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## HERE, NOW, AND ALWAYS

Voices of the First Peoples of the Southwest

Compiled and edited by Joan K. O'Donnell

Text by Carlotta Penny Bird, Santo Domingo Pueblo

Tony R. Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo

Anthony Dorame, Tesuque Pueblo

Gloria Emerson, Diné (Navajo)

Rex Lee Jim, Diné (Navajo)

Angelo Joaquin, Jr., Tohono O'odham (Pima)

Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma, Hopi

Michael Lacapa, Apache/Hopi/Tewa

Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo

Lillie Lane, Diné (Navajo)

Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo

Paula Rivera, Taos Pueblo

Luci Tapahonso, Diné (Navajo)

Veronica E. Velarde Tiller, Jicarilla Apache

With a Foreword by Rina Swentzell

Introduction by Bruce Bernstein

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I am here.

I am here, now.

I have been here, always.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo



*Here, Now, and Always*

is dedicated to

Edmund J. Ladd (1926–1999)

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Cochiti Pueblo, ca. 1950

## FOREWORD

It is a snowy January evening. The piñon trees, laden with white, are bending to touch the earth. No tracks yet in the fresh snow. Grasses, small bushes, rocks, and uneven surfaces hide under a smooth, glistening blanket of white. I breathe in deeply and feel the beauty of the place flow through me.

And, so, I think of how I need such moments to remind me of the sacred within and around me. On other evenings my spirit can blossom with the red clouds glowing in the setting sun. Our place, this Southwest, has no lack of the sublime. Native peoples have reveled in its profound intensity for centuries.

In these pages are words of Native peoples of the Southwest remembering the thoughts and perceptions of our ancestors in which the beauty of life and place is acknowledged. They talk about the emergence from the womb of the Earth Mother, moving from darkness into the light of the Father Sun. They talk about traveling and searching for the center place alongside lightning, sacred clouds, rainbows and water spiders. They remember that the center place is where prayers and songs of thankfulness for the mountains, the rain, the deer, and the clouds are given to the breath of the cosmos. They also remember that transformation is in our very next step, much as clouds transform before our eyes.

As clouds shift and seasons change, so do human thoughts and human-made processes. As Ed Ladd writes in this text, "There is a season for growth . . . a season for caring . . . a time for resting." The process of birthing, tending and nurturing the Here, Now and Always exhibition also came with intense moments of moving through exhilarating insights, depressing frustrations, and deepening friendships. For me, human relationships are the most difficult. As I lived through the conceptualization process of the exhibit with others, I had to remind myself that the struggle for balanced relationships among all aspects of life—mountains, plants, and animals, including other humans—is the central issue of life for my ancestral Pueblo people. This helped me understand that the process of creating the exhibit was like living everyday life with all its frustrations, angers, delights, and joys.

I relish the words included in this book. These words are like the snow covering the uneven ground, bringing unity, inspiration, and sublimity into our lives. They remind us of the creativity and beauty inherent in human thought and activity, which, in Pueblo terms, are extensions of the place wherein we dwell.

—Rina Swentzell, Santa Clara Pueblo

## INTRODUCTION

Museums in North America and Western Europe historically have presented the authoritative view of the “expert” outsider looking in and “explaining” Native histories and cultures, portraying Indian and other indigenous peoples as something out of the past and fixed in time. Today, museums are challenged to reconsider this approach. *Here, Now, and Always*, a book based on an exhibition at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, New Mexico, was conceived to redress the flawed perspective of the past by allowing the Native peoples of the Southwest to be accessible through their own words and viewpoints. We wanted to uncover existing stories rather than create new ones, to organize the book around Native worldviews and philosophies, and to demonstrate the active role of Native peoples in shaping their own cultures and lives.

We began planning *Here, Now, and Always* in 1989. The project was intended to help transform the new Indian Arts museum into both an active curatorial and exhibition space and a place of living peoples. Early in the planning process, the exhibit’s curatorial committee resolved not to structure the exhibit according to Western categories of time lines or tribes. As Ed Ladd joked, with a serious edge, “We didn’t want to put on display the corn, beans, and squash Indians. And no

flute music!” Instead, we decided to tell the complex stories of Native peoples’ lives and histories from a Native point of view, organized around Native principles and ideas.

This book features a selection of words of fourteen Native writers who were key contributors to the exhibition, which included more than two hundred individual voices in written text, audio, and video formats. In the exhibition, Native writers, artists, community activists, elders, scholars, and students from throughout the Southwest—Navajos (Diné), Utes, Apaches, Pueblos, Mojaves, Tohono O’odhams (Pimas), and others—relate different cultural traditions and personal experiences, together conveying the texture of real people’s lives. Their voices demonstrate persuasively that we can know and understand the past and present only through our individual or collective contemporary experiences. Using words from Native peoples of the present, the exhibition and this book illuminate the uses and meaning of ancestral objects, creating the sense of continuity inherent in contemporary Native cultures.

A museum exhibition or a book can never fully stand in for Indian people or communities but we hope this text and its accompanying images will promote understanding of the multilayered Native worldview, rejecting the anthropological overlay familiar to the non-

Native world. The book gives equal weight to diverse voices and objects that tell stories—not concise, “scientific” tales but frameworks for understanding behaviors and worldviews.

Native peoples of the Southwest have their own unique and enduring concept of the world. At a ceremonial dance today in any one of the pueblos, you will see people dancing the Creation at the very spot of Creation, the Emergence Place. The dance is not a symbolic re-creation of that historical or mythological moment but rather an act of Creation itself, ongoing, in which the people of today, along with today’s animals and elements and landforms, all participate. People are dancing on the same ground where they have danced for a thousand years or more, dressed as they have been dressed since at least the fourteenth century but with today’s Nikes.

This sense of the continuity of tradition, and the knowledge that tradition also involves change, is at the core of *Here, Now, and Always*. Native people at any one moment stand *inside* their history, and that history is continuous because the Creation is ongoing. Given this, it is unremarkable, not dissonant, for an Indian elder to speak English or Tewa, Spanish or Navajo, for an Indian teenager to dance the Corn Dance and to drink Coca-Cola, for an Indian woman to weave a blanket of handspun wools and to sell it through her website on the Internet.

The enduring cultures of southwestern Indian peoples are worth celebrating for their strength and survival

in the face of continuing adversity. Foreign forms of education, religion, food, housing, transportation, entertainment, clothing, and disease have had a profound impact on Native peoples, becoming part of their ethos. *Here, Now, and Always* is designed to convey something of the experiences that Native peoples of the Southwest have had over the four hundred years since the Spanish conquest, and over the two millennia preceding the arrival of Europeans.

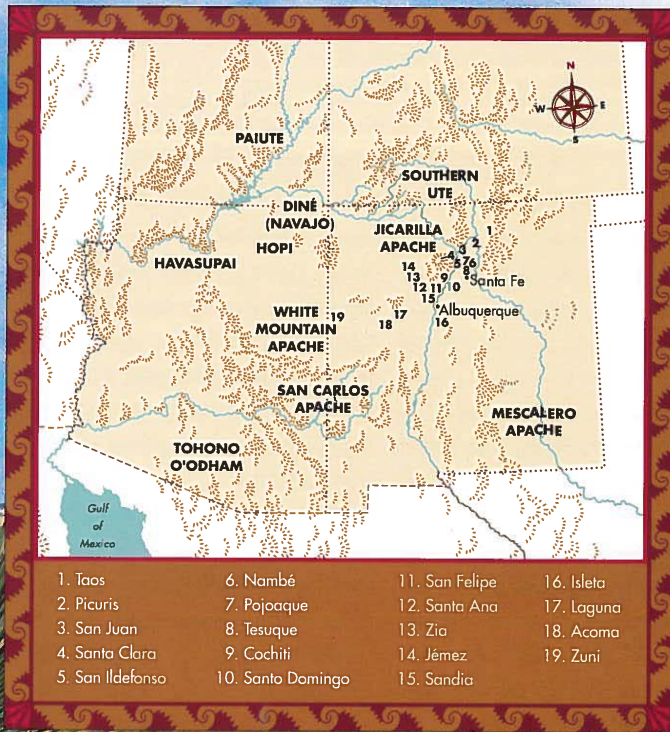
The “Earth Words” that follow, created by Ed Ladd and Luci Tapahonso, are thematic threads that lead the reader through a cultural landscape, breathing life from the Creation into the objects illustrated here, carrying us from the distant mythological past across space and time to today.

The parting message of *Here, Now, and Always* is one of survival. Ed Ladd, who selected the title for the exhibit, wished to convey to visitors that Native peoples of the Southwest did not come here from somewhere else but have been here since the beginning. To hear and to read the words of the first peoples of the Southwest arouses a stirring and profound understanding about their histories and cultures.

