

## Vernacular versus state housing in the Wari Empire: Cosmological clashes and compromises

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### **Abstract:**

The Andean Wari state expanded in the early 7th century CE. Wari built imperial style complexes in several provincial areas to house state representatives, but many members of subject groups also would have experienced these buildings as occupants or visitors. This type of experience may have been a powerful catalyst for change in some regions. In the Wari province of Moquegua local leaders appear to have adopted features of Wari style houses; however, most houses were vernacular structures. Differences in the design of Wari and vernacular housing suggest that some features of Wari residential design and use may have clashed with cosmological principles evinced by the dwellings of subject groups. In this chapter I emphasize the importance of residential architecture as a ‘structuring structure,’ describe the significant differences between Wari and vernacular styles, and consider cosmological clashes and compromises as a common attribute of imperial society.

**Keywords:** Wari Empire | architecture | Moquegua Valley | Cerro Mejia | cosmology

### **Article:**

The Andean Wari state expanded in the early 7th century CE. Wari built imperial style complexes in several provincial areas to house state representatives, but many members of subject groups also would have experienced these buildings as occupants or visitors. This type of experience may have been a powerful catalyst for change in some regions. In the Wari province of Moquegua local leaders appear to have adopted features of Wari style houses; however, most houses were vernacular structures. Differences in the design of Wari and vernacular housing suggest that some features of Wari residential design and use may have clashed with cosmological principles evinced by the dwellings of subject groups. In this chapter I emphasize the importance of residential architecture as a ‘structuring structure,’ describe the significant differences between Wari and vernacular styles, and consider cosmological clashes and compromises as a common attribute of imperial society.

Connections between the vast urban Wari capital in Ayacucho (Huari) and large, stone-walled complexes in Cusco (Pikillaqta) and Huamachuco (Viracocha Pampa) were first made based on similarities of architectural features despite the distances between these sites (Rowe et al. 1950). Perhaps because architecture played a crucial role in identifying the existence of a pre-Inca empire, architecture has continued to be a significant theme of study for archaeological investigations of the Wari polity (e.g. Isbell and McEwan 1991). Following this tradition I explore the significant features of vernacular architecture in the Moquegua Valley of Peru at the Wari-affiliated site of Cerro Mejia, where people chose to build their houses in different styles, maintaining important elements of their cosmology. This appears to contrast with the choices of local leaders who adopted features of canonical Wari style houses, examples of which were built at the nearby provincial center of Cerro Baul. I suggest that the form of this typical Wari building may have been repeated across the imperial landscape because its design was integral to performances of ritual practices and political-religious activities linked to state ideologies during socio-political gatherings. This does not mean that there was not space for variation. Differences between the houses of provincial governors and local leaders may indicate the maintenance of salient features linked to local cosmologies and principles inherent to local power and leadership. Despite the adoption or imposition of state style, architecture similarities between vernacular styles and the houses of local leaders may represent aspects of local cosmology that continued to be expressed in this polyethnic imperial community.

Architecture modifies or creates an environment. It sets the scene for many types of activities and interactions. People design these spaces, however the spaces impact people (Geertz 1973; Lawrence and Low 1990; Moore 1996). This is a dialectical process (Bachelard 1964; Douglas 1973; Kent 1990). Buildings, in many cases, take on symbolic content and may come to represent cosmological ideals (Rapoport 1969) and communicate in several ways (Blanton 1994). Thus the architectural plans we study may have been designed with two goals in mind: accommodating specific activities and providing a *meaning-full* setting for people's lives. When possible we must also consider how the other attributes of houses may have represented ideas or communicated messages. These features make buildings similar to all other types of artifacts, in that they are created with both functional and stylistic attributes (Sackett 1982), but also act as social agents in that they cue particular types of acts, feelings, and interactions (*sensu* Gell 1998).

Bourdieu (1977, 1979) refers to houses as structuring structures (see also Donley-Reid 1990; Giddens 1979) describing what Rapoport (1990) later called "systems of activities and systems of settings," where houses and other spaces are part of the generative schemes that direct human behavior. In a sense the design of the house materializes mental categories that divide and group people and activities. The spaces are part of the learning process and socialization (Bourdieu 1977:90), and movement from one space to another may modify one's actions. A familiar example of this phenomenon may be the threshold of a university library; most students recognize the interior of the library as a quiet study area (Donley-Reid 1990:116). Spaces of different kinds are associated with prior experience and practice. These associations may also be situational or have temporal difference, particularly if a space has multiple uses. As is the case with the elite residences discussed in this chapter, houses are used for daily domestic tasks; however, they may become salient arenas for political interaction and ritual on certain occasions (for a modern example from the Andes see Allen 2002; Bolin 1998).

Going back to Bachelard (1964), researchers have acknowledged that people attach meanings to spaces. Rapoport (1969:2) described the house as the “worldview writ small.” Features of dwellings can also be used as metaphors, be associated with ideals (e.g. Bourdieu 1979; Cunningham 1973), or elaborated to communicate differences and affiliations (Blanton 1994; Clark 2001). Major modifications in the form of domestic spaces may represent changes in domestic activities, shifts in cosmology, or alterations in expressions of identity.

Controlling the design of spaces or the settings in which people interact is an important source of power. Wolf (2001:384) calls this tactical or organizational power. Thus, a house has power in one sense because as a setting it impacts the practices of people. People can harness this type of tactical power if they host gatherings in their houses. Maintaining control over the design of the family home is to shape the family’s daily activities. Imposing the design of a dwelling is also to impose or shape domestic activity. A familiar example may be college dormitories because they lack privacy and almost force engagement with others through shared daily experiences. The power to design a community, the spaces of public engagement, or the dwellings of others is the power to shape socio-political relations, activities, and eventually meanings. In a state-level society architecture could be a salient way to literally build power. As the Wari Empire expanded, it may have used architectural design as a power-building strategy in some regions.

### **Architecture in the Wari Empire**

The Wari Empire had a profound impact on the central Andes from roughly 600–1000 CE. Wari-affiliated materials and sites have been identified as far north as Cajamarca and as far south as Moquegua. Researchers have noted different types of changes from region to region. In some areas the Wari polity made large investments by expending labor to modify local landscapes or construct monumental complexes (e.g. Glowacki 2002; McEwan 2005; Nash and Williams 2009; Schreiber 1992). In the areas outside the Wari heartland of Ayacucho Wari affiliated sites are typically identified using architectural attributes such as construction technology and the design of space within buildings (Isbell 1989). Some archaeologists only accept areas with obvious Wari style architecture as being part of the polity; Wari control of other regions is widely contested (e.g. Jennings 2006). For this reason, data about the Wari Empire is biased and primarily drawn from regions with monumental imperial architecture (for a significant exception see Owen 2007; Tung 2007). In this chapter I consider Wari style architecture to have been the products of specialists or architects that designed monumental complexes at the Wari capital and provincial centers. These types of constructions will be compared with local styles, which I will consider ‘vernacular,’ not because the regions the Wari conquered lacked architectural specialists, but because I am comparing imperial forms to non-Wari forms, which are presumably derived from the vernacular, local styles of subject populations.

