



**Mariusz Ziółkowski\***

## *El Fuerte de Samaipata in the light of current research*

## *El Fuerte de Samaipata w świetle aktualnego stanu badań*

### *Introduction*

The importance of the El Fuerte de Samaipata site and the history of the investigations of this emblematic place have been the subject of numerous works. These works include a synopsis published a few years ago by Albert Meyers in a compendium edited by him in collaboration with Isabel Combès [1]. With the background of this site being so important and well-known to the public, in this text I will limit myself to summarising the facts, which have been analysed in detail by my predecessors, and complementing these with some relatively unknown data, but of importance for the main theme of this publication: the sacred rock of Samaipata and its petroglyphs.

### *Description of the site*

Samaipata, or more precisely El Fuerte de Samaipata, is a pre-Hispanic archaeological site of approximately 40 ha. It is located in Bolivia, on the eastern slopes of the Andes, on the top of a hill that rises above the valley of the Piray, at an altitude between approximately 1890 and 1920 m above sea level. Its geographical coordinates are Lat. 18°10'42"S, Long. 63°49'10"W. In administrative terms, it belongs to the department of Santa Cruz, province of Florida, municipality of Samaipata. It consists of two parts:

– A natural rock with (approximate) dimensions of 250 × 60 m, covered with a complicated system of petroglyphs representing animals, various geometric shapes, canals, and water tanks, as well as carved-out niches or entire rooms.

– An architectural complex located on the south side of the rock, which served as the Incan ceremonial and administrative centre. It is composed of about 50 buildings typical of Incan provincial architecture, including what are known as *kancha*, that is, sets of rectangular buildings distributed around a quadrangular courtyard or patio. Among the buildings, a *kallanka* (a huge stone building), 78 m long and 16 m wide, stands out for its size. This *kallanka* was used for residential purposes (sometimes also ceremonial) and was capable of accommodating numerous groups of temporary workers (*mit'ayuq*), soldiers, or pilgrims [2]–[5].

In spite of its present Incan appearance, the Samaipata site is multicultural, and its origins date back to around 1000 AD, the probable date of the beginning of the creation of the petroglyphs in the rock mentioned above [1]. Its current appearance is the effect of at least 1000 years of activity of the successive cultures that occupied the place in pre-Hispanic times, during the Colony, and even today, but also of the deterioration and modifications of both anthropic and natural origin, phenomena that accelerated in the previous century.

In the pre-Hispanic period (and after this), the rock played the role of *wak'a*, or sacred place, and its prestige among the local population was undoubtedly one of the main reasons (although not the only one) for the Incas to build an administrative and ceremonial centre here, after incorporating these areas into the *Tawantinsuyu* (Inca Empire), probably in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century AD. Due to its artistic and historical importance, in 1998, the site was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List<sup>1</sup>.

\* ORCID: 0000-0003-4137-0799. Centre for Andean Studies of the University of Warsaw in Cusco (Peru), e-mail: mziolkowski@uw.edu.pl

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. Meyers, *El Fuerte de Samaipata in context. Introduction*, in this issue of "Architectus".

### Summary of research history

Samaipata (initially Sabaypata) appears in the historical sources of the *Probanza of the grandsons of the Conquerors* document written in 1569, in which the conquests of the Inca ruler Tupac Inca Yupanqui and his brothers in clashes with the Chiriguanos are recounted<sup>2</sup>. However, the most detailed historical document about the history of Samaipata at the time of the Inca Empire is *True Relationship*, written by Father Diego Felipe de Alcaya(ga) between December 1635 and March 1636. This was based on an earlier account, written probably between 1573 and 1582, which was authored by Martín Sánchez de Alcaya-ga, the supposed father of Father Diego<sup>3</sup>.

According to Father Diego's document, Samaipata (or Sabaypata) was an important Inca administrative and religious centre, which suffered a devastating invasion from the Chiriguanos shortly before the arrival of the Spaniards in the *Tawantinsuyu*<sup>4</sup>. Apparently reconquered by the Incas (although the document cited is not very clear about it), the site would have been rebuilt but quickly abandoned because of the advance of the Spaniards [7], [2, p. 48], [1, pp. 12, 13].

The archaeological data collected mainly by the German project, the Samaipata Archaeological Research Project (Proyecto Arqueológico en Samaipata, PIAS) in the 1990s confirm the reliability of historical references regarding the successive destruction of the site and its reconstruction. Historical stories or legends also refer to treasures supposedly hidden by the Incas, a topic that remains part of different stories and the oral tradition until today [1, pp. 12, 13].

Leaving aside the somewhat legendary component of the site, it is clear that Samaipata occupied a key strategic position for the protection of the *Tahuantinsuyu* against

rampant incursions of the Guaraní. Due to these defensive qualities, the Spanish administration also promoted the construction of a fort in this place, most likely in the time of Viceroy Toledo, between 1574 and 1575. This provides the origin of the current name of the site – “El Fuerte”. However, at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the defensive value of the site was no longer so important since the “Chiriguano Border” had been established further east. In addition, after the foundation between 1615 and 1617 of the settlement of Samaipata (at the time, the capital of the municipality), about 8 km from “El Fuerte”, the latter lost importance and was gradually abandoned [1]. Despite this abandonment, the tradition regarding the glorious past of the site remained in force not only in the oral tradition of the inhabitants of the place, but in the geographical publications of the time, which undoubtedly urged travellers to visit the place<sup>5</sup>.

