

Puebloan Societies

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HOMOLOGY AND HETEROGENEITY
IN TIME AND SPACE

Edited by Peter M. Whiteley

SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH PRESS • SANTA FE

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS • ALBUQUERQUE

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Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Whiteley, Peter M., editor.

Title: Puebloan societies: homology and
heterogeneity in time and space / edited by
Peter M. Whiteley.

Description: Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research
Press; Albuquerque: University of New Mexico
Press, [2018] | Series: School for Advanced
Research advanced seminar series |
Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018008530 (print) |

LCCN 2018028010 (e-book) |

ISBN 9780826360120 (e-book) |

ISBN 9780826360113 (pbk.; alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Pueblo Indians—Social life and
customs. | Pueblo Indians—History. |
Indians of North America—Southwest,
New—Antiquities.

Classification: LCC E99.P9 (e-book) |

LCC E99.P9 P94 2018 (print) |

DDC 978.9004/974—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018008530>

Cover illustration: *Basket Dance*, by Quah Ah
(Tonita Peña, 1893–1949), San Ildefonso Pueblo.
North American Ethnographic Collection,
Division of Anthropology, American Museum of
Natural History. Catalog no. 50.2/4147. Donated by
Amelia E. White, 1937.
Composed in Minion Pro

To the memory of Alfonso Ortiz, Oku p'in

It is hardly necessary to make a general brief for the kind of interdependence that prevails in our Southwest, where extant cultures are historically related to cultures under archaeological research. There is no dispute that the living culture has light to throw upon the buried one. Theoretically no dispute; practically we are constantly surprised to find Southwestern archaeologists, even seasoned students, unfamiliar with the ethnological record and having to leave to the ethnologist interpretation of their data: plums for the ethnologist but a loss to the [wo]man who has been doing the work.

—Elsie Clews Parsons, “Relations between Ethnology and Archaeology in the Southwest” (1940)

Ethnographic analogy, the use of comparative data from anthropology to inform reconstructions of past human societies, has a troubled history. Archaeologists often express concern about, or outright reject, the practice—and sometimes do so in problematically general terms. This is odd, as . . . the use of comparative data in archaeology is the same pattern of reasoning as the “comparative method” in biology, which is a well-developed and robust set of inferences which play a central role in discovering the biological past.

—Adrian Currie, “Ethnographic Analogy, the Comparative Method, and Archaeological Special Pleading” (2016)

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This volume presents results of the School for Advanced Research Advanced Seminar “Puebloan Societies: New Perspectives across the Subfields,” held in October 2015. The title alluded to two classic predecessors, “New Perspectives on the Pueblos,” led by Alfonso Ortiz (1972), and “Reconstructing Prehistoric Pueblo Societies,” led by William Longacre (1970). The immediate inspiration was another SAR volume, John Ware’s *A Pueblo Social History* (2014), which has importantly reconnected Southwestern archaeology and ethnology. Seminar participants agreed it was high time to reengage some central questions on Pueblo social formations from deep history into the recent past, throughout the northern Southwest. For reasons that are neither sound nor valid scientifically, explanations in Puebloan anthropology have often been disjoint, especially between archaeology and ethnology, almost as if they occupy separate epistemological universes. Recent disaggregation of anthropological subfields in graduate programs and research practices explains this in part, although the divergence arose earlier and is more encompassing, as the volume epigraphs by Elsie Clews Parsons and Adrian Currie suggest.

While addressing a discrete cultural region, our inquiry is germane to central questions in anthropology, which rest on meaningful interconnections among the subdisciplines. Anthropology’s strength lies in its unitary capacity to explain human social evolution and variation, via targeted foci on well-defined phenomena. Since the late nineteenth century, Puebloan societies, those of long ago and those of the present, have been both exemplars and explananda during all theoretical phases and paradigm shifts in anthropology. As the discipline begins to emerge from its postmodern slumber, reengagement with more rigorous analytical approaches offers much promise for enhanced explanation.