Monumental architecture attributed to the Wari Empire consists of agglutinated complexes with high walls; some sites clearly had multi-storied structures. Walls were of double-faced stone masonry with interior rubble fills (Benavides 1991). Excavators have commented that movement through these compounds would have been difficult and may have been restricted to an exclusive group (McEwan 1991). Constituent rooms are usually rectilinear or trapezoidal, although temples may be round or D-shaped. Niched halls, which have also been linked to ritual activity,

were rectilinear with rounded interior corners (McEwan 1998). It is important to note that no two Wari provincial centers are alike. The variation in design between regions may reflect different time periods; however, it is also possible that the configurations of these centers resulted to some degree from the input of local leaders. Nevertheless, the similarities between Wari provincial complexes override their differences.

Within monumental provincial complexes, subunits often combine roofed spaces with larger areas open to the sky (e.g. patios that are surrounded on one or more sides by roofed rooms, or plazas that are associated with platforms or lie adjacent to patio units). These features were common to several Andean societies; however, Wari sites exhibit a particular configuration, which is referred to as a Wari patio group (Nash 2010, 2011; or formal patio group Nash 2002; Isbell's [1991] definition for orthogonal cellular architecture is broader and does not coincide with the narrower category of buildings discussed in this chapter).

Wari patio groups consist of a nearly square or trapezoidal building with a central patio of the same shape and rooms along all four sides. Entrance to the patio is typically via one of the surrounding rooms. These units may stand alone (e.g. Honco Pampa; Pataraya) or be components of larger buildings (e.g. Moraduchayoq Sector, Huari, or Cerro Baul). Structures of this type may be used for elite residences (e.g. Brewster-Wray 1989; Isbell 1989; Isbell et al. 1991; Nash 2002, 2010, 2012b), but they may also be used for productive tasks (Moseley et al. 2005) or be found relatively empty with little evidence of use (e.g. Anders 1986, 1991), which suggests they may have been the location of occasional and perhaps restricted ritual events. The use of a single prescribed form for several different functions was also common among Inca state architecture (Gasparini and Margolies 1980).

All Wari compounds were circumscribed by high walls. Access to these complexes appears to have been tightly controlled. Unlike the emulation of a motif on a ceramic vessel or personal clothing, architectural configurations would have been difficult to copy unless a person participated in the construction or spent considerable time as a guest in one such structure. Thus, knowledgeable imitations of such architectural configurations had to have been executed by individuals with close ties with Wari state personnel, or have resulted from copies made by workers involved with constructing state buildings (or labored to build for a knowledgeable imitator).

Each of these possibilities can be considered if we examine the use of the space along with the form of the building. Since these buildings were Wari 'structuring structures,' we would expect them to be designed to accommodate Wari activities, be vehicles for Wari metaphors, and communicate Wari ideology. Knowledgeable imitators who had spent considerable time in this type of building with Wari personnel would be the most likely to use the structure in a similar fashion, because they would have experience with its different spaces and features. Individuals who merely participated in the construction, but did not have experiences in such a building during its use, would likely use the spaces in different ways and be unaware of the associated practices and meanings.

These differences in construction techniques and practices within such buildings can be used to distinguish between people who had extensive interactions with state personnel versus those with

a more tangential relationship. Thinking from a different angle we must also consider that the subjects who lived in Wari style patio groups were being structured by these structures. Their daily activities and the practice of domestic rituals would have been constrained and modified by the state's design. This does not mean that all traces of their indigenous practices or vernacular domestic features would disappear, but it is possible that ritual performances and daily tasks may have been modified to fit within these new settings. Likewise, new practices and meanings may emerge out of the blending of local and imperial practices and ideas. In contrast, Wari subjects who continued to build houses in their vernacular styles were less subject to such imperial structuration, at least in their domestic settings. The Wari Empire still may have had a great impact on the domestic economy through resource and/or labor extraction, however tactical power was not extended into people's homes. Those who occupied and built other styles of houses could potentially choose their form and direct any affiliated meanings.

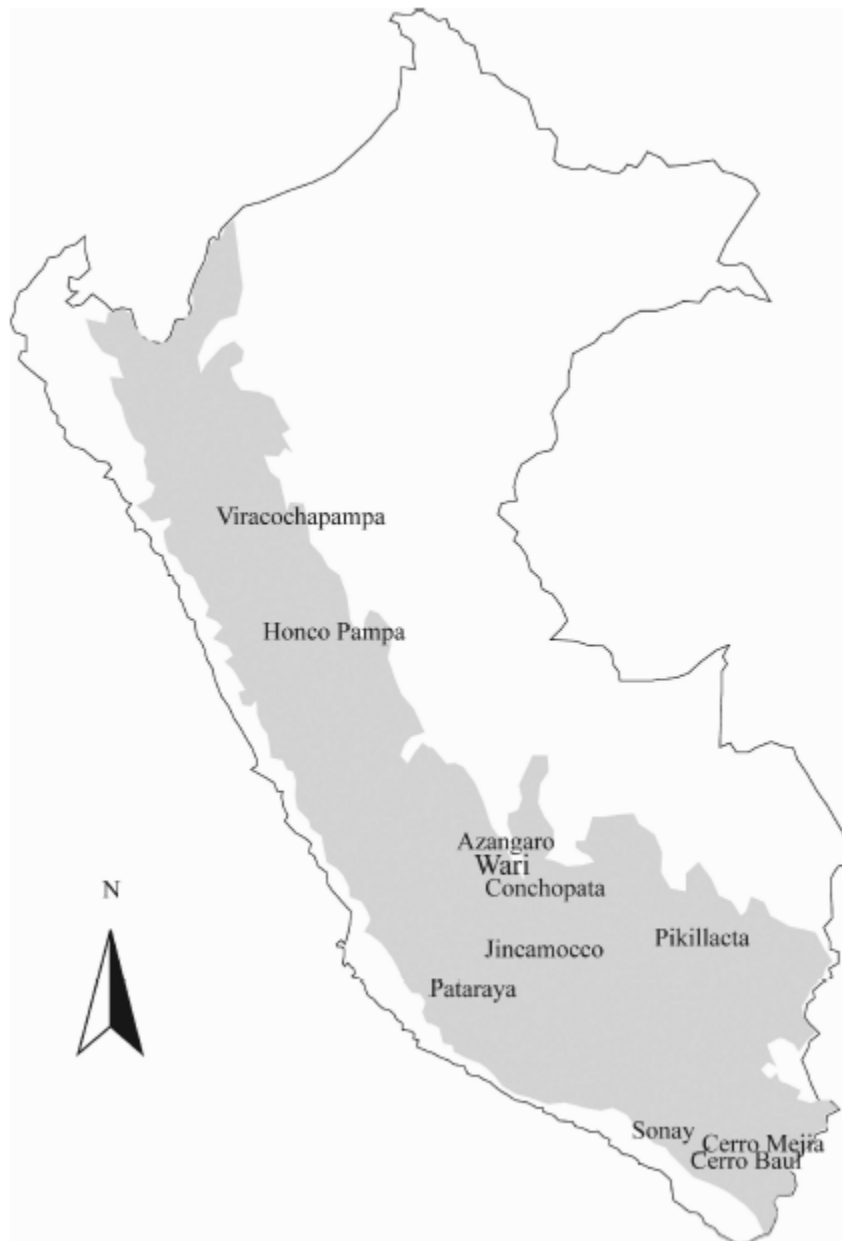
### **Wari-affiliated dwellings in Moquegua**