Bruce Bernstein,  
Assistant Director for Cultural Resources,  
National Museum of the American Indian



## PART I: ANCESTORS



Map: Peoples of the greater Southwest region.  
Background: The llanos extending to the Animas Range,  
New Mexico.

In the beginning,  
The earth was soft,  
There were no humans,  
There was no laughter.  
Born of Mother Earth  
And Father Sun,  
Are the humans.  
It is the Word  
Of the beginning.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo



Peoples of the Southwest trace their origins to the Earth Mother. Pueblos, Navajos (Diné), Apaches, Utes, Paiutes, Tohono O'odhams, and the other Native peoples of the region are inextricably linked to the land in which they live. Alive with sacred places and sacred stories, the land represents the past and future of the tribes. It is central to all oral histories, to family ties, to the sources of plants and animals and the uses of minerals, to the shape of architecture and the structure of communities. It is the heart of ceremony and religion. It is where an understanding of the peoples of the Southwest must begin. The land itself is the original ancestor.

The relationship of people to land is not only symbolic. It is tangible in daily life, as vital today as it was two thousand years ago. For the archaeologist, too, the land yields information critical to understanding how earlier

people lived. Articles fashioned from local materials—clays, fibers, animal skins, and stones—provide clues to the lifeways of the ancient indigenous peoples of each region, to how they used the resources of and adapted to their environment. It is here, among the ancestors, that we begin to recognize the connections between the Southwest and the rest of North and Central America. These links can be seen in the horned serpent imagery found in Mesoamerican temples, in two-thousand-year-old rock art in the mountains of Chihuahua, and on the pottery made by twenty-first-century residents of the pueblo of San Ildefonso. They are apparent in the Southern Plains—style beaded deerskin dress worn by a Mescalero Apache girl in southern New Mexico. Vividly, the words of today's Native peoples as they reflect on their heritage open the door to the ancient worlds and



Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Culture National Historic Park, New Mexico



Wupatki Pueblo, Wupatki National Monument, Arizona.

lasting connections of the American Southwest.

The peoples' ancestral homelands follow the great river courses: the Salt and the Gila, the Rio Grande, the San Juan and Colorado rivers. These rivers trace paths through several different geographic areas—high and low desert, basin-and-range, mountain and riverine—and the environment of each has influenced the adaptations of the people who live there. In southeastern Arizona, the first sedentary villages of the region were built by the ancient Hohokam and Salado cultures. They constructed an extensive and sophisticated net-

work of irrigation canals, walled adobe villages, and impressive ceremonial ballcourts. Their descendants, the Tohono and Akimel O'odhams, still harvest the fruit of the Saguaro cactus and grow the tepary beans their ancestors cultivated some two thousand years ago.

Then, as now, the region was a corridor for travel and trade, linking greater Mesoamerica, California, the desert West, and the greater Southwest.

The greater Southwest, encompassing the Great Plains to the east, the Great Basin to the north,

Coiled Mogollon storage basket from New Mexico's Guadalupe Mountains, ca. 1200–1425.







Wupatki Pueblo

and extending west to California, was first peopled by Paleo-Indian big-game hunters who used large Clovis points and atlatls to hunt mastodons and bison and left their record in caches of blades and chert nodules. The Rio Grande region was an exception to the hunting-gathering that characterized the regions around it with its early commitment to farming. The corridor was a life-line for cultural exchange, giving rise to the community of Paquimé (Casas Grandes) in northern Chihuahua around A.D. 1200, and such valuables as copper bells, marine shells, and parrots passed this way, along with the ideas and beliefs of cultures far to the south. The Zuni people today tell of how, in ancient times, their relatives traveled here from the north to found Paquimé.

The Mogollon Highlands, encompassing a large portion of southwest New Mexico, southeastern Arizona, and north-

ern Mexico, is an area rich in natural resources and the location of the headwaters of the Salt and Gila Rivers. Characterized by wooded mountains and small, lush stream valleys, the highlands were the site of important indigenous developments in hunting and gathering, irrigation farming, and pottery. The renowned black-and-white Mimbres pottery was made here, as were textiles and sandals created from yucca fibers.

North of the Mogollon lies the Four Corners region conjoining Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. This is the heart of the Colorado Plateau, a geologically diverse area that features of snowcapped San Juan Mountains and its progeny, the San Juan River at its northern reach and, to the south, the dry and formidable San Juan Basin with Chaco Canyon at its center. The arid canyon was home to the extraordinary Chaco phenomenon (ca. A.D.

**The Rio Grande at Kuaua, Coronado State Monument, New Mexico.**  
**Inset: Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Culture National Historic Park.**

800-1130), the florescence of a sedentary ancestral Pueblo culture whose elaborations included monumental multi-story masonry architecture, exceptional black-and-white pottery, and a far-reaching trade system evidenced in rich caches of turquoise beads and imported feather and shell artifacts that continue to be a source of fascination to archaeologists and of pride to the Pueblo people who recognize their ancestry at Chaco. More recently the area has been home to the onenomadic Navajos, whose oral history animates the land with the sacred beings who created and settled it.

North of the San Juan Basin lay the San Juan Uplands, a region of green mesas, abundant springs, and perennial streams. With the collapse of the Chaco culture in the twelfth century, Chaco people migrated outward to the region's periphery. To the north the results included the architecturally grand cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde (A.D. 1200-1300). There, the kiva, a key architectural and ceremonial feature of today's pueblos, was developed. The pottery making that flourished here

during the relative brevity of its occupation continues among the Pueblos today, whose origin and clan stories are embedded in the local landscape and in the adjoining Upper Rio Grande area.

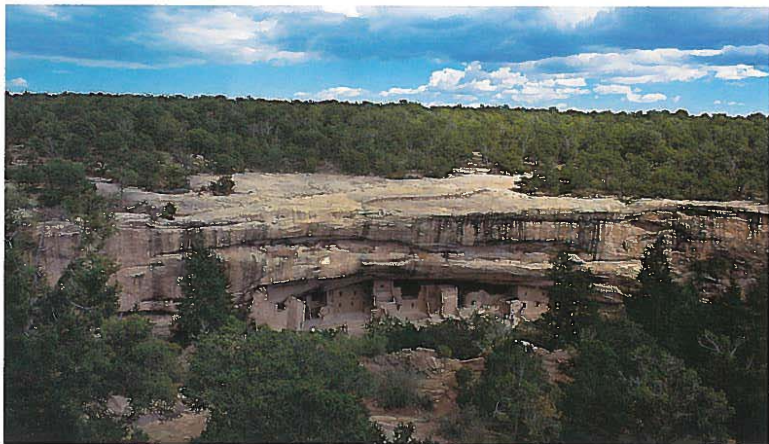
The Upper Rio Grande Valley, home to the modern Pueblo people, is the longstanding connection between the Southwest and the Great Plains to the east. With its varied geography, it was simultaneously home to early sedentary farmers and nomadic hunter-gatherers and a corridor along which great population movements took place over vast stretches of time. Since the fourteenth century, Pueblo Indians have occupied villages along the great river. Apache settlements nestle nearby, and large trade fairs attract Native neighbors from the Plains. The stories told here today invoke the legacy of the past.

"Listen carefully. Let the stories carry you to the center created by each Native community. Here, at the intersection of sky and earth, you will find the Southwest's people (Sarah Schlanger)."





## ORIGINS

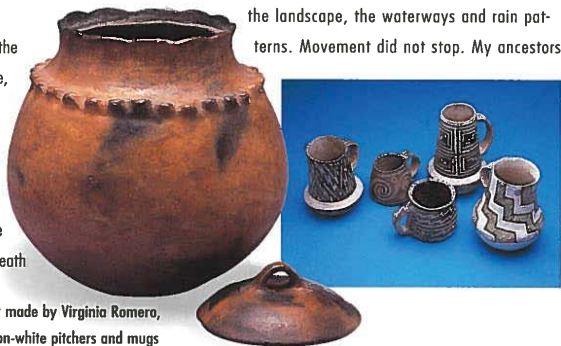


Spruce Tree House cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, Colorado.

**P**ueblo people believe that our origins are within Earth Mother. We are literally born of the earth and can mark the places in the land from which we came. These places are generally watery places, springs or lakes. They are also places that connect us to the other levels of existence. Our origins are where we began and where we return. We were born of the mother and return into the earth upon death.

All existence swirls around the center. The houses of the people, the hills and mountains, are in concentric circles around the center place. The sky and earth define the sphere within which the center is crucial to the orientation of the whole. The breath

Left: Micaceous lidded cooking pot made by Virginia Romero, Taos Pueblo, 1950s. Right: Black-on-white pitchers and mugs from the Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde areas, ca. 1000–1300.



