



Pre-Hispanic archaeological sites destroyed by climatic events

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Peru is very rich on archaeological and historical objects. Nazca geoglyphs area or Cusco and Machu Picchu are on the list of UNESCO world heritage and they are well known. However, other areas are saved only on national or local level and their condition is in most cases not good. There are a lot of little known or unknown areas with valuable historical objects. Many of them were destroyed in the past by disasters. We can appoint famous Cahuachi near Nazca city for example, a large ceremonial centre or unknown “abandoned town” (La Ciudad Perdida de Huayuri in Spain) in the Ica region of Santa Cruz district in Palpa province. Cahuachi was a ceremonial centre of the Nazca culture; some of the world famous Nazca lines are oriented to this centre. Cahuachi consists of approximately 40 mounds built from adobes. (Silverman, H., 1994). There is much evidence that indicates that the Nazca Lines were created by people from Cahuachi; it is supported by a number of found artefacts but the origin and purpose of all Nazca Lines is still not satisfactorily explained (mainly figural geoglyphs or trapezoids). Cahuachi being researched for a long time and today it is relatively well documented the main part (Orefici, G., 2003). The archaeological survey shows that this important centre was at least three times damaged by El-Niño; last catastrophic flooding around 350 AC meant the end of this big ceremonial centre. The complete fall of Nazca civilization was around 750AC. This was apparently due to El Niño effect which triggered destructive flooding. Excavation shows many evidences on this catastrophe. In the dry desert, beneath the mud and stone have been preserved ropes, remains reed roofs and small things. In the excavations can be easily defined layers of sediments (Beresford-Jones et al. 2009). In case of “abandoned town” there is a very few information about its inhabitants and their customs at present. The most information comes from natives and partly from the previous research made in the years 1975 and 1984 and 2002-2005 (proyecto arqueológico de Huayuri; Siveroni, V., 2005). The “Abandoned town” is situated in the valley oriented northeast aslant from the Santa Cruz River, at Huayuri village. The Abandoned town is a pre-Columbian town in Peru in the late medieval period. Its period is dated sometimes between years 1000 and 1450 but it is very hard to say its exact beginning and the end. It is assumed that it starts at the Huari culture decline and finish with the Inca culture coming. But the elements of this period had been appearing at some regions only for a short time, though at other regions for a much longer time. There are some indicators that this district had been inhabited also during the Inca’s reign. The town remains spread in the valley at about 15 hectares area. There are remains of building walls in the bottom of the valley and the slopes around. Buildings are close to each other with a very small space between them that is typical for this architecture. The building structure is only for living in them; there were found no building and objects remains which should have other purposes - such as religious or economical for example. This settlement was abandoned probably after a catastrophic event like El-Niño and has not been further inhabited. All this area was documented by German-Czech expedition in 2008; an original base map using terrestrial photogrammetry and very high resolution satellite images has been created. Field work and project outputs will be described in this paper.