Wari-affiliated settlements were established in the Moquegua Valley early in the 7th century (Moseley et al. 2005) (Figure 5.1). At this time there were several local groups occupying different ecological zones of the drainage. There were as many as four groups occupying the coastal valleys and spring oases to the north of the Osmore River (Owen 1993) (Figure 5.2). In the middle valley (1000–2000 masl) numerous Huaracane communities were located on river terraces near cultivated areas of the river's wide flood plain (Goldstein 2005). In contrast, the steep and rugged upper drainage (2000–3200 masl) with little cultivable land along the river and sierra grassland were sparsely inhabited by small groups of flood plain agriculturalists, rainfall agriculturalists, and herders (these last three groups may have composed a single pattern of transhumance, but more work is needed). Tiwanaku colonists also settled the middle valley sometime during the Middle Horizon, but it is currently a matter of debate as to whether Tiwanaku communities arrived before Wari affiliated colonists.

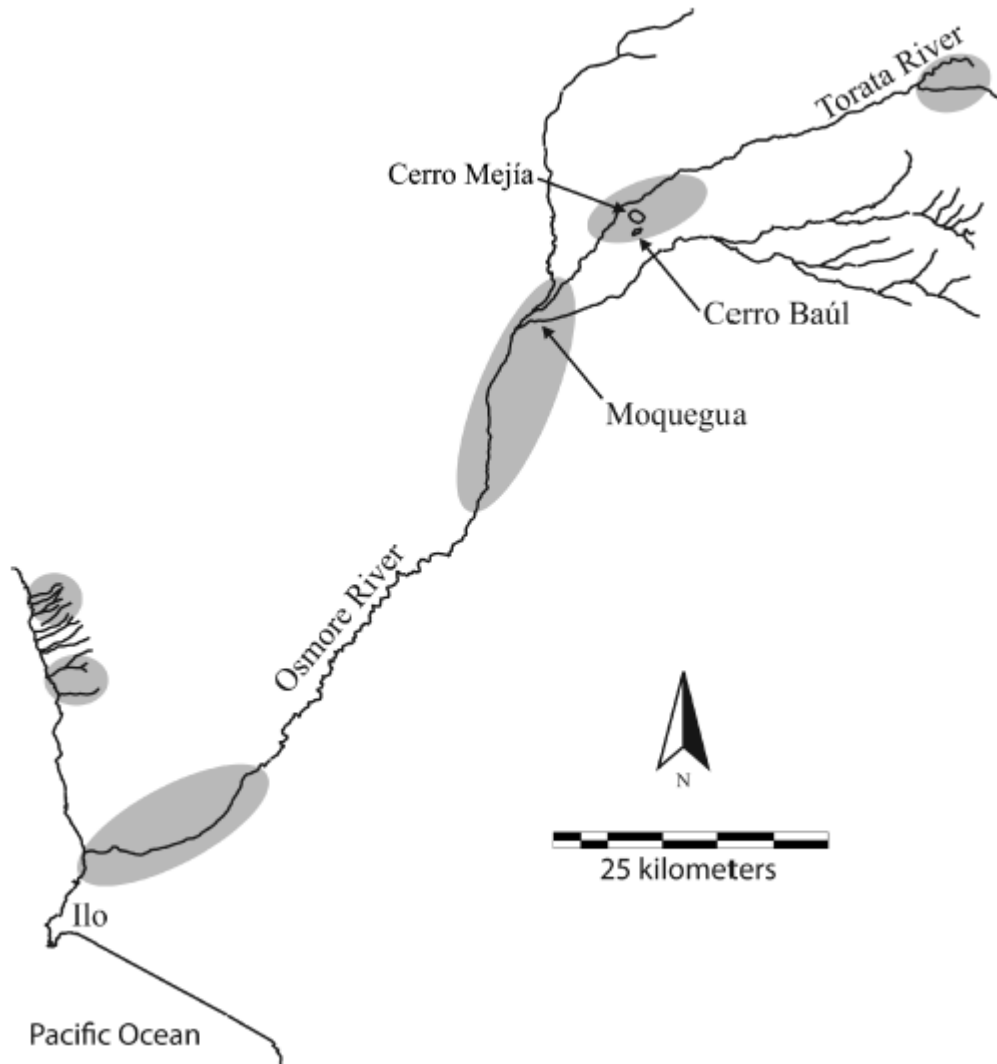
The Wari settled and developed the upper drainage by constructing a long, high-elevation irrigation canal across the undulating mountain slopes above the south side of the Torata River. Based on settlement survey there would have been a very small population in this area before Wari incursion, which means that the successful establishment of the Wari colony required importing workers in addition to administrators. Moquegua as the Wari-Tiwanaku frontier would be no place for forcibly moved, unhappy colonists. It is likely that the groups who settled Moquegua, including their own leaders and Wari administrators, were considered loyal subjects. This does not mean that they had been Wari-ized or had adopted a Wari identity. Instead, it suggests that moving to Moquegua may have been considered an opportunity and the subject population may have viewed themselves as pioneers (Nash n.d.).

Given that the colony was established by the Wari state we might suspect that all housing would follow Wari architectural canons, however this is not the case. Wari established a monumental provincial center on the summit of a high mesa, Cerro Baul, a large settlement on the slopes and summit of the adjacent hill, Cerro Mejia, and several other small settlements. Excavation projects led by Ryan Williams in 1997, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2004, and 2007, as well as those led by the author in 1999, 2000, 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2012 have focused on Cerro Baul and Cerro Mejia, while a few structures have been probed at the other sites (Moseley et al. 2005; Nash 2010,

2012a; Nash and Williams 2004, 2009; Williams and Nash 2002, 2006). The current sample of houses shows that Wari style patio groups are limited to the summits of Cerro Baul and Cerro Mejia, whereas other settlements exhibit different forms, features, and construction materials. In other words, only a few families in the colony used the imperial style of housing. Other families built in their respective vernacular styles, some of which may have been truly local, while others may have been vernacular in the homeland of Wari-affiliated colonists. I briefly review the features of houses in the colony and then discuss the implication of these differences.



**Figure 5.1** Highland Wari sites in Peru with imperial style architecture. The grey area indicates mountainous topography.