The first of the itinerant scientists about whom we have somewhat detailed information was a Czech-German scholar Thaddeus (Tadeás) Haenke, who, after a short visit to Samaipata in 1795, drew a schematic drawing of the rock and its petroglyphs (Fig. 1). Unfortunately, after Haenke's unexpected death in 1817<sup>6</sup>, most of his notes and plans, including his information on Samaipata, remained unpublished [11], [12].

An important event for studying the history of this site was the visit (of only one day – 24<sup>th</sup> November, 1832) of the French naturalist Alcide d'Orbigny, who prepared a more detailed but still incomplete plan of the rock and the carved representations. D'Orbigny's plan presents some petroglyphs, including a rhea, that are now practically unrecognisable (Fig. 2)<sup>7</sup>.

D'Orbigny interpreted a set of elements carved in the rock as a gold-washing plant [13, pp. 1464–1466]. However, this interpretation had no firm basis and has been, rightly, rejected [14], [15]. In light of certain data collected 85 years after d'Orbigny's visit, it is possible that this curious identification as a “gold-washing plant” had a local origin<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *Y asi salieron a Pocona y hicieron muchas fortalezas en el mesmo Pocona y en Sabaypata quees en los chiriguanas y en Cuzcotuero y pusso en todas fortale[ça]s muchos yndios de diuersaspertes para guardasen la dha fortaleça y frontera a donde dexo muchos yndios orexones y al pressente estan poblados sus hijos y descendientes en las dhas ffortale[ça]s y fronteras [6, p. 226].*

<sup>3</sup> A critical study of this document with the comprehensive publication of the palaeographed text has been conducted by Albert Meyers and Isabel Combès. These scholars concluded that Don Martín's original document has been altered by successive remodelling, through which references to different events after 1582 were introduced [1].

<sup>4</sup> The document provides interesting chronological information regarding the possible date of the occupation of Samaipata by the Chiriguanos. When referring to the entry of the Spaniards through the Río de la Plata and the foundation of the city of Asunción (15<sup>th</sup> August, 1537), there is a reference to information provided by the Guaraní regarding the sacking of Samaypata and the death of the Inca commanders (kings): [...] *le dieron noticia con facilidad de la Riqueça que poseyan los yndios parientes suyos en los llanos que la hauian descubierto los dos yngas que mataron que ya lo sauian ellos en su tierra y por las lunas que contaron pareçio hauer onçe años que mataron a estos dos yngas [1, p. 25].*

If the aforementioned Guaraní calculation “by moons” was correct, it would mean that the Chiriguano invasion took place in ca. 1525–1526. This date coincides with the chronicle of Rui Diaz de Guzman, according to which an invasion of the Inca territory by the Guaraní, an event in which a Portuguese, Alejo García participated, took place precisely in 1526. However, after a thorough critical study of this document, Nordenskiöld advanced this invasion to 1522 [7].

<sup>5</sup> As an example, let us mention a geographical dictionary from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: *Samaipata, Pueblo grande y de numerosa Población en la Provincia y Gobierno de Santa Cruz de la Sierra en el Perú, tiene mas de 600 almas todos Españoles, y á una legua de distancia en un cerro alto en que se ve un edificio maltratado de tiempo con vestigios de palacio que llaman del Inca y dicen que hay escondido allí un gran tesoro desde la gentilidad de los Indios [8, p. 486].*

<sup>6</sup> Haenke was accidentally poisoned by his maid, who served a toxic potion instead of a medicament. There is some confusion in the literature regarding the date of his death: 1816 or 1817 [9, p. 23], [10, pp. 5, 22].

<sup>7</sup> The French scholar was apparently the first one to propose an astronomical–calendrical interpretation of some of the petroglyphs, a topic much discussed until today: *En lo que se refiere al aspecto alegórico, relacionado con la religión, quizis podría verse en el estanque A, situado en el punto mis alto del conjunto, la representación del sol, cuyos rayos serian las excavaciones triangulares del contorno. Dentro de esta hipótesis, seria licito creer también que las medias lunas F F de la parte baja representarian los primeros y los últimos cuartos de la luna, andando de este a oeste. En cuanto a la serpiente F, a1 ave y a1 otro animal a1 borde del estanque E, tenían tal vez un valor simbólico difícil de explicar hoy (D'Orbigny 1945 [1844]: 1466 – compare with Fig. 2).*

<sup>8</sup> In 1917, a North American traveller, Harry A. Franck, after his visit to Samaipata, published the following information, which, although brief, offers relatively little known data about the rock. This interesting testimony

