

Cultural Coalescence and the Archaeological Record as Seen Through the Salado Phenomenon

Alexander Ballesteros (Northern Arizona University), Dushyant Naresh (Vassar College), and Jeffery Clark (Archaeology Southwest)

Project Background

Coalescence manifests itself in many ways, but tends to occur during large migrations when groups from one culture move into a region inhabited by another. Cultural "mixing" is not only produced by the physical movement of people, but also from the flow of goods and ideas. In historic contexts, it is easier to determine the forces behind cultural coalescence from written documents. In pre-writing contexts, however, it is much more complicated. Due to various possible explanations for how an artifact was produced and became deposited in the archaeological record, it is difficult to determine what cultural forces were responsible.

Our project focuses on the Salado Phenomenon, a spatial-temporal horizon defined largely by polychrome ceramics dating from A.D. 1275 to 1450 in southern Arizona and southern New Mexico. It has been hypothesized that an immigrant community in diaspora from northeastern Arizona played an important role in this horizon. Looking at artifacts recovered from the Dinwiddie site, a 14th century pueblo in the Cliff Valley of southwestern New Mexico, we attempt to reconstruct the social identities of inhabitants, including local, migrants, or combinations of both. Certain artifacts can be used to identify the movement of people, others indicate exchange without migration, and still others suggest a transfer of ideas only. These material culture differences allow us to examine the character of the Salado "interaction sphere" in which the Dinwiddie site was situated, both in relation to local traditions and other large spheres such as Casas Grandes.

Social Identity in the Archaeological Record

History of Southwestern Social Identity

Concepts of southwestern social identities have greatly evolved from Alfred Kidder's "Pecos Classification", which suggests a shared regional identity. Later, Harold Colton's multi-tiered categorization system broke identity down to culture areas, branches and foci, the foundation for contemporary research.

- **Culture Areas** refer to supposed shared cultural identity
 - Hohokam, Mogollon, and Ancestral Puebloans
- **Branches** represent areas with a shared ceramic traditions
- **Foci** are the spatial variations of ceramic wares within branches

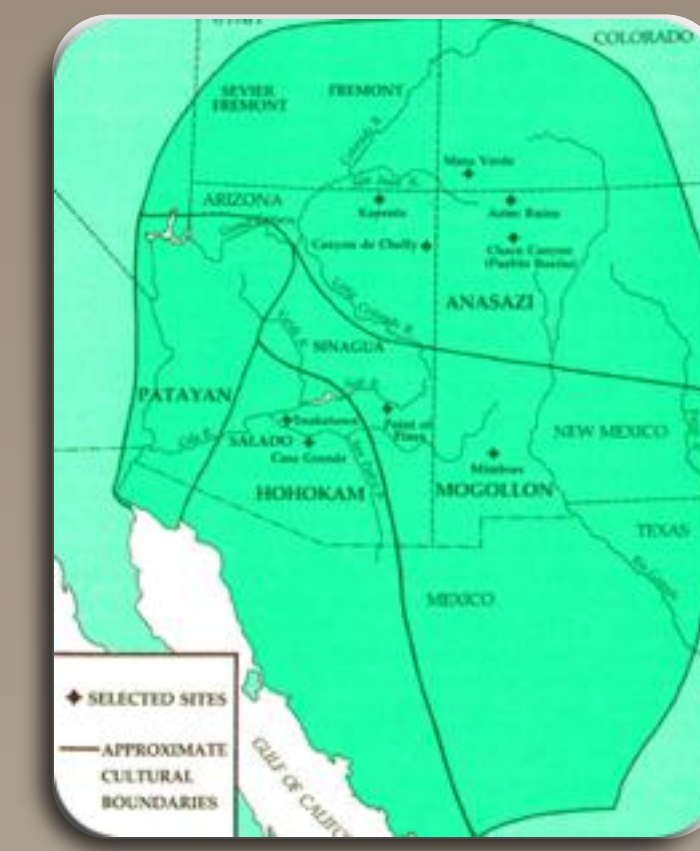


Figure 1. Map of Southwestern Pre-contact culture areas

This simplistic categorization is problematic because it relies on one artifact class: ceramics. Use of the term culture area also assumes cultural homogeneity. Thus, the term regional system has been applied to the Hohokam, the Anasazi, and the Salado, although similar problems arise. For phenomena such as the Salado, it is more productive to think of the "system" as a set of communities with similar world view, more like a shared religion than an common ethnicity.