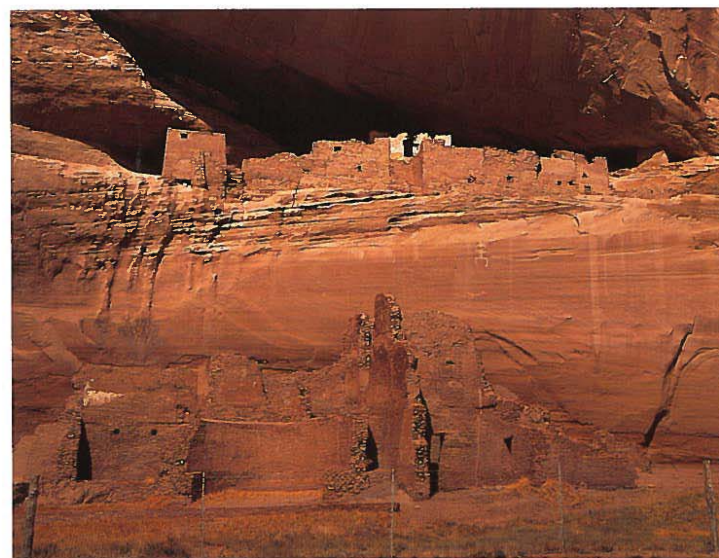
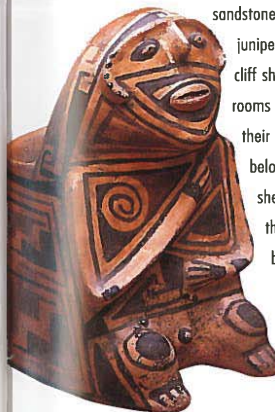
of the universe passes through this center place, as did our people when they emerged into this level of life.

I am happiest when I revisit the ruins of my Pueblo ancestors and imagine the struggles and joys of their lives in the many places that they lived. Chama, Galisteo, and the Northern Rio Grande region were home to my ancestors. They adapted to the landscape, the waterways and rain patterns. Movement did not stop. My ancestors

continued to move about from place to place acquiring an intimate knowledge of the hills and valleys of this gentle, yet harsh, land.

Mesa Verde is an exquisitely beautiful place. Our ancestors lived in sandstone cliff shelters located high in the piñon- and juniper-studded canyons of the region. Within the cliff shelters, the ancestors built houses and storage rooms of readily available sandstone. They planted their fields on the tops of the mesas and down below in the canyon areas. From their magnificent shelters, they spoke to the clouds and waited for the rains to bring water for them and their corn, bean, and squash plants.

—Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo



Top: Chihuahuah polychrome effigy pot from Casas Grandes (Paquimé), ca. 1200–1425.

Bottom: White House Ruin at Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona.

Together we traveled,  
in search of the center place.  
In numbers we grew.  
The center place had not been found.  
The gods divided the people.  
Some traveled north,  
to the land of winter.  
Some to traveled south,  
to the land of summer.  
We are the people.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo





Rock art at Village of the Great Kivas, New Mexico.

*We, the Zuni, traveled as a single family from the place of the beginning to search for our center place.*

In time, we increased in numbers, so the gods separated and divided the family. There is a place in present-day central Arizona called "The Place Where the People Divided." Some traveled to the east and north to the great river and beyond. Others traveled south beyond the mountains of perpetual snow. Still others went to the land of the macaw, which is also known as the land of eternal summer. They are our relatives. Without a doubt, some of our relatives who traveled south were the people who built and occupied Paquimé.

In the words of our elders, our universe that we share with the spirit beings extends to the four corners of the world and to the four encircling oceans. It extends from the mist-enshrouded and moss-draped mountains to the springs and rivers of the valleys. Within these mystical boundaries is the "Place of the Beginning." It is in the Grand Canyon near a place called "Ribbon Falls." The route of travel, east and northward, is marked by many named places now in ruins, such as Walnut Canyon, Winona, Sunset Crater, Canyon Diablo, White House, Aztec, Village of the Great Kivas, and, finally, the Center Place, modern-day Zuni Pueblo.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo

Archaeologists, geologists, ethnohistorians, and other researchers are collecting fascinating evidence from the middle Colorado and Little Colorado river areas regarding the human evolutionary history of North America. This region is important to the Hopi people, for it is the heartland of our aboriginal lands. Among the footprints are ancestral Hopi villages, burial sites, sacred trails and springs, petroglyphs, pictographs, and sacred sites. In my visits to the numerous archaeological sites in this area, I have observed evidence of villages once occupied by different Hopi clans. I believe it is accurate to say that our history goes back at least ten thousand years.

The Hopis call Pueblo Bonito "The Place Beyond the Horizon." In our Hopi migration stories, Pueblo Bonito and other villages in the valley were resting places for many clans prior to their final journey to the mesas. Clans that have ancestral ties to the region include the Parrot, *Katsina*, Sparrow-Hawk, Squash, Crane, Bow, Sand, Lizard, and Eagle. When I visit the area, I feel its mystery and significance. Pueblo people still pay spiritual homage to this "footprint," for no archaeological site is ever considered abandoned. Pueblo Bonito is still a living legacy to us and to other Pueblo people.

Why is the Grand Canyon important to Hopi people? The answer is simple: We are the canyon. The Grand Canyon is both the genesis and the final destination of our people. It is our beginning because our emergence to the Fourth Way of Life occurred there. It is our destination because when a Hopi completes the human life cycle, the canyon becomes his or her final spiritual home. We are the canyon.

The *Katsina* represent a set of beliefs centered around the environment and the relationship between man and nature. This word is of Hopi origin and literally translates to "life," but it reflects a deeper philosophy. In clan traditions, these spirit beings helped the Hopi survive during the migration period. Today, *Katsina* belief is expressed in different ways. *Katsina* spirit beings still visit the pueblos and hold dances. They act as messengers of prayer to all the forces of nature and the universal environment.

—Leigh J. Kuwanwiswma, Hopi



Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon.



Gabernador Knob sits at the center of Diné'tah (Navajoland). On top of this sacred mountain, we are centered in the universe and balanced in life. Changing Woman, the Navajo goddess, was born here. The idea of embracing and mastering change began on top of this mountain. This is our place of origin. We came together here and are still in the process of becoming a people. Before, as hunters and gatherers, we lived in instability and were unorganized. At Diné'tah we acquired a sense of purpose and a reason for being. We learned ceremonial, economic and social systems that allowed us to prosper as a people, to endure hardships and always come out the winner. Diné'tah will always be the sacred center for us.

— Rex Lee Jim, Diné



Creation of North Sacred Mountain, by Harrison Begay, Navajo, 1957.

The Holy People lived here in the beginning.  
They built the first "hooghan," made the first weapons,  
sang the first songs, and the first prayers.  
Diné language, ceremonies,  
history, and beliefs began here.  
This is where we began.

— Luci Tapahonso, Diné

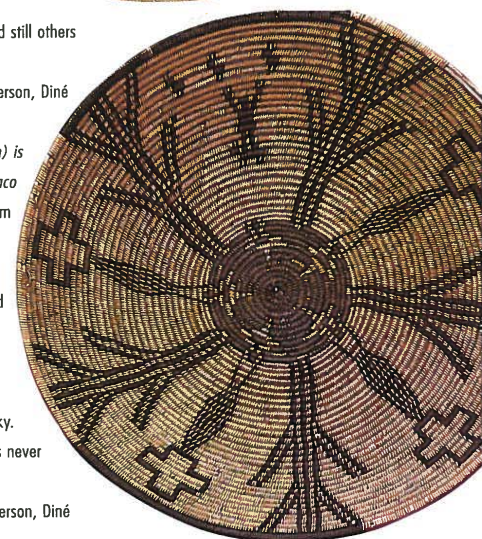
Mythology basket made by Sally Black, Navajo, 1988.  
Western White Mountain

Clan origin stories are part of a Navajo woman's social bundle. 'Asdzag Nádleehí (Changing Woman) was lonely, so she created four or five clans. She set them on western shores and directed them homeward with special powers. As the ancestors traveled, they took on names inspired by accidents. One ancestor struck bitter water, hence the Tódi ch'íinii (Bitterwater) clan was born. Battling many elements, they wearily traveled about, wanting to retrace their steps. 'Asdzag Nádleehí disapproved and conferred with the deities to perform a ritual. Diyin Dine'é did as instructed but lost a cane. 'Asdzag Nádleehí made them repeat the ritual by expanding a set of prayers. Other clans were added, naming themselves for a sacred mark or cosmic event, and still others were adopted from other tribes.

