

## **Survey of the Cordillera Negra, Ancash community archives**

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A short survey of two of the communities nearby the village of Pamparomás was carried out as part of the Ancash Community Archive Digitisation (ACAD) Project.

In discussions with members of the town council of Pamparomás, three communities with early Spanish colonial foundation settlement (AD 1532-1615) and possible surviving archives were selected for this survey. These comprised Chaclancayo, Cosma and Jimbe, with the latter being considered too remote to investigate in the time available to project members during the 2022 fieldwork season.

All these villages in the past had administrative links with the community of Pamparomás. Furthermore, members of the Pamparomás town council were able to identify likely individuals in the target communities who would know of any relevant archive material or who would be able to help identify people likely to be helpful. This information proved crucial to the success of the survey work.

The survey was carried out between the 21st and 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 by Kevin Lane and Frank Meddens. The survey entailed a quantification of the available material, including sample photographs of the same, an assessment of the material's condition and contents as well as a discussion with local stake holders regarding their possible interest in having the material digitized. In both Chaclancayo and Cosma representatives of the communities expressed themselves very favourably inclined to having digital copies made of their archive material.

**Chaclancayo; District Pamparomás, Huaylas Province, Ancash Department, Peru.  
Latitude 9° 6' 50" S Longitude 77° 58' 10" W, Altitude c. 3090m asl.**

The village in the past was part of the Cajabamba hacienda

Informant: Domingo Luna Rejo

The village has 208 *comuneros*

The village patron saint is Saint Apushino

The community was founded during the early Spanish colony, dating to the end of the Sixteenth Century.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February the project team travelled to Chaclancayo, a small village, of some 118 dwellings with an early Spanish colonial, late Sixteenth Century town foundation,

located *circa* 5km as the crow flies SSE of Pamparomás. All of the settlement's buildings post-date the 1970s earthquake which destroyed most of the village (a common occurrence throughout the region).

In Chaclancayo we met up with various community representatives who were happy to show us their archive material which comprised of manuscript material with dates ranging from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, with the majority pertaining to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. These documents concern the efforts of the local community to protect their land ownership, which was threatened by Dominican friars from Lima. This archive appears to contain a wealth of information about kinship ties, the local economy, political structures, and ritual activities concerning the indigenous population in Chaclancayo during the Spanish colonial era. About 35 typescript pages of 20<sup>th</sup> century date comprised a transcription of the folio text. The material was largely in reasonable to good condition with some staining and foxing.

Further, in discussions with Don Pancho Villar of the community it became clear that the revered local patron saint of the village is Saint Apushino. The image of this saint comprises a crucified Christ on a cross made from the local molle tree (*Schinus mole*) known as the 'tree of life' for its medicinal properties. St Apushino is not a Catholic saint and the local informant in trying to describe him identified him as originating from the homologous tree. Likewise, the name 'apushino' can be subdivided into apu-shino, meaning small 'apu', the root word 'apu' in the Andes designates 'revered lord or ancestor', usually an appellation used to designate a titular sacred deity. In this case, 'Apushino' would roughly translate as 'small, revered lord or ancestor'.

In turn this is a very interesting discovery given that pre-Hispanic populations of the Andes, specifically the Inca designated ancestors as *mallqui*, a term which in its broader meaning included a reference to a tree or plant as an ancestor. Records from 1656 from San Francisco de Otuco in Cajatambo show that a Spanish colonial period inspection here identified the case of a molle tree being worshiped by the local population (Sherbondy 1988). St Apushino in Chaclancayo appears to be an adaptation and potentially a hybrid survival of this tradition in which the patron saint reflects aspects of a local ancestor deity or *mallqui*.

In total, the Spanish colonial period hand-written and type written archive in possession of the community comprises two manuscripts. The first consists of c. 58 folios of hand-made paper measuring approximately 22 x 33 cm x 0.7 cm. with dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The second comprises c. 45 folios consisting of a typewritten transcription of the first

document, measuring c. 22 x 33.5 x 0.3 cm on 20<sup>th</sup> century machine made paper. The document includes references to land titles and water rights. The condition of this material is good.

