More than half a century after the visit of Manuel Chávez Ballón to Velille, some of the stone sculpture has changed ownership. For example, the Colegio Tupac Amaru houses an upper piece of the stela, with the four carved heads, abandoned in a corner of the students' patio and dotted with cement, as we saw in September 2013. After a superficial cleaning, the motifs described by Sergio Chávez in his article appeared (Figures 21–24).

*The slab incorporated into the Lantarón family house*

During a visit to Velille in September 2013, Rainer Hostnig and his companions located a new monolith in the house of the Lantarón family, on the basis of a photograph found at the repository of archaeological artifacts of the Santo Tomás municipality (Figures 24–27). This piece drew our attention not only because of its unusual location, but also because of its unique iconography.

We were informed by Lantarón's son, Waldimir, that the monolith was found by accident in 1993 when people from Velille were digging a trench close to the Cerro Wiracocha Orqo, and that his father was notified of their find, and that he had the piece transported to his home. While the slab was being excavated, its lower right corner was slightly damaged by a pickaxe strike. Lizandro Lantarón incorporated the slab two years later into the wall of his newly built house, to avoid its confiscation by the Instituto Nacional de Cultura (now the Ministry of Culture) (Figures 24–26).

Upon the death of Lizandro Lantarón in 2000, his sons covered the slab with a layer of mud to hide it from the sight of the curious. The integration of the slab into the wall did not

permit us to make a complete analysis of the object, but we know from Wladimir Lantarón that the opposite face and the sides are plain and do not show signs of having been worked. The slab, certainly made from gray sandstone, has a perfectly rectangular form, and measures approximately one meter high and 40 centimeters wide. The exposed face is sculpted in low relief, in accordance with the Pucara aesthetic tradition, which we also see on the other monoliths from the Chumbivilcas area which we have discussed. We note that along all its edges the slab has a deep, well-worked groove that functions as a border. This element, which one frequently finds in the compositions of Pucara slabs and stelae, allows the clear delimitation of the iconographic space given over to the theme treated on the object. In this case, all of the visible side is dedicated to the representation of a standing human figure. As we will see the composition is very complex and atypical.

The headdress occupies a paramount position in the graphic scheme. The central part is composed of a trapezoidal geometric form which is found surrounded by two pairs of motifs. On the viewer's right, one recognizes two identical representations of the familiar theme of the *suche* in a simplified representation. The major difference with other *suche* representations is in the execution of the profile, with the body curved and the solid heads quite stylized. This stylistic convention for the *suche* is correctly recognized as part of the iconographic production of the Pucara tradition. The stelae from Chumbivilcas described in the 1970s are an aid in determining the stylistic affiliation of this piece. A reading of the other pair of motifs, placed on the viewer's left side of the headdress, are more difficult, and identification is uncertain.

As in the case of the Velille stela described by Sergio Chávez, under the headdress we

encounter a *chullo* which defines the space of the face. The difference is that the flaps of this *chullo* descend to the shoulders of the personage. The facial elements follow the same conventional norms of Pukara iconographic style that we have seen on the Totora statue. We note the “Y” form made by the eyebrows with the triangular nose, the treatment of the eyes as slightly oblique oval rings, as well as the rectangular form of the mouth. We also distinguish the presence of incisions within the ears. The only difference is in the form of the whole. The making of an “E” has been abandoned for a simple form which securely relates to the final phase of the Pukara culture (Cuynet 2012b: 412–414).

Only on the basis of these facial and headdress details can we relate the Velille Slab with some security to other artifacts from the Pukara culture. The iconographic construction in this case is in almost perfect concordance at least with other recorded stelae. It relates to the famous Qaluyu slab which is found today in the Museo Lítico of the Pukara site (Figure 28). One side of the preserved fragment presents the same human face (see Chávez 1988:32, figure 7). One can note some minor variations in the motifs including those on the headdress, but the principal traits are present (such as the representation of *suche* motifs marked on the central part of the headdress, and the construction of the eyebrows and eyes. The same elements can be recognized in the stela in the community of Velille described by Sergio Chávez (1988, figure 5a).

