Enduring Monuments

Formative Period Transformations at Pukara, Peru

ELIZABETH A. KLARICH

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Monumental Transformations

> We cannot even assume that all flat-topped pyramidal mounds—even within just one region or during just one phase—meant the same thing or functioned in the same ways. (Pauketat and Alt 2003, 163)

MODERN RITUALS IN ANCIENT SPACES

In the late 1990s, when I initiated a research project in the small town of Pucará, the northern Lake Titicaca Basin (and Peru more generally) was just beginning to recover from more than a decade of intense political violence and social upheaval. Understandably, a group of foreign graduate students, including myself, and of archaeologists and field supervisors from different regions of Peru were viewed with suspicion when we arrived. Over the course of several field seasons, we worked closely with numerous families from the community in the field and in the laboratory, developing personal and professional relationships that continue today. This was, however, a slow process that began with our project members attending public events in the town and at the archaeological site museum, which then led to invitations to more private affairs at people's homes. During those two years living between Pucará and the nearby city of Puno, I was very fortunate to participate in a regional cooking competition, celebrate weddings, join a dance troupe for the feast of the Virgen de la Candelaria in Puno, snip infant curls

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Figure 1.1. *Qalasaya with the Peñon in the background (2018). Drone photo courtesy of Elizabeth Arkush.*

at *retuche* (first hair-cutting ceremonies), visit household pottery workshops, and to do something I very rarely did at home—attend church.

One of our weekly rituals for the six-plus months of the excavation season was to return to Pucará from Puno on Sunday afternoons to attend Catholic Mass at Santa Isabela, an early Spanish colonial church located in the Plaza de Armas (central plaza). The church is dark, cavernous, and freezing cold; the Mass was officiated by a priest who lived in Pucará and traveled throughout the region for weekly services. A few members of our project would sometimes follow up the service—in which the priest typically poked fun at our team of archaeologists during the sermon—with a visit at the church residence to talk politics and indulge in his homemade pies. During these visits, we found that *el padre* was fascinated by regional prehistory and had a deep respect for the rich cultural traditions of the Quechua-speaking residents of Pucará.

One Sunday afternoon we returned to Pucará and encountered community members heading from the church up the unpaved road toward the archaeological site of Pukara (figure 1.1).[1] The site, which is the locus of our multi-year research project, is well-known to local people, archaeologists, and tourists

Figure 1.2. *Upper platform of the Qalasaya with the restored central sunken court and the town of Pucará in the background (2018). Drone photo courtesy of Elizabeth Arkush.*

due to its imposing temple complex and associated stone sculpture. After confirming that we were not intruding on a private gathering, a few of us from the project walked with the group up to the Qalasaya, an impressive prehistoric platform mound located at the base of the surrounding hills. The priest and an elderly *paqo* (shaman) plus a number of community members were standing together in the center of a sunken court complex (figure 1.2). These monumental stone buildings, which feature a central, recessed area surrounded by numerous small rooms on a slightly raised platform, were first constructed and utilized for public ritual approximately two millennia ago.

While archaeological sites in the Andes are often used in historical "reenactments" for both national and international tourists,[2] this was the first time I had seen or heard of the sunken court at Pukara being used as a ritual space by community members. I sat with a few other people on the stone foundations of the structures surrounding the sunken plaza and watched as participants stacked potatoes and other agricultural products on a number of *mantas* (woven blankets) on the floor of the court. The two officiants took

turns addressing the group in Spanish and Quechua as community members shifted the *mantas* and their contents closer to the speakers and then stepped back into the larger group. The officiants acknowledged these offerings with a nod and a few words, which marked the conclusion of the gathering. Those in attendance resumed casual conversations, picked up their belongings, and headed back down the long road from the archaeological site into the town center. I returned to the museum to prepare for the upcoming week, so distracted by project logistics and the rhythms of our weekly routine that the significance of the experience escaped me for some time.

I start with this brief story because that afternoon gathering in the central sunken court of the Qalasaya has inspired me to think more explicitly about how archaeologists have framed the long and varied histories of Pukara's monumental constructions and the broader significance of such enduring monuments. There are a number of themes woven throughout this book, and several of them can be briefly outlined using this event as touch point.

First, it is impossible to ignore the complex and long-term interplay of the natural and built environments while standing on the Qalasaya, which has served as the center of Pukara for over two millennia. This 35-m-tall platform mound is found nestled at the base of a large pinkish sandstone outcrop called the Peñon, which is visible from great distances. I am often amazed while driving from Juliaca to Pucará, a drive of just under an hour, how the Peñon comes in and out of view as we wind up the (former Inca) highway. The Peñon casts a great shadow over the Qalasaya, serving as the "head" of the "sleeping feline" (one of many local names for the Peñon and adjacent hillsides) and as a place where modern pilgrims leave offerings every May (figure 1.3). The Qalasaya nearly blends into its surroundings, except for the blunt edges and sharp angles of the stone-lined terraces and large platforms. This hillside is the source of a number of springs, which required ancient Pukareño builders to design a series of canals within the stone-lined terraces to keep the sunken courts and other structures from flooding each rainy season. Anyone participating in an activity on the upper platforms of the Qalasaya would have enjoyed an expansive view to the east, including mountaintops now ringed by late prehispanic hill forts, vast stretches of agricultural lands, and the meandering path of the Pucará River. The river provides access to rich clays for modern potters and myriad wild resources, while the terraces, platforms, and semi-buried walls of ancient Pukara continue to hold significance within both the quotidian and ritual spheres of life in Pucará.

The gathering in the central sunken court also illustrates the challenges of categorizing events as "public" or "private" and of determining how participants

Figure 1.3. *Pukara and Pucará viewed from the Pucará River (2006). Pukara Archaeological Project.*

would (or could) have used different spaces within ritual structures. A number of people—including myself—walked up from the town center to the Qalasaya but remained on the periphery of the court while the priest and *paqo* were speaking. We observed the event from quite near and seemed to pay close attention, but we did not enter the primary (and more intimate) locus of activity. At a larger scale, even to those in the town center, it was obvious that numerous people had gathered on the Qalasaya that Sunday afternoon. While I did not think to ask at the time, was everyone in town invited (or at least felt welcome) to attend?

