

Power and Negotiation through Material Culture: The Case of the Chaco Regional System

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Introduction

There have been innumerable books and articles written in an attempt to make sense of the "Chaco Phenomenon." Most efforts to explain the seemingly counter-intuitive level of complexity of the prehistoric system have been couched in notions of adaptation. That is, it is argued that the Chaco regional system was the most efficient way for, or was economically necessary in order for, prehistoric Anasazi people to survive in the environment that they found themselves in (Cordell 1984; Judge 1984, 1989). One advantage to this kind of analytical approach is that it can generate some very explicit empirical expectations that can be tested against the archaeological record, and thus ideally bring us to some understanding as to whether or not "economics" was in fact the prime evolutionary variable. Unfortunately, much of mainstream American archaeology has adhered aggressively to strictly economic explanations in the face of evidence which suggests that a more complex array of interacting processes were in operation prehistorically.

It is the premise of this paper that the Chaco Phenomenon represents more than simply a prehistoric adaptation to specific ecological factors, but rather may in fact reflect a very active symbolic dynamic between Chaco Canyon and outlying regions that, to a large extent, overrode local environmental specifics. That is, social, symbolic, and political behavior on the part of individuals may have played just as important a role as group adaptation to an unfriendly environment, if not a more important one, in the development of certain levels of social complexity.

The Chaco Phenomenon

The issue concerning the origin and nature of the "Chaco Phenomenon" is a complex one. Beginning in the first part of the Pueblo I period, ca. A.D 900, the eventual construction of eleven monumental Great Houses, eighteen Great Kivas and a multitude of roads form the most striking corpus of what now remains of the Chacoan culture within the Canyon proper (Lekson et al. 1988:100). Much speculation has been expended in an effort to understand just what went on at Chaco, who labored to construct the monumental works there, and why they were built. At present it is unclear if in fact the town-sites within the canyon were permanently occupied to full capacity or whether a small religious contingent were the only full-time inhabitants, the Canyon serving as a sort of "Mecca" for regional ceremonial gatherings. Present data seem to fit the latter scenario better. For instance, the recent systematic excavation of Pueblo Alto, one of the nine Great Houses within Chaco Canyon, revealed that household units represented a relatively small percentage of the total number of

rooms at Pueblo Alto (Lekson et al. 1988), and the excavators, in their attempt to find evidence of habitation in the rooms of other great houses, conclude that, in fact, the resident population within the canyon was limited. However, the excavation of Pueblo Alto also resulted in the discovery of an extraordinary number of artifacts.

More than 204,000 pieces (including potsherds, flaked stones and food remains) were recovered, 70,000 of them from a nearby trash mound that occupied 2,400 cubic meters of space and stood four meters tall. How could a small permanent population in the household suites have produced such a disproportionate number of artifacts?... The trash appears to be layered in the mounds as if it was deposited intermittently rather than daily.... We therefore think the mounds reflect ... seasonal gatherings of large numbers of people, who may have converged on Chaco for ceremonial reasons [Lekson et al. 1988:105-6].

However, although many scholars have cogently argued Chaco Canyon to be an ideological/ceremonial "center", this seems, so far, to be an empirically based inference, rather than something that could have been expected to develop in the face of some specific environmental conditions. In other words, we may never be able to answer the question "why in Chaco Canyon (rather than somewhere else) did these things develop?" And we may have to be content with this realization and instead concentrate on the effects of this center of ideological power on regions outside the canyon.

Chaco Outliers

The term "Chacoan outlier" is commonly used to refer to sites with Chacoan architectural features located outside Chaco Canyon. The outlying Chacoan structures, like their counterparts in the canyon, are large (averaging 1,172 square meters), well-planned pueblos with thick walls of core and veneer, Chaco-style masonry, large interior rooms, and subterranean kivas with distinctive furnishings (Judge 1984). Throughout the majority of the Chacoan literature these are termed "Great Houses". What makes them distinctly "Chacoan" is their carefully coarsed (horizontally aligned) Chacoan masonry patterns. The sandstone blocks fit together tightly, forming walls that are as much as a meter thick at ground level (Lekson et al. 1988:100). In addition, the formal geometry of the floor plans is another prominent feature of Chacoan architecture. Rooms and kivas (circular chambers believed to have had a ceremonial function) are arranged in grid-like patterns (Powers 1984a:50). And lastly, Great Houses tend to have a proportionately large number of storage rooms relative to the number of habitation rooms within the pueblo (Judge 1984).

