

# MEMORY, THAT INDELIBLE TRACE

**Tirajana, an ancient history**



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▲ Perimeter closing wall of La Fortaleza of Amurga

## MEMORY, THAT INDELIBLE TRACE

The area now occupied by the municipality of **San Bartolomé de Tirajana** could be compared to a palimpsest, one of those ancient manuscripts that fell into disuse and were then scraped clear and overwritten, introducing new content. Unlike those manuscripts, each historical moment written here did not erase everything that went before, but took over part of it, incorporating it, shaping a new territory on the surviving remains. This means, in short, that the municipal space we know today is the result of a history of superimposed traces and forgettings.

The very name of the municipality indicates the conjunction of two worlds that are in principle opposed. The Christian world, imposed after the conquest, settled on and took over the space of the indigenous settlement. So **the history of this large district of Gran Canaria** combines nearly two thousand years of histories revealed in material form through its heritage, from the arrival and establishment of the first North African population, which we perceive through their cemeteries and settlements, to the built heritage linked to the social and religious hierarchies from the sixteenth century.

**From the Maspalomas Dunes to the great Caldera de Tirajana, and including the Arguineguín Ravine**, the history of the communities that settled in the various spaces left an indelible trace that we can still see, just like the footsteps we leave behind us in the sand. The traces reveal an action which, though fleeting, left an imprint, a mark of what was but is no longer there.

Similarly, **cultural heritage, in any of its dimensions (archaeological, architectural and ethnographic)**, can be seen as a space containing, in a concentrated form, a past that we can trace, even though it no longer



◀ Overview of the Caldera de Tirajana

exists, thanks to the fact that it was actualized and impregnated by the memory of those moments.

This brief **Guide to the Archaeological Heritage of San Bartolomé de Tirajana** attempts to show the places where history is displayed and takes concrete form with its own voice, so that every space is revealed as unique, focusing different histories and ways of thinking, and relating. In short, different ways of seeing the world. They are not the only spaces of memory, but they are the indispensable ones. We encourage you to get to know them, enjoy them, understand them, and above all preserve them.



▲ Maspalomas pond and dunes (Ascanio, 1968)

## TIRAJANA, AN ANCIENT HISTORY

The **earliest datings currently place the first occupation of the island of Gran Canaria no earlier than the first to second centuries of our era**, by settlers originating from a still unidentified region of North Africa.

With the data available at the time of writing this guide, we can state that the southwest of the island of Gran Canaria, in which we include the **Caldera of Tirajana, was one of the places where the first inhabitants settled, specifically at the archaeological site of La Fortaleza (Santa Lucía de Tirajana)**. However, more intensive archaeological excavations and datings will probably change the current paradigm and offer us definitive evidence showing when Gran Canaria was first populated.



▲ Libyan-Berber engraving in Fom Chena (Tinzouline, Morocco). Courtesy photo by Desenfoque Productions.

On this initial period, the human colonization of the archipelago, we have more questions than answers. We do not know, for example, why and how these populations arrived. However, we do know, thanks to **cultural similarities, the use of Libyco-Berber script and the genetic studies that have been conducted, that the first settlers of Gran Canaria are linked to Imazighen ethnicities and to the Amazigh world.**

The geography and environmental conditions of the space now occupied by San Bartolomé de Tirajana were very different from what we know today. The large

ravines would have carried a massive volume of water, there would have been many small woods of palm trees and Canarian willows at the bottoms of the ravines, and the pine forest would perhaps have been much more extensive than it is today.

At this initial stage the **population occupied the island in natural caves**, where they created their living spaces and their eternal resting places; the whole community was buried in caves adjoining the homes. The few documented settlements in these early times seem to have been linked to steep terrain, where the economy was based on livestock and dryland farming.

We have to wait until the eighth century for the first major change to occur. Suddenly, the great tumular cemeteries appear, such as that of Arteara, for example. There are data suggesting that at this very time new geographical areas were beginning to be occupied, which may have included the heights of Amurga or the mountain of Udera (Rosiana).



▲ Amurga from the top of the La Fortaleza of Santa Lucía de Tirajana site.

In the former, it is suggested that the **sacred territory of Umiaya** was located, whilst Udera matches a cave settlement that seems to acquire a very prominent role in subsequent years, even after the conquest of the island. From this complex we must highlight the **Painted Cave of Udera (Rosiana)**, apparently related to the performance of rituals linked to fertility.