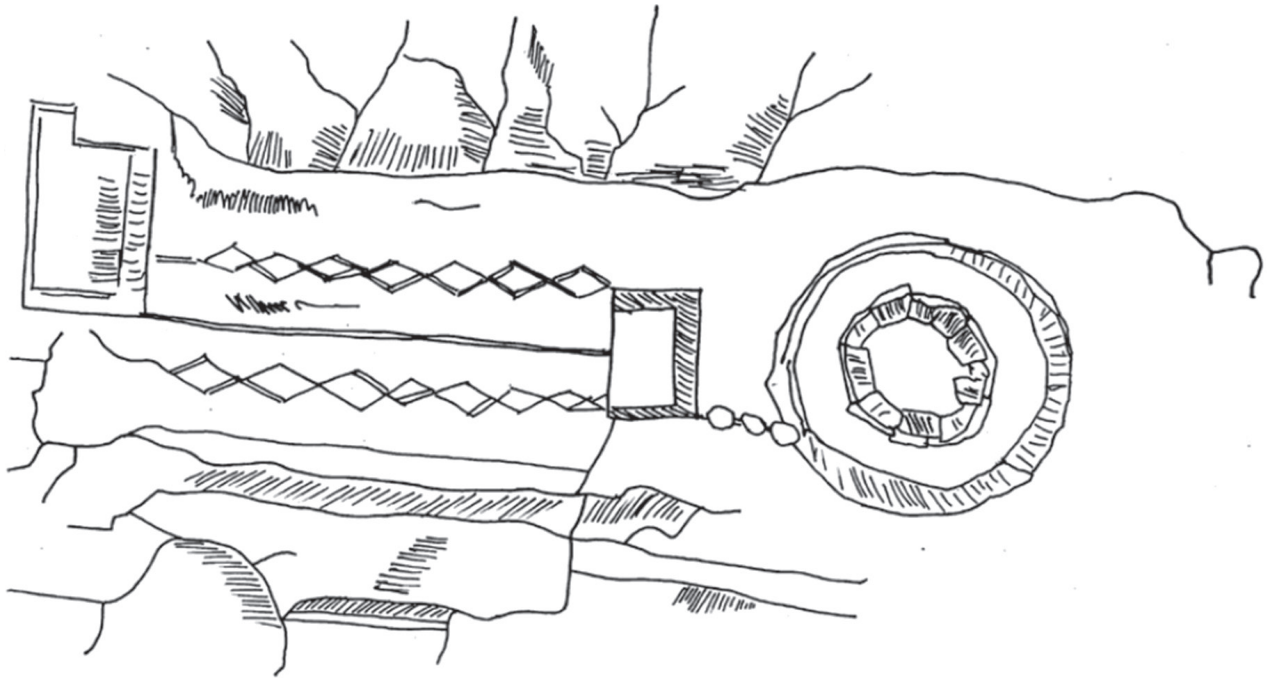


Fig. 1. Plan of the rock of Samaipata by Thaddeus Haenke in 1795 [1, p. 25, Fig. 4]

D'Orbigny's plan is accompanied by a description that is presented below in an approximate English translation: *The sculpted set is composed, at its eastern end, by the foundations of a great wall (C C) and other stores or homes. From that point, you climb a gentle slope of thirty meters to the top. In this interval, there are four steps carved in the rock, and*

is reproduced in length below: *Some two hours beyond Samaipata, 3000 feet or more above the road, up the range on the right, stands what the natives of the region call "El Fuerte". Here, in a splendid strategic position, covering the flat top of an entire hill, were and still are extensive terraces and the mostly fallen remains of what must have been important buildings, now overgrown with brush, though there are few or no real trees. Scattered about this cold and barren plateau, some 10,000 feet above sea-level, are many carved seats, similar to those of Cusco and its vicinity, and figures cut in sandstone, among which jaguars, ostriches, and other fauna of the Andes can still be distinguished, though many are time- and weather-worn beyond identification. Practical miners who have visited the spot report the existence of ore-washing apparatus of hewn stone. According to tradition, the Incas had here their easternmost stronghold, built by Yupanqui, the emperor who aspired to conquer the hated huarani, the breechless tribes of the tropical lowlands. At present, "El Fuerte" is utterly uninhabited. For many years, one aged Indian lived here, long reputed to be more than a century old. The people of the region called him "the Inca", and credited him with supernatural powers and untold wealth. The usual rumors of hidden gold and jewels, and of subterranean passages from temple to treasure-house, hover about the place. So far as is known, the site has never been visited, or at least explored, by archeologists, to whom it might bring rewards not inferior to those of Machu Picchu [16, pp. 537, 538].*

If in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the miners interpreted the elements carved in the rock as an ore-washing plant, it could hardly be a memory associated with d'Orbigny's visit in 1832; more like a local tradition still in force that the French scientist would have known and resumed in his time. There is also interesting information about the "old Indian" who had lived near the rock. This information has a parallel in the story of "Timothy and the Elder" collected by Erland Nordenskiöld [7]. Also of interest are Franck's references to the representations of animals (felines, ostriches), still visible at that time, despite the advanced deterioration of the rock.

