

two and gave the People their choice of the pieces. While the young men were considering which piece to take, Coyote grabbed the tip and ran away with it, leaving the butt end for the Kisani- and that is why the Pueblo People have always had better corn than the Navaho. After the angry words, the Kisani moved away from the People, which is why they and the Navaho live apart to-day.

Then First Man and First Woman, Black Body and Blue Body built seven sacred Mountains with the earth brought from the lower world. And the Four Great Mountains were DSIS-NA-JINI to the East, TSODZIL to the South, DOOKOSLID to the West, and DEBENTSA to the North, and within these boundries were the three lesser mountains. These are still the Sacred Mountains of the DINEH, the Navaho People.

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The gods told the People to stand away to allow the Wind ~~to~~ enter. The White Wind blew from the East and the Yellow Wind blew from the West, blowing between the buckskins. While the Winds were blowing, eight Mirage People came walking around the skins four times. While they walked the People saw the feathers move. When the Mirage People had completed their fourth round, the upper skin was lifted. A man and a Woman lay where the ears of corn had been; the white ear had been changed into a man, the yellow ear into a woman, and the Wind gave them life. It is the wind coming ^{out of} ~~into~~ our mouths that gives us life- when it stops we die. In the skin at the tips of our fingers we can see the trail of the wind. Thus the gods created First Man and First Woman.

The first children born to First Man and First Woman were hermaphrodite twins. Then more sets of twins came, and after the last pair the gods took First Man and First Woman away to the East Mountain and kept them there for four days. When they returned all the children were taken to the same place. After all returned they occasionally wore masks and when this happened they prayed for all good things, for rain, and abundant crops. The children of First Man and First Woman married among the Mirage People, and many children were born to them. Many of their off spring married among the Kisani and among the People from the lower worlds, and soon there were many people in the Fourth World with First Man as their chief.

changes to Van Volkenberg story of the birth of White Shell Woman

Other supernatural beings appeared in the Fourth World. There was Begochidi and the Sun who created the animals, Changing Woman, wife of the Sun. Perhaps the most preeminent was Changing Woman, who symbolized regeneration, who brought all green things to life

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~~But times were hard and there were many Enemy Monsters who killed and ate people.~~

The people from the Third World had been in the Fourth World for eight yeays when one day they saw the sky stooping down and the earth rising to meet it. From the point of contact there sprang from the earth COYOTE and BADGER, children of the sky. Coyote, the elder, came

two and gave the People their choice of the pieces. While the young men were considering which piece to take, Coyote grabbed the tip and ran away with it, leaving the butt for the Kisaní- and that is why the Pueblo People have always had better corn than the Navaho. After the angry words, the Kisaní moved away from the People, which is why they and the Navaho live apart to-day.

Then First Man and First Woman, Black Body and Blue Body built seven sacred mountains with the earth brought from the lower world. And the four Great Mountains were DIS-NA-JINI to the East, TSODZIL to the South, DOOKOSLID to the West, and DEBENTSA to the North. Within these boundaries were the three lesser mountains, NAVAHO MOUNTAIN, HUERFANO MESA, and GOBONADOR KNOB. These are still the Sacred Mountains of the DINEH, the Navaho People.

But times were bad, and there were many Enemy Monsters who killed and ate people. One day First Man was standing on Huerfano Mesa and looking to the East he saw a rain cloud resting on Gobonador Knob. Each day it enveloped the Knob more and more and on the fourth day it completely covered it. He told First Woman that something unusual was happening, and he set forth to see what it was, singing a Blessing Song as he went.

When First Man reached Gobonador Knob he heard a baby cry; it was lying with its head toward the West and its feet toward the East. Its cradle was made of two short rainbows; over the baby's chest and feet lay the red beams of the rising sun. Arched over it's face was another short rainbow. Four blankets covered the baby; one was black, one was blue, another was yellow, and the fourth was a white cloud. Along both sides were rows of loops made of lightening, and through these sunbeams were laced back and forth.

First Man did not know what to do with the ~~issings~~ fastenings, so he

took the baby back to Huerfano Mesa to First Woman telling her that he had found the baby on Gobonador Knob in the rain and darkness. Soon they heard the call of Talking God, and then the call of House God, as they came. Talking God clapped his hands ~~together~~ over his mouth saying that something important had happened, for the baby was ^{what} the Holy People had been wishing for. Talking God placed the cradle on the ground and with one pull of the strings, the lacings came free.

"This is my daughter" First Woman said, and First Man said the same. Days passed which were the same as years, and when two days passed, the baby sat up. Then she was dressed in white shell. On the tenth day she was named WHITE SHELL WOMAN (also she was known as Changing Woman), and thus she was brought by the Holy People, to become, perhaps, the most preeminint of the supernatural beings for she symbolized re-generation, brings all green things to life, and who symbolizes fertility.