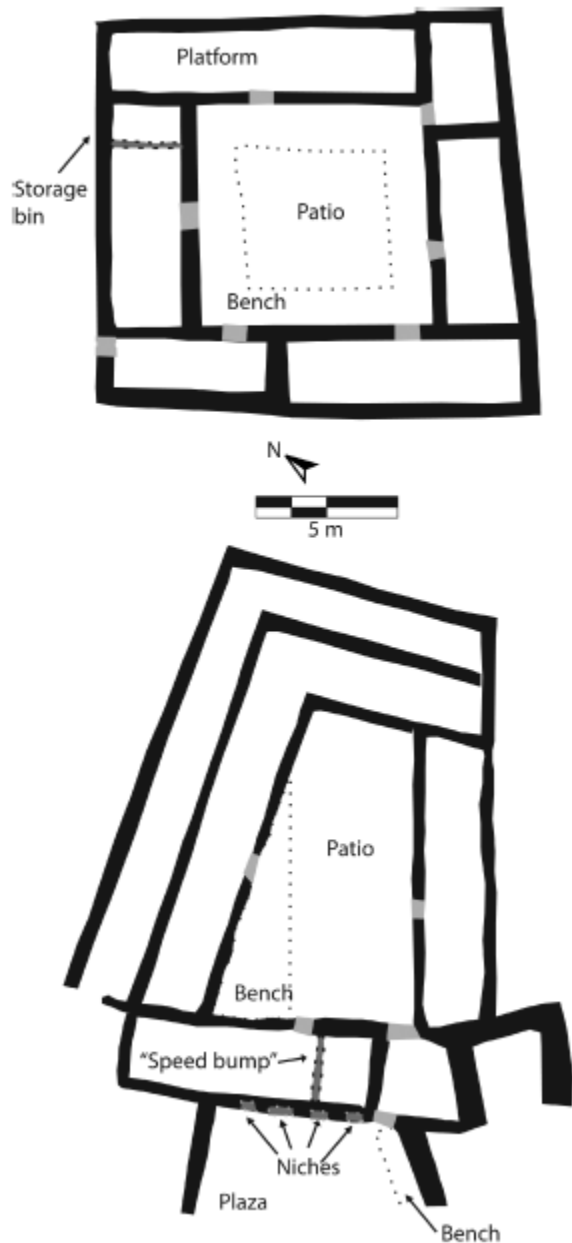


**Figure 5.2** The Osmore River drainage of the Moquegua region was occupied by several groups during the Late Formative (200 BCE–600 CE) and Middle Horizon (600–1000 CE). Survey indicates that three to four groups occupied the coastal region in the vicinity of the modern city of Ilo (Owen 1993). Moquegua’s middle valley was occupied by Huaracane groups in the Formative and Tiwanaku in the Middle Horizon. In the Torata tributary of the upper valley, Wari settled Cerro Baul, Cerro Mejia and the surrounding area, which was sparsely populated by local people in the 7th century. People from one or more groups utilized the higher grasslands for herding and other resources during both periods.

### Wari style patio groups

Two Wari style patio groups have been excavated on the summit of Cerro Baul. Both are situated within large, high-walled compounds, but appear to have accommodated different types of activities. The patio group in Sector A (Unit 9) appears to be at the center of an elite residential compound or palace, approximately 2,060 m<sup>2</sup> in area, which includes an entrance court or plaza, a ceramic workshop, a garden, and other spaces for crafts and cooking (Nash 2012a) (Figure 5.3, *top*). Both the entrance court and patio group were designed for group encounters and both were likely important settings for provincial politics of different kinds. The entrance court of the palace may be viewed as semi-public and would have been used to engage different groups

within the region. The more exclusive Wari patio group may have been restricted to elite visitors and combines structured political space with areas for residential activity.



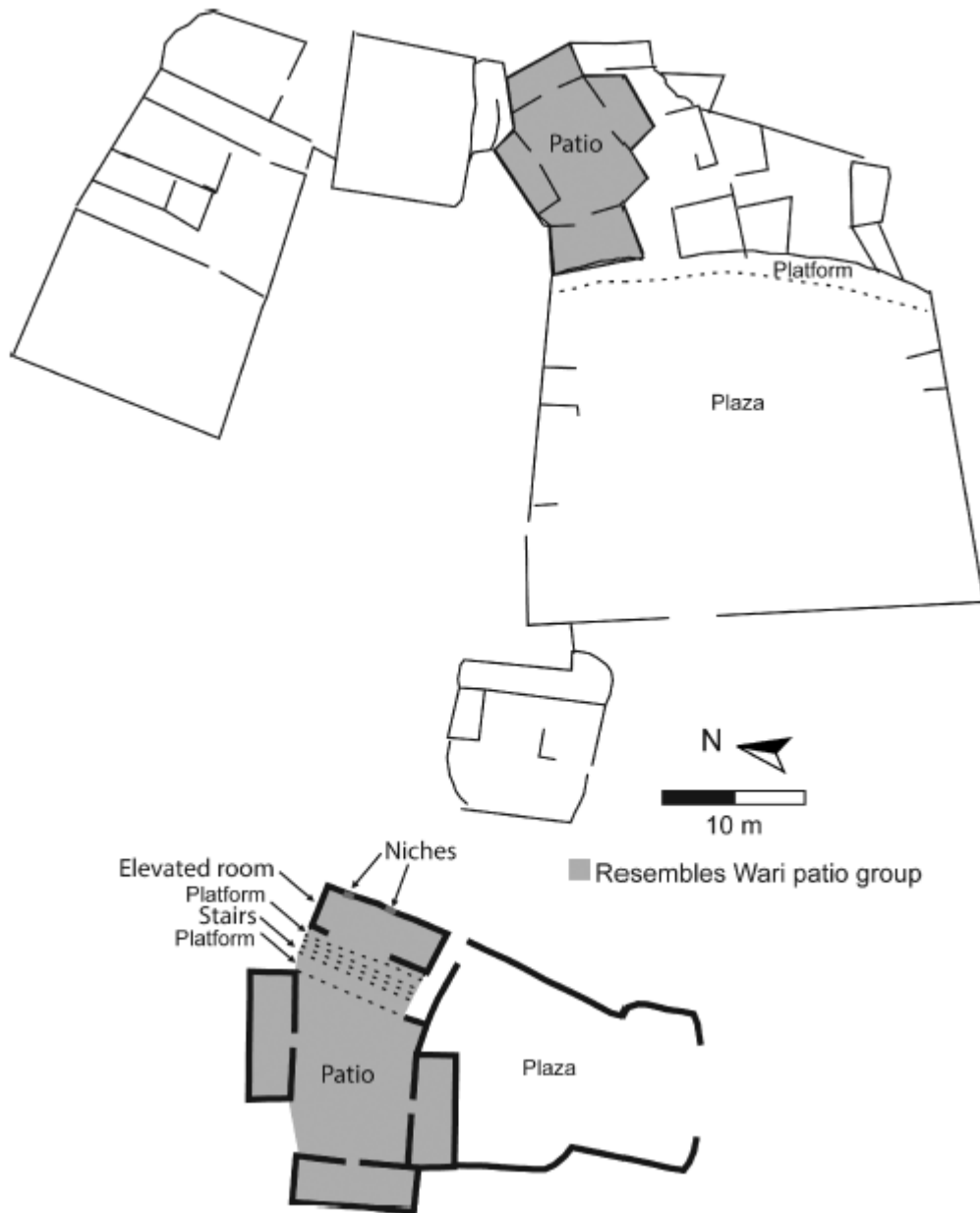
**Figure 5.3** Unit 9 on the summit of Cerro Baul was built in the form of a Wari patio group. This residence had stone paved floors and elevated stone thresholds indicated in grey (top). The brewery, excavated as Units 1 and 42, has a trapezoidal footprint. The floors were surfaced in white plaster; however, doorways also had stone thresholds. The adjacent plaza to the west may have been a gathering space for people to consume the *chicha* brewed in this facility. The eastern wall of the plaza exhibits the bases of four niches (bottom).

