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Chapter 15: Ritual, Social Power, and Identity

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Communal ritual is fundamental to constructing community life in Neolithic and Formative societies. The early Pueblo I community in Ridges Basin was no exception. Data from across the project area—in particular, patterning among bioarchaeological data, architecture, artifacts, and mortuary features—indicate that ritual was integral to the structuring of social relations within the community, and was part of constructing social identities and promoting social power differentiation among households. This chapter explores each of these material realms and their role in ritual practice and the development of social relationships in the Ridges Basin community. In addition, it notes the economic, political, and ritual dominance of the Sacred Ridge site (SLP245) within the Ridges Basin community and the potential reasons underlying this dominance, including the establishment of a pioneer settlement there and its subsequent control over ritual practices in the community.

Ritual is a form of behavior characterized by its formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism, and performance (Bell 1997; Rappaport 1979). Although archaeologists differ in how they conceive of the relationship between religion and ritual (Fogelin 2007; Insoll 2004), this chapter focuses on the effects of ritual on the social relations among ritual participants, regardless of underlying religious belief. In other words, the emphasis is on what ritual does rather than what it means. Of particular interest here is understanding the role of ritual in constructing social identities (Varien and Potter 2008), and examining

the ways people used ritual to affirm or challenge power relations and the dominant social order (Bradley 1998; DeMarrais et al. 1996; Fogelin 2007; Inomata 2006).

As Rappaport (1979:174) states, ritual is “*the* basic social act,” and for all rituals, performance is a constituent feature. “Performance as well as formality is necessary to ritual.... [I]f there is no performance there is no ritual” (Rappaport 1979:176). It is in the context of communal performance and participation that rituals communicate both canonical messages—those encoded in liturgy—and indexical messages—those aspects that communicate the ritual performer’s status, identity, and state of being, and that rely on whatever opportunities the liturgy offers for variation (Rappaport 1979). Both types of information can promote social differentiation. Indeed, the control of ritual and differential access to ritual knowledge (the canons of the liturgy) has been argued to be the fundamental basis for social ranking in Pueblo societies (e.g., Adams 1989; Brandt 1994; Potter and Perry 2000; Spielmann 1998; Upham 1989; Whiteley 1988). But strategic manipulation of indexical messages—the potential for variation in otherwise invariant liturgy—may also promote social differentiation (e.g., Schachner 2001). For instance, there is always the possibility for variation in occurrence (i.e., whether or not to conduct the ritual at a particular time), who participates in a ritual performance, and the content of the ritual itself. The content of the ritual offers the potential for the greatest amount of variation. Even the most invariant of liturgical orders allows variations of a numerical sort. For example, as Rappaport (1979:183)

notes of the Kaiko ritual of the Papua New Guinea group the Tsembaga,

what is not specified by liturgy, but is of great importance to all concerned, is the order in which the names of the allies are called out. He who is called first is most honored. He who is called last may well feel dishonored.

Another important source of variation is quantity, which is most evident in potlatches, feasting ceremonies, and mortuary rituals. For the Tsembaga, during the Kaiko ceremony messages concerning worthiness and prestige are communicated by the numbers of pigs slaughtered and the amount of pearl shells, blankets, coppers, and similar valuables imparted as gifts. Similar messages may be communicated through the quantity and types of items placed in association with the deceased during mortuary rituals.

Indexical messages operate as public counting and ordering devices, which in turn reduce the vagueness of a social situation by facilitating social comparison, while canonical messages imbue those distinctions with authority and sacredness (Rappaport 1979:184). Power relations thus are created and sanctified through ritual performance by simultaneously expressing social distinctions and refuting their arbitrariness.

In addition to the messages communicated during ritual performance, constructing symbolically charged ritual spaces and limiting access to these spaces can be another strategy for creating power differences among community members.

The construction of a sacred building... is an avenue toward sacred power; limiting access to the same building affirms that sacred power is restricted to a select few. Ritual, in this formulation, is also a form of materialized ideology. (Fogelin 2007:65)

Indeed, ritual architectural may come to symbolize the group that controls access to it and uses it to conduct rituals, dramatically enhancing the group's standing and

altering or solidifying the identities of those in possession of such ritually sanctioned space (Hegmon 1989:8).

Mortuary rituals and features, too, are strongly linked to group identities. The construction of a mortuary feature in a particular location, the assignment of items in association with the deceased, and the performance of particular rituals all speak to who the deceased was and also to the identities of those who participate in the ritual, those who claim association with the deceased, and those who continue to live in proximity to the grave (Pearson 2003). Again, while many of these ritual acts are determined by the canons of the liturgy, any allowable variance can be used to communicate indexical messages through variation in, for example, the number and quality of grave goods, the energy spent in the construction of the mortuary feature and in the ritual performance, the placement of the interred in or near a particularly sacred place or previously interred individuals, the number and status of participants, or the inclusion of new rites and rituals in the performance. These messages can be used either to enhance social distinctions or to assimilate and integrate community members, or a combination of both at multiple scales. In this way, rather than simply passively reflecting society, mortuary ritual is seen as actively constructing social orders.

In sum, by controlling and manipulating the messages and the spaces of performance, ritual practitioners are able to use ritual practices, beliefs, and symbols to sanctify or claim authority, communicate category divisions and thereby construct distinctive social identities, and influence power relationships. Groups in Ridges Basin used three main materials to achieve these ends—ritual architecture, ritual items, and mortuary features.

RITUAL ARCHITECTURE

Oversized Pit Structures

If ritual is by definition performative, then the spaces in which rituals occurred must have, on some level, accommodated or enhanced performances.

Architecture, including buildings and bounded open spaces such as plazas, can provide that space (Hegmon 1989:7). Moreover,

structures that house group rituals tend to be distinctive from ordinary habitations (Rapoport 1982:29–30) and to require construction investments that exceed utilitarian requirements (McGuire and Schiffer 1983:281). These expectations should be true even if the structure is not used exclusively for ritual. (Hegmon 1989:8)

As described in Chapter 13, *The Community*, the Sacred Ridge site contained five oversized pit structures that have been interpreted as communal ritual structures based in part on their large size. These structures contained unique floor features (conical floor pits) not found in smaller structures, enormous floor areas relatively uninterrupted by floor features, continuous and wide benches to accommodate large audiences, and elevated bowl sherd frequencies ostensibly resulting from the use of bowls to serve food (and the inevitable breakage of vessels that occurs with use) during ritual feasts (Allison 2008; Blinman 1989; Potter 2010a). The largest of these structures, Feature 49 in Locus 6, was also the earliest of these large structures, and it differed from the other four in that it had a ventilator entryway, was not paired with another smaller pit structure, and was fairly isolated on the eastern edge of the site (see Figure 11.11). The post-abandonment fill of this structure contained refuse and several burials, indicating that it went out of use relatively early in the occupation sequence of Sacred Ridge. Potter and Chuipka (2007a) suggest that it was used as a communal ritual structure from about A.D. 750 to 780 (see Figure 11.11), prior to the construction of the other four oversized structures, the remodel of the ridgetop features, and the construction of the tower. Thus, Feature 49 was not only spatially isolated but also temporally isolated in that it was the only shared ritual structure in the community before about A.D. 780.