— Gloria Emerson, Diné

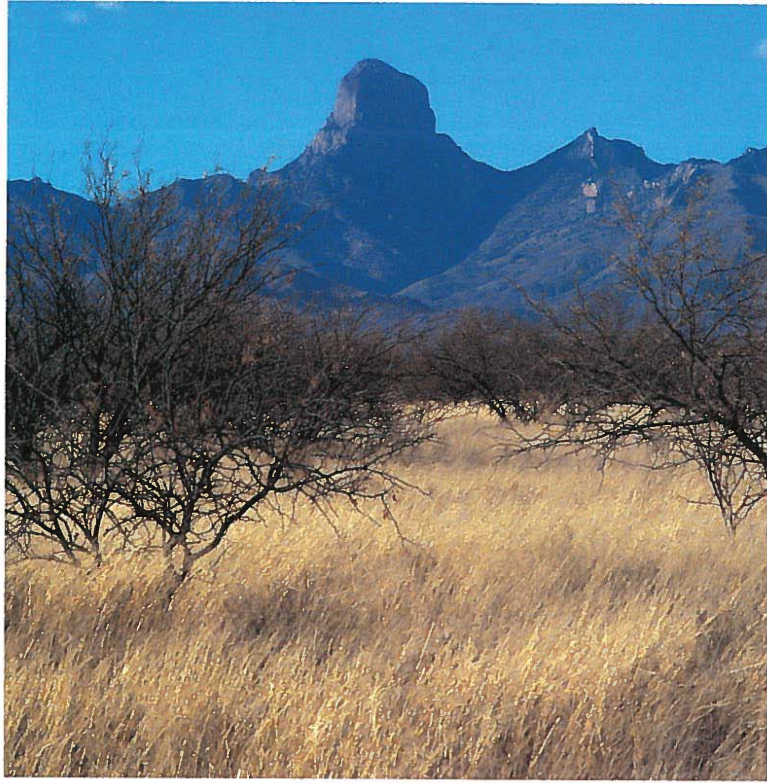
The earliest memory we have of Tsébiyahanií'áhi (Chaco Canyon) is in this condensed story: Náá'íilbìíhí (Gambler) descended into Chaco Canyon. He tricked the Pueblo people into gambling and won them and their property. The Navajo came to gamble, and they, too, lost. Náá'íilbìíhí wanted more, so he ordered his slaves to build a great village, but the slaves aligned with Jaa'bání, Tl'úshitsoh, and Na'azisí (Gopher Bat, Great Snake, and Gopher). Níich'í Dine'é diverted Náá'íilbìíhí's attention by acting indifferent to his stakes until Náá'íilbìíhí offered himself. Níich'í Dine'é won, and all were freed. He placed Náá'íilbìíhí on an arrow and shot him into the sky. Náá'íilbìíhí mumbled a strange language as he ascended and was never seen in this form again.

— Gloria Emerson, Diné



Western White Mountain Apache basketry bowl with human, animal, and bird figures, ca. 1930.





The center of the Tohono O'odham universe, Baboquivari Peak in Arizona.

**T**he Hohokam, "Those who are gone," gave present-day desert dwellers in southern Arizona many gifts, including the tepary, a cultivated bean. The desert people, the O'odham, continue the farming legacy begun by the Hohokam by growing tepary beans, cotton, corn, and other arid-land crops. This knowledge of traditional farming practices, crops and seeds helped and continues to help the O'odham survive as a unique group.

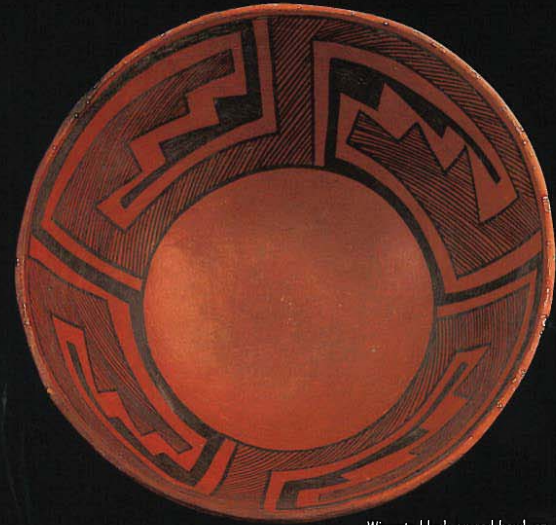
"Baboquivari Peak is the center of the universe." From there, *l'itai*, or Elder Brother, watches out over the O'odham, the people of southern Arizona. Our elders advise us to make the trip to *l'itai's* home at least four times in our lifetime, with gifts of thanks for our safety. We also renew our commitment to live as respectful community members. The Baboquivari mountain range provides rain runoff for the crops of the few traditional farmers left today. In our pilgrimages, we ask Elder Brother for this runoff to irrigate our crops. Despite the decline in farming, many tribal members still make the pilgrimage to the mountain to pay respect to *l'itai*.

—Angelo Joaquin, Jr., Tohono O'odham

## THE ELEMENTS

**P**ueblo people believe that clay has life. A sacred relationship between the potter and the clay begins when the clay is taken from the earth. Before removing the clay, the potter prays and asks *Nung-ochu-quiyo* (Earth Clay Old Lady) to be considerate of the needs of her family. "Just as you will eat us, you will feed us and clothe us, so please do not hide."

—Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo



Wingate black-on-red bowl, ca. 1050-1200.

**W**e Navajo have stories about the sacredness of water. *Asdzqa Nádleehí* gave our clan ancestors *gish* (canes). They used *gish* to strike water three times, drawing bitter, muddy, and clear water with each strike of a cane. We now have the Bitter Water, Muddy Water, and Clear Water clans. Water is very important. My family lives by *Tooh* (the San Juan River), where, like the earliest farmers, we still grow melons and corn. At eighty-four, my father still irrigates. My mother says, "He is the only one I know who can guide water up slopes. It's because he loves water."

—Gloria Emerson, Diné



Legends say that Salt Woman lived near one of the Zuni villages in ancient times. The people did not appreciate her. They polluted her home, so, she moved south, where she makes her home today near Fence Lake. Plants will not grow along the path where she walked to her new home. This may be part of an early salt-gathering trail system that originated in the San Juan Basin (Chaco Canyon) and led to the salt lake. Salt gathering was an annual male religious pilgrimage. All tribes were allowed to gather salt in peace. It was one of those unwritten laws of protection observed by all tribes.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo

Hopi people pay respect to Salt Woman. Difficult for our ancestors to obtain, salt was either secured through trade or mining. When the Hopi found a salt deposit, the location became a highly respected religious site. Hopis today still engage in ceremonial pilgrimages to gather salt. When the men bring the salt to the village, the women ritually “accept” it from the men. Women then become the caretakers and monitor the proper use of the salt for both secular and ceremonial purposes. They also decide on the distribution of the salt within the community. We also trade for salt with the Zuni people, who gather it from the salt lake located on their reservation.

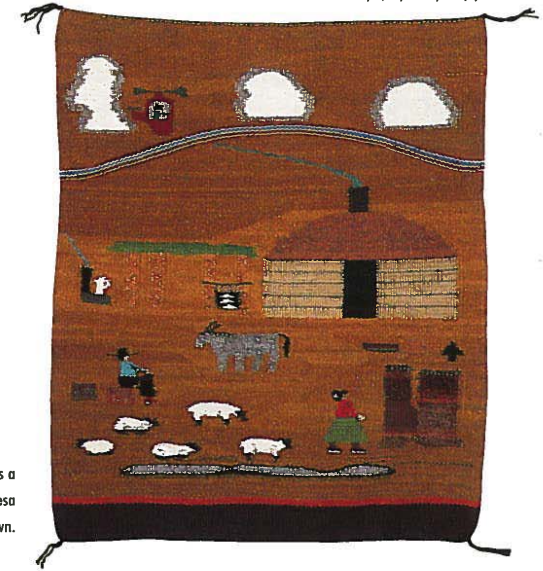
—Leigh J. Kuwanwiswima, Hopi

Zuni Salt Lake, home of Salt Woman.



These pipes, made of reed and clay, date to Ancestral Pueblo through early historic times, indicating the longevity of tobacco use in the Native American Southwest.

This pictorial rug, ca. 1970, shows a Navajo domestic scene set in a mesa landscape. Artist unknown.



Salt is an important element of our daily lives. We Hopi use it not only for meals but also in our rituals and ceremonies, and it is a part of our medicine. As my father and his fathers before him, I go to Zuni for salt. At a time before the white man came to this land, the Hopi men would be charged with the task of traveling to Zuni, New Mexico, for salt. The journey to Zuni provided the salt needed for daily living, but it also gave many different tribes a chance to exchange ideas, pottery, basketry, clothing, language, and news. Today, I still go to Zuni for salt.