The rest of the personage on the Velille Slab follows Pukara stylistic conventions, while its structure is a little atypical. The body and the legs exhibit a highly geometric treatment, in contrast to its other parts. It is interesting to note that, in general, the aspect of the person is very similar to the human image represented on the Arapa Slab (Figure 29), first published by Alfred Kidder II in 1943 (Kidder 1943:19). One notes ornaments at the levels of the neck, the fists, and

the ankles, as Pukara iconographic norms demand. The subject is posed with his left arm along his body; by contrast, the right hand is located over his chest. It is placed with precision above another element of uncertain identification. This element has a decoration of chevron incisions that end with a circular ring at the level of the viewer’s right hip, dividing the body with a diagonal band.

Nevertheless, the most surprising element is the representation of a footprint in the center of the abdomen. The footprint, sculptured perfectly in low relief, has clear human anatomical aspects, as one can observe with the depression of the arch. The interpretation of this motif and its association with the general theme of the block is uncertain. The atypical character of this motif necessitates a more detailed study of its iconographic composition and the associated elements. Nevertheless, the existence of this particular motif on a stela from Chumbivilcas is very interesting, and only one other example from a site in the Pukara tradition in the northern part of the Titicaca Basin is known (Stanish 2012:137). Nevertheless, the stone object with the footprint recorded by Charles Stanish is not a sculpture, but a lintel, that is, is an architectural element. Furthermore, the footprint is executed in low relief, not in intaglio as with the Velille Slab. Therefore, the Velille footprint is a unique decoration.

There are those who doubt the authenticity of this piece, including two experts who evaluated this article for *Andean Past* and the editors of this journal. We are aware, of course, that because of the lack of an archaeological context there is no absolute certainty. Nevertheless, several arguments exist in favor of its authenticity: in the first place, if we are dealing with a falsification, why hide it? In addition, in the photograph taken in 1993, probably shortly after its discovery, we see a wooden scale of a

type used in fieldwork at this time. Likewise, the monolith shares more points in common with other Pukara remains than it does differences. The differences could be the result of a specific regional variant, taking into account its location, far from the Altiplano, or perhaps they represent a local adaptation to iconographic discourse. Finally, we must not forget that even today the general public has little familiarity with the Pukara Culture and that, also, Pukara objects appear with low frequency in archeological collections, in contrast with Moche, Chimú, or Tiahuanaco artifacts. For this reason, it is difficult to believe that anyone would have been inclined to dedicate time to the manufacture of a false Pukara piece in the 1990s.

At the same time, the norms employed on the Velille Slab, in terms of its execution and the evident correlation with other examples of motifs found in the same zone, as well as in the traditional area of the Pukara culture allow, without doubt, the stylistic integration of this piece into the group of Pukara artifacts.

## CONCLUSIONS

To judge from their stylistic traits, there is no doubt that the sculptures found in Livitaca and Velille are from the Pukara Period. This affirmation is reinforced by the existence of ceramic fragments (in the Lantarón private collection), identified as belonging to this cultural period. It is important to point out that these are the first Pukara ceramics recorded in a region relatively distant from the traditional nuclear area.

If the presence of Pukara sculptures in a district of the Cusco Region, a considerable distance from the urban-ceremonial center of Pukara, is surprising, the apparent absence of related architectural remains (ceremonial or domestic) with these monoliths does not necessarily signal elements made outside the zone. We must remind ourselves that during the Formative

Period and the Early Intermediate Period there already existed notable interregional exchange between the Cusco Valley and the Altiplano region. According to one hypothesis, the remains discovered could have been made in the original area of the Pukara phenomenon before a long trip to the sector of their installation. On the other hand, they could certify the ancient presence of a population originating in the Titicaca Basin. As the finds of Pukara ceramics in the southeast of the Cusco Region and the iconographic themes present on the monoliths attest, this presence can be related to the ritual aspect of Pukara society as well as to trade relations between two Andean regions.