While the ceremony comprised a number of distinct activities, there were no material traces left behind at its conclusion. There was no formal altar, and the only objects used in the ceremony were woven textiles and foodstuffs, which were taken home at its conclusion. It is also likely that the gathering continued afterward in another setting, although our crew members did not attend. Was this an offertory "potluck" of sorts, with participants contributing various goods that were later consumed by the group? Did one of the

officiants or a family host a *huatia* (or *watiya*), a communal meal where various foods are cooked together in an earthen oven? If so, where did it take place? Did the meal leave a more significant material trace than the gathering at the sunken court?

Lastly, while this was hardly their intention, the collaboration of the priest and *paqo* at the sunken court ceremony prompted me to think more critically about the ways archaeologists categorize or differentiate ritual leaders. For example, the Catholic priest is a full-time ritual specialist who is part of an international, top-down, and highly institutionalized religious organization. He is an outsider to the community and typically operates within a formalized ritual framework and in a public setting in the nearby church. While he also attends to private matters—such as meeting with parishioners for the sacraments—he primarily interacts with large numbers of people through celebrating Mass every week. In more rural communities, a priest appears once or twice a year to perform dozens of baptisms, officiate weddings, and offer other sacraments over the course of a weekend.

In contrast, the *paqo* is a part-time ritual specialist who is called upon periodically to perform a wide range of activities for individuals and families across the community.[3] These activities include making burned offerings to Pacha Mama (Mother Earth), diagnosing both physical and spiritual ailments, and performing a number of other rituals. These specialists are trained by parents and grandparents starting in childhood, and they primarily perform their services in private households. There are particularly auspicious moments for performing different types of rituals—for example, a burned offering is often made in the middle of the night and the ceremony continues until early morning—and the *paqo* makes the decisions about when, where, and how the activity will be conducted. As I sat on the stone wall just above the sunken court, I was struck by the fluidity and diversity of ritual leadership in this context, which would be challenging to address using existing archaeological models.

The modern repurposing of the ancient sunken court—which was restored for tourism in the 1970s by Plan COPESCO (Comisión Especial para Coordinar y Supervigilar el Plan Turístico y Cultural Perú–UNESCO)—illustrates not only the time depth of Pukara's monumental constructions but also how the use and meaning of these spaces continue to be transformed over the millennia. This brings us to the central question of *Enduring Monuments*: How can we determine the significance of monumental buildings in the development of early population centers? These constructions have been variously interpreted as testaments to technological innovation,

conspicuous consumption, centrally organized labor, and social hierarchy, among others. However, such constructions are rarely static; they are frequently modified and even erased from the landscape. A more nuanced version of the central question considers what the transformation of monumental constructions reveals about the variable practices that contribute to the persistence of these early centers. Examples of such transformations are present cross-culturally and reflect particularly complex processes at sites with long and diverse occupational histories.

Over the last 2,500 years at Pukara, a wide range of transformative practices have been inscribed on the monumental Qalasaya by local peoples, distant imperial powers, and, most recently, archaeologists and tourists. Some of these modifications remain visible today—one of the earliest Spanish colonial churches in the altiplano was built upon an Inca *kallanka* (rectangular building) overlying two sunken courts—while others are hidden from view due to a variety of natural and cultural processes. Through excavation, archaeologists are in the unique position to uncover the remains of these processes or events, which may include intentional burial, reconstruction, destruction, or abandonment of a structure or its constituent parts.

This is the first work to consolidate the architectural and non-architectural evidence from investigations of the Qalasaya, which is culled from the investigations of the Pukara Archaeological Project (PAP) since 2000 and from those of fellow archaeologists beginning in the 1930s. The final product is a "building biography" for the Qalasaya, one that traces both the small-scale processes and large-scale, coordinated efforts that first created and then transformed this central feature at Pukara during the Middle and Late Formative periods (400 BC–AD 200 to 400). I also utilize excavation data from other areas of the site core, including public spaces and residential zones, to provide further context for the Qalasaya data sets, which tend to be less fine-grained. Taken together, I argue that the transformations within the site core provide new insights into broader economic, social, and political dynamics during the development and early history of Pukara within the northern Titicaca Basin. The earliest of these transformations—the founding of Pukara and initial construction of the Qalasaya—occurred centuries later than previously assumed, requiring the reassessment of existing models of a long, gradual process of in situ socio-political development during the Middle Formative. The second—the renovation of the Qalasaya during the Late Formative period—was a monumental undertaking, a coordinated effort by Pukara leaders that referenced long-standing architectural traditions in novel ways for residents and visitors. This chapter of expansion and remodeling created a hierarchy of ritual spaces

