

es claro cómo traducen estas secuencias cronológicas a nivel local. Otro punto para resaltar es la elección de utilizar las impresiones del explorador Hiram Bingham en su travesía entre los valles Majes a Sihuas a inicios del siglo veinte, donde indica que esta zona es desértica y hace comentarios sobre “los conductores de los burros” para mencionar a los pobladores locales (p. 91). Quizá una búsqueda bibliográfica del tráfico caravanero o uso de tambos durante la colonia y la república, así como conversaciones con la misma gente local, habría podido proveer una visión menos colonialista del paisaje, del territorio y de la gente que caracterizó a los discursos de los viajeros o “descubridores de ruinas”.

En el capítulo 4, Gonzáles La Rosa, Jennings, Spence-Morrow y Yépez Álvarez realizan análisis espaciales del sitio en donde identifican “espacios públicos” versus “espacios privados”, grupos arquitectónicos y análisis de accesos, entre otros. A base de estos análisis, los autores concluyen que había dos tipos de comunidades cohabitando este sitio, cada una con distintos niveles de organización y cohesión social que se expresan y materializan en la arquitectura. A pesar de que ofrecen una discusión sobre las categorías utilizadas para identificar espacios públicos versus privados en Quilcapampa, esa distinción pudo ser más clara ya que son categorías occidentales culturalmente condensadas, como lo ha demostrado la arqueología antropológica y las discusiones teóricas feministas de distintas genealogías.

En el capítulo 5, los autores Jennings, Rizzuto y Yépez Álvarez presentan las descripciones de las excavaciones y los resultados de fechados utilizando dos modelos cronológicos bayesianos que revelan dos períodos de ocupación simultánea entre la zona central y la periferia, pero de distinta duración, inicio y abandono. Los otros capítulos, del 6 al 9, están basados en la discusión de análisis cerámico, lítico, de fauna y botánico de las excavaciones. Los autores — Huamán López, Biwer, Melton, Alaica y Quiñonez Cuzcano, entre otros ya nombrados— son los que analizan estos materiales. Se discuten a detalle estos materiales, llegando a varias conclusiones sobre las filiaciones de los habitantes de Quilcapampa con lugares y regiones de la costa sur o de Ayacucho, indicando que estos pobladores que ocuparon esta colonia fueron identidades “frontera”, tuvieron acceso independiente a obsidiana, entre otras características de su vida social. También realizan la ubicación y análisis de las piedras pintadas, el acceso a una dieta diversa (incluyendo chuño negro y blanco), las preferencias culinarias, el uso de árboles y las prácticas agrícolas. Por otro lado, el análisis lítico se compara con los conjuntos de materiales de Cerro Baúl. A pesar de

que, como indican los autores, aún falta realizar más investigaciones, es un informe completo que arroja evidencias para comprender a mayor detalle la ocupación de este sitio.

Finalmente, en el capítulo 10, los autores-editores concluyen que Quilcapampa fue habitado por una población con una larga trayectoria migratoria que inicialmente salió de la capital hacia los valles costeros luego de una reestructuración radical y de la región Nazca hacia el sur debido a los conflictos por el incremento de aridez, llegando a esta región sureña a finales del horizonte medio. Pero la influencia wari habría llegado con anterioridad al Valle de Majes en la costa arequipeña, influenciada por bienes exóticos e ideas a través de las redes de caminos en las pampas y desiertos que conectaron estos valles con Nazca, y desde ahí, hasta Ayacucho. Algunas décadas después, y bajo un contexto de crisis, reestructuración y aumento de violencia, la expansión de la población y el crecimiento de la diferenciación social fueron los aspectos que determinaron un segundo período de influencia wari en los Andes. Quilcapampa entonces fue ocupado brevemente después de un largo recorrido proveniente de norte a sur a través del Valle de Nazca, a mediados del siglo nueve, y fue abandonado por razones aún desconocidas.

En conclusión, este libro es un estudio del asentamiento de Quilcapampa que condensa discusiones actuales sobre la naturaleza de la influencia wari en los Andes y las distintas perspectivas e investigaciones sobre este fenómeno.

Paso de la Amada: An Early Mesoamerican Ceremonial Center. Richard G. Lesure, editor. 2021. Monumenta Archaeologica 45. Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, Los Angeles. xxiii + 645 pp. \$125 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-950446-15-5. \$72 (ebook), ISBN 978-1-950446-20-9.