Small sites, which tend to cluster around the Chacoan structures, give rise to the concept of the Chacoan "community" (Lekson et al. 1988). Documented densities are as high as 27 sites per square kilometer, which then seem to drop off rapidly beyond an area of about one square kilometer (Powers et al. 1983:Table 22). In contrast to the Chacoan structures, these smaller sites lack large-scale planning and careful, skilled craftsmanship. According to Powers (1984a) it was at these smaller sites that the great majority of the population lived and performed the daily round of secular and religious activities. In addition to the Chacoan structure and a varying number of small houses or pueblos, a great kiva and a road are common features of such communities.

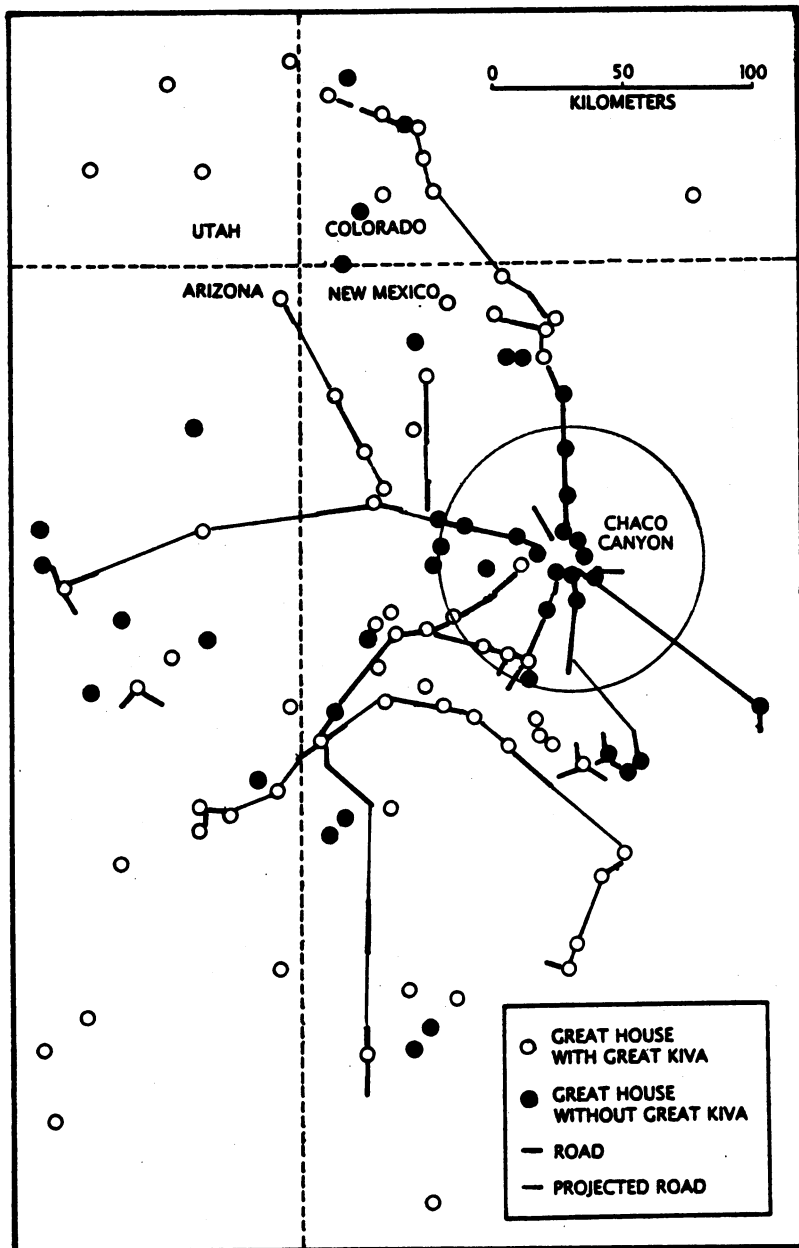


Figure 1: Chacoan Region, defined by the presence of Great Houses, Great Kivas and roads, covers northeastern New Mexico and parts of Colorado, Utah and Arizona and is much more extensive than previously recognized. Circle denotes maximum possible corn redistribution (After Lekson et al. 1988; Hogan and Winter 1983).

Because Chacoan structures are typically situated beside roads and are larger than all other buildings within the community, they appear to have been not only the most important edifice in each locale but also the primary entry point and link with other communities (Powers 1984a). The architectural and locational prominence of the Chacoan structures within outlier communities has suggested to some that they were not just ordinary residences but living quarters for a chiefly or priestly elite, dominant in community affairs (Powers 1983:262).

