APPENDIX 10: INKA CONTACT IN NORTHWEST ARGENTINA: A REVIEW

This Appendix considers studies of Inka colonialism in the particular context of northwest Argentina. There are a number of reasons why this review is important. This discussion provides examples of where and how researchers have had success in trying to understand the colonialism of the Inka period in the area. These examples of productive Inka research in the region provided a good deal of methodological inspiration for the work described in this thesis, a point made clear in the discussion of research methods in Chapter 3. Reviewing regional studies is useful also because it provides an understanding of the greater historical, physical and cultural contexts in which events unfolded in the Northern Calchaquí Valley in the 15th and 16th centuries AD.

A consideration of the entire corpus of relevant monographs, articles, papers and research reports from the areas of northwest Argentina, north Chile and south Bolivia would require a lifetime of work, as over a century of archaeological and ethnohistorical investigations have produced libraries of information on the Inka period alone. Because of the quantity of material available, synthetic studies focusing generally on the areas of northwest Argentina, north Chile and south Bolivia are considered here before a selection of studies concerning more specific regions or actual archaeological sites is considered.

The most prolific contemporary writer on the topic of the prehistory and archaeology of the South Andes in general and the Inka period in northwest Argentina in particular is Rodolfo Raffino of the Museo La Plata, Argentina. Raffino, who has conducted research in the provinces of Catamarca, Tucumán, Salta and Jujuy and in south Bolivia, has published a number of important books on the archaeology of northwest Argentina. His book "Los Inkas del Kollasuyu: origen, naturaleza y transfiguracion de la ocupacion Inka en los Andes meridionales" (1983) is perhaps the essential handbook for Inka studies in northwest Argentina. Also important is his book "Poblaciones Indígenas en Argentina: Urbanismo y proceso social precolombino" (1988). This compendium of northwest Argentine archaeological sites from all time periods contains important detailed site plans and architectural measurements. His edited book "Inka: Arqueología, historia y urbanismo del altiplano andino" (1993) is a theoretical effort that brings together his empirical knowledge of the archaeology of the South Andes in reference especially to his own fieldwork. Raffino has also published countless articles and papers, some of which deal directly with the question of Inka entry into the South Andes (e.g., Raffino 1993, Raffino et al. 1991, Raffino et al. 1979-82). Raffino's work offers researchers the unique opportunity to compare archaeological information from different locations within and beyond northwest Argentina.

The most insightful ethnohistorian working in northwest Argentina has been Lorandi of the University of Buenos Aires. Together with a number of her students, Lorandi has carefully sifted through countless historical documents that describe the South Andes and northwest Argentina. Her publication "Mitayos y mitmaqkuna en el Tawantinsuyu meridional" (1983) speaks clearly to the question of Inka- and Spanish-period migrations in and out of northwest Argentina, as does her article "Evidencias en torno a los mitmaqkuna incaicos en el N.O. Argentino" (1991). Other superlative articles covering the Inka period include two that she published with her student-colleagues, including the essential "Etnohistoria de los valles Calchaquies en los siglos XVI y XVII"
(Lorandi and Boixadós 1987-88) and her "Reflexiones sobre las categorías semánticas en las fuentes del Tucumán colonial, Los Valles Calchaquíes" (Lorandi and Bunter 1990). The 1983 and 1991 articles, and similar ones by other Andeanists that deal with the question of mitmaqkuna histories, are important because the mitmaqkuna phenomenon is one aspect of Inka studies that brings together archaeologists and ethnohistorians.

More scholarship concerning Inka-period history in the region comes from a myriad of other Argentine and non-Argentine scholars. Among them is González, whose well-known treatment of the question of Inka settlement in the South Andes has become one of the most cited explanations of why the Inkas expanded into the remote areas of northwest Argentina (1983). Briefly, González argues that the primary goal of Inka expansion into the South Andes was the exploitation of metallurgical resources, a topic discussed in relation to the Northern Calchaquí Valley in Chapter 6. Another well-known author, Krapovickas, has studied the extensive prehispanic economic networks and trade ties that spread across the region, which linked three geographic zones of the Argentine Andes: the puna, the intermontane valleys, and the lower sub-Andean slopes. Krapovickas (1984) presents evidence that these far-reaching relationships were established as early as AD 900 and extended into and after the Inka period (see also Pollard 1984). The implications of Krapovickas’ work for the Inka period in Argentina support an idea introduced in Chapter 1, namely that there was an atmosphere of interregionalism in the area long before the Inkas appeared. In this setting it may have been difficult for the Inkas to present themselves as uniquely foreign in the eyes of indigenous societies, because interregionalism was a common standard of life for indigenous societies. This becomes central in determining whether the Inka could have emphasized exoticism in order to spur potential subjects to participate in their imperial world or, if so, whether indigenous groups--exotically savvy in their own right--would have been immune to such overtures. It might have been difficult, in other words, for the Inkas to effectively substitute their exotic materials as gifts in an effort to stand out in a system that could have been 500 years old.

