

**Prehistoric Pueblo Pottery North and West of the Colorado River:
Museum of Northern Arizona Ceramic Conference
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Margaret Lyneis and Kelley Hays-Gilpin convened a two day conference at the Colton Research Center sponsored by the Museum of Northern Arizona. Approximately 40 archaeologists attended. A highlight of the conference was the Friday night reception sponsored by the Kaibab-Vermilion Trust Alliance, held at the headquarters of the Grand Canyon Trust. More than 50 years after the publication of Harold S. Colton's *Pottery Types of the Arizona Strip and Adjacent Areas in Utah and Arizona* (1952), we have learned a great deal more about the pottery of the region. It is time for a new synthesis.

The Region and its Pottery-Producing Locales

The region (Figure 1) extends from the Moapa Valley in Clark County, southern Nevada, eastward to the Escalante River which flows into the Colorado River just east of 50-mile Mountain at the eastern margin of the Kaiparowits Plateau in Kane County, Utah. It is about 200 miles east-northeast from Overton, Nevada, to the Escalante River. The Moapa Valley is the westernmost area where prehistoric Pueblo settlement was continuous, hence its choice as the western terminus of the area we cover. Nevertheless, prehistoric Pueblo pottery is common in the Las Vegas Valley, where there is evidence of intermittent settlements (Lyon and Ahlstrom 2006).

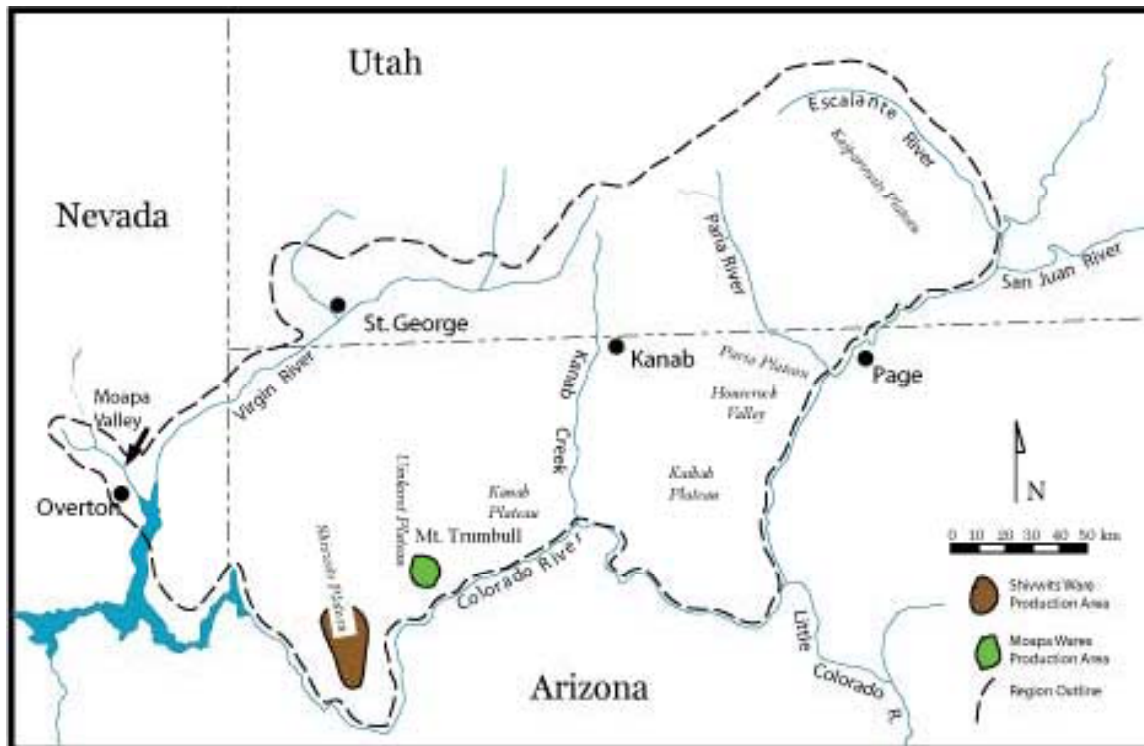


Figure 1. The prehistoric Pueblo region north and west of the Colorado River

West of Kanab Creek

Kanab Creek, which heads up in the southern part of Bryce Canyon National Park and flows south through Kanab, Utah, to the Colorado River is a convenient geographic divider. It separates two spheres of pottery production and distribution, perhaps because it is difficult to cross. To its west is the Kanab Plateau, Mt. Trumbull and the Uinkaret Plateau as well as the Shivwits Plateau.

