We know a lot about the Pueblo Indian cosmos from ethnographic fieldwork performed at the historical Pueblos over the past century. Pueblo cosmology (the way in which people order and structure the world around them) is based on the dual platform of corn agriculture and the quest for moisture. Archaeological evidence suggests that a similar sort of cosmos was guiding the lives of Pueblo farmers for thousands of years in the past. This worldview, which is expressed in architecture, pottery, and even the landscape, is found on Mimbres bowls, Chaco buildings and roads, and Hopi painted murals, suggesting a shared deep history. However, while it is clear that this cosmology originated deep in the past, archaeology shows that many of these traits changed through time.

Pueblo cosmology was altered most dramatically over the nearly four centuries just prior to Spanish contact (A.D. 1275-1600). Drought and other factors had caused Pueblo people, who traditionally lived widely across the Southwest, to begin to settle in fewer but larger villages in the Hopi, Zuni, and Rio Grande regions. Thousands of people from different backgrounds began to live together in large towns and were taxed with figuring out how to live together and even thrive under diverse religions and social orders. The Tewa Basin Archaeological Research Project (www.tbarp.org), directed by archaeologist Sam Duwe, attempts to understand how one modern Pueblo people, the Tewa of northern New Mexico, created their own unique answer to the cosmological problem of close quarters with new neighbors.

Our guest speaker this month is archaeologist Samuel Duwe, a graduate student in the School of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. Sam’s research interests include southwestern and eastern European archaeology. He received his B.A. from the University of Michigan and his M.A. from the University of Arizona where he wrote his thesis on pottery production in east-central Arizona. His dissertation work addresses the ancestral Tewa Pueblos of the northern Rio Grande region of New Mexico, specifically focusing on questions of religion and cosmology, identity, and history.

Please make your reservation today for dinner and the presentation at Mimi’s Café, 120 S. Wilmot Rd., Tucson (at Broadway Blvd.)

Those attending may select and purchase their own dinners from the restaurant’s general menu. Reservations are due by 3 p.m. Wednesday September 15. There is no entry fee but donations are requested to help cover the cost of dinner for our guest speakers and to benefit Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s educational efforts.

Contact Old Pueblo at 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org for reservations or more information.