Other sources that have been consulted at length to build some understanding of the regional context in which events unfolded during the Inka period in the Northern Calchaquí Valley include some works by foreign scholars. Despite their early dates of publication, two sweeping treatments of Argentine archaeology include helpful sections on Inka-period prehistory and material culture (Bennett et al. 1948, Boman 1908). Among the many other published sources that have been used, two works by Hyslop that utilize a regional perspective merit mention; these landmark books released in 1984 and 1990 deal with in turn the Inka road system and Inka settlement planning. Hyslop's careful research reflects years of travel and study throughout the Andes (including northwest Argentina) and bring together his expansive knowledge of hundreds of Inka-related research projects.

Other useful sources of information that can be used to place the Northern Calchaquí Valley in its south Andean context are research reports that focus on the Inka period in the regions and valleys neighboring the Northern Calchaquí Valley. Those projects in particular that are similar in scope to the research describe in this thesis have served as valuable comparative material. While they are described in the following paragraphs, they also appear in the test in passages that deal especially with settlement
planning, architectural construction and patterns in regional ceramic traditions. Figure 1 provides some orientation for locating the neighboring regions described below.

At a distance of 50km northeast of the Northern Calchaquí Valley passes the Quebrada del Toro. This drainage flows northwest to southeast and has served (and still serves) as a connection between the lower Lerma Valley to the east, the high altitude puna to the west, and routes to Chile that lie further west. The most well-known archaeological site in the valley is Santa Rosa de Tastil, which, from its location in the middle of the Quebrada del Toro, would have easily controlled traffic through the area. Tastil has been described and studied ever since Boman (1908:Vol.1) made note of it a century ago. Eduardo Cigliano studied the site extensively in the 1960s and 70s with his colleagues, and describes it in a number of books and articles (e.g., 1973, 1973).

The presence of the Inkas at the site of Tastil is the source of some debate. While researchers would agree that it was occupied nearly entirely in the pre-Inka period, there may be some Inka-related architecture and ceramic remains at the site (Hyslop 1984:183-184). This question, which is discussed in more detail in the text, relates to the Northern Calchaqui Valley in two ways. First, whatever was happening in the Quebrada del Toro in the Inka period could reflect how the region as a whole may have been organized, a point that is of interest in attempts to recreate colonial contact in the Northern Calchaquí Valley. Second, for some reason the Inkas decided it was important to connect Tastil and the Northern Calchaquí Valley, in that they extended an Inka road between the valleys through a barren landscape nearly void of Late-period habitation. Hyslop and Diaz (1983) surveyed this road in 1980 and documented a string of distinct Inka corrals and way-stations along its 50km route. In sum, given its proximity to the Northern Calchaquí Valley, the nature of Inka relations with Tastil in the Inka period relates to what was going on contemporaneously in the Northern Calchaqui Valley.

Further on towards the northwest lies the well-preserved Inka site of Incahuasi, which lies in the mountains west of the city of Salta (Raffino 1983:45). This site has not been investigated in any detail, but is distinct for its size, preservation and location in a landscape that is nearly void of Late-period occupation. Christian Vitry of the Universidad Nacional de Salta is currently studying the presence of the Inkas at Incahuasi and in the surrounding area, so more will be known in the near future. Down the valley from Incahuasi towards the west lies the Lerma Valley, which is home to the modern city of Salta. This north-south valley is larger, lower and warmer than the Calchaquí Valley and the Quebrada de Humahuaca (see below) and served as the effective limit of Inka movement towards the east. Mulvany (1986, 1999) and her students (1998) are currently conducting research in the valley, which is hampered by the advanced state of modern industry and agriculture. As described in the text, some of the Inka-period sites that Mulvany has mapped are comparatively similar to study sites from the Northern Calchaquí Valley.