Another indication of the tight relationship which must have existed between what is now the Province of Chumbivilcas and the Titicaca region is the fact that a part of the population were Aymara speakers according to the survey made by the Corregidor Francisco de Acuña in 1586 (Jiménez de la Espada 1965 [1881–1898]:310–325). In the Districts of Capacmarca, Colquemarca, Chamaca, Livitaca, and Velille people existed who, apart from Quechua, “the language of the Inca”, spoke the “Chumbivilca” language. This regional language could eventually be related to Puquina, a language of the Lake Titicaca Basin. In effect, according to the linguist Rudolfo Cerrón Palomino (2016) the extent of the Puquina language encompassed two sectors: to the northeast of Lake Titicaca it included the present territory of Callahuayas, Huancané, passed through Moho, and extended to Arequipa, Moquegua, Tacna, and Arica. The other sector included Potosí, Charcas, and Sucre. If we postulate that the migrations, or at least the circulation of these Aymara-speaking populations, took place during the Pukara Period, it is evident that they brought with them their religious system, and their iconographic and technical knowledge, as well as their artisan and artistic skills.

The chronological assignment of the monoliths is, nevertheless, complicated by the fact that they are potentially reusable and because, having been extracted from their original placements, we lack stratigraphic contexts. Sergio Chávez (1988) was the first to postulate a Pukara presence during the last phase of this culture, which corresponds to a period between the beginning of the Christian era and the third century A.D. It is our opinion that it will be necessary to deepen and amplify archaeological studies in Chumbivilcas Province so that, through comparisons with data from the central zone of the Pukara culture we can corroborate this hypothesis.

Many questions remain for archaeologist to resolve, for example, if the monoliths of Livitaca and Velille were made *in situ* or brought from other locations. If they were placed in ceremonial sites with Pukara infrastructure, that is, in the environment of sunken temples, or if they were related to other sacred elements of the landscape. The task of saving this cultural patrimony for future generations remains for the district and provincial authorities, and for the Ministry of Culture. The recovery and exhibition of the monoliths in a municipal museum similar to that of Taraco in the Puno Region enormously helps their conservation and study by national and foreign researchers.

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*Translation from the Spanish by Monica Barnes*

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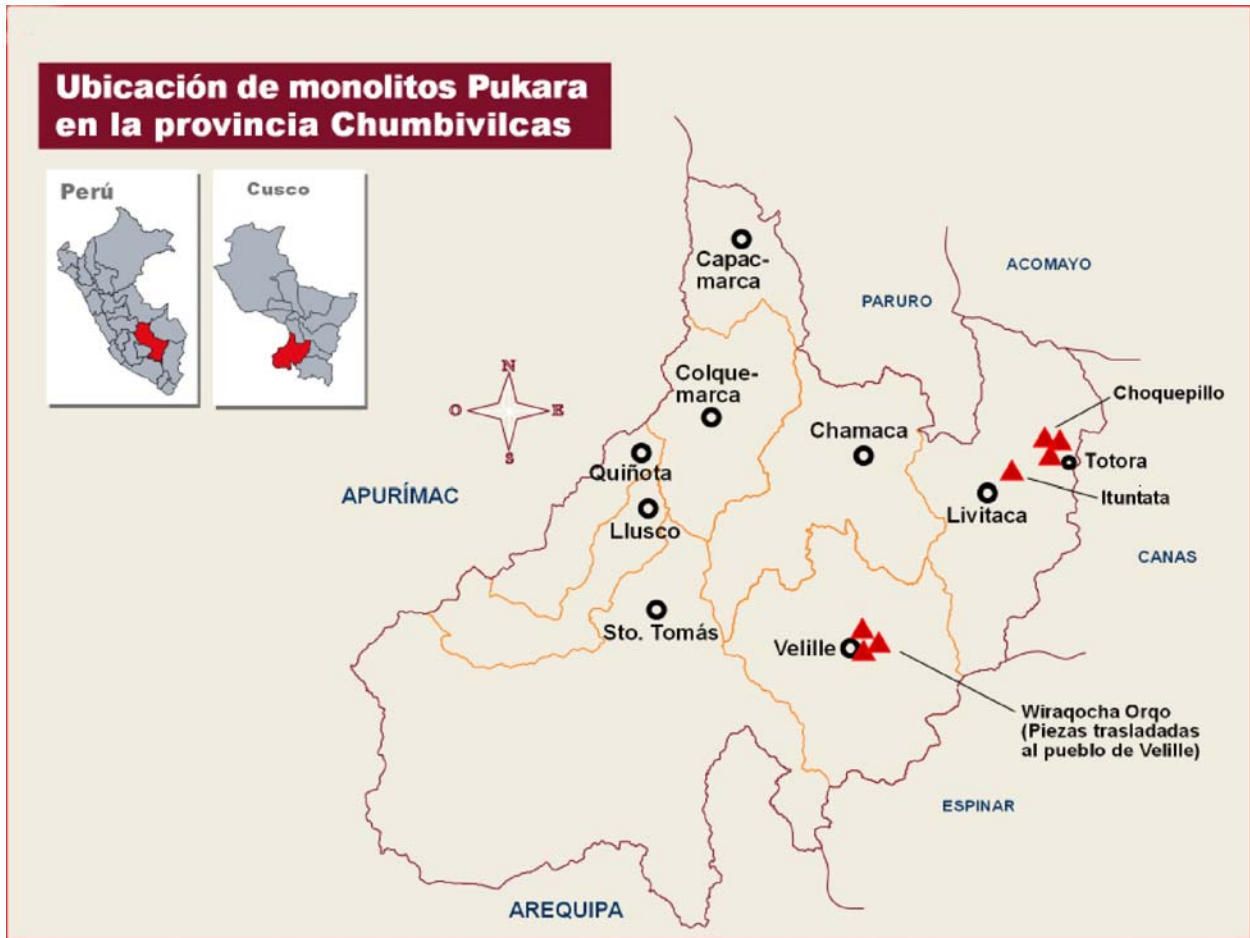


