

EXPLORING SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION IN THE ZUNI REGION

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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY AND IDEOLOGY OF EARLY POPULATION AGGREGATION IN TOGEYE CANYON, AD 1150-1250

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The aim of this volume is to explore the relationships between politics, economics, and culture in prehistoric societies of the Zuni area. The editors advocate the development of models that address the diversity and internal dynamics of social formations. In so doing they foreground questions about social power, agency, competition, and factionalism. Illuminating such dynamics presents a challenge to our conceptual frameworks. Specifically, it means breaking with received wisdoms about the organization of the prehistoric world and freely imagining alternative organizational possibilities--even where areas available data are thin.

In this paper I further develop some ideas about the nature of Zuni area social dynamics between AD 1150-1250, or that period termed "reorganization" (LeBlanc 1989; Saitta 1991) or early "aggregation" 1992b). (Stone argument incorporates new observations about the archaeology of Togeye Canyon east of Ramah, and is inspired by recent observations about the archaeology of other parts of the Colorado Plateau, specifically southwestern Colorado. goal is to further refine a model of political economy for the area that is amenable to testing with both old and new data.

TOGEYE CANYON ARCHAEOLOGY

Togeye Canyon is located just east of the Zuni Indian Reservation, about 5.3 km southeast of Ramah (Figure 4.1). Aspects of Togeye Canyon archaeology were first reported in a doctoral dissertation (Saitta 1987). A total of 60 sites were recorded in the canyon by Wake Forest University in the 1970s. No new surveys have been conducted since then, although several sites were resurveyed as part of the 1992 University of Denver archaeological field school.

Sites located in Togeye Canyon are mapped in Figure 4.2 and listed in Table 4.11 Fifty one of the recorded sites are One of these is the large pueblos. Kluckhohn Ruin. dated by Kintigh (1985b:42) from after AD 1250 to after AD 1300. The 50 remaining pueblo sites date, on the basis of Kintigh's (1985b) ceramic complexes, to between AD 1200-1250 (Pruchnic n.d.). Further strengthening the assignment of sites to this time period is the modal size of sites in the 6-20 room range (Figure 4.3). This size distribution parallels patterns reported by Kintigh (1980) and Robertson (1983) for other parts of the Zuni area during this time period. Excavation at the Pettit site (29 Va 1) and three other small sites in the vicinity of Pettit (29 VA 2; 29 VA 6; 29 VA 38) also reveal ceramic assemblages dominated by St. Johns types. These types date between approximately AD 1150-1350 in the area (Breterntiz 1966; Carlson 1970; Harris n.d.).

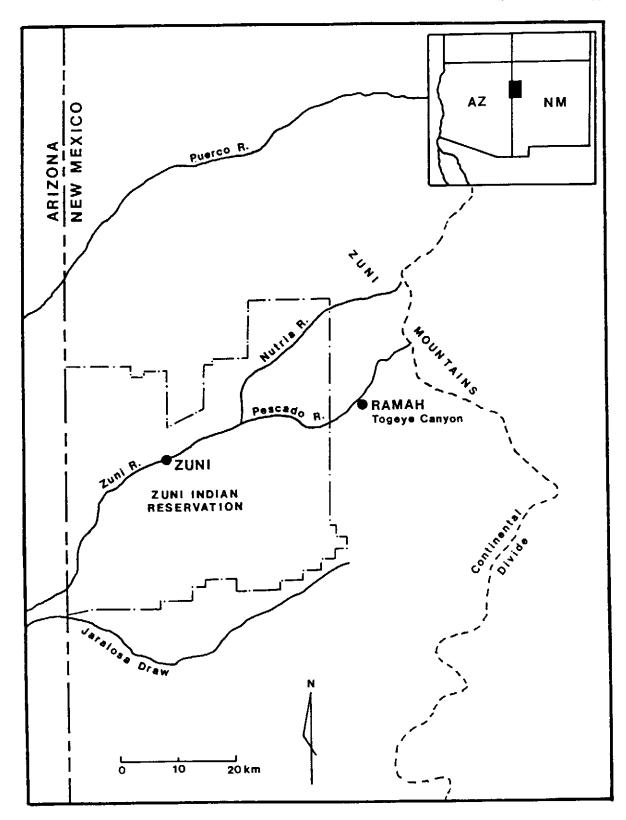


Figure 4.1. Location of the study area.