Another architectural feature that has been argued to represent a distinctive trait of Chacoan outliers is the Great Kiva. Many have noted the co-occurrence of Great Houses with Great Kivas within Chaco Canyon and within outlier communities, but the nature of this co-occurrence is dubious. As will be elaborated upon below, although there is an important role that Great Kivas play within outliers, Great Kivas show up in the archaeological record much earlier than Great Houses and are more widespread than Chaco outliers seem to be.

Though Chacoan outliers are defined first and foremost on the basis of Great House architecture, the most direct evidence for the linking of Chaco outliers with Chaco Canyon is a network of roads that appear to converge in the canyon (Figure 1). At present, as many as thirty outliers can be linked directly to one or more of six major road systems, each at least 20 miles in length. The longest, best defined roads extend 40 to 60 miles and connect as many as half a dozen outlying sites to each other and to Chaco Canyon (Powers 1984b). In cross section, these roads tend to be shallow, concave depressions, 8 to 12 meters wide. Road edges are sometimes demarcated by low berms of broken substrate, rock, and sand excavated during construction or maintenance (Nials 1983). What is most striking is the amount of labor that seems to have gone into the construction of roads. Not only are they long and wide, but they are remarkably straight. Masonry curbing and cuts through dunes or slopes occur on occasion (Nials 1983). In addition, on the roads traversing the cliffs in Chaco Canyon, masonry steps, stairs cut in the bedrock, and masonry ramps were used to connect road sections (Powers 1984a). Because the Anasazi had no wheeled carts or draft animals, it is still a question as to why the roads were so wide. It is interesting to note that many of the roads are later than the early outliers. Some road building doesn't appear to occur until ca. A.D. 1050, well after many of the outliers have been built (Kincaid 1983).

The fact that major roads appear to connect directly the Chacoan structures in outlying communities with those in Chaco Canyon suggests to some that the roads' purpose was to facilitate travel and communication between these sites.

Spurred by the realization that roads and outlying sites are elements of an integrated system, archaeologists are conducting research to learn why such a system was developed and what purpose it served. One explanation currently under investigation is that differences in the availability of natural resources among various areas in the system provided stimulus for trade, and that outliers and roads may have been constructed to facilitate and regulate this activity [Powers 1984a:55].

One of the most perplexing problems in the attempt to explain the "Chaco regional system" has been the incredible geographical extent of it. It is now becoming apparent that the regional system encompassed perhaps as much as 300,000 square kilometers (Lekson et al., 1988:108). Even conservative estimates (ca. 85,000 square kilometers - Judge and Schelberg, 1984) are much more extensive than previously suspected. It is only recently, however, that research on the topic has focused outside the San Juan Basin, and this research has tended to be

patchy and site-specific. Because of the spottiness of outlier research and lack of major data syntheses, little theoretical progress has been made in explaining the apparently extraordinary expansiveness of the phenomenon. Before the discoveries of Great Houses and roads beyond the San Juan Basin, the evolution of the regional system was thought to be best explained as an adaptation to local ecological and demographic conditions within the San Juan Basin. Now, given the dramatic increase in the apparent scale of the system, this hypothesis must be reevaluated.

Traditional Models

Models of the development of Chacoan outliers can be broken down into two gross types: 1) the cultural domination type, and 2) the adaptationist type, which can be broken down further into colonial "spin-off" models, and universal stress-response models.

In the past, "domination" explanations proposed *cultural* differences between "Great House groups" and "small house groups" (or a town/village cultural division) (Vivian 1990). For example, Vivian and Matthews (1965) suggested a "symbiotic relationship" between Great House populations and small house populations in which Great House groups occupied a dominant role made possible by more productive horticulture. As well, Kluckhohn (1939) saw the Great House tradition exhibiting a more advanced cultural heritage. Recently, Wilcox (n. d.) has suggested that the Chacoan structures in outlying areas represent the residences of prehistoric military governors who were part of the governing elite of the Chaco culture. He has speculated that these so-called Chaco elites were part of a powerful political and economic entity that sent groups out to set up shop in outlying regions in order to conquer and rule those less powerful groups; a sort of "expanding empire" model.