Figure 1: Map showing the locations of Pukara sculpture in Chumbivilcas Province, Cusco Region, Peru.





*Figure 2: State of Choquepillo Monolith A in 2013, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*



*Figure 3: Location of the two monoliths in the Choquepillo sector in 1968  
(from Juan Núñez del Prado 1972: figure 2).*





*Figure 4: State of Choquepillo Monolith B in 2013, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*





*Figure 5: (top) upper part of Ituntata Stela A in 2013, photo by Rainer Hostnig; (bottom) Lower part of Ituntata Stela A in 2013, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*

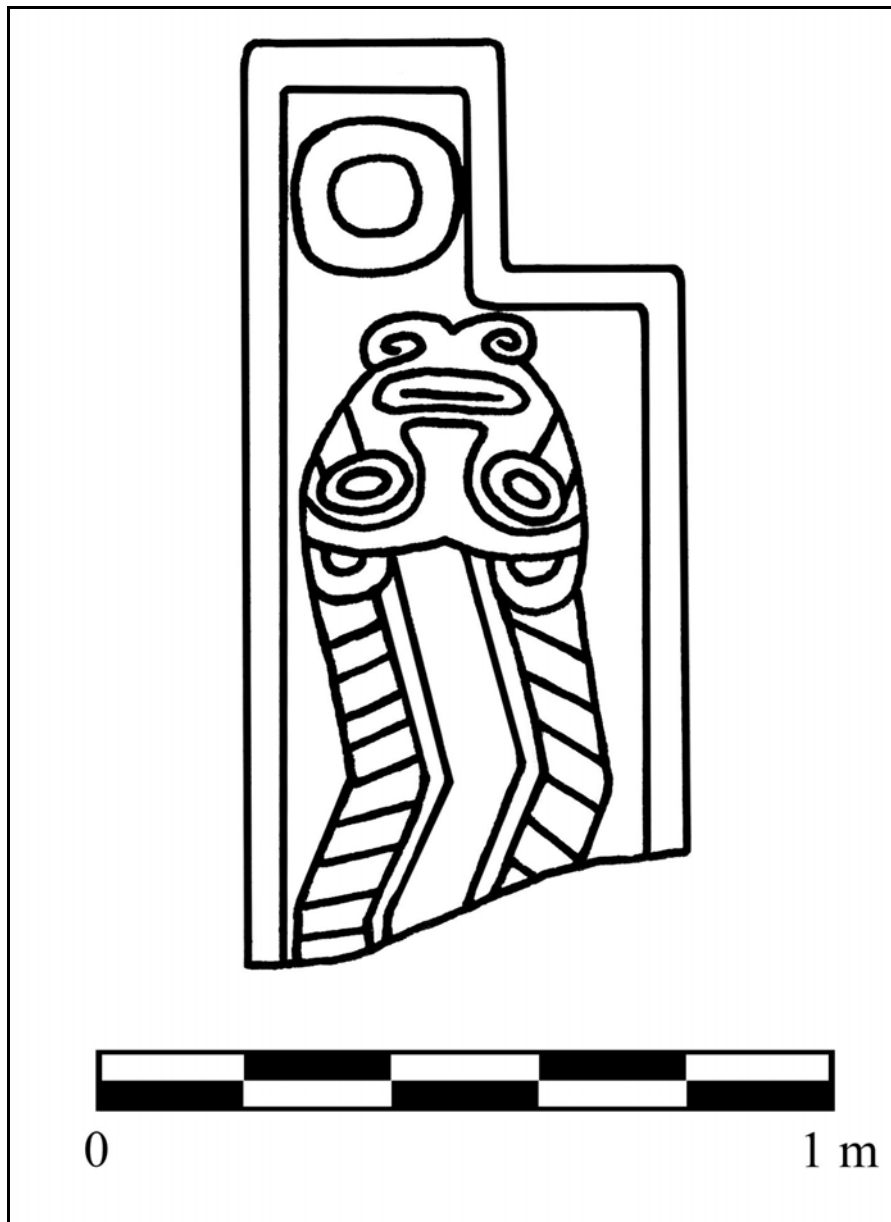


Figure 6: The catfish motif on the Ituntata Stela, drawing by François Cuynet.





*Figure 7: The elderly couple who look after the ex-Hacienda Ituntata house. In the middle of the patio is Stela B, photograph by Rainer Hostnig, 2013.*



*Figure 8: The two faces of Stela B, Ituntata, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*





Figure 9: Location of the Totorá statue in the storeroom of the community house being shown by Fredy Lazo Jordán, then alcalde of Totorá; photograph by Rainer Hostnig, 2013.



*Figure 10: The Totoro monolith as reconstructed by François Cuynet, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*



