

Castillo de Huarmey is an archaeological site at the north coast of Peru. It used be of minor importance compared to the numerous world famous locations in the country, it seemed that the desert site had been completely penetrated by looters a long before the first researchers arrived at Huarmey. Nevertheless thanks to the persistent effort of Polish-Peruvian expedition lead by dr Milosz Giersz it emerged that under the surface the site might have still much to offer. 21 century technology, such as aerial photographs and geophysical imaging tools were used to locate the spot with the highest likelihood to reveal subterranean structures. The project work started in 2010. Two years later a major breakthrough came with the extraordinary discovery of a mausoleum that was built by the Wari culture in the second half of the first millennium AD. The tomb held 64 female skeletons equipped with precious burial gifts including textiles and weaving tools, which underlines their high social status.

The discussed project focuses on textiles revealed at Castillo de Huarmey. Textiles can be divided into several categories based on their structure, type of threads used, raw materials, methods to apply motifs etc. One of those groups is tapestry, a fabric of complex structure, difficult to weave. This complexity on the other hand allows to create sophisticated motifs. Wearing tapestry was the privilege of aristocrats; the iconography (patterns and figures) of these textiles represented the governing religious system. The analysis of iconography will allow to better understand the beliefs of Wari people. The results may be compared to artifacts related to different cultures , e.g. pottery and textiles, in order to determine whether they influenced the Wari culture. Consequently the identity of buried weavers can be determined, as presumably they had came from different cultural centers of Peru. The structural analysis of tapestries provides information about weaving in ancient Peru and also allows to determine the shape and function of the examined fabrics. In order to accelerate further research on the collection high detail digital documentation is to be created.

Castillo de Huarmey is the first known Wari cultural center at the north coastal region, all the other sites are located mainly at the highlands. The importance of the proposed project lies in the fact that knowing which cultures affected the Wari iconography may radically change our assumptions regarding the functioning and expansion of Wari culture.