Feature 49 was associated with the highest proportion of bowl sherds among the loci at Sacred Ridge and, in fact, across the entire Ridges Basin community. Allison (2008) proposes that pot-luck-style feasting occurred disproportionately in association with this structure, whereby families from across the village or community brought prepared wet food to ceremonies performed inside or near the structure and served that food in bowls to the participants of the ceremonies. Blinman (1989) associates similar pot-luck feasting with oversized structures at McPhee Village, a late ninth-century community in the Dolores River Valley. Following Blinman's study, Potter (1997a) evaluated the faunal data from McPhee Village and found additional evidence for communal feasting at oversized structures in the form of high percentages of lagomorph remains. Historically, Pueblo groups often participated in communal rabbit and hare hunts before, and specifically for, communal feasts (Tyler 1975:134). As at McPhee Village, the assemblage from Locus 6 at Sacred Ridge (including Feature 49, the oversized structure) also exhibited relatively high proportions of rabbit and rabbit-sized mammal remains that may be related to communal feasting (Potter and Edwards 2008:266–274, 284).

As indicated in Chapter 13, oversized structures at Sacred Ridge were not enclosed by room blocks, as they were at McPhee Village. But they were, for the most part, associated with specific households. Thus, access to them may have been fairly controlled and restricted to segments of the village or community, as Schachner (2001) notes for oversized pit structures at Pueblo I sites in the west, such as McPhee Village. The exception is Feature 49, the earliest and largest of these structures. This structure may have functioned more as a great kiva than did the other four structures; not only was it larger than other structures but it also was not physically restricted from community access (Schachner 2001:180; see Chapter 13). In other words, it may have functioned as a truly communal structure.

The other four oversized structures—Feature 41 in Locus 3, Feature 117 in Locus 5, Feature 83 in Locus 7, and Feature 58 in Locus 9 (see Figure 11.11)—were all smaller than Feature 49 but were still large compared to other pit structures in the community. All four structures had a one-hole ventilator rather than a ventilator entryway. All had conical pits, large benches, and four main roof support posts like Feature 49, and all were cleaned out and burned at abandonment. Additionally, each was associated with a smaller, earlier structure (in use when Feature 49 was in use), and each appeared to have been overtly controlled spaces occupied by specific households. It is particularly interesting that these households appropriated the form of the oversized pit structure, including the conical floor pits, from the earlier, more communal Feature 49.

Unlike the oversized pit structures at McPhee Village, oversized structures at Sacred Ridge were not associated with other living rooms. Oversized structures at McPhee Village were adjacent to contemporary smaller pit structures and above-ground living rooms; at Sacred Ridge, the oversized structure was the only (or the main) structure occupied by the household. This suggests that these structures at Sacred Ridge, with the possible exception of Feature 49, were less specialized than those at McPhee Village and functioned as domiciles most of the time. Lekson sees a similar pattern in early Hohokam villages. At Valencia Viejo and Snaketown some families began building “Big Houses” (Lekson 2008:58). These were once interpreted as communal structures, but Lekson suggests instead that they were the domiciles of important families.

Big Houses were the homes of important people: families that had better farmlands and more stuff (for example, turquoise) than anyone else. Big Houses often included unusual features that appear to have been ritual or ceremonial. Big House

families, I think, co-opted or created ritual that consolidated power—political, ritual, or both. (Lekson 2008:58)

This scenario makes sense for the oversized structures at Sacred Ridge, as well. In addition to hosting feasts, as evidenced by the relatively high proportions of bowl sherds associated with loci containing oversized structures (Allison 2008; Potter 2010a), at least one structure (Feature 41 in Locus 3) was associated with an inordinately high proportion of deer and elk remains, which are high-value food resources (Potter and Edwards 2008). In addition, a relative abundance of turquoise (20 pieces) was recovered from a burial in the midden associated with Feature 58 in Locus 9 (Potter 2010b). These patterns suggest that, indeed, important families occupied these houses and were in control of communal rituals that occurred in them.

The Tower at Sacred Ridge

The top of the knoll at Sacred Ridge contained architectural elements that also may have been a locus for communal ritual (see Chapter 11, Settlement Clusters; Figures 11.14–11.19). The tower, in particular, had no obvious habitation or storage function and appears to have been a structure in which rituals occurred. It was a fairly small space, however, and would have accommodated only a small number of people at one time. The fire pit in the floor may have been used during rituals involving only a few select ritual specialists. Part of the ritual performance associated with this structure, however, may have included the participation of community members throughout Ridges Basin as they observed the smoke plumes emitting from the top of this impressive structure. The palisade-enclosed area adjacent to the tower—containing a remodeled pit structure serving as an entryway to a large storage feature—appears to have also been part of a ritual complex (see Activity Area 3 in Figure 11.19).

Architecturally defined ritual space structures interaction by defining and confining, excluding and including, concealing and enhancing. In the case of Sacred Ridge, the tower complex did all of these things. The tower itself was visible throughout Ridges Basin (Figure 15.1), yet the rituals conducted within the complex and in the tower were hidden from view, and access to them would have been highly restricted, as evidenced by the palisade enclosing the area. Those people in control of these features and the rituals conducted in them and who had privileged access to the area (perhaps those living on the ridgetop or in the oversized pit structures) would have been powerful individuals within the community.

It is of particular interest that all of the communal ritual architecture present in the Ridges Basin community was contained within a single settlement cluster—the Sacred Ridge site—and was associated with particular households. So, even if the rituals conducted in these structures were communal in scale, their exclusive association with a particular settlement and in some cases with particular households suggests a high degree of ritually sanctified social differentiation and hierarchy within the community.

RITUAL ITEMS

Ritual Fauna

The use of animals and animal parts—particularly the remains of mammalian carnivores and birds, including pelts and feathers—for ritual purposes is well documented ethnographically and archaeologically for Pueblo groups (e.g., Akins 1987; Beaglehole 1936; Bunzel 1992; Eggan 1950; Henderson and Harrington 1914; Judd 1954; Ladd 1963; Lange 1959; Neusius 1985; Olsen 1990; Potter 1997a, 1997b; Stephen 1936; Tyler 1975; Vivian and Matthews 1965). Throughout this literature, carnivores tend to be an uncommon source of meat. Instead, these species are sought for religious and ritual reasons (Neusius 1985:115). The Hopi, for example, regard badgers as a medicinal animal, and they

use fox skins in ceremonies (Beaglehole 1936). Among the Keresan-speaking Pueblos, bears and mountain lions belong to a special class of game. One who kills either animal is eligible to join the Warrior's Society, just as though he had killed a man (Lange 1959:137). Bunzel (1992:492) notes the use of bear paws in Zuni medicine ceremonies. Additionally, foxes (Beaglehole 1936:9; Bradfield 1973), coyotes (Eggan 1950:85; Tyler 1975:154–183), and wolves (Stephen 1936:699–700) all possess ritual significance and associations for Pueblo groups.

Many bird species have been associated specifically with Pueblo rituals. Henderson and Harrington (1914) report that the Tewa did not eat red-tailed hawks. According to Vivian and Matthews (1965), the golden eagle was sought by many Pueblo groups solely for its feathers. Magpies figure into the mythology of the Tewa (Henderson and Harrington 1914), and were used by the Hopi for headdresses of warriors (Bradfield 1973). Bunzel (1992:500) describes the importance of feathers from ducks, eagles, wild turkey, jays, red-tailed hawks, orioles, bluebirds, hummingbirds, and roadrunners among the Zuni for the manufacture of prayer sticks. Ladd (1963:10) notes that the various prayer sticks of the Zuni, taken together, require feathers from 72 species of birds.