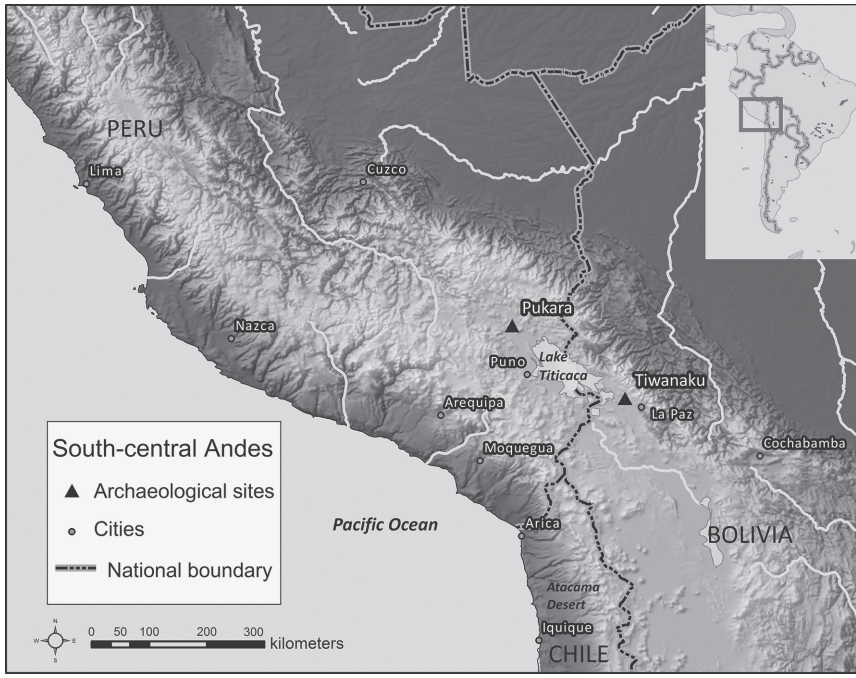

Figure 1.4. *Map of the south-central Andes with the location of Pukara and Tiwanaku. Map by Rachel Moskowitz, Pukara Archaeological Project.*

on the Qalasaya (Hastorf 2003, 2017; Van Dyke 2013), interpreted as a materialization of growing inequality within Pukara society and, presumably, across the northern basin (DeMarrais et al. 1996). The final transformation—the closure of the Qalasaya toward the end of the Late Formative—is evidenced by a group of decapitated and battered statues deposited in the central sunken court that were uncovered during the 1939 excavations (Kidder n.d.; see figure 6.11). There is, however, no additional evidence of damage or destruction in the civic-ceremonial core or site periphery. I interpret this isolated event, combined with recent excavation data from Pukara, as evidence of internalized strife that led to the closure of the Qalasaya and, perhaps, a more generalized abandonment of the site between AD 200 and 400.

Big Site, Small Processes

The archaeological site of Pukara, which translates to "fortress" in the Indigenous languages of Quechua and Aymara, underlies and abuts the modern

town of Pucará in the northwest Lake Titicaca Basin (figure 1.4). The site's civic-ceremonial core is demarcated today by a number of monumental stone and adobe constructions at the base of the Peñon (elevation 3,950 masl [meters above sea level]). The Peñon is visible from Pucará's central plaza, but the stone terraces of the Qalasaya only appear on the walk up the steep dirt road toward the archaeological site. In contrast, the material remains of earlier times are omnipresent in the daily lives of Pukareños. It is not uncommon to spot modern and Spanish colonial pottery on the surface of recently plowed fields or set into the adobe bricks used in various constructions across town. Classic Pukara pottery, however, tends to be recovered from deeper contexts exposed across the site and town; brightly colored sherds are identified in pits from clay mining or construction projects and are also visible eroding from ancient middens along the riverbank. Large stone blocks have been recycled in field walls and been used for house foundations, and they are visible in many areas of the colonial church and its surrounding courtyard. Half-collapsed colonial kilns dot the landscape, often on the edges of house compounds that have long been abandoned. Walking through town and across the site provides opportunities to identify "new" evidence of a long and diverse occupational history in this area.

During the Classic Pukara period (200 BC–AD 200), when the site was at its largest extent, it extended over 2 km^2 (Klarich and Román Bustinza 2012; see also Chávez 1992; Cohen 2010a; Erickson 1988b; Mujica 1991; Stanish 2003; Tantaleán 2010). This ancient center underlies the modern town, extending east to the banks of the Pucará River and to the north and south of Pucará. However, it remains unclear how continuous or intensive those occupations were due to later Colla (AD 1000–1470), Inca (AD 1470–1532), Spanish colonial (mid-1500s–1820s), and modern constructions across the area (table 1.1). While Pukara has a long and fascinating history, I focus *Enduring Monuments* on the end of the Middle (800–200 BC) through the Late Formative (200 BC–AD 500) periods, centuries during which Pukara became the largest and most influential locale in the northern Titicaca Basin.

For archaeologists of the Titicaca Basin, these periods are associated with Qaluyu and Pukara decorated pottery, monumental architecture, and ritual paraphernalia, which are frequently grouped together as elements of the Yaya-Mama Religious Tradition (Chávez 1992, 2004, 2012, 2018; Chávez and Chávez 1975; K.L.M. Chávez 1988). For those not familiar with the region, the Middle Formative is generally characterized as a period when populations grew, diversified their agropastoral strategies, and aggregated into larger villages with small platform mounds and ritual structures called sunken courts (or *plazas hundidas*) (see chapter 2). The Late (or Upper) Formative is marked by

Table 1.1. Lake Titicaca Basin regional chronologies

BC/AD	*Central Andes (Rowe 1962)*	*South Titicaca Basin (Janusek 2008)*	*North Titicaca Basin (Chávez Justo 2014)*	*North Basin/ Pukara (Mujica 1985, 1988)*
1600	Colonial		Early Colonial/ Inca III	
	Late Horizon	Inca Pacajes		Inca conquest
1500			Inca I–II	
1400	Late Intermediate period	Pacajes	Altiplano I–III Collao	Altiplano kingdoms
1300				
1200				?
1100				
		Tiwanaku 2		
1000				
	Middle Horizon			
900			Middle Horizon Tiwanaku II	
800			Middle Horizon Tiwanaku I/ Huaña II	
		Tiwanaku 1		
700			Transitional Huaña I/Pukara	
600				
	Early Intermediate period			
500				
		Late Formative 2		
400				
				Late Pukara
300				
		Late Formative 1		
200				

continued on next page

Table 1.1.—*continued*

BC/AD	*Central Andes (Rowe 1962)*	*South Titicaca Basin (Janusek 2008)*	*North Titicaca Basin (Chávez Justo 2014)*	*North Basin/ Pukara (Mujica 1985, 1988)*
100	Early Intermediate period (*continued*)	Late Formative 1 (*continued*)	Upper Formative Formative III Pukara	Middle Pukara
0				
100				
200				
	Early Horizon	Middle Formative	Transitional Formative II Qaluyu/Pukara	Initial Pukara
300				
400				
500				
	Initial period			Cusipata
600				
700				
800			Middle Formative Formative I Qaluyu	
		Early Formative		Qaluyu
900				
1000				
1100				
1200				
1300				
1400				
1500				

large-scale political, economic, and social transformations across the Titicaca Basin, which are evidenced by the development of new centers, expansion of trade networks, intensification of agricultural systems, and new forms of material culture. While regional scholars assumed for decades that populations primaily aggregated into the two largest centers—Tiwanaku in the southeast and Pukara in the northwest—settlement surveys beginning in the 1990s identified a number of smaller, independent centers scattered among these two major spheres of influence (e.g., Stanish 2003, 157–60, 164). Pukara was abandoned between AD 200 and 400, marking the end of the Late Formative in the north, while a few centuries later the Tiwanaku polity expanded its influence within and far beyond the Titicaca Basin during the Middle Horizon (AD 600 to 1100). There was not, however, a Tiwanaku presence at Pukara.