—Michael Lacapa, Apache/Hopi/Tewa

Indian tobacco, wild tobacco or coyote tobacco, is sacred. Traditionally, it was never smoked for pleasure or used as a medium of exchange. The smoke from wild tobacco plants, which grow in low, moist areas, symbolizes purity and clouds that bring rain to the land. Both leaves and flowers are collected and dried for use. The dry leaves are rolled into cornhusk cigarettes. During the winter and summer solstice blessing ceremonies, religious elders declare their respect to the gods and peace for each other by exchanging the tobacco and blowing tobacco smoke in the six directions. Our ancestors used small cone-shaped clay pipes called “cloud blowers,” and these have been recovered archaeologically from early Pueblo sites in the Southwest.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo



**W**e Navajo love our animals, so they appear in our sacred stories and in our livestock prayers. Historian Ethel Lou Yazzie says the Sun gave obsidian, turquoise, abalone, and white shell horses from the east; elk, antelope, porcupine, deer, and rabbits from the south; and plants and birds from the north.

Once, my *shiná yázhí* (aunts) worried about the sheep because they acted like deer, "jumping when they were scared." They hired a medicine man, who ordered them to go to *oo'lii* to look for herbs. My younger, seventy-three-year-old aunt drove up some steep hills with no roads. My older aunt was afraid to look out the window. Once my aunts gathered the herbs, they returned to the corral and sang for the sheep. The animals got well.

— Gloria Emerson, Diné

**M**y elderly aunts know stories about plants. Here is my adaptation.

*Atsé Hastiin* (First Man) ordered animals to take care of themselves so they sowed a variety of plants. *Chaa'* (Beaver) planted *T'isbā'* (aspen). *Biih* (Deer) planted *Nabiih*. *Hazéi* (Squirrels) planted *Gad* (or *Hazeitsah*). Other squirrels planted spruce, piñon, and berry bushes. *Chaldichízhí Hastiin* (Old Toad Men) planted *Tsa'aa*. *Na'azísi* (Gopher) planted *Da woozh* (wild berry) and wild potatoes.

Other animals planted many plants. *Shiná Yázhí* Martha says, "Plants have families like us, mothers, fathers, children. Here are *Tsin Dine'é* (Tree People), there, *T'ah Dine'é* (Grass People). Plants feed, heal, give colors, so say 'thanks.' Put pollen there for them."

— Gloria Emerson, Diné

**T**urquoise is venerated by Native Americans for its beauty and is used as gifts for the spirits. It is also a measure of personal wealth and is valuable for trade and barter. Many generations sought turquoise from the mines at Cerrillos, New Mexico. They also went searching beyond the great river and to the south, beyond the mountains of perpetual snow near the land of little rain. Raw, uncut, unpolished stones called nodules were brought back and skilled men did the finishing work. Chips and pieces left over from bead making were carefully saved to become special gifts to the gods. Turquoise collecting trips were infrequent due to the distance and other travel hardships. It was a male religious pilgrimage.

— Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo

**M**inerals are for prayer, ceremony, dry painting, cleansing wool, and dye pigments. I think every Navajo carries the four sacred minerals. It's like carrying around our own miniature sacred mountains. Daily we pray and celebrate living within the circle of the grandfather mountains. Each mountain carries precious knowledge. Each is symbolized by certain birds, insects, trees, plants, songs, and prayers. Try to remember this when you think you might want to bulldoze these mountains. Let the sacred remain.

— Gloria Emerson, Diné

Background: Turquoise from Ancestral Pueblo times: Rough chunks, chips, flakes, and pendant fragments from the Pindi Pueblo excavations (ca. 1150-1300), a drilled pendant from Unshagi (ca. 1350-1550), and cylindrical beads.

## PART II: CYCLES



*Santa Clara Corn Dance*, by Pablita Velarde (Tse-Tsan), Santa Clara Pueblo, 1940.

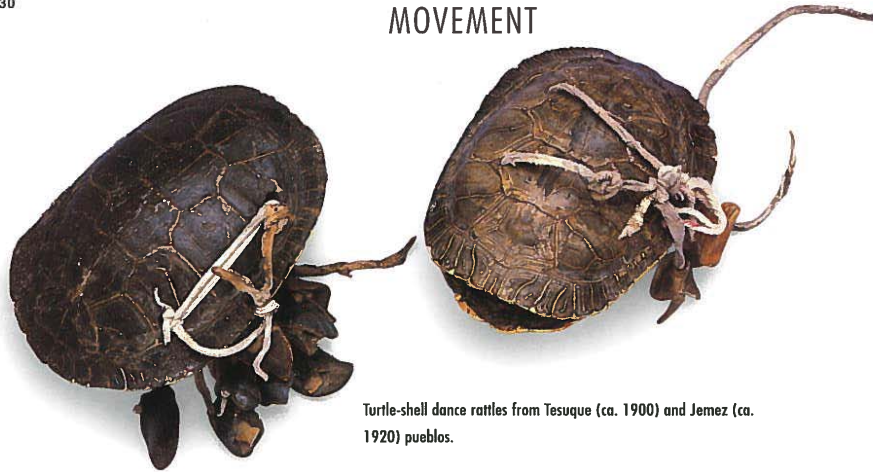
**N**ative life is measured not in years or decades or centuries but in the cycles of the seasons, of birth and death, of coming of age and marriage, of the ceremonial round and the subsistence activities that accompany these intervals. The measure is rhythmic and recurrent and it acknowledges the essential complementarity of opposites: past and present, youth and age, male and female. As Tessie Naranjo says, "Little focus is placed on the future. There is primarily the past, what we have done; and the present, where we are now."

From childhood through adulthood, traditional gender roles, community obligations, and ceremonial responsibilities inform daily Native life. Elements of contemporary

American life inform that life as well, and a Pueblo or Apache child today occupies a world of video games and Barbie dolls that are as familiar as traditional dance costumes and cradleboards. An adult Navajo male will wear Wrangler jeans, roper boots, and a western-style shirt to a traditional "sing" conducted by an elder medicine man. An adult Tohono O'odham woman with a professional job in a downtown Tucson office building still plays the sacred female game of shinney—much like field hockey, but using as a ball a small leather pouch filled with seed. As the women bat the seed pouch with sticks they perform a sacred fertile act, a way to keep the world fruitful and to make crops grow and ensure the people's health.



## MOVEMENT



Turtle-shell dance rattles from Tesuque (ca. 1900) and Jemez (ca. 1920) pueblos.

Cycles are circles that travel in straight lines. The seasons come in cycles, yet each season marks the passage of another year. We receive our names, plant, harvest, marry, dance, sing, and are buried in concert with the cycles. We have danced the corn dance for hundreds of years. I am now beyond dancing, for the knee aches and the body tires much too quickly. But some things do not appear to change. I see my children dancing in the same way that I once danced. The young men still wrinkle their noses against the swamplike smell of the mud being plastered on chilled skin. And the pleasing fragrance of fresh evergreen branches still fills the kiva. My grandfather fixed the turtle and the rattle. Still good to this day, they are now part of my son's life. And we are linked by the song, for his song is now ours. Now I am part of the singers, and that is my role. Someday, my son will no longer dance and will join the singers. And we will mark the time. All people live within cycles, and in that way we are alike. In that way, we also are different.

—Anthony Dorame, Tesuque Pueblo

**M**ovement is life. Without movement, change, and transformation, there would be no life or death. Movement is seen everywhere. The clouds rise out of the mountains and move across the sky, forming, shifting, and disappearing. The clouds become the model for the way people need to move through life. And, certainly, movement was characteristic of the ancestors, who moved across the land like the clouds across the sky.

—Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo

I belong to the Hopi Greasewood clan. Clan history contains the religious philosophy of the culture. Today, there are approximately thirty-four Hopi clans, compared to the sixty or more that once existed. Our clan traditions tell us about a spiritual covenant between the guardian deity of the Hopi Fourth Way of life and the Hopi people. This covenant required all Hopi clans to embark on migrations to place our "footprints" on the earth. Upon return to one of the mother villages, the clans that fulfilled this obligation earned the honor of "earth stewards." Among the migration footprints are ancestral villages, burial grounds, pottery sherds, petroglyphs, pictographs, trail markers, trails and springs, agricultural areas and sacred landscapes.

—Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma, Hopi

We get a hint of the Twins' journeys during certain chants. There's the story of how 'Asdzqa Nádleehí sent the clans back to Navajoland on a cosmic transit system. No buses for them! We split from the other, the Chishi (Chiricahua) to the south, Naashgali Diné (Mescaleros) to the west, and Beehai (Jicarilla) to the north. For a while, we farmed at Tsénaajiin (Cabezon Peak) before moving on. The best story comes from this Ts'éNaajiin, who sometimes talks about an ancestor of his who was also a medicine man. His ancestor carried a big crystal in his jish that guided the early people away from danger when

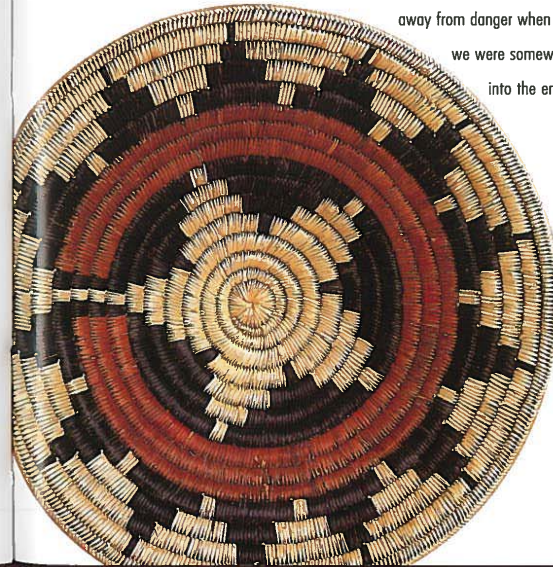
we were somewhere in the east. The crystal guided us into the embrace of our land.

