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## ‘AYMARA’ ROCK ART OF LAKE TITICACA

Matthias Strecker and Freddy Taboada

**Abstract.** The authors present a preliminary vision of late pre-Hispanic, Colonial and Republican rock art at the Bolivian side of Lake Titicaca, based on their research of fifty sites over seventeen years. Several traditions are described: geometric or ‘abstract’ designs, schematic camelid figures, ‘religious scenes’, and ‘scenes’ representing conflicts between armed persons. At least some of the sites, and possibly the vast majority, are considered of particular importance as part of the ritual landscape of the Indians.

### Introduction

Lake Titicaca, situated at an altitude of 3810 m on the frontier of Bolivia and Peru and skirted on its eastern (Bolivian) side by the mountains of the Cordillera Real, is the highest navigable body of water in the world. For thousands of years, it has had an enormous economic and spiritual importance for the Andean peoples who believed that here is the centre of their world. Tiwanaku and Inka cultures constructed temples on its islands and along its shores. In this article we wish to focus on another cultural aspect of the region, which has received very little attention: petroglyphs and rock paintings.

The first report on rock art of Lake Titicaca region was published as early as the 17th century. Ramos Gavilán (1621/1976: 41) mentions that ‘on an island, not very far from Carabuco, there are some letters written on a rock’. Presumably he refers to ancient rock art. The north-eastern border of Lake Titicaca, where Carabuco is situated, possesses outstanding sites with rock paintings and petroglyphs. But apart from a few brief studies in the 1960s and 1970s (Portugal Zamora 1969; Portugal Ortiz and Vega 1973, 1974) they received little attention until our investigations started in the 1980s.

In the last seventeen years we have investigated, with other members of the Bolivian Rock Art Research Society (Sociedad de Investigación del Arte Rupestre de Bolivia, SIARB), sites in the region bordering the east side of Lake Titicaca (provinces Ingavi, Los Andes, Omasuyos and Camacho of Dept. of La Paz). Forty-eight sites have been registered in the region bordering the northern and eastern sides of the lake, the study region including the lake islands and the land up to a distance of approximately 15 km from the lake (Fig. 1). One site (LP 011) is located at a distance of only 20 m from the lake water and at an altitude of 3815 m. The highest rock art site found in the study area is located at 4460 m. Preliminary results of the investigations of a few selected sites have been published (Albarracín-Jordan 1991; Strecker 1992; Taboada

1992; Medinaceli et al. 2003). Various stylistic groups or traditions can be recognised for the pre-Hispanic rock art, but so far it is very hard to find clues for dating these representations. We can only provide a first approach to the complex sequence of rock art styles in the region, hoping that the present preliminary synthesis will be amended and improved in the future. We assume that in the late pre-conquest period camelid representations were widespread among rock art, belonging to the same cultural tradition as similar representations on ceramics that have been firmly associated with the Altiplano and Inka periods. Apparently another late pre-Hispanic tradition is represented by geometric or abstract designs, sometimes combined with schematic animal or human figures. In Colonial sites these representations are combined with new elements of Spanish culture such as crosses, churches and horseriders (Nordenskiöld 1906 was the first to draw attention to riders among rock art of the region). On the other hand, the exceptional paintings and drawings of sites LP 072 and LP 073 are related to the indigenous rebellions in Colonial and/or Republican times. The Colonial period was from 1532 to 1825, followed by the Republican period.

### Archaeology and ethnohistory of Lake Titicaca

The Lake Titicaca region has been settled for a long time due to its favourable climatic conditions.

The large body of water raises ambient temperatures near the lake and extends the growing season along the lakeshore. This thin strip of land is one of the most productive areas of land in the Andean highlands, and it has long attracted human settlement (Bauer and Stanish 2001: 23).

The general chronology of the Lake Titicaca basin, ranging from Early Archaic (11 000–8000 BP) to Early Colonial (A.D. 1532–1572) has been summarised in Bauer and Stanish (2001: 33). More specifically, in our study region, we may rely on data presented by Arellano López (1985) and Portugal Ortíz (1985) who inform us that in the north-

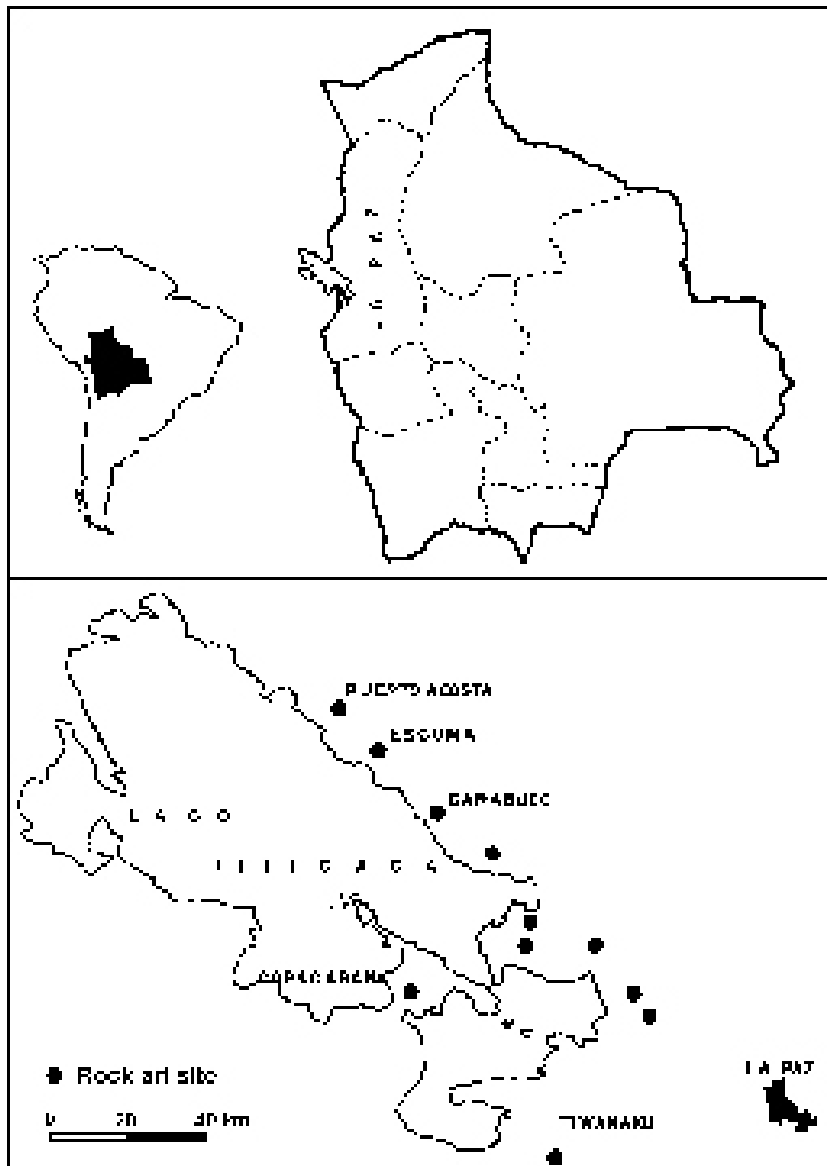


Figure 1. Distribution of major rock art sites surrounding Lake Titicaca in the Dept. of La Paz, Bolivia.

ern part of the lake, in the region between Ancoraimes and Carabuco, numerous archaeological sites exist that belong to the following pre-Hispanic periods: Chiripa, Tiwanaku IV and V, Mollo, Aymara (called Altiplano by Hyslop 1976; Bauer and Stanish 2001; A.D. 1100–1400), and Inka (A.D. 1400–1532).

The prevailing languages in the lake region are Aymara (the dominant language) and Quechua. Colonial documents mention also Pukina (now extinct, but widely spoken in the south central Andes in the 16th century) and Uruquilla (cf. Bauer and Stanish 2001: 30–3).

In the sixteenth century, the distribution of Quechua, Aymara, Pukina, and Uruquilla speakers in the Lake Titicaca Basin was a mosaic produced by Inca resettlement policy, earlier migrations, and pre-Inca conflict and alliance patterns (ibid.: 32).

According to Bouysse-Cassagne (1988: 49), in the 16th century three native languages were spoken in Carabuco and Ancoraimes: Aymara, Quechua, and Pukina.

Most scholars agree that the Aymaras, now the dominant

indigenous population in the Andean highlands of Bolivia, arrived comparatively late in the region, after the collapse of the Tiwanaku culture, although a few believe them to be descendents of the Tiwanaku empire. While some investigators favour an origin in the south (northern Chile), based on 16th century chronicles (Espinoza 1980; Gisbert 1987), others believe the Aymaras came from the northern part of the Titicaca basin (Torero 1987).

A survey of archaeological sites in the Lupaka region by John Hyslop (1976) revealed that after the Tiwanaku demise there was a shift in settlement away from low-lying land near the lakeshore to distant hilltop localities, which were fortified and known as *pukaras*. While Tiwanaku settlements were clustered in certain areas, Aymara villages were more dispersed. There was also a shift in economy in which pastoralism was intensified with large herds of camelids (llamas and alpacas), combined with farming, lake exploitation and trade (Bauer and Stanish 2001: 43).

Bouysse-Cassagne (1986: 211) identifies at least twelve Aymara *Señoríos* or kingdoms in the highlands of the old Tiwanaku empire, including the Pacajes in the area of Tiwanaku itself. Two of these kingdoms, the Lupaka and the Collas, centered on the western shore of Lake Titicaca. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the major Aymara polities around the lake (after Bauer and Stanish 2001: 44).

Ethnohistoric data indicate that the area controlled by the Collas included the towns of Huaycho (Puerto Acosta), Escoma and Carabuco along the east border of the lake (Omasuyu). Habitants of Ancoraimes were '*mitimaes*', foreign settlers placed there by the Inkas. The towns in the south (Achacachi, Santiago de Huata, Pucarani and Laja) belonged to the Pacajes (Gisbert 1987: 2-3). The Aymaras of this region known as Collas constantly opposed the Inka rule and there were frequent rebellions against the conquerors from Cuzco. In Colonial and Republican times, this region was still a focus of unrest and rebellion.