Access to the patio was via a lateral room, which was relatively inaccessible. The patio group consists of five rooms arranged around the north, south, and west sides of a nearly square patio space, and an elevated platform on the eastern side. The patio has benches along all four sides to



accommodate lengthy encounters. The elevated room to the east would have given some individuals a privileged position during gatherings.

The rooms and patio contain food remains, grindstones, and artifacts associated with biface production, ceramic production, and weaving. No cooking hearth was found, and this activity took place in an adjacent area of the palace. The entire compound was built with a great deal of skill. The rooms have relatively square corners, the walls were plastered in white and orange, and the floors in the patio group were paved with stone.



**Figure 5.4** Two buildings on the summit of Cerro Mejia have architectural configurations that resemble Wari style patio groups. Unit 136 (top) is located in a relatively inaccessible area, whereas in Unit 145 (bottom), the patio group appears to have been a relatively open area designed to host semi-public gatherings.

The patio group in Sector B (excavated as Unit 1 and Unit 42) is also part of a large compound, but other spaces around it have not been excavated, and the configuration or exact size of the complex has not been determined due to heavy disturbance. The patio group is trapezoidal and was used to brew a fermented beverage, *chicha* (Moseley 2005; Nash 2012b) (Figure 5.3, *bottom*). The brewery has an unusual L-shaped room bordering the patio to the east and north. Two rectangular rooms are to the west, and a single rectangular room is to the south. The patio group unit could be entered through the smaller western room and adjoined to a plaza with niches in its eastern wall and a bench along the south wall. Unfortunately, this plaza is near the center of the site and is a favored spot for modern drinking and offerings. Excavations encountered a great deal of disturbance.

On Cerro Mejia, there are two residential structures that also incorporate Wari style patio groups. The smaller of the two has been excavated extensively – Unit 145 (Figure 5.4, *bottom*). The larger complex, Unit 136, has been sampled in the patio group and plaza (Figure 5.4, *top*). The two houses were designed for political activity but exhibit differences in labor investment, monumentality, and spatial configuration. If these two structures were used by leaders of different subject groups, the buildings portray striking differences in leadership and cosmology.

Unit 136 is monumental in construction and is nearly as big as the Sector A palace on Cerro Baul. It consists of several conjoined compounds totaling 1,980 m<sup>2</sup>. The largest is roughly 1,283 m<sup>2</sup> and is built on a platform. Entrance into the compound was via stairs and a broad threshold in the western end of a large plaza of approximately 720 m<sup>2</sup>. The patio group is in the eastern part of the compound on the north end of a bank of rooms. The plaza has a platform along its eastern side that would have allowed elites to preside over gatherings from an elevated position. Entrance to the patio group and adjacent bank of rooms would have been via this platform, which suggests it was relatively inaccessible. Test excavations in the rooms of the patio group reveal some common activities with those from Unit 145, such as small-scale *chicha* production, a sleeping platform, and storage features; however, there are also important differences.

Unit 145 consists of a patio group attached to a plaza, which extends to the south through a gap between rectangular rooms. The southern end of the plaza lacks a complete wall and it is relatively open. From the surface the walls of the plaza appear somewhat curvilinear, and test excavation indicates their construction coincided with the Wari patio group.

The walls of the complex were well built, and some finished stones were found in the rubble. The patio group lacks a circumscribing wall and only two of the rooms are attached, however there are rooms on four sides and the eastern one is elevated. This configuration resembles those of Unit 9 in Sector A of Cerro Baul, which also serves a residential function. Unit 145 has a roughly trapezoidal patio with a staircase that ascends to the eastern elevated room. The elevated room has two wall niches in its eastern wall, both of which could be viewed from the patio through the unusually wide doorway to this space. The structure includes evidence of food production and lapidary work, as well as *chicha* making. Similar to the patio group on Cerro Baul, the patio of Cerro Mejia's Unit 145 provided ample space for socio-political gatherings, where hosts could preside over gatherings in the patio from an elevated position in the east.

Summary and comparisons

None of these Wari style patio group structures are identical. However, there are some common patterns that suggest these buildings may have been designed to accommodate or structure certain types of activities and in such a way as to communicate similar meanings. The use of elevation is present both in Cerro Baul's Unit 9 and Cerro Mejia's Unit 145; further elevated structures in both these patio groups were located to the east. Cerro Mejia's Unit 136 also had an elevated platform to the east but this was located in a plaza. There was no elevated room or platform in the patio group itself, which suggests asymmetrical power relations may have been confined to the plaza. In the elevated room of Unit 145 there were niches in the east wall that could be viewed from the patio space. The plaza adjacent to the brewery on Cerro Baul also had niches in the east wall. Given the location of niches, which may have been used to display valuable or sacred objects, and the orientation of elevated platforms in elite residences it appears that east may have been a superior or prestigious direction. This may have been determined by the presence of sacred snow-capped peaks visible on the horizon (Williams and Nash 2006), or east may have held a more general significance, perhaps as the direction of the rising sun.