Potter (1997a) demonstrates a greater-than-expected abundance and diversity of carnivore and wild bird species associated with oversized pit structures at McPhee Pueblo and argues that this is due to the ritual significance of these species and their importance in the performance of communal rituals. The high diversity of species may also relate to the communal nature of the rituals. Ceramic data suggest that families from across the community brought food in pot-luck fashion to serve at communal feasts at these rituals (Blinman 1989), and they may have also brought with them their varied ritual practices, paraphernalia, and costumes for these communal events.

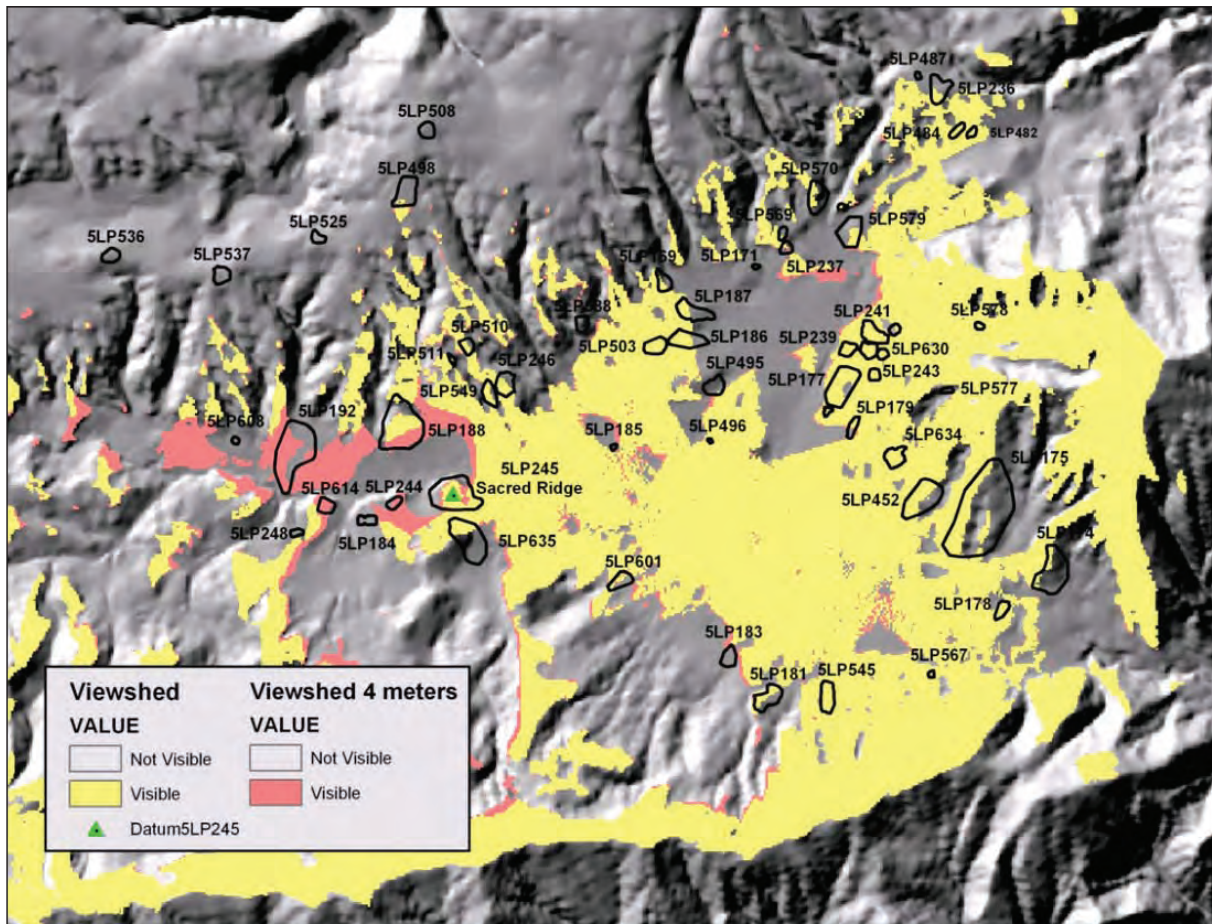


Figure 15.1. Viewshed analysis of Ridges Basin and surrounding landscape from the Sacred Ridge site (5LP245). The yellow shading represents areas visible from the ridgetop without the tower; pink shading is the added viewshed from atop a 4-m tower.

No similar associations were found in Ridges Basin. Wild bird and carnivore remains were not concentrated in any communal ritual settings but instead were strongly associated with the closure of structures and with mortuary features. This is particularly the case in the Eastern Cluster and at 5LP185. In the Eastern Cluster, animal burials in structures occurred in relatively high frequency. At 5LP177, Feature 2 (a pit structure) contained three animal burials on the floor—a swan or crane, a domesticated dog, and the articulated bones of a turkey wing (Subfeatures 2.01, 2.02, and 2.03, respectively). All of these remains appear to have been part of the closing ritual for the structure. A pit structure at 5LP239 (Feature 1) contained two domesticated dog burials. The dogs (Features 3 and 4) were resting on slabs placed on alluvial sediments that

had been deposited shortly after the abandonment of the structure. The dogs had been severed in half at the mid torso and placed with their upper and lower body portions oriented in opposite directions. The dogs were found adjacent to each other at the same stratigraphic level, so it is likely they were sacrificed in a planned event related to the abandonment of Feature 1 and interred simultaneously shortly after the dismantling of the structure. The floor fill of this structure also yielded much of a gray fox hindlimb, including part of the pelvis and a left ulna; the left mandible of a bobcat (with cut marks); and multiple portions of a common snipe. These remains also appear to have been part of the closure ritual for the structure. In addition, two inhumations at 5LP239 contained numerous fox jaw pendants.

At 5LP185 in the North-central Cluster, pit structures also contained numerous carnivore and bird remains. The fill of one pit structure, Feature 10 in Locus A, contained a gray wolf humerus with cut marks, and the floor fill of this feature contained a porcupine femur. In addition, Subfeature 10.04, a subfloor pit, contained a whooping crane sternum. The fill of Feature 3, another pit structure at the site, yielded a gray wolf right distal humerus with cut marks and a porcupine humerus with spiral fractures. The floor assemblage of this feature includes a black bear phalanx and left radius. In addition to pit structures, this site contained numerous extramural human burials, and many of the rare and unique faunal specimens are associated with these features. For example, Feature 14, an inhumation, contained a gray wolf claw and a badger claw, which were either grave offerings or ornaments. Another inhumation (Feature 31) contained a bobcat lower third molar. Additionally, two sets of isolated human remains (Features 50 and 57) had possible associated faunal grave goods: Feature 50 had a domesticated dog tibia with cut marks, and Feature 57 had fragmented domesticated dog bones and a raccoon femur.

Animal burials were also discovered at 5LP185. A bobcat burial (Feature 78) was found in a pit that contained a combination of intentionally deposited secondary fill and naturally deposited post-occupational alluvial fill. All but the skull was present, and the animal was probably buried intact; no cut marks were noted. Tarsal bones and two partial socket portions of the pelvis of a bison were found in Feature 46, an extramural pit. The partial and disarticulated state of these remains suggests that the bones were buried after much processing, and the association of these remains with a particular burial pit feature rather than with the midden suggests that these remains were intentionally and ritually buried.