(Duff 2000)(Neitzel 2000)(Schollmeyer 2015)

Determining Past Social Identity

Two perspectives on how social identity is expressed are *interactionist* and *enculturationist* theoretical models. An interactionist approach assumes a conscious expression of identity, whereas an enculturationist view suggests identities can also be unconsciously practiced. It is probable that social identity can be studied from both perspectives. Conscious identity is seen in high visibility artifact attributes, while low visibility or structural components of an artifact inform on enculturated thought processes. An example of these two dimensions working simultaneously are structures with a single façade, but hidden construction styles reflecting a diverse group of builders. Ceramic examples are Cliff White-on-red and Dinwiddie

Polychrome ceramics, which combine exterior Salado iconography with Mogollon production techniques (e.g., interior smudging), indicating both conscious and passive manifestations of social identity.

(Cordell 2008)(Lyons and Clark 2008)(Duff 2000)(Schollmeyer 2015)



Figure 2. Examples of Dinwiddie Polychrome and Cliff White-on-red bowls

What Artifacts Say About Social Identity

Ground stone artifacts like manos and metates are usually mundane domestic artifacts used to process seeds, grains, or nuts

- Different stylistic forms suggest separate enculturative traditions

- Ceramics are indicative of both high and low visibility attributes
 - Production and firing style represent enculturative practices
 - Decorations are active expressions of identity

- Textiles and jewelry
 - Textiles such as clothing and basketry have diagnostic iconography woven into them, although specific weaving styles inform on enculturative practices
 - Exotic material used in jewelry production demonstrates interaction with other regions
 - both jewelry and clothing styles are conscious expressions of social identity

(Schollmeyer 2015)(Hays-Gilpin 2008)



Figure 3. Mano and metate used for grain processing



Figure 4. A photo of two Hopi women. The maiden on the right is wearing Squash Blossom buns

Salado and the Dinwiddie Site

Background on Salado Phenomenon

The region encompassed by the Salado Phenomenon exhibits a considerable amount of artifact and architectural diversity. The common thread is the presence of various Roosevelt Red ware (Salado polychrome) ceramics with high symbolic content. Thus the Salado phenomenon should be viewed as an ideology that involved the movement of ideas, and probably people and goods. Salado polychrome ceramics first appear around AD 1280 (Pinto Polychrome) and continue (Gila and Cliff Polychrome) until AD 1450. They are concentrated in central and eastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico, especially the Salt and Gila rivers and tributaries. Salado polychromes dominate most site assemblages in the eastern Hohokam and western Mogollon Culture areas by AD 1350.

Recent research suggests that that ancestral Pueblo immigrants made and used Salado polychrome vessels as part of a new religion that appealed to many local groups in their new homes. Specifically, it is theorized that the phenomenon is associated with Kayenta immigrants from the Four Corners area. The presence of Maverick Mountain Polychrome and perforated plates along with locally made Salado polychrome support this theory. Excavations across at the Dinwiddie site have also shown interaction with groups in northern Chihuahua. Artifact distributions indicate that Salado communities that developed in the AD 1300s included migrants, their descendants and various local populations.