▲ The Painted Cave of Udera (Rosiana) stands out for the configuration of its space and the paintings. The white speckling has been interpreted as possible raindrops or even a grain field.

Finally, from the tenth century a new situation was established, with the incorporation of a new population who seem to have arrived with different dwellings, made of stone, in the shape of a Greek cross, and also with profusely decorated ceramics, pintaderas and clay idols. This period is characterized by the creation of an economy based on extensive farming, as shown by the various collective granaries found on the island at this stage.

We have various spaces from this time, including, for example, **the settlement of Lomo Perera, the Necropolis of Maspalomas and the settlement of Tunte itself**, where there is evidence of pre-Hispanic

dwellings. Even ethnohistorical sources, the documents written by Europeans describing the traditions, places and history of the aborigines, speak of Arguineguín as one of the largest settlements and one of the first capitals of the island. This, in a way, demonstrates the importance of the geographical space now occupied by San Bartolomé de Tirajana.

The island community, apparently unified under two *guanartematos* (kingdoms), suffered attacks from the European populations who, after arriving on the island, went in search of inhabitants to enslave. Subsequently, the island became the scene of several battles which served as a prologue to the “**Canarian War**”.

So it was that after five years (1478–83) of bloody confrontations the island came under the aegis of the Crown of Castile. **Several episodes of the war took place in this municipality, always linked to Tirajana**, where a large number of stable settlements contemporary with the conquest seem to be documented.



▲ Canary House of Tunte. Olivia Stone, 1887

Today, thanks to the documents that have been recovered, it can be unequivocally stated that one of the most outstanding episodes in the war of conquest,



▲ Los Sitios de Abajo.

which brought it to an end, however, took place in the territories that now make up this municipality: the surrender of the **Canarians at Ansite**, which possibly took place in the highest part of what is now the district of **Los Sitios de Abajo, in the Amurga Massif**.

After the Castilian victory, the conquered lands and the waters that flowed freely through them were shared out. The collision of two worlds was followed, first, by a period of coexistence and then by the merging of the two cultures and traditions. In this way, over the course of the sixteenth century, the old and the new were combined and amalgamated, giving rise to a new Canarian society and culture.

## RULES FOR VISITORS

The main object of this guide is to **publicize the archaeological heritage of San Bartolomé de Tirajana in order to promote its conservation**. Public institutions have a duty to develop management policies that will enable future generations to enjoy archaeological heritage in the same conditions as we do today.



However, it must not be forgotten that **heritage belongs to everyone**. Therefore members of the public must also commit themselves to preserving it. We are convinced that raising awareness of heritage assets will help to foster greater understanding of them, and that this will produce favourable attitudes towards defending and preserving our heritage. As an anonymous American park ranger put it, "through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection".

**The following rules for visitors will enable you to visit the area safely and will help you, in a way, to fulfil the aims of the guide: to understand, appreciate and protect.** Make sure your visit does not obliterate the imprint of the past and, in short, that you pass through the archaeological site without leaving a trace.

## RULES FOR VISITORS

- 1. Do not leave litter** in or around archaeological sites, even if it is biodegradable.



- 2. Do not pick up litter.** Although it is a praiseworthy initiative, cleaning and maintenance work needs to be supervised by an archaeologist.

- 3. Follow the signs and stay on the paths provided for the visit.** If there are no paths or they are not signposted, do not move stones. Do not climb on walls or archaeological structures.



- 4. Do not touch the sides of the caves and structures, nor the walls and the carved or painted surfaces.** Think of the site as a jeweller's containing the "treasures" of Canarian archaeology.

- 5. You may take pictures.**

Do not use chalk, water or anything else that alters the surface for taking photographs. Make sure you do not use flash if you photograph cave paintings.



- 6. Do not remove anything at all from an archaeological site.** Remember that collecting archaeological material or any other item from a site is like tearing a page out of a book, the book that tells the story of the Canary Islands.

- 7. Become a "megaphone".** Every time you visit an archaeological space, do your bit to preserve heritage by passing on the rules for visitors to your companions or other people who are there.