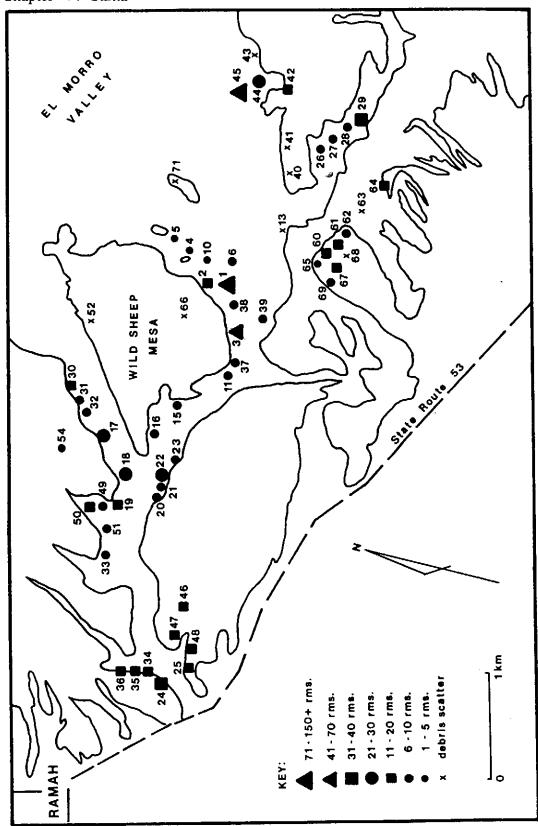


Figure 4.2. Togeye Canyon site locations.

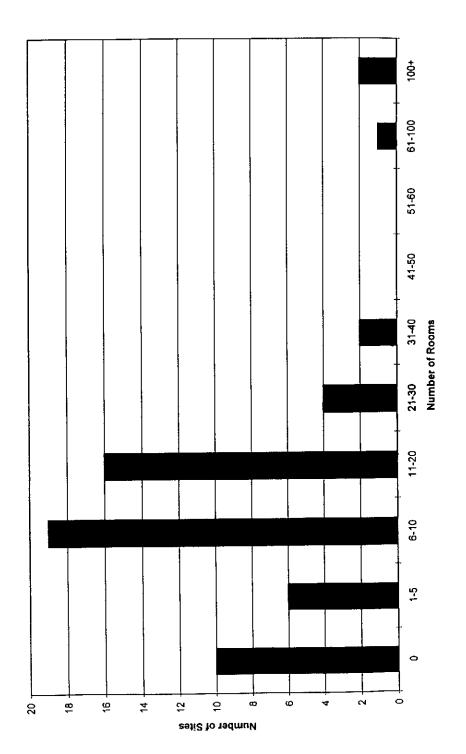


Figure 4.3. Histogram of Togeye Canyon site size.

Table 4.1. Togeye Canyon Site Survey Data.

Site Number	No. of Rooms	Site Number	No. of Rooms
29 VA 1 (Pettit Site)	154	29 MC 36	18
29 VA 2	11	29 MC 37	6-8
29 VA 3	70	29 VA 38	8
29 VA 4	1-5	29 VA 39	6
29 VA 5	2-3	29 VA 40	0
29 VA 6	6-8	29 VA 41	0
29 VA 7, 8 (Kluckhohn)	1100	29 VA 42	14
29 VA 10	1-5	29 VA 43	0
29 VA 11	6-8	29 VA 44	30
29 VA 13	0	29 VA 45	100
29 VA 15	4-6	29 VA 46	14
29 VA 16	8-10	29 VA 47	20
29 VA 17	30	29 VA 48	12
29 VA 18	30	29 VA 49	8-10
29 VA 19	20	29 VA 50	10-12
29 VA 20	6-12	29 VA 51	8
29 VA 21	6-12	29 VA 52	0
29 VA 22	30	29 VA 54	4
29 VA 23	6-12	29 VA 60	14-16
29 MC 24	39	29 VA 61	20
29 MC 25	18	29 VA 62	6
29 VA 26	10	29 VA 63	0
29 VA 27	10	29 VA 64	12
29 VA 28	6	29 VA 65	3
29 VA 29	30-40	29 VA 66	0
29 VA 30	20	29 VA 67	20
29 VA 31	8	29 VA 68	0

Table 4.1. Togeye Canyon Site Survey Data.

