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Early village dwellings and the reproduction of South Andean formative communities

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Agriculture was adopted by NW Argentina inhabitants around BP 3500 within a complex process of macroregional population reorganization, economic intensification and increase of territoriality. This transition was followed by a rapid introduction of large and solid buildings that became the major and most visible features in the village outlays after BP 2500. Thousands of multi round-room compounds were built and inhabited by several generations all over several high valleys, like Tafi, Anfama, Yocavil and Cajón creating continuous and centrifugal village landscapes.

Previous explanations on NW Argentina early villages have stressed the adaptive arrangements of functionalist systems, therefore understanding the economic principles of settlement patterns organization as the paramount study object of archaeological explanation. Applying spatial archaeology scales, the study of the “micro” scale was led to a descriptive narrative and a secondary role, dismissing both people practices and agency of material settings and things in the constitution of the social relationships that defined new ways of life born in the formative transition. **But: Which is the role of daily material settings for the reproduction of social practices? How were these contexts built by people? How did they, in turn, build people as social personas? What are these contexts highlighting? How could we understand the overall process from the perspective of houses and households?**

A closer analysis of one case could give a clearer view of the early village context of this region in order to understand the role of materiality in the constitution of social relationships in early villages. We make a brief presentation about the case of Tafi Valley considering village spatial organization, household settings, quotidian practices and their duration. We present regional evidence on household architecture, especially on daily habits, ancestors worship role and relations between humans and the material settings considering how this relation allowed the emergence and reproduction of household and communities within the conflictive medium of early village societies.