- 8. If you find any archaeological material at a site or you know of any structure or cave that you think has not been catalogued, do not handle anything. Contact the institutions responsible for protecting heritage\***

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## A LITTLE PIECE OF AFRICA: The archaeological heritage of San Bartolomé de Tirajana

Archaeological heritage is made up of all the vestiges of aboriginal and historical human activity that require archaeological explorations in order to study them. **The pre-Hispanic occupation has remained frozen, fossilized, in the territory of San Bartolomé de Tirajana**, where a large number of archaeological sites are recorded, so much so that it has over **300 catalogued sites, making it the municipality with the largest indigenous heritage in Gran Canaria.**

These spaces are safeguarded through their inclusion in the **Municipal Archaeological Charter**, which is none other than a document containing an inventory of all the archaeological spaces that need to be protected.

Large settlements of caves or stone houses, temples on mountains and mountains as temples, carvings and writing, cemeteries of burial mounds, cists and graves, and so on: the spaces transformed by the earliest inhabitants of the island are scattered all over the municipality, creating a mosaic in which the most ancient memory is always present.

We are aware that in the selection that has been

▼ Village of artificial caves in the Mountain of Udera (Rosiana).



made for this guide many assets of equal or greater academic and historical importance have been left out. We have chosen to select accessible heritage elements that are in a good state of conservation and above all significant, in other words, important historically, culturally and in terms of identity.

In this way, the archaeological spaces described below will enable readers to get to know the beliefs, everyday aspects of life in the settlements and forms of burial of the pre-Hispanic population who, over the course of a millennium, **occupied the area of San Bartolomé de Tirajana from the summit to the coast.**



▲ Village of artificial caves in the Mountain of Udera (Rosiana).



## The Necropolis of Arteara



Function	Funerary area
What there is to see	Burial mounds and carvings
State of conservation	Moderate
Level of protection	Asset of Cultural Interest
Location	Arteara
Duration of the visit	60 minutes
Difficulty	Moderate-high*
*Irregular terrain with slopes	

The **Necropolis of Arteara** is one of the largest pre-Hispanic cemeteries in the Canary Islands, occupying an extensive area two kilometres long by one kilometre wide. The choice of this site as an eternal resting place was no accident.

It occupies the volcanic malpaís (badlands) produced by a landslide in the hill called **Morro Garito**, forming a pyramid-shaped scar which is still visible today. In this way, the aborigines made use of a totally unproductive stretch of wild terrain. According to the datings available at the time of writing this guide, the cemetery seems to have been in use between the eighth and twelfth centuries AD.

The **Arteara Necropolis** is composed of over a thousand tumuli or burial mounds, funerary structures consisting of two parts: the pit in which the



▲ Delimitation of the Necropolis of Arteara.

body was deposited and a pile or structure of stones rising substantially above the ground. At Arteara the tumuli are of different shapes and sizes, as they have to adapt to the particular contours of the terrain.

The great majority of these burial mounds accommodated a single individual, though a few cases of multiple graves are found. The funerary space was surrounded by a monumental wall which enclosed the whole perimeter of the cemetery, a physical separation between the world of the living and the world of the dead, and perhaps between the profane and the sacred.



▲ Detail of the entrance to Túmulo del Rey in the Necropolis of Arteara.

One of the most notable burial mounds is the one known as the **Túmulo del Rey** or "King's Tomb". It owes this name to a curious phenomenon that occurs at the equinoxes, when the sun rises over the foothills of the Amurga Massif, leaving the whole cemetery in semi-darkness apart from one tomb, that of the "king".

Inside it the **remains of a male who died between the ages of 16 and 18** were documented; he was wrapped in a shroud made from reeds. The funerary bundle was dated to between the eighth and eleventh centuries AD.

## Umiaya, the lost temple

The ethnohistorical sources or chronicles describe numerous aspects of the life and death of the indigenous population. However, if there is one subject on which they dwell in especially prolific detail, it is undoubtedly the system of beliefs and religious practices.

Among the topics highlighted in these sources are symbolic and religious elements, probably because of how alien and incomprehensible they seemed to the chroniclers. So for Gran Canaria the various sources mention the existence of **two Sacred Mountains which apparently divided the island into two "districts" or "parishes"**. Paradoxically, the sacred mountains cited are not always the same. Whilst the writers unanimously mention Tirma as one of the aborigines' sacred spaces, they alternate between **Amagro and Umiaya** for the other.

Umiaya was located in Tirajana, in the Riscos Blancos area. The lack of archaeological remains in that area and the fact that there is no such place name today suggest that it was incorporated into those documents at a late stage and is therefore an incorrect piece of information. Recently, however, the compilation of various administrative documents has made it possible to reinterpret this space and consider it not as a single specific place but as a broad territory.



