Coalescence is the coming together of groups from different cultural backgrounds to form new communities, integrative institutions, inclusive ideologies, and expanded networks. For the past twenty years Archaeology Southwest has been studying coalescence associated with the Salado Phenomenon across the late pre-contact southern U.S. Southwest.

During the past decade, our attention has focused on coalescent community formation in the Upper Gila and Mimbres (UGM) areas in southwestern New Mexico. Here, many 14th-century Salado settlements were composed of scattered, single-roomed mounds arranged in various configurations. This intra-settlement segregation suggests that coalescence was incomplete, despite occupations that lasted more than a century. This poster examines ceramic and other material culture variability among room blocks within three Upper Gila settlements to look for persistent social and cultural differences. Of particular interest is evidence for identities and practices associated with Kayenta immigrants and local “Mogollon” groups.

Ormond Village

Ormond Village, in the central Cliff Valley, was excavated during the mid-1960s as a highway salvage project and published more than 30 years later (Wallace 1998). The site includes a 14th-century Salado village and earlier pithouse components.

The Salado village is more integrated than 3-Up, with four closely spaced room blocks arranged around a large structure that may have served a ceremonial function. Both excavated room blocks had similar painted ceramic assemblages, although the East Room Block had a higher frequency of painted wares. Typical of the 14th century, RRW dominates the painted assemblage. Considering the relatively high frequency of Maverick Mountain series (second in the painted assemblage), the apparent absence of painted pottery (note noted in analysis) is interesting. The local Cliff White-on-red RRW variant is also present in substantial quantities. In the unpainted assemblage, the East Room Block had nearly twice the proportion of corrugated ware than the North Room Block.

Both room blocks were similar in construction, although the North Room Block contained multi-roomed structures, connected by doorways (presumed for extended families) while the East Room Block had more single room habitations. Rooms in both room blocks contained slab-lined fireboxes and basin-shaped hearths lined with adobe, with the former outnumbing the latter.

Concluding Remarks

Painted ceramic assemblages are dominated by Roosevelt Red Ware (Salado polychrome, RRW hitherto) associated with inclusive Salado ideology that emerged from a Kayenta community in diaspora. However Roosevelt RRW variants such as Cliff White-on-red suggest local influence. Painted assemblages also include Kayenta-related Maverick Mountain series ceramics, Jornada Mogollon types such as El Paso Polychrome, and northern Chihuahuan wares. As specialized tools used by Kayenta potters, perforated plates are of particular interest (Loy and Lindsay 2006). Finally, distributions of local material culture such as ground stone griddles, and mealing facilities with bowls inset in floor in some excavations.

References

1972 The Dinwiddie Site. The Dinwiddie Site located in the western portion of the Cliff Valley. The site has been extensively impacted by vandalism, erosion, and road grading.

Avocational archaeologists Jack and Vera Mills (1972) excavated a portion of Room Block 1 and nearly all of Room Block 2 during the mid-1960s. Over the course of three field school sessions (2013-2015) Archaeology Southwest excavated units and traced walls in each of the three room blocks, tying in with the Mills’ earlier work.

Room Block 1 was associated with the lowest painted ceramic frequency at the site and had a substantial quantity of El Paso Polychrome and few northern Chihuahuan wares.

Room Block 2 was by far the largest at the site. It had a similar painted ceramic assemblage to Room Block 1, but a higher total painted percentage. Room Block 2 also had a diverse and unique ground stone assemblage that included a number of griddles, a cooling tool found only at Dinwiddie site in the site sample and only in this room block. The ground stone assemblage also included numerous trifacial handstones, bifacial handstones with finger grips or pointed ends, %-grooved and full-grooved axes, and a carved, painted anthropomorphic head. Three or four inset bowl mealing installations, similar to those at Ormond Village, were also encountered. The only Jeddito Yellow Ware specimen in the site sample also was recovered from this room block.

Concluding Remarks

The Dinwiddie site, located in the western portion of the Cliff Valley, is the down slope extension of a hillytop settlement that was unfortunately removed by heavy machinery. This room block yielded the highest standardized perforated plate count among the three, as well as the highest proportion of painted ceramics and RRW, suggesting the presence of at least one Kayenta potter.