We here address Puebloan societies from comparative and specific perspectives, principally via archaeology and ethnology, but attendant also to linguistics and bioarchaeology, with the aim to reengage the subfields in analytical dialogue. Disjunction over the last few decades, we believe, is shortsighted. The problems and pitfalls of “ethnographic analogy” have been overstated, resulting in underinformed hypotheses that too often restrict rather than advance scientific explanation. Notwithstanding extensive changes—gradualist and punctuated, internally driven and externally imposed, environmental and sociological—there are palpable continuities in material practice, architecture,

economy, and ritual symbolism between the Ancestral and modern Pueblos; the latter are better seen not as ethnographic analogies but as *ethnological homologies* that descend, with modification, from the former. The continuities extend also, this volume argues, to Pueblo social organization, though the seminar as a group diverged somewhat on how to read them, and the causes and consequences of their changing distributions in time and space. And as well as long-term homologies in sociocultural forms, there are substantive heterogeneities that represent serial and/or cumulative events and processes of ethnogenesis and multiple, sometimes intersecting lines of descent. These differences, as well as the similarities, require explaining: this is the task we set collectively for ourselves. Our divergent perspectives, as well as some clear convergences, make our volume's total trajectory particularly vibrant: while governed by thematic coherence, we do not seek uniformitarian consensus.

Accounting for patterns of similarity, difference, transformation, and continuity entails systematic comparison in time and space—culturally and regionally, specifically and generally. That requires the explanatory capabilities of all anthropological subfields, each with its own analytical strengths. These include kinship, ritual, and social organization from ethnology; site formation and succession and networks of connection over time from archaeology and ethnohistory; cross-language patterns and processes from linguistic anthropology; and demographic and genetic structures from biological anthropology. (Only intermittent allusions remain to the last, as its principal seminar representatives, John Crandall and Debra Martin, chose to publish their research elsewhere.) The seminar was one of the liveliest exchanges among a diverse array of scholars that I have experienced. It touched both on the deeply layered history of anthropological ideas (thanks especially to Triloki Pandey's extraordinary interventions) and on fine-grained empirical detail of Puebloan cases and sites, the specialties of individual participants. But the continuity and discontinuity of Ancestral and recent Pueblo social formations remained both the anchor and the guiding theme of all our conversations.

To what extent we have succeeded in casting new light will be judged by the reader, but the common sentiment among the seminar's participants was that the effort was very worthwhile, as well as deeply enjoyable. This was in no small part thanks to the support and hospitality of the School for Advanced Research. I would like especially to thank Michael Brown, Nicole Taylor, Cynthia Geoghegan, David Stuart, Sarah Soliz, and the late Douglas Schwartz for their multiple and varied contributions during, before, and after

the seminar. My involvement with Puebloan societies goes back to the beginning of my work as a Southwestern anthropologist, which could not even have been imaginable without the guidance, influence, and encouragement of Alfonso Ortiz. As the volume's dedication (reproducing a collective sentiment voiced at the outset of seminar discussion) attests, Alfonso profoundly influenced the lives and ideas of many seminar participants in similar ways. John Ware's insights on Pueblo social history, his friendship, and his comprehensive engagement in this project have been consistently invaluable—even when we have disagreed! For support at the American Museum of Natural History, I would particularly like to thank Anthropology Chair Laurel Kendall, Provost Michael Novacek, Ward Wheeler (Invertebrate Zoology and Computational Sciences), and past and present Anthropology Division artists Jennifer Steffey and Kayla Younkin. The National Science Foundation under Program Officer Deborah Winslow supported earlier work (with colleague Ward Wheeler) on Crow-Omaha kinship systems that proved foundational to the seminar: specifically "Explaining Crow-Omaha Kinship Structures with Anthro-Informatics" (BCS-0925978) and "Workshop on Transitions in Human Social Organization" (BCS-0938505), the latter of which was presented as an Amerind Foundation Advanced Seminar, thanks also to John Ware's generous support.

Leigh Kuwanwisiwma (the Hopi Tribe), Thomas Trautmann (University of Michigan), Maurice Godelier (EHESS), Dwight Read (UCLA), David Kronenfeld (UC, Riverside), and Nick Allen (University of Oxford) have each influenced my own thinking on Pueblo kinship and social organization in more ways than they know. Although now ancient history, my nascent interest in social structure was forged in the early 1970s crucible of Cambridge anthropology, under the fortunate, often competing influence of Meyer Fortes, Jack Goody, and Edmund Leach; it is hard to imagine a sharper group of elders. That great good fortune expanded at the University of New Mexico through guidance by Harry Basehart. And, transcending all other influences, Jane Campbell continues to put up with me, for reasons I do not quite understand.