► Structures located on top of La Fortaleza of Amurga.

This sacred space of Umiaya would have been located on the **heights of Amurga**, combining within it important archaeological sites linked to ritual, such as **La Fortaleza and the Almogarén (place of prayer) of Amurga**.

According to the latest archaeological explorations, **this territory in which Umiaya now stands** may have been in use from the eighth to the fifteenth century as a place of community congregation, connected to pre-Hispanic religiosity.

Was it by chance that **the last Canarian resistance fighters took refuge at Ansite**, that is, within Amurga? Some historians and archaeologists believe it was not. Choosing Ansite would have enabled them not only to defend themselves physically, since it was very rugged and inaccessible terrain – a natural stronghold – but also a place where they would receive the protection of their gods.



◀ Almogarén of Amurga.

▼ Perimeter closing wall of La Fortaleza of Amurga.



## The settlement of Punta Mujeres



Function	Above-ground settlement
What there is to see	Living space
State of conservation	Good
Level of protection	Municipal Archaeological Charter
Location	Paseo de Las Meloneras
Duration of the visit	15 minutes
Difficulty	Very low

What is **now the village of Punta Mujeres** was part of a larger settlement which probably disappeared as a result of the explosion in urban development that took place from the 1970s, driven by tourism. Only a few hundred metres away, the remains of a domestic space, which **was in use between the ninth and tenth centuries AD and had disappeared under the sand, were documented in 1993.**

The site is now fenced off and to visit it requires applying to the Island Council of Gran Canaria for access, although it can be seen and enjoyed from the fence.

► Delimitation of the settlement of Punta Mujeres.



It is thought that there were numerous indigenous settlements dotted around the south coast of the island, many of which have not withstood the passage of time. Some examples are the remains found in **Pasito Blanco, Playa de Las Mujeres and Montaña Arena.**

Current lines of research indicate that the inhabitants of the coastal settlements devoted themselves to intensive exploitation of marine resources. Until 2001, when the archaeological work began, the site was completely buried, and its walls protruded just a few centimetres above ground level.



▲ Settlement of Punta Mujeres.

The settlement consists of at least three clusters on the surface, with a monumental 16 x 14 m structure standing out above them. While it has a circular ground plan on the outside, the interior plan is quadrilateral, with a bedroom opening towards the east. This floor layout is due to the fact that a circular or oval enclosure wall was added to the internal structure. The space in between was filled with small stones.

This indigenous architectural system of thick walls, which is repeated all over the island, not only explains the preservation of the aboriginal dwellings for centuries, but also improves the habitability of the dwellings by artificially recreating the natural conditions of caves, in which the temperature and humidity hardly vary.

## What is there to see in the area?

The importance of the **Maspalomas Lighthouse**, designed by **Juan León y Castillo**, goes beyond the strictly historical and heritage dimension.

► Maspalomas Lighthouse.



Its enormous tower rises to a height of nearly 55 metres above the building that contains it and some 60 metres from the ground. **For a hundred years it was the only lighthouse available on the entire western side of the island, from Maspalomas to Sardina de Gáldar.**

So its light beam, in a semicircular sweep extending for 20 nautical miles (approx. 37 km), has served as a guide to mariners sailing the Atlantic Ocean since 1890, the year its construction was completed.

The **Lighthouse Keeper's House**, which surrounds the tower, is a regular square inspired by traditional **Canarian dwellings**, with the rooms distributed around a yard. The four façades of the house are eclectic in style, with openings and structural elements framed in stone quarried from the **slopes of El Tablero**.

Looking towards the sea, the most striking element is a jetty or pier built to deliver materials to a place which at that time was completely isolated. Looking towards the sky, the glass lantern or dome nearly 4 metres in diameter houses the optical apparatus which emits a characteristic signal reflected on nautical charts.

Each lighthouse has a specific signal, enabling sailors, before the advent of satellite navigation, to determine their geographical position.

The Maspalomas Lighthouse emits a group of three white flashes every 13 seconds.



▲ Maspalomas Lighthouse in the 1930s. FEDAC photographic collection.

## The settlement of El Llanillo

Function	Above-ground settlement and funerary area
What there is to see	Living spaces, burial mound and structures
State of conservation	Good
Level of protection	Asset of Cultural Interest
Location	Las Pimientas Beach (or Llano de los Militares)
Duration of the visit	20 minutes
Difficulty	Low

The **settlement of El Llanillo** is composed of two areas. The most interesting space is fenced off, although it can be visited by applying to the Island Council of Gran Canaria for access. It is possible to enjoy it thanks to a viewing point opened in the fence.