#### 'Vernacular' houses

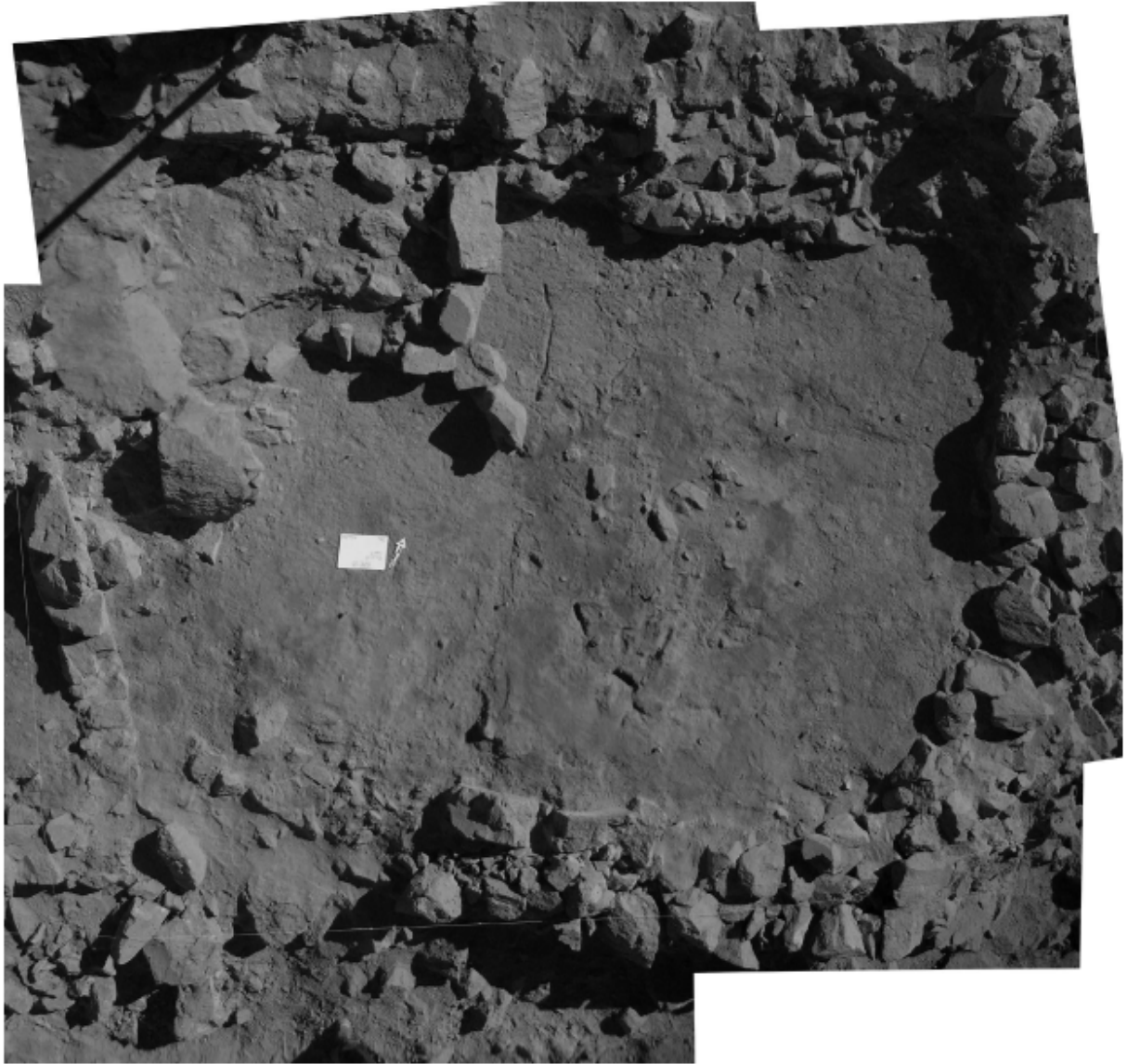
The forms and construction materials of other dwellings in the colony are variable and do not resemble the internal configurations of Wari patio groups. On Cerro Mejia each house combines one or more roofed rooms with a relatively larger unroofed patio. On Mejia's summit most dwellings are surrounded by tall walls that likely prevented visibility of internal features. In contrast, on the hill's slope, neighbors could observe patio activities over the relatively low walls. This difference may be attributed to class; however, this along with other observable features of the 'vernacular' structures built on the slopes of Cerro Mejia may have communicated divergent identities, affiliations, or commonly held ideals.

The southern slope of Cerro Mejia is divided by large walls into six neighborhoods or barrios. These divisions extend into the adjacent agricultural fields and may indicate larger reproductive groups. The hill is steep and the construction of most houses required a retaining wall or terrace to create a sufficiently wide flat area to build a house. In many instances the house wall is separate and set back from the terrace wall. This suggests that house plots may have been built as an initial phase of community construction before individual groups built their houses.

Based on visible surface remains, Barrio 1, located on the eastern end of the settlement, exhibits a very different type of construction compared to the other sectors of the site. Structures in this barrio were constructed with above average size stones, exceeding 50 cm in all dimensions, and cover a much greater area than buildings in other sectors. Because of their large size none of these structures has been excavated and it is not certain they are residential. The other barrios exhibit no clear differences in construction based on surface remains; however, in most cases very little is visible, and based on formation processes of structure collapse it is difficult to assess if a structure is rectilinear or round without excavation (this is true for all Wari-affiliated sites in the area). Therefore analysis only includes excavated houses.

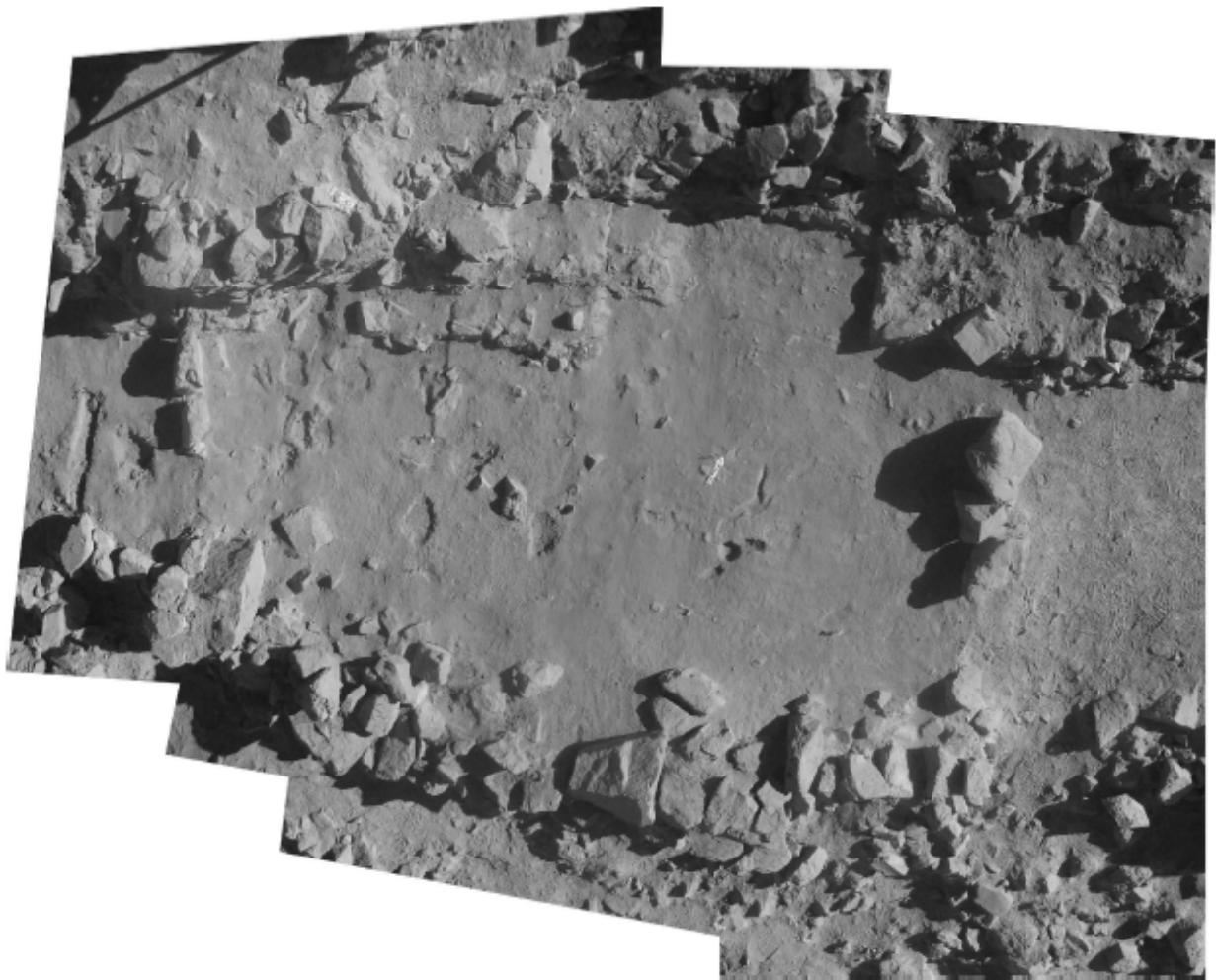
Excavation of 11 houses reveals variations in the visible attributes between structures such as rectilinear or curvilinear walls; single or bi-level configuration; the use or non-use of entrance

ramps; and the color of the clay mortar and wall coating. These differences could have been observed from the exterior of the structure, and some of these features may have conveyed meaning to members of the community. Contrasts in style may represent temporal changes, but radiocarbon dates suggest that the construction phases compared here are roughly contemporaneous (Nash 2012a). One might expect distinct styles to cluster in specific barrios; however similar houses are in different barrios and there are notable variations within barrios.