Further to the north lies the Quebrada de Humahuaca, a 150km-long intermontane valley that slopes from the Argentina-Bolivian border in the north down to the modern city of Jujuy in the south. This arid valley, like the Northern Calchaquí Valley and the Quebrada del Toro, serves as a corridor connecting the high-altitude puna and the humid zones along the eastern edge of the Andes. As a transportation route, the Quebrada de Humahuaca has been used for centuries to link Argentina communities with communities
on the southern extension of the Bolivian high plateau (e.g., Nielsen 2001). Ever since receiving early notoriety (Debenedetti 1930), generations of Argentine archaeologists have worked in Humahuaca, including Krapovickas and his colleagues in the 1960s and 70s (Deambrosis and de Lorenzi 1973, Krapovickas 1968, 1969, 1982, Pérez 1978) and, more recently, Nielsen and a number of his associates and students (Garay de Fumagalli and Cremonte 1997, Nielsen 1988, 1995, 1996, 1997, Raffino et al. 1991, Ruiz and Albeck 1998, Sánchez and Sica 1991). Collectively, their research brings to light the Omaguaca society that developed in the valley starting around AD 1000 and extending through the Late and Inka periods.

Research on the Omaguacas, contemporaries of pre-Inka societies in the Northern Calchaquí Valley, provides a comparative history of how other societies in northwest Argentina interacted with the Inkas. Some of the following points serve as brief examples. The Inkas moved into Humahuaca in the mid-15th century and settled at the site of Tilcara. Initial evidence suggests that their incorporation of the Omaguacas was non violent and the result of a negotiation between the two parties (Nielsen 1995:61, 1996). The Inkas went on to commandeer one of the largest agricultural settlements in the South Andes at Coctaca in the northern reaches of the Quebrada de Humahuaca (Raffino 1988:208:Fig.7.2). Coctaca contains a system of agricultural terraces that lies at 3300m asl and covers nearly 10km² of land. It is strikingly similar in elevation, size and complexity to Las Pailas, a DR-period agricultural facility in the Northern Calchaquí Valley that was never appropriated by the Inkas. There is also a type of ceramic from the Quebrada de Humahuaca (Tilcara negro sobre rojo) that has been recovered in excavations in the Northern Calchaquí Valley, which provides another comparative point of discussion between the two areas.

Moving back in the vicinity of the study area, to the west of the Northern Calchaquí Valley rises the Sierra de Cachi, one of Argentina's highest mountain ranges reaching 6380m at the peak of Mt. Libertador. There is evidence that Late- and Inka-period groups were active in these mountains, whether living on their slopes, communicating through their passes, or reaching the peaks in order to build simple platforms and structures (Ceruti 1997, 1999). The use of the Sierra de Cachi in the Inka period for mountaintop shrines and as the destination for religious activities seems entirely likely. These points are considered in more detail in the text, especially in the analysis of valley space and landscape that appears in Chapter 7.

Further west at the same latitude of the valley (i.e., on the other side of the Sierra de Cachi) lies Pastos Grandes, a barren salt flat at the eastern edge of the high-altitude Argentine puna. Conceptually, the puna can be thought of at this latitude as a wide, flat basin nestled between parallel mountain ranges. At the east edge of the basin (i.e., towards the Calchaquí Valley, Argentina and the Atlantic Ocean) rises the Sierra de Cachi; at the west edge rises the western Andean cordillera, acting as a natural boundary today between Argentina and Chile. The western mountain range at this latitude is higher than the Sierra de Cachi, peaking at 6739m at Llullaillaco. This towering landmark gained attention in 1999 when Reinard (Ceruti 1999, 1999) excavated Inka tombs on the summit and retrieved three mummified corpses rich in Inka ceremonial artifacts. While certainly spectacular, the site on Llullaillaco is one of scores of Late- and Inka-period mountaintop sites in the South Andes, for instance others have been identified on the Nevados de Cachi, Acay, Aconquija and Quehuar.
While it is clear that people from the past and present have settled in the rugged landscape of Pastos Grandes, crossing it for trade and migration, the sparseness of habitation and the difficulties of working in such remote locations means that little is known about the prehistory of the area. For instance, modern roads crossing the puna between the east and west slopes of the Andes are said to follow (and now obscure) prehispanic routes crossing the same terrain, but this is mostly conjecture. The only clear prehispanic route connecting the Argentine and Chilean sides of the mountains was used by Almagro in 1535-1536 and passes east-west over the mountains some 500km south of the Calchaquí Valley (Raffino 1995). This pass connects the eastern slopes of the Andes with the Copiapó Valley in Chile, which serves as the southern limit of the Atacama Desert (see below).