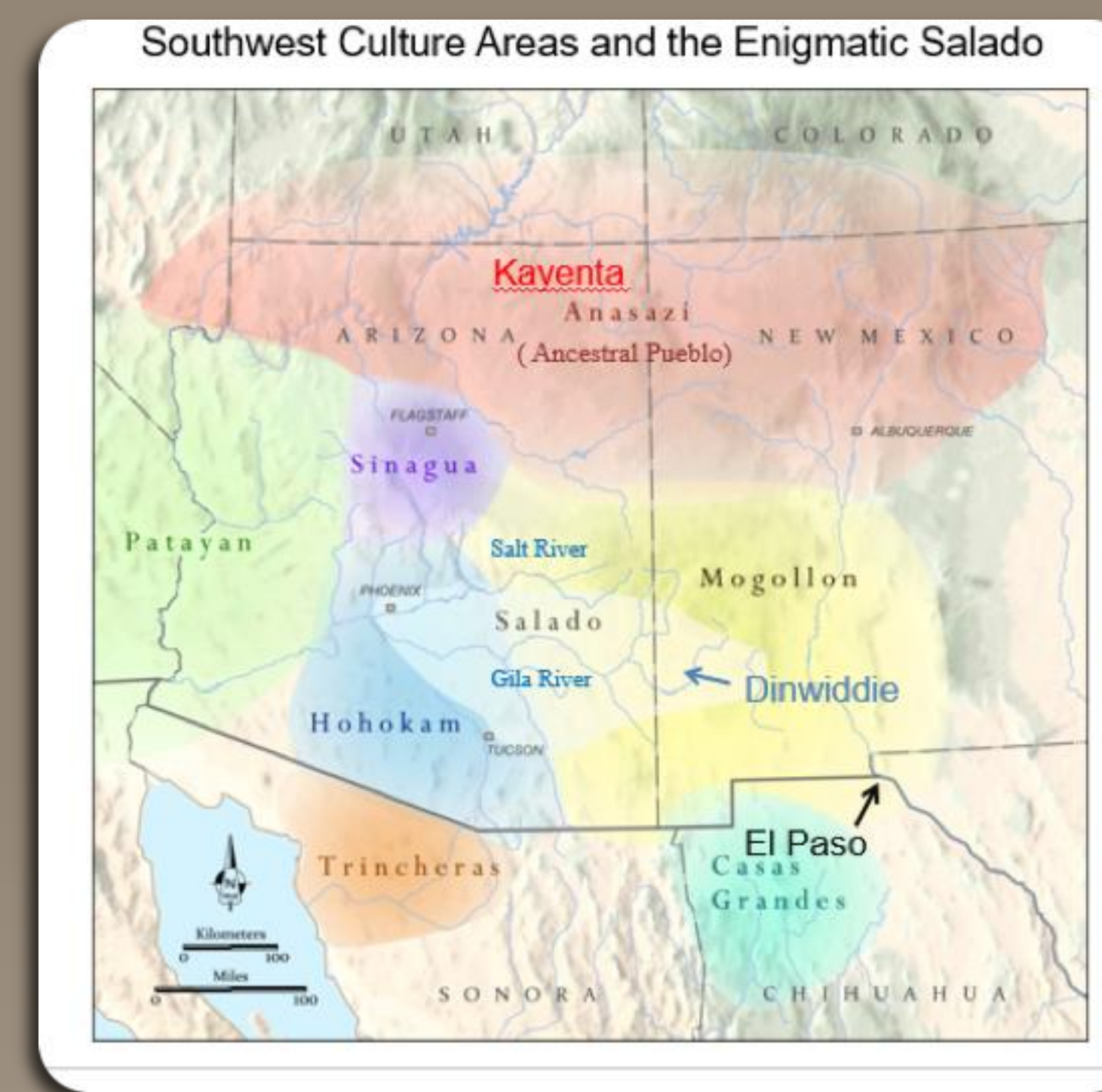


Figure 5. Map of Southwest with the Salado Region in White and Kayenta region highlighted

(Lyons 2004)(Schollmeyer 2015)(Lyons and Lindsay Jr. 2006)

Preservation Archaeology

Our research on the Salado tradition took place as part of a preservation archaeology field school at LA 106003, commonly referred to as the Dinwiddie site. The field school was jointly conducted by the University of Arizona and the non-profit Archaeology Southwest as part of the Upper Gila Preservation Archaeological Project.

The Dinwiddie site was chosen because it represented an aggregated community which practiced Salado ceramic traditions, and exhibited evidence of Kayenta presence. Moreover, natural and human impacts threatened the site, making it an ideal candidate for a preservation archaeology field school.