The main problems with the cultural domination approach are two-fold. First, it doesn't attempt to explain how a single cultural group actually accomplished this domination. There is no evidence, technological or otherwise, to suggest the occurrence of any coercive force whatsoever, nor any hints of reactive behavior (i.e. resistance) on the part of the so-called dominated group. Second, it is not a useful explanation because it really does not attempt to explain the conditions under which we might expect this "domination" behavior to occur. It simply notes an empirical observation (i. e. a large system with a large center) and fits these observations into the "domination systematic". In other words, the result is flamboyant *description*, not *explanation*. An example of this is Wilcox's (n. d.) recent suggestion, in response to the evidence for the extreme areal expansiveness of the system (larger than would be expected for a particularly dominant and expansive chiefdom), that the Chaco phenomenon represents the remains of a prehistoric state-level society. This kind of *post hoc* fitting-of-the-data to preconceived categories through endless qualification underscores the dubiousness of empiricist-inductivist approaches.

Recent models put forth by the New Archaeology to explain the development of the "Chaco Phenomenon" have almost invariably been functionalist/adaptationist in approach (Cordell 1989). These consider the expansive development of Chacoan outliers a response to ecological or demographic stress or risk. Many consider Chaco Canyon itself a prehistoric redistributive center, and the establishment of far-flung outlier sites a consequence of this function. The colonial model considers the wide-spread appearance of outlier sites the result of a population/resource imbalance (usually in the guise of population pressure or drought) within the canyon forcing groups of people out of the canyon. This purported colonial exodus is seen as fulfilling two needs; relieving the population pressure within the canyon, and

establishing satellite colonies in surrounding areas for the exploitation of regional resources. In this scenario the large scale settlements within the canyon itself would have acted as redistributive centers. Movement of subsistence goods into the canyon and their subsequent redistribution would have acted as a resource buffer to environmental perturbations due to seasonal or spatial differences in rainfall distributions. This redistributive scenario is based on the tenet that high-risk areas for agriculture, defined by their general aridity and their patchy rainfall distributions, necessitate a solution to this random pattern of potential crop failure. One solution would be the pooling and redistribution of subsistence resources, the incentive for participating in the redistribution system arising from the expectation that, because of the unpredictability of the environment, one may experience shortages in the future. The Chaco system, according to this model, encompassing the San Juan Basin and areas beyond the basin rim, would have been large enough and well organized enough to moderate not only local food surpluses and shortfalls but regional resource imbalances as well (Judge 1989).

Irwin-Williams (1980), in an attempt to test the colonial model, proposed that if a group of colonists from Chaco Canyon founded Salmon Ruin (an outlying Great House near Bloomfield, New Mexico), the residence units should contain a large proportion of imported Cibola ceramics. In fact, what was found was that locally produced San Juan pottery dominated the room suites, suggesting that the potters (at least) belonged to the local population. In investigating the possibility that the founding population was purely local and borrowed ideas and traded ceramics in from Chaco, Irwin-Williams found that the intra-site distribution of ceramic wares imported from the Cibola areas was not patterned in a way that would suggest general accessibility to Cibolan wares. Rather, the Cibolan ceramics were concentrated in the residences on the west side of the pueblo and at "specialized activity centers" such as the tower kiva and its associated rooms. This distribution suggests to Irwin-Williams differential access within the outlier population to the Chaco system. However, it seems to me that it may also reflect the differential (i.e. ceremonial) use or function of ceramics originating from the Chaco area, or possibly even patterns of secondary discard within the site.

Limited regional survey data obtained by the San Juan Valley Archaeological Project suggests that Chacoan "penetration" into new areas occurred in two sequential phases.

First, either small colonies or special-function sites (such as great kivas) were located in a new area without impacting the local population or integrating that population into the Chacoan trade network. Subsequently, presuming the first stage was successful, the new region was fully incorporated within the Chacoan distribution system and the region was connected to Chaco by the construction of a roadway [Cordell 1984:264].

The outlier site of Bisa'ani, located approximately 4.8 kilometers northwest of Fajada Butte in Chaco Canyon, is an instance, according to Marshall and Doyle (1981), of this later colonial penetration. They refer to the site as a scion community, a descendant community established late in the Chacoan period (A.D. 1125) in an area that appears to have had marginal agricultural potential. They suggest that it developed "as a result of increased population in order to increase regional carrying capacity," or as a satellite colony for the exploitation of regional resources (p.59). A site this close to Chaco Canyon, though, may have had quite different functions, and different explanations, from those that are located forty or one hundred miles away (Doyle *et al.* 1984).

Many of the colonial redistributive models suggest that agriculturalists could not have occupied many marginal areas, for example the lower Chaco River, unless they were part of a larger network from which they could have received support in times of crop failure.