*to the north, two ponds (I). One is square, six meters long, and another oval, seven metres, certainly destined to serve as reservoirs for water (see the section below the plan). At the highest point, there are two oblong ponds (B), twelve meters long and separated by a part in which four chairs on each side were carved, whose destiny was perhaps to serve as a seat for the workers engaged in washing in those ponds. A little further down is another circular pond (.4), eleven meters in diameter; around which eighteen seats are carved equally in the rock. A conduit connects this pond with another placed on the northern slope. Going down the slope and along the middle, under pond A, is a second oblong pond, excavated in the slope and whose length is sixteen meters: under this one, there is a third, oblique, much smaller, and a fourth pond, oval, in the north. From this last cross-sectional pond, pond C, six meters wide by forty long, a little concave, can be seen on the midline of the slope, in which there are three ditches in the shape of a rhombus, which is the supposed washing plant; they should serve to collect the gold nuggets (fig. II). Under these rhomboid ditches, there are two last D ponds, beyond which a wall extends. Undoubtedly, there finished the installation of the ore-washing plant. On the other side of the wall, and below, pond E is still seen on a very even platform, twenty-seven meters long and twelve meters wide. On this platform, near the pond, is the figure of an animal carved in relief, and on the other side a large bird, drawn only in hollow. Below, in two crescent-shaped pits (F F), whose convexity is inverse, two large animals are visible, and on the northern side, a snake, evenly sculpted in relief in a semilunar cavity beyond two huge stepped terraces that end the whole west. So far, I have spoken only of the convex part that occupies the top of the hill: I want to say only two words about the two parallel slopes, to the north and south of each side of the eminence. To the north and the eastern extremity,*

there are three wide stepped terraces and some kinds of moats (H of the plan and fig. III the profile) where there is a reserved entrance, and the rest, carved in the rock, shows concealed doors. On the slope, you can see four

of these pits and several large stepped terraces, some of which must have been used as stairs and the others for other uses. To the south, you can see many more grand stepped terraces and wide and long pits [13, p. 1465].

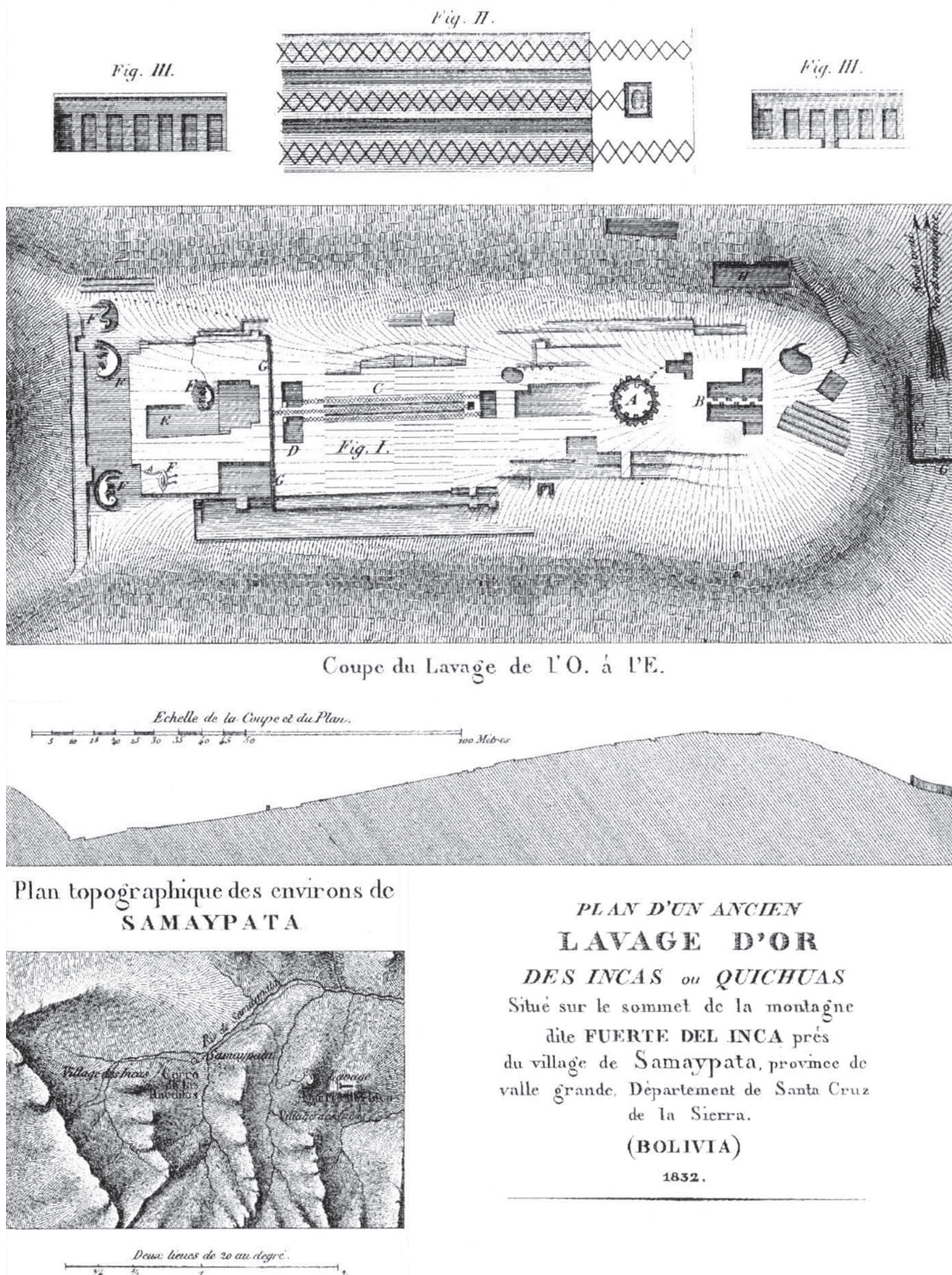


Fig. 2. Plan of the rock of Samaipata created by Alcide d'Orbigny on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 1832 [13]