Figure 6. Excavation at the Dinwiddie site, June 2015

(Archaeology Southwest 2016)

The Dinwiddie Site (LA 106003)

Over the past three summers, Archaeology Southwest has conducted research at the Dinwiddie site near Cliff, New Mexico. The site was an adobe village consisting of three roomblocks occupied from ca. AD 1300 to 1450. This site was originally excavated by avocational archaeologists Jack and Vera Mills in the 1960's and 70's who produced an incomplete, but tantalizing, report. Our investigation focused on areas the Mills did not excavate.

(Schollmeyer 2015)(Archaeology Southwest 2016)

Roomblock 1

- Ramos Polychrome sherds suggests interaction with northern Mexico
- Turquoise tesserae recovered from lowest levels
- Multiple episodes of floor remodeling suggest long-term occupation
- Pick marks on walls and a large sherd cluster provides evidence of looting

Roomblock 2

- Perforated plates and possible comals suggests more than one social group lived in this building
- Plugged T-shaped door similar to those common at Casas Grande
- 3/4 groove stone axe remodeled into full groove axe recovered from room floor
- Extensive remodeling also indicates extended occupation
- One room was abandoned and filled with trash, possibly due to instability of walls
- Pot hunter pits and historic artifacts exemplify 20th century looting

Roomblock 3

- Perforated plates suggest Kayenta presence
- Also considerable remodeling
- Heavily impacted by road and mechanical looting