Since this area experienced a major influx of population during the height of the Chaco system and was very little used by agriculturalists before Chaco rose or after it fell, the settlement-pattern data from the lower Chaco seems to support the depiction of the Chacoan system as redistributive, but only if the marginality assumption is correct [Sebastian 1983:448].

What is particularly appealing to Chaco researchers about this type of model is that the development of redistribution is viewed as facilitating the rise of social complexity (*sensu* Service 1962). The argument postulates that sedentary populations in a risky environment must specialize in the production of specific resources, and the administrative requirements of getting the goods from areas where they are abundant to areas where they are needed gives rise to an administrative hierarchy. Additionally, as mentioned above briefly, it is also an attractive scenario because Chacoan Great Houses have such a high proportion of storage rooms (Judge 1984).

Another adaptationist model for the development of outlier communities can be called the "interaction sphere" model. As put forth by Altschul (1978) the widespread distribution of Chacoan traits may have been the result of a standardized cultural response to stress, rather than diffusion from one major cultural center, i.e. Chaco Canyon.

The development of a Chacoan cultural expression at either a large or small site was a standardized response through the interaction sphere to demographic stress in which greater cooperation or, at least, communication was needed between corporate units [1978:128].

Altschul further suggests that Great Kiva ceremonies were the mechanisms which functioned to facilitate both this cooperation and communication throughout the sphere. He argues that, in addition to the Great Kiva's probable function as local redistributive center, the ceremonies associated with them also operated as "pan-community integrating mechanisms" designed to relieve social conflict brought on by demographic pressures (p. 134).

Another model which postulates a standardized cultural response to population dynamics is Johnson's (1982) "sequential hierarchy" model. This model suggests that, as population grows (or aggregates), "scalar" stress is generated through the increase in organizational inefficiency (i.e., too many organizational units, such as household units, overload the decision making process within a community). Alternative solutions for the resolution of this stress include the institution of non-consensus political hierarchy, group fission, or the institution of consensual sequential hierarchy. In the sequential solution, basal organizational units are aggregated into larger (and thus fewer) entities among which consensus can be obtained more efficiently. It is further argued that the use of the formalized religious ritual as an interactional context is scale dependent in sequential systems. "Ritual which may not be evident at smaller organizational sizes becomes increasingly important at larger sizes" (Johnson 1984:13). Accordingly, in the case of the development of outlier sites, their larger special-function structures (i.e. Great Kivas and Great Houses) would represent one or more levels of sequential hierarchy above a small kiva or "household cluster" level.

These specific adaptationist models differ from the colonial model in that the center of redistribution are postulated to be local regional centers and would not necessarily have to be Chaco Canyon.

There are problems with both kinds of adaptationist models. A major argument against Chaco Canyon developing as a redistributive center designed to buffer against some sort of ecological stochasticity and/or demographic pressure involves the energetics of transporting subsistence goods long distances on foot. Sanders and Santley (1983) suggest that a person carrying corn would need to consume twenty percent of her/his load by the time (s)he had gone 60 kilometers and nearly fifty percent when (s)he had gone 150 kilometers. The area covered by the fully developed Chaco system is simply too large for foot transport of staples to have been economically feasible (see maximum possible corn redistribution from Chaco Canyon [after Hogan and Winter 1983] on Figure 1). Lightfoot (1979) has estimated that the maximum range over which corn can be economically distributed by foot is 32-48 kilometers. This would seem to preclude the possibility of redistribution of basic subsistence resources on a regular basis throughout the entire Chaco system, which has been conservatively estimated to have encompassed ca. 85,000 square kilometers (Judge and Schelberg 1984).

Additional support for the argument against the Chaco system developing as a redistributive center comes from data on the distribution of ceramics. If redistribution of subsistence goods was occurring on a regular basis, one might expect some movement of everyday utilitarian items such as culinary ceramic wares through the network in a similar pattern. At Chaco, the expected exotic wares are present at sites like Pueblo Alto, but the evidence for ceramic redistribution is egregiously absent. The vast majority of ceramics that came into Chaco seemed never to have left the canyon. Preliminary investigations of ceramic types associated with the roads (initially done in order to define a period of use for them) has revealed that the vast majority of "pots that broke in transport" are types that are indigenous to the specific outlier regions to which the roads radiate out (Kincaid 1983). In other words, the roads bore no significant ceramic traces of the transport of products from other outlier regions, as might be expected if in fact things had been pooled at Chaco and then redistributed.