When PAP began investigations in the late 1990s, there was little evidence to counter the model in which these two regional centers, Pukara and Tiwanaku, developed around the same time and likely due to similar factors on opposite ends of the Titicaca Basin. Both sites were located near prime agricultural lands, along important rivers and not far from the lake's edge, and they had access to the eastern and western slopes of the Andes, which would have fostered exchange (Stanish 2003, 159). Why *not* move to either of these locations during the Formative period? However, the re-analysis of data from early investigations at Tiwanaku and Pukara, combined with a decade-plus of new field research, has resulted in distinct northern and southern basin trajectories during the Late Formative.

In the north, the date range of 200 BC to AD 200 for Classic Pukara was established in the 1950s (Ralph 1959) and remains consistent with recently dated contexts from Pukara and contemporaneous sites (e.g., Taraco; see Levine 2012). Also, while settlement surveys have identified new centers in neighboring valleys, none were of the scale or complexity of Pukara during this period. In contrast, a re-analysis of early dates from Tiwanaku has prompted the development of an updated (and slightly later) site chronology (Marsh 2012a, 2012b), while excavations at nearby sites provide new regional perspectives for this period, which has been designated as Late Formative 1 (following Janusek 2003b; see chapter 2). Tiwanaku was one of a number of interacting centers and, as noted by John Janusek (2008, 90), "no regional polity comparable to Pukara developed in the region until after AD 200, once Pukara itself began to wane in regional importance." In other words, both Pukara and Tiwanaku were influential Late Formative centers in their respective regions, but at different moments in time and operating within different interaction spheres. This book, therefore, relies primarily on comparative data from the

northern basin to contextualize the monumental built environment at Pukara during the Middle and Late Formative periods.

The civic-ceremonial core of Pukara is a striking example of Late Formative architecture at its largest and most elaborate. The focal point is the Qalasaya, which was excavated and partially restored during the 1970s and early 1980s by Peru's Plan COPESCO (see chapters 3 and 4). The Qalasaya comprises a series of expansive platforms and narrow terraces that were likely covered in brightly painted plaster and interconnected by at least two stairways. The uppermost platform is the location of three sunken courts, which I refer to as the "upper courts." As described in the opening narrative, each court complex features a centrally located, slightly sunken, roughly trapezoidal plaza accessed by a single staircase on the east. The plazas are surrounded on at least three sides by a small patio that is enclosed by interconnected room blocks. We assume that the room blocks were roofed and the courts were not, creating a variety of open and closed, light and dark, accessible and restricted spaces on the upper platform of the Qalasaya. While most investigations of Pukara ritual focus on these upper courts, this work also considers how the lower platforms and terraces could have served as additional gathering spaces for a diversity of audiences during the Late Formative.

Based on excavations over the last century, we know that the Qalasaya was not the only setting for ritual activities in Pukara's civic-ceremonial core. Most notably, the Central Pampa is an open space at the base of the Qalasaya, which is demarcated by terraced mounds and other semi-buried structures to the north and south. While today this area is relatively featureless aside from stone field boundaries, during the Formative it first functioned as a public space for periodic feasting events and later as a residential area with craft workshops and ritual spaces (see chapter 5). From this vista, the Qalasaya is particularly striking; it rises steeply to a height of approximately 30 m, appearing as a solid stone wall to those on the pampa below (figure 1.5).

As noted above, the upper courts on the Qalasaya have received significant attention from archaeologists over the decades. The courts have served as proxy for calculating labor investment, documenting the nature of ritual practice and early political maneuvering, and mapping out interaction networks during the Late Formative (chapter 2). Sunken courts, however, are not limited to Pukara or to a single time period. They are considered the "defining feature" (Cohen 2010a, 340) of the Yaya-Mama Religious Tradition (YMRT), which was first defined by Karen Mohr Chávez (1988) as a regional phenomenon that unified diverse populations in the Lake Titicaca Basin beginning around 800 BC.[4] In addition to the sunken courts, which were typically constructed on platform

Figure 1.5. *Qalasaya view from the Central Pampa (2006). Pukara Archaeological Project.*

mounds, the YMRT is characterized by the presence of elaborately carved stone sculpture[5] and ritual paraphernalia featuring natural and supernatural images. YMRT centers served as loci for ceremonies and facilitated long-distance exchange of obsidian (Burger et al. 2000, 311), basalt hoes, and coca (Chávez 2012, 447). According to Sergio Chávez (2004, 93), beginning around 200 BC, Pukara "constituted a continuation of the Yaya-Mama tradition on a larger scale . . . [as] a major religious, political and craft production center." In this framework, the social, economic, and political relationships fostered by participation in the YMRT at Middle Formative villages remained salient centuries later at Late Formative population centers, like Pukara, and even extended into the Middle Horizon at Tiwanaku (Chávez 2018).