#### Pre-Hispanic rock art of Lake Titicaca region

Rock art in the lake region is diverse, showing different cultural traditions. We assume that rock art was created from the earliest times, and one site in the vicinity of the city of Puno, Peru, has been tentatively ascribed to the Archaic period (Bustinza Chipana 1991). It consists of a panel of deeply engraved figures of stylised animals

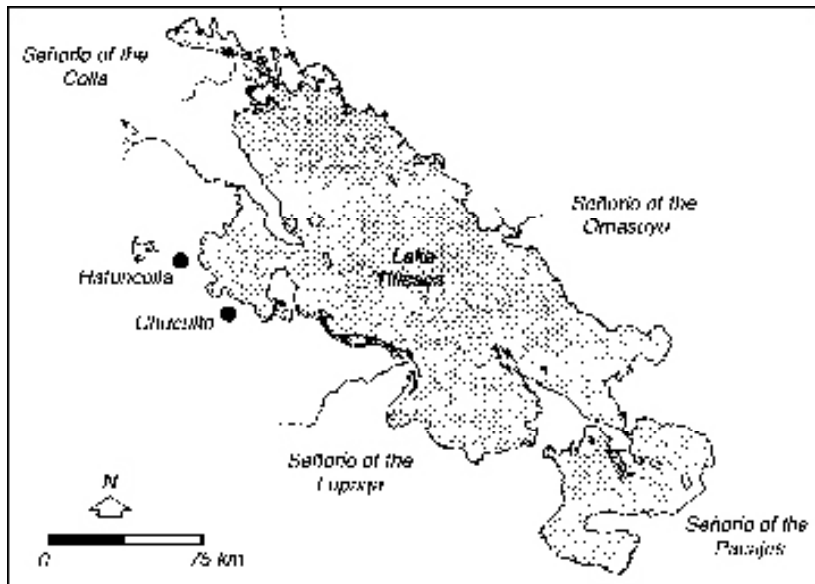


Figure 2. Major Aymara polities of the Lake Titicaca region during the 16th century (according to Bauer and Stanish 2001: 44).

and humans. Ancient projectile points found in front of the panels led the investigator to assign tentatively an early date to the petroglyphs. As far as we know, the style is unique among rock art of the region, and the site deserves to be re-investigated.

Another unique rock art site is situated near Copacabana. Known as Kopakati or Banderani (LP 018), it features two geometric red paintings presenting an assemblage of stepped rectangular forms (identified erroneously by modern Aymaras as their flag 'Wiphala', at present important as a symbol of their ethnic identity) and a cross consisting of four parallel lines. Another painting is reported to have existed on the same rock representing a feline figure (Portugal Zamora and Ibarra Grasso 1957: 26-7). Also, there are numerous carvings in the form of rectangular depressions, as well as cupules, and one rock has been transformed into a so-called Inka 'seat', similar to monuments at the Intinkala and Orkojawira sites of Copacabana. While these carved rocks have been said to be associated with Inka or Aymara settlements, and chronicles mention that Kopakati possessed a stone idol which was destroyed by a Spanish priest in the early Colonial period, the paintings may be much older. On the other hand, on the hill above the principal site, three panels of Colonial and/or Republican indigenous petroglyphs exist (LP 019, LP 023a, b) which will be discussed below.

At Cerro Quilima on the northern border of Lake Titicaca, rock paintings called Pintatani (LP 011) have been mentioned in reports from the beginning of the 20th century (Nordenskiöld 1906: 345, Fig. 5; Portugal Zamora 1969). The site occupies a spectacular position at the south-east side of the hill and at a distance of only 20 m from the water. The paintings picture X-like designs in red, white or in both colours, accompanied by a few other motifs such as circles, a possible plant form and an anthropomorphous figure with wing-like extensions. Apparently, the art extends into the Colonial period, as evidenced by two horseriders (Strecker

1992: 83, Figs 3-6).

Finally, we wish to mention assemblages of cupules located in a cave (LP 069), where they were carefully and deeply pounded. Others are on a rock outcropping where they are quite small and more superficial (LP 052).

While these rock art sites display different cultural traditions, probably spanning a considerable time, we presume that the following stylistic groups belong to the late pre-Hispanic, the Colonial and Republican periods and may be associated with the Aymara population of the Lake Titicaca basin.

### Camelid figures

Camelids (wild guanacos and vicuñas, and domesticated llamas and alpacas) constitute an inexhaustible wealth for Andean inhabitants. Therefore they also play a major role in mythical and ritual

concepts of indigenous communities. This explains why camelids are one of the most frequent motifs in the rock art of the Andean highlands.

Significant stylistic differences exist between camelid representations by ancient Andean hunters and those by later herders. Klarich (1999) and Klarich and Aldenderfer (2001) explored these differences at the site of Quelcatani, Dept. of Puno, and in the region of Ilave, both west of Lake Titicaca in southern Peru; taking into account also data from the Sierra del Osmore, Moquegua, southern Peru. They developed a model for distinguishing between the two pictorial traditions that is also valid for the Bolivian highlands. Camelids in the art produced by hunters are of uniform size, naturalistic in form and movement, and sometimes accompanied by very small and extremely simple human figures. Camelids in the art of later herders are of varied size, schematic, and represent both adult and juvenile animals. Accompanying human

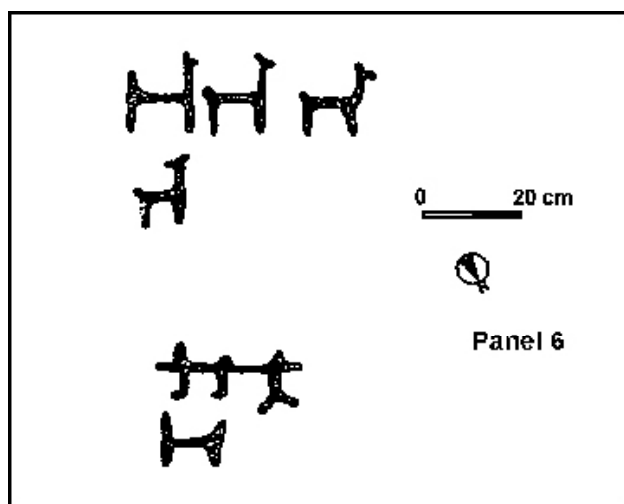


Figure 3. Petroglyphs of LP 034, panel 6. Note four stylised camelids on top (Albarracín-Jordan 1991: Fig. 8).

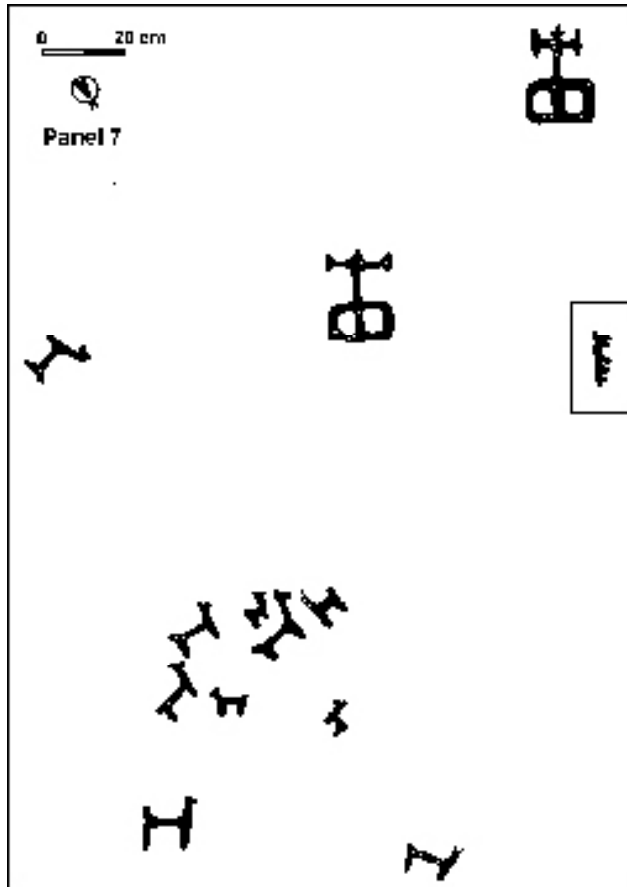


Figure 4. Petroglyphs of LP 034, panel 7: camelids and two Colonial crosses (Albarracín-Jordan 1991: Fig. 9).

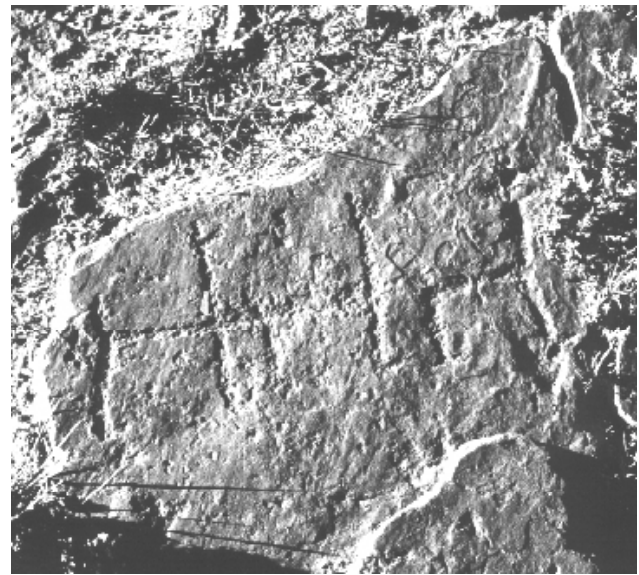


Figure 5. Petroglyphs of LP 034 representing camelids. Photo by J. Albarracín-Jordan.

figures are normally represented in proportionate size. The data in our study region support this model. Camelid representations which we associate with the late pre-Hispanic, Colonial and Republican indigenous population are always represented as very schematic form.