—Gloria Emerson, Diné



We are born of mother's clan.  
We are children of father's clan.  
We are presented to Sun Father  
and named by father's sister  
on the fourth day of our life.  
Father's sister and mother's brother  
will be there for your transition  
from child to adult.  
When the "end of your road you reach,"  
father's clan sisters prepare you  
to return to the womb of Mother Earth.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo



Top: Ancestral Pueblo sandals woven of yucca and leather, dating to between A.D. 1 and 700.  
Left: Traditional Navajo wedding basket made by Sandra Black, 1983.



**W**e Navajos are taught that movement follows the sun. When you go into a hogan (a traditional Navajo dwelling), you enter with the sun. This changes if the *Hataalii* (medicine man) ordains another pattern. When we pray, we name the grandfather mountains in order, starting with *Dzil Sisaajini*. And we begin with our foot, closest to *Nahasdzaan* (Earth), moving upwards to our head and the sky. We think of bipolar dynamism. Male and female. Two halves of our body, the halves of the hogan, female and male rain, and so forth. Up is for growth, down is for rainfall. In creation stories, we think upward, from first to glittering world. And when we are praying, we think of all these directions, up and down, under, over, all around us.

—Gloria Emerson, Diné

**N**avajo oral traditions state that there were four original clans, including *Tádi ch'íinii* (Bitterwater), *Kinyaa'aanii* (Towering House), *Hasht'ishnii* (Mud), and *Hanágháanii* (Walks Around). These clans are associated with places in *Diné'tah* (Navajoland). Other clans came with Puebloan peoples who joined the Navajo people because of the marauding Spaniards. The Utes, Zunis, Hopis and Spanish are represented by their own clans. Navajo people joined and intermarried with other groups as well. The Navajo tribe is currently made up of over one hundred clans. It recognizes that it is a conglomeration of many Southwestern tribes. Change is in all societies, and the Navajo people have always embraced change—and this is evident in their population.

—Lillie Lane, Diné

**T**ime is tied to the cycles of nature. The sun rises, moves across the sky, and sets to mark a time of daily living. The sun in its larger cycle gives us seasons as its arc of movement progresses in the sky. And seasons determine community activities such as planting, harvesting and resting. This overall cycle of seasons places a focus on recurrent events such as winter, summer, and their associated activities of hunting or planting. Little focus is placed on the future. There is primarily the past, what we have done; and the present, where we are now and how we are living our lives at the moment.

—Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo

The beginning was mist.  
The first Holy Ones talked and  
sang as always.  
They created light, night, and day.  
They sang into place the  
mountains, the rivers,  
plants and animals.  
They sang us into life.

—Luci Tapahonso, Diné

**S**ome may think Navajo time notions are mythic. We believe they predicted today's acceleration of time-space. In one example, *'Asdzq Nádleehí* (Changing Woman) creates the clan ancestors and sends them homeward. They traveled here in a blink; and upon arrival they returned to normal human time. Others say they traveled slowly from the Pacific. Time is now carved into twelve months, four seasons and seven-day weeks. *Ghaqjil'* (October) is the backbone of the calendar year by virtue of being both in front of winter and in back of summer. Some organize the seasons into two main branches, *Shi* (summer) and *Hai* (winter) with four secondary seasons.

—Gloria Emerson, Diné

## SUMMER

**I**n the eyes of the Great Spirit, all life is to be honored and celebrated.

Thus, Apache People honor and celebrate womanhood  
in a special ceremony called the puberty feast.

Apache women are honored because,

in the equation of life-giving, they are equal.

Echoes of happiness rang throughout the universe,

when male first met female

and life began.

It was deemed that one cannot be without the other;

Human life is impossible

without both man and woman.

An Apache girl is honored as she begins her life journey,

giving birth, nurturing mankind through childhood,

keeping sacred her vows

to honor and celebrate life in all its ways,

during all its cycles, and for all time.

—Veronica E. Velarde Tiller, Jicarilla Apache

Mildred Lewis's basket features the popular "Man in the Maze" design, Tohono O'odham, 1999.





In a ritual of passage, O'odham boys ran over one hundred miles from the desert to present-day Puerto Peñasco on the coast of the Gulf of California. They were accompanied by O'odham men, who would set up campsites for the runners. The boys would collect salt on the beach for their village. The area just south of the U.S.–Mexico border is sacred, and the old trails through the volcanic rock in the Pinacate region are still visible. I am saddened that nothing has taken the place of this transition from boyhood to manhood.

—Angelo Joaquin, Jr., Tohono O'odham

An Indian Agent wrote in his report during the 1880s, "Place the same number of Whites on a barren, sandy desert such as they (the O'odham) live on and tell them to subsist there; the probability is that in two years they would become extinct." Traditional knowledge enables us to live within this arid land. The rebirth of the tohono (desert) is signaled by the coming of the summer rains. The Tohono O'odham celebrate the rains with a feast featuring wine made from bahidaj, or saguaro cactus fruit. During this time, desert farmers plant traditional crops from the seeds developed by "those who went before."

Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon.

—Angelo Joaquin, Jr., Tohono O'odham



## WINTER



Of the four seasons, winter is the quietest time. It is the time when earth mother rests after having given of herself by providing food for her children and other necessities needed for human survival.

—Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo

*New Year's Dance*, by Fred Kabotie, Hopi, ca. 1920.

The Navajo people learned a long time ago that winter is the ultimate test of applied faith. Winter seems harsh, but at its heart we plant a seed of great knowledge. Knowing that winter is a time of transformation, the Navajo people retreat into the warmth of hoghans, tell stories of creation, sing songs, and utter long prayers. They also play shoe and string games. These are all activities that nourish the human spirit and allow the soul to attain staying power. When winter arrives, the elders teach the sacred knowledge to younger generations, so that we, the people, may continue. Winter allows for reflection, correction, and growth.

—Rex Lee Jim, Diné



Huerfano Mesa is the doorway to our past and to our future.  
 The Holy People clothed her in precious fabrics.  
 Thus we wear clothes of soft, warm fabric.  
 We wear the shiny silver of clear water.  
 We wear turquoise made of bright skies.  
 We dress as they have taught us.

—Luci Tapahonso, Diné

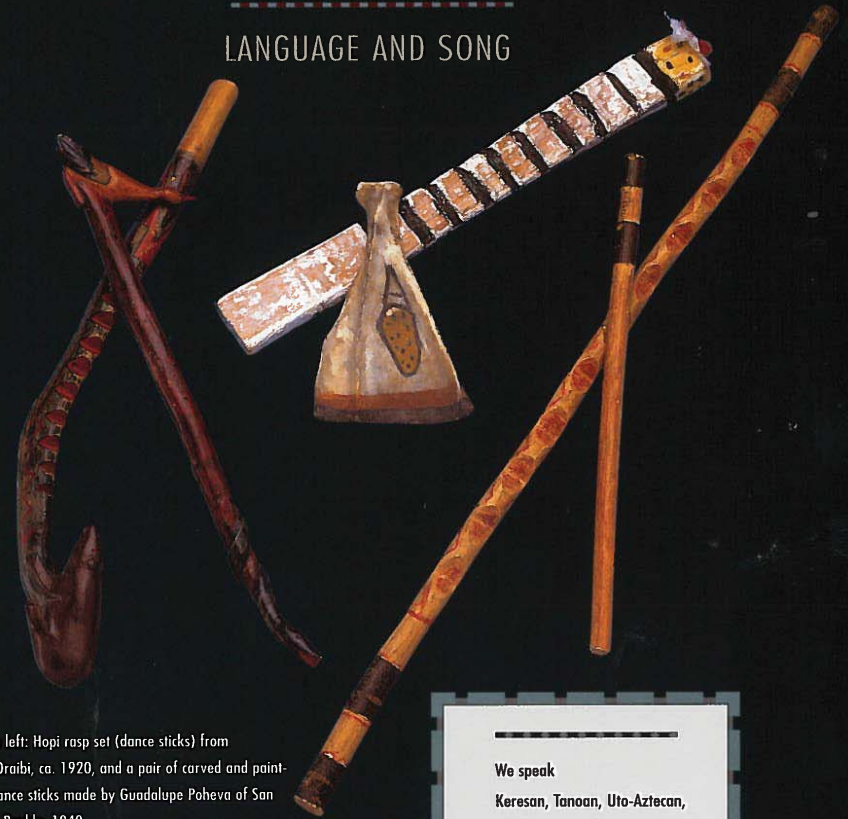


Largo School Pueblo in Largo Canyon, New Mexico.