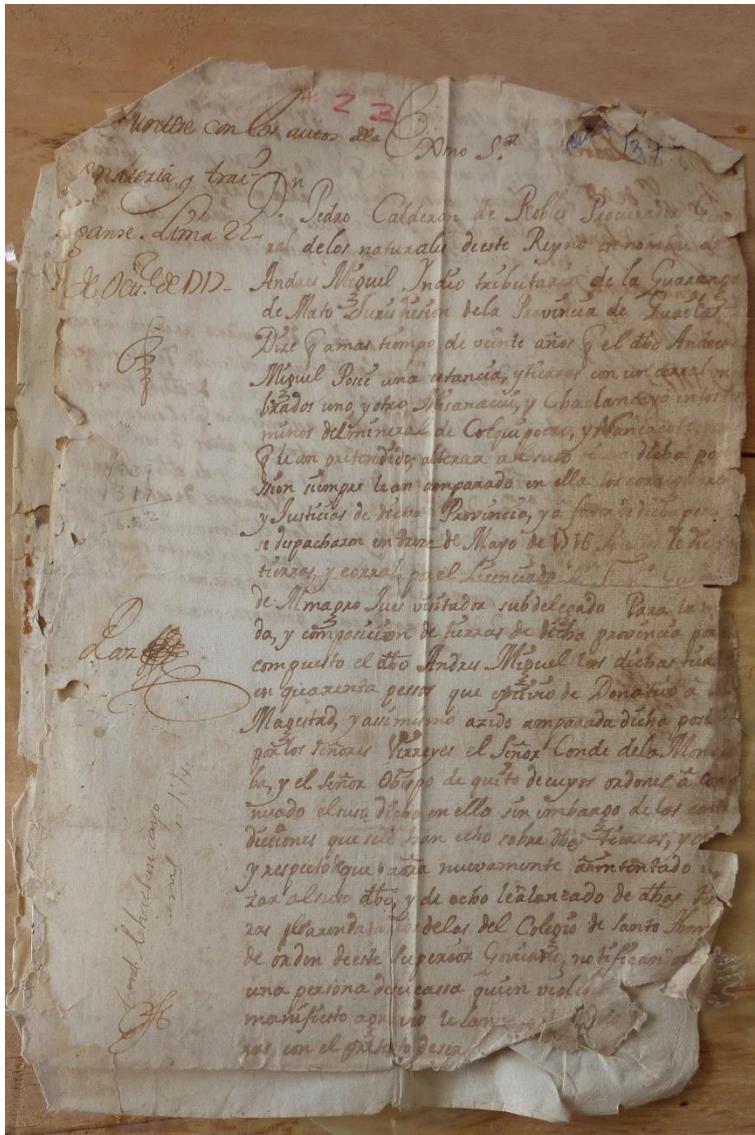


Figure 1 Sample page Chaclancayo archive.

**Cosma; District Caceres del Peru, Santa Province, Ancash Department, Peru. Latitude 9° 9' 0" South, Longitude 78° 3' 0" West, altitude c. 2575m asl.**

Informant: Chumico Chavez

The village has c. 200 comuneros

The village patron saint is San Lorenzo, who was originally paired with the patron saint of Pamparomás at the archaeological site of Kipia in the Pamparomás district.

The community has an early colonial foundation and is registered as a *comunidad indigena*.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February we visited the village of Cosma, situated some 7km NW of Pamparomás as the crow flies. In this village too the settlement was largely rebuilt following the 1970's earthquake. Here we met up with Chumico Chavez who on behalf of the community looks after the old community records. The Cosma archive comprised c. 45 photocopied pages of manuscript and transcribed typescript material including land titles mostly of 18<sup>th</sup> Century date. The original of these documents was deposited in 1950 with Dr. Abal Ramos Guardia a notary public (with document number 118) residing in the coastal town of Casma. In 1984 these documents were with notary Jenaro Angeles in Casma. It would be worthwhile if possible to check on a future occasion whether the originals of these titles and any other documents remain in the safe keeping of any successor notary public in Casma.