The evidence available to directly address the "universal stress response" model put forth by Altschul (1978), as outlined above, as well as Johnson's (1982, 1989) more general model, is much more sketchy. Although these models postulate reasons for the development of the settlement hierarchies associated with outlier communities, it remains to be demonstrated empirically that population stress was a ubiquitous phenomenon throughout the system. Additionally, these models really do not account very well for the system's apparent axial linkage with Chaco Canyon. The fact that many of the roads seem to converge, or link up with ones that converge, in Chaco Canyon, and that there is a highly disproportionate amount of exotica present in the town sites within Chaco Canyon, suggests that there were some important linkages between the outlier regions and the canyon itself beyond simply the emulation of an adaptive strategy.

One thing that Altschul (1978) seems to do is conflate the Great Kivas phenomenon and the Chaco Phenomenon. Great Kivas, though an important part of the Chacoan equation, are not solely Chacoan - they develop earlier and are far more widespread than even the late Chacoan System. Nor do they originate in Chaco *per se* (Cordell 1984). It is significant, however, that Great Kivas continue to function along with outliers. Thus, Altschul's explanation for the development of Great Kivas may be correct, but, as per the problems noted above, there seems to be something different going on with, more specifically, "Chacoan outliers". Johnson (1989) also stresses the relationship between Great Kivas and outliers. To him, Great Kivas, Great Houses, concentric wall structures, etc., taken together, represent one or more levels of sequential hierarchy above a small kiva or "household cluster" level. And

again, the processes underlying the development of settlement size hierarchies that seem to define outlier communities are considered the same as those that are behind the establishment of Great Kivas; no differential interpretation is offered. None seems necessary if one conflates the two phenomena.

A Symbolic/Interactive Model

An alternative explanation, which links Great Kivas and outliers but does not conflate them, may be forwarded to account for distant outlying regions having participated in the Chaco regional system.

In the context of a settlement system exhibiting greater sedentism, as is seen during the Basketmaker III/Pueblo I transition of the American Southwest (Gilman 1987), inter-societal exchange relations become significantly more important and consequently more intensive (Lightfoot and Feinman 1982:65).

[With increased sedentism] alliance formation is more directed and there are fewer groups involved, but ties are stronger and these are frequently enhanced by intermarriage. The trading networks of [sedentary] food-producers take the form of ceremonial feasting... [Jackson n.d.:20].

Inter-tribal ceremonies, then, often facilitated these intensified economic and social exchanges between societies, placing demand on production for the gearing up of surplus for feasting and exchange (Bender 1985; Blackburn 1976).

Importantly, there are two aspects of inter-societal trading relationships that have an impact on social organization. First, they perpetuate differential social prestige at the local level (Johnson and Earle 1987 167-185, Lightfoot and Feinman 1982). Second, since ideally in an egalitarian society, access to trade would be equally available to all, individuals would strive to create and maintain the best possible trading network in order to maintain their own local social position (Bender 1985, Clark and Blake 1990). Thus, personal initiative to produce or obtain materials for trade would enable individuals to participate in ceremonial exchange and establish trade partnerships. Jackson comments on the particular ethnographic case of coastal Umiliak groups in Alaska:

Networks were constantly in flux and the social prestige of particular individuals could fall just as surely as it rose. Ceremonial exchange thus provided the context for producing a "Big Man" system in participating societies and at the same time appears to have inhibited the establishment of hereditary, hierarchical ranking [Jackson n.d.:23].

In the Southwest, the significance of conceptualizing Great Kivas as separate from the Chaco system *per se* and viewing them rather on their own terms (as representing an intensification of communal ceremonialism across the Anasazi landscape during the Basketmaker III and early Pueblo I period) becomes apparent here, for we can now suggest a more sophisticated relationship between Great Kivas and Chacoan outliers. I suggest that the Great Kiva functioned as the locus of status achievement through participation or control of participation in ceremonies. Adaptationist models suggest that Great Kivas operated not only as redistributive centers but as pan-community integrating mechanisms in areas of population aggregation, whereby cooperation and specialization was upheld by the ceremonies associated with the Great Kiva (Altschul 1978). For instance, Altschul argues that the Great Kiva developed as a mechanism to insure or express village solidarity and integration and aided in adapting people to town life during the Pueblo II period. The data suggest, however, that Great

Kivas were established throughout the Anasazi landscape very early in the Pueblo sequence and as early as the Basketmaker III period in some areas (Cordell 1984; Marshall and Doyle 1981). Whatever their specific function, it seems possible that Great Kivas facilitated extra-village relations. Furthermore, an intensification of ceremonialism at this level can be argued to reflect an intensification of inter-social exchange/alliance relations. It is also conceivable (and indeed likely) that the primary function of Great Kivas changed over time. For instance, it is possible to perceive the *initiation* of Great Kivas ceremonialism within the framework of an Altschul/Johnson-like framework. Communal facilities seem to be a fact of life for neolithic/formative societies throughout the world (Johnson and Earle 1987). It is likely that Great Kiva ceremonies served a number of functions, including serving as integrative mechanisms to cope with population increases (*sensu* Altschul). Once established (for whatever reason), Great Kivas may have provided the *potential* for status enhancement through the control of ceremonies and the participation in regional trade associated with these ceremonies.