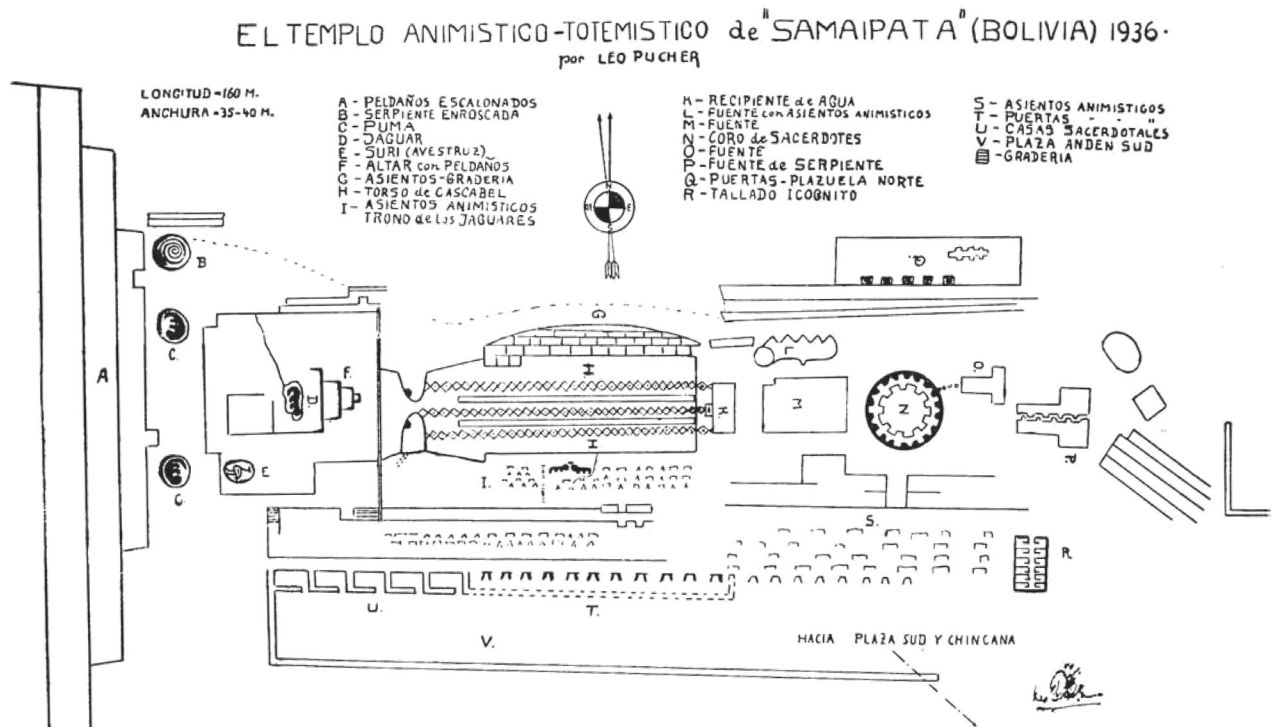


Fig. 3. The plan of the rock of Samaipata by Leo Pucher in 1936 [14, sec.], [24]

It is interesting to note that in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Samaipata's chronological position was already associated with Tiwanaku and a pre-Inca period, despite the prevailing historical information about its Inca affiliation [17, p. 27].

The chronological considerations about the pre-Inca origin of advanced pre-Columbian cultures (among those, the Samaipata builders) were intimately associated with the popular theories at that time, which were related to the supposed existence of two "racial" components of the indigenous population: a "superior" and an "inferior" race. These speculations rested in craniological studies, which were promoted by physical anthropologists including Paul Broca [18]. Apparently, a specimen (skull), likely from excavations in El Fuerte de Samaipata, was collected by the Italian Medical-Surgical Commission that was present in Bolivia between 1875 and 1877, and served as "evidence" for those speculations [19, p. 182].

A significant advance in the research and interpretation of the rock at Samaipata occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was the work of the Swedish scholar Erland Nordenskiöld [20], [21], [7] and the self-taught researcher Leo Pucher, an Austrian emigrant in Bolivia [14]. The latter supported the thesis on the pre-Inca origin of some of the representations carved into the rock, an interpretation that proved to be correct. Pucher's activity was supported by the Archaeological Society of Bolivia, created in 1930 by Arthur Posnansky. However, the truth is that the type of archaeology promoted by this society (very select – only twelve members) raised several doubts not so much in terms of the fieldwork methodology, but more the theoretical and interpretative aspects. This is why the somewhat derogatory qualification of "fantastic" and "mythical"

archaeology is often attributed to this society [22]. For this reason, and also because of the historical moment in which it was published, Pucher's work on Samaipata [14] did not have a significant distribution or impact outside Bolivia, while the credit of having begun scientific *sensu stricto* studies in Samaipata is attributed to Nordenskiöld.

