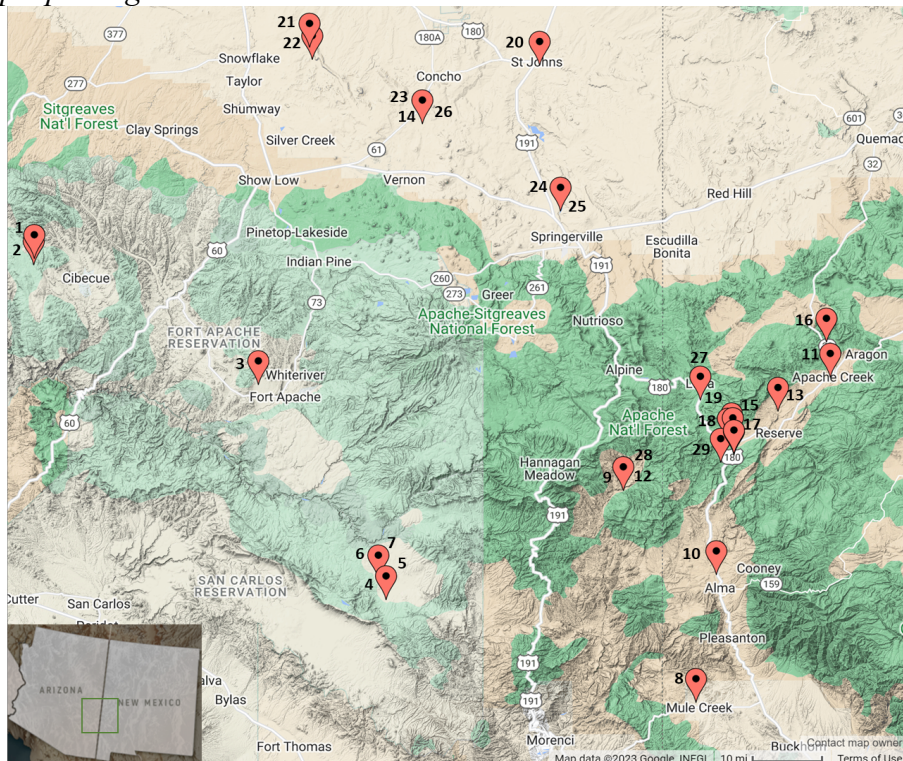


Lessons from a Pot: How Corrugated Vessels Can Tell Us about Identity in the Prehispanic Mogollon US Southwest

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Between 1250 and 1450 CE, the cultural landscape of the present-day U.S. Southwest was transformed significantly, as diverse communities in northeastern Arizona migrated from their homelands after decades of environmental instability into southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. These areas had long-established local populations, but the migrants likely had previous contact through smaller-scale migrations. These large-scale migrations led to a period where people from diverse places interacted and shared their traditions, which led to new inclusive cultural practices seen in the archaeological record through objects such as pottery and architecture. Corrugated ceramics were used across the U.S. Southwest and made as jars and bowls in various styles of corrugation and decorative aspects. Given the complexity of corrugated wares, their widespread use, and the visibility of the designs, *I suggest that people used the decorated forms of these corrugated wares to express and negotiate group identity in new multicultural communities across southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico after people migrated.*



Region of study with archaeological sites included in my sample.



Corrugated Ceramic types included in the study: a) Clapboard Corrugated (AD 1050–1130) b) McDonald Corrugated (AD 1100–1300) c) Incised Corrugated (AD 1050–1250) d) Tularosa Fillet Rim (AD 1100–1300) e) Indented Corrugated (AD 1050–1250) f) Semi-obiterated Corrugated (AD 1200–1450) g) Zoned Corrugated (AD 1100–1300) h) Patterned Corrugated (AD 1100–1300) (All ceramic images from the NM Office of Archaeological Studies Pottery Typology Project <https://ceramics.nmarchaeology.org/>)

Corrugated ceramics are an excellent category of objects to examine for identity on various levels because they encompass traditions passed down through generations and vary widely. The data needed to investigate whether potting communities combined or maintained separate spheres of practice can be obtained by analyzing whole vessels for 25 attributes across 29 archaeological sites in the Mogollon. The knowledge of how to make a corrugated vessel creates enough similarity in vessels made by the same potting community. Designs, like diamonds or line patterns, added to the vessels can signal larger concepts shared across multiple communities to community members.



A Salado painted vessel from Grasshopper Pueblo (A-34967) at the Arizona State Museum with neck corrugations was used to demonstrate how a rollout works for analyzing design elements on a complicated vessel in sections. Due to the asymmetry of the vessel there is a wave to the image, but it captures all of the pertinent details needed for analysis. This particular vessel is unusual because it combines Salado polychrome slipped and painted registers as well as a register with indented corrugation rather than painting over the corrugations as with McDonald and Cibecue painted corrugated vessels.

When I look at a pot, I see the story of how it was made, from the fingerprints of the woman who created it to how it was fired and used. Each step of making a vessel the potter goes through leaves evidence of the creator's community and potters from whom they learned. The coil's thickness could be from how their grandmother first took her hands to help her roll the piece of clay into a thin rope, and the direction and depth of indentations could be from how her mother taught her. **In other words, I am analyzing parts of the pot to learn *how* the potter learned to make a pot.**

This research addresses a period of flux in the U.S. Southwest by analyzing corrugated ceramics to look at the negotiation of identity in newly formed multicultural communities before and after migration. I seek to understand the extent of variation in attributes that indicate various identities. I will specifically examine the extent to which utilitarian ceramics are embellished, including what forms and techniques were used.

So far, I have examined over fifty vessels, and some of the trends that I have seen include the majority of indentations on vessels being made using a tool. Thus far, indentations are the most common way to create designs. This is interesting as even some painted vessels, like McDonald corrugated, have designs made first with indentations and then the signature, while kaolin paint is painted over the indented areas. I look forward to more lessons from these vessels and piecing together their lives in the past.