J. Albarracín-Jordan (1991) studied an extensive petro-glyph site (LP 034) in the lower Tiwanaku valley. The majority of its elements consist of schematic camelid figures, lined up, in groups or isolated, apart from two possible snakes, a number of ‘human feet’, a hand representation, geometric elements, and ‘animal heads’. He relates the

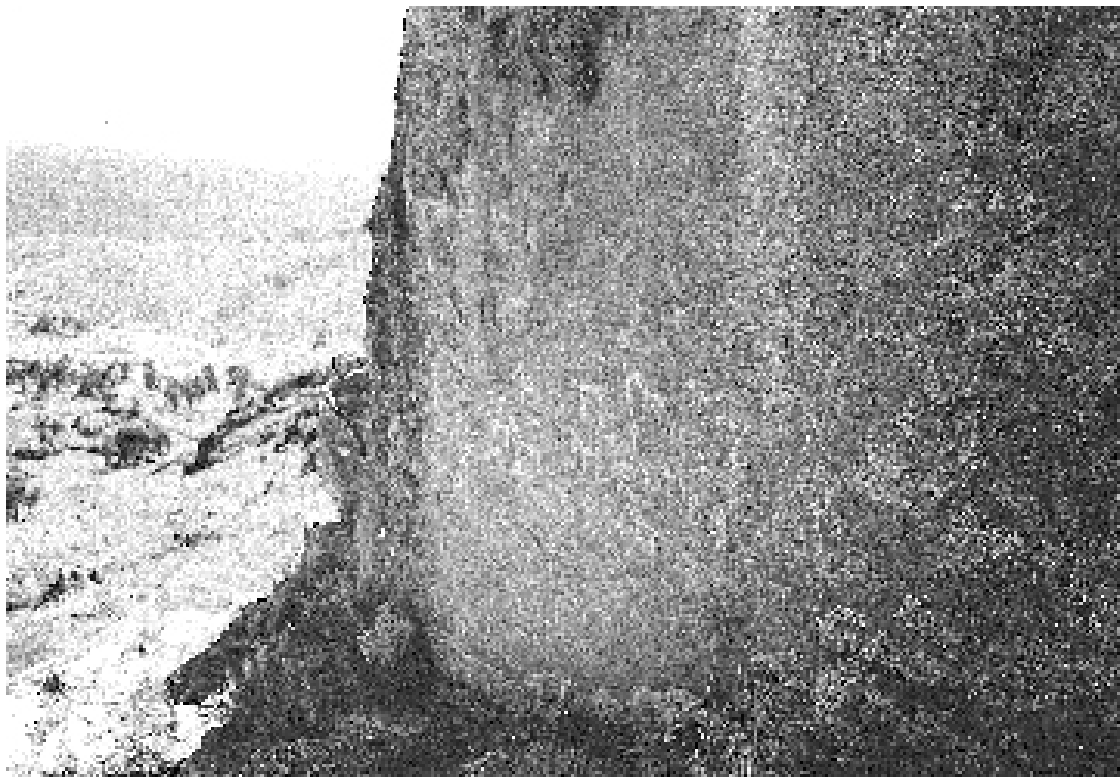
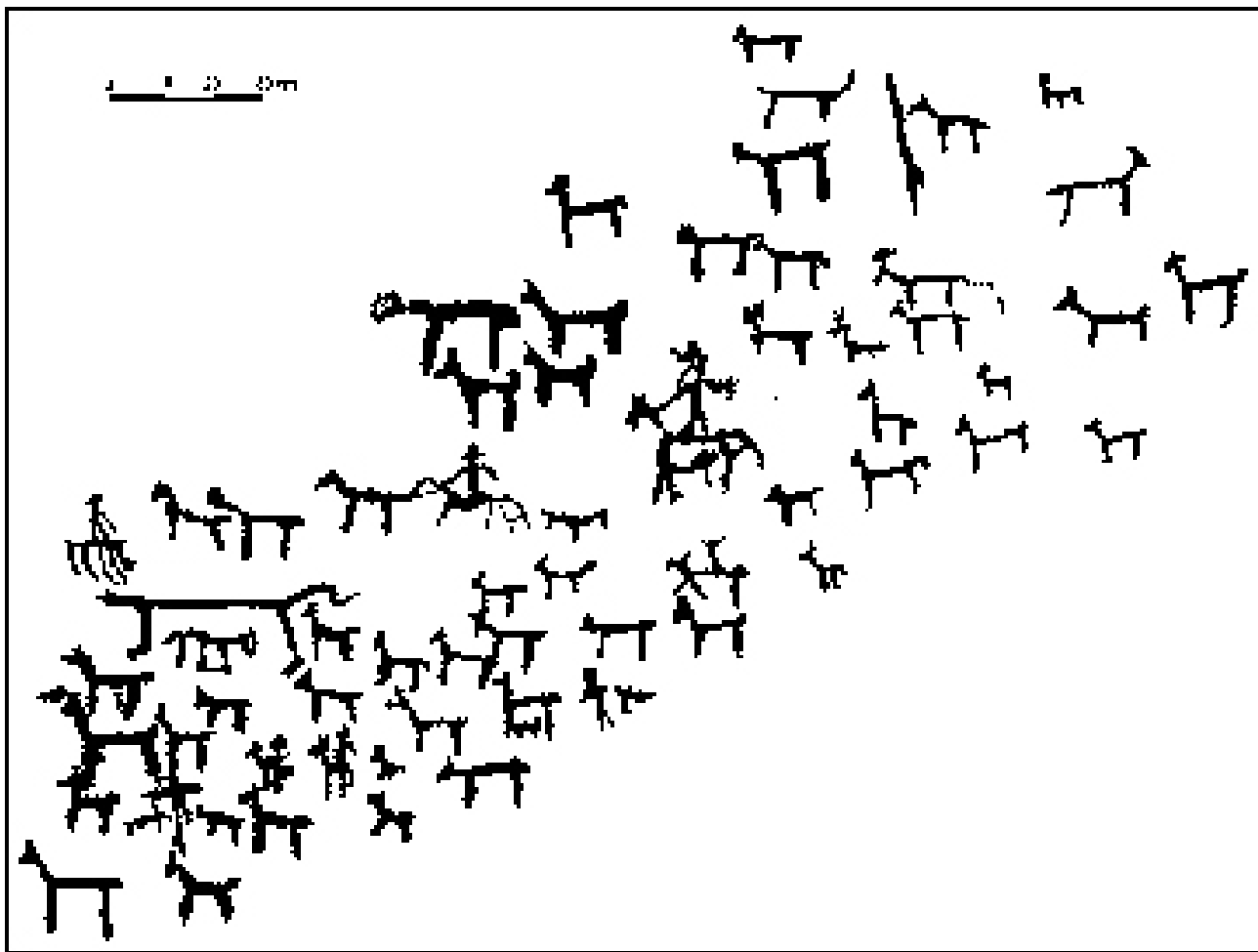
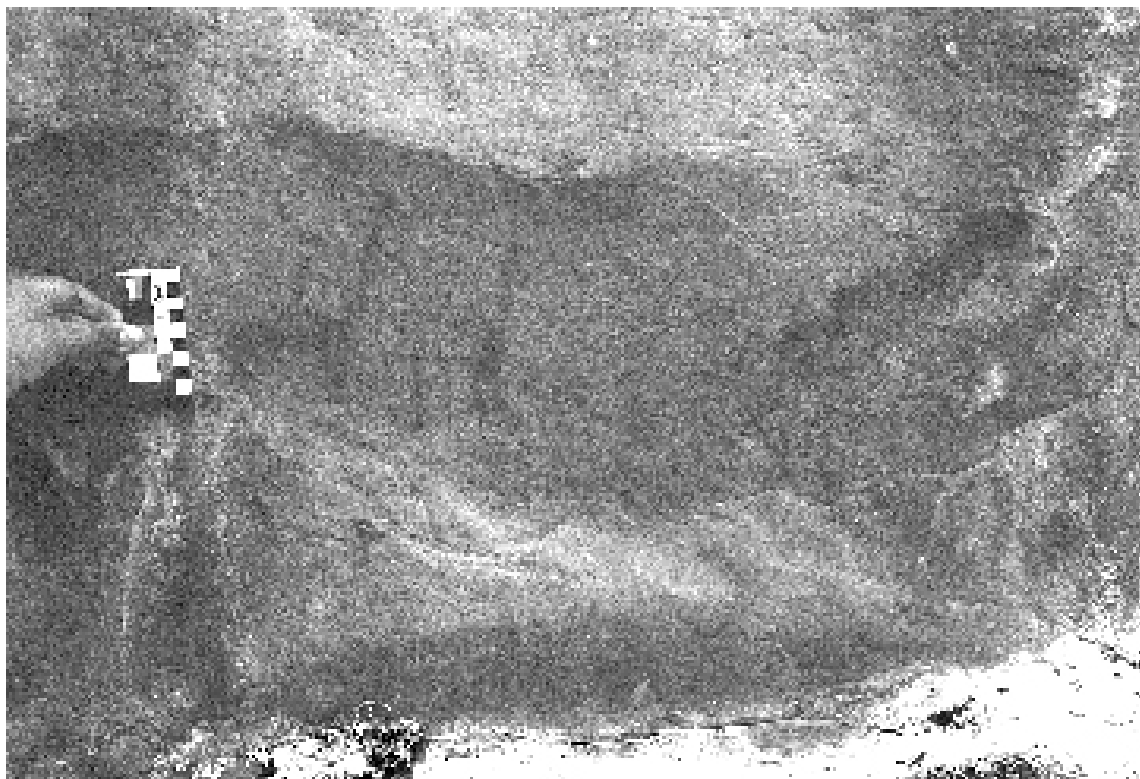


Figure 6. Principal petroglyph panel at Kopakati (LP 023a). Note Lake Titicaca in the background. Photo by M. Strecker.



*Figure 7. Petroglyphs at Kopakati (LP 023a). Note 'horseriders' among 'llama' figures. Recording and drawing by Renán Cordero.*



*Figure 8. Red 'llama' figures at LP 069. Photo by M. Strecker.*



Figure 9. Red paintings at LP 049. Photo by Gloria Hall.

camelids to motifs painted on ceramics, typical of Early Pacajes (Altiplano) and Pacajes-Inka (Inka) periods. One very elaborate animal head probably representing a camelid stands out from the general pattern of petroglyphs and may be earlier. On the other hand, some petroglyphs featuring apparently Christian crosses and 'horseriders' would belong to the Colonial period (Figs 3, 5).