Reviewed by Guy David Hepp, California State University, San Bernardino

In this new volume on the archaeology of Paso de la Amada, located in southern Mesoamerica's Socusco region, editor Richard Lesure and ten contributors present detailed information for several key contexts at the site. Intended as the first in a series of reports, this monograph focuses on several mounds, test pits, trenches, and off-mound areas. The well-known Mounds 6 and 7, as Lesure and coauthors John E. Clark and Michael Blake point out in their introductory chapter, have been the subject of previous publications and will be the focus of a future monograph in the series.

This hefty volume is divided into six parts with an appendix. Part I reintroduces readers to the objectives guiding the research at Paso de la Amada since the mid-1970s. Part II details the excavations at Mounds 1, 12, and 32, as well as a few other mound-testing and off-mound excavations. The section culminates with Chapter 7, dedicated to the “constructed landscape” surrounding Paso de la Amada. This chapter presents data for one of Lesure’s primary social interpretations in the book, which is that domestic life at the site during the Locona phase (1700–1500 cal BC) was organized according to clusters of small structures and their occupants surrounding the larger homes of community leaders. Part III is rich in data and is dedicated to specific artifact types recovered from these excavations. The excellent imagery here will prove useful to researchers working in other regions and is one of the volume’s major contributions. Part IV follows with a discussion of specialized ceramic studies, including Chapter 21 by Terry G. Powis, Lesure, Blake, Louis Grivetti, and Nilesh W. Gaikwad, which presents mass spectrometry analyses seeking evidence of maize, manioc, chili, and cacao. Although previous results and analyses of early cacao use in the region published by Powis and colleagues are not bolstered by new findings here, the team does report fifteen samples bearing *Capsicum* and providing “the earliest evidence of chili consumption in well-dated Mesoamerican archaeological contexts” (p. 467). Part V contains a burial catalog and evidence of skeletal health and demographic patterns. Part VI offers a selection of synthetic essays by Lesure and several collaborators, including Blake, Clark, R. J. Sinensky, Thomas Wake, and Kristin Hoffmeister; these chapters consider the evidence for social inequality, changes in subsistence, and occupational history. The volume’s appendix provides the curious with tabulated contextual data for specific excavation areas.

This book is, at heart, an extensive site report. It maintains a focus on organization over narrative flow that can be seen, for example, in Chapter 13, where the discussion of carbonized plant remains occupies less than a page. Incidentally, the poor preservation of macrobotanical remains seems to be common among sites of this age, particularly in coastal Mesoamerica. However, the volume’s focus on organization is not a weakness. The available data are here, and if a reader chooses to interpret them differently than the authors, they have the means to do so. In fact, volume contributors have indicated where they do not share interpretations. In the introduction, for example, Lesure and Clark clarify their differing interpretations of Barbara Voorhies’s model of Archaic-period settlement in the Soconusco region.

As mentioned, this volume really shines when it comes to imagery. Some reconstructions of pottery and figurines will be familiar to readers who have followed the Soconusco research in the past. But never, to my knowledge, has such a detailed and high-quality collection of imagery for the site appeared in one place. One might even say that very rarely has such a rich visual catalog of Early Formative materials appeared *anywhere*. In addition to the quantity and diversity of artifact drawings, photographs, site maps, vessel profiles, and figures illustrating interpretive models, some of the imagery is also innovative. Artifact photographs accompany schematic drawings to provide the best of both worlds in terms of realistic depictions and comparative data. One of Paso de la Amada’s most remarkable finds—a large ceramic statuette with probable obsidian inlay eyes, known as the “Mokaya Matron”—is reconstructed to breathtaking effect in Figure 16.8 with the help of artist Ayax Moreno.

The social interpretations of life at Paso de la Amada include an intriguing take on variation in domestic structure size. Lesure (Chapter 7) infers from groups of smaller buildings accompanying a few larger houses that settlement clusters of “ordinary” residences surrounded those of emerging community leaders, whose lives were subject to varying degrees of public observation. These interpretations supplement Brian Hayden’s aggrandizer models proposed since the late 1980s for the emergence of social complexity in the region. They also do not seem to entertain any serious refinements of those models, such as those by Rosemary Joyce, proposing that the agency of social collectives and women are essential considerations. At times, the assumption that community leaders were individualistic men is implicit, as with references to an asymmetrical bridewealth system as a critical vector of emerging social complexity (p. 578). With discussions of the “headman’s house,” this assumption is explicit (p. 147). Women are depicted here more as symbols than as people. For example, Lesure seems more comfortable interpreting the Mokaya Matron as a “mythological entity” incorporating “themes of social power, fecundity, debt, and obligation,” rather than as an emerging leader herself. One might argue that the evidence is equivocal enough to leave that possibility open, at the very least (p. 572).

