



The Pachakuti Mesa Tradition

Oscar Miro-Quesada

THE MESA

The purpose of the Mesa is a Pachakuti (cosmic transformation or world reversal).

The Mesa anchors the cosmos' energies

The Mesa anchors the universe in front of you. It brings the cosmos to you.

A Mesa is a living system of medicine work. It is the very heart of the Peruvian *Curanderismo*. As taught by Oscar Miro-Quesada, the Mesa is a kind of altar and sacred medicine ground. There are many different kinds of Mesas. The Mesa you will learn about here is a synthesis of Peruvian shamanic coastal traditions combined with southeastern Andean *Paqokuna* practices. As you progress through an apprenticeship and a series of initiations, you become a Mesa carrier. Your own Mesa will organically grow and evolve, reflecting your personal development as a shamanic apprentice.



There is a deep and magical logic to the consecrated setup of the Mesa. There is also a direct relationship between the Mesa and the spatial geographic ordering of the *Tawantinsuyu* (four corners of the world). When standing in the center of the *Qorikancha* (Enclosure of Gold – Temple of the Sun), in the city of *Qosqo* (considered the navel of the universe) facing north, the south is behind you and reflects the earth element. To the west is the Pacific Ocean – the water element. To the north are the mountain peaks – the air element. To the east is the rising sun – the fire element. *Qosqo* is the sacred center – the rainbow bridge. It is an integration of the seven directions: ***Below, Above, Before, Behind, Left, Right and Within – the sacred cube.***

The most basic Mesa reflects a cosmovision that honors a sacred center surrounded by four directions laid upon a consecrated square ground. It represents a mystical squaring of the crossed circle.

The center and four directions of the Mesa have symbolic significance and energetic power as follows:

The South is where physical healing takes place and we align ourselves with the energies of the Earth Mother – ***Pachamama***. Its element is earth and tutelary animals, the Boa/Anaconda. Its color is yellow. It's also called *Qollasuyu*.

The West is the place of emotional healing and we align ourselves with the energies of Mother Moon – ***Mama Killa***. Its element is water, the moon, and tutelary animals, the Dolphin/Whale. Its color is white. It's also called *Kuntisuyu*.

The North is the realm of spiritual healing and we align ourselves with the energies of the Supreme Creator – ***Wiracocha***. Its element is air (wind) and tutelary animals, Condor/Eagle. Its color is black. It's also called *Chinchaysuyu*.

The East is the location of mental healing and we align ourselves with the energies of Father Sun – ***Inti***. Its element is fire and tutelary animals, the Puma/Jaguar. Its color is red. It's also called *Antisuyu*.

The Sacred Center of the Mesa is the container of power for ***Pachakuti*** (cosmic transformation). It is the connection to the highest and most refined element of quintessence and the integrative shapeshifting energy of ***K'uychi***. Its tutelary animals are the Royal Hummingbird (*Siwari Q'enti*), the Llama and Alpaca – supreme symbols of selfless service. Its colors are purple and green or the integration of the colors of the four directions – brown. It's also called *Chawpinsuyu*.