In contrast to the "strong overall cultural continuities that characterize the Yaya-Mama Religious Tradition through time and space" (Chávez 2018, 21), I propose an alternative approach that recognizes the coexistence and interplay of both continuity and change in the ancient Titicaca Basin. Instead of framing a "tradition" as relatively static—a "learned way of doing or making things" (Pauketat 2001, 1)—a study of "tradition making" conceptualizes the past as "a multi-level, syncretizing, and hybridizing process shot through

with contestation, defiance, and contrary practices" (13). If we begin with the assumption that traditions are dynamic phenomena that are made and remade, invented and re-invented over time (Pauketat and Alt 2003, 161), we then can consider the interplay of continuities and discontinuities or long-term stability and short-term ruptures in our interpretations of the past.

In the Formative period Titicaca Basin, a study of tradition making requires a critical "unbundling" of YMRT material culture and practices across time and space. For example, did sunken courts vary by region, time period, or site type? What is the contextual information available for stone sculptures? Where, when, and in what context do we find ceremonial vessels at these sites? This process of unbundling, which has been initiated by colleagues working across the basin (Cohen 2008, 2010a; Hastorf 2003; Janusek 2006, 2008; Roddick 2002, 2009; Roddick and Hastorf 2010), is fundamental to our ongoing research agenda at Pukara and neighboring sites.

At Pukara, the evidence has come together gradually, as each year of fieldwork has produced unanticipated finds through the slow, deliberate processes of excavation and surface mapping in the site core and on the periphery. Investigations of platform mounds, plaza spaces, terraces, and midden deposits provide evidence of single events, long-term accumulative processes, and labor-intensive projects left unfinished. It was through the documentation, analysis, and interpretation of these diverse (and often perplexing) archaeological contexts that I found that the most compelling insights are often revealed in the small-scale processes, the fine-grained, and even the mundane. I then revisited the archival materials from earlier Qalasaya excavations with a new perspective, approaching the monumental constructions not as a conglomeration of courts and platforms with specific functions but as dynamic places created and continually transformed through the agency of people and buildings (Fisher and Creekmore 2014, 5). The Classic Pukara Qalasaya was unprecedented in terms of overall size, the diversity of architectural elements present, and the complexity of navigating access to the upper courts and platforms. I argue that these sunken courts, characterized as integrative spaces within the YMRT (e.g., Cohen 2010a; Juengst 2017; see also Roddick 2009, 31–32), became relatively inaccessible, esoteric spaces during the Late Formative at Pukara.

It is through assembling evidence from the construction of the earliest platform mound, a major remodeling episode, and subsequent attempts at expansion that we can begin to develop a "building biography" for the Qalasaya. This approach to architecture, which builds from the biographical study of artifacts within anthropology and related fields, traces "sequences of human activities and decisions that went into creating a building, using a building, abandoning

a building, part of a building, or a group of buildings" (Rogasch 2014, 1030–33; see Chesson et al. 2019). There are many benefits to a biographical approach: It is comprehensive because it includes all phases from construction through abandonment; it is high resolution, emphasizing the small scale and highlighting variability within the architectural units that make up a building; it treats buildings as dynamic settings, often with unplanned or unforeseen uses; and it is "workable" because it can be applied at various scales of analysis, including in situations where the remains are fragmentary (Rogasch 2014). At Pukara, it may be impossible to determine precisely how courts, platforms, and terraces were used, but well-documented architectural sequences provide clear evidence of changes in scale, layout, and access during the Middle and Late Formative periods. It is these physical transformations that provide insights into broader social, economic, and political transformations taking place at Pukara and in neighboring communities during this time.

Monumentality: Good to Think

Monuments are places to experience awe and to remember. They are also places with unique histories of construction, use, reuse, remodeling, abandonment, or destruction. While geographically and temporally quite distant from Pukara, the Washington Monument is a telling reminder to archaeologists of how the smallest details often provide powerful insights into these unique histories. From written records and archival photographs, we learn that the obelisk's construction began in 1848 and ultimately spanned two generations. This was due to a number of factors, including a loss of funding for the project due to political controversy and a continued hiatus in the early 1860s as a result of the Civil War. The lowest section of the obelisk, measuring over 150 feet in height, stood incomplete for two decades, "doing more to embarrass the nation than to honor its most important Founding Father."[6] Construction resumed in 1876, a decade after the end of the Civil War: "Only as the nation was rebuilding did attention once again turn toward honoring the man who had once united the states in common purpose" (see note 6). When it was finally completed in 1884, not only had the original design significantly changed, but so had the social, economic, and political context of the nation.

Today, as the Washington Monument stands among numerous other monuments and parks on the National Mall in Washington, DC, it is hard to imagine that it remained incomplete for decades. Fortunately for archaeologists, the construction hiatus is visible approximately a third of the way up the monument's facade. According to the National Park Service, when

construction resumed, the builders had to find a new source of marble because the original quarry in Baltimore was no longer available. A second source from Massachusetts was a terrible match, but this was not discovered until a few courses had been set. A third, lighter stone was located in Baltimore and then used to complete the project above the level of the dark "belt" of New England marble. An archaeologist—relying exclusively on the physical characteristics of the obelisk—would document the variations in the marble, locate the distant quarries used in the construction phases, and then seek to explain those patterns with additional contextual information. It is this minor detail on the monument's facade—one rarely noticed by visitors—that provides insights into the deep social and political divisions that dominated the second half of the nineteenth century in the United States. This is just one such insight to be gained from focusing on the small scale within the monumental.

This project is not primarily concerned with whether the Qalasaya served as a monument in a commemorative sense, like the obelisk built in George Washington's honor. We will never know if the individuals buried in the niches of the sunken court were esteemed leaders, revered ancestors (as might be expected based on analogous Inca practices), or a form of offering (Beck 2004a; Hastorf 2003). Likewise, we will never determine if the "Feline Man" or "Woman with Alpaca"—two iconographic themes identified on Classic Pukara pottery (Chávez 1992, 2002, 2004, 2018)—represent historical figures or mythical individuals memorialized during the Late Formative. We can, however, seek to understand the meaning or significance of the Qalasaya and its constitutive architectural elements during the Middle and Late Formative periods.