The truth is that the main contribution of the Swedish scholar was to contextualise the foundation of Samaipata within the framework of the expansion of the *Tawantinsuyu* in the direction of the plains of the east and the consecutive clashes with the Chiriguano [21]<sup>9</sup>. However, Nordenskiöld devoted relatively little time and attention to fieldwork on the site itself. Despite this, he had the honour of publishing some photos that showed the state of preservation of the site in 1908 when he visited it [20], [7], [1].

In the 1950s, the long-lasting involvement of German scholars in research on Samaipata began. The well-known German archaeologist Hermann Trimborn (University of Bonn) visited Samaipata in 1955 and 1960 as part of an archaeological survey in the east of Bolivia. He published a very detailed description of the site, which also summarised the previous studies, and a simplified plan of the structures combined with a topographic survey carried out by his assistant Hansjürgen Müller-Beck [24]. This plan is not of sufficient resolution for the study of petroglyphs, but Trimborn also used in his publication the little-known plan drawn by Pucher (Fig. 3). Other works, but of limited scope, were conducted in the following years: "On

<sup>9</sup> In a recent study, Sonia Alconini again addresses this issue, mentioning the importance of Samaipata among other Inca facilities in this territory [23, p. 28].

a study trip to Samaipata from June 1 to 7, 1964, the Bolivian-German Günter Holzmann (1968) made some small excavations in what we call platform 2, finding remains of buildings and ceramics” [1, p. 15].

Investigations of Samaipata and particularly of the rock have not been limited to the activity of foreign expeditions. The work of Bolivian scholars has expanded significantly with the establishment of the Samaipata Archaeological Research Centre (CIAS) in early 1974 by the Bolivian government (and under the initiative of Carlos Ponce Sanginés). Since then, this centre coordinates the research activities and maintenance of the site: The first systematic excavations were carried out by Peruvian archaeologist Felix Tapia Pineda in that same year, in a residential area south of the rock, today known as sector 2 [25].

In 1979, Oswaldo Rivera Sundt made an interpretative publication about Samaipata, which represents so far the most complete and detailed vision of the site [26].

Since then, the resident archaeologist and director of CIAS, Omar Claire Callaú, makes continuous efforts not only in terms of the conservation of the monument but also to attract the interest of scientists to do deep research into the site and region [1, p. 16].

The site is also still the subject of interest of different scientific publications. Among these, a text by Giancarlo Ligabue stands out for the excellence of the photos taken on the site [27]<sup>10</sup>.

Following Trimborn’s studies, in 1992, the German researchers from the Department of Ancient American Studies of the University of Bonn and the Commission for Archaeology of Non-European Cultures (Kommission für Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen, KAAK; part of the German Archaeological Institute) initiated PIAS, headed by Albert Meyers of the University of Bonn. The research within the framework of this German-Bolivian project focused mainly on the part of the site connected to the ceremonial and administration centre of the Incas, located at the south of the rock.

For the subject of the present study, a survey conducted in 1994 by the German technicians of the University of Bonn is particularly important. The result of this survey

was a detailed plan of the rock and its petroglyphs. It is necessary to emphasise the fact that this plan, produced using “high-tech” equipment for the time, was the first one so precise<sup>11</sup> and has been surpassed only by what we have presented in this volume. However, we must remember that our plan in this work was produced using advanced 3D laser scanning technology, unavailable in the 1990s.

In 2015, Albert Meyers and Isabel Combès published a collective work in Santa Cruz, Bolivia [28] that contains a summary of the work of PIAS completed in 2001. Among the texts of great importance that are presented in this volume, there is a detailed description of the petroglyphs, which serves as a commentary to the above-mentioned topographic plan.

Finally, it is necessary to mention the work related to the conservation and protection of the site and in particular the rock: *geologically, it is a type of sedimentary sandstone with a siliceous, porous, extremely soft, and friable matrix* [29]. Carved in such a soft and delicate material, petroglyphs deteriorate due to environmental factors such as rainfall, insolation, wind erosion, the harmful impact of lichens whose different species grow on the surface of the rock, as well as anthropic factors. Among the latter, the most notable are the inscriptions, drawings, and other forms of expression carved profusely by visitors before the installation of CIAS and a control and monitoring system of the tourist flow. Among the studies that addressed the issue of conservation and protection, the most relevant are those conducted in recent years by Sonia Avilés [29]–[32].

A brief summary of the main contributions to the studies of Samaipata by different scholars, both Bolivians and foreigners, with corresponding bibliographical references, has been published by Richard Alcazar de la Fuente, a researcher who for over 13 years was in charge of CIAS [33]. Currently, the archaeological and conservation works on the El Fuerte de Samaipata site are coordinated by CIAS, which depends on the Autonomous Government of the Department of Santa Cruz and on the authorities of the municipality of Samaipata, who work under the supervision of the Department of Heritage of the Ministry of Cultures and Tourism of Bolivia.

<sup>10</sup> Photographic documentation of the rock done for the preparation of the aforementioned article is in the archives of the Fondazione Giancarlo Ligabue in Venice, Italy.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. A. Meyers, *El Fuerte de Samaipata in context. Introduction*, p. 7, Fig. 1 in this issue of “Architectus”.

