

Subconscious Expressions of Identity in Lithic Debitage: Migrant Communities in the American Southwest

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Research Goals

- Examine the frequency of low-visibility attributes in lithic assemblages and identify continuity or discontinuity in traditions of stone tool production amongst migrant communities.
- Assess the importance of different raw materials from three distinct periods of time (Pre-migration, immediately post-migration, and one generation afterwards), and examine how migrant communities engage with a novel raw material source (obsidian).

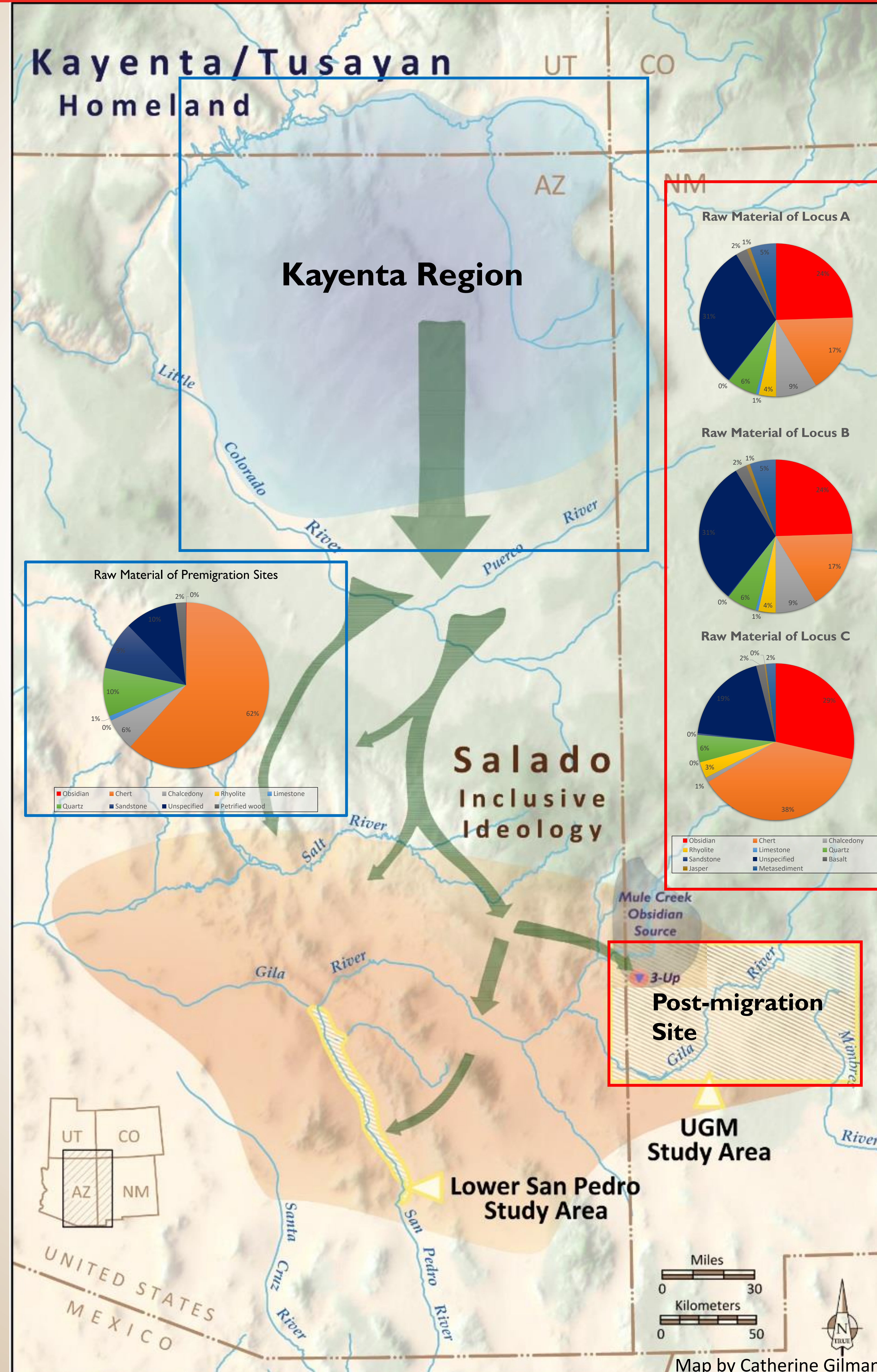
Introduction

In the late 13th century in the American Southwest, social and environmental pressures prompted thousands of people from the Kayenta region (Clark et al., 2013) to emigrate southward into southern Arizona and southwest New Mexico. The migrants encountered the already existing local communities, but instead of assimilating, became established as a prominent minority in the region (ibid). The following century saw the emergence of multicultural coalescent communities where immigrant and local culture melded (Lyons 2013). These communities produced the archaeological phenomenon known as “Salado”. The Salado ideology created a cultural platform that united people of diverse heritage in the Southwest. Much of what we know about the Salado phenomenon comes from investigations regarding ceramic technology and design, but lithic technology has not been as extensively addressed in terms of this ideology.

Our research aims at identifying subconscious expressions of identity in lithic assemblages by examining low-visibility attributes in flaked stone. We looked at data from two regions: 1) a group of sites in northeast Arizona and southern Utah that immediately precede the time of migration (Geib 2011) and 2) the site of 3-Up in New Mexico, which represents local, migrant, and Salado communities.

Methodology

- Twenty-five lithic assemblages analyzed. Twenty-two premigration, three postmigration
- The postmigration sites differ temporally. (Huntley et al., in press)
 - Locus A (950-1450): Premigration
 - Locus B (1250-1350): Kayenta Enclave
 - Locus C (1350-1450): Salado Occupation
- ANOVA tests were run comparing debitage sizes and materials between loci and the premigration sites.



Raw Material

Site	P Value	(DF)	Cultural Assimilation Seen?
Locus A B and C	<.0001	2	✗
Locus A and B	0.097608	1	✓
Locus A and C	0.000439	1	✗
Locus B and Locus C	<.0001	1	✗
Kayenta and Locus B	<.0001	1	✗
Kayenta and Locus C	<.0001	1	✗

Size

Site	P Value	(DF)	Cultural Assimilation Seen?
Locus A B and C	0.000379	2	✗
Locus A and B	0.698628	1	✓