Still further west, the Virgin River takes us from the plateaus of Zion National Park down through the St. George Basin into the low-elevation desert of far northwestern Arizona and southern Nevada to Lake Mead. The Muddy River, which drains the Upper and Lower Moapa Valleys, originates in warm springs in the upper valley at an elevation of about 400 m, and runs southeast through the Lower Moapa Valley where it enters Lake Mead. Prior to the creation of Lake Mead, it joined the Virgin River, which flowed into the Colorado River. The northern edge of the region is formed by the higher elevations of the Grand Staircase, where the growing season becomes too short [for what? for reliable cultivation of maize].

Mt. Trumbull and the Moapa Wares. Residents of the southeast edge of the Uinkaret Plateau in the vicinity of Mt. Trumbull produced surpluses of Moapa Gray Ware and Moapa White Ware, known informally if not accurately as “olivine-tempered pottery.” Crushed or disaggregated olivine-rich xenoliths from ashy tuffs provided the distinctive temper for this pottery. These wares were supplied [in ? quantities relating to lesser? large numbers] to settlements along the Muddy and lower Virgin Rivers, and in lesser quantities to the St. George Basin and the plateaus to the north, including Yellowstone Mesa, 30 miles to the north (Allison 1988). Only very small quantities reached the communities along the base of the Vermilion Cliffs. In Hildale, only .2% of the pottery was Moapa Gray and White Ware. However, there was local production of sand-tempered pottery here, using clays from the Chinle Formation from the adjacent Vermilion Cliffs (Hasbargen and Gilpin 2003). The Moapa wares were present in the Moapa Valley throughout the Pueblo occupation, from BM III to Late Pueblo II, but peaked in Middle Pueblo II times (Allison 2000: Figures 17-19).

The Moapa wares were also exchanged eastward in quantities to settlements on the Kanab Plateaus. They made up as much as 60% of the assemblages from sites without corrugated pottery. In later sites, indicated by the presence of corrugated wares, their frequency dropped to about 35%. The implications of these large quantities remain to be explored (Huffman 1993:Table 20).

The Shivwits Plateau and Shivwits Ware. The second volcanic production area was on the Shivwits Plateau where jars and a few plain bowls were made. This Ware is common in the lower Moapa Valley in Middle Pueblo II times (Lyneis 1992). However,, its occurrence in other areas is not well documented. Shivwits Ware was made from iron-rich clays, presumably derived from weathering basalt and tempered with crushed sherds.

Logandale Gray and White Wares. These are the only wares known to have been made in the Moapa Valley and lower Virgin Valleys. Their key characteristic is limestone or dolomite temper; a close look will reveal some other, secondary inclusions. It is not thought to be widely distributed beyond its production areas.

Tusayan Gray Ware, Virgin Series, and Tusayan White Ware, Virgin Series. The conference did not address the issues behind these categories. Currently they encompass a wide range of sand tempered pottery, including multilithic sand in some cases. They are distinguished from Shinarump White Ware and Shinarump Gray Ware by fired clay color and texture. Tusayan Gray Ware, Virgin Series is thought to have been widely produced west of Kanab Creek (Allison 2000:220).

East of Kanab Creek and the Shinarump Wares

The Kaibab Plateau, House Rock Valley, the Paria Plateau and the Kaiparowits Plateau lie to the east of Kanab Creek. Colton only had sherds from the Virgin Valley when he defined Shinarump Gray Ware and Shinarump White Ware (1952:55-65). He made the assumption that their ranges were limited to the Virgin and Moapa Valleys. As the only described ware with a dark paste, Shinarump Gray Ware and Shinarump Brown became a dumping ground for any sand-tempered pottery with a dark-fired clay body. The difficulties with this ware and its types came to center stage with the excavation of the Dead Raven site in Johnson Canyon, east of Kanab, Utah. By this time usage of Shinarump Gray Ware had shifted significantly from Colton's (1952) characterization. In 1986 an informal gathering in Cedar City, Utah confronted the problem. They decided a new definition of "Shinarump" was required and Robert Euler drafted one (Walling and Thompson 1988:45-52). Since 1988, most of us have used Shinarump Plain instead of Shinarump Brown to designate pottery that meets our revised sense of what this type should look like. Shinarump Gray and White Wares and their types are rare west of Kanab Creek.