**Figure 5.5** Unit 17 is located on the southern slope of Cerro Mejia. It is a large terrace dwelling with two levels, multiple rooms, and an entrance ramp (lower left). The image shows the patio with the latest floor surface exposed. Further exploration to the north revealed that the patio lacked an upslope wall. This space has low, curvilinear walls, although the adjacent room has a more rectilinear plan (left). In an earlier phase the room adjacent to the plaza was also curvilinear and located further to the north. It was used as a tomb, filled with stones, and a floor was laid, making a new terrace. This occupation surface was accessed from the patio with a ramp (upper left). The entire structure was built with yellow, silty mortar and the walls were finished with the same material. There is no indication that adobe was placed on the stone footings.

Comparing multiple visible attributes suggests a correlation between the use of rectilinear walls and red clay for mortar versus structures with curvilinear walls and yellow silty clay for mortar. At least two of the houses finished in yellow were transformed into bi-level structures with internal ramps. One example is Unit 17, where an early room was used for burying human remains. It appears the walls of this early room were partially deconstructed to a height of 80 cm. The burial was placed in the corner and the other part of the room was filled with stones. A floor surface was laid down over the stones and tomb. A ramp was built in the patio to ascend to this level and the structure continued to be occupied (Figure 5.5). A very similar construction was observed in Unit 20 (Figure 5.6). Therefore, we can tentatively associate observable house attributes with mortuary practice.



**Figure 5.6** The southern slope of Cerro Mejia has several structures that resemble the design and construction of Unit 17. Unit 20 also has a patio that lacks an upslope wall and a ramp that leads to a higher level in the northwest (upper left). The structure does not have stone thresholds, the walls are low and curvilinear, and it was also finished with yellow, silty material. This structure appears to have two unroofed areas. The largest is shown in the image. The eastern patio has an entrance ramp (lower right).

Unit 18 was well constructed of double-faced stone masonry with square corners, durable clay mortar, and wall finishing of a reddish brown color (Figure 5.7). It resembles Unit 6, and both houses have thresholds in the front wall (or downslope walls), even though there is a steep drop

off to the next level. Unit 18 exhibited remnants of a staircase; however, this area downslope from Unit 6 was not excavated. The patio walls of Unit 18 are more substantial than other structures, a feature it shares with Unit 6. Thick clay deposits suggest there may have been adobe bricks placed on the stone walls, which may indicate a high patio wall secluded this work space from neighbors.



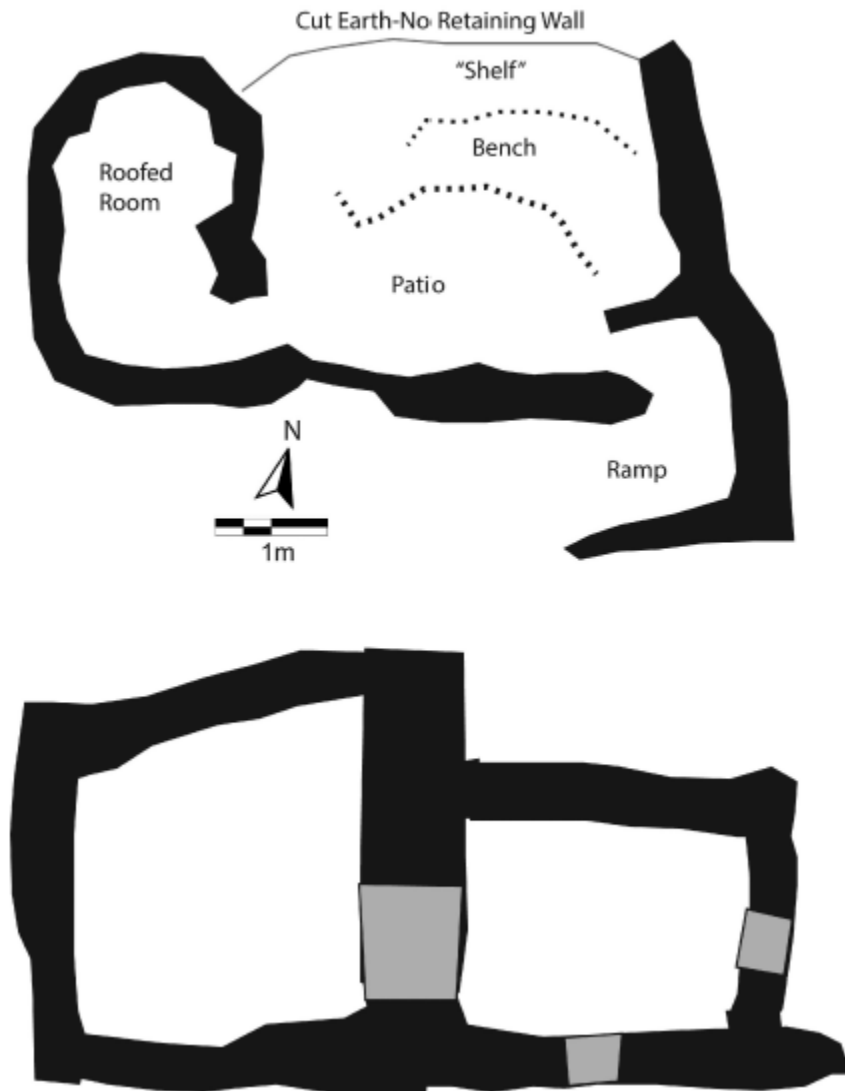
**Figure 5.7** Unit 18 has a very rectilinear plan. The patio shown here has well-built walls finished in a thick, red clay mortar on all four sides. The rooms have stone thresholds, and deposits along the walls suggest that the stone footings may have once been topped by adobe bricks.

For the most part other structures on the southern slope of Cerro Mejia exhibit lower quality wall constructions (Figure 5.8). In line with Units 17 and 20 they indicate a less rigid floor plan. Some combine rectilinear rooms with curvilinear spaces. In several cases the patio space does not have a wall along the upslope boundary, but merely exhibits a vertical profile of the hill's matrix. It is also common for the front wall of the patio to be delimited with a single row of stones or defined by the terrace's retaining wall. This suggests that the patios of these dwellings may have been visible to neighbors.