There are numerous ways to define or categorize large-scale constructions like the Qalasaya in the archaeological literature.[7] For example, if one is interested in *who* constructed a building, then the term *corporate* architecture emphasizes that a collective larger than a household worked together, through cooperation or coercion, to complete the project. If one is interested in *for whom* the building was constructed, it would be characterized as "public" architecture. The intended audience is central to this definition and includes individuals beyond the household or from diverse social groups. If one is focusing on *how* a building was used, it may be categorized as a "ritual" or "administrative" structure. This typically defines it in opposition to "domestic" architecture, but palaces and other elite residences often blur the lines among household activities, ritual spaces, and administrative functions. Lastly, measuring *how much* energy was expended became a defining feature of "monumental" architecture; the presence of any type of structure built with an excess of "scale" or "elaboration" serves as a reflection of political power in this framework (Trigger

1990, 119, 128). The publication of Bruce Trigger's "Monumental Architecture: A Thermodynamic Explanation of Symbolic Behaviour" (1990) inspired a lively exchange among scholars who focused on energetics and conspicuous consumption (e.g., Abrams 1989) and those who employed phenomenological approaches reflecting the post-processual critique of the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Thomas 2001). Archaeologists continue to expand on these categories and frameworks, developing innovative approaches to the study of the built environment that facilitate comparative work across temporal and geographical contexts (e.g., Burger and Rosenswig 2012; Furholt and Müller 2011; Hildebrand 2013; Jennings and Swenson 2018; Kassabaum 2019; Moore 1996a, 1996b, 2005; Osborne 2014; Thomas and Meyers 2013).

The framing for this study at Pukara builds on Jerry Moore's *Architecture and Power in the Ancient Andes*, an anthropological analysis of "how human societies create, conceptualize, and are influenced by cultural modifications—physical and symbolic—of the environment" (1996b, 10). *Architecture and Power* centers the analysis of public buildings, ranging from temporary ritual structures to palace complexes, and explores how such spaces actively shaped or influenced human interaction. Architecture is not viewed as a passive reflection of social complexity or primarily as a chronological or typological marker: "I am interested in how architecture reflects the development of different social forms in Andean prehistory, and I am also concerned with the ways in which Andean architecture may have communicated those social forms to members of prehispanic societies. For that reason, the study only considers *public* architecture. As a product of social effort, patterns of public architecture may communicate the nature and scale of social order. And thus my goal is to understand the changing nature of Andean social complexity" (15, original emphasis). Using the variables of permanence, scale, centrality, uniqueness, and visibility, Moore systematically documents public spaces at twenty-two sites across the Central Andes and the transformations of these spaces over nearly 8,000 years (19, 139; see also Moore 1996a). At Pukara, I utilize these same variables to analyze the diverse architectural elements in and surrounding the Qalasaya; the patios, plazas, terraces, and platforms all served as dynamic loci of social interaction and communication throughout the Formative period.

The present work also recognizes the important distinctions between monuments and monumentality, which are "closely related, but nevertheless distinct, phenomena" (Osborne 2014, 3). James Osborne emphasizes that studying the built environment requires both the development of tools for formal analysis (e.g., Moore's variables) and the consideration of the active (and ever-changing) meaning of that environment. He advocates a relational

approach that defines monumentality as "an ongoing, constantly renegotiated *relationship* between the thing and person, between the monument(s) and the person(s) experiencing the monument" (3, original emphasis). This reflects the broader spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences, which recognizes that elements of the built environment are active places of social production and reproduction (Fisher and Creekmore 2014, 4, citing de Certeau et al. 1988, 98–99, 142; Low 2000; Soja 1989, 14, 2000, 11). At Pukara, this two-step approach begins with the development of a detailed construction history of the Qalasaya, which is followed by discussions of how its transformations during the Middle and Late Formative may have been experienced by visitors to and residents of Pukara (chapter 6).

It is a perennial challenge for archaeologists to shift from description to interpretation, and this is particularly salient in studies of monumental architecture due to the incomplete nature of the data sets. First, we are often limited to evidence of the final use of a building, and, depending on when it was excavated, the data resolution may be fairly coarse. Second, based on long-held assumptions about the static nature of big buildings and early conventions of archaeological map making, monumental architecture often appears "flattened in time." At Pukara, for example, the most popularly reproduced map features the Classic Pukara sunken court complex that was excavated on the upper platform by Alfred Kidder II in 1939 (K.L.M. Chávez 1988). Subsequent excavations by Plan COPESCO identified cultural materials underlying this sunken court and in deep deposits on the terraces that were investigated in the 1970s (Wheeler and Mujica 1981). While Plan COPESCO highlights the locations of these earlier deposits on its maps and provides architectural cross-sections in its publications, these fragments are very difficult to link together into a cohesive picture of what pre-dated the partially restored Classic Pukara Qalasaya that is visible today.

However, these challenges are not insurmountable if one is willing to "excavate the excavations" from early projects, as illustrated by Susan Gillespie's work at the Olmec center of La Venta in Mexico. Gillespie (2008, figure 6.1) meticulously "disassembled" the architectural plans and artifact inventories recovered from Complex A during fieldwork in the 1950s. The goal was to reassemble the depositional processes into a building biography, one that could provide a diachronic perspective on a dynamic landscape that was built and rebuilt over time. Gillespie notes that archaeologists have long recognized the *evidence* of change at Complex A but not the interpretive potential of "generations of depositional practices" for our "understanding [of] the development of social differentiation and political hierarchy, entwined with the rise of new

categories of social persons in a value-laden landscape" (135). Ascribing an agentive role to the Complex A landscape, which recognizes that architecture both facilitates and constrains human actions, she concludes that "sociopolitical organization may have changed in concert with, and as a consequence of, the processes of building this ceremonial precinct" (116). Gillespie's re-analysis of archival materials clearly demonstrates how new methods of analysis, presentations of spatial data, and theoretical framing can be used to identify the accumulated actions that created and transformed La Venta's Complex A over the centuries.

