



Fig. 1. The locations of Kotiyiti and selected contemporaneous Pueblo villages in the northern Rio Grande district. Kotiyiti, an ancestral Cochiti village, received refugees from San Marcos and San Felipe Pueblos.

Living on the Mesa: Hanat Kotiyiti, A Post-Revolt Cochiti Community in Northern New Mexico

By Robert W. Preucel

On August 10, 1680, the Pueblo Indians of the Spanish province of New Mexico, along with their Navajo and Apache allies, rose up against their overlords to initiate one of the most successful revolts in the history of the New World.

After eighty-two years of living under Spanish rule, Pueblo leaders forged an alliance that transcended longstanding village rivalries. For nine days, Pueblo warriors besieged the Spanish capital of Santa Fe, forcing the Governor of New



Fig. 2. Potrero Viejo, where Cochiti people made one of their final stands against the Spanish, is currently the site of a collaborative project. Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania Museum and the Pueblo of Cochiti are mapping the community of Hanat Kotiyiti, established sometime after 1683.

Mexico, Antonio de Otermín, to retreat with his followers to what is now Juarez, Mexico. A total of 401 Spanish colonists and 21 Franciscan missionaries lost their lives in the uprising. The number of Pueblo people killed is not recorded.

Surprisingly, given its historical significance, the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 has not been the subject of sustained archaeological research. Early 20th century investigators, such as Nels Nelson and A. V. Kidder, conducted some of the first excavations at mission pueblos in the course of establishing scientific archaeology in the American Southwest. Their chief concern, however, was with understanding the origins of the Pueblo people and they saw mission pueblos as a way to work back in time "from the known to the unknown" (Nelson 1914:9). Other archaeologists, such as Edgar Lee Hewett, were more interested in ruins stabilization and the promotion of tourism than in mission pueblo economy and

Pueblo-Spanish social dynamics.

In order to gather new archaeological data about this period, I established the Kotiyiti Research Project in 1995 as a collaboration between the University of Pennsylvania Museum and the Pueblo of Cochiti. Our focus of investigation is Hanat Kotiyiti ("Cochiti above"), an ancestral Cochiti community located on Potrero Viejo, a mesa in north central New Mexico (Figs. 1 and 2). Kotiyiti figures prominently in Southwestern history because it was the setting of one of the final battles of the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico. Our on-going research addresses a number of interrelated questions, such as: How did Pueblo people reconstruct their lives in the period following the revolt? What is the archaeological evidence for the different groups of Pueblo people known historically to have been present at Kotiyiti? What are the current meanings of Kotiyiti to the people of Cochiti?

THE PUEBLO REVITALIZATION MOVEMENT

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 was more than a successful military campaign to overthrow the Spaniards. It was part of a broad-based *cultural revitalization* movement carefully crafted by Pueblo leaders. Anthony Wallace (1956:265) has defined a revitalization movement as "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." The Pueblo revitalization movement combined aspects of messianism, nativism, and revivalism.

The messianic component of the Pueblo revitalization movement is perhaps the least well developed of the three. Messianic movements usually "emphasize the participation of a divine savior in human flesh" (Wallace 1956:267), and although some accounts identify a San Juan Pueblo

burn the images of the holy Christ, the Virgin Mary and the other saints, the crosses ... burn the temples, break up the bells, and separate from the wives whom God had given them in marriage and take those whom they desired" (Hackett and Shelby 1942:247). To purify themselves, they were to plunge "into the rivers and washing themselves with amole (yucca root)... with the understanding that there would thus be taken from them the character of the holy sacraments" (ibid., 247).

There was also a strong revivalistic character to the movement. Revivalism emphasizes "the institution of customs, values, and even aspects of nature which are thought to have been in the (worldview) of previous generations but are not now present" (Wallace 1956:267). During the inspection tour, Popé and his associates urged the

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leader named Popé as the overall architect of the revolt, he is unlikely to have been a true "messiah." In Pueblo society ritual leaders were not considered to be divine. In any event, he was certainly not the only leader of the Pueblo Revolt. Rarely cited historical sources identify El Saca and El Chato of Taos Pueblo, Francisco Tanjete of San Ildefonso Pueblo and Alonzo Catiti of Santo Domingo Pueblo as prominent leaders. Popé, however, seems to have been the public spokesperson, the person most responsible for the rhetorical form and persuasive power of the movement.

