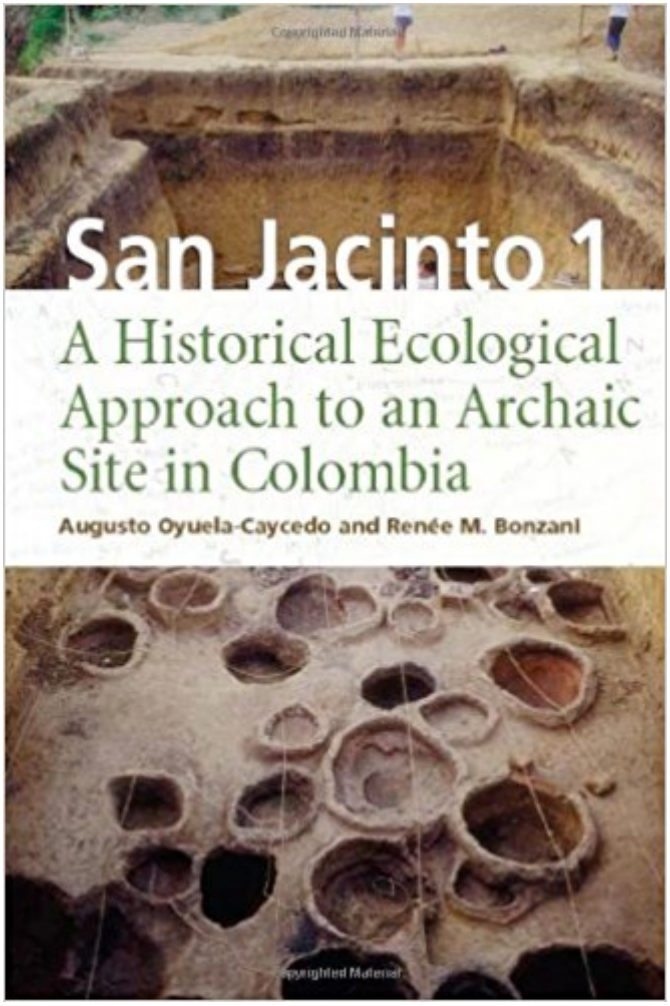
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San Jacinto 1: A Historical Ecological Approach To An Archaic Site In Colombia



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Synopsis

A significant work of neotropical archaeology presenting evidence of early hunter-gatherers who produced fiber-tempered ceramics.Few topics in the development of humans have prompted as much interest and debate as those of the origins of pottery and agriculture. The first appearance of pottery in any area of the world is heralded as a new stage in the progress of humans toward a more complex arrangement of thought and society. Cultures are defined and separated by the occurrence of pottery types, and the association of pottery with mobility and agriculture continues to drive research in anthropology. For these reasons, the discovery of the earliest fiber-tempered pottery in the New World and carbonized remains identified as maize kernels is exciting.San Jacinto 1 is the archaeological site located in the savanna region of the north coast of Colombia, South America, where excavations by led by the authors have revealed evidence of mobile hunter-gatherers who made pottery and who collected and processed plants from 6000 to 5000 B.P. The site is believed to show an early human adaptation to the tropics in the context of significant environmental changes that were taking place at the time.This volume presents the data gathered and the interpretations made during excavation and analysis of the San Jacinto 1 site. By examining the social activities of a human population in a highly seasonal environment, it adds greatly to our contemporary understanding of the historical ecology of the tropics. Study of the artifacts excavated at the site allows a window into the early processes of food production in the New World. Finally, the data reveals that the origins of ceramic technology in the tropics were tied to a reduction in mobility and an increase in territoriality and are widely applicable to similar studies of sedentism and agriculture worldwide.

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"An outstanding summary of the important San Jacinto site. . . . Few sites in the Americas offer this kind of window into early human complexity. . . .The authors have written a remarkable synthesis of the ecological and behavioral issues surrounding early pottery making and intensive plant manipulation in the lowland tropics of Colombia. Geographers, anthropologists, botanists, ecologists, Latin Americanists, and archaeologists will find this an essential source of information on a key region of early South American civilization."&#151Tom D. Dillehay, author of Monte Verde"The vividness of this account is remarkable, based on a convincing analysis painstakingly justified at each step. Highly recommended."&#151CHOICE

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