We also ascribe three panels of petroglyphs at Kopakati, in the region of Copacabana (LP 019, LP 023a, b) to the Colonial period, as several 'horseriders' occur there among a large number of camelids (Figs 6, 7). Kopakati has already been mentioned as a major ritual centre with rock art clearly belonging to several pre-Hispanic periods. The Colonial petroglyphs are a late addition to the site, located on rocks in the upper part of the hill which is known as *waranqa qarwan jaqi* ('mountain of a thousand llamas') to the local indigenes, clearly in reference to the petro-glyphs. The principal petroglyphs (LP 023a) were mentioned in earlier reports under the name of Karpanake (Portugal O. 1976). As some figures (LP 023b) are lightly and superficially pecked, they may be of a recent date, copying the same motifs only a few years or decades ago.

Schematic camelids were also represented in a uniform group of rock paintings, predominantly in red colour and sometimes in white, which occur in several sites around Lake Titicaca (Figs 8, 9). They frequently appear as isolated single figures in rigid pose, and sometimes form groups of several or multiple animals. They are stylistically very similar to the camelid representations on ceramics during the Altiplano period (Figs 10, 11). In fact the resemblance is even closer than in the case of the petro-glyphs. In one case (site LP 042), an immense natural rock outcropping, located about 50 m in front of the rock art panel, faintly resembles the figure of a camelid as seen from the site and may have motivated the production of the paintings in that particular place.

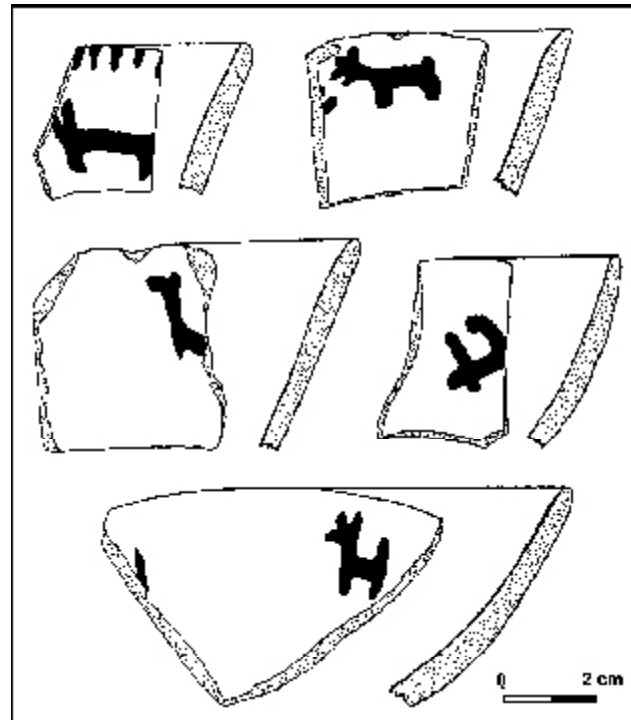


Figure 10. Representations of stylised camelids painted on ceramics, early Pacajes (Altiplano) period, according to Albarracín-Jordan (1991: Fig. 18).

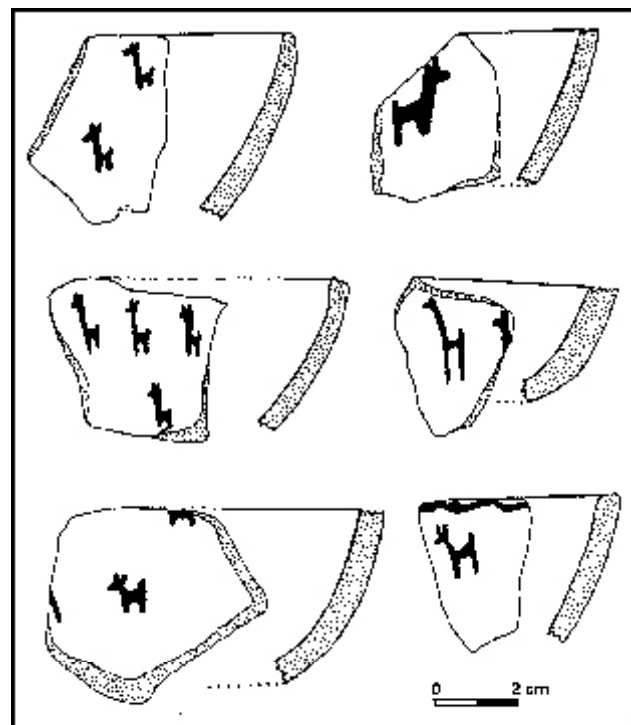


Figure 11. Representations of painted camelid figures on ceramics, Pacajes-Inka (late Altiplano and Inka periods), according to Albarracín-Jordan (1991: Fig. 19).

Size of camelid representations varies considerably in rock art. They range from quite small figures (in some cases apparently representing young ones along with their mother) to exaggerated long bodies.

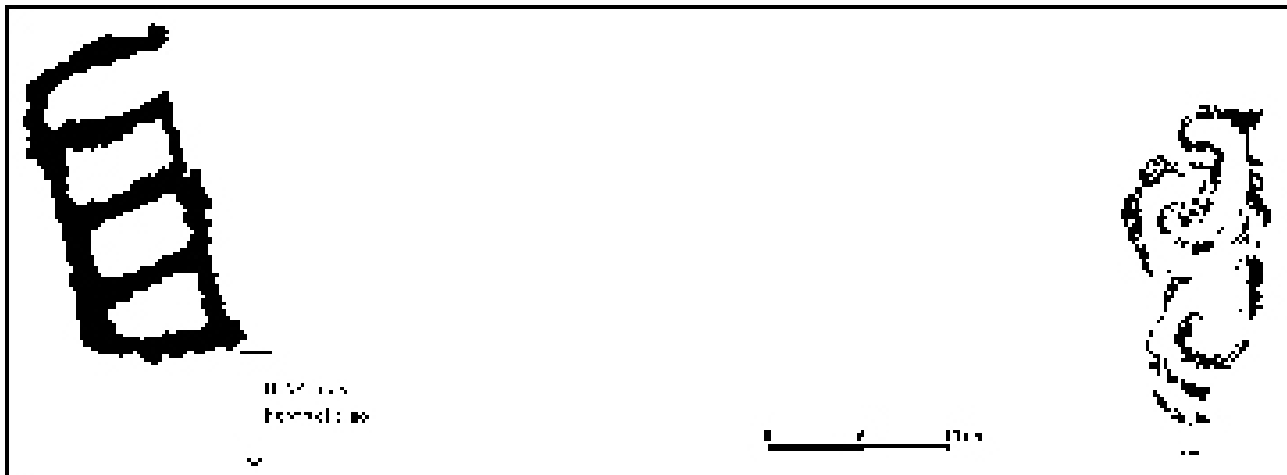


Figure 12. LP 065, cave 1, black paintings. Drawing by Renán Cordero and Jane Kolber.

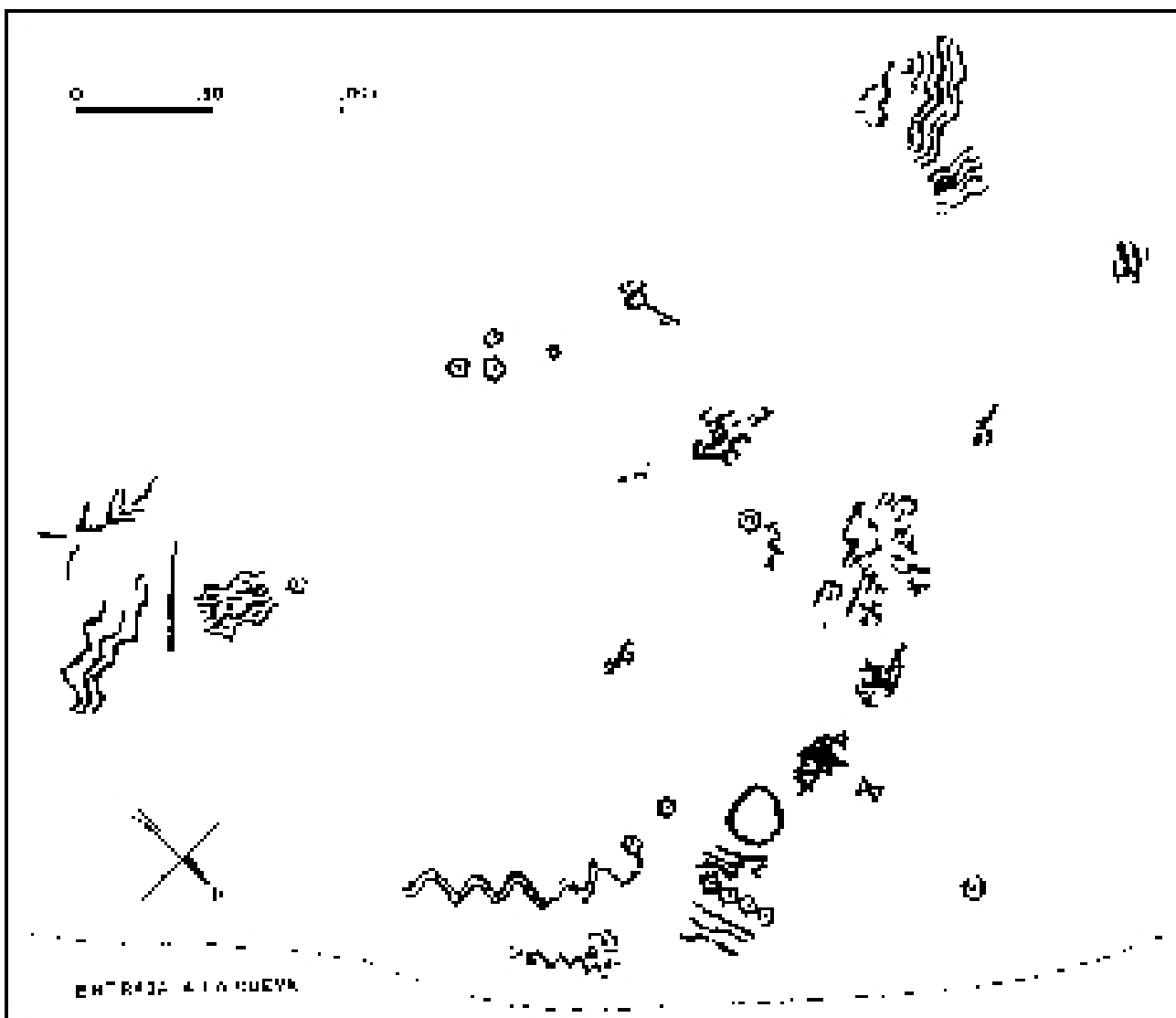


Figure 13. LP 065, cave 2, red drawings on the ceiling of the entrance zone. Recording by Renán Cordero.