**Two enormous houses have survived.** The one closer to the coast stands out because an initial domestic space subsequently had another attached to it like an anteroom. During the excavation process, the remains of newborn ovicaprids were found on either side of the hearth which dominates the house (it is very difficult to tell the difference between sheep and goats, so archaeologists use the term ovicaprid).



► Delimitation of the settlement of El Llanillo.

It was confirmed that they had not been removed or processed for consumption. **Were they placed there as a foundational ritual or a way of protecting the home?** The second dwelling consists of two adjoining structures. One is notable for a stone seat against the wall and in the other there are signs of reuse in historical times, including a white mortar floor.

Attached to the latter house there is a circular structure interpreted as an oven and related to the period when it was reused in historical times. To the east, in turn, there is another circular structure inside which numerous remains of ovicaprids and stone tools were found. It has not yet been possible to clarify its function.

At the western end of the complex lies an **enormous tumulus which has lost its covering**. The pit, which is more than 4 m long by 1 m wide, is still visible, and so are some of the stones that covered it. Inside it the fragmentary remains of several individuals were found, and it has therefore been interpreted as an ossuary. We must bear in mind that the surrounding area has been radically altered by being used as an agricultural space; an example is the **adjacent funerary complex of Lomo Galeón (thirteenth century AD)**, in which only a few graves have survived. Did this hypothetical ossuary “serve” the Lomo Galeón cemetery? Does it have something to do with the **vanished tumular necropolis of Arguineguín?**



▲ Burial mound in the settlement of El Llanillo.

## The settlement of El Pajar

Function	Above-ground settlement
What there is to see	Living space and walls
State of conservation	Poor
Level of protection	Asset of Cultural Interest
Location	El Pajar, Arguineguín
Duration of the visit	15 minutes
Difficulty	Moderate (unmarked path)

On the left shore of the **Bay of Santa Águeda**, in the vicinity of its picturesque hermitage, are the remains of an important indigenous settlement.

*Le Canarien* describes an enormous village from which **Gadifer de la Salle** had to flee after his unsuccessful attempt to conquer the island. There, according to the French writer, he came across a “great” (gran) number of men, of “great” strength and “great” courage. Some historians hypothesize that this description of the event by Gadifer may possibly **have turned the island of Canaria into the island of Gran Canaria (“Great” Canary).**



◀ View of the Hermitage of Santa Águeda

It is now thought that this ancient settlement, **Arganeguín or Areaganigui, occupied the district of El Pajar and continued up the ravine, around the bed of the Arguineguín Ravine.** All that is visible today, however, is some partial remains of the stone dwellings that made up one of the largest settlements on the island.

Some structures must remain hidden under the subsoil and the current buildings, while many others will have disappeared through agricultural activity, as there used to be numerous banana plantations in the area.

▶ Archaeological site of El Pajar



One of the dwellings was excavated in the late 1970s. At the time, it represented an important breakthrough in our knowledge of the pre-Hispanic world, as there is evidence that it suffered a fire while it was inhabited, forcing its occupants to abandon their household goods, which were recovered in situ. For the first time it was possible to document the layout of a home and reconstruct the daily life of the ancient Canarians using scientific methods.



▲ Detail of a wall of an old Aboriginal house.

It is known that **there was an enormous necropolis associated with this settlement, in the style of the Necropolis of Arteara**. Today no traces remain of that cemetery, located at Punta del Perchel, but the memory of it is preserved in a description by René Verneau, a French doctor and anthropologist who visited the island at the end of the nineteenth century.

## NOTABLE PIECES: PINTADERAS



Two fragments of a square pintadera which still has the base of the appendage. The field, or inner surface, is defined by a triangle in relief with impressions of angular section and an incised or hollowed-out triangle. The pintadera shows traces of orange-coloured clay and burnished areas as a result of rubbing the piece repeatedly to obtain smooth, shiny surfaces.

These remains were handed in by a private individual at the Canarian Museum in 1997. They came from inside a house in the **Chamoriscán Ravine**.



Pintadera of similar shape to that found in **Agüimes**. It may be one of the 30 pintaderas located in the vicinity of the historic centre of **Agüimes** during agricultural work.

Although pintaderas are an element of indigenous material culture that is only present on the island of Gran Canaria, they are undoubtedly a symbol of the Canary Islands as a whole.