Lying further west-- beyond the western Andean cordillera-- are the arid northern deserts of modern Chile. The Arica Desert, one of the driest places on earth, lies along the Pacific north coast of Chile and is too far from the Northern Calchaquí Valley to justify immediate, direct comparison, although Inka-period research there is ongoing (Muñoz Ovalle 1998). Of more immediate interest is the Atacama Desert, which stretches out from the western slopes of Volcán Llullaillaco and lies at around 2500 to 3000m asl. This area, which lies upslope from Arica, is closer to the study area and was likely linked with the Calchaquí Valley in the Late and Inka periods by a route that crossed the mountains and the puna at this latitude. The distinct landmarks that define the desert area (from north to south): the Lao and Salado rivers, the town of San Pedro de Atacama and the Salar de Atacama, the Gran Despoblado, which is a vast, rugged stretch of open desert, and the modern city of Copiapó and the Copiapó Valley in Norte Chico at the southern limits of the desert. Rivera (1998) and Iribarren Charlin (1978) offer good reviews of Inka-period prehistory in the Atacama, and Lynch (1993) and Hyslop (1984:150-167) have studied Inka sites and roads that cross the desert. More focused studies in the upper Río Lao area to the north include recent projects at the Inka-period sites of Caspana and Turi (Berenguer 1994, Castro Rojas 1992, Castro Rojas and Cornejo B. 1990, Castro Rojas et al. 1993, Gallardo and Vilches 1995, Uribe and Alfaro i.p., Varela et al. 1993). Lynch (1977) has also worked at the Inka site of Catarpe, which is just north of modern town of San Pedro de Atacama. More studies are available of Inka-period sites that lie across the Gran Despoblado in the Copiapó, which is the first area south of the Atacama Desert able to support significant habitation (Iribarren Charlin 1958, Niemeyer 1986). Taken as a whole, this north Chilean research, especially information about settlement plans, architectural layout and construction, and the nature of Inka colonial relations, provides comparative material against which measure the result of research in the Northern Calchaquí Valley.

The final three regions that provide similar comparative studies for this research lie south of the Northern Calchaquí Valley (see Figure 3). From near to far (or, north to south), they are (1) the Southern Calchaquí Valley, (2) the Santa María Valley, and (3) the region along the border between the provinces of Tucumán and Catamarca. Given their proximity, the Southern and Northern Calchaquí Valleys are similar in geography and history and the research of the Inka period in the southern valley receives a careful review below. The Santa María Valley is the second half of the Calchaquí Valleys as described earlier. The two valleys join end to end at their embouchures, with the Río Santa Maria flowing north to meet the southern flow of the Río Calchaquí. The Santa
Maria Valley, which lies at roughly the same altitude as the Calchaquí Valley, is distinguishable on a map by its unique U-shape. Like the Calchaquí Valley, the Santa María Valley has hundreds of archaeological sites dating to thousands of years of habitation. Because of its proximity and similarity to the study area it also receives a careful review below. There are a number of terms used to denominate the third area, including the Bolsón de Andalgalá (or simply Andalgalá), the Campo de Belén, the Salar de Pipanaco, and the Hualfín and Abaucán Valleys. I refer below to this entire area as the 'Belén Basin.' Research in all three areas south of the Northern Calchaquí Valley will be discussed in reverse order, starting with southernmost Belén Basin.

At the center of the Belén Basin lies the Salar de Pipanaco at an elevation of less than 1000m, which is a full 1000 to 2000m lower than the Santa María and Calchaquí Valleys. In particular, the mountain range that borders the basin to the east (and effectively separates it from the plains of Santiago del Estero) reaches heights over 5000m. While the whole of the Belén Basin shows sparse DR-period habitation, there is a good deal of evidence for later Inka activity. The northern and western edges of the Belén Basin in particular contain a number of Inka-period sites that provide comparative material for the Northern Calchaquí Valley. Geographically, the mountains lining the edges of the basin are characterized by a number of river valleys that flow into the basin from the higher elevations of the Santa María Valley (to the north) and the puna (to the west). Visualizing the climb through the northern valleys into the Santa María Valley is difficult, because unlike most passes between neighboring valleys that require an ascent and a decent, the routes into the Santa María Valley from the south require only an ascent. This means that the headwaters of any one of the valleys that climb out of the Belén Basin to the north lie essentially at the same elevation as the floor of the Santa María Valley. Specifically, the tops of the valleys linking the Belén Basin to the Santa María Valley reach the Río Santa María at its most southern point, in a place called Campo Arenal, which is at the bottom of U-shaped course of the Río Santa María as it turns north into the Yocavíl Valley. All of this is mentioned because it gives some idea of the ease of travel and transportation between these valleys. Moving along valley bottoms, travelers from the Northern Calchaquí Valley could pass through the Southern Calchaquí Valley, into the Santa María Valley and down through smaller valleys into the Belén Basin without having to negotiate much vertical terrain.