### Geometric-stylised tradition

Another stylistic tradition is dominated by geometric designs with a certain proportion of highly stylised animal and human figures. Three sites exemplify this stylistic group.

At site LP 065, in the region of Santiago de Huata, province Omasuyos, two decorated caves exist. Cave 1

consists of a small space of  $6 \times 4$  m where two black designs occur (Fig. 12). Cave 2 is exceptionally large, with a floor space of  $26 \times 50$  m. The ceiling of the entrance zone has been decorated with numerous abstract designs in dark red (Munsell scale 7.5 R 4/8) and orange (Munsell scale 5YR 6/8), while some drawings in yellow were executed on top

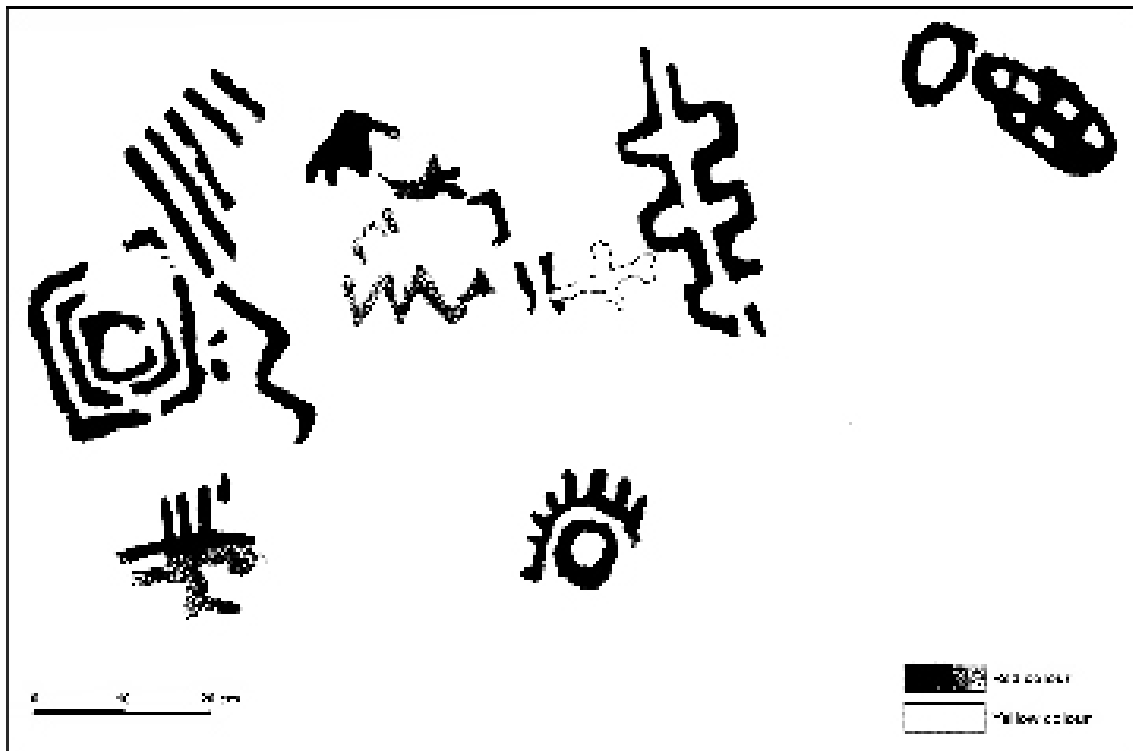


Figure 14. LP 065, cave 2, red and yellow paintings at the entrance zone, right side. Recording and drawing by Freddy Taboada.

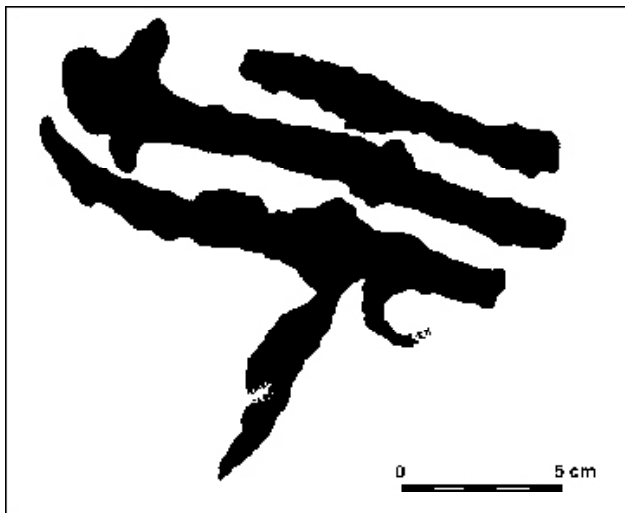


Figure 15. LP 065, cave 2. Abstract design on the back wall of the cave. Recording and drawing by Renán Cordero.

of the older designs (Figs 13, 14). One isolated figure is on the back wall, at a distance of 23 m from the entrance, and can only be seen with artificial light (Fig. 15). Paintings were executed with thick lines and sometimes with liquid paint leaving splashes in some places. This cave has been used intensively in recent times, as evidenced by a number of modern artefacts and animal bones, identified as cattle (*Bos taurus*) and sheep (*Ovis aries*) by biologist Eliana Flores de Capriles. It is also indicated by some modern drawings and inscriptions on the walls, made using red and yellow crayons, as well as charcoal. On the other hand, we found a few pre-Hispanic ceramics, which have tentatively been

ascribed to the Altiplano period and may correspond to the time when the paintings were produced.

Another complex partly of geometric paintings is located on Cerro Chiarake (LP 013), a mountain site in the region of Quilima, on the north side of Lake Titicaca, at 4320 m elevation. It has been previously discussed (Portugal Zamora 1969; Portugal Ortiz and Vega M. 1973, 1974) and was recorded by a SIARB team in 1989. Most of the paintings were executed in dark red (Munsell scale 7.5 R 4/6), with a few figures in reddish-yellow (7.5YR 6/8). Some elements were painted in both colours. As in Cave 2 of LP 065, the figures were executed with thick lines using a liquid paint. A peculiarity of this site is that several natural round depressions were incorporated into the composition, in one case forming the head of a human figure. Though a large part of representations are 'abstract' designs, a significant number of zoomorphs, anthropomorphs and possible plant forms exist, many highly stylised, others more realistic. Several elements induce us to place this site chronologically at a late pre-Hispanic and early Colonial time. The plant forms are similar to those found at the Colonial sites of LP 024-25 in province Los Andes. A zoo-morph with a long back and a vertical line on its top might represent a horse and rider. A 'human' figure with 'bent leg' at the side of a Christian cross is to us a clear indication of a Colonial representation. On the other hand, vertical serpentine or zigzag lines are a pre-Hispanic element, which appears at least at two other sites in the lake region, in one case at Cerro Quilima representing snakes with heads (Figs 16, 17).

LP 068 is another group of presumably late rock drawings near Lake Titicaca. It is situated on rocks of a ravine called Kori Wari. The Quechua name means 'golden llama'



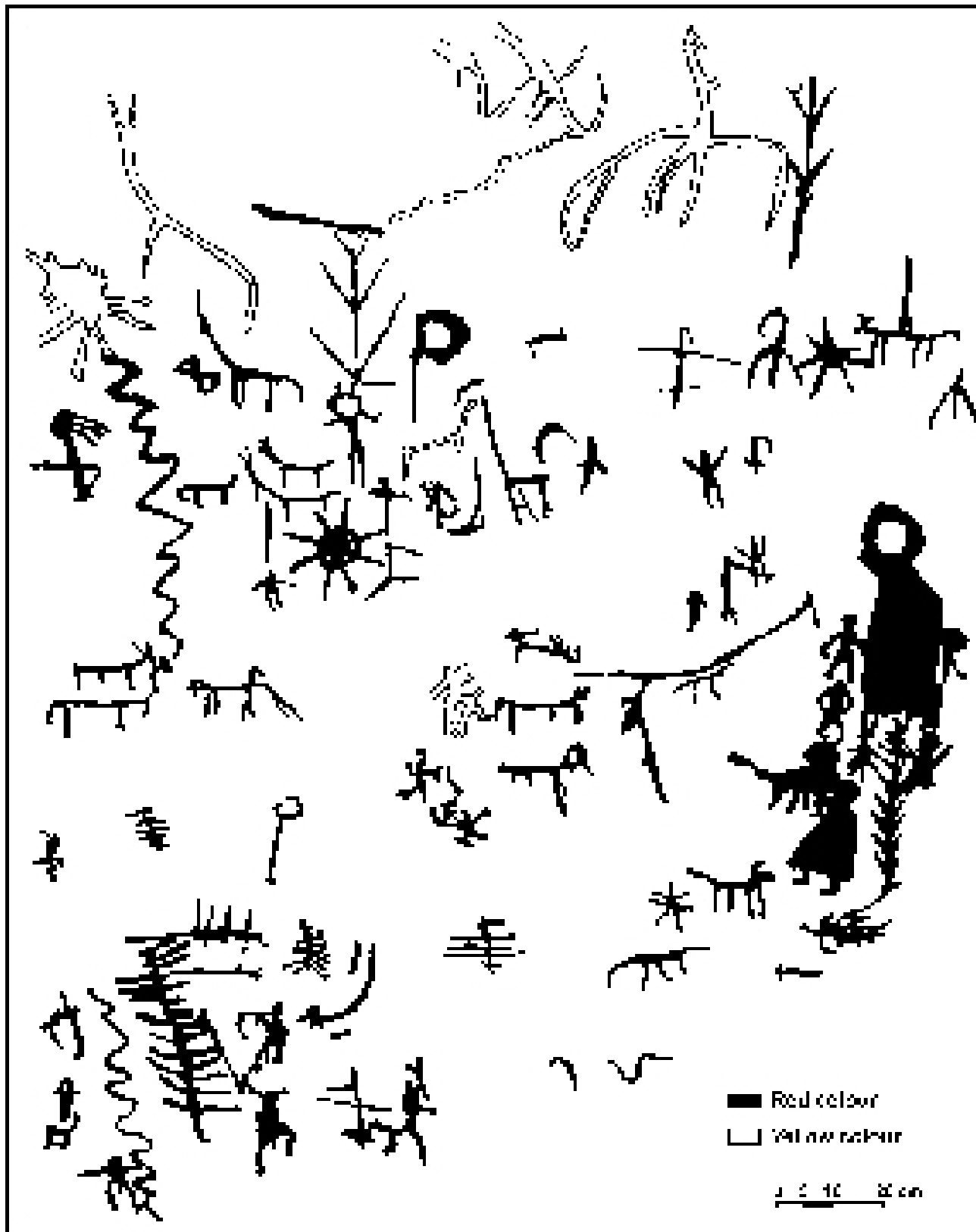


Figure 16. Cerro Chiarake (LP 013). Red and yellow rock paintings. Drawing by Fernando Huaranca (after Strecker 1992: Fig. 9).