The nativistic component of the movement, in contrast, is clearly in evidence. Nativism is expressed by "a strong emphasis on the elimination of alien persons, customs, values or material from (a people's worldview)" (Wallace 1956:267). Immediately following the revolt, Popé and his associates conducted a formal inspection tour of the Pueblo villages. At each one, they demanded that the people eradicate every trace of Christianity. They were instructed to "break up and

Pueblo people to renew their kivas and once again hold their katchina ceremonies. If they lived in accordance with "the law of their ancestors," they would harvest "a great deal of maize, many beans, a great abundance of cotton, calabashes, and very large watermelons and cantaloupes and that they could erect their houses and enjoy abundant health and leisure" (Hackett and Shelby 1942:248).

Kotyiti is of special interest as one of several mesa-top communities known to have been founded in the aftermath of the Pueblo Revolt. As such, Kotyiti should be able to provide new information on the ideology and practice of the Pueblo revitalization movement.

TWO VILLAGES: SUCCESSIVE OR CONTEMPORARY?

There are two distinct villages on Potrero Viejo—a formal plaza pueblo with six roomblocks containing two kivas, and a secondary village composed of a loose clustering of individual

houses located some 150 meters to the east (Figs. 3 and 4). The plaza pueblo is securely dated to the post-Revolt period on the basis of historical documentation, dendrochronology, and ceramics. What has been debated by archaeologists is the age of the secondary village.

Adolph Bandelier, the pioneering anthropologist, first proposed the idea that the secondary village predated the plaza pueblo. He visited the mesa in 1880 with Juan José Montoya, the Governor of Cochiti, and gave the following interpretation: "The oldest ruins on the mesa, which hardly attract any attention, are those of a prehistoric Queres [Keres] pueblo; the strikingly well preserved ones are those of a village built after the year 1683 and abandoned in April, 1694" (Bandelier 1892:178).

It is clear that Bandelier's main criterion for

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differentiating the ages of the two villages is the condition of the architecture. He described the plaza pueblo as "two stories high in some places, very well preserved, and built of fairly regular parallelepipeds of tufa [tuff, a volcanic rock]" (1892:167) (Fig. 5). He described the secondary village as a group of "utterly shapeless" small houses located 210 meters east of the plaza pueblo and speculated that these were possibly "traces of the first occupation of the Potrero Viejo by the Queres [Keres]" (ibid., 168).

In 1912, Nels C. Nelson began excavations at Kotyiti as part of the American Museum of Natural History's Southwestern Program (Figs. 6 and 7). Nelson (n.d.) was an advocate of Bandelier's thesis and speculated that the ruinous condition of the eastern village was due to its building stone having been robbed for reuse in the construction of the plaza pueblo.

In 1932, H. P. Mera of the Museum of New Mexico made surface collections of ceramics at

the two villages. Because so-called Glaze F ceramics are found at both sites, Mera believed both were occupied during the Revolt period (Mera 1940:24, 25). More recently, Charles Lange has written that "all the glaze-paint forms (of the secondary village) are of Group F, and it would seem well justified to look upon these structures as the work of late arrivals after the double plazas had been enclosed or to consider them merely detached portions of the main ruin" (Lange and Riley 1966:146, n. 98).

In 1979, Julia Dougherty directed an archaeological survey of the Kotyiti area for the Santa Fe National Forest (Dougherty 1980). Like Bandelier and Nelson before her, she interpreted the two villages as being successively founded with the secondary village dating to between AD 1150 and 1275 (ibid.).

At present, there are two competing hypotheses regarding the age of the secondary village on Potrero Viejo. The Bandelier thesis holds that the secondary village was occupied sometime during the prehistoric period. The Mera thesis proposes that the secondary village is contemporaneous with the plaza pueblo and that both were occupied after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. One of the first goals of the project was to resolve this conflict.

CERAMICS AND CHRONOLOGY

Our studies of the ceramics from the two villages demonstrate that the villages are indeed contemporaneous (Table 1). This conclusion is based upon our analyses of the painted ware assemblages that were collected by Nelson and Mera as well as our ongoing studies of the architecture of the two villages.