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This is a partial story of the Creation Myth

THE CREATION MYTH

To understand the Navaho People, even in small measure, it is essential to know at least some part of their symbolic ritual. That they have so rich a background comes as a surprise to many. The Navaho have retained their culture through centuries without the use of written language, without centers of education, without a religious head, for there is no such office. It simply exists in every person, in every family, in every region of their land. As the myths, the chants, and the symbolism are myriad, and ^{Knowledge of} as these must be handed down by word of mouth or they perish, Navaho capacity for memory has become very great. There is always a medicine man who carries on these beliefs, who conducts the ceremonies, who teaches others. The Creation Myth, as its title indicates, contains the roots of this symbolism, and signifies Navaho relation to all of nature. Like the Old Testament, the Navaho story contains a flood, expulsion from one world to another, and throughout, a strong suggestion of evolution.

~~During the past eighty years~~ Beginning with Dr. Washington Mathews, an Army surgeon stationed at Fort Wingate in the 1880s, and followed by a number of students and ethnologists, ^{gathering} ~~obtaining~~ their information ^{has been recorded} from many medicine men, ~~have recorded~~ this Myth, and though there are variations, the basic characters are similar. From the Myth has come the Blessing Way Ceremony- the most sacred to the Navaho People- ^{also} and the great variety of symbolism- plants and animals, birds and insects, colors and substances. There are white and white shell for the East, blue and turquoise for the South, yellow and coral or abalone for the West, black and jet for the North. Then there is the sacred number Four (or multiples thereof), the four seasons, the four directions, the four major colors, and the four sacred mountains.

That they have so rich a background comes as a surprise to many who have long considered the Western Indian as a savage. The Navaho have retained their culture through centuries without the use of written language, without centers of education, without a religious head for there is no such office. It simply exists in every person in every family

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Just below the junction of the San Juan and the Pine Rivers in north central New Mexico, where the new Navaho Dam is now creating a large reservoir, there was a meadow on the eastern side of the San Juan. Along one side of the meadow was a cliff of reddish sandstone, and etched into this facade was a series of petroglyphs chipped out of the rock with obsidian tools centuries ago. Here were the remnants of petroglyphs of the Twin Hero Gods (Twin War Gods), sons of Changing Woman and the Sun, who slew the monsters on this earth that the Dineh might safely live here. On this sheer slab of rock also was another petroglyph of Changing Woman Herself-She who symbolizes the continuance of life- who renews growth, who benefits all living things. In one hand she holds an ear of corn, in the other

The story relates how a ray of light from the Sun passed through drops of water from a watherfall, impregnating Changing Woman. When twins were born, one was named Monster Slayer, the other Child-of-the-Water. This is probably the only image of this sacred Navaho Diety, for She is never depicted in any sand painting or in any way.

Now She is submerged beneath the waters of the reservoir, but surely the spirit of Changing Woman will bless this water as it goes forth onto the dry and barren land, fulfilling Her mission of renewing life, and bringing new crops and a richer life to many of the Dineh.

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To understand the Navaho People, even in small measure, it is essential to know at least some part of the symbolic ritual of these Indians. Their lives, their thoughts, their^{ly} behavior, are deep-rooted in their culture. That they have so rich a background comes as a surprise to many. One expects it on foreign shores, but to find it so strongly imbedded right in the middle of our ~~own~~ country seems strange to those who do not know this heritage. The Navaho have retained this^{ly} culture through many centuries without the use of a written language, without centers of education, without tribal dictates. There is no individual head of their religion; it simply exists in every person, in every family, in every region of their land. The^{ly} capacity for memory is very great, for the myths, the chants the symbolism are myriad and they must be handed down by word or they perish. There is always a Medicine Man who ~~thexnyths,~~ ~~thexnythixmxxmxxfxthexxhantxx~~ ^s to continue their beliefs, who performs ceremonies and who teaches others.

Lower
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The Creation Myth, as its title indicates, is the foundation of Navaho culture. The story contains the roots of symbolism, and indicates Navaho relation to all of Nature. The first ^{religion} ethnologist to study Navaho ~~thexnyth~~ was Washington Mathews, an Army physician stationed at Fort Wingate in the 1880s. There are several variations of this myth, most of a later origin, ~~but~~ as Dr. Mathews was the first to inscribe it, his seems the most authentic. It is a beautiful story, ~~q~~ and ~~as~~ Dr. Mathews has given it a Biblical ring. There are interesting comparisons to the Old Testament;- there is a flood- expulsion from one world to another because of sin- and throughout the story a strong suggestion of evolution. Here, too ~~thexnythixmxxmxxfxthexxhantxx~~ are the symbolic colors and stones. White and white shell, for the East, blue

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Here is a condensed version as Dr. Mathews has written it.

DZII - NA - JINI Sis Naajini }
 Tsis Naajini }

TSODSIL

Tsoodzik

BO-O'K'O-OSLIIID Dook'o'ooskiid

DII - B^{eh} - NIIHTSA Dibé NTsaa

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