The abundance and variety of carnivores and birds associated with structure closing and mortuary rituals at these sites contrasts markedly with sites in the

western portion of Ridges Basin, including the Western Cluster and Sacred Ridge. What is striking, however, is not only the abundance of carnivores and birds but also their variety and their consistent association with particular depositional contexts. Waterfowl and shore birds are well represented, as might be expected given the proximity of these sites to the ancient marsh, but, additionally, a wide variety of non-aquatic species are also evident, including black bears, foxes, wolves, domesticated dogs, badgers, bobcats, bison, and turkeys, all found in association with houses and mortuary features in the Eastern Cluster and at 5LP185. This suggests that the inclusion of even the wetland species in these contexts was not entirely due to the proximity of these sites to the marsh, but rather because they were powerful, symbolically charged animals. It is rare to find specimens of these animals in any faunal assemblage, much less in special placements such as houses and mortuary features. Their disproportionate association with a specific settlement cluster and site suggests that these items were important for rituals conducted in these particular locales. These rituals involving animal burials appear to mark a transition in, or the end of, use and life for both houses and individuals. While birds and carnivores were rare in other areas of the project area, a few were evident at Sacred Ridge. At this site, the remains of the left and right wings of a long-eared owl and one bone from each wing of a northern harrier were recovered from the ventilator shaft of Feature 49, the early oversized pit structure in Locus 6. These most likely had been placed in the shaft during a closing ritual. And at features on the knoll were found a single element each from a fox, a badger, and kestrel. These items may have been associated with rituals conducted on the knoll, but sample sizes are too limited to substantiate this.

San Juan Red Ware

Blinman (1989) and Allison (2008) note that by the late A.D. 800s San Juan Red Ware was important for communal rituals at McPhee Village. Most San Juan

Red Ware vessels were produced at locations to the west of McPhee Village in southeastern Utah and acquired through trade, and some of these vessels were used to bring food to communal feasts, events that reinforced social integration and created group identities (Allison 2008:46; Blinman 1989).

In Ridges Basin, 100 years earlier, no such associations between San Juan Red Ware and communal ritual are evident. Redware is extremely rare in the Ridges Basin assemblage (Potter 2010a), and redware pots appear to have been most often sought and used by particular households for domestic needs and as burial items rather than for group gatherings (Allison 2008:61). A similar shift is seen in the use of ritual fauna (Potter 1997a, 2009). Allison interprets this as evidence that imported redware was more strongly associated with the creation of individual identities through differential access to these rare, exotic items than it was with the creation and reinforcement of group identities through communal ritual performance. However, as shown in Figure 15.2, the two loci at Sacred Ridge that contained massive ritual architecture, Loci 1 and 6, had comparatively high proportions of redware, perhaps partly due to the ritual significance of this artifact type.

Other Artifacts at Sacred Ridge

It appears that the exclusive control of ritual architecture and the performances that occurred in these structures translated into economic and political advantage for the occupants of Sacred Ridge. Root (1967:26) noted that many items of ground stone (13 metates and more than 30 manos) were found in association with the surface rooms at the northern end of the ridgetop. If Feature 2, the domed circular structure, was used to store maize surpluses, as suggested by Potter and Chuipka (2007a:418), these numerous ground stone tools may have been used to process communally stored maize. This also suggests an inordinate amount of centralized control over food surpluses within the community.

Root also found a relatively large number of exotic goods in association with the ridgetop, including a jet effigy of a macaw or parrot. Based on the presence of these items, he speculated that Sacred Ridge functioned as a trade center (Root 1967:24). Although SWCA did not find evidence of exotics such as jet effigies, as noted above, the ridgetop (Locus 1) did yield some of the highest relative frequencies of imported San Juan Red Ware ceramics at the site and in the entire community (Figure 15.2), despite the significant disturbance of this area by Root and his Fort Lewis College students during field schools in the 1960s (see Chapter 2, A History of Archaeological Work in the Durango Area).

Although the ridgetop loci did not produce inordinate amounts of exotic items other than slightly higher proportions of redware sherds, other loci at Sacred Ridge did. Of the 23 turquoise items recovered during the ALP project, 20 were found in association with a single burial in Locus 9 at Sacred Ridge. Additionally, Homer Root reported excavating a burial with similar grave goods in the midden of Locus 3. The individual was buried with a collection of quartz “diamonds” by the chest and 52 turquoise tiles and 24 turquoise fragments in a small jar next to the pelvis (Duke 1985). The Cerrillos Hills area in the Rio Grande Valley of north-central New Mexico is the most probable source of turquoise recovered at Pueblo I sites in the ALP project area (Eisenhauer 2009:317). The association of these items with mortuary features does not support Root’s hypothesis that the site operated as a trade center, however.

Finally, faunal data indicate that residents at Sacred Ridge had greater access to ungulate-sized mammals and high-utility ungulate remains than did residents of any other contemporaneous sites in the area, suggesting that access to high-value hunted resources was disproportionate within the Ridges Basin Pueblo I community. At Sacred Ridge, ungulate remains (not including antler) compose 5.3 percent of the assemblage, whereas for the project as a whole ungulates constitute only 3.0 percent of the total faunal assemblage.

Table 15.1. Rich Burials (from Potter 2010b:Table 2.18)

Location	Site 5LP_	Burial Number	Sex	Age	Mortuary Items							Total Items			
					Ceramic Vessel	Quartz	Turquoise	Mineral/ Fossil	Shell	Flaked Stone	Fox Mandible Pendant		Faunal Bone (other)	Obsidian	Ground Stone
5LP185	185	74	F	45-50	2	3	-	1	2	7	-	2	9	-	26
	185	76	F	40-50	7	-	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	59
	185	102	F	30-35	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Eastern Cluster	239	7	F	45-50	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	8
	239	8	F	18-20	4	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	8
	240	16	F	18-20	3	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	7
	240	18	F	35-40	3	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	7
	240	19	SA	6-8	2	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	7
	177	59	F	45-49	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Sacred Ridge	242	35	M	50+	4	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	2	-	11
	245	303	M	30-35	-	34	20	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
	184	131	M	Adult	1	2	-	3	-	4	-	-	-	3	13

Residents of Loci 1, 2, and 3 commanded the largest proportions of these resources. Whether all of these resources were consumed by the residents of these loci or whether they were shared communally during feasts at these loci is not known. Regardless, these loci appear to represent either high-status households or households that could organize communal hunts more effectively than other households within the community.

The ritual dominance of Sacred Ridge in the community was not total, however. While architecturally it dominated the landscape and appears to have reaped some political and economic advantage due to the exclusive control of rituals performed in these structures, occupants of other settlement clusters, particularly the Eastern Cluster, focused on other types of ritual to construct and signify distinct identities. The use of rare fauna in the closure rituals of houses and mortuary features has already been noted for the Eastern Cluster and 5LP185. Other aspects of mortuary ritual in these locales were even more distinctive and elaborate.

MORTUARY RITUAL

Mortuary ritual ranges in size and complexity from small private ceremonies to large public displays and mass gatherings (Pearson 2003). In the Pueblo I community of Ridges Basin, mortuary rituals were mostly small scale and did not involve the construction of large or elaborate mortuary features (Potter 2010b; see Chapter 13). Over three quarters of the burials in Ridges Basin occurred in extramural contexts, including midden areas. These extramural features were constructed as shallow, oval or subrectangular, and basin-shaped or straight-walled earthen pits. Mortuary features in pit structure fill were similarly constructed. Arrangement and positioning of the body were quite consistent, as well. All but one body (a male) was flexed or semiflexed. Thus, in general, very little effort or energy went into the construction of Pueblo I mortuary features and the preparation and arrangement of corpses, and it does not appear that these activities would have involved extravagant public ceremonies. Two elements of Ridges Basin mortuary

ritual, however, were probably quite public and may have been to some degree communal in scale. These elements are the establishment and use of a cemetery at 5LP185 and the construction of rich burials through the placement of numerous, rare, and exotic funerary items.