Site Number	No. of Rooms	Site Number	No. of Rooms
29 VA 32	8	29 VA 69	6
29 VA 33	6-8	29 VA 70	. 0
29 VA 34	20	29 VA 71	0
29 MC 35	14		

The reorganization period in westcentral New Mexico has been identified as a time of significant social instability. The period is characterized by fragmentation of Chaco-San Juan Basin social networks, population movements, and the realignment of regional exchange relationships (Stuart and Gauthier The amount of population 1984:131). displacement and movement that actually occured, however, is still at issue (Lekson and Cameron 1993). Whatever proves to be the case, LeBlanc (1989:352) discusses "major restructuring" of area communities, while Anyon and Ferguson (1983)speak of local populations "experimenting" with different organizational forms as a response to the changing conditions of life.

Some of these experiments involved population aggregation. Aggregation has been explained in a number of ways by Southwestern researchers (see. example, the contributions to Wills and Leonard 1994). It has been viewed as a way to: (1) cope with the impossibility of community fissioning under conditions of regional population packing; (2) remedy population-resource imbalances reorganizing labor to stabilize subsistence production (e.g., Leonard and Reed 1993); (3) consolidate control over labor for the purposes of political competition; better defend a community in the context

of regional warfare (e.g., LeBlanc 1989); and (5) maintain broadly equal access to, and regularize the flow of, information through a society (e.g., Stone 1992b). Specific causes of aggregation, however, were likely variable across space and different sets of environmental and social conditions (Cordell 1994:82). The process was also likely accompanied by new and more complex forms of social integration, tensions and struggles relating to the negotiation of social group boundaries and the rules regulating the production and distribution of surplus labor and products, and the need for continual renegotiation of such arrangments over time.

Settlement size data from the Zuni area hint at the significant social changes associated with aggregation. Prior to late prehistoric aggregation settlements in the Zuni area rarely exceeded 60 rooms in size. In Miller Canyon settlement size never exceeded 60 rooms for the period dating 1125-1200 (Kintigh 1980). Knife Hill Canyon settlements were in the 6-40 room range for 1100-1200 and mostly in the 1-60 room range for 1200-1300 (Roberston 1983). After AD 1250 aggregated sites of greater than 100 rooms formed fairly rapidly across the area, and as discussed above the challenge is to explain why.

What is most interesting about the site size distribution over time, however, is

the relative absence in all areas of sites numbering 60-100 rooms in size. Kintigh (1994) explains this pattern by suggesting that sites of 40-60 rooms in size are at the upper limit of consensual decision-making for Pueblo groups, whereas sites larger than 100 rooms indicate qualitatively different, more complex forms of decisionmaking. Thus, the absence of sites in the 60-100 room range reflects the difficulty of coordinating activities above a "group consensus" level, and also perhaps the reluctance of Puebloan people to abandon decison-making consensual absolutely necessary and until the requisite organization for integrating larger groups of people was in place.

Interestingly, a histogram of Togeye Canyon site size (Figure 4.3) shows only one site between 40-100 rooms in size dating to the period 1150-1250. This is in keeping with region-wide patterns, and highlights Togeye as a place where the dynamics of reorganization period social life can be profitably investigated. rest of this paper inquires a bit more deeply into these dynamics. investigation assumes that population aggregation entails some significant social trade-offs, and that the maintenance of aggregated communities requires constant social vigilance and effort.

A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TOGEYE CANYON

Fully understanding the organizational forms and dynamics of aggregated communities requires excavation data. Very few sites dating to the time period of interest have been excavated in the Zuni area. The Pettit site in Togeye Canyon (Figure 4.4) is one such site (Saitta 1991). Although

described as a classic Scribe S phase site dating 1250-1275 (LeBlanc 1983; Watson et al. 1980), the ceramics at the site indicate an occupation beginning in the very late 1100s. The Pettit site has the clustered room blocks characteristic of Scribe S phase settlement (described as "Features" in Figure 4.4), but departs from other Scribe S patterns by displaying abundant trash and evidence for the remodeling of some rooms over time (cf. LeBlanc 1989).

