

New Perspectives on Salado

Poster session for the 2015 Society for American Archaeology meeting, San Francisco

The widespread Salado phenomenon, largely defined by distinctive polychrome pottery, has perplexed archaeologists in the US Southwest for decades. Many current views associate this pottery with an ideology that helped integrate culturally diverse communities during the tumultuous late pre-contact period (A.D. 1250-1450). This session focuses on recent excavations and preservation efforts in southwestern New Mexico while bringing together perspectives from other regions to examine the intriguing variability and shared elements that characterize Salado communities. Examinations of architecture, ceramics, and ground and chipped stone from new excavations and past projects enrich our understanding of Salado at different spatial and temporal scales. This large data set allows for detailed consideration and debate on Salado at a synthetic level.

Organizers: Karen Schollmeyer and Jeffery Clark

Twenty Years of Studying the Salado

Jeffery Clark and William Doelle

Archaeology Southwest (formerly the Center for Desert Archaeology) has been heavily engaged in studying the Salado Phenomenon through the lens of migration for nearly twenty years. Our research has been both intensive and extensive in scope: gathering new data from sites on public and private lands, reanalyzing existing collections, and scrutinizing published and unpublished reports from nearly every valley and basin in southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. Here we summarize this research and the salient empirical facts that any model of Salado must accommodate. We then present our conception of Salado, consistent with these facts, as an inclusive ideology that was developed by a spatially dispersed, but culturally connected, immigrant minority from northeastern Arizona. This ideology was ultimately adopted by many local groups in an attempt to ease tensions in the wake of migration and integrate multi-cultural coalescent communities. Many of these communities failed prior to the arrival of Europeans for reasons that remain obscure.

True Facts About the Dinwiddie Site: Surprising Results from Limited Testing in a Disturbed Site

Alexandra Covert and Leslie Aragon

Archaeology Southwest and the University of Arizona's 2014 Upper Gila Preservation Archaeology (UGPA) field school excavations at the Dinwiddie Site (LA106003) produced interesting and somewhat unexpected results. Dinwiddie is a Cliff Phase (A.D. 1300 – 1450) Salado site located along Duck Creek, a tributary of the Gila River, in southwestern New Mexico. It was partially excavated by avocational archaeologists in the 1960s and the remaining deposits have faced multiple sources of disturbance. Despite this history, test excavations in small areas of intact deposits at risk for future disturbance revealed unanticipated variability in

architecture and ceramics between roomblocks. Spatial variation in pottery types represented in different parts of the site may be linked to temporal differences or to variability in social connections. Evidence of intensive remodeling and rebuilding in some rooms indicates a longer period of occupation than has commonly been attributed to Cliff Phase sites.

Experimental Archaeology: Insights from the Construction of an Adobe Room

Aaron Trumbo and Allen Denoyer

Experimental archaeology is a useful tool for improving our understanding of prehistoric technologies and testing archaeological interpretations. The “Hands On Archaeology” project at the 2014 Archaeology Southwest / University of Arizona Upper Gila Preservation Archaeology Field School focused on the experimental construction of a single-story adobe pueblo room in the style of the Cliff phase (AD 1300-1450+). This project was done in conjunction with limited excavation in three Cliff phase rooms at the Dinwiddie site, which provided information on building materials and construction styles. Experimental studies during construction of the adobe room improved our understanding of both labor effort and the construction techniques required to produce the types of walls and features observed in the excavated rooms. A full-scale adobe room and a portable small-scale model allow us to share what we learned with the public in different venues. This ongoing project will continue to generate data on the durability and maintenance required for this type of structure.

Ground Stone as a Migration Marker: Using Finger-Grooved Manos and Fully Grooved Axe-Heads to Trace Kayenta Influence at Salado Sites

Maxwell Forton

The Salado phenomenon in southern New Mexico and Arizona includes a set of cultural traits that are believed to have been stimulated by the arrival of Kayenta migrants in the late 1200s from northern Arizona and southeastern Utah. Identifying the influence of these northern migrants at Salado sites has been one of the ongoing goals of Archaeology Southwest’s field excavations. In addition to perforated plates and certain architectural features, the presence of particular ground stone tools at Salado sites may serve as markers of Kayenta influence. Manos possessing finger grooves and axe-heads displaying a full groove are tool styles associated with Ancestral Pueblo peoples. The presence of these tools at the Dinwiddie site is further evidence of Kayenta influence in Cliff phase communities. Further analysis of the distribution of finger grooved manos and fully grooved axes among Cliff phase ground stone assemblages may lead to a better understanding of the dispersal of migrants and cultural influences associated with the rise of the Salado phenomenon.

Black and White and Shades of Gray: Projectile Points and Bifaces from the Dinwiddie Site, Southwestern New Mexico

Riley Duke and Stacy Ryan

During Archaeology Southwest and University of Arizona's 2013 and 2014 field school seasons, close to a hundred bifaces were recovered from the Dinwiddie site, a Cliff phase (A.D. 1300-1450) Salado site in southwestern New Mexico. These artifacts include Archaic and late Pueblo period projectile point styles and several bifaces interpreted as having been discarded during the manufacturing process. This poster presents the biface and projectile point analyses results, expanding on a study initially conducted for the 2014 Upper Gila Preservation Archaeology field school public outreach project. The discussion focuses on the temporal and cultural associations of the recovered projectile point types and identifiable evidence for on-site point production. Differences and similarities among the three loci excavated at Dinwiddie are examined, and comparisons are made with previously excavated Cliff phase sites in the Upper Gila region. Located only 30 km from the Mule Creek obsidian source, obsidian bifaces are most common at Dinwiddie, followed closely by locally available chalcedony. Procurement strategies and possible social contacts are discussed using the results of obsidian XRF analysis.