Rich Burials

Twelve mortuary features in the ALP project assemblage are defined as rich based on the number of items and the rarity of some of the items they contained. Among features that contained items (not counting features that lacked items altogether), the median number of items is two. Burials were considered rich if they contained more than five items (the point at which they become statistical outliers) or if they contained four or more items, at least one of which was unusual or of rare material type, such as quartz crystal, olivella shell, or jet.

Table 15.1 shows the item content of these 12 rich burials. Three patterns are notable. The first is the high frequency of rich burials of females (8 of 12) as compared to rich burials of males and a subadult¹ (4 of 12). The second pattern is the distinction between the types of goods associated with female burials as compared to male burials. Rich female interments contained abundant shell and fauna, whereas males were associated with turquoise and quartz. Moreover, while ceramic vessels were associated with all rich burials except one, in no instance were they the most numerous items. It was the addition of shell, quartz, obsidian, minerals, turquoise, or faunal items that made these burials disproportionately rich. The third pattern is the spatial separation of rich male and female burials; male burials were found predominantly in the western basin, including at Sacred Ridge, and female burials were found primarily at 5LP185 and the Eastern Cluster.

The abundance of rich female burials in the Eastern Cluster ($n = 5$) is striking when this number is compared to the total number of female burials in this settlement

¹ This subadult may have been female, particularly given the associated shell items.

cluster ($n = 10$). In other words, half of the female burials in the Eastern Cluster were rich. Also, the richness of certain adult female burials (and male burials) is all the more notable when compared to the paucity of items found with subadults. Although there are some exceptions, even the richest of subadult burials do not compare to those of the adult females or males (Table 15.1).

As noted above, variation in the quantity and quality of funerary objects placed in the graves of particular individuals represents indexical messaging through ritual performance and participation. Ten items included in a grave are simply and obviously more than two. But what does the presence of more stuff actually translate into in terms of social power differentials in these contexts? Given that ritual simultaneously integrates social units and promotes hierarchy among them, what did rich burials and the rituals associated with assembling them represent in the Ridges Basin community? Were these burials of high ranking individuals? Or are there other possible reasons for the richness of some mortuary features compared to others in the assemblage?

Cross-cultural research by Tainter (1978) found that social rank was consistently marked by the degree of energy expended in body treatment, the construction and placement of the grave, and mortuary rites. Grave goods, on the other hand, marked social rank in less than 5 percent of cases. Carr's cross-cultural study (1995:153) corroborates Tainter's findings that social rank is most often signified by energy expenditure and grave form. Carr's study further indicates that grave goods (what he terms "grave furniture") most often symbolize personal identity and gender rather than social rank, *per se*. Moreover, when grave goods are linked to social rank, it is the quality rather than the quantity of items that indicates the status of the deceased. It seems unlikely that the significant patterning in the Ridges Basin assemblage is caused strictly by differences in social rank, because all graves in the Ridges Basin assemblage were low-energy features, body treatment appeared to be more or less undifferentiated, and grave forms were uniform.

Rather than social rank, then, the rich graves in Ridges Basin seem to represent attempts to elaborate and signal social identities within the community (Potter and Perry 2011). What is particularly intriguing is the strong pattern of rich female burials in the Eastern Cluster and at 5LP185 and rich male burials in the western part of Ridges Basin, especially the Western Cluster and Sacred Ridge. While the exact underlying causes of this patterning cannot be known, there are several possibilities. One is that females were considered more important as leaders in the Eastern Cluster and 5LP185 and males were more important in the western part of the basin, including at Sacred Ridge. The rich burials may reflect this gender distinction in leadership status. A second possibility is that among the people living at sites in the Eastern Cluster and at 5LP185 females adorned themselves more in life, or were adorned more lavishly in death, than was the case with females at Sacred Ridge. This may have been simply a matter of cultural tradition. This scenario is more consistent with Tainter's (1978) and Carr's (1995) cross-cultural findings that quantities of grave goods more often symbolize personal identity and gender rather than social rank. A third possibility—one that does not necessarily contradict the first two—is that female interments in the Eastern Cluster were elaborated with offerings to define, construct, and communicate a group identity in contradistinction to the male-symbolized Sacred Ridge site. Alternatively, if adult females in the Eastern Cluster and at 5LP185 were routinely honored with highly valued offerings for their abilities to integrate and represent the group, members of Sacred Ridge might have attempted to distinguish themselves by choosing male representatives. Regardless of the intentions of those carrying out these highly patterned ritual acts, the gender distinction among settlement clusters would probably have been notable to community members, and likely reinforced social and cultural distinctions within the community.

The Cemetery at 5LP185

Site 5LP185 contained many more interments than its three households and relatively short occupation span could account for, and it appears that after its use as a habitation was discontinued in the early or mid A.D. 700s, it was used as a cemetery by households occupying other sites (Potter 2008b:311–315). In all, 23 individuals were recovered from 18 features in two burial areas at the site. The burial areas had been heavily disturbed by prairie dogs, and therefore only a portion of the total number of individuals was recovered as intact interments with associated artifacts. Many more were recovered as isolated human remains (Stodder 2010a).

Site 5LP185 was situated directly between Sacred Ridge and the Eastern Cluster, yet in many ways

mortuary features here were more similar to those of the Eastern Cluster sites, manifesting little variation in burial context (all but two burials were in midden or extramural contexts), similar grave items (e.g., redware, olivella shell, and faunal bone items), and rich mortuary assemblages associated exclusively with adult females. Potter (2009:11) suggests that the placement of this cemetery near the marsh in the central basin (see Chapter 9, The Natural Environment) was a strategy used by community members to lay claim to the faunal and floral resources associated with this particular landscape feature. It is also suggested that the spiritual and mythic significance of marshes and lakes as places of origin, creation, and power, and the socially legitimizing aspects of associating a village with these meaningful places was a motivating factor in the transformation of this locale into a cemetery.