## References/Bibliografía

- [1] Combès I., Meyers A., *El Fuerte de Samaipata en contexto: Estudios históricos*, Biblioteca del Museo de Historia Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno, Santa Cruz de la Sierra 2018.
- [2] Meyers A., *Trabajos Arqueológicos en Samaipata, Departamento de Santa Cruz. Primera Temporada 1992*, “Boletín SIARB” 1993, No. 7, 48–58.
- [3] Meyers A., *Las Campañas Arqueológicas en Samaipata, 1994–96. Segundo Informe de Trabajo*, “Boletín SIARB” 1998, No. 12, 59–86.
- [4] Meyers A., *Reflexiones acerca de la periodización de la cultura Inka: Perspectivas desde Samaipata, Oriente de Bolivia*, [in:] C. Diez Marín (ed.), *Actas del XII Congreso Nacional de Arqueología Andina, La Plata 1999*, T. 1, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, La Plata 1999, 239–251.
- [5] Meyers A., *Incas, Españoles y el Paytiti: la perspectiva desde el “Fuerte de Sabaypata”*, *Oriente de Bolivia*, [in:] L. Laurencich Minelli (ed.), *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Nuove Prospettive negli Studi Andini Firenze 2005*, Società italiana di antropologia e etnologia, Serie Archivio per L’Antropologia e la Etnologia, Vol. 135, Firenze 2006, 167–181.
- [6] Rowe J.H., *Probanza de los incas nietos de conquistadores*, “Historica” 1985, Vol. 9, No. 2, 196–245.

- [7] Nordenskiöld E., *Indianer und Weisse in Nordostbolivien*, Stuttgart 1922, <https://archive.org/details/indianerundweiss00nord/page/n9/mode/2up?q+=Samaipata> [accessed: 14.07.2019].
- [8] Alcedo A., *Diccionario geográfico-histórico de las Indias Occidentales ó América: es á saber, de los reynos del Perú, Nueva España, Tierra Firme, Chile, y Nuevo reyno de Granada...*, Vol. 4, Madrid 1786.
- [9] Beidleman R.G., *California's Frontier Naturalists*, University of California Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 2006.
- [10] Haubelt J., Polisenky J., *Prirrodovedec Tadeás Haenke a pocatky Ceského novodobého Zajmu o Latinskou Ameriku*, “Acta Universitatis Carolinae. Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis” 1965, Vol. 6, No. 2, 5–46.
- [11] Ponce Sanginés C., *Tadeo Haenke y su viaje a Samaipata en 1795*, Centro de Investigaciones Arqueológicas, La Paz 1974.
- [12] Ovando-Sanz G., *Tadeo Haenke, su obra en los Andes y la selva, boliviana*, “Biblioteca IV Centenario”, Editorial, La Paz 1974.
- [13] D'Orbigny A., *Viaje a la América Meridional*, Editorial Futuro, Buenos Aires 1945.
- [14] Pucher L., *Ensayo sobre el arte prehistórico de Samaypata*, “Revista de la Universidad de San Francisco Xavier”, Universidad Mayor de San Francisco Xavier Sucre, Sucre 1945, 17–61.
- [15] Ponce Sanginés C., *Alcides d'Orbigny y su viaje a Samaipata en 1832*, [in:] R.D. Arze Aguirre (dir.), *El naturalista francés, Alcide Dessaline d'Orbigny en la visión de los bolivianos*, Institut Français d'Études Andines, Plural editores, Lima–La Paz 2002 [1975], 307–315.
- [16] Franck H.A., *Vagabonding down the Andes: being the narrative of a journey, chiefly afoot, from Panama to Buenos Aires*, Grosset & Dunlap, Garden City, NY, 1917.
- [17] Maury M.F., *The Amazon, and the Atlantic Slopes of South America. A series of letters published in the National intelligencer and Union newspapers, under the signature of "Inca"*, F. Taylor, Washington 1853.
- [18] Broca P., *Sur des crânes et des objets d'industrie provenant des fouilles de M. Ber à Tiahuanaco (Pérou)*, “Bulletins de la Société d'anthropologie de Paris” 1878, Ser 3, T. 1, 230–235.
- [19] Podgorny I., *Coleccionistas de arena. La Comisión médico-quirúrgica italiana en el Altiplano boliviano (1875–1877)*, “Antípoda” 2010, No. 2, 165–188.
- [20] Nordenskiöld E., *Meine Reise in Bolivien 1908–1909*, [in:] *Globus Illustrierte Zeitschrift für Länder- und Völkerkunde*, F. Vieweg und Sohn, Braunschweig 1910, 213–219.
- [21] Nordenskiöld E., *The Guarani Invasion of the Inca Empire in the Sixteenth Century: An Historical Indian Migration*, “Geographical Review” 1917, Vol. 4, No. 2, 103–121.
- [22] Browman D.L., *La Sociedad Arqueológica de Bolivia y su influencia en el desarrollo de la práctica arqueológica en Bolivia*, “Arqueobolivia” 2007, No. 4, 29–54.
- [23] Alconini Mujica S., *Southeast Inka Frontiers: Boundaries and Interactions*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville 2016.
- [24] Trimbom H., *Der skulptierte Berg von Samaipata*, “Archäologische Studien in den Kordilleren Boliviens”, Bd. 3, “Baessler Archiv, Beiträge zur Völkerkunde” 1967, NF 5, 130–169.
- [25] Tapia Pineda F., *Excavaciones arqueológicas en el sector habitacional de el Fuerte de Samaipata*, “Arqueología Boliviana” 1984, No. 1, 49–62.
- [26] Boero Rojo H., Rivera O., *El Fuerte preincaico de Samaipata*, Editorial Los Amigos del Libro, La Paz y Cochabamba 1979.
- [27] Ligabue G., *The Samaipata Fort*, “Ligabue Magazine” 1992, Anno 11, No. 21, 60–69.
- [28] Marulanda R., *La roca esculpida del Fuerte de Samaipata: elementos de discusión para un enfoque interpretativo*, [in:] A. Meyers, I. Combès (comp.), *El Fuerte de Samaipata. Estudios arqueológicos*, Biblioteca del Museo de Historia, Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno, Santa Cruz de la Sierra 2015, 34–51.
- [29] Avilés S., *La conservación de la Roca Sagrada de Samaipata*, [in:] A. Meyers, I. Combès (comp.), *El Fuerte de Samaipata. Estudios arqueológicos*, Biblioteca del Museo de Historia, Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno, Santa Cruz de la Sierra 2015, 151–170.
- [30] Avilés S., *Consolidazione della Rocca scolpita di Samaipata, Bolivia-Sudamerica/Consolidazione de la Roca esculpida de Samaipata, Bolivia-Sudamerica*, Tesis de Master per Operatori Museali con competenze storiche, filologiche e storico-religiose nei secoli IV–XV. Dipartimento di Storie e Metodi per la Conservazione dei Beni Culturali. Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, Ravenna, (Italia) 2001–2002, [www.stonewatch.de/media/download/sc%2004.pdf](http://www.stonewatch.de/media/download/sc%2004.pdf) [accessed: 18.07.2019].
- [31] Avilés S., *Aspetti sulla conservazione della Rocca Scolpita di Samaipata, Bolivia-Sudamerica*, Tesis de Corso di Perfezionamento sui materiali ceramici, lapidei e musivi per i beni culturali. Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, Italia 2002.
- [32] Avilés S., *Diagnostico di conservazione del Tempio della Rocca Scolpita di Samaipata, Santa Cruz-Bolivia*, [in:] S. Avilés, L. Bengtsson, E. Bre', G. Ganzaroli (eds.), *Progetto di Conservazione del Tempio della Rocca Scolpita Di Samaipata*, Univeristá di Bologna, Italia, Santa Cruz, Bolivia 2014.
- [33] Alcazar de la Fuente R., *El Sitio Ceremonial y Administrativo de El Fuerte de Samaipata*, “Boletín Tesape Arandu” 2015, Año 4, No. 21, 2–9.