Extra-regional Wares

San Juan Red Ware and Tsegi Orange Ware are found in low quantities across the region. Deadmans Black-on-red is generally the earliest type of San Juan Red Ware found. However, a few sherds of Abajo Polychrome were recovered at the Bonelli site in southern Nevada (Lyneis 2000:261). From Tsegi Orange Ware come both Medicine and Tusayan Black-on-red. Polychromes are rare.

Tusayan White Ware, Kayenta Series, also occurs in low quantities across the region, particularly as Kana-a Black-on-white and Black Mesa Black-on-white. As sherds it is sometimes difficult to distinguish it from Tusayan White Ware, Virgin Series. Lyneis postulates that Tusayan White Ware, Kayenta Series, has been under-identified.

Chronology

Temporal control is poorly developed in the region. We spoke in the terms of the Pecos stages, Basketmaker III to Pueblo II, with Pueblo II divided into early, Middle and Late. Pueblo III is rarely used, and with hesitance. Although there is increasing evidence of Pueblo occupation into the 1200s, there are few signs of Pueblo III characteristics such as aggregation. Flagstaff Black-on white or a regional interpretation of its style is scarce to absent. Type and ware description will also use this chronology.

Design Styles

A fresh look at regional black-on-white design styles was a central focus of the conference. While they are loose analogs to the design styles of Tusayan White Ware, Kayenta Series, and Colton saw them that way, the conference made a good start at distinguishing their independent characteristics. This effort was greatly enhanced by the presence of archaeologists well-versed in Kayenta design styles. The group recognized an outline of varying similarity to Kayenta designs beginning with great similarity in Basketmaker III/Lino times. There is much more contrast in PI times, with little similarity to Kana-a. Instead we will use “Washington style,” based on Washington Black-on-gray, a type in Tusayan White Ware, Virgin Series (Colton 1952: 35-36).

Greater similarity returned with St. George style, a very loose analog of Black Mesa Style named after St. George Black-on-gray in Tusayan White Ware, Virgin Series. We note that in the Kayenta series “Black Mesa style” is already loosely defined. In both areas, the style is characterized by a wide variety of bold elements including dotted and plain triangles, positive and negative squares, varied line widths, and occasional squiggle hatchure. Layouts are often banded and sometimes have panel dividers of multiple thin lines.

Similarity increased with Sosi analogs more in content than in layouts (Figure 2). In both areas, Sosi-style elements consist of elongated right triangles and broad lines. In the Kayenta area, Sosi-style broad lines are virtually always 5-7 mm wide, and the white spaces between them are wider than the black lines. In the Virgin series and other wares with Sosi style elements in the study area, we observe a wider variety of lines widths that are often more closely spaced. The distinctly regional “across-the-bowl” layouts are found with St. George style content or may incorporate Sosi-like angles and triangles (Figure 2). Dogoszhi style is readily recognizable. Although there are type names for a Flagstaff-like style in each of the white wares except Logandale White Ware, pieces with this style are hard to recognize or rare. A sub-group of conference participants will work on full characterizations of the regional styles.



Figure 2. A North Creek Black-on-gray bowl in the collections of the Lost City Museum, Overton, Nevada. Photograph courtesy of David Van Alfen.

**Northern Arizona University's Graduate Ceramics Class
and the Littlefield Site**

In preparation for the conference, Northern Arizona University's Spring 2007 Ant 552 Ceramic Analysis class analyzed pottery from the Littlefield site, NA9058. Located in far northwestern Arizona, it was situated on the eastern edge of Mormon Mesa between the Virgin River Gorge and Mesquite. It was excavated by the Museum on Northern Arizona under the direction of William Wade before the construction of I-15. All the kinds of pottery produced west of Kanab Creek are well represented in this collection. Sherds from the Littlefield site, as well as from some sites east of Kanab Creek will be added to the Colton Ceramic Repository at the Museum of Northern Arizona. The students' reports are on file in the repository.

Revised Ware and Type Names

Sherds from the Las Vegas Valley, mostly contributed by Dr. W. S. Park, were an important part of the collection used by Colton to define the wares and types of this region. Bradley Stuart contributed sherds from the Moapa Valley. Colton was inclined to name types after the localities where they were first noted. Other sherds that Colton used in describing types for the region came from sites along the Virgin River in the vicinity of St George, Utah. Names currently in use include many of those from Colton (1952) as well as a number of useful designations developed by Richard A. Thompson (Walling et al. 1986). The conference reviewed the nomenclature and agreed on a structure and names for the pottery known to be produced in the region.