I have outlined a working model of how the Pettit site community was economically and politically organized (Saitta 1991, 1994). I emphasize "working"because the formation processes of the Pettit site assemblage have not been completely investigated. While such middle-range work is needed, I believe there is sufficient coherence to the empirical patterns discussed below, and congruence with patterns illuminated in other areas, to support some basic inferences about local social organization. These inferences have helped suggest future research directions in Togeye Canyon, and may have applicability in other areas where alternative ideas for interpreting data are in short supply.

As currently understood material patterns at the Pettit site reflect the operation of a complex set of integrating differentiating (centripetal) and (centrifugal) processes of the sort we might expect in any context of social upheaval and reorganization. These processes are situated within a general model of "communal" production. model of communality (Saitta 1994) allows for variation and complexity in the processes that sustain collective forms of and production, labor appropriation including inequalities of access to wealth

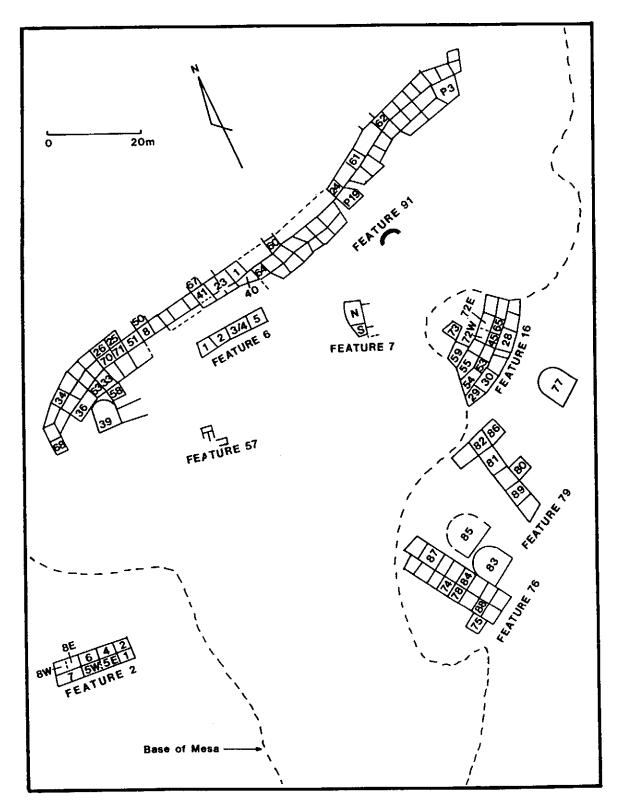


Figure 4.4. Roomblocks and Features at the Pettit site.

and power and even institutionalized political hierarchy (see also Keene 1991; Lee 1990; Patterson 1991; Saitta and Keene 1990). This view of communality recognizes that individuals and groups can have many different positions within a communal social order--political, economic, and cultural--and that this potential creates the for tension. factionalism, and struggle.

Communality at Pettit is suggested by "modularity" in architectural form and plan, and comparable levels of labor investment across the settlement (Saitta There is little indication of a differential association of habitation rooms with a disproportionate share of storage facilities, wealth items, or ritual space. Also, the large kivas--interpreted here as community ritual facilities--located on top of Pettit mesa (Figure 4.5) show an architectural style that is distinct from the roomblocks styles of other the settlement.² The existence of distinguished roomblocks by masonry styles has been established by Linthicum (1980).Using wall bonding and abutment patterns, ceramic associations, and a factor analysis of masonry attributes Linthicum identified 13 "masonry construction units" at the Pettit site. These construction units may in turn represent distinct corporate or even ethnic groups, an inference consistent with the longstanding pattern of coresidence" at puebloan sites (Johnson 1989). The large kivas do not fit cleanly into any of the defined masonry clusters. suggesting that labor groups comprised of individuals from throughout the community cooperated in kiva construction. This emphasis communality is not surprising given that labor (along with land) is a crucial limiting

resource in tribal societies (Price 1984). The labor constraint may have been especially severe under conditions of population displacement and migration. Kintigh (1984a) notes that land was likely not limiting in the Zuni area at this time, thereby directing our attention to labor as a key focus of economic concern.