### Acknowledgements/Podziękowania

The presented work is part of the research sponsored by the grant given to the Wrocław University of Science and Technology by the Polish National Science Centre (grant No. 2014/15/B/HS2/01108). Additionally, the municipality of Samaipata, represented by Mayor Falvio López Escalera, contributed to this research by providing the accommodation during the fieldwork in June and July 2016, as well as in July

2017. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Bolivia kindly granted all necessary permits (UDAM No. 014/2016; UDAM No 060/2017). The research is conducted in close cooperation with the Centre of Pre-Columbian Studies of the University of Warsaw in Cusco. Specialists from other universities and research centres are also joining the project.

### Abstract

Samaipata, or more precisely El Fuerte de Samaipata, is a pre-Hispanic archaeological site of approximately 40 ha located in Bolivia, on the eastern slopes of the Andes. Due to its artistic and historical importance, the site was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1998. The importance of El Fuerte de Samaipata and the history of the investigations of this emblematic place have been the subject of numerous works. This text summarises the main stages of the studies of the site, particularly of the rock, from the first information in Colonial sources of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the most current research carried out by Bolivian and foreign scholars. Special emphasis is given to the documentation and preservation programs of the petroglyphs, which are deteriorating due to environmental and anthropic factors.

**Key words:** Samaipata, Bolivia, rock art, Andean archaeology, UNESCO World Heritage List

### Streszczenie

Samaipata, a ściślej El Fuerte de Samaipata, to przedhiszpańskie stanowisko archeologiczne o powierzchni około 40 ha, położone w Boliwii na wschodnich zboczach Andów. W 1998 r. miejsce to ze względu na swoje znaczenie artystyczne i historyczne zostało wpisane na Listę Światowego Dziedzictwa UNESCO.

Znaczenie El Fuerte de Samaipata i historia badań tego wyjątkowego zespołu były już przedmiotem licznych studiów. Ten tekst podsumowuje wyniki głównych etapów prac na tym stanowisku, zwłaszcza te dotyczące samej skały, od pierwszych informacji w źródłach kolonialnych z XVI w. poczynając, po najbardziej aktualne opracowania boliwijskich i zagranicznych badaczy. Szczególny nacisk kładzie się na dokumentację i programy ochrony petroglifów, których stan zachowania pogarsza się z powodu czynników środowiskowych i antropogenicznych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Samaipata, Boliwia, sztuka naskalna, archeologia andyjska, Lista Światowego Dziedzictwa UNESCO