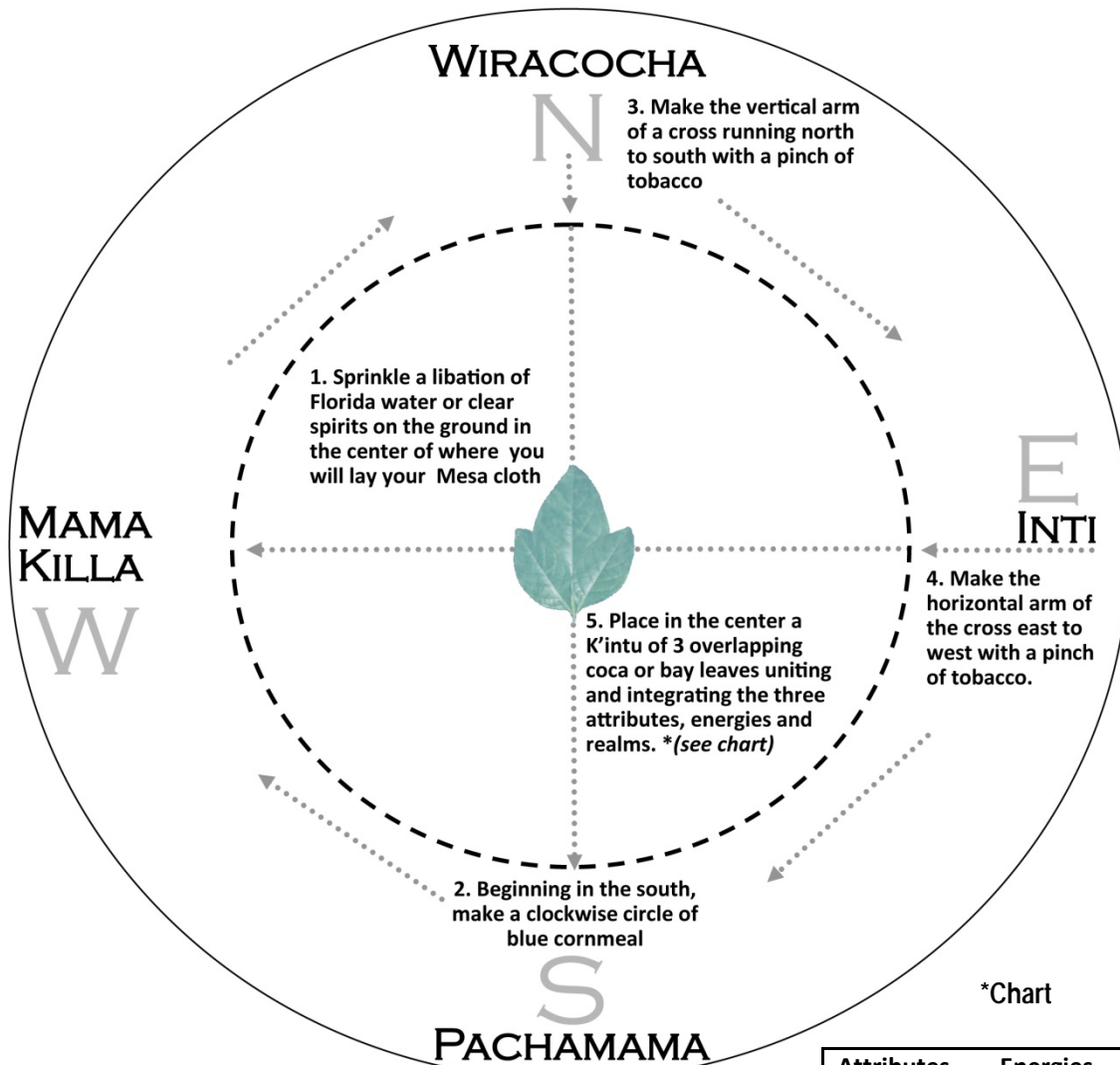


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CONSECRATING THE GROUND

The first step in laying out the Mesa is to consecrate the ground. Initially, this is done before laying the *unkhuña mastana*, or Mesa cloth, on the ground – but it can be reenergized on top of the cloth. To consecrate the ground you will need tobacco, cornmeal (preferably blue), three coca leaves (bay leaves will also work), and some clear liquid such as Florida water or clear spirits. Begin with the sacred center by offering libation in the form of a few drops of Florida water or clear spirits that has been prayed over. Next, begin in the south and make a clockwise circle with the cornmeal, in the center of where the Mesa will be created. This represents the sacred circle of life, light, and sacred relationship. Next, make a cross on the ground with a pinch of tobacco – sprinkling north to south, to represent the transmutation of spirit into matter outside of linear time. Then, move east to west, dedicating your life in service from birth to death within linear time. Finally, *phukuy* (blow forth softly) into the *K'intu* of three overlapping coca or bay leaves integrating the three attributes, energies, and realms. Lay the *K'intu* in the center of your circle.