The painted ware assemblage of the plaza



Fig. 3. Aerial photo of the Kotyiti plaza pueblo showing the village layout and its remarkable state of preservation. Courtesy of Tom Baker, Aerial Archaeology, Albuquerque

pueblo is dominated by historic Kotyiti glazewares (Glaze F) and Tewa matte paint polychromes (Fig. 8). In fact, these wares are so common that the site has been identified as the "type site" for the two ceramics (Hawley 1936). Both of these wares are securely dated to the Revolt period. There are also small amounts of trade wares, such as Jemez Black-on-White and Puname Polychrome, as well as a few European ceramics, such as majolica and olive jars.

The painted ware assemblage of the secondary village is entirely comparable with that of the plaza pueblo. It too is dominated by late, historic glaze and Tewa wares. And it too has trade wares, specifically Puname Polychrome. However, there are no prehistoric ceramics in any of the existing collections and, moreover, we saw none during our three seasons of fieldwork. The absence of these ceramics at this village directly contradicts the Bandelier hypothesis.

Thus we consider both of the villages to have been occupied during the post-Revolt period

and therefore to constitute a single interacting community. This view is consistent with the earlier observations by Mera and Lange.

THE CHANGING KOTYITI COMMUNITY

The question that emerges next is who were the people who lived in the Kotyiti community? Where did they come from? In order to address these and other questions, we have carefully examined the documentary record, particularly the new translations of the journals of Diego de Vargas (Kessell and Hendricks 1992; Kessell, Hendricks, and Dodge 1995, 1998).

When Vargas first visited Kotyiti in 1692, the community was inhabited by people from Cochiti and refugees from San Felipe and San Marcos (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:515). Vargas was told

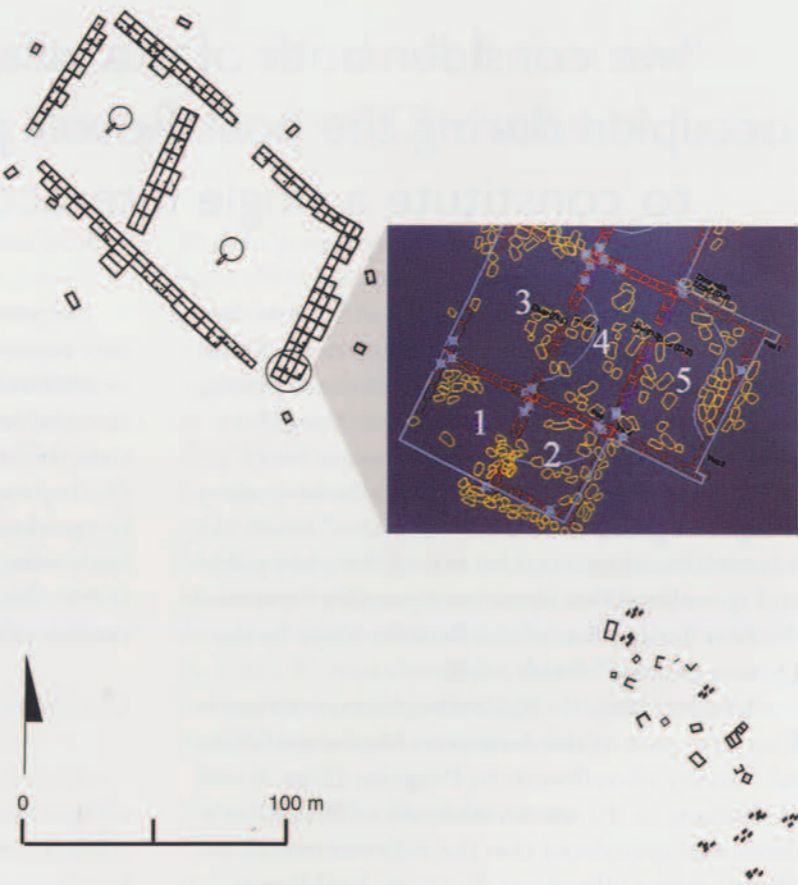


Fig. 4. High-resolution map of the spatial relationships between the Kotyiti plaza pueblo (on left) and the secondary village (on right), created by Nick Stapp from data gathered by Loa Traxler, director of the Kotyiti Mapping Project. Inset: Southern end of Roomblock 1 at the plaza pueblo.