Returning to the Belén Basin, the western routes out of the area also deserve mention. As noted above, any prehispanic route that crossed the cordillera between Argentina and Chile at the more northern latitude of the Calchaquí Valley is assumed to lie beneath any one of a number of modern routes. Until this assumption is verified archaeologically, other routes that have been documented, like one that leads out of the Belén Basin towards Chile, are presented as the most likely connections that were used by travelers in the past between the east and west slopes of the mountains. The only known prehispanic route crossing the mountains in these parts, then, originates in the Belén Basin. From the basin, it climbs in a westerly direction through the Quebrada de La Troya, crossing the mountains through the Paso de Comecaballos, and terminates in the Copiapó Valley in Chile. Again, this route was used by Almagro in 1535-1536 and is clearly demarcated by a number of Inka tampus (Olivera 1991, Raffino 1995). Because of the ease of this crossing (its highest point is only 4330m at Comecaballos), it is possible that the majority of Inka-period traffic up and down the Andes (i.e., between
Central Peru and Bolivia and the southern-most part of the empire in Chile) passed through the valleys of northwest Argentina. This more roundabout route meant travelers from Bolivia and Peru could avoid traversing the inhospitable deserts of northern Chile.

Turning to site-specific research of the Inka period in the Belén Basin, four sites stand out. Moving east to west along the northern limits of the area (i.e., just south of the Santa María Valley), they are Potrero-Chaquiago, Hualfín, El Shincal, and Watungasta. Potrero-Chaquiago is an Inka installation that lies in the northeastern corner of the basin near the passes out of the area to the east that connect with the plains of Santiago del Estero. The site was investigated for nine years by Williams, who published her work in her doctoral thesis and in a number of articles (1991, 1996, 1986). Together with Lorandi, Williams demonstrates that within this administrative center the Inkas installed a state-supported enclave of local potters, who were brought from distant regions like Santiago del Estero and who produced ceramics using local clays in the Inka style as well as in the style of their homelands (Williams and Lorandi 1986). Finding such evidence for mitmaqkuna enclaves in the Belén Basin makes it easier to identify similar settlements elsewhere in northwest Argentina.

The next three sites of interest in the area (Hualfín, El Shincal, Watungasta) are similar to each other in layout, which suggests to Raffino that they were constructed under a single Inka campaign to tap into the rich metallurgical resources of the area. Each site consists of two sectors: first, a large walled plaza that contains several kallankas and other rectified structures; and second, a collection of surrounding structures and patio groups, which were build to a lesser degree of formality and organization than the plaza group (Raffino et al. 1983-85). The three sites are linked by the same segment of the Inka road which passes through the area from the Santa María Valley in the northeast to the beginning of the route crossing the Andes in the west. This route begins at the edge of the Santa María Valley near the headwaters of the Río Hualfín and passes in a southwesterly direction down the Hualfín valley. The site of Hualfín lies along the road at mid-valley and is closely linked to a number of mineral mines. El Shincal lies further down slope at the mouth of the Hualfín Valley, along the very northern edge of the Campo de Belén, and is perhaps the best known of the three sites (Farrington 1999, González 1966, Raffino 1995-96). Given its larger size and central location, El Shincal was most likely the principal administrative settlement in the area. Further along the Inka road to the west lies Watungasta at the junction of the Abaucán Valley and the Quebrada de La Troya (Raffino 1988:205, 1998). The location of this Inka-period site at the head of the western trail to Chile through the Quebrada de La Troya suggests that it would have been a key node in trans-Andean traffic, perhaps serving as a way-station, storage depot, and control point.