Pukara is an ideal setting for a similar undertaking. For instance, the Qalasaya has a long and dynamic history that has been documented through excavations over the last century (chapters 4 and 6). While this data set has some limitations—for example, a lack of radiocarbon dates from non-fill contexts—it is possible to formulate a broadly diachronic perspective on the production of Pukara's monumental built environment from these earlier projects. The architectural data can also be contextualized alongside more recently collected excavation data from the Northern Platform of the Qalasaya (chapter 4), the Central Pampa (chapter 5), and areas of the site periphery (chapter 5). These other areas provide additional information on monumental constructions pre-dating the Classic period and insights into daily life from various areas of the site. This cross-contextual analysis seeks to frame the construction, remodeling, and use of the ritual facilities of the Qalasaya within a broader, site-level perspective using evidence of quotidian practices. As noted by Edward Swenson (2015, 340), "Determining how transformations in one domain related to either stability or change in the other should improve our interpretations of historical process in past societies." We are fortunate that investigations since the late 1930s have recognized the importance of gathering data beyond the impressive constructions of Pukara's civic-ceremonial core (see chapter 3), an approach we have continued since 2000.

In addition, our analyses at Pukara contribute to a reassessment of the Late Formative regional picture, which has relied primarily on large-scale settlement data to trace the development of a regional political economy during this period (Bandy 2001; Stanish 2003). We can, instead, develop models for political centralization that utilize fine-grained, site-level data to "explor[e] how small, place-based politicized acts can generate larger sociopolitical changes (Mills and Walker 2008; Pollard 2001; Walker and Lucero 2000)" (Roddick et al. 2014, 140). Colleagues working at the site of Kala Uyuni in the southern Titicaca Basin have done just that, relying on localized events to create a site biography that traces the internal development of the site from a

Middle Formative village (800–200 BC) to a Late Formative (200 BC–AD 475) political center (Roddick et al. 2014). Fortunately, numerous survey and excavation projects have been conducted in the northern basin over the last two decades (chapter 3), providing site-level, local, and regional data sets for contextualizing Middle and Late Formative Pukara.

Lastly, we can compare the transformative practices documented at Pukara with those of other major centers beyond the Andes, such as La Venta, mentioned above, or Cahokia, a Mississippian center in the American Bottom. While comparisons with Gillespie's work at La Venta are primarily methodological, the parallels between Pukara and Cahokia are primarily historical. At Cahokia, archaeologists have documented rapid population resettlement, new monumental constructions, and changes in material culture dated to the Lohmann phase (AD 1050–1100) (Alt 2001, 141). In fact, the founding of Cahokia happened so rapidly that it has been characterized as a "Big Bang" of political consolidation in the region (Pauketat 1994, 1997; Pauketat and Alt 2003) and described as reflecting a "major cultural disjuncture" (Pauketat and Alt 2003, 168; see also Meskell 2008, 241). However, years of meticulous excavations of Cahokia's massive earthen constructions have provided evidence that they were created gradually, the result of many building episodes, perhaps on an annual basis (Pauketat and Alt 2003). The building cycles at Cahokia, which culminated in Monk's Mound reaching 30 m in height, had parallels at outlying sites where pyramids were also under construction. Timothy Pauketat and Susan Alt concluded that across the region, people were "actively involved in the continuous and symbolically charged rhythms of this new living landscape" (166).

Unlike the village-level projects, the mounds at Cahokia were constructed through the efforts of heterogeneous populations coming together at this new center. These building projects would have been contexts for intense social negotiations, as the diverse villages formed a new type of collectivity that created a uniquely "Cahokian variant of the platform mound" (Pauketat and Alt 2003, 169). This was also the case at Pukara, where Late Formative populations constructed the Qalasaya as a similarly "local" variant of the familiar platform mound and sunken court complex but one of unprecedented scale and complexity. In stark contrast to the accumulative practices of Cahokia, however, the available architectural evidence indicates that the Classic Pukara Qalasaya was built in a single, coordinated episode that completely encased or "entombed" the pre-Classic constructions (Mujica 1996; see chapters 4 and 6).

While the parallels between Monk's Mound and the Qalasaya are intriguing on many levels, it is their differences—the obscured details of their

building and rebuilding over time—that provide valuable insights into what these monumental constructions may have signified to the diverse populations responsible for their creation and maintenance. Pukara leaders continued to construct and utilize sunken courts, an architectural form with a long history in the region, but they did so in novel ways. Instead of functioning as community-level, integrative spaces, as in Middle Formative villages (Juengst 2017), the upper courts at Pukara were transformed into relatively inaccessible, esoteric spaces during the Late Formative (Klarich 2005a). Sunken courts were not the only forms of public space on the Qalasaya, however; numerous platforms and terraces served as gathering and circulation spaces for larger groups of visitors and residents. In short, the Classic period renovation of the Qalasaya created a nested hierarchy of ritual spaces (Van Dyke 2013, 201) through the differential scale, centrality, and accessibility of the sunken courts, platforms, terraces, and plazas during that period (chapter 6). There were no architectural antecedents to the Qalasaya or any contemporaneous constructions of its scale in the northern basin.

The Qalasaya's building biography is long and complex, including founding events, large-scale renovations, and termination events (Gamboa Velásquez 2015) that provide insights into the shifting relationships between the inhabitants of Pukara and the monumental built environment they constructed, maintained, and visited. Based on excavation data from the Qalasaya and surrounding areas, I argue that the creation of nested ritual spaces and spatially segregated ritual activities reflected increasing social differentiation during the Classic Pukara period. These divisions had unintended consequences for Pukara leaders, as localized discontent led to a major termination event in the central sunken court and abandonment of construction projects on the Qalasaya. I interpret a deposit of battered and decapitated monoliths in the central sunken court, as documented by the Kidder excavations in 1939 (Chávez 1992, 83; K.L.M. Chávez 1988, 23), as indicators of a violent closure of this prominent Classic Pukara structure. Ultimately, the architectural experiment of the Qalasaya—likely in combination with other external factors—triggered a series of internal responses that led to the dissolution of Pukara as a regional population center in the early centuries of the first millennium AD.