and refers to a natural rock formation that resembles a llama figure, beside another one which is recognised by local Indians as a condor. Local informants told us that these formations shine in the sun as if they were made of gold, especially on August 15th; and that some people tried to climb up to the figure to find a hidden treasure, but fell and

died. Black drawings, apparently executed with charcoal, exist in several places in the ravine, the largest concentration on a vertical rock face, just above a big rock with a smooth surface which allowed the artist to stand or crouch on top and draw the figures representing abstract designs (lines in zigzag, rectangles with an X inside, spirals, concentric

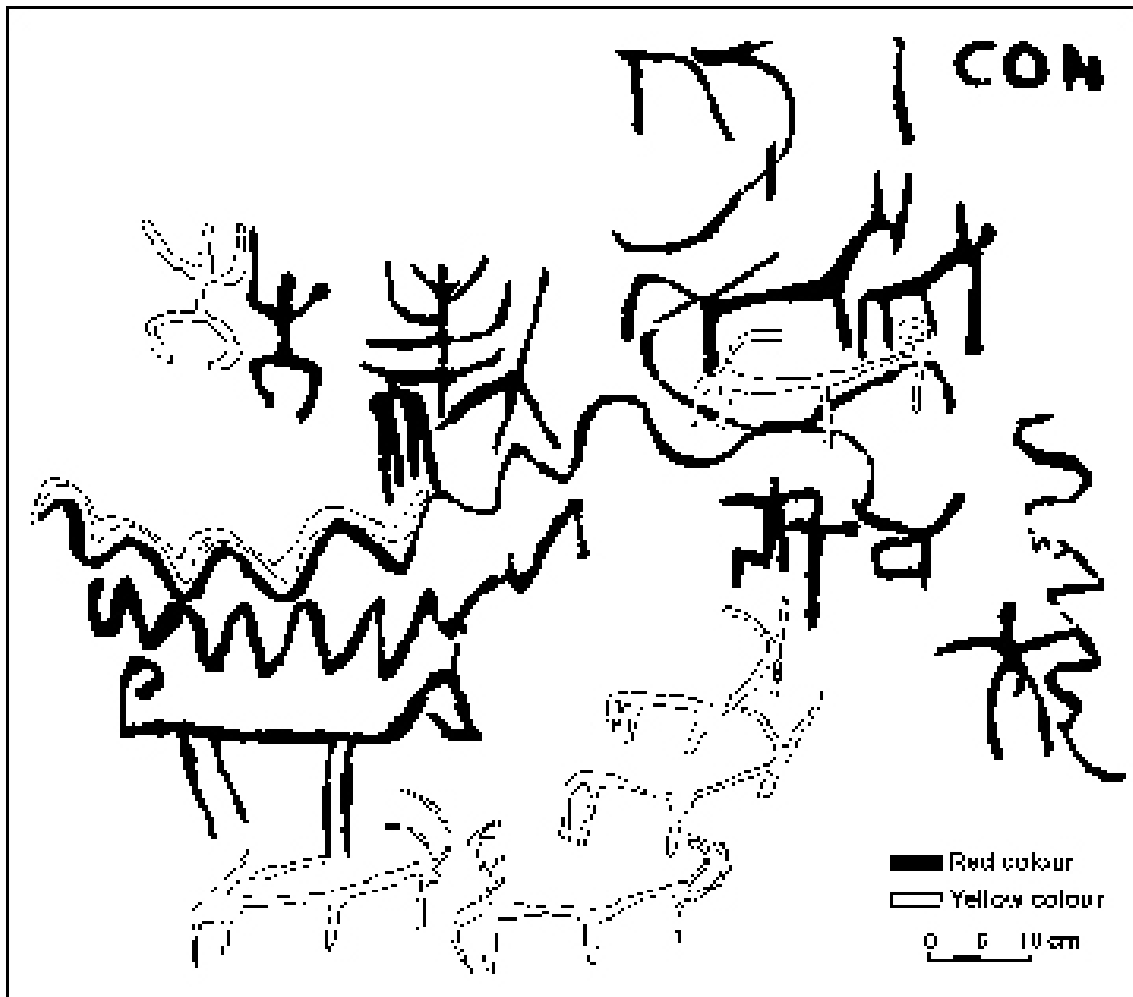


Figure 17. Cerro Chiarake (LP 013), detail of the rock paintings. Drawing by H. Antonini. Note anthropomorphous figure in the centre kneeling next to a Christian cross (after Strecker 1992: Fig. 11).

circles, and a ladder-like design), and a few highly stylised animals (various quadrupeds and a possible bird with extended wings), and anthropomorphs with upraised arms. Some designs were scratched on top of the black drawings. Additionally, we detected some red, superficially drawn figures which we presume to be recent.

#### Colonial rock art of province Los Andes

An especially large concentration of indigenous Colonial rock art is located in province Los Andes, in a small indigenous community where Aymara is spoken, at a distance of only 45 km from the capital La Paz. These sites have been registered as LP 024-25/53. They are formed by three sandstone outcroppings. Two of the sites, the hills *Catachilla* and *Laparani* (LP 024-25), belong to the same tectonic formation. On the east face of each are numerous small rock art panels. *Catachilla* is the more important of the two, according to the quantity and quality of the representations.

In 1987 M. Strecker visited the place and reported its partial destruction. The National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF) collaborated with a rescue recording of the art, which later was presented in an exhibition at the museum. Freddy Taboada (1988, 1992) published the sites in several articles, analysing

their motifs and cultural relationship. He later continued his study, recording traditions and beliefs of the present Aymara population who still regard these places as part of their traditional *huacas* or ritual sites.

The rock art of sites LP 024-25/53 consists mostly of paintings and a small percentage of petroglyphs. The dominating colour is red with shades of orange and warm yellow (haematite-limonite). There are a few blue and white paintings also.

This art is characterised by its extraordinary vitality and realism. The paintings present isolated elements, apart from many complex and extensive 'scenes', which we interpret as religious expression in the contact phase of Hispanic and Andean indigenous cultures. The rock art presents an excellent example of 'religious syncretism' where profound pre-Hispanic contents merge with elements imposed by the European conquest, such as churches, 'horsersiders', Christian crosses, processional elements etc. These representations are therefore considered to be Colonial productions, with a small percentage of younger figures produced during the Republican period.

Of the total corpus of representations, 77% are figurative in the sense of permitting the apparent identification of iconographic elements and the represented events still in force in our times. Among the principal representations are

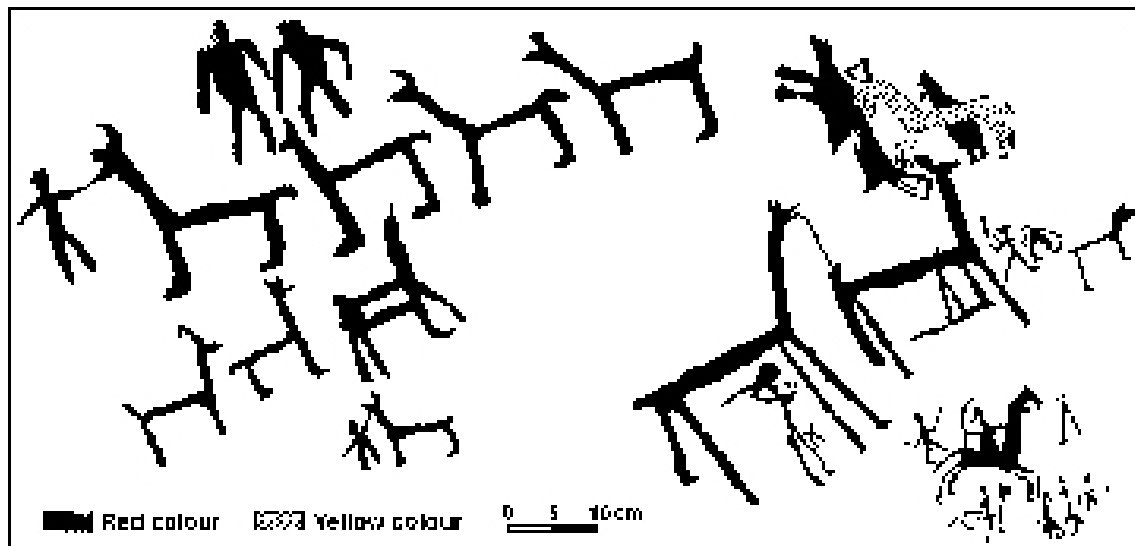


Figure 18. Camelids and other representations at LP 024 (Prov. Los Andes). Note small 'hors rider' at bottom, right, which we interpret as representation of Saint Santiago (after Taboada 1992: Fig. 11).