Three other material patterns, however, suggest centrifugal processes that may have threatened the maintenance of communality even under conditions of labor scarcity. The first process derives from the inferred pattern of ethnic Within coresidence. some of settlement's roomblocks I have identified a single "limited activity room" (Figure 4.5) that strikes me as exemplary of the "clanhouses" reported in Puebloan ethnography (Eggan 1950; see also Watson et al. 1980:207). Because of their architectural features I assume that these rooms were used for corporate group specific activities and ceremonies (Saitta 1991). With this in mind, another way to describe these rooms--and distinguish them from community kivas-would be as "corporate kivas" (Wilshusen 1989). Six of these rooms were excavated at the Pettit site, while a total of fourteen were predicted to exist based on the excavated sample (Saitta 1987). closely matches Linthicum's number thirteen masonry construction units and further supports an inference of ethnic coresidence at Pettit. The occupants of these units may have been localized in their own villages prior to aggregation.³ The convergence of such groups at Pettit alerts us to the possibility that "factionalist" tensions and struggles over ceremonial life may have punctuated community affairs.

Another source of factionalism is

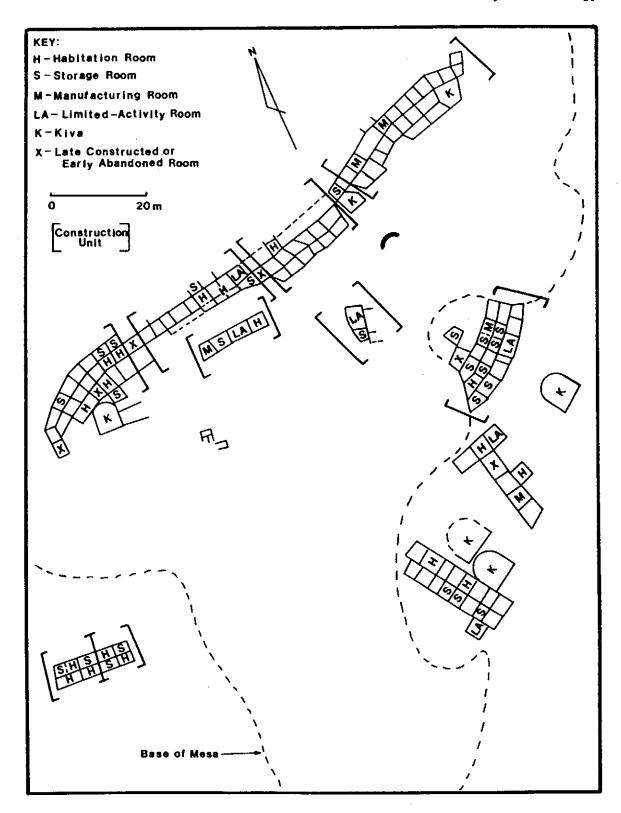


Figure 4.5. Room use at the Pettit site.

suggested by evidence for a communitywide technical division of labor in the production of strategic "use-values" at the settlement. This evidence takes the form distribution differential manufacturing rooms for ceramics and stone and bone tools across roomblocks (Figure 4.5). Although not statistically different from storage rooms in terms of average size, manufacturing rooms do cluster tightly in size: they average 5.72 m², with a standard deviation of .003. This compares with an average size of 5.72 m² and standard deviation of 1.80 for storage rooms.4 An additional warrant for investigating the possibilities for productive specialization comes from the contemporaneous Broken K Pueblo in east-central Arizona, where a nonrandom distribution of tools used to make other tools exists across the settlement (Longacre 1966; Saitta 1994). On this view of production individuals corporate groups are differentially positioned as producers within communal economic order. This in turn opens the door to factionalist struggles over who produces what and how much, and how the finished products distributed (Saitta 1994).