These photocopied Cosma documents suggested that a similar conflict to that elucidated in the Pamparomás archive had occurred between the community of Cosma and a religious order over ownership of the community lands and water resources. The timing of this dispute is again similar to that of Pamparomás and appeared to have occurred in the mid to later 18<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time as the recently installed Spanish Bourbon monarchy reforms were making headway across their Latin American colonies.

In addition, there were 349 folios of manuscript and some typescript material in 4 disbound volumes dating to the Peruvian republican period, between 1873 and 1918. This manuscript material represent the surviving documents of an original archive of some 15 volumes dating from 1873 to 1918 comprising the records of local court sessions held in Cosma dealing with local petty crime as well as land and water related conflicts. Page sizes of all the encountered archive material varied from a minimum of 21.5cm by 32cm to 22cm by 34 cm.

The extant four volumes of original material on handmade paper date to between 1873 and 1918 concerning local court sessions as noted above with Volume 1 dating to 1873 measures c. 22 x 32 x 0.8 cm, comprising 60 folios; Volume 2 dating to 1905 measures c. 22 x 34 x 1.4 cm, comprising 96 folios (Figure 2, 3); Volume 3 dating to 1915 measuring c. 22 x 33.5 x 1.4 cm, comprising 85 folios and Volume 4 dating to 1918 measuring c. 22 x 33.5 x 1.8 cm comprises 108 folios. The condition of this material is variable, from good to badly water stained and vermin damaged with losses around the margins.