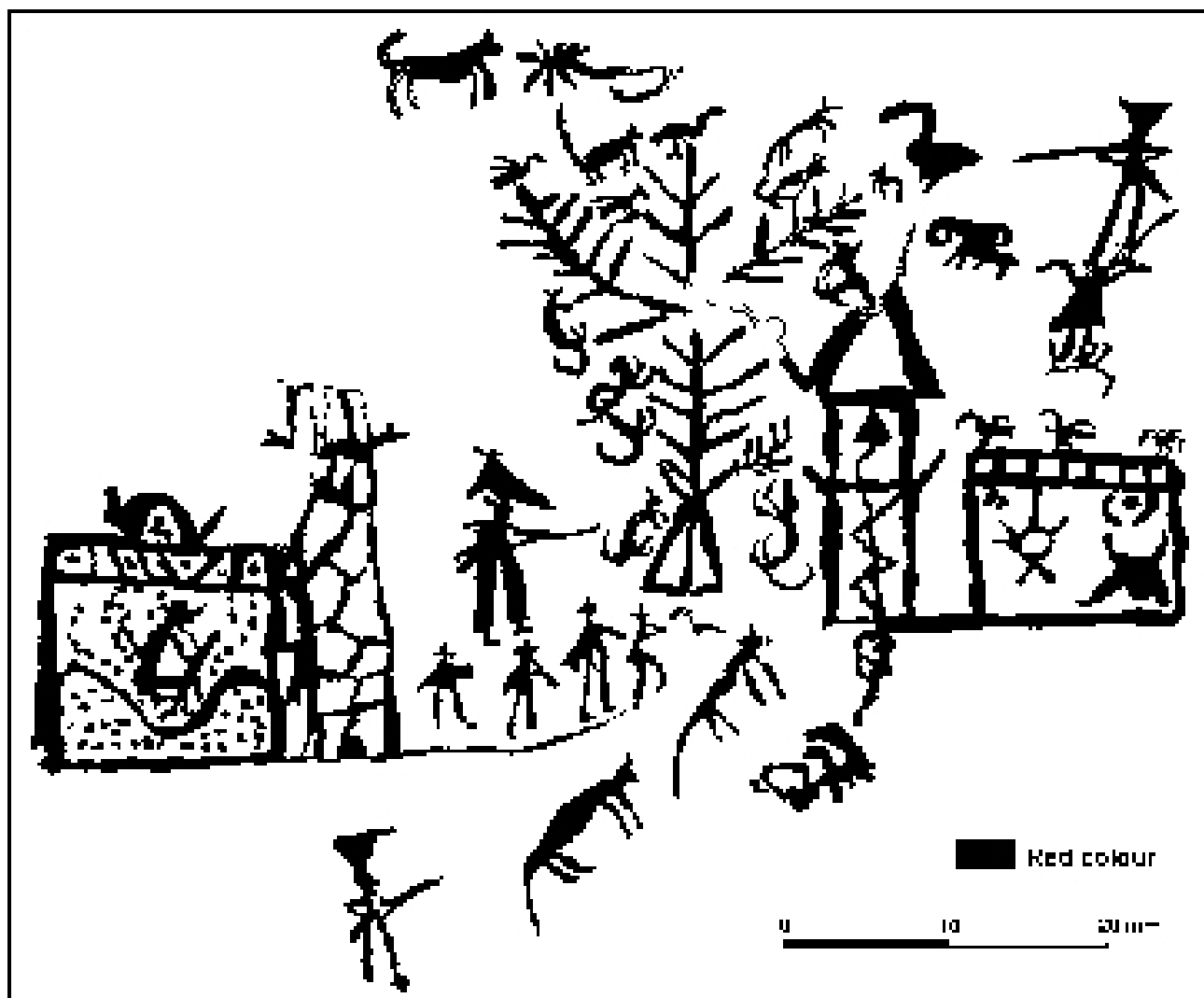


Figure 19. Representation of two 'churches, flute-playing dancers walking on a path, a tree surrounded by animals and hunting scenes' at LP 024 (Prov. Los Andes; after Taboada 1992: Fig. 14).

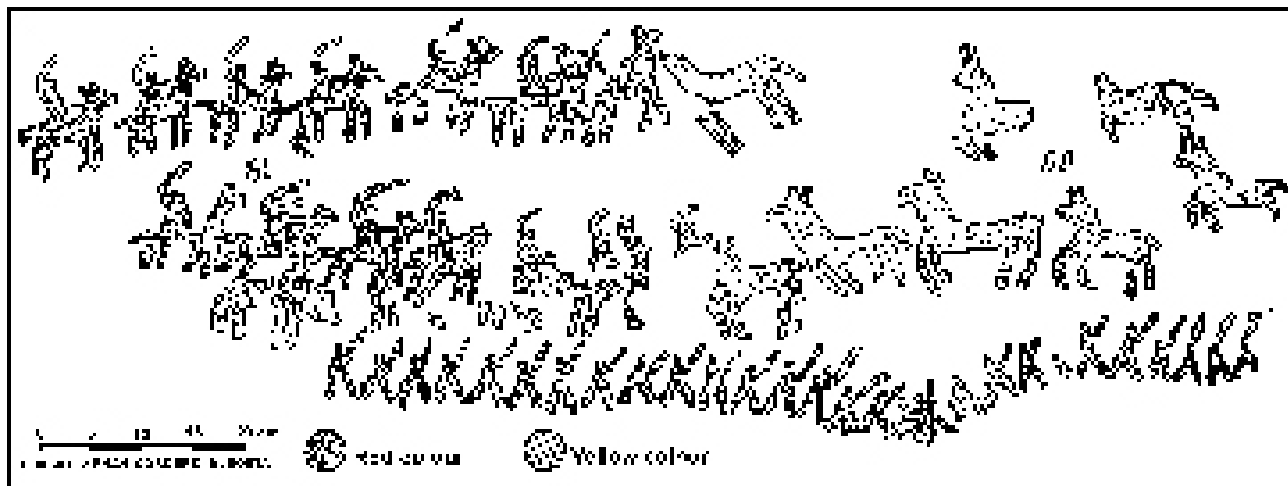


Figure 20. Rock paintings of site LP 072, panel A. Drawing by Renán Cordero.

in our opinions the following:

- a. *Camelids* (Fig. 18). We find them in this rock art without spatial organisation, but also in pastoral scenes and, in one case, represented as pack animal with a load on its back.
- b. *Churches and pilgrimage scenes* (Fig. 19). In sites LP 024-25/53 the Catholic church is the most frequent motif. It appears in religious festivities as demonstrated by the presence of 'folkloric dances', 'pilgrimage scenes', 'scenes of ritual battle' etc. Steeples display festive flags, and in one case the steeple transforms into a tree in which animals abound, with monkeys and birds of the tropical regions. Typical of the pilgrimage scenes are anthropomorphous figures lined up on a base line representing the path and walking toward the churches.
- c. *Dances*. These scenes are among the most prominent motifs. Originally the native dances formed part of pre-conquest propitiatory rites. Once the Gregorian calendar was introduced, they were ascribed to the patron's festivity of the community. Folkloric dances today still are one of the main traditions in the highlands and mesothermic valleys.
- d. *Battle scenes*. They probably represent 'ritual battles' called *Tinkus* (ritual meetings), which take place in many communities in festivities where bloodshed by fighters is considered an offering to *Pachamama* (Mother Earth).
- e. *Rural scenes*. These representations seem related to pastoral activities and hunting.
- f. *Petroglyphs*. The few engraved elements represent simple zoomorphic motifs and Christian crosses which possibly reveal an iconoclastic activity (Bednarik 1992), whose purpose was to annihilate the ritual character of the sites. In this case, the crosses only occur in the sector called *Pachamama* and *Tije Kuchu* (meaning unknown), and according to local informants this place is considered the 'most powerful and most active of the hill'.

In these sites, as well as at Cerro Chiarake, we have recorded a few isolated motifs that bear a strong resemblance to elements of the pictographic writing which missionaries used in Colonial times (Strecker and Taboada 1992).

### Rock paintings of LP 072-73

In the vicinity of the northern border of Lake Titicaca, between Carabuco and Escoma, we located five sites with pre-Hispanic, Colonial and Republican rock art. Sites LP 069 (cupules and paintings of 'llama figures') and LP 068 (black geometric drawings) have already been mentioned. The other three sites contain only post-conquest rock art, which seems to indicate that in the Colonial period new locations were used to produce rock art (the same occurs in the site of Province Los Andes, described above). LP 070 consists of Colonial petroglyphs of horseriders and camelids.

Site LP 072 (Waylla Ph'uju) contains inclined rock walls forming an angle, which is the meeting point of two opposing groups of paintings apparently representing two armed bands in battle formation facing each other. In contrast to most rock art found in the lake region, these paintings are executed in four colours (red, yellow, white and black), sometimes combining three colours in a single figure. Similar cases of multi-coloured elements can be found in the Colonial rock art of Province Los Andes and Cerro Chiarake. We have described and analysed this site in detail (Medinaceli et al. 2003), so the following summary may suffice here.

The left part (panel A, Fig. 20) consists of three rows of 'horseriders' or 'marching human figures', accompanied by two rows of animals (apparently horses), represented in profile and in a schematic way. They are facing right, with the exception of the animals in the upper right part, which are 'galloping' to the left. Horseriders hold a curved 'stick', in front of which sometimes a single dot appears, which we interpret as a projectile hurled by a sling. The lined-up humans in the bottom row hold straight 'sticks', which might represent rifles.