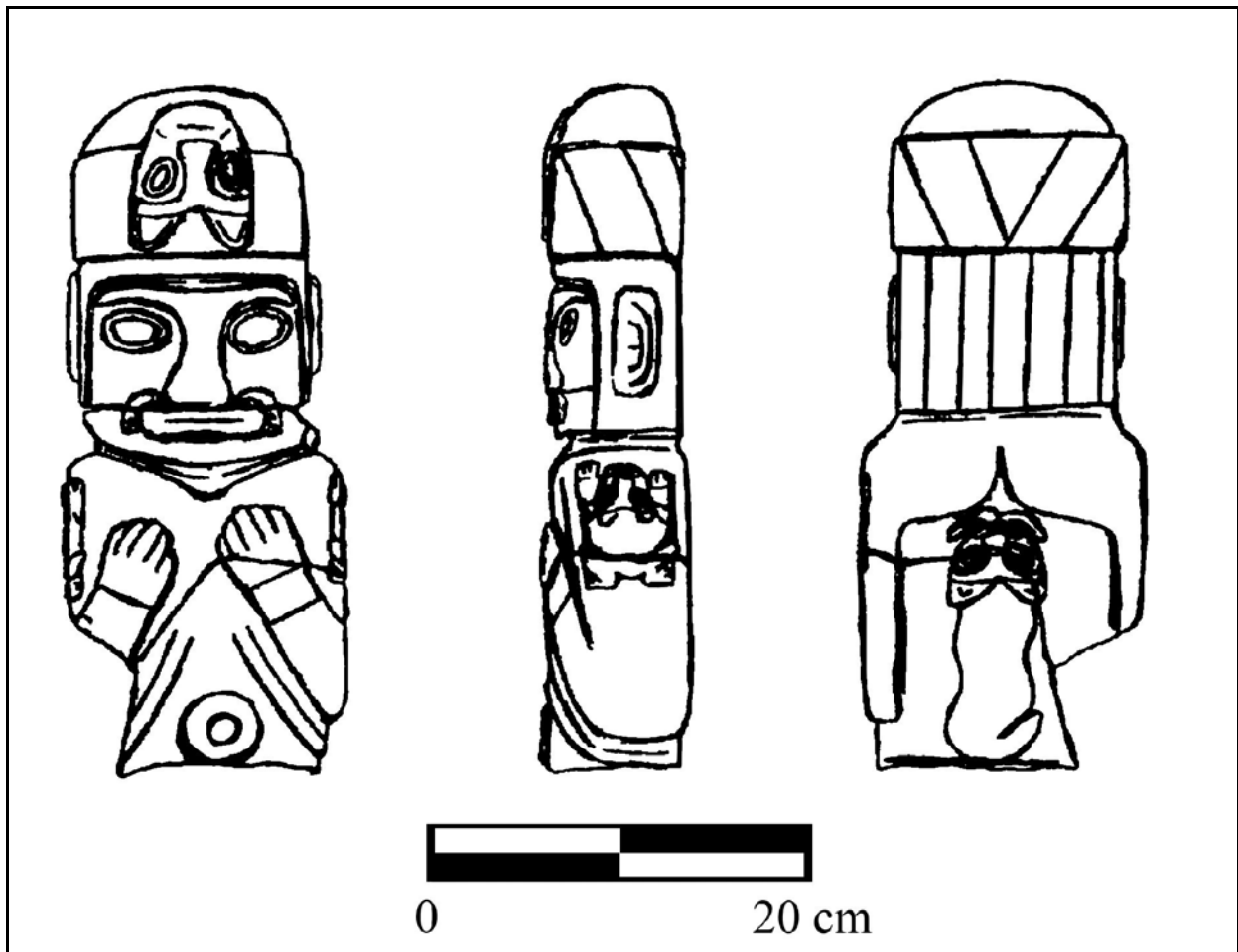


Figure 11: *The Totoro Monograph*, drawing by François Cuyenet.



*Figure 12: The Decapitator of Pukara, a typical example of statues in the Pukara style, Museo Lítico de Pukara, photograph by François Cuynet.*



Figure 13: Incisions in the ears are one of the iconographic traits that help to identify the statue of Totorá as in the Pukara style; (viewer's left) the Decapitator of Pukara, photo by François Cuynet; (viewer's right) the Totorá statue, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.