Locus A and C	0.001112	1	✗
Locus B and C	0.000208	1	✗
Kayenta and Locus B	<.0001	1	✗
Kayenta and Locus C	<.0001	1	✗

Discussion

The unique chronology at 3-Up combined with assemblage data from a Kayenta pre-migration context has provided us with the opportunity to analyze subconscious expressions of identity in both diasporic Kayenta communities, as well as the Salado coalescent community at the site. Migrants in the region adapted to different locally available resources; how they chose to utilize these raw materials speaks to the importance of prior tradition. While chert dominated the pre-migration assemblage and was still readily available, migrants also had access to an obsidian source that was previously unavailable. How they utilized this resource is indicative of another form of identity expression.

In our testing of pre-migration data, we saw that the Kayenta migrant enclave and Salado occupation employed a unique lithic manufacturing strategy, distinct from their Kayenta homeland. As a community in diaspora, Kayenta migrants were also a potent minority in the region (Clark et al., 2013). Perhaps as they were introduced to new resources, the Kayenta were also forced to learn new ways to manipulate the materials. As it is a culture of shared heritage, the Salado community at 3-Up would have had a diversity of traditions that influenced their practices, and it appears that traces of pre-migration tradition at Locus C are no longer recognizable.

It is apparent that there is a difference between pre-migration assemblage and the loci at 3-Up, which we expect is mostly due to the locally available resources in the regions. However, when analyzing raw material from the later assemblages, there was unexpected variability between the loci. As they are all located at the geographic site, we expected to see similar utilization practices of the raw materials represented. Surprisingly, there is no evidence of this present in the assemblages. In the case of the Kayenta migrant population, the small amount of overlap in usage patterns suggests that the migrants are exploiting the new resources without referring to local traditions. This independent development of practice could be indicative of the group's insular nature. As Salado is an ideology of inclusivity (Clark and Huntley, 2012), it would not be surprising to see raw material patterns similar to that of the local population, but that doesn't appear to be the case. With the location of the Salado community being spatially separate from Locus A, it is possible that the group was opposed to sharing cultural practices with the indigenous population.

Works Cited
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Map by Catherine Gilman