In the right part (panel B, Fig. 21) all figures, arranged in eight horizontal rows, are directed towards the left. In contrast to the left side of the composition, where human figures ('horseriders' or 'people marching') are represented in a homogenous way, here we find a greater diversity in the humans, which were painted in different colours (we are therefore thinking of certain uniforms). There is also a difference in the representation of horses, those belonging

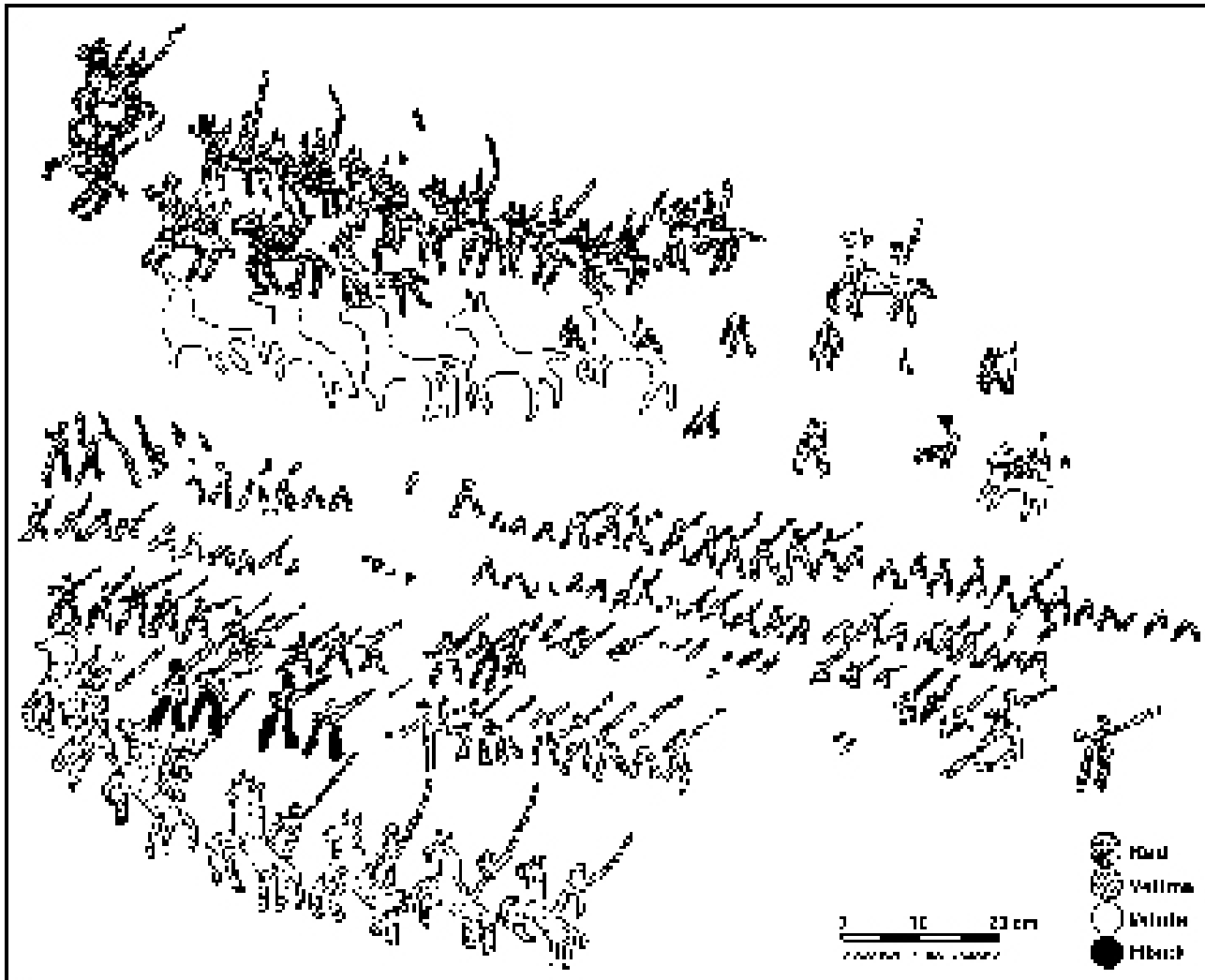


Figure 21. Rock paintings of site LP 072, panel B. Drawing by Renán Cordero.

to riders heading toward the right are generally smaller and drawn with less detail, while the ones directed toward the left are larger and show such details as feet or horseshoes painted as black spots. On both sides at least 180 persons are present, if we take into account some remains of paintings indicating poorly preserved figures.

We interpret these paintings as portraying the confrontation of two armed groups in battle formation, where the left part depicts indigenous fighters, and on the right we see Colonial or Republican troops. We are tempted to relate this scene to the Indian rebellion of 1781–1782 led by Tupaj Katari and Tupac Amaru, although we cannot exclude a later date as there were still uprisings among the Indians of Lake Titicaca region in the Republican period, especially during the government of President Melgarejo (1866–1871).

Similar representations of armed figures, lined-up 'horseriders and humans marching', exist at the nearby site LP 073 (Molin Jawira). They may reveal the preoccupation of its authors with warfare.

#### Recent rock art

Aymara Indians occasionally still produced rock art in recent times. Some people living in a village near LP

024-25 told us that their grandfathers still painted figures at the site. They also described the process of the paintings indicating how colours were mixed (adding water to natural pigments), so apparently they had watched the execution as children. More recently, students of a nearby school added some inscriptions and figures, next to or on top of the ancient rock art, but in this case we feel that these modern representations do not follow the tradition of the former art. At LP 073 (Molin Jawira), a few recent drawings were added at a short distance on a separate rock, thus respecting the integrity of the old art. The new drawings are executed with red paint and portray a woman with the typical hat of a *cholita* (indigenous woman living in a city) and a modern house. We have already mentioned that petroglyphs at LP 023b may have been produced recently in imitation of older figures.

#### Final remarks

We are still far from understanding the cultural origin and sequence of rock art in the Lake Titicaca region. Representations from the latest periods, which we consider to be 'Aymara' rock art, belong to several traditions and in our view consist of:

- geometric or abstract designs which we believe are re-

lated to the last pre-Hispanic period and early Colonial times;

- schematic camelid figures which also extend back to pre-conquest periods but were made for a very long time, reflecting the utmost religious and economic importance of llamas and alpacas;
- religious scenes presenting churches, pilgrims and folkloric dances from the post-conquest period, incorporating elements of Hispanic culture and representing a new tradition (which has been characterised as a religious syncretism by Querejazu Lewis 1992: 10); sometimes accompanied by rural representations of camelids or hunting scenes;
- scenes representing conflicts between armed persons, apparently related to indigenous rebellions against the Colonial government;
- occasional recent drawings executed only a few years or decades ago which may imitate the ancient designs or represent elements of present indigenous culture.

The results of this survey have a bearing on rock art in other parts of the Bolivian highlands as well. For example, in Calacala (Oruro) rock art has been uncritically ascribed to the ancient Wankarani culture (Faldin 1990). However, a majority of figures consist of schematic camelid representations (Strecker and Taboada 2001), which are similar to those existing in the Lake Titicaca area; in addition Altiplano ceramics were found near the rock art panels.

At least some of the sites around Lake Titicaca, and possibly the vast majority, are considered of particular importance as part of the ritual landscape of the Indians. For example, Cerro Quilima (LP 011), whose rock art is mostly pre-Hispanic but includes horseriders (Strecker 1992), apparently was an important *huaca* or sacred site in pre-Hispanic times. Colonial chronicles (Uría 1958: 211–2) refer to the place in relation to the legend of Tunupa (identified as a Christian missionary, but whose origin is related to an ancient Aymara god; cf. Gisbert 1984: 25). At sites LP 024-25/53 in province Los Andes, Freddy Taboada has studied Andean religious traditions and ritual practices. The major rock art sites are considered to be occupied by spirits, and rites are carried out by specialists called *yatiris*. The religious function of these sites stems from a dynamic ritual calendar. However, no religious practices have been found which relate directly to the rock art; they are rather related to the site in general and its spiritual character. At LP 069 we found evidence of recent rites, and local Aymaras informed us that the place is used for magic enchantments (*'para brujería'*). In Copacabana, an indigenous informant told us that *yatiris* carry out rites and offerings each year alternatively at Kopakati or at the site called Horca del Inka.

The Aymara communities, as all Andean societies, have formed a complex relation between their economic practices and their ritual expressions, which have to do with their ritual spaces (cf. Querejazu Lewis 1994) and the adoration of the Mother Earth, *Pachamama*, related principally to fertility. Other important rites are directed to the *Achachi-las* and *Awichos* (spirits of the ancestors and tutelary spirits), *Illas* and *Samiris* (animal and plant spirits).

Religious expressions in Aymara communities are characterised by their dynamism and flexibility. During the Colonial period, the Indians were forced to adopt the Christian faith. The Spanish government tried to annihilate the native religion by its policy of Christian mission and the destruction of ancient beliefs. This process was known as *'Extirpación de Idolatrias'* (wiping out of superstitious practices). The Gregorian Calendar superseded the ritual Andean calendar. Due to similarities between the two calendars and identifications of ancient beliefs with the new system a 'religious syncretism' (T. Gisbert 1980; Van den Berg 1989) arose among the indigenous population which has remained till our days and proves that the effort to convert the Indians was not very successful. Rock art at LP 024-25/53 reflects both pre-Hispanic indigenous and Colonial Christian concepts.

Among the most important identifications of old beliefs with the new religion are the following: the Virgin Mary is identified with the *Pachamama* (Mother Earth); and the saint Santiago with *Illapa* (ancient god of lightning). We believe that some of the isolated horseriders at rock art sites (which are not integrated in a battle scene) in fact represent Santiago who has a special importance for the Indians as he is responsible for rain and good harvests. Among Colonial rock art of northern Chile, a region inhabited by Aymara Indians, horseriders have also been interpreted as Saint Santiago (Gallardo et al. 1990).

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Matthias Strecker  
P.O. Box 3091  
La Paz  
Bolivia  
E-mail: [strecker@accelerate.com](mailto:strecker@accelerate.com)

Freddy Taboada  
Calle Nanawa 1805  
Miraflores  
La Paz  
Bolivia  
E-mail: [siarb@accelerate.com](mailto:siarb@accelerate.com)

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**Zusammenfassung.** Die Autoren präsentieren eine vorläufige Übersicht über Felsbilder im Bereich des Titicacasees (bolivianische Seite), die aus der späten vorspanischen Zeit, der Kolonialzeit und der Republikanischen Periode stammen. Der Artikel beruht auf dem Register von 50 Stätten und Forschungen, die sich über 17 Jahre erstreckten. Mehrere Traditionen werden

beschrieben: geometrische oder 'abstrakte' Darstellungen, schematische Figuren von Kameliden, religiöse Szenen und Szenen, die Konflikte zwischen bewaffneten Personen zeigen. Wenigstens einige der Stätten – vermutlich die überwiegende Mehrheit – haben besondere Bedeutung als Teil der traditionellen rituellen Landschaft der Indianer.

**Resumen.** Los autores presentan una visión preliminar del arte rupestre de la región del lago Titicaca (en el lado boliviano), del período prehispánico tardío, así como de la Colonia y República. En el curso de su investigación, a lo largo de 17 años, registraron 50 sitios. Describen varias tradiciones: diseños 'geométricos' o 'abstractos', figuras esquemáticas de camélidos, escenas religiosas y escenas representando conflictos entre personas armadas. Por lo menos algunos de los sitios – posiblemente la gran mayoría – tienen especial importancia como parte del paisaje ritual de los indígenas.

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