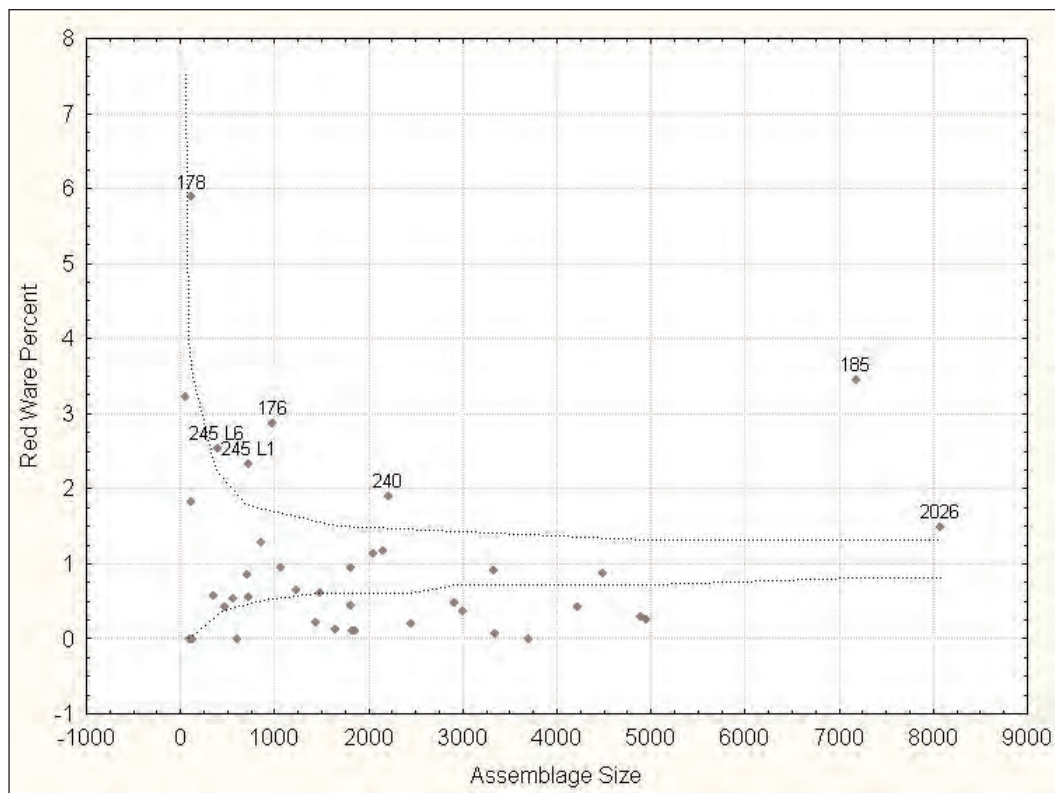


Figure 15.2. Plot of percentages of redware versus sample size for early Pueblo I habitation sites in the ALP project area. The dashed lines mark the upper and lower boundaries of a 90-percent confidence band for percentages based on the total ALP project Pueblo I assemblage. Labeled cases above the upper band are considered statistically significant. Site numbers preceded by 5LP. Sacred Ridge (5LP245) presented as separate loci (L). Not all cases labeled. (Reproduced from Potter 2010a:Figure 3.4).

RITUAL SUMMARY

In the context of Ridges Basin, communal rituals not only brought groups together and socially integrated them (e.g., Lipe and Hegmon 1989), but also distinguished and highlighted differences among them. Communal ritual therefore created an arena for the construction of social identities. In the Ridges Basin community, Sacred Ridge was distinguished by its exclusive control of ritual associated with elaborate ritual architecture, including communal feasting, and greater access to highly valued items such as turquoise, deer and elk, and redware. The Eastern Cluster, on the other hand, was differentiated by the use of ritual fauna in architecture closure rituals and inhumations and by numerous rich burials, the majority of which were adult females. It is suggested that in both cases ritual was used to actively negotiate power relations and construct social identities through the control of canonical messages and the manipulation of indexical messages. The following section further explores social identity construction with the Ridges Basin community, particularly as it relates to distinctions among settlement clusters.

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND SETTLEMENT CLUSTERS

Identity refers to people's perceptions of themselves and how they relate to others. It is the totality of perceptions of ethnicity, nationality, tribal affiliation, linguistic group, sex, gender, and age that constitutes an individual's sense of self and that both informs and constrains social actions (Varien and Potter 2008). Although social identities take many forms and derive from many sources at a variety of scales, the focus in this section is ethnic identity, or ethnicity. Following Lucy (2005) and Levine (1999:168), ethnicity is viewed as a means of classifying people based on culturally constructed notions of shared origins. Ethnic groups are composed of members who "choose to do (some) things in similar ways to each other, and in different ways from others. These similarities and differences

are then articulated as 'ethnic' ones (often framed in terms of members of the group having shared 'origins' or descent)" (Lucy 2005:86). Thus, for archaeologists, ethnic distinctions are often interpreted from behavior and the material culture affected by those behaviors rather than from biological relatedness per se (although relatedness certainly can and often does play into perceptions of origin and rules structuring behavior). Importantly, ethnicity is a means of social differentiation and becomes activated and reinforced when conditions call for it, particularly in the presence of an "other." It is thus conceived of as an organizational and oppositional strategy that works in tandem with and draws upon notions of relatedness and common origins (Knudson and Stojanowski 2009).

Potter and Yoder (2008) note that architectural variation is greater than expected in this community given its geographic position between two broad culture areas that have been defined for the Pueblo I period: the Piedra to the west and the Rosa to the east. As noted in Chapter 7, Pueblo I Research Questions, the Piedra area is typified by sites with square or rectangular pit houses with wing walls and one-hole ventilators. These sites correspond to the Northern San Juan Ceramic Tradition, which consists of pottery with crushed igneous rock temper and mineral paint (Allison 2008). Rosa sites, on the other hand, often contain circular pit structures with two-hole ventilators. Surface rooms are more ephemeral and built strictly of adobe. Rosa pottery assemblages are of the Upper San Juan Ceramic Tradition, characterized by sand or quartzite temper and organic paint decoration.

Potter and Yoder (2008) note, however, that although pit structure shapes in Ridges Basin included the square form typical of the Piedra area and the circular form noted in the Rosa area, but there were also oval, D-shaped, and sub-square (square sides with rounded corners) pit structures (see Figures 11.6, 11.7, 11.8, and 11.12). The most common pit structure shape in Ridges Basin was a flattened oval, or D shape.

What is most interesting, though, is that house shapes in one cluster, the Eastern Cluster, were consistent within the cluster and distinct from house shapes in other clusters, especially Sacred Ridge (see Chapter 11). Other clusters, such as the North-central and Western clusters were quite variable, and the latest structures in both of these clusters were large and looked similar to pit structures on Sacred Ridge—oval with large benches, large floor areas, four-post roof support systems, one-hole ventilators, and wing walls (Potter and Yoder 2008:Table 2.1) (see Chapter 11). These data suggest that some households used pit structures to actively negotiate and establish their identity as members of particular settlement clusters. Eastern Cluster occupants may have standardized the visible aspects of house style, most notably shape, so as to optimize a household's inclusion or acceptance into the settlement cluster and distinguish it as such. Other cluster members, by contrast, appear to have manipulated house shape to signal affiliation with Sacred Ridge. Potter and Yoder (2008) propose that this pattern is similar to that documented for Dela in northern Cameroon, a multiethnic community of about 1,100 people in which the form of domestic architecture “is one material strategy which local ethnic groups use to negotiate political self-interests” (Lyons 1996:351). Household compounds in this community contain different language groups with separate histories of origin. House shape is used as a conscious strategy to either enhance or suppress visible differences between individuals and groups, depending on whether a group's ethnic visibility is advantageous or detrimental to the self-interest in the political context of the community. As in Ridges Basin, less-visible attributes of the interiors of houses—for example, the furniture and the spatial organization of people, property, and activities—remain unchanged and reflect the diverse backgrounds of the community members. It is only the exterior shape of the house that is altered.

The Eastern Cluster is unique, or at least starkly different from Sacred Ridge, in other ways. As noted in Chapter 12, Settlement Cluster Variation, there are considerable differences in artifact assemblages, pit structure closure rituals, and extramural features. Most distinguishing was the composition, quantity, and gender of the rich burials (see above). All of these material culture distinctions reinforced social and cultural distinctions within the community.

Biological data corroborate these patterns. Using dental data gathered from the human remains assemblage for the ALP project, McClelland (2010a) examines whether Ridges Basin newcomers maintained previous group identities or whether they merged through social and ceremonial integrative mechanisms or through intermarriage. He concludes that although some admixture surely occurred within the community and across clusters, in some cases differences were maintained genetically within the community. He notes significant differences in permanent dental trait frequencies between the Eastern Cluster and the greater Ridges Basin population, and between the individuals from Sacred Ridge whose remains were processed (intentionally cut, broken, and burned) in one event and deposited in Feature 104 and all other individuals in Ridges Basin. (The following chapter discusses the processed human remains at Sacred Ridge in greater detail.)

