TWENTY YEARS OF SALADO RESEARCH IN THE SOUTHWEST
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The Salado Phenomenon (A.D. 1300-1450) in the southern Southwest is closely tied to the production, exchange, and use of Roosevelt Red Ware (Salado polychrome), especially Gila Polychrome and later types. Roosevelt Red Ware is the only common decorative type in the basin that is otherwise characterized by high diversity in material culture and broad spatial distribution (Hill and LeBlanc, 2009). spanning the Hohokam and Mimbres-Mogollon archaeological cultures. Detailed studies of Roosevelt Red Ware demonstrate that although this ware was produced in many valleys across the southern Southwest, it was closely related to Arizona basin economies, specifically those associated with the Kayenta (e.g., Lyons 2012). Within the Salado area, Roosevelt Red Ware is abundant in 14th-century habitation sites regardless of size and is found in relatively equal proportions in both initial and domestic contexts.

Our research supports and builds upon Crown’s (1994) model of the Salado as a non-ritualized society that facilitated integration of multi-cultural communities which formed in the wake of late 13th-century epidemics. However, we emphasize the role played by Kayenta migrants in this process. An analysis through the lens of processes of Salado (Clark 1996) and coalescence (Sandriek and Bowd 2020), an enduring Kayenta Community in the Isquiero (and Las Vegas Valley) explains the homogeneity in Roosevelt Red Ware technology, forms, and uses despite highly decentralized production across a broad area for more than a century. Mule Creek obsidian also circumscribes this community. Coalescence and interregional interaction resulted in the rapid spread of Roosevelt Red Ware from enclaves to local settlements. Mesoamerican-inspired iconography as displayed on this ware symbolized the inclusive and socially contiguous Salado ideology. Kayenta enclaves and Salado coalescent communities have been examined in detail in the Lower San Pedro Valley and Upper Gila region.

Kayenta and Hohokam in the Lower San Pedro Valley

Ceramic Production and Consumption: Roosevelt Red Ware was made primarily in the northern Dudleyville District where the first pre-contact settlements were located. These settlements display a mix of local and Kayenta attributes.

Prior to the 14th century decorated ceramic production was focused on the Agua Caliente District, including a Middle Gila Buff Ware variant and San Carlos Red-on-brown.

During the late 13th century, Kayenta/Tusayan immigrants established a network of sites within the San Pedro River Basin and made Maverock/Blackwater pottery Gila Polychrome was first produced in enclaves for internal consumption and rapidly spread to local platform mound settlements, replacing socially divisive Salado traditions (San Carlos Red on brown and Maverock Mountain series).

Transformation in style: Kayenta and associated intrusive Mesoamerica-period contexts date from the late 14th century, coinciding with the dramatic increase in Roosevelt Red Ware production.

Obsidian Procurement and Use:

Prior to A.D. 1300 virtually no Roosevelt Red Ware was present. The Kayenta society was isolated and depends on a local source for obsidian.

Afterwards, the Kayenta society enters a period of rapid exchange with the Salado, and is characterized by an increase in the range and diversity of obsidian sources utilized. This change is evident in the Kayenta complex and in the transition to Salado polychrome ware in the Kayenta/Tusayan complex.

Kayenta and Mogollon in the Upper Gila-Mimbres (UGM) Area

The 3-up site in Mule Creek

The 3-up site is the only substantial 14th-century site in the San Pedro River Basin. It is the only Late Roosevelt Red Ware site in the San Pedro River Basin. Excavations revealed that: 1) the site was continuously occupied from the late 13th to early 14th century; 2) with high frequencies of Mesoamerican sherds, a probable Kayenta influence has been identified. The site was established 1300.

Late Eastern Roosevelt Red Ware Variants: Reassertion of Local Traditions?

• Family shrines and other non-functional uses
• Graves and family shrines
• Multi-functional and ceremonial uses
• Altar-like structures
• Baskets, gourds, and other container forms
• Adoption of Kayenta and Salado traditions

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