



La Galgada, Peru: A Preceramic Culture in Transition

By Terence E. Grieder, Alberto Bueno Mendoza, C. Earle, Jr. Smith, Robert M. Malina

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Excavations over many years in the Peruvian Andes and coastal regions have revealed that the village settlements on the west coast of South America were one of the early centers of world civilization. One of these settlements, La Galgada, flourished from 3000 B.C. to 1700 B.C. Its extraordinarily complete cultural remains help to reconstruct a picture of human life, health, activities, and trade relations as they were 4,000 years ago and allow us to enter the mental and artistic life of this early civilization.

The location of La Galgada on Peru's Tablachaca River midway between the highlands and the coast caused it to be influenced by the culture of both those regions. The remains found at La Galgada tie together important textile collections from the coastal region with important architectural remains from the Andean highland to give a picture of a complete preceramic culture in ancient Peru. Numerous illustrations provide an exciting visual catalog of the finds at La Galgada. What also makes La Galgada such a significant site are the changes in art and architecture that can be documented in considerable detail from about 2500 B.C. to about 1700 B.C. During that period, La Galgada and the other preceramic communities in northern Peru were transformed with a rapidity that must have seemed shocking and revolutionary to their inhabitants. These changes record the first appearance of the powerful and intimidating Chavín culture that was to dominate the region for the next thousand years. They also allow us to watch a people change and adapt as they try to cope with the powerful pressure of technical and social development in their region.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Terence Grieder is Professor Emeritus of the History of Art at the University of Texas at Austin.

Alberto Bueno Mendoza is Director of the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas at Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Peru.

The late C. Earle Smith, Jr. (1922–1987) was Professor of Anthropology and Botany at the University of Alabama.

Robert M. Malina is Professor Emeritus of Kinesiology at the University of Texas at Austin.

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