The interest on the part of the Inkas in the Belén Basin has been interpreted in two ways, and both ideas give thought to what was happening at the same time in the Northern Calchaquí Valley. First, by the Inka period groups from outside the basin that included the Inkas were clearly intent on exploiting the mineral wealth of the area. This is evident in the proximity of sites like Hualfín and El Shincal to local-area mines and in the metallurgical remains recovered by researchers in the area (Raffino et al. 1983-85:452). Second, by establishing settlements in strategic locations in the area, local and foreign populations gained access to interregional traffic that was flowing through the area. This is particularly the case at the site of Watungasta, which lies at the western
edge of the Belén Basin at the foot of the route to Chile, as well as at the site of Potrero-Chaquíago, which lies in the northeastern corner of the basin near the passes to the east connecting to Santiago del Estero. This second point, about Inka-period populations settling in the area in order to link into traffic patterns, has validity in terms of the geography that was involved in moving around the South Andes. As mentioned above, the route along the Pacific Ocean, for instance, that connects the central and South Andes would have been difficult to navigate given the change in elevation and aridity involved.

On the other hand, the journey south from Peru through the intermontane plateaus and valleys of southern Bolivia and northwest Argentina (including the Quebrada de Humahuaca, Calchaquí Valley, and Santa María Valley) would have been more familiar for groups used to living in the mountains. This idea, as well as metallurgical interpretations for Inka-period activity in the area, is discussed in the text in relation to potentially similar interpretations that could be used to interpret data from the Northern Calchaqui Valley.

The last two areas lying south of the Northern Calchaquí Valley that are useful as comparative examples of Inka-period activity in the region are the Santa María Valley and the Southern Calchaquí Valley. The U-shaped Santa María Valley has two segments: the western leg, which is the upstream portion and includes the Arrojo de Cajon, and the eastern leg, which is the downstream portion known as the Yacavíl Valley. While these sections of the Santa María Valley have a rich and deep prehistory in the centuries leading up to the Inka period, there is less evidence for significant new settlement in the area during the Inka period. The large site of Quilmes is an example of a dense, pre-Inka settlement in the valley, and the more diminutive Inka-period sites of Fuerte Quemado (a possible Inka tampu) and Punta de Balasto, with its Inka-styled plaza and usnu (Carrara et al. 1960), are examples from the later period of less intense Inka occupation in the valley. A drop in population and activity in the area in the Inka period has been interpreted as possible emigration under Inka pressure (Cornell and Johansson 1993).

The final area to consider that neighbors the Northern Calchaquí Valley and contains Inka-period comparative material is the Southern Calchaquí Valley. In its entirety, the Río Calchaquí flows 210km from its source at the Nevado de Acay to its embouchure near the modern town of Cafayate, where the Calchaquí and Santa María rivers converge. The line that divides the Southern Calchaquí Valley from the Northern Calchaquí Valley passes just south of the well-known archaeological site of Puerta de La Paya, which lies at nearly the precise midpoint in the valley. As is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, Puerta de La Paya was the site of possible Calchaquí-Inka interactions as reflected in the Inka-styled kallanka located within the largely pre-Inka settlement. This dividing line between north and south is an artificial device and has little to do with natural features or historical episodes in the valley. It was established in modern times by administrative authorities of the province of Salta in cooperation with archaeologists to delineate discrete areas of study (Tarragó and de Lorenzi 1976:5).

This discrecional division of the valley at its midpoint causes some problems, because for the most part the geography and history of the two halves are very similar. For example, if the site of Puerta de La Paya served as the capital of the Inka province of Chicoana as some have argued (González 1983), then it is likely that the area surrounding and supporting this settlement up and down the valley was administered or organized as a single realm in the past. This would mean that the southern limit of the project area (i.e.,
the Northern Calchaqui Valley) cuts this realm in half. Even if Puerta de La Paya was not the center of Inka attempts to control valley societies, having access to only half of the region surrounding the site still limits what can be said about the indigenous polity inhabiting this site.

In either case research about the Inka period from the Southern Calchaquí Valley would have comparative and interpretive value vis-à-vis similar research efforts being made in the Northern Calchaquí Valley. The area has never been the subject of in-depth research focusing on the Inka period. Instead, there are a number of general inventories of archaeological sites in the area that give some indication that the Southern Calchaquí Valley was at least as heavily occupied as the Northern Calchaquí Valley in the DR and Inka periods (e.g., Díaz 1983, Raffino and Baldini 1983, Tarragó and Díaz 1977). The few site-specific studies that do exist focus on the activities in the Late period at sites like Fuerte de Tacuil (Cigliano and Raffino 1975), El Churcal (Cigliano et al. 1976), and El Molinos (Raffino and Baldini 1985). Looking to the future, a new project that promises to shed some light on Inka-period activities in the Southern Calchaquí Valley has recently been initiated by Williams in the local departments of Molinos and San Carlos. Her results are eagerly anticipated.