Finally, relatively high per capita storage estimates at the settlement (see Table 6 in Saitta 1991) can be taken as evidence for political hierarchy on the assumption that storage behavior in part reflects the intensity of administrative demands for surplus production (see Hantman 1989 and Saitta 1991 for the appropriate arguments of relevance).5 Political hierarchy, of course, can be a further source of integrative problems in society. Independent evidence hierarchy at Pettit is the burial of a young adult male in a unique burial context and

with unique grave goods; that is, within the largest kiva at the site (room 77 in Figure 4.4), and in association with a complete St. Johns Black-on-red bowl. Skeletal analysis, however, does not reveal that this individual was better nourished than other individuals excavated at the site (Grimsley 1992). These patterns are not in contradiction, but rather are consistent with a notion of puebloan elites as communal subsumed classes (Saitta 1994). That is, elites provide services for, and are sustained by, the community without living off of the exploited labor of kinfolk or neighbors.6

Thus, resident social groups at the participated site in building Pettit communality while also straining for economic, political, and perhaps even ceremonial autonomy. The specific organization discussed here was intended to bring these forces into balance. They did not, however, operate perfectly. In other places I have speculated about the kinds of social tensions that may have existed at Pettit and how they might be evidenced (Saitta 1991, 1994). architectural remodeling of some corporate kivas out of habitation rooms may indicate the outcome of factionalist struggles over ceremonial life: situating of trash-filled, early abandoned rooms at the edges of roomblocks (see Figure 4.5) may reflect efforts to reinforce some kinds of intra-settlement boundaries; and patterns of regulated access between rooms as disclosed by doorway placement may reflect corporate efforts to maintain control over labor under conditions of labor scarcity. The kinds of tensions and factions that formed in this context of early aggregation clearly need further investigation.

Moreover, and as intimated above,

a complete understanding of social life at Pettit also depends on clarifying events at other, nonaggregated sites in the canvon with which Pettit was contemporaneous and in interaction. Only the three small sites identified above have seen test excavations. What we know from these excavations is that room use patterns at the small sites mirror patterns observed at Pettit. We have excavated a number of habitation and storage rooms, and one limited activity room (or, corporate kiva) at these sites. Construction sequences at small canyon sites also parallel those evident at Pettit. That is, it is apparent from wall bonding and abutment patterns that the nonaggregated pueblos grew by accretion or, as is the case with some construction units at Pettit, the outer "shell" of the roomblock was built first and then rooms were partitioned off as needed. Although it is still an open question as to how long people lived at these small sites, they are certainly engaging in many of the same domestic activities evident at the Pettit site.

One architectural element that these small settlements lack, however, is community kivas. This may suggest that the social relations glimpsed at Pettit extended into the inter-local arena. That is, the small sites may have been tied into the same extended technical division of labor, sphere of decision-making and usevalue circulation, and ceremonial cycle More specifically, evidenced at Pettit. they may have been providing agricultural surpluses to the Pettit community-surpluses used for redistribution and/or maintaining political and ceremonial hierarchies--in return for the benefits of participation in these social relations.

The evidence for such relationships is still thin. Geomorphological

observations of the soils in the canyon bottom surrounding Pettit Mesa reveal that they are not that productive. Soil development is weak, with virtually no significant accumulation of organic matter. What the Pettit site has going for it is its location on a prominent landform (whether the original rationale was for defense or ceremony is still unclear), and the trade-off for this location may have been reduced agricultural potential in the immediate vicinity of the settlement.

Another clue to the nature of intermay lie in canvon local interaction petroglyphs. Although the sample size is very small, it is interesting that stick-figure humans with arms pointing downward are found on top of Pettit mesa, whereas stick figures with arms pointing characterize the petroglyphs observed on canyon walls near small pueblos. may indicate the ceremonial dependency of small sites--for ritual objects and guidance--on the larger Pettit mesa community. Turquoise, as one presumed ritual commodity, was found in very small quantities at the Pettit site, and none has yet been recovered from small canyon sites. However, the distribution turquoise at Pettit is concentrated in rooms surrounding the room 39 kiva located at the extreme west end of the mesa-top ruin (Figure 4.4). This area was identified as a "ceremonial precinct" by the Wake Forest University original excavators, with the enigmatic Feature 57 (a set of walls built on bedrock and rubble fill that do not form a room and lack artifact associations) identified as a "gate" into the precinct. Certainly, much more research needs to be done on these phenomena, as well as on site middens and artifact assemblages, to clarify the nature of interlocal relationships within

the canyon.