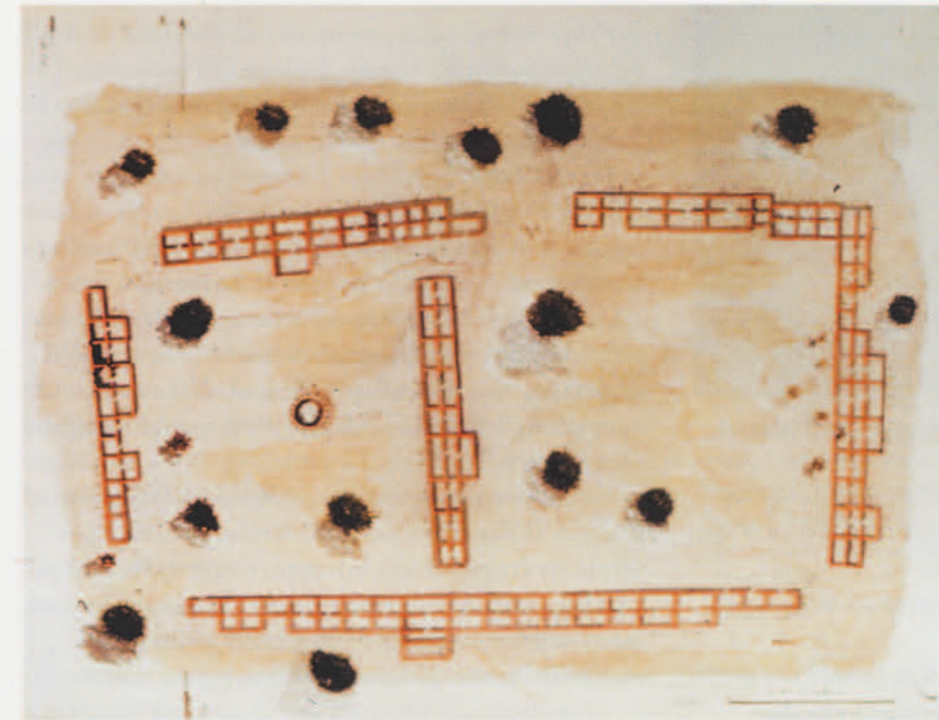


Fig. 5. Adolph Bandelier's 1882 watercolor map depicting the Kotyiti plaza pueblo. It shows the locations of the well-preserved rooms with wall plaster. It also depicts the character of the local vegetation (presumably pinyon and juniper) which appears to have been considerably more sparse when mapped than is the case at present.

Histoire de la colonisation et de missions de Sonora, Chihuahua, Nouveau-Mexique et Arizona jusqu'à l'année 1700. (Manuscript Lat. 14111 in Vatican Library; 1887) Plate VII. II. No. 32. Courtesy of the Vatican Library

that the people had moved up onto the mesa out of fear of their enemies. A year later, Vargas returned and was greeted by two separate groups of men and women (Kessell, Hendricks, and Dodge 1995:425). By this time, the San Felipe people had left to establish their own mesa-top village, Old San Felipe. It thus seems likely that the two groups Vargas encountered in 1693 were the people from Cochiti and San Marcos, each under their own leader. Vargas identified El Zepe as the leader of the Cochiti, and Cristobal as the leader of the San Marcos. He also learned that the people of San Marcos occupied a roomblock in the "second plaza" of the village (*ibid.*, 200).

By 1694, pro- and anti-Spanish tensions within the community escalated to the point that El Zepe ordered the death of Cristobal and his brother Zue (*ibid.*, 200). Their crime was that they had served as Spanish informants. In response to this act and the threat Kotyiti posed to the friendly villages, Vargas attacked the village on April 17, 1694, with a combined force of over 150 men, the majority being composed of allied Pueblo warriors from San Felipe, Santa Ana, and Zia. Although Vargas captured the village in an early morning attack, most of the warriors escaped. Four days later, the warriors coun-

terattacked and succeeded in freeing half of their women and children.

