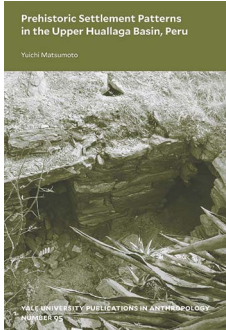


ANTIQUITY 2022 Vol. 96 (387): 776–778  
<https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2022.41>

YUICHI MATSUMOTO. 2020. *Prehistoric settlement patterns in the Upper Huallaga Basin, Peru* (Yale University Publications in Anthropology 95). New Haven (CT): Yale University Press; 978-0-913516-31-7 paperback \$35.



This book examines the pre-Colombian settlement patterns of the Upper Huallaga Basin of Peru. Strategically located at the intersection of the Andean highlands and the Amazon drainage in the department of Huánuco, this region of the Andes has produced some of the most outstanding Andean prehistoric finds. At the beginning of the 1960s, the University of Tokyo Scientific Expedition initiated several archaeological fieldwork projects in the area. Excavations at the Kotosh site revealed a sequence of occupations spanning approximately 2500 years, from the Late Preceramic Period (2500–1600 BC) to the Early Intermediate Period (50 BC–?). The excavations at Kotosh were groundbreaking for a

number of reasons: they exposed the oldest permanent temples in the Andean cordillera during the Late Preceramic Period (2500–1600 BC); they documented the emergence of pottery and sedentism in the highlands during the Early Initial Period (1600–1200 BC); and they revealed the existence of Chavín-style temples and artefacts during the Early Horizon (700–250 BC) outside of the Chavín heartland. These discoveries transformed Andean prehistory because they contradicted the then widely accepted idea that the Early Horizon site of Chavín de Huántar had laid the cultural foundations (i.e. temples, pottery, iconography) from which later Andean civilisations flourished. Unfortunately, despite these important and exciting discoveries, archaeological research in the Upper Huallaga Basin came to an almost complete halt between the 1970s and the end of the 1990s due to political unrest in the region.

Yuichi Matsumoto was among the first archaeologists to return to the area to conduct a field survey in 2001. This book synthesises those survey results. The first chapter discusses the archaeological significance of the Upper Huallaga Basin in Andean prehistory. The second outlines the research design and field methods. Matsumoto acknowledges the limitations of the research strategy. The paucity of surface architecture and the disturbance of settlements by modern human activities, for instance, often prevented Matsumoto from gathering information about site size and function. As a result, the author relied predominantly on self-collected surface ceramic sherds to identify, organise chronologically, and plot on a map the surveyed settlements. The research design therefore establishes the culture-historical focus of the remainder of the book.

Following a short description of the chronological sequence of the region in Chapter 3, Matsumoto introduces, in Chapter 4, the 51 sites surveyed in 2001, including 35 newly recorded ones. The description of the settlements follows a uniform and somewhat repetitive framework, listing their location, natural setting, modern land use, characteristics, surface

artefacts (mainly pottery), chronological positioning, and antecedents, if any. The chapter is illustrated abundantly with black and white images of settlements and surface ceramic collections. The latter are particularly useful as they allow an appreciation of the stylistic variability of the ceramic chronology.

In Chapter 5, Matsumoto proceeds with a synthesis and interpretation of the entire settlement pattern sequence of the Upper Huallaga Basin. As the evidence gathered during the 2001 survey is mostly spatiotemporal, Matsumoto integrates into the discussion data from earlier and later excavations in Huánuco, as well as evidence recovered in neighbouring regions (mainly Ancash and Junín). Matsumoto argues that throughout the culture-historical sequence, communities of the Upper Huallaga oscillated between political integration and fragmentation due to the fluctuating influence of a succession of competing ritual centres. A few relatively small, coeval and shifting autonomous political units were engaged in peer-polity interactions throughout most of the prehistoric sequence. This chapter also addresses a few ongoing debates in Andean archaeology—notably, the nature of the pan-regional distribution of the Chavín style during the Early Horizon. The author notes that the abrupt settlement pattern shift and the sudden rise of new stylistic canons in the Upper Huallaga during this period (700–250 BC) could not have resulted from a gradual, local development produced by widespread peer-polity interactions among several coeval centres across the Andes (contra Kembel & Rick 2004: 55). Rather, Matsumoto argues that these radical cultural transformations resulted from a rapidly expanding foreign religious ideology emanating from the site of Chavín de Huántar (e.g. Burger 1988).

The final chapter of the book outlines areas for future research in the Upper Huallaga in relation to broader Andean archaeological issues. In addition to the main chapters, the volume contains five useful appendices, including a reevaluation of the radiocarbon chronology sequence of the region, three site reports of excavations conducted before and after the 2001 survey, and a retrospective essay by Yoshio Onuki, one of the pioneers of Upper Huallaga archaeology.

Overall, the book provides a welcome and much needed synthesis of the entire settlement pattern sequence of the Upper Huallaga Basin. In addition to new settlement pattern data, the volume condenses much of the archaeological knowledge on the region assembled over the years. It therefore represents a good introduction to the archaeology of the Upper Huallaga Basin and will prove useful for comparative purposes with other regional occupational sequences. Nevertheless, the book has a few shortcomings. Notably, with its culture-historical emphasis, the volume describes cultural patterns and diachronic changes more than it explains them. The future addition of some theoretical discussion of key issues would certainly enrich the interpretative framework laid out by the author. Most significantly, the design of the project originally sought to better understand the settlement patterns of the earlier segment of the occupational sequence. As a result, the 2001 survey only targeted the *yunga* ecological zone (1800–2300m asl), where settlements exhibiting early temple architecture had been discovered. In neighbouring regions, sites prior to the Late Preceramic Period (<2500 BC) and post-dating the Early Intermediate Period (c. 50 BC–? to AD 1532) are typically located at higher elevations. As Matsumoto acknowledges, the investigation

probably overlooked large portions of Andean prehistory. If the interpretation of the early occupational sequence generally stands on solid ground, the discussion surrounding the last 1500 years of Andean prehistory, however, remains highly speculative and raises more questions than it answers. In this regard, I concur with Matsumoto's closing statement that "the volume should be considered an opportunity for researchers to plan and carry out more systematic investigations that obtain new archaeological data" (p. 129).

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ALEXIS MANTHA

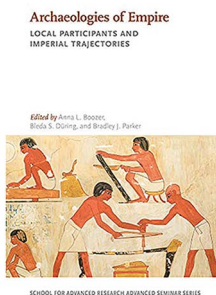
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ANTIQUITY 2022 Vol. 96 (387): 778–780  
<https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2022.45>

ANNA L. BOOZER, BLEDA S. DÜRING & BRADLEY J. PARKER (ed.). 2020. *Archaeologies of empire: local participants and imperial trajectories*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press; 978-0-8263-6175-2 paperback \$39.95.



This robust, timely and impressive volume begins with an observation that the considerable scholarly investigation of empires both ancient and more recent is unsurprising; legacies of historical imperialism have shaped the early twenty-first century world. Moreover, we are reminded, as a discipline that adopts multi-scalar perspectives and offers access to the people and developments not recorded in written histories, archaeology is uniquely positioned to probe questions about how empires come into being, how they behave, how they transform the landscapes and communities they seek to subjugate, and how, in turn, those places and people shape imperial states. Yet, throughout the volume, the editors and

contributing authors also make a persuasive case that despite so much scholarly attention, existing comparative models in archaeology fall short, flattening the messiness, the heterogeneity and the longevity of empires.

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