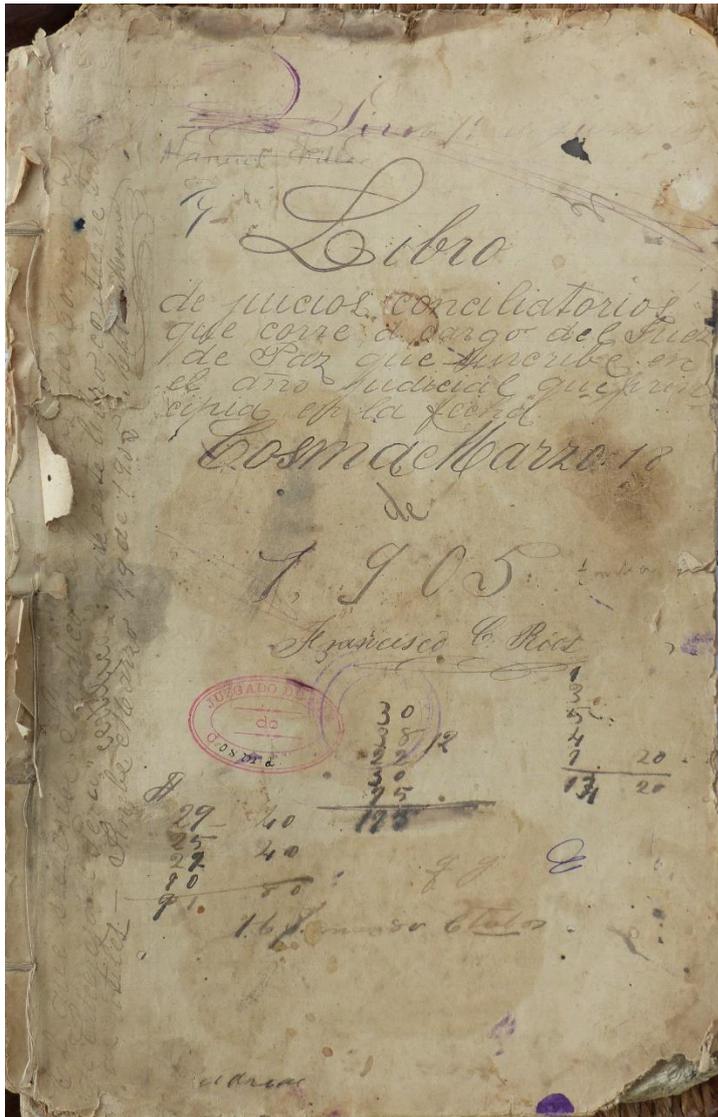


Figure 2 Sample page (first page) Cosma court session 1905

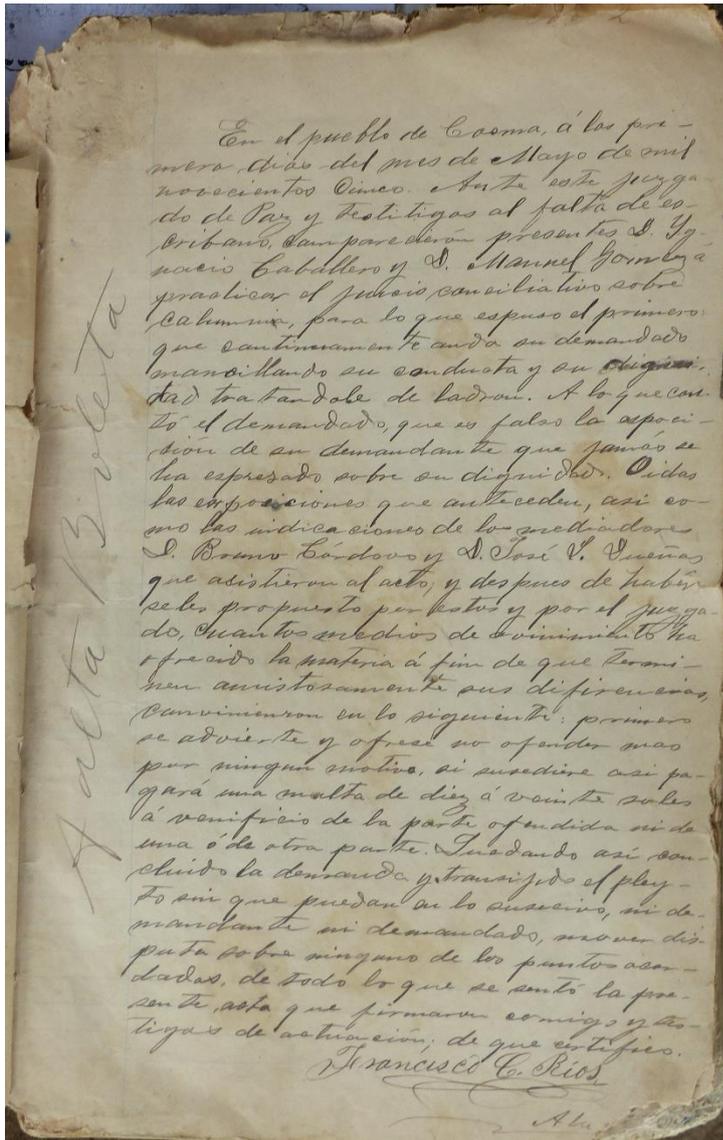


Figure 3 Sample page Cosma court sessions 1905

The community archive comprises photocopied pages consisting of c. 32 folios measuring 21.5 x 33 x 0.4 cm this represents material where the original was deposited with a notary public in the coastal town of Cosma (see above). The material includes photocopies of the original documents as well as transcribed typescript. Some of the photocopied material is starting to fade. This bundle concerns title documents and material concerning a dispute between a religious order and the local community mostly dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, referencing and copying earlier material.

### Conclusions

The fact that all three of the Ancash communities where archive material has been identified appear to have witnessed disputes between Lima based religious orders and the local villagers

over land and water rights is intriguing. Whether this is related to wider issues resulting from the contemporary Spanish Bourbon monarchy reforms, or whether there are more locally focussed reasons for these disputes remains unclear for now. It may be that the survival of the archive material is in part the result of the very conflicts which created them. It is the intention of the project team to seek further funding to allow for the detailed analysis of the archives and digitization of the additional material identified in the early Spanish colonial foundational settlements of this region.

The colonial period documents for Chaclancayo and Cosma are rare survivals and of considerable importance in their own right, albeit that the original material from Cosma will require following up in the coastal town of Cosma with the local notary public or its successor's office.

The court session documents from Cosma are of significant interest as they deal largely with conflicts on a local level over land and water access as well as petty crime covering a period of some 50 years. As such they could be crucial in detailing both water availability at this microlevel, while also providing information on plants grown in this area at this time, this could then be compared to modern data providing a template for climate change induced changes in local farming practices and crops.

### **Bibliography**

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