Technology and Typology in the Upper Gila: Flaked Stone from the 3-Up and Fornholt Sites, Mule Creek, New Mexico

Stacy Ryan

Several seasons of field school excavations at the late Pueblo period 3-Up and Fornholt sites in Mule Creek, New Mexico, have produced a substantial number of flaked stone artifacts. Located adjacent to the extensive Mule Creek obsidian source, and occupied at a time when Mule Creek obsidian was widely distributed, these collections provide information about lithic technology at sites with immediate access to the material. Obsidian composes a large proportion of the artifacts, and projectile points are almost exclusively made from this material. Though occupations at these sites may have overlapped, the Tularosa phase (A.D. 1200-1325) Fornholt site produced a more diverse set of projectile point types than those recovered from 3-Up, where a late 13th to 14th century probable Kayenta migrant enclave and a later Salado occupation have been identified. This poster summarizes the obsidian core reduction and tool production patterns at 3-Up and Fornholt, and illustrates the stylistic variability of the projectile point types from these sites. The points are compared with late pre-contact typologies from southwestern New Mexico and southern Arizona to make inferences regarding their temporal and cultural affiliations.

Reading between the Lines: Salado Polychrome and (In)organic Paint Variability

Hannah Zanutto and Will Russell

During the late thirteenth century, the Salado Phenomenon swept across much of the U.S. Southwest, leaving its most indelible mark in the form of Salado Polychrome pottery. Chemical sourcing indicates that this pottery was produced in many of the areas in which it is found and many researchers now associate production areas with the settlement of Kayenta migrants. Archaeologists frequently use stylistic analyses to infer shared socio-cultural backgrounds. For example, some colleagues have noted similarities between earlier Kayenta pottery designs and

those found on later Salado Polychromes. High-visibility attributes like motifs, however, are easily replicable. Low-visibility, technological attributes serve as better indicators of shared social backgrounds. In addition to decorative similarity, researchers suggest that black paint on Salado Polychrome vessels is almost exclusively organic in nature and thus consistent with earlier Kayenta production. Ongoing work at the Dinwiddie Site provides an opportunity to further explore this model. We use macroscopic and chemical analyses to characterize paint composition, thereafter exploring variability through space and time. Our results speak to the scale of integration among production communities and emphasize the role of cultural diversity within the Salado P phenomenon.

Temporal and Spatial Variability in Roosevelt Red Ware Painted Decoration

Patrick Lyons and Deborah Huntley

Recent research in the southern US Southwest has revealed patterns useful in refining ceramic chronology and investigating communities of practice among 14th and 15th century potters producing Roosevelt Red Ware (Salado polychromes). Analyses of whole and partially reconstructible vessels recovered from stratified contexts in the San Pedro Valley of southeastern Arizona confirm the Roosevelt Red Ware stylistic seriation presented by Patricia Crown in 1994. Combining these results with recent typological revisions leads to refined dating at the regional, settlement cluster, and intrasite level. A related study of geographical variability in the bands of painted decoration on the rims of late Roosevelt Red Ware bowls (Cliff Polychrome and Nine Mile Polychrome) illuminates stylistic trends bearing on models of the spread, the persistence, and the eventual disappearance of the Roosevelt Red Ware tradition. These data, juxtaposed with typological patterns related to geography, in turn, allow us to address the evolution, operation, and decline of social networks born of the Kayenta diaspora.

Renegotiating Identity in a Cultural Crossroads: Salado in the Safford Basin

Anna Neuzil

Current perspectives on the origin and nature of the Salado phenomenon vary amongst Southwest archaeologists. Evidence from the Safford Basin in southeastern Arizona suggests that in this area, Salado came about as a response to multiple waves of migration of various sized groups from the Kayenta and Tusayan regions of northeastern Arizona. Following the arrival of these migrants, the archaeological record shows that both migrants and groups indigenous to the Safford Basin renegotiated their identity to provide community cohesion in this new social milieu.

A Local Expression of “Salado” in the Tonto Basin

David Jacobs, Arleyn Simon, and Owen Lindauer, and Glen Rice

“Salado” refers to a series of local expressions developed when populations were faced with the challenges of increased population sizes, migrants, and complexity. Local populations incorporated ceramic styles, iconography, architecture and community organization from new

arrivals and surrounding populations in ways that were adaptive and fostered integration. This brought migrants into the fold, albeit keeping them at a safe distance with limited participation and membership. To have excluded migrants would have led to attacks and raiding. Ceramic data, architecture, community rooms used for ritual observances, and burial data are used to examine one such local development in the Tonto Basin, Arizona.

The Salado Preservation Initiative: Combining Research Investigations with Regional Preservation Planning

Andy Laurenzi, Matthew A. Peeples, and William H. Doelle

Regional planning is an essential element of comprehensive archaeological management programs. The Salado Preservation Initiative at Archaeology Southwest is linked to our research agenda focused on Salado and related developments across the Southwest in the late precontact period. Working exclusively within a temporally defined period of record (1250-1450) and conscribed geographically by the distribution of Roosevelt redware, Archaeology Southwest conducted a series of expert workshops and interviews using a geographic information system and archaeological site databases to collectively identify high-priority archaeological resources (sites, site complexes and in some instance landscapes). This project demonstrates the potential advantages of using research to complement assessments of individual site eligibility for purposes of listing on the National Register of Historic Places by providing an added layer of regionally contextualized information at larger geographic scales. By establishing spatially explicit priority areas, this information assists Archaeology Southwest in focusing its cultural resource protection efforts and can also enhance cultural resource considerations in local, state, and federal land use planning.