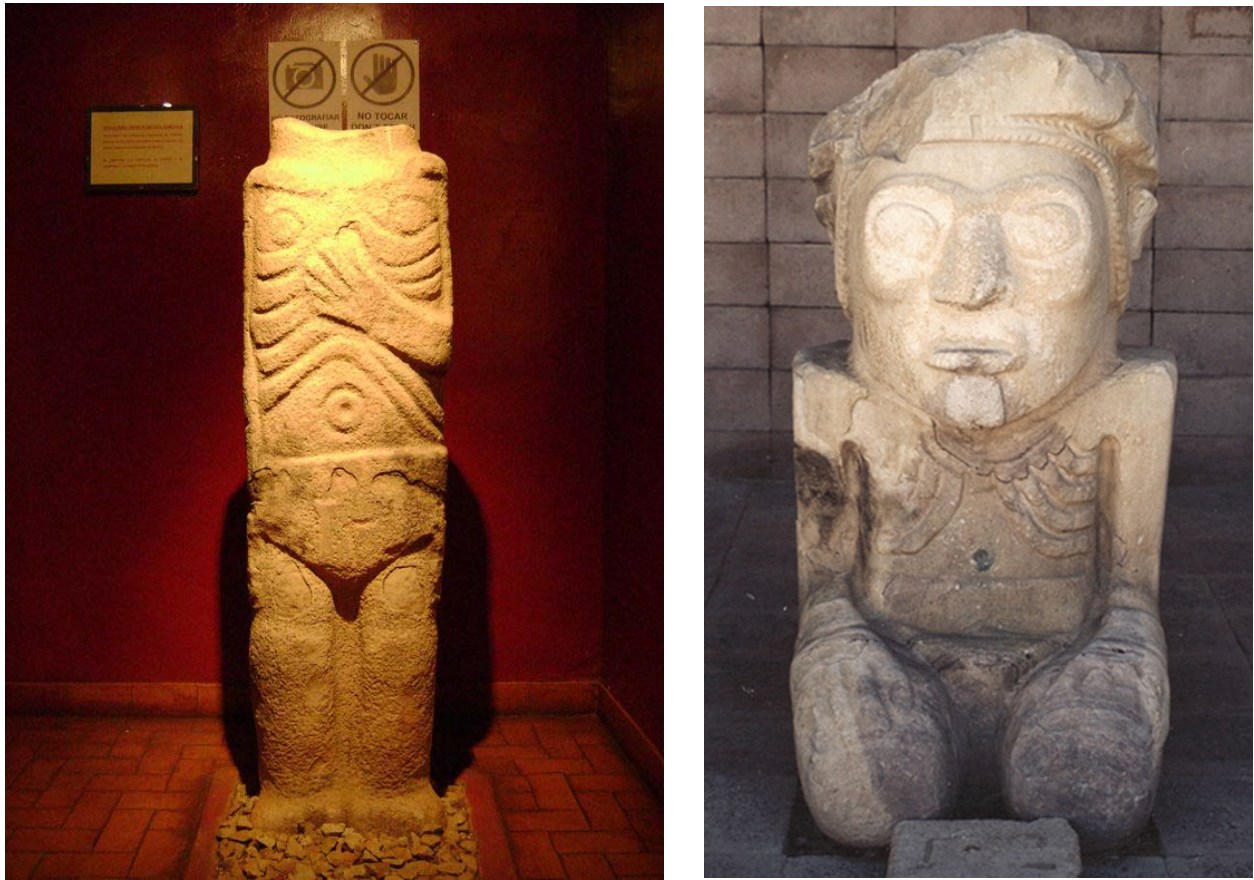


Figure 14: (viewer's left) The Qaluyu statue with a similar depiction of the ribs as the Totora statue and the ring that represents the navel, Museo Lítico de Pukara, photograph by François Cuynet; (viewer's right) One of the Pokotia statues, Museo Lítico de Pukara, photograph by François Cuynet.



Figure 15: (viewer's left) detail of the bactracian with the feline head; (viewer's right) detail of the suche located on the shoulder as well as on the back of the Totorá figure, photographs by Rainer Hostnig.





*Figure 16: View of the shoulder of Choquepillo Monolith A with associated motifs (from Núñez del Prado 1972: figure 11).*



Figure 17: Pukara monolith from Livitaca in the Museo Inka de Cusco, photograph by François Cuynet.



Figure 18: Fragments of Pukara stone sculpture found on Cerro Wiracocha Orqo in Velille in 1988 (from Lantarón 1988: figure 8).



Figure 19: Fragments of Pukara stone sculpture found on Cerro Wiracocha Orqo in Velille in 1988 (from Chávez 1988: figure 5, a-c).





Figure 20: Fragment of Pukara sculpture found on Cerro Wiracocha Orqo in Velille and shown in Figure 19a, in the patio of the Tupac Amaru College (secondary school) in Velille, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.



Figure 21: Another fragment of Pukara sculpture found on Cerro Wiracocha Orqo in Velille in the patio of the Tupac Amaru College (secondary school) in Velille, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.



Figure 22: A fragment of Pukara sculpture found on Cerro Wiracocha Orqo in Velille in the patio of the Tupac Amaru College (secondary school) in Velille, and shown in Figure 19b, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.