Other ideas about the nature of social and political organization and stress in Togeye Canyon during the early aggregation period return us to public architecture--the large community kivas--at the Pettit site (Figure 4.5). Architectural continuity between Chacoan reorganization period material landscapes in the northern Southwest has been identified in several places including southwestern Colorado (Bradley 1993a, 1993b) and the Zuni area (Fowler et al. 1987; Fowler and Stein 1992; Kintigh 1994). Bruce Bradley interprets evidence of Chacoan-like settlement configuration and architecture at Sand Canyon Pueblo and the Wallace Ruin as representing or revival of either a continuation Chacoan symbolism at these places. On this view. Chacoan planning architecture formed a "ritual landscape" communicated cultural meaning important for maintaining local social organization. Kintigh (1994:136) argues similarly where he suggests that Chacoan symbolism (as expressed by rubble-core masonry, earthen berms, and roads at the Hinkson site) was appropriated to form the ideological basis of early aggregated communities in the Zuni area. Bradley the Chacoan symbolism evoked the glorious "old ways" of the system; for Kintigh it communicated that "old time religion".

With these arguments in mind I am thus most intrigued by Bradley's suggestion (personal communication 1993) that the large D-shaped structure at Sand Canyon Pueblo (described by Bradley 1991) served as a metaphor for the Chaco Canyon Great House. Indeed, the entire settlement may be socially modeled on the Chaco core Great House (Lekson and

Cameron 1993). I would suggest that such ideological continuity is also being celebrated with the D-shaped community kivas at the Pettit site, and perhaps also by Pettit's location on a prominent landform-a context identical to that of many early Chacoan great houses in the Zuni area. It is easy to imagine such symbolism helping to integrate unsettled, culturally diverse groups who may share in common only memory the experience and/or participation in the Chacoan system. Appropriated Chacoan symbolism would have served to reintegrate diversity, defuse political tensions, and sustain communality under new historical conditions of population displacement, aggregation, and reorganization. The symbolism was, in effect, something that allowed aggregation to proceed. Use of the symbolism continues into the Muerto phase (AD 1275-1300) at Ramah-El Morro, as evidenced by the location of Dshaped kivas within plazas at some of the huge walled pueblos. The integrating power of Chacoan symbolism is evidenced even today by the fact that diverse groups of modern Pueblo claim the Chaco area as part of their ancestral territory (Lekson and Cameron 1993).

In light of these ideas about the old Chacoan symbolism serving the aims of community building in new historical circumstances I am struck by another observation about Pettit site archaeology made in the summer of 1993. This is a possible architectural feature (Feature 91 in Figure 4.4) pecked into the south side of Pettit mesa just below the mesa rim. We were unable to fully investigate this 1993 because feature in constraints. The feature is photographed in Figures 4.6 and 4.7. The feature is semicircular in shape, and overlooks the

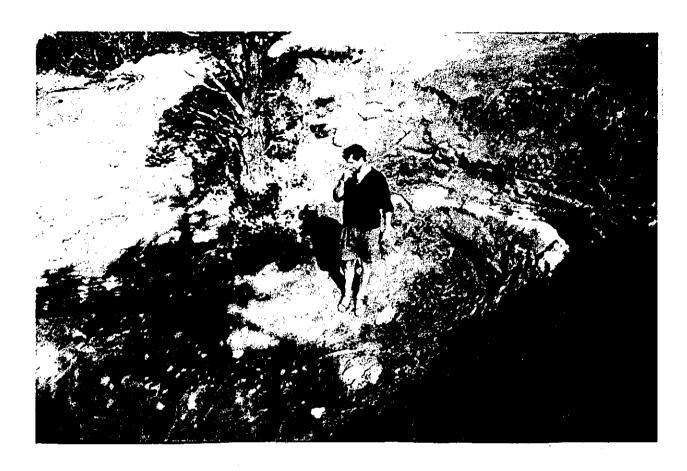


Figure 4.6. Feature 91 at the Pettit site.

multi-story Feature 16 roomblock and the large room 77 kiva (Figure 4.8). The entire complex conveys the impression of "amphitheatre". This set of architectural features may represent a collective attempt to maximize community involvement in ceremonial activities centered in the courtyard containing kiva 77 (again, the largest public building at the site and the one containing the "elite" The intent at Pettit may have burial). been identical to that motivating the construction of large, open, unroofed structures elsewhere in the Zuni area after 1150, including one observed at the Scribe S site itself (Kintigh 1994; see also LeBlanc 1989:355-356).

