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# The yungas of the South Andes and their key role for the onset of early pre-columbian villages.

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*Chapter 5*

**THE YUNGAS OF THE SOUTH ANDES  
AND THEIR KEY ROLE FOR THE ONSET  
OF EARLY PRE-COLUMBIAN VILLAGES**

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**ABSTRACT**

Environmental characteristics of the Andean Yungas have been traditionally interpreted as constraining factors limiting cultural development based on intensive agropastoral economies. This idea was the milestone for an aprioristic view that dismissed the relevance of the Andean eastern slopes throughout the region's human history. That narrative, however, lacked of strong data support and reproduced old deterministic suppositions. This chapter presents new archaeological data coming from Anfama, a narrow basin located in the montane forest (the higher altitudinal ecozone of the Yungas), in order to demonstrate the key role this region played on the development and consolidation of early villages. Speculation about what these new findings mean in terms of current local populations are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Andes, Yungas, archaeology, early villages

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