The configurations of entrances may have also held some significance. Two houses appear to have stairs that provide access into the structure from below. In 5 of the 11 houses ramps were identified that cross in front of the structure and enter through the patio area. Some of these have additional entrances into other part of the dwelling. Ramps were not identified for the other houses in the sample, but given their ephemeral construction in other examples the presence of ramps remains a possibility.

Less data is available for vernacular structures on the summit of Cerro Mejia, where most large buildings do not include a Wari patio group. Based on visible standing walls most structures appear rectilinear and commonly have one long room or a bank of smaller rooms on one side of a

patio. Only one of these dwellings has been excavated thus far; however, surface architecture indicates that the organization of space within these compounds is highly variable. Since these buildings have high walls and enter onto small plazas, this variation may have been largely hidden from outside observers or the casual visitor.



**Figure 5.8** The differences in construction are also apparent among the smaller, more modest dwellings of Cerro Mejia's southern slope. Unit 5 (top) has ephemeral, curvilinear walls, and the patio lacks an upslope wall. The structure was entered from below with a ramp. Unit 6 (bottom) resembles Unit 18 in having well-built rectilinear walls with stone thresholds, and all of the excavated rooms had walls on all four sides.

This pattern has a few possible explanations. First, if we acknowledge that the visible features appear as though households were making an effort to imitate Wari compounds with high walls and entrance plazas, then it is possible that families with the necessary resources to build big compounds but who lacked direct connections with Wari personnel could copy the high walls and entrance plazas of Wari palaces, but did not have sufficient knowledge to recreate the intimate interiors where rituals took place. Alternatively, the Wari may have imposed sumptuary laws so that only those local leaders working in the state hierarchy could incorporate patio

groups in their dwellings. On the other hand it is possible that high-walled compounds were a feature of this subject group's place of origin and that it shares common features with the imperial canon.

### Summary and comparisons

Given the variation on Cerro Mejia and many unanswered questions, a much larger sample is needed to understand its residential architecture, especially from the large compounds on the summit. Choices in house construction may be linked with ritual practice, but more excavation is required to examine subfloor offerings in these structures, determine the location of entrances, and closely examine construction techniques and materials. Nevertheless, the current data indicate that people living on the slopes of Cerro Mejia were not preoccupied with emulating Wari construction styles. Instead it appears that they made construction choices that may have been directed by vernacular traditions linked to their own ideals or expressions of identity.

### Discussion and conclusions

The data from Cerro Mejia compared to that from Cerro Baul presumably represent the difference between subject groups and people from the Wari heartland. Interactions between Wari personnel living on Cerro Baul and other members of the colony may have taken place in a number of venues. Colonial leaders of subject groups may have had more access to the homes and rituals of Wari leaders or may have been actively indoctrinated through performances staged in patio groups or adjacent plazas. The design of buildings, the organization of space and the placement of features in these 'structuring structures' may be linked to state ideologies, such as inherent social differences signaled by exclusion, with high compound walls and the elevation of some individuals over others with features such as platforms and staircases.

Likewise the cosmological importance of east indicated by the location of platforms and the placement of niches may represent a prominent association with this cardinal direction or a more relative concept highlighting the importance of mountain peaks in the landscape. At present it is unclear if local leaders chose to emulate these configurations in their houses or if these features were mandated as an exercise of Wari tactical power; however the large labor investment represented by the massive nature of the walls and platform constructed as part of Unit 136 suggests that the use of these forms was at least sanctioned by Wari officials in the region.

In contrast, other colonists living at Cerro Mejia appear to have based the design of their homes on other factors. Prominent features, such as the color of building materials or the use of a ramp versus stairs for an entrance, may have expressed the household's identity or group affiliation. Other attributes such as an enclosed patio of rectilinear design versus an open patio with curvilinear walls may instead be linked to cosmological ideas about relations with neighbors or related notions of community. Although the meaning of color choices or patio design may never be known, such distinctions may help distinguish between emic categories of people in complex polyethnic communities. These subtle features may also reveal points of tension and the potentially complex negotiations that took place between agents of the Wari Empire and the leaders of groups with contrasting cosmologies.



The configuration of Unit 145 at Cerro Mejia appears to represent a clash of cosmologies because it has rooms in four directions, including an elevated room to the east with niches to display sacred objects. These features closely adhere to Wari design principles and may be related to the performance of state ceremonies. Nevertheless, in stark contrast to other Wari buildings it maintains open access to neighbors, both to the patio group and the adjoined plaza. Both are left open, and the plaza exhibits curvilinear walls like many of the more modest houses on the hill's slope. I suggest such openness may have been a significant element of one subject group's notions of leadership and that these somewhat clashed with the relatively inaccessible and exclusive position of leaders in the Wari Empire. It is possible that this openness was essential to the subject leader's ability to manage their followers and was potentially linked to a whole host of cultural features that could not be ignored or quickly changed.

The design of Unit 136 does not exhibit such a clash. Like many other houses on the summit along with Units 6 and 18 on Cerro Mejia's southern slope, it is designed to exclude outsiders. In fact, the placement of the platform in the plaza instead of within the patio group (where members of the group likely slept) might suggest just the opposite. It is possible that some subjects already evinced exclusionary principles in their vernacular architecture, which made welcoming outsiders into certain areas of the home an obstacle to hosting state style performances. A compromise that may have accommodated essential rituals typically performed in patio groups may have been found by adding rooms to the large plaza, where the remains of footings may indicate small rooms were located along the north and south walls of the plaza. Such adaptations may have curtailed broader emulation of Wari patio group features by the clients of this leader or the particular design of a Wari patio group, and related activities may have been rejected by the group for cosmological reasons.

In general it appears greater social distance was maintained between the leading family living in Unit 136 and their followers. The wall enclosing the plaza was more than 2 m high and the entire residence was elevated on a platform. This design signaled the occupants' position relative to others living on the summit and represents a massive labor investment. This contrasts with the relatively modest size and openness of Unit 145. It is possible that the leader living in Unit 145 may not have been accustomed to commanding large labor inputs from followers and that the distance between patron and clients among people in this subject group was not exceptionally great. When compared to Unit 136 the degree of hierarchy in general may have been underdeveloped. These types of differences should not be surprising since empires conquer and control different types of communities as they expand.

Much more research is needed to understand the complex interactions between the Wari Empire and local groups. In this study, comparisons between Wari and vernacular styles of residential architecture have highlighted some potential points of contention between state ideologies and the worldviews embedded in the house design of subject groups. Such differences in ideologies were played out both on a daily and ritually focused basis, as walls and architectural features were part and parcel of how people entered the buildings; how household members, guests, and strangers were included or excluded; and how activities, such as the worship of sacred objects, were organized. These potential 'clashes' of cosmology may have been significant obstacles to Wari control in some areas. Nevertheless, the present data from the frontier colony of Moquegua suggests that clashes could be overcome, resulting in interesting variations in 'structuring

structures' that are neither strictly imperial nor simply vernacular. Since the Wari Empire endured for some four centuries, perhaps it was the polity's ability to compromise and find solutions to cosmological clashes that explains this success.

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