Abstract

The Pyramids with Ramps of Pachacamac are traditionally interpreted as secondary temples related to the main deity of the big prehispanic coastal site, and also as embassies of ethnic groups affiliated to the cult during the Late Intermediate Period (ca. A.D. 900-1470). In order to know more about it, it has been decided to excavate Pyramid N° III, one of the most monumental examples of the site. The building is described and the investigation goals are presented in detail. Chronology, architectural development, functioning and construction system are explained on the basis of field data. Results shed some doubts on the specific religious character of the pyramid, which appears as a palace build by and for a curaca. When he dies, he’s buried in his pyramid, and the building is abandoned. Implications of this alternative model are discussed.