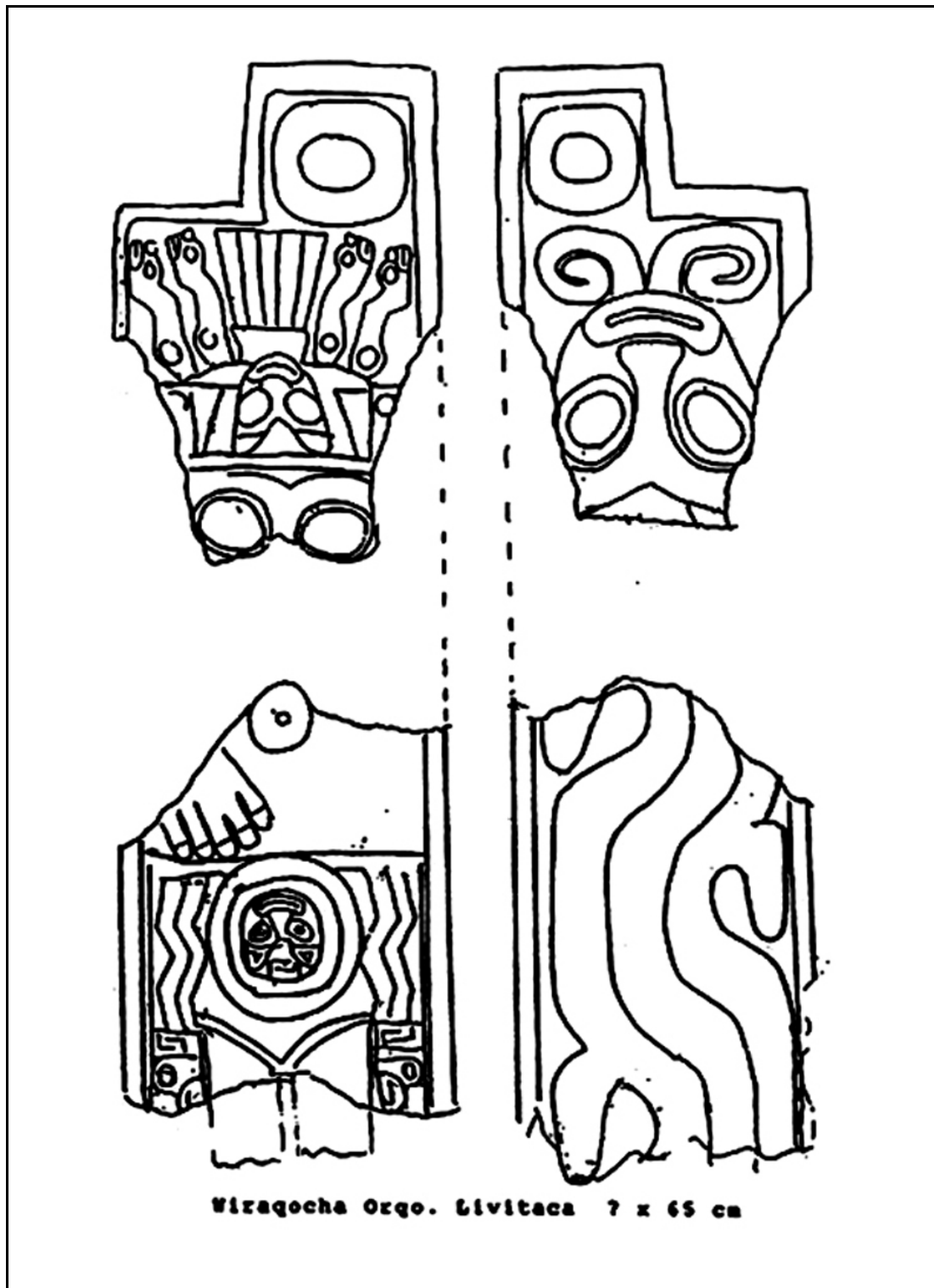


Figure 23: Reconstruction of the Velille Monolith (from Browman 1997: lámina 8).



*Figure 24: Close-up view of the Velille Slab in its current position, incorporated into the Lantarón house, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*



*Figure 25: Another view of the Velille Slab in its current position, incorporated into the Lantarón house, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*





*Figure 26: The Velille Slab as the mud plaster that concealed it was being removed, photograph by Rainer Hostnig.*



*Figure 27: The Velille slab shortly after its discovery in the 1980s, photo courtesy of the Municipalidad de Santo Tomás*





Figure 28: The Qaluyu stelae in the Museo Lítica de Pukara. Photograph by François Cuyenet.





Figure 29: The Arapa Slab, now kept in the town church, photograph by François Cuynet.