In sum, the interpretive components of the book do not push the envelope very far from existing models proposed for the site and region, save for the argument for a multifamily community organization that differs from the “nuclear family” model proposed by Kent Flannery and Joyce Marcus for the Valley of Oaxaca. Yet the sheer amount of contextual information reported, the excellent imagery, and the rich detail

added to the published literature for early village life in Mesoamerica combine to make this volume indispensable for the scholar of the Early Formative period.

Olmec Lithic Economy at San Lorenzo. Kenneth G. Hirth and Ann Cyphers. 2020. University Press of Colorado, Louisville. xxiv + 456 pp. \$95.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-64642-056-8.

Reviewed by Jeffrey P. Blomster, George Washington University

The Gulf Olmec of San Lorenzo, Veracruz, engage scholars focused on early sociopolitical complexity and interregional interaction. Although many Olmec “firsts” remain debated, from specific icons to the site’s position as an urban center, authors Kenneth Hirth and Ann Cyphers provide compelling evidence for the presence at San Lorenzo of Mesoamerica’s earliest specialized obsidian blade workshop. It is difficult to imagine two colleagues better suited to exploring Olmec lithic economy, because they bring decades of systematic research on ancient economies (Hirth) and intensive excavations at San Lorenzo (Cyphers). Hirth and Cyphers marshal an enormous and diverse database of 69,223 flaked stones that spans the site’s millennium (1800–800 cal BC) of occupation, which peaked during the San Lorenzo B phase (SLB) from 1200 to 1000 BC. Wisely eschewing polemics on Olmec complexity, they establish San Lorenzo as a large capital covering 775 ha with a centralized political system governed by rulers and a nobility, supported by a network of lesser nobility at secondary centers. With a mean population of nearly 12,000, the site’s SLB peak also coincides with the depletion of lacustrine resources and the reduction in availability of a key raw material—obsidian—that, intriguingly, was used almost exclusively in San Lorenzo’s lithic economy.

The authors frame lithic economy as the procurement, production, distribution, and consumption of obsidian tools within and between domestic and institutional spheres. Their most substantive contributions encompass production, given their focus on the SLB obsidian pressure blade workshop at Puerto Malpica. This workshop was located advantageously at the southern tip of San Lorenzo Island for both riverine and overland transportation routes: it was a place through which all arrivals had to pass. Prior to and concurrent with this SLB workshop, most obsidian cutting tools were made on a household basis by percussion. The authors persuasively argue that pressure blades represent a specialized craft, with pre-SLB blades arriving as trade

items, probably as part of the same networks as nodular obsidian cores destined for percussion.

With 30% of SLB flaked tools comprising pressure blades made by probable part-time specialists, the authors suggest that the loss of household economic independence was a response to obsidian shortages; pressure blade production more efficiently used obsidian than did percussion technology. Although the San Lorenzo elite supervised some types of craft production (such as basalt carving at the “Red Palace”), the authors propose an “independent crafting model” for obsidian pressure blade production: “entrepreneurial” artisans obtained raw material and distributed their products without elite involvement. In contrast to the traditional sequential removal of blades, which left a polyhedral core, the authors outline an alternative process employed at Malpica and previously unrecognized at Early Formative sites: the progressive production strategy, whereby the original blocky nodule was prepared to remove pressure blades early in the process, leaving half-cylindrical cores. The SLB scarcity of obsidian, however, precludes the discovery of such cores at Malpica because exhausted cores would have been further reduced using bipolar techniques. The authors usefully outline the full sequence and types of pressure blades that archaeologists can readily identify as evidence of the progressive production strategy.

To explore the procurement, distribution, and consumption of obsidian, the authors sourced a large sample of their temporally and spatially diverse dataset, including a variety of contexts from San Lorenzo’s core, periphery, and hinterland sites. They document eleven obsidian sources used for percussion tools and ten for pressure blades during the SLB; the importance of distant sources such as El Chayal, Guatemala, and Ucareo, Michoacán, indicates that “resource provisioning was not structured purely in energetic terms” (p. 146). In contrast to the variety of sources evident in most SLB contexts, the Malpica crafters focused primarily (92%) on one (and most distant) obsidian source: Ucareo. The authors propose that obsidian nodules primarily moved through short relays in long networks of household-to-household exchange. With no local obsidian sources near San Lorenzo, such exchange mechanisms mitigate the distance between closer but still remote sources such as Paredón and the farthest source, Ucareo; thus, it was the ready availability of Ucareo obsidian in such networks, and not crafter preference, that led to its near-exclusive use at Malpica. To understand the movement of Ucareo obsidian, the authors rely primarily on pioneering 1970s literature from Oaxaca rather than more recently sourced obsidian databases from Oaxaca’s highlands and coast.