In summary, then, I argue that, although perhaps initially developed out of ongoing networks established for the management of subsistence risk and/or demographic stress, the intensity of Great Kiva ceremonialism and concomitant intensity of establishing trade relations became accelerated and expanded because of the opportunities afforded individuals for the enhancement of status.

It should be clear that, in contrast to functionalist/adaptationist theories which view the origins of social complexity and/or intensification (in general) as a response to either positive or negative feedback stimulus, they are here viewed as the consequence of many individuals promoting their own aggrandizement. And the establishment of a Great Kiva ceremonial/alliance/exchange system created an arena for these social processes to play themselves out (Bender 1985). One aspect of this would have been intensified competition for the control of access to socially valued material items as well as important ritual knowledge. In time, certain individuals would prove more successful at this and achieve a certain local status, which would best be maintained by establishing a coalition of loyal supporters, or a faction. Additionally, once aggrandizers or "big men" established their "bigness," they would have had much more widespread contacts than others within their community, and regional interaction among big men would occur on a regular basis (Johnson and Earle 1987). Thus, their power may have been local, but they would have operated in an arena of external relations.

By promoting exchange relations on a regional level and maintaining affinal relations with multiple in-laws, an aspiring leader can create a series of political alliances outside the local community [Lightfoot and Feinman 1982:67].

Thus, big men ultimately represent the "group" or community in external negotiations (such as homicide negotiations, warfare negotiations, alliances, exchange relations) and "local communities are often integrated into large exchange and sociopolitical systems through ties among village leaders" (Lightfoot and Feinman 1982:67).

Clark and Blake (1990:24), suggest that the impetus for the development of social ranking must be brought in from outside the local social group, and that part of this process is the control of the meaning of the "outside" by the "aggrandizer *qua* cultural broker." As well, they concern themselves explicitly with the issue of why individuals within a group would allow certain other individuals to achieve power over them. In a nutshell, they contend that

"followers tag along because they benefit from doing so" (p.13), that it becomes advantageous within the larger interactive realm for people or "clients" to support an innovative big man.

In particular, one's local reputation is greatly enhanced by regional renown.

Our hypothesis presumes the plurality of structurally similar, autonomous units (social groups or communities) within a region and a complex web of rivalry and cooperation among aggrandizers and their supporters within each unit and among units [p. 10].

Thus, local supporters might be expected to back their representative big man in an attempt to enhance his (thus their) status. Symbolic linkage or affiliation of outlier communities with Chaco Canyon through the construction of Great Houses and roads leading to Chaco would have been an effective way of doing this.

With this scenario in mind, it is necessary to discuss how material culture is used as "symbolic linkage", and why architecture and roads are the specific material culture domains that could be used in this way by aggrandizers.

According to Shanks and Tilley,

Material Culture ... becomes part of the way in which social reality becomes constituted. It must therefore be seen as an active element in society, not as a passive reflection of social processes [1989:3].

As well, Hodder has written that,

Material culture does not just exist. It is made by someone. It is produced to do something. Therefore it does not passively *reflect* society - rather, it creates society through the actions of individuals [1986:6].

Conceived in this manner, it may be productive to ask how a particular material culture is "used" as an active element in a particular social setting (i.e. first assume that it is "active" and then attempt to understand "how so?").

Fritz has noted that architecture may be a particularly well suited symbolic medium to communicate "myth".

Architecture - in particular that architecture that is a component of such complex connotation and behavior systems as religious systems - is rich in reference [Fritz 1978:40].

Thus, as myth links the past with the present, and can be actively manipulated to mask present incongruities or legitimize/naturalize the present, architectural form and structure is a medium useful for the encoding of referents in stone and space (Fritz 1978:41). And, although these referents may be temporal, as myths are, they may also be spatial. From this perspective, outlying Chacoan Great Houses, then, may be considered symbolic referents to Chaco Canyon.

