

〔Article〕

The Dine's Sense of the Sacred: Past and Present

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Abstract

Native American spirituality, with its understanding of humans as part of the earth teaches a certain humility and respect for life in all of its forms.

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抄 録

ナバホ、又はディネDine（ナバホの人々は自らをそう呼ぶ）は、今でも、自分の生活している伝統の中で強い影響を受けている。神話の中では、世界がどのように造られた（創造）、自分たちの役割はどこにあるのか、といったことや、ほかの人たちとの関わり方や彼らが～彼らの面倒をまだ見てくれており、この世界の全ての居住者の間を旅している～と信じている聖徒ディンディネに関係する方法を、説明している。本論文では、こんにち会話や歌や詩で日々 常の中で使用されるにあたって、ディネ人たちの神聖な伝統や神聖さという感覚がどういったものなのか、について焦点をあてる。

The search for man's origins and the meaning of life is an essential part of every culture. All cultures have developed sacred traditions that explain man's origins, position among the other animals and man's duty to each other as well as the way he is to interact with other people and his environment. These sacred traditions become an essential part of their culture, a part of their cultural identity, and as such the sacred traditions become a large part of their "cultural filter" through which they evaluate and interact with the rest of the world's cultures. The Navajo, or Dine (the People) as they call themselves, are still strongly influenced by their own traditional sacred stories that explain how the world and they were created as well as their role in it. These stories tell them to search for balance between the various animals, and other people and how to relate and interact with the Holy People or Diyin Dine'e they believe still lookout for them and travel among all the dwellers of this world. This paper will focus on how the Dine's sacred traditions and their sense of the sacred is use in daily conversation, songs and/or poems today.

1 . Emergence Story

According to the Dine tradition the present world we live in is the Fifth World. The previous worlds were destroyed because of various transgressions of the people living in them. Traditionally, the Dine Story of Creation, or Story of Emergence, is passed down from one generation to another orally through the sacred Blessing Way ceremony. This ceremony takes nine days to complete, but the

story is told with the same sense of tradition and reverence as a rabbi might teach a Jewish child, or a priest or minister might retell the story of Christ in a church. For a deeper understanding of the Dine sense of the sacred and how it might be revealed in the life and language of the Dine today a brief discussion of The Emergence Story is necessary.

The Dine believe that the first world was inhabited by the Air Spirit People (Insects People in some traditions or interpretations). According to the traditional story there were twelve of the Air Spirit People or Insect People. These were the Locust, White Locust, Dragon Flies, Red Ants, Black Ants, Red Beetles, Dung Beetles, Black Beetles, White-Faced Beetles, Yellow Beetles, Hard Beetles, and Bats. They lived on an island floating in a gigantic ocean. The sky was a hard dome that fit like a lid on a kettle at the horizons. The Air Spirit People lived in the middle of the island near three rivers. The God called *Tieholtsodi* (Water Monster) lived in the ocean to the east, the God *Tattl' aah alleeh'* (Blue Heron) lived in the ocean to the south, *Ch' al* (Frog) lived in the ocean to the west, and *I'ni jil-gaii* (Winter Thunder) lived in the Ocean to the north.

The Air Spirit People began to commit adultery and started to quarrel and fight among themselves. This angered the four Gods who warned them to live in peace and to stop their evil ways, but they were unable to control themselves and continued on their bad path. The Gods then met together and told the Air Spirit People they must leave their homes and no longer live in the first world. The people knew of no other place and stayed where they were. One morning the people saw that they were surrounded by water and would soon drown. In order to escape, they flew high into the sky till they reached the hard top of the sky, a strange creature with a blue head called to them from a hole in the sky. The Air Spirit People followed this strange creature through the hole to the Second World.

It turned out that the strange creature that had befriended them was a member of the *Tgashiji'zhi dine* (Swallow people). They were the inhabitants of the Second World till the arrival of the Air Spirit People. The Air Spirit People were accepted as friends by the Swallow People and they began to live in harmony. Unfortunately, the harmony lasted only twenty-three days. Once again it was the inappropriate advances to the wife of one of the Swallow People that caused troubles and the Swallow People demanded that they leave the Second World.

Once again the Air Spirit People flew to the hard shell like ceiling of the sky and couldn't find an opening. Once again they were befriended. This time a white face appeared to them. This was *Nilch'i*, the wind, who told them where there was a small slit in the sky and that they could use it to enter yet another world. The Air Spirit People did as they were told and they were able to enter the Third World. They found that it was populated by the Grasshopper People. Once again, the Air Spirit People found no kin in this Third World