In summary, multiple lines of Togeye Canyon evidence in comparable patterns in other areas suggest the need to explore alternative models of political economy and ideology for Zuni prehistory. We should allow that under particular historical circumstances (like those characterizing the reorganization period), puebloan political economy took on new forms or at least some new At the same "experimental" elements. time we should be alert to powerful historical continuities. I believe that communal relations of production were sustained throughout Zuni prehistory, although the social articulation of these relations with non-economic processes



Figure 4.7. Detail of Feature 91 at the Pettit site.



Feature 4.8. View from Feature 91 looking south over Feature 16 towards the room 77 kiva.

could have been quite variable. I have tried to explore this possibility using Pettit site data. Others have demonstrated the substantial ideological continuities running through Zuni prehistory. With this mix of old and new, familiar and foreign we have a warrant for imagining tensions in, and struggles over, many different aspects of prehistoric Zuni social life. Whatever tensions existed during the reorganization period were resolved in such a way as to allow unprecedented kinds of population 1250, but aggregation after this development undoubtedly introduced new

social pressures and tensions.

CONCLUSION

The archaeology of the Zuni area suggests that early aggregated communities pulsed with interesting social The development of new dynamics. theory to grasp these dynamics is clearly in order. Work at the Pettit site has produced some inferences about integrating and disintegrating tendencies in early aggregated communities that can be tested with new data and perhaps help

illuminate dynamics in other places. I have here added to the context for interpreting Pettit by discussing smaller sites in Togeye Canyon and several new observations of canyon archaeology.

If we follow the editors' advice to build new interpretive theory we should also keep in mind that any mode of labor appropriation and social production is variable in terms of how it is sustained (and complicated) by the other political, economic, and cultural processes with which it exists. Allowing, as the editors do, for the coexistence of communal and stratified structures in the same society and perhaps even frequent shifts between them is a good idea. At the same time we might also allow that stratification can function to sustain communality under certain environmental and historical circumstances. The reorganization period in the Zuni area is a good time and place to explore these sorts of possibilities given the apparent struggles of resident groups to cope with new existential realities and challenges.

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NOTES

- 1. The sites in Table 4.1 bear their original Wake Forest University survey numbers. We are still assembling information from original survey forms and notebooks to prepare site forms for submission to the Museum of New Mexico Laboratory of Anthropology.
- 2. Kivas located at the base of Pettit mesa (room numbers 77, 83, and 85) were not part of Linthicum's analysis because they were excavated too late to be included.
- 3. Robertson (1983) discusses this idea for the Zuni area, and Adler (1992:22) describes a similar situations for contemporaneous southwestern Colorado. Adler notes that groups of associated rooms and kivas are discernible as distinct spatial units in the later aggregated sites around Mesa Verde. The architecture of aggregated sites thus often preserves the integrity of smaller, previously dispersed coresidential units.
 - 4. It seems reasonable to relate the

greater variation in storage room size at Pettit to variation in the size of the last corporate groups using storage facilities at the settlement.

- 5. The large amount of storage space could also relate, however, to Pettit's role in provisioning an outlying network of sites, discussed below. Even this set of circumstances, however, would likely require some formal political hierarchy to help redistribute use-values across settlements.
- 6. The kinds of services performed by this particular community leader at Pettit is perhaps disclosed by other aspects

of his biology. This individual is distinguished by a stress fracture in his left tibia which may reflect frequent participation in physical activities such as running or strenuous foot travel (Grimsley 1992). The point should certainly not be stretched too far, but perhaps this young male derived social status from his ability to personally negotiate linkages between communities during an unsettled period of social reorganization. If we are really interested in exploring the sources of social power in Zuni socieities, then perhaps such ideas should be seriously considered.

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