Pintaderas are pieces of terracotta consisting of an **appendage and a body**, whose surface (field) is given a geometric shape: a triangle, a rectangle, a square, a circle, etc. Various techniques are used to decorate the field, by representing a great variety of forms, which makes each pintadera a unique work of art. So by hollowing out, relief or a combination of both they are adorned using, once again, geometric shapes (spirals, dots, lines, triangles, etc.).

The great majority of the pintaderas for which the context in which they were found is known are related to domestic settings. Traditionally, because of their appendages and their varied decoration, they have been associated with stamps.

Their use has been keenly debated. **Were they devices for decorating the body in the manner of tattoos? Marks to designate ownership? Family symbols?** The fact is that at present we still do not know what their specific function may have been, and this constitutes one of the great unsolved mysteries of the pre-Hispanic world of Gran Canaria.



## NOTABLE PIECES: IDOLS

Idol, 25 mm high x 26 mm wide, decorated with small incisions probably made with fingernails. The head, lower limbs and left hand are missing. While the right breast is very markedly represented, the left breast is not preserved or is not represented at all.

It was recovered in 1964 at La Montaña de Huesos or Udera Mountain (Rosiana), one of the most populated areas of Tirajana.



In the past, as now, the world of beliefs was given material expression in many different ways, from great cultic spaces, now churches and formerly sacred mountains, to figurative representations of divinity, now statues of virgins and formerly idols.

From the nineteenth century onwards there was a growing interest in the aboriginal past of the islands, and one of the elements that attracted most attention was the terracotta idols. An example is the **popular Idol of Tara**.



These clay figurines **have traditionally been associated with women and with human fertility cults.** In the earliest little idols salvaged from the past, female attributes were strongly emphasized and plump bodies were represented. Both these features, in **most neolithic cultures, were associated with better health and a higher probability of bearing strong, healthy children.**

Pre-Hispanic religion was very pragmatic. **They worshipped positive natural phenomena, those that enabled the community to prosper (water, the sun, the moon, etc.) and feared negative natural phenomena, those that prevented its survival (earthquakes, floods, etc.).** According to the chroniclers, one of the main indigenous rites was performed at the almogarén (place of prayer), the object of which may have been to ask for rain.

Is there anything as essential as the water that irrigates the fields and quenches the thirst of animals and humans? Yes: **the fertility of women. If women did not bear strong children, capable of surviving the difficulties of childbirth and the diseases** that could befall them in the first years of life, the community would not be able to survive in the long term.



◀ Pregnant woman idol.

Nowadays, as well as those female idols, numerous cases have been documented of **figurines whose sex has been impossible to determine** and above all a large number of idols in the form of animals.

So now specialists in the archaeology and history of the Canary Islands are wondering whether all the clay figurines are a material expression of the same religious thought. In other words, are we dealing with another type of phenomenon? Protection for the home? Mere decorative elements? Toys?



▲ Woman idol (La Fortaleza de Santa Lucía de Tirajana).

## NOTABLE PIECES: CERAMICS

**Ceramics are the most common material we can find in archaeological sites.** However, they are most often preserved as fragments; complete pieces are very rarely found.

The **indigenous ceramics of Gran Canaria are very different** from those present on other islands. One of their most striking features is their decoration. As well as ceramics decorated with printed and incised motifs, generally geometric, the pieces that stand out above all are those with painted decoration, mainly in red ochre.

The **profuse decorations of the ceramics have been interpreted as elements expressing identity, associated with local groups.** In other words, it is thought that each group had representative motifs, and that the women, in turn, extended the motifs to other groups following their marriage, since bioanthropological analysis of bones has led to the conclusion that the severe wear observed in the hands of aboriginal women is explained by the repeated fine movements typical of craft activities.



► Pot located in the deposit of the Fortaleza of Amurga.

The ceramics of Gran Canaria can be divided into two major groups. On the one hand, **there are domestic items (pots, plates, etc.)** characterized by their robustness and simplicity, suited to their function.



▲ Decorated pottery recovered from the site of La Montaña of Udera (Rosiana).

On the other, another type of ceramics is found, more finely made and less crude, and usually accompanied by decoration. The latter seems to have become popular between the tenth and the thirteenth century, at the same time as the coast was beginning to be systematically populated, stone houses appeared and burials in graves and cists became widespread.



► Ceramic located in the site of the Llanillo

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