The highest number of significant differences in any...cluster is two for the Eastern Cluster. When we consider that the individuals represented by the processed remains from Sacred Ridge also differed in terms of a relatively low caries rate, a higher rate of dental calculus, and a higher rate of enamel hypoplasia, the differences between this subsample and the other samples within the basin are reinforced. (McClelland 2010a:237)

In an analysis of skulls from 26 individuals from across the basin, Douglas and Stodder (2010) found similar patterning, in particular the uniqueness of the Eastern Cluster population. “Nonmetric univariate comparisons revealed that the most differences were between the Eastern Cluster individuals and Outlier 1 (primarily between 5LP177 and 5LP185), and the next largest distinction was between the Eastern and Sacred Ridge clusters” (Douglas and Stodder 2010:221).

Douglas and Stodder also see in the skull data the same pattern McClelland (2010a) saw in dental data with respect to the Sacred Ridge processed remains. According to cranial biodistance data, “the individuals in the mass grave in Feature 104 at Sacred Ridge are biologically distinct from those in the normative burials at Sacred Ridge and from other Ridges Basin inhabitants” (Douglas and Stodder 2010:222).

When migrants moved into Ridges Basin—initially in the early A.D. 700s and again in another wave at about 750 (see Chapter 8, Pueblo I Chronology and Population)—they organized their habitation sites into clusters, some of which were more tightly aggregated and distinctly bounded than others. Potter and Yoder (2008:22) suggest that this process of clustering was one strategy used to “negotiate and establish boundaries of belonging and exclusion (in effect, clarifying the categories of us vs. them, or the ‘other’) within the community as it formed, ultimately as a way for households to gain perceived access to allocative and authoritative resources.” Two groups in particular appear to have gone to considerable lengths to maintain distinct social identities within the community: the people living at Sacred Ridge and the people living in the sites of the Eastern Cluster. These distinctions are manifested most acutely in architectural, mortuary, ritual fauna, and artifact variation and are mirrored in cranial and dental measures of biodistance. That only two of the five clusters investigated exhibit any degree of spatial, stylistic, or biological cohesiveness is notable, and it underscores the fluid and dynamic nature

of ethnic identity. This dynamism is further exemplified by the different strategies of identity construction pursued by households—for example, the construction of houses that resembled Sacred Ridge houses in the North-central and Western clusters near the end of the Ridges Basin occupation. Other North-central Cluster households built houses near long-abandoned Basketmaker II habitation sites and used a cribbed roof construction similar to that used in Basketmaker II houses (see Chapter 4, Basketmaker II Sites). As Potter and Yoder (2008:29) suggest,

variation in house appearance was the result of immigrant households from various origins actively working to establish and signal their identities. Some did this by harkening back to Basketmaker II times through the construction of cribbed roofs and the placement of their houses next to ancient Basketmaker II sites. One of the most effective ways to legitimize one’s claim to a landscape and create an identity that is rooted in tradition is to reference the remote past through architectural style, effectively signaling a historical connection—whether real or fictive—to place. Other people, instead, chose to create identities that were based on innovative new house styles, such as oval or D-shaped houses.

Attarian (2003:186) writes, “as groups of people enter into a new environment, their previous sense of identity will be challenged and reshaped by the new conditions that they must confront in order to survive.” It appears that in the Ridges Basin community different strategies were pursued to confront these new conditions. It seems clear that ethnogenesis—the process by which group distinctiveness is established and new ethnic identities emerge and are mobilized—was ongoing in Ridges Basin. The question is how complete the process was and whether these new ethnic identities survived intact when the community collapsed and fragmented at about A.D. 815.

First-comers and Latecomers

One of the factors that may have played a role in Sacred Ridge's dominance in the community is the establishment of an early pioneer settlement there. In the late A.D. 600s or early 700s, after a several-hundred-year hiatus following the Basketmaker II occupation of the Durango area, people began moving back into Ridges Basin. This first wave of settlers included families that established houses on the ridgetop at Sacred Ridge. Some of the earliest tree-ring dates from the project (A.D. 269 and 607) were recovered from the ridgetop (although both were "vv" dates and may have derived from old wood). In addition, seven radiocarbon dates were obtained from ridgetop structures. These dates suggest an early occupation of this part of the site followed by a remodel in the late eighth century. Three of the radiocarbon dates have intercepts in the late A.D. 600s, and four have intercepts at 770 or 780. The early dates were recovered from two pit structures, Feature 1 at the north end of the site and Feature 18 at the south end, and a pre-remodel context at Feature 23, suggesting that these three structures were some of the earliest at the site (see Figure 11.11).

At about A.D. 760, following the initial settlement of Ridges Basin, there appears to have been a construction boom in the basin (see Figure 8.2) that likely represents a substantial population increase. This occurred most dramatically at Sacred Ridge (see Figure 11.11). While a high birth rate may account for some of this population increase (Schlanger and Craig n.d.; Wilshusen and Perry 2008), it is hard to imagine that population movement did not play some part in the rapid increase in population in the basin at this time.

This pattern is consistent with what is expected during the settlement of a frontier by pioneer groups. Van Gijseghem (2004:87) outlines some essential features common to most migrations; three are particularly relevant to the Ridges Basin case.

- Migrations attract migrants. Almost invariably, once a migration has been undertaken by

individuals and groups, a successful settlement will attract followers and kinfolk, and the development of a "migration stream" (Anthony 1990; Lefferts 1977).

- The initial migrants, the pioneers, often sponsor the arrival and settlement of the later migrants within the migration stream because they are in need of allies for mutual protection and labor to effectively exploit the frontier's resources.
- The pioneers also exert some power over resources, people and land in the new settlement; power that is legitimized by their seniority in the area, which results in the formation of a **primocracy** [emphasis in original].

Van Gijseghem goes on to define a primocracy as a pattern of authority and leadership that rests mainly on privileges and prerogatives given by seniority within a given sociopolitical landscape. "A primocracy is established by the strategies applied on the frontier and its people by pioneers sometimes called 'charter groups' (Drieder 2001; White and Fleras 1990)" (Van Gijseghem 2004:87).

Pioneers and the kin-based networks that they establish on the frontier have the possibility of manipulating tradition and history, cementing and sanctifying their position of power....Their authority is economic, through the debt relationships that they establish (Hayden 1995:21); ideological and ritual, through their imposition of a cultural landscape and its juxtaposition with cosmology; and sociopolitical, through the stem of leadership that they represent as the "us," pioneers, founders, and their kin, vs. "them," the latecomers...." (Van Gijseghem 2004:124)

Van Gijseghem (2004:130) points out that the resultant society, the "new" society, generally remains relatively inert and unchanging for a generation or two, preserving and expanding some of the distinguishing features of the pioneer subgroup in terms of ritual and notions of status and power based on a "founder's effect." Over time, however, some features of the donor society are

jettisoned and social innovations occur, particularly with respect to cultural manifestations of religious beliefs, group identity, political ideology, and ethnicity (Van Gijseghem 2004:125). This may explain the dramatic reorganization that occurred at the Sacred Ridge site at about A.D. 780 or 790 with the construction of the ridgetop complex, including the tower. To maintain and even enhance their standing as the ritual core of the community, descendants of the pioneers at Sacred Ridge may have developed new rituals, and designed and constructed new, highly visible architectural forms in which to house these new rituals. Concurrently, by constructing the four oversized pit structures along the southern and eastern slopes of Sacred Ridge, the occupants of Sacred Ridge deliberately elaborated communal ritual structures based on long-standing traditions in the community, that is, those traditions associated with the original communal ritual structure for the community (Feature 49). This pattern may relate to Van Gijseghem's (2004:128) notion that, "in time, new forms of expression will be elaborated based on old ones to cement the distinction between 'them' and 'us'." Indeed, enhanced efforts at identity construction is a process that consistently accompanies the colonization of a frontier, whether it is the maintenance of existing social identities (Duff 2002) or their deliberate alteration (Fortier 2001).