These accounts document that Kotyiti was a Cochiti village led by El Zepe. They also reveal that it was a village in flux as people from other Pueblo villages periodically joined and left the community. There are strong indications of internal unrest; some people wanted to surrender peaceably to the Spaniards, while others planned to resist. These disputes severely weakened the community, causing changes in leadership for the San Marcos people and leading to the emigration of San Felipe people and their subsequent alliance with the Spaniards.

EVIDENCE FOR REVIVALISM

What traditional practices did the people of Kotyiti reinstate as part of the Pueblo revitalization movement? Did they actually stop using Spanish food and material culture? To answer these questions, we have begun an analysis of the artifacts excavated by Nelson and curated by the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Although the comparative data on Pueblo foodways in the pre-Revolt mission communities

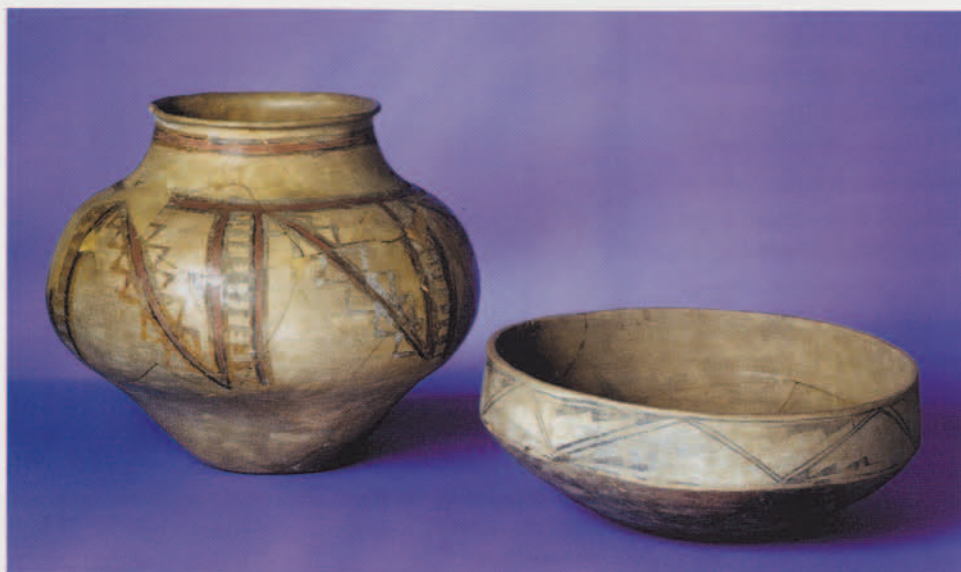


Fig. 8. Kotyiti Glaze Polychrome jar and Tewa Polychrome bowl, both from Nelson's excavations at the Kotyiti plaza pueblo.

(l) AMNH 29.0/3140 (Rm. 124), H. 21.7 cm; (r) 29.0/3052 (Rm. 39), D. 29.6 cm

Fig. 9. A copper censer and candle holder (?) were among the few metal objects found in Nelson's excavations at the plaza pueblo, suggesting that the Pueblo people retained certain Spanish religious objects after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

(l) AMNH 29.0/3027, H. 4.4 cm; (r) 29.0/3042, D. 6.8 cm



Fig. 10. Miniature vessels found in Room 44 of the plaza pueblo may be evidence for Pueblo rain-making rituals. These vessels are all slipped with white clay in what may be the earliest documented use of the famous Cochiti slip and are decorated with matte paint designs.

AMNH 29.0/3061-3070; H. of no. 3068 (far right), 3.1 cm



Fig. 11. Clay pipe carved with a lightning arrow design emanating from a stepped terrace (cloud or mountain?). Similar pipes are known from Kidder's excavations at Pecos Pueblo.

AMNH 29.0/3093; L. 18.8 cm

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ROBERT W. PREUCEL is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Associate Curator of North American Archaeology in the American Section. He has been working in the American Southwest since 1979, when he joined James N. Hill's Pajarito Archaeological Research Project. He has published widely on new developments in archaeological method and theory. His most recent book, edited with Ian Hodder, is entitled *Contemporary Archaeology in Theory: A Reader*.