*Chart

Attributes	Energies	Realms
<i>Yachay</i>	<i>K'anchay</i>	Upper
<i>Munay</i>	<i>Sami</i>	Middle
<i>Llankay</i>	<i>Kawsay</i>	Lower



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CREATING THE PACHAKUTI MESA

The Mesa cloth or *unkhuña mastana* (sometimes called a *manta*) is a square piece of cloth laid down over the sacred ground. It should be a cloth that is pleasing (you will be spending a lot of time with it); but it is important to remember that the true essence of the Mesa is an energetic pattern that the cloth and the objects upon it merely embody.

To create a basic *Curandero's* Mesa you will need the following items:

For the South, you will need a stone or crystal to represent the element of Earth, the physical body, material concerns, and the Earth Mother – *Pachamama*.

For the West, you will need a shell or bowl of water to represent the element of water, the emotional body, matters of the heart and relationship and Mother Moon – *Mama Killa*.

For the North, you will need a feather to represent the element of air (wind), the spiritual body, and the Supreme Creator Spirit – *Wiracocha*.

For the East, you will need a white candle (preferably in a glass holder to contain melting wax) to represent the element of fire, the mental body, psychological issues and Father Sun – *Inti*.

The Sacred Center of the Mesa, or *Qosqo*, is considered the hub (*T'aqe/Usnu*). It is represented by the *Misarumi*, a collection of three objects placed one atop the other. The center is physically anchored into a large, scalloped shell (*Cocha*) representing the feminine womb of life and the power of *Pachamama*. Within this shell is placed an etched, alabaster or marble-like stone (*Sepja* or *Sepja Misarumi*) symbolizing the gift of love transmitted from teacher to apprentice. A dark, hardwood crucifix or cross (*Cruz Chonta* or *Santu Ara*) represents the integration of matter and spirit and divine power (masculine essence) received from Creator. For our present purposes, you will want to find a flat stone (also called a *Misarumi*) as the sacred ground upon which to place your most sacred object. The center of the Mesa is where personal intention and all universal energy converge. It is the axis mundi, the center pole, the tree of life or world tree, the sacred conduit between worlds, the place of cosmic transformation, and world reversal (*Pachakuti*). It is represented by the Rainbow Spirit – *K'uychi*.

Consecrating and Empowering your Mesa Pieces

Sitting in the south, smudge each of your mesa items with a mixture of *palo santo* or sage (for cleansing) and *copal* or sweetgrass (to nourish and attract the spirits). Beginning in the south, hold your stone in your right hand and direct your left palm toward the heavens. Open and activate your crown area. Draw in *Allpa* essence, the earth element, through the soles of your feet and your perineum while intoning *Pachamama* seven times. Take a deep breath and *phukuy* (blow forth softly) into your stone. This transfers the essence of *Pachamama* into the stone you've selected. Place the stone in the south of the Mesa. Repeat the process intoning *Mama Killa* seven times while holding the shell or bowl of water. Draw in the *Unu* essence, the water element, and use your breath to transfer it into your sacred object. Place the shell or bowl in the west of your Mesa. For the feather, intone *Wiracocha* seven times while drawing *Wayra* essence, the air (wind) element. *Phukuy* and place the feather in the north of the Mesa. Hold your candle in your right hand and intone *Inti* seven times while drawing in *Nina* essence, the fire element. *Phukuy* into the candle. Place the candle in the east and light it. Finally, hold your most sacred object in your right hand while intoning *K'uychi* seven times. Draw in the quintessence of the rainbow. *Phukuy* and place your most sacred object in the center of the Mesa.



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THE BASIC MESA

The *Unkhuña Mastana* (Mesa Cloth)