**O**ur stories are told only in the winter when the snakes sleep and the snows fall. The winter is a good time for the earth to rest and the time when our grandmas and grandpas recite the legends. Our elders become our teachers and the stories become the curriculum for learning. The stories are shared from one generation to another through the oral tradition. Our stories speak of the world around us and our relationship with animals. They speak of the creator and all who were involved in the making of the world.

—Michael Lacapa, Apache/Hopi/Tewa

## LANGUAGE AND SONG



From left: Hopi rasp set (dance sticks) from Old Oraibi, ca. 1920, and a pair of carved and painted dance sticks made by Guadalupe Poheva of San Juan Pueblo, 1940.

We speak  
 Keresan, Tanoan, Uto-Aztecan,  
 Athabascan, and Zuni.  
 English  
 is our second language.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo

**B**ecause there are a multitude of Native American languages, radio stations broadcasting in the native tongue have a limited audience. For example, the Zuni FM station KISH occasionally broadcasts in a mixture of English and Zuni for the enjoyment of the few Zuni speakers on a reservation with a population of about ten thousand people. In the past there were attempts by missionaries to eliminate our language and culture through the removal of young boys and girls from their homes. Several young girls and boys were shipped off to Carlyle, Pennsylvania, in the 1800s. They all died from loneliness. Now, our language is dying from loneliness.

—Edmund J. Ladd, Zuni Pueblo



**G**randmother is a welcome influence on my children and me now that we have returned to Taos Pueblo. She is teaching my son how to speak Tiwa through example and repetition. For instance, each time he visits Grandma, the first thing he says to her is, “*Co*” (mother). When we moved away from Taos Pueblo, I was very young and unaware that I would lose the opportunity to learn the traditions and language. Both my children know about Nintendo, videos, and the urban environment that I experienced. Now, with Grandmother’s efforts, my children are learning about their cultural heritage through the Tiwa language.

—Paula Rivera, Taos Pueblo

**W**e sometimes gather at Navajo Community College to study the sacredness of our language and its primordial roots. Instructor Wilson Arnolith says, “*Saad*” [language] is formed as mist with the little waters in our mouth, our tongues are rainbows, and Saad travels over the rainbows . . . .”

We’re told that *Diyin Dine’é* hears us only if we speak correctly. My niece Sage asks, “Are our prayers heard if we don’t say them right?” We know our language has changed over the centuries, and certain phonemes are echoes from ancestral families. Holy speech, song, thought, a perfect chant are led, it is said, by the most perfect pair.

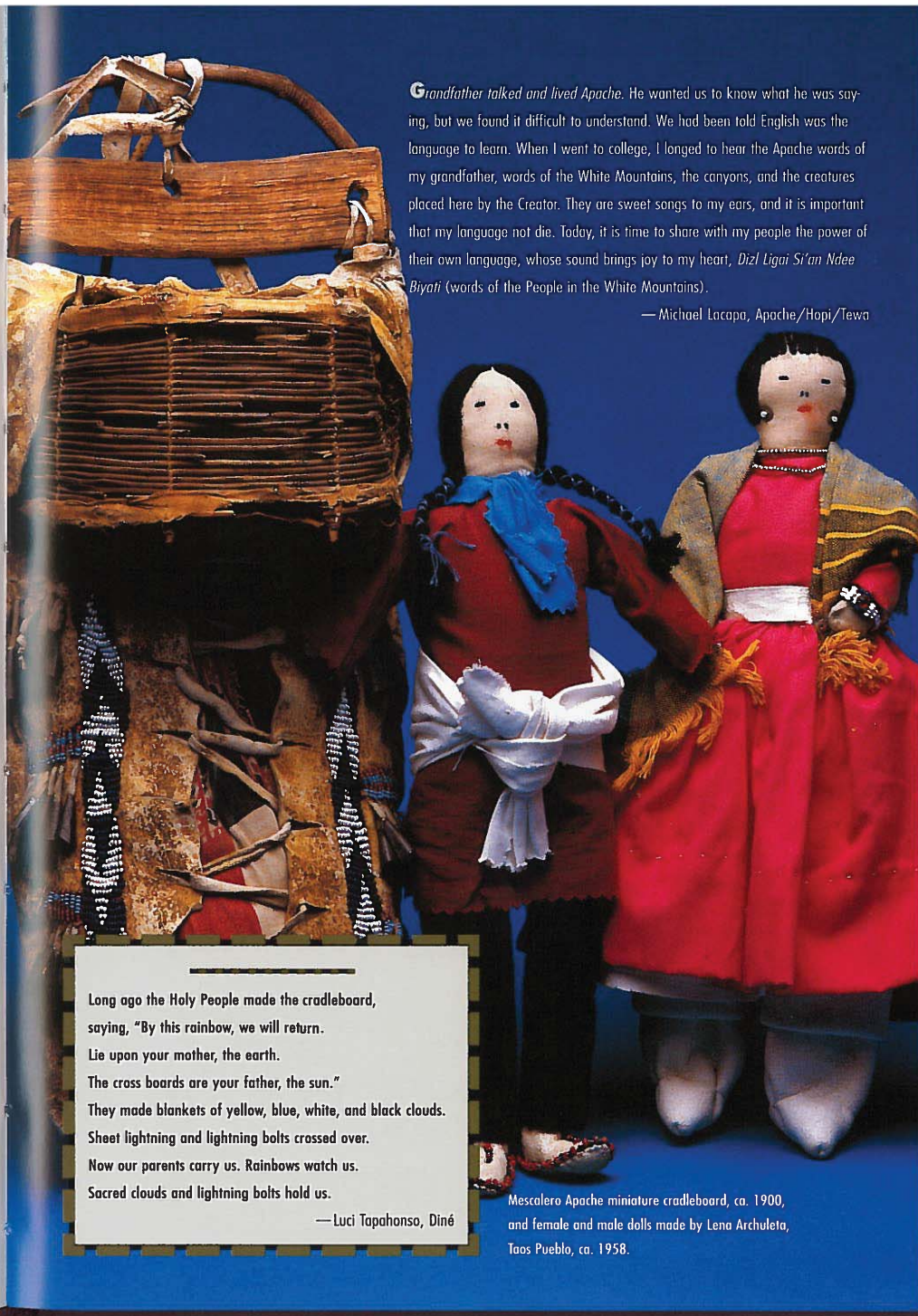
Linguist Gary Witherspoon says, “*Sa’ah Naaghái* is said to be Male. *Bik’é Hózhó* is said to be Female. This pair is manifested in the universe as bipolar pairs—*Sa’ah Naaghái* is Thought of the Universe and inner form of Speech, *Bik’é Hózhó* is Speech of the Universe and outer form of Thought.”

The invocation of “*Sa’ah Naaghái doo Bik’é Hózhó*” moves me and graces my life. *Baa nitséskeesgo shil házhó leh*. In certain ceremonies, songs are still accompanied by the upside-down basket, yucca strips, rattles, and flutes. As in the old days.

—Gloria Emerson, Diné

**I** came home one weekend and found my family watching a Phoenix Suns’ basketball game on TV with the sound turned off. Instead, they were listening to KTNN Navajo radio broadcasting the game in Navajo. We winced every time the announcer yelled, “*Jáhonaa’ái*,” a sacred name of Sunbearer. Navajo radio does its part to revitalize our language. We listen to ads selling mutton, cars, and beds, and to music and news in the Navajo language. Alvin Sandoval, of the Alamo Navajo Band near Magdalena, New Mexico, and of KABR radio, helped produce a series of tapes teaching Navajo on topics such as the months of the calendar. So our language now zips through radio crystals. Words are coined and songs are sung for future generations.

—Gloria Emerson, Diné



**G**randfather talked and lived Apache. He wanted us to know what he was saying, but we found it difficult to understand. We had been told English was the language to learn. When I went to college, I longed to hear the Apache words of my grandfather, words of the White Mountains, the canyons, and the creatures placed here by the Creator. They are sweet songs to my ears, and it is important that my language not die. Today, it is time to share with my people the power of their own language, whose sound brings joy to my heart, *Dizl Ligai Si’an Ndee Biyati* (words of the People in the White Mountains).

—Michael Lacapa, Apache/Hopi/Tewa

Long ago the Holy People made the cradleboard,  
saying, “By this rainbow, we will return.  
Lie upon your mother, the earth.  
The cross boards are your father, the sun.”  
They made blankets of yellow, blue, white, and black clouds.  
Sheet lightning and lightning bolts crossed over.  
Now our parents carry us. Rainbows watch us.  
Sacred clouds and lightning bolts hold us.