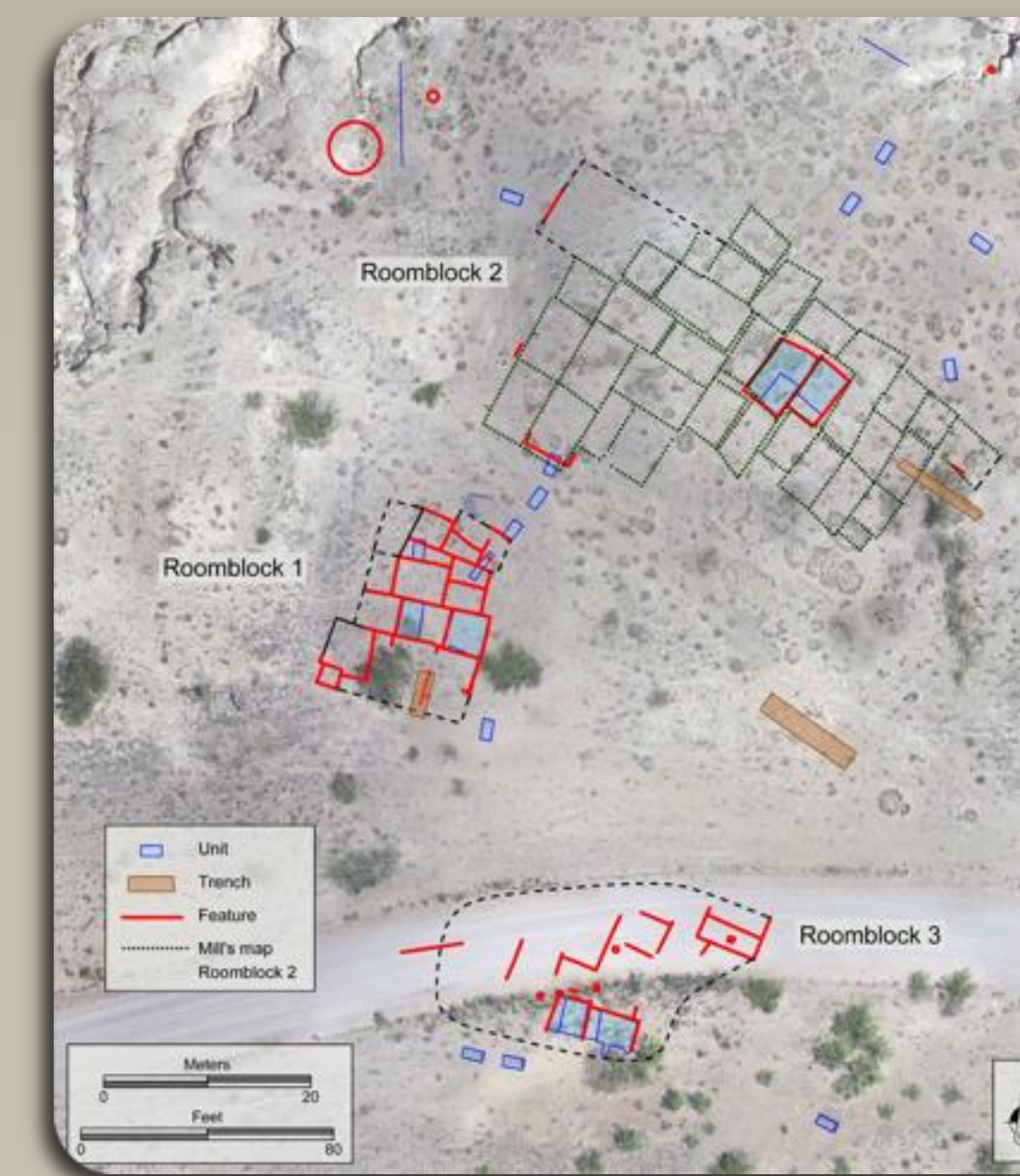


Figure 7. Map of Dinwiddie with roomblocks and walls highlighted

References Cited

Archaeology Southwest
2016 Investigation at the Dinwiddie Site. Electronic document, <http://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/what-we-do/investigations/salado/field-school/dinwiddie/>, accessed January 11, 2016.
Cordell, Linda S.
2008 Exploring Social Identities through Archaeological Data from the Southwest: An Introduction. In *Archaeology Without Borders: Contact, Commerce, and Change in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico*, edited by Laurie Webster, Maize McBrien, and Eduardo Carrera, pp. 145-154. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.
Duff, Andrew
2003 Scale, Interaction, and Regional Analysis in Late Pueblo Prehistory. In *The Archaeology of Regional Interaction*, edited by Michelle Heymon, pp. 71-98. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.
Hays-Gilpin, Kelly
2008 *Men's Pathways: Geographic Movements in Ancestral Puebloan Material Culture*. In *Archaeology Without Borders: Contact, Commerce, and Change in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico*, edited by Laurie Webster, Maize McBrien, and Eduardo Carrera, pp. 207-220. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.
LeBlanc, Steven A.
2008 The Case for an Early Farmer Migration into the Greater American Southwest. In *Archaeology Without Borders: Contact, Commerce, and Change in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico*, edited by Laurie Webster, Maize McBrien, and Eduardo Carrera, pp. 107-142. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.
Lyons, Patrick D.
2004 Cliff Polychrome. *Kiva* 69(4): 361-400.
Lyons, Patrick D. and Jeffrey J. Clark
2008 Interaction, Enculturation, Social Distances, and Ancestral Pueblo Identity. In *Archaeology Without Borders: Contact, Commerce, and Change in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico*, edited by Laurie Webster, Maize McBrien, and Eduardo Carrera, pp. 185-207. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.
Lyons, Patrick D. and Alexander J. Lindsay Jr.
2006 Perforated Plates and the Salado Phenomenon. *Kiva* 72(1): 5-54.
Native Languages of the Americas
2015 Native American Languages. Electronic document, <http://www.native-languages.org/hair.htm>, accessed January 07, 2015.
Schollmeyer, Karen
2015 Preservation Archaeology at the Dinwiddie Site. Research Update for 2015.
Weigand, Phil C.
2008 Turquoise: Formal Economic Relationships between Mesoamerica and the North American Southwest. In *Archaeology Without Borders: Contact, Commerce, and Change in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico*, edited by Laurie Webster, Maize McBrien, and Eduardo Carrera, pp. 344-363. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.