Among the “policy” conclusions basic to this revision was the decision to delete separate type names for the versions of black-on-white types that have corrugated exteriors on bowls. The conference participants eliminated separate type names for versions with fugitive red on exterior. They also eliminated the only separate corrugated type that was distinguished by a particular form of corrugation, Washington Corrugated in Tusayan Gray Ware, Virgin Series.

Although Moapa White Ware (Colton 1952:3) was reinstated so that all black-on-gray and black-on-white types are grouped into white wares, Colton’s convention of calling the types “Black-on-gray” was retained. The exceptions are the types in Shinarump White Ware. They are slipped, and as in Colton’s typology, those types are “Black-on-white.”

Other additions include Logandale Corrugated in Logandale Gray Ware; Logandale White Ware to include Logandale Black-on-gray and Shivwits Ware to include Shivwits Plain and Corrugated. Tables 1-3 summarize the current names and ware/type organization for the region.

Acknowledgments

We appreciate the contributions of the graduate students in Northern Arizona University’s ANT 552 Ceramic Analysis seminar for Spring 2007. Their reports, listed below, are on file in the Colton Ceramic Repository, Museum of Northern Arizona.

Baldwin, Lisa and Lindsay Smith
2007 Chronology and History of the Tusayan White Ware, Virgin Series.

Bane, Barbara
2007 Moapa Gray Ware.

Decker, Jeremy
2007 Decorated Moapa Gray Ware Types: A Description of Olivine-Tempered Pottery Types Found in Southwestern Utah, Southeastern Nevada, and the Arizona Strip.

Joseph, Brian
2007 Shivwits Plain Ware.

Mandell, Ryan A.
2007 Logandale Gray Ware.

Novotny, Michael J.
2007 Shinarump Red Ware: A Historical Overview and Type Description.

Rodriguez, Fredy, and John Paul Schubert
2007 Shinarump Review: Laboratory Analysis, Chronology, and Type Descriptions of Shinarump Gray and White Wares.

Shurack, Nikki
2007 The History and Chronology of San Juan Red Ware.

Stehman, Kelly
2007 Tsegi Orange Ware: A History, Chronology, and Refined Type Descriptions.

Swarts, Kelly and Thann Baker
2007 Developmental History of Tusayan Gray Ware – Virgin Series Ceramics.

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2007 Surprising Shifts: Changes in Middle PII Pottery Frequencies at the Yamashita Sites. Presented at the 3 Corners Conference, Las Vegas.

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1988 *Archaeology of the Dead Raven Site*. Prepared for the Kane County Commission by Intersearch, Cedar City, Utah. (Reissued as Utah Cultural Resource Series No. 26, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Special Publication No. 2 [2004]).

Table 1. White Wares and Types.

Design Style	Logandale White Ware	Tusayan White Ware, Virgin Series	Moapa White Ware	Shinarump White Ware
Lino-like	Logandale Black-on-gray	Mesquite Black-on-gray	Boulder Black-on-gray	not known
Washington	not known	Washington Black-on-gray	Boysag Black-on-gray	not known
St. George	not known	St. George Black-on-gray	Trumbull Black-on-gray	Wahweap Black-on-white
Sosi-like	not known	North Creek Black-on-gray	Moapa Black-on-gray	Wygaret Black-on-white
Dogoszhi-like	not known	Hildale Black-on-gray	Slide Mountain Black-on-gray	Vermilion Black-on-white
Flagstaff-like	not known	Glendale Black-on-gray	Poverty Mountain Black-on-gray	Cottonwood Black-on-white

Table 2. Shinarump Red Ware Types.

Design Style	Type
Medicine-like	Kanab Black-on-red
Tusayan-like	Middleton Black-on-red

Table 3. Gray Wares and Types.

Surface Finish	Logandale Gray Ware	Tusayan Gray Ware, Virgin Series	Moapa Gray Ware	Shivwits Ware	Shinarump Gray Ware
Plain	Logandale Gray	North Creek Gray	Boulder Gray	Shivwits Plain	Shinarump Plain
Corrugated	Logandale Corrugated	North Creek Corrugated	Moapa Corrugated	Shivwits Corrugated	Shinarump Corrugated