Peter M. Whiteley
American Museum of Natural History

Introduction

Homology and Heterogeneity in Puebloan Social History

PETER M. WHITELEY

Framing

This volume addresses core questions about Pueblo sociocultural formations of the past and present. Its overarching goal is to elucidate key patterns, revealed in specific times, places, and ethnolinguistic groups, via a series of focused inquiries, from deep history into the recent past. The volume results from an SAR Advanced Seminar addressing long-term continuities and discontinuities among Puebloan societies. We seek to identify points of genuine comparability over the long term, from Basketmaker times forward, as well as definitive distinctions. Drawing upon the insights of ethnology, archaeology, linguistics, and a little bioarchaeology, our collective aim is for a new benchmark of understanding. We examine structures of social history and social practice, including kinship groups, ritual sodalities, architectural forms, economic exchange, environmental adaptation, and political order, and their patterns of transmission over time and space. We suggest long-term persistences, as well as systemic differences: Pueblo social formations encode both homologies and heterogeneities. The result is a cumulative window upon how major Pueblo societies came to be and how they have transformed over time. Some chapters are more explicitly comparative and others attend to particular societies, sites, or time periods, but all speak to an overriding concern with the shapes and, broadly speaking, the “evolution” of Pueblo social forms. All told, the volume represents an interdisciplinary—or, at least, *intersubdisciplinary*—conjunction, bringing archaeology, ethnology, and linguistic anthropology into mutual dialogue.

The core analytical questions are vital to a genuinely comparative anthropology. What is a society? What are its building blocks, its moving parts? How

are people woven together, e.g., by kinship and marriage, across households or other constituent elements? How does the whole operate collectively? What is its economy, its mode of adaptation to a particular ecosystem? Its principles of leadership, its governance, its division of labor? How does it produce and reproduce itself via structured relationships of gender and generation? What are its religious beliefs, ritual practices, worldview? What about boundaries, intersections, networks? How does a social formation perpetuate itself and arrange its relations—of both peace and war—with neighbors? Alternatively, how does it mutate, absorb, or amalgamate with others to produce novel rearrangements? And when “things fall apart,” how does it respond—e.g., via migration and/or regrouping and reconstitution? Moreover, how does society imagine itself as the product of one history or several: how did present patterns come into being, and in what manners and measures do they represent a persistence of old forms and/or innovation, accretion, or change? For the analyst, these questions give rise to others, including how to calibrate relationships among successive societies over time or identify the most meaningful links between past and present—say, between the archaeological residue of long ago and living descendant communities.

Such questions used to be the staple diet of anthropology, binding together different strands among its subdisciplines with a common overall purpose. Willful abandonment of this epistemological core over the last few decades—often, it seems, for parts unknown and discourses tendentious—has enfeebled both scientific argument and anthropology’s *raison d’être* as an objective investigation of the human condition. This volume seeks to demonstrate the value of substantive reengagement among ethnology, archaeology, and linguistics—which have too long languished in discrete silos—and to reconnect and reenergize diverse approaches to Puebloan sociocultural formations. We aim here for an analytical whole greater than the sum of its parts: to adumbrate a new synthesis in this fascinating region of human cultural history, which has provided a living “laboratory” for the development of global anthropology over the last century and a half.

Our purpose involves a deliberate double focus on past and present. Present and recent social formations are in effect the “downstream” result of past events, processes, and configurations. Explaining historical social phenomena is enhanced, we argue, by informed “upstreaming” from known ethnographic realities to structural and processual probabilities in the Puebloan past. But beyond material forms, how can known differences among the living

Pueblos—of language, kinship, polity, and ritual—meaningfully inform interpretations of earlier societies within, broadly speaking, the same overall tradition? How can ethnographic descriptions and oral traditions best enhance explanations of the long-term archaeological record? And, turning the telescope around, how did known societies such as the Hopi, Taos, Zuni, or Ohkay Owingeh come to be? In what manners and measures do they descend from Ancestral Pueblos of the last two thousand years, and how do they differ from each other and from their own respective pasts, either as a result of precolonial or colonial dislocations and reformations and/or historic and ongoing relations with non-Puebloan peoples, both Native and non-Native? Moreover, what are the explanatory implications of known differences among recent or present Pueblo social structures? Do systems based, respectively, on matrilineal (the Western Pueblos) or bilateral (the northern Rio Grande) kinship represent distinct social formations over the long run, or variant transformations under colonial rule? What about ritual moieties and sodalities—do these reflect, oppose, or historically grow out of kinship-based organizations? The authors of this volume may differ in their responses to these questions, but all believe it is important to bring upstream and downstream perspectives into dialogue. Past and present are a two-way street: our aim is to demonstrate how each may illuminate the other.