Images Cited

Figure 1- <http://istatoolbox.com/cultural/culturearea.htm>
Figure 2- Preservation Archaeology at the Dinwiddie Site. Research Update for 2015. Matt Dent
Figure 3- http://www.viridulmuseum.nyu.edu/gallery/2/index.php?Articles/GSM/Manos_metates_NAVA_1413
Figure 4- <http://www.muhstet.com/Arts/Arden-Cook-Women499C4E83C40E411A/ArdenCook>
Figure 5- Preservation Archaeology at the Dinwiddie Site. Research Update for 2015
Figure 7- Jeffery Clark
Figure 8- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 9- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 10- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 11- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 12- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 13- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 14- Self, Dinwiddie Site (LA106003)
Figure 15- <http://turquoiseusmuseum.com/sitepostnet>



Archaeology Southwest



Artifacts from Dinwiddie Site (LA 106003) Cliff, NM

Ceramics

- Local Salado polychromes dominate assemblage, including Cliff White-on-red and Dinwiddie Polychrome
 - Salado iconography, Mogollon ceramic traditions
- Local Mimbres Phase II/III effigy fragment recovered
- Local Maverick Mountain Polychrome and perforated plates recovered
 - Some Kayenta immigrants present
- Imported Ramos Polychrome effigy fragment in Roomblock 1
 - Interaction with Casas Grandes
- Imported Jeddito Yellow Ware in Roomblock 2
 - Interaction with Hopi in northeastern Arizona



Figure 8. Mimbres Effigy sherd

Figure 9. Ramos effigy sherd



Figure 10. Roosevelt Red Ware sherd



Figure 11. Perforated plate fragment

Figure 12. Jeddito Yellow Ware sherds

Ground Stone Artifacts

- Axes reflect multiple enculturative traditions:
 - 3/4" groove axe technology from West Mexico enters southern US Southwest around AD 550
- Full groove axe in northern Southwest as early as AD 700
- Full groove axes outnumber 3/4 groove axes by 3:1 from the Mills' excavations in Roomblock 2
- Possible comals were recovered from the Mills' and our excavations in Roomblock 2
- A comal is a flat griddle with Mexican origins used to cook tortillas and other foods



Figure 13. Full-grooved axe



Figure 14. 3/4" Grooved Axe

(Schollmeyer 2015)(Adams 2002)

Minerals and Jewelry

- Turquoise tesserae found in Roomblock 1
 - Originally a Mesoamerican tradition
 - Suggest interaction with the transcontinental turquoise trade
- Shell Pendant found in Roomblock 2
 - Shaped in the form reminiscent of a Hopi maiden in a Squash Blossom hair style

(Weigand 2008)(Native-languages.org)



Figure 15. Turquoise stones

Conclusion

Ceramics representing local traditions as well as those from northern Mexico and northeastern Arizona, stone axe designs with styles from both the southern and northern Southwest, T-shaped doors and possible comals reflecting Mexican traditions, and turquoise tesserae similar to Mesoamerican styled jewelry provide evidence for a culturally diverse community at the Dinwiddie site. Dinwiddie Polychrome and Cliff White-on-red demonstrate a fusing together of local and non-local styles and technologies. By examining the Salado phenomenon through the lens of the Dinwiddie site, it becomes clear that the Salado was not a single, homogeneous culture, but included members of several cultures who participated in a common ideology associated with Salado polychrome iconography. Although Salado polychromes were by far the dominant painted ceramic ware, other decorated wares and types (e.g., Ramos, El Paso, Jeddito) suggest at least limited interaction with neighboring regions.

Our investigations of the Dinwiddie site show a constant movement of people and exchange of ideas within the Salado interaction sphere during the AD. 1300s and 1400s. Categorizing people into different ethnic groups is detrimental to understanding the inclusive Salado social identity.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who helped us make our project possible. First and foremost we want to acknowledge Archaeology Southwest and CEO William Doelle for allowing us to participate in the 2015 Mule Creek Field School. We would also like to thank the National Science Foundation (REU Grant No. 1359458) for allowing us to participate in this research project. Additionally, we would like to thank our field school instructors: Leslie Aragon, Allen Denoyer, Barry Price, Will Russell, Stacy Ryan, and Karen Schollmeyer. Finally, we would like to thank our fellow students at field school for participating in the project with us.