SUMMARY: ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Sacred Ridge—with its monopoly on communal structures and exclusive control of the rituals they housed, its towering architectural feature visible from across the valley, the success its members had in obtaining imported items and large game, and the communal feasts it hosted—dominated the Ridges Basin community. As some of the earliest Pueblo I occupants of the basin, its settlers successfully attracted migrants and constructed a primocracy in which they became the most powerful group in the community through the control of ritual and feasts and through highly visible displays of authority.

This primocracy was based on the premise of an us-versus-them dynamic between first-comers and latecomers. As Van Gijseghem (2008) notes, however, the dialectic between pioneers and latecomers can cause primocracies to be short-lived and inherently unstable. Pioneers establish a social order that places them at its apex, but there is a need for this structure to be open or flexible enough to attract followers. Frequently, the pioneers will emerge as elites based on this blend of traditional hierarchy and their economic and ideological position as founders. Over time, though, if appropriate strategies of social integration—communal rituals, the creation of exchange partners, intermarriage, and the development of work cooperatives—are not established, cleavages may develop in which the pioneers' power is contested. It appears that in Ridges Basin first-comers established themselves as the leaders of the community, and had exclusive control of architecturally based communal ritual and, presumably, primary access to resources such as agricultural land and hunting grounds. But this also created conditions that encouraged the construction and elaboration of ethnic groups in opposition to the primary group. This opposition is most evident in the Eastern Cluster, a cohesive and distinct group of sites at the eastern end of Ridges Basin that housed a relatively discrete biological group.

The main goals of this chapter have been to characterize ritual, social differentiation, and identity construction in the Ridges Basin community and to address the interplay of these aspects of community life. This final section specifically addresses the questions posed in Chapter 7 relating to these issues.

How many different ethnic or cultural groups made up the Pueblo I population of Ridges Basin? Where did they come from?

Based on dental and cranial biodistance data, there were at least three distinct biological groups in the community: one represented by the processed human remains at Sacred Ridge, one by the Eastern Cluster burial assemblage, and one by the rest of the community,

including the formal burials at Sacred Ridge. The group that occupied the Eastern Cluster is also distinguished archaeologically through a relatively tight aggregation of houses, consistency in the external appearance of the houses, the use of animals in the closing rituals for houses, and the elaboration of adult female burials with exotic and rare grave goods. These material distinctions are arguably the result of an intentional construction of an ethnic identity, specifically in opposition to the identity created by the occupants of Sacred Ridge. If ethnicity can be reliably mapped onto biodistance, as it seems to with the Eastern Cluster group, the biologically related people represented in the processed human remains at Sacred Ridge's Feature 104 may have composed a third ethnic group. It is unclear whether the other households or settlement clusters in the basin exhibited distinct ethnic identities or what their perceived identities may have been. Some seem to have attempted to define themselves as related to ancient Basketmaker II groups, while others appear to have attempted to link their identity with Sacred Ridge. The question of how many ethnic groups is thus not a straightforward one to answer, but it appears there were at least three present in Ridges Basin in the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

The question of *where* these groups came from is even more difficult to address. Ezzo (2010) conducted strontium isotope analysis on a large sample of Ridges Basin human remains to address this question. Of the 98 individuals analyzed, 12 were identified as possible immigrants and only two (Burial 35 at 5LP242 in the Eastern Cluster and Burial 38 at 5LP503 in the North-central Cluster) were definitively of nonlocal origin (Table 15.2).

Seven possible immigrants from the San Juan Basin were identified. These samples yielded strontium ratio values intermediate between Ridges Basin and Blue Mesa, and Ezzo observes that they "may represent immigrants from a geologically younger region, such as the San Juan Basin, or they may indicate these people spent their first year of life obtaining food from both

Ridges Basin and Blue Mesa or upland areas surrounding Ridges Basin" (Ezzo 2010:194). One of the possible immigrants originated from an environment where local soil derived from Cambrian sources. According to Ezzo, these soils are present along the Animas River between Durango and Silverton, so it is possible that this individual migrated from the north. The two confirmed immigrants also sourced to this location (Table 15.2). Four individuals possibly originated from Blue Mesa or the uplands surrounding Ridges Basin.

Although it is difficult to assess these relatively ambiguous results, several patterns are noteworthy. For instance, it is interesting that many of these outsiders may have derived from Blue Mesa or ate food grown on Blue Mesa as they were growing up. (As described above, because the San Juan Basin isotope signature is actually an intermediate value between that exhibited by Ridges and Blue Mesa, the individuals noted in Table 15.2 as having possible origins in the San Juan Basin may have grown up on both Blue Mesa and Ridges Basin.) If all of these individuals did, in fact, originate at Blue Mesa, they compose a substantial proportion (11 of 14) of the "immigrant" population in Ridges Basin. If this is the case, then all of the "outsiders" identified in the processed human remains were from Blue Mesa (see Table 15.2).

Also of note is Gladwin's (1957:55) observation that people in the Durango area might have origins to the north.

[I]t looks as if their earliest settlements were made along the Animas River, within a radius of about ten miles of Durango, and this suggests that these people either came down from the north—through the central valleys of Utah, west of the Rockies—or in the from the east, through southern Colorado from the western plains.

While Gladwin was willing to extend the migration stream quite a bit farther northward than seems reasonable at this point, his scenario is roughly

consistent not only with Ezzo's data but also with the chronological data presented in Figure 8.7. According to tree-ring dates, the Hidden Valley community, north of Durango, was a short-lived community occupied in the early A.D. 760s and abandoned sometime in the late 760s or early 770s, coincident with an increase in construction in Ridges Basin. These "northern people" may have been drawn into Ridges Basin at this time as part of the migration stream started by the original settlers of Ridges Basin.

Given the obvious links between Ridges Basin and the Rosa area, it is quite probable that some or even most of the population of Ridges Basin immigrated from the south up the Animas River drainage. Ezzo (2010) provides additional data to suggest that other areas also provided donor populations. This most likely contributed to the ethnic diversity we see expressed in the material culture of the Pueblo I community in Ridges Basin.

Table 15.2. Summary Table of Samples Identified as Possible or Confirmed Immigrants to Ridges Basin

Settlement Cluster	Site	Burial	Immigrant?	Possible Origin
Eastern	5LP177	40	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico
Eastern	5LP242	35	Yes	Animas Valley north of Durango
North-central	5LP185	74	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico
North-central	5LP185	50	Possible	Blue Mesa
North-central	5LP503	38	Yes	Animas Valley north of Durango
North-central	5LP237	139	Possible	Blue Mesa
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	F150/7	Possible	Animas Valley north of Durango
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	303	Possible	Blue Mesa
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	276	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	304	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	SKU058*	Possible	Blue Mesa
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	SKU085*	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	SKU093*	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico
Sacred Ridge	5LP245	SKU117*	Possible	San Juan Basin, northern New Mexico

* From processed human remains assemblage in Feature 111



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