

site at Woodstown to historically attested Viking winter camps or their Irish equivalents, the *longphuirt*? Was Woodstown a *longphort* in the first place, or was it a more permanent settlement founded in the ninth century by Scandinavian traders that ultimately 'failed', an option that Maurice Hurley alludes to in the final discussion? How can we use different material culture signatures to shed light on the initial functions and subsequent developmental trajectories of individual settlements, as well as on the identities of their inhabitants? These and other questions can only be explored through comparative research. Nonetheless, as many of the contributors to the present volume point out, there is also further scope for more detailed analyses of the Woodstown material. Hence, although this book is the final report on fieldwork at the site, it is undoubtedly not the final word on Woodstown, but rather the starting point for much interesting and worthwhile future research.

LETTY TEN HARKEL

Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, UK
(Email: letty.tenharkel@arch.ox.ac.uk)

ALISON E. RAUTMAN. *Constructing community: the archaeology of early villages in central New Mexico*. 2014. xvii+285 pages, 18 figures, 20 tables. Tucson: University of Arizona Press; 978-0-8165-3069-4 hardback \$60.



This volume summarises long-term research at sites dating to AD 600–1400 in the Salinas district of central New Mexico, USA.

This region is somewhat off the beaten path in US Southwest archaeology due to its location about 100km south of contemporary Pueblo communities and about 300km south-east of the famous centres of Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde. Yet, at the time of Spanish contact, the Salinas pueblos played an important role in the Plains-Pueblo macroeconomy due to their location at the edge of the southern plains and their proximity to a series of lakes that were an important source of salt. The Spaniards built stone missions in these pueblos, and today the ruins of both are incorporated into the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. There is a relatively rich Spanish documentary record for this area

and the contact-era pueblos have been the subject of long-term research, but sites that pre-date the Spanish mission pueblos have not received significant attention. This volume begins to fill that gap.

Although the book focuses on the author's own excavations, it also incorporates research by other academics and National Park Service archaeologists. As such, it is a useful resource for those who are interested in understanding how the Salinas district fits into the overall picture of US Southwest prehistory. The book consists of an introduction and seven chapters. The introduction lays out the author's twin goals, which are to contribute to discussions concerning the internal dynamics of early village societies and to summarise the current state of knowledge in the Salinas district. Chapter 1 presents a useful review of recent literature on early village societies in the US Southwest and elsewhere that emphasises the distinction between settlements as physical entities and communities as social and cultural entities, and also outlines the variety of measures archaeologists use to interpret the latter from the former. Chapters 2–6 consider changes in intra-community social dynamics, using specific survey and excavation results for sites dating to a series of time periods: Kite Pithouse Village, several jacal villages, Kite Pueblo, Pueblo de la Mesa and Frank's Pueblo. Finally, Chapter 7 provides a summary of the changing ways in which people of the Salinas district constructed their communities over time.

For archaeologists who do not work in the US Southwest, the most useful aspect of the book may be the author's discussions of the social significance of specific characteristics of the investigated sites: the size, arrangement and construction of buildings as evidence of group size and composition; the relationships between midden deposits and structures, and the locations and capacities of storage pits, as evidence for the social scale of waste disposal and food-storage activities; structure abandonment stratigraphy, rebuilding and remodelling as evidence of social commitment to place; and similarities and differences in these attributes across sites as evidence of regional interaction. The arguments that Rautman uses to link the material evidence to dimensions of community organisation are embedded within discussions of individual sites due to the changing nature of the evidence through time, but all of them draw upon the extensive literature on community organisation in US Southwest archaeology and thus provide a useful guide for those who work elsewhere.

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What may prove disappointing for regional specialists is that, for a report on a multi-year excavation project, the book does not contain much quantitative data—tables of counts and weights of pottery, stone tools and faunal specimens; actual measurements of rooms and features; estimates of site counts, sizes and densities from full-coverage surveys; estimates of artefact accumulations and occupation spans; or even Bayesian modelling of radiocarbon dates. Such data may exist in the limited distribution reports produced by the author and collaborators over the years, but one might have hoped this volume would bring these quantitative data together in a more convenient form in order to facilitate quantitative inter-regional comparisons.

One aspect of the book that is somewhat surprising, given recent interest in the topic, is the cursory attention given to migration. The author concludes from site and structure counts that Salinas “was apparently *not* experiencing extensive population immigration and [...] the region as a whole exhibits considerable continuity in overall population size” (p. 222). Population estimates, however, are not provided and it appears that the well-documented changes in construction material and techniques that suggest structure use-life increased over time were not taken into account. In addition, several of the local cultural periods are marked by simultaneous changes in pottery, mortuary practices, architecture and village layout that could easily reflect influxes of people and ideas from elsewhere. Finally, at least two of the languages spoken in this area at the time of Spanish contact are related to other Tanoan languages, the homeland of which was north of the Salinas district (see Ortman 2012)—in other words, there must have been migration of Tanoan speakers into the Salinas district at some point, as has been noted for adjacent areas. Given these patterns, one hopes future treatments of Salinas archaeology will examine the potential for migration more systematically.

The author’s eschewal of migration may be related to what is perhaps the book’s most puzzling aspect. In

the introduction, the author argues that “early village society represents a dynamic concept rather than a distinct social type or stage in cultural evolution” (p. 7), but at several points Rautman compares Salinas with other regions in ways that suggest such stages do exist. The most jarring example involves comparing fourteenth-century plaza pueblos in the Salinas district with ninth-century villages in the Mesa Verde region. Such comparisons would be reasonable if the two cases represented independent responses by isolated communities to similar conditions, but this seems unlikely given a conception of the past in which people and ideas flowed across the landscape (see Lekson 2009). From this more post-processual perspective, early pueblo villages and plaza pueblos represent two distinct episodes in Pueblo history, and it makes more sense to compare what was going on in Salinas and Mesa Verde during the same episodes.

These issues aside, *Constructing community* succeeds in providing a thorough summary of archaeological research in the Salinas district, effective use of methods and principles developed by US Southwest archaeologists to interpret the social significance of the built environment and a nuanced discussion of social relations among the various groups—households, lineages, corporate groups, political factions and villages—that comprised early village communities in the Salinas district.

References

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SCOTT G. ORTMAN
Department of Anthropology,
University of Colorado Boulder, USA
(Email: scott.ortman@colorado.edu)