Roads, of course, were a much more direct link with Chaco Canyon, and the degree to which this linkage was symbolic depends, to a large extent, on the reasons they were built and how they were used. As has been pointed out previously, functional interpretation of Chacoan roadways has been almost exclusively economically oriented (Vivian 1983; Nials 1983). Some features of Chacoan roads, however, are difficult to explain within an economic context. For example, transport volume would never have reached proportions requiring the construction of two, possibly four, parallel nine-meter wide roadways over considerable distances. Yet double roads have been reported to the north and south of Chaco Canyon (Vivian 1983). As well, it seems to me that many of the roads that are associated with outliers may not even have connected to roads leading to Chaco, and probably were, like Great House

architecture, purely *symbolic* referents to Chaco. Many researchers have attempted to trace roads out from outlier sites and have found that after a relatively short distance they abruptly end. For example, Fowler *et al.* (1987) traced four formal roads radiating out of the Great House at the site Kin Hocho'i (an outlier in Manuelito Canyon, NM) and found that none of them extended farther than 300 meters. Although this may seem a considerable distance with respect to the labor involved, in a strictly utilitarian sense their distance is not significant. Johnson (1989) has suggested that Chacoan roads were a form of "piling behavior," a way for elites *within* Chaco Canyon to maintain a labor force in the face of "episodic" labor needs.

Given the absence of any obvious need for prepared transport surfaces, this system has a decidedly "useless" air about it that carries an implication of systematic concern with control of labor. This was not, however, an effort that seems to have been especially appropriate to enhance the social position of local elites [p. 377].

Though Johnson is on the right track in focusing upon labor, I think he underestimates the potential for road construction as a method of enhancing the social position of "elites" *outside* Chaco Canyon. Johnson assumes that the impetus for the contribution of labor by non-elites to monumental construction projects can only be in the face of power that elites exert *over* subject peoples. But, following Foucault (1977), Hodder (1986), and Miller and Tilley (1984), my position is that power is not a general system of domination exerted by one group over another, but rather,

Actors have interests by being members of groups, and to examine ideology is to see how symbolic meanings are mobilized to legitimate the sectional interests of those groups [Hodder 1986:66-67].

Miller and Tilley (1984) refer to this as "power to" rather than "power over" (cf. Foucault 1977). In the case of outlier communities, for the reasons suggested above, local supporters backed their representative big man, investing labor into Great House and road construction as a highly strategic way of drawing "power" from Chaco into the local community. This is consonant with Renfrew's notion of "symbolic entrainment".

This process entails the tendency for a developed symbolic system to be adopted when it comes into contact with a less-developed one with which it does not strikingly conflict. For one thing, a well developed symbolic system carries with it an assurance and prestige which a less developed and less elaborate system may not share [Renfrew 1986:8].

Consequently, since the permanence of Great House architecture suggests an accumulation of status and power which is intended to be (and is) transmitted over at least several generations, community-wide adoption of the Chacoan symbolic system embodied within it the enhancement and solidification of social differentiation. It is the thesis of this paper, then, that the establishment of physically substantial symbolic linkages with the Chacoan ideation system did not simply *reflect* the development of the institutionalized transmission of power across generations (i.e. ascribed ranking), but in fact actively facilitated (i.e. brought about) and reinforced the development of more permanent positions of power within outlying communities.

Conclusion

In sum, the evidence taken *en bloc* seems to suggest that two separate phenomena, the so-called Chaco phenomenon and the Great Kiva phenomenon, allowed the aggrandizing

behaviors of individuals in outlying regions around Chaco to play themselves out and manifest themselves symbolically through the construction of Great Houses and roads. Furthermore, if this is the case, then it is reasonable to conclude that the labor needed to construct these features was not necessarily the result of coercion or domination. If we define power as the ability to "get things done", rather than the ability to "get others to do what they don't necessarily want to do," it is possible to view the backing of local leaders through labor and the construction of monumental works as a strategy adopted to enhance community or "polity" prestige as well. This in turn, resulted in the establishment of more permanent positions of social differentiation within outlying communities.

One valuable aspect of the particular approach taken here, is not only its focus upon "power" relations rather than simply environmental relations, but that it views "power" as "negotiation" rather than simply "domination". As Lynn Hunt writes of the social dynamic within revolutionary France,

Power ... was not a finite quantity possessed by one faction or another; it was rather a complex set of activities and relationships that created previously unsuspected resources [Hunt 1987:72].

Furthermore, as Hunt demonstrates in her work, this symbolic approach recognizes the potential role that material culture can play in these power negotiations.

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