

The background of the entire cover is a collage of nine photographs of archaeological sites from the Caral civilization, arranged in a diamond pattern. The central diamond is a dark blue textured area containing the title. The surrounding sites are: Era de Pando (top), Piedra Parada (top right), Caral (center right), Chupacigarro (bottom right), Miraya (bottom), El Molino (bottom left), Allpacoto (left), Pueblo Nuevo (middle left), and Lurihuasi (top left).

ERA DE PANDO

PIEDRA PARADA

CARAL

CHUPACIGARRO

Ruth Shady
Marco Machacuay
Pedro Novoa
Edna Quispe
Carlos Leyva

MIRAYA

EL MOLINO

ALLPACOTO

PUEBLO NUEVO

LURIHUASI

Urban Centers of Caral Civilization: 21 years recovering history on the Social System

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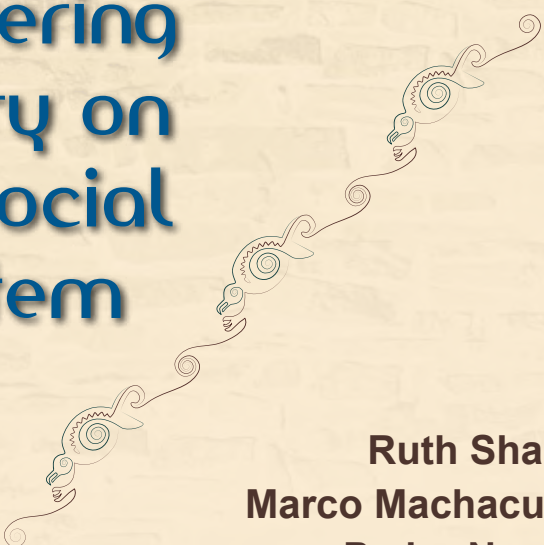




Urban Centers of Caral Civilization:

21 years

recovering history on the Social System



Ruth Shady
Marco Machacuay
Pedro Novoa
Edna Quispe
Carlos Leyva



PERÚ

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de Cultura



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Zona
Arqueológica
Caral

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INTRODUCTION

ZONA ARQUEOLÓGICA CARAL

(CARAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ZONE)

Zona Arqueológica Caral (ZAC) is a public institution, which works under scientific, administrative and financial management autonomy. It was created by Supreme Decree 003-2003-ED, dated February 14, 2003, ratified by Law 28690, dated March 18, 2006, and attached to the Ministry of Culture -as Executive Unit- since July 2010.

ZAC is responsible for conducting investigation and preservation activities, and for disseminating the social and cultural values of the Caral civilization, the oldest in America, nation and worldwide; as well as for protecting this civilization's valuable archaeological heritage and its cultural landscape for the benefit of current and future populations.

Its goal is turning Caral civilization into the most outstanding archaeological resource of the Peruvian north central area, and specifically of the Supe basin, as the cornerstone promoting comprehensive and sustainable development for its populations.

ZAC's general goals are the following:

- Recovering social history through archaeological research;
- Preserving archaeological heritage and spreading its values for the benefit of current and future societies;
- Disseminating the history of Caral civilization;
- Strengthening cultural identity and improving social self-esteem through the

recovered historical knowledge and intangible culture;

- Preserving the environment and natural resources;
- Promoting the implementation of the Master Plan for Supe and its area of influence to contribute to cultural, social and economic development of the local and regional population, by providing value to the Caral civilization settlements, promoting organic farming, producing diverse goods with cultural identity and providing touristic services.

With this perspective, ZAC conducts research on the Sacred City of Caral and other eleven settlements, related to Caral civilization: Chupacigarro, Miraya, Lurihuasi, Allpacoto, Pueblo Nuevo, Era de Pando, El Molino, Piedra Parada, Peñico, Áspero and Vichama, to compare data and draw conclusions supporting interpretations on the origins of this civilization, to get to know the changes that occurred over the thousand years it held its prestige during the Initial Formative period, and the reasons why it lost such prestige.

By identifying new urban centers in the Supe valley, which correspond to the Early Formative period, ZAC is studying the relationship of Caral civilization with other Andean societies, the impact it had on them and the external effects produced by the Caral crisis.

Furthermore, ZAC is responsibly assuming the preservation of archaeological settle-

ments, promoting the training of a group of people, and it is continuously monitoring the preservation efforts, taking into account authenticity and integrity principles set forth in international documents on monument preservation.

It is worth mentioning that the settlements intervened by ZAC have been selected since they are being affected by several interests, mostly private ones.

Since the beginning of its activities, ZAC has deployed a permanent work to achieve legal physical clearance of archaeological sites in the Supe valley, defend its integrity and ensure its preservation.

ZAC prepares and edits scientific publications, as well as papers and bulletins; it programs tours to the archaeological sites; organizes events and museum exhibits to disseminate historical and cultural values of Caral civilization; conducts natural and cultural heritage preservation activities; organizes workshops to enhancement tangible and intangible culture, as well as training workshops (on organic farming, natural color cotton, music, among others) and it fosters the population's comprehensive socio-economic development, to contribute to improving life conditions in the Peruvian north-central area.



▲ Minor Pyramidal building and La Galería (The Gallery) Pyramidal building, of the Sacred City of Caral.



◀ Panoramic view of the Central building of the Sacred City of Caral. All monumental buildings in the Sacred City of Caral were found in such conditions, as natural mounds.

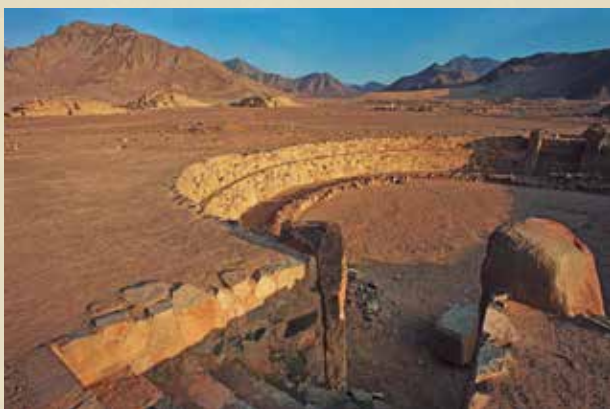
RESEARCH IN THE SUPE VALLEY

INVESTIGATIONS IN THE CARAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA

In 1994, Dr. Ruth Shady and a group of archaeologists initiated investigations with archaeological explorations in the Supe valley, and two years after in Caral.

As a result, they identified a series of archaeological settlements that corresponded to the then called Late Archaic period, currently known as Initial Formative period (3000 – 1800 B.C.). In their publication they included the characterization of the sites' architecture, as well as their similarities and differences, preliminary interpretations on the settlement patterns and inferences on the social system that produced them (Shady et al. 2000).

At the beginning of the investigation in the sacred city of Caral they had the support of the distinguished researcher Betty Meggers,



◀ Sunken circular plaza, of the Main Pyramidal Building of the Sacred City of Caral.