WHAT FOLLOWS

As Charles Stanish (2003, 142) noted two decades ago, "Pucara remains one of the most important and least published major sites in the Titicaca Basin."

In an effort to address the lacuna, this book has two intersecting goals. The first is to provide a summary and evaluation of unpublished or difficult to access resources about the Formative period occupation of Pukara, which are the products of investigations over the last century. This process of "excavating the excavations" has involved visiting archives and museum collections in the United States and Peru, seeking out technical reports and site plans from various sources, reading travel journals, and informally interviewing many generous archaeologists and community members who know the site and its research history thoroughly.[8] I could not fit everything from these sources into this work—particularly those relating to the post-Pukara occupations of the site—and much remains to be explored and further disseminated by interested scholars.

The second goal of *Enduring Monuments* is to share the results of more than a decade of fieldwork and artifact analysis by the Pukara Archaeological Project, which has primarily investigated the Middle and Late Formative period occupations. I have had the pleasure of co-directing this project with a number of colleagues since 2000; their insights and contributions have informed every stage of research and are present throughout this work (Carbajal Salazar 2010; Flores Blanco 2009; Klarich and Craig 2001; Klarich and Román Bustinza 2012; Oshige Adams 2010, 2012). Beyond the site level, this project contributes to a regional conversation about Late Formative period centers across the Lake Titicaca Basin, a topic that has gained quite a bit of momentum over the last decades (figure 1.6). This is also the first comprehensive work about Pukara available to archaeologists who research contemporaneous cultures in other areas of the Andes or who focus on early centers, monumental architecture, and ritual practice. Lastly, Pukara as a case study contributes to broader discussions within anthropological archaeology about how monumental architecture can serve as a lens to explore social, political, and economic relationships in centers across the globe.

Enduring Monuments begins with a geographical and cultural overview of the northern Lake Titicaca Basin before shifting to the archaeological data from Pukara and contemporaneous sites in the region. Chapter 2 describes the diverse natural resources available in the region and local subsistence strategies, many of which can be traced to Formative period innovations (figure 1.7). Pukara is also contextualized in various regional chronologies and explanatory frameworks, which are briefly evaluated based on data from recent investigations. Chapter 3 provides a history of research at Pukara, beginning with early visits by Spanish chroniclers in the sixteenth century and by prominent Peruvian archaeologists during the early twentieth century. Excavations by

Figure 1.6. *Formative sites in the Lake Titicaca Basin. Map by Rachel Moskowitz, Pukara Archaeological Project.*

Alfred Kidder II in 1939 and by Plan COPESCO in the 1970s provide a rich data set for framing more recent research at Pukara and across the northern Titicaca Basin. Lastly, the distribution of Pukara-related sites and objects is summarized, providing a broader regional context for our understanding of Late Formative period interaction spheres in the south-central Andes.

These early chapters set the stage for a synthesis of Pukara excavation and mapping data, which have been recovered during numerous field projects that span nearly nine decades. First, the monumental constructions of the Qalasaya, Northern Platform, and neighboring platform mounds are described and illustrated in chapter 4. I compiled, reviewed, and evaluated available field notes, photos, drawings, site maps, and technical reports to present a detailed history of these diverse constructions and the evidence of

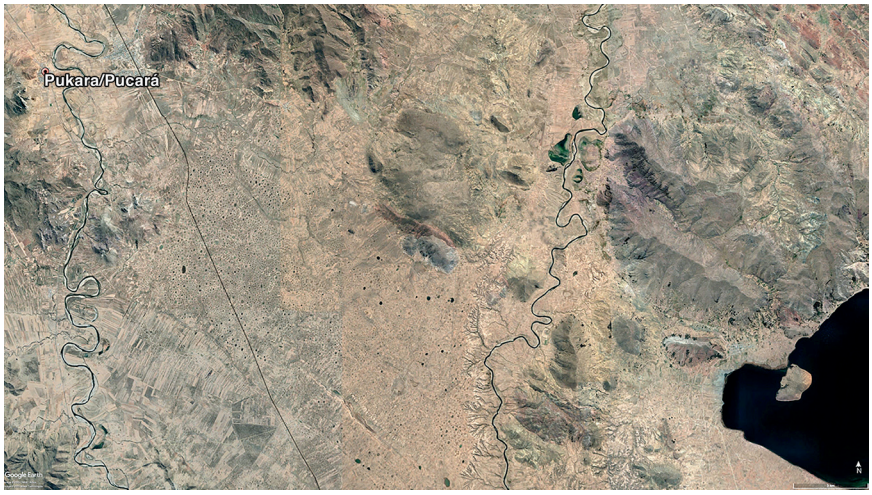

Figure 1.7. *Satellite image of Pukara/Pucará, sunken gardens (*qocha*), and Lake Arapa. Google Earth, 2023.*

their use during the Middle and Late Formative periods. Chapter 5 presents excavation data from both the civic-ceremonial core and the periphery of the site, which provide the site-level information needed to contextualize Pukara's monumental constructions. These areas provide important insights into the earliest uses of public space and the evidence of daily life beyond the monumental constructions during the Classic period. In chapter 6, I return to the central questions of the book, providing a formal analysis of the monumental constructions at Pukara and contextualizing their transformation within the site and the region more broadly.

In conclusion, chapter 7 outlines how various populations—the Colla, Inca, Spanish, contemporary residents of Pucará, archaeologists, and tourists—have altered the forms and meanings of the Qalasaya in the millennia following its Formative period abandonment. Its biography continues to unfold, as the restored sunken courts and platforms serve as settings for community festivals, educational programs for local students, economic opportunities through tourism, and sites of contestation over land use and ownership. It is clear that monumental constructions are enduring, highly charged places on the cultural landscape that "shape people as much as they are shaped by people" (Chesson et al. 2019, 496). The meanings of the Qalasaya today are as diverse and mutable as they were for visitors and residents during the Middle and Late Formative periods, to which we return in the following chapters.