—Luci Tapahonso, Diné

Mescalero Apache miniature cradleboard, ca. 1900, and female and male dolls made by Lena Archuleta, Taos Pueblo, ca. 1958.



Drummers for the Comanche Dance, San Ildefonso Pueblo, January 1933.  
Inset: Drum and beater made by Lorenzo Herrera, Cochiti Pueblo, ca. 1920.

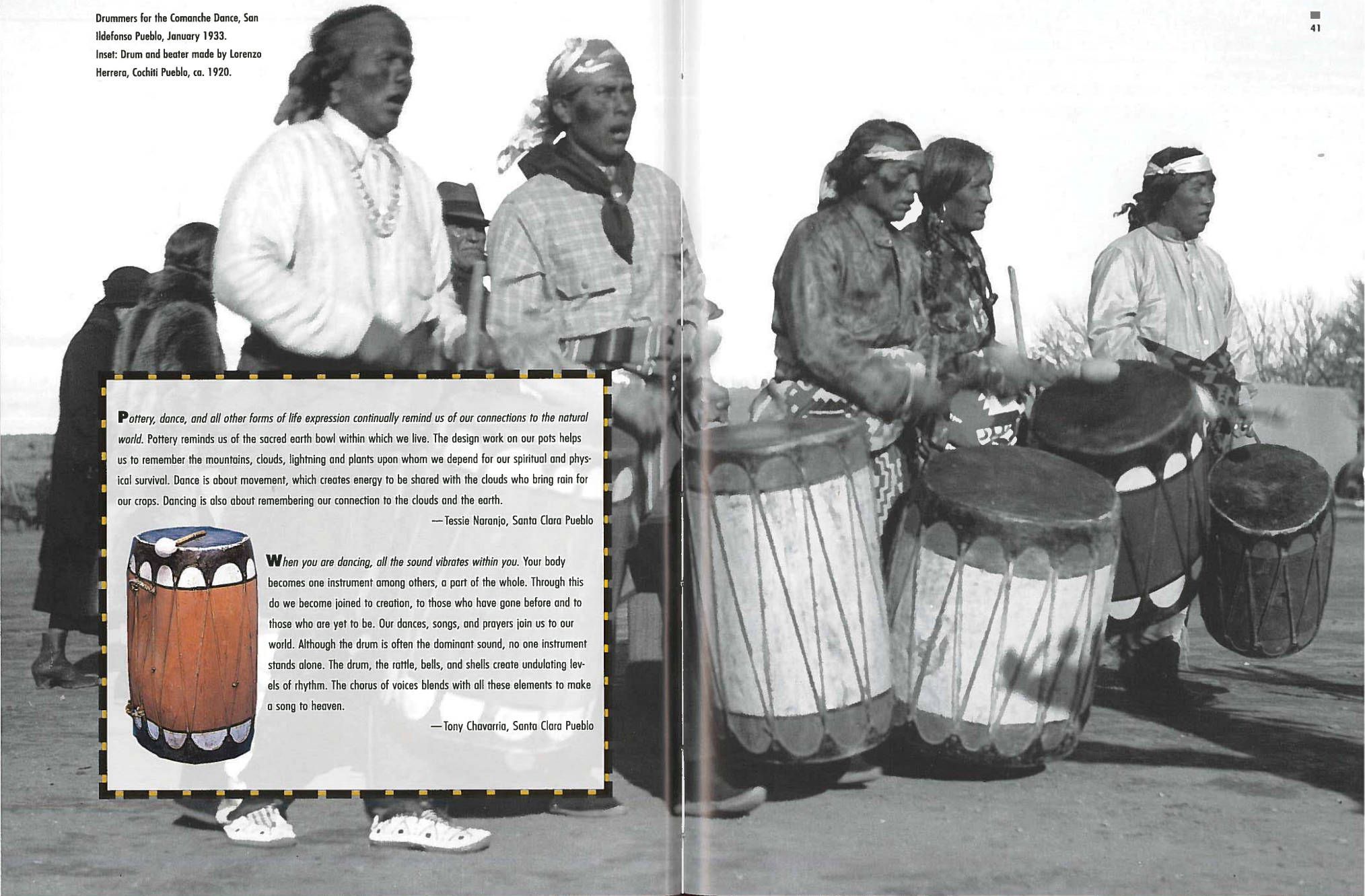
**P**ottery, dance, and all other forms of life expression continually remind us of our connections to the natural world. Pottery reminds us of the sacred earth bowl within which we live. The design work on our pots helps us to remember the mountains, clouds, lightning and plants upon whom we depend for our spiritual and physical survival. Dance is about movement, which creates energy to be shared with the clouds who bring rain for our crops. Dancing is also about remembering our connection to the clouds and the earth.

—Tessie Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo

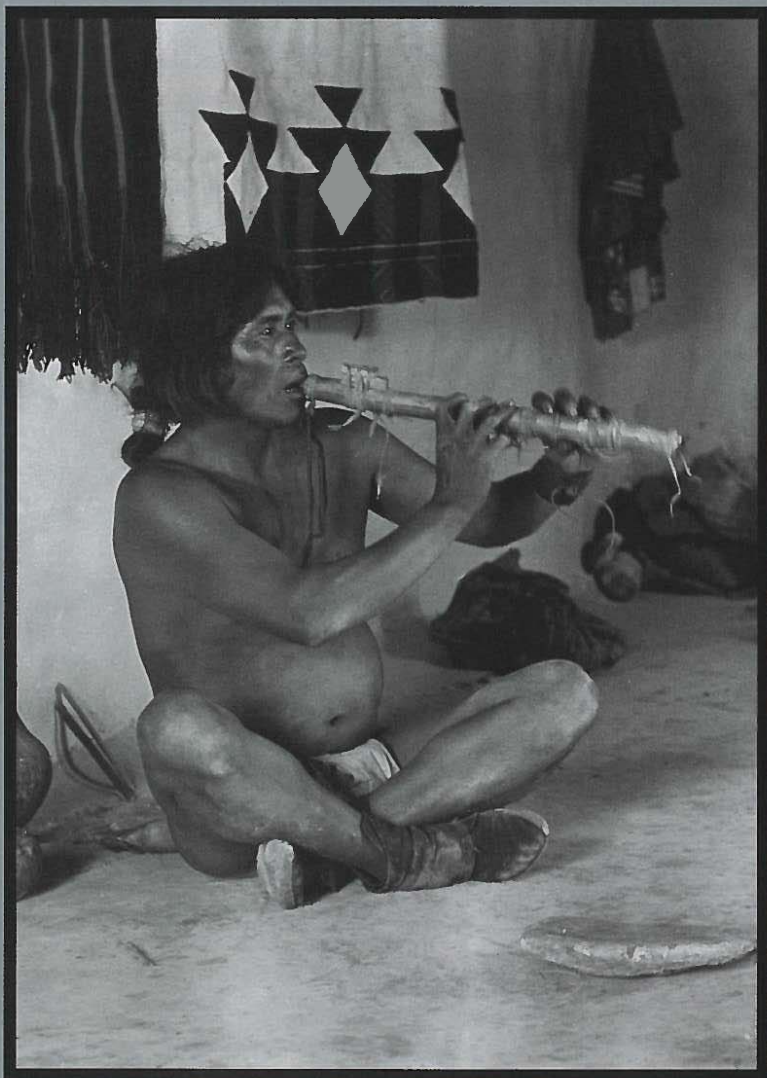


**W**hen you are dancing, all the sound vibrates within you. Your body becomes one instrument among others, a part of the whole. Through this do we become joined to creation, to those who have gone before and to those who are yet to be. Our dances, songs, and prayers join us to our world. Although the drum is often the dominant sound, no one instrument stands alone. The drum, the rattle, bells, and shells create undulating levels of rhythm. The chorus of voices blends with all these elements to make a song to heaven.

—Tony Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo







Left: Flute player, Hopi Arizona ca. 1911.

Photo by H.F. Robinson MNM Neg. No. 21621

This page from left: Taos flute of painted cane and buckskin, ca. 1900; Tohono O'odham (Pima) flute of painted cane with cut designs and finger holes, ca. 1920; carved cedar flute made by Phillip Hoozous, Chiricahua Apache, 1977.

**A**s a novice Hopi composer, I am consistently reminded that the words of a song are a humble petition to the spiritual forces for their blessings. My father and grandfather taught me that my corn plants are my children. By singing to the corn, I help them to mature. Indeed, the best place to contemplate and compose a song is in the solitude of my cornfield. The women would sing grinding songs to the rhythm of the metate and mano as they ground the corn into flour. Our traditions say that the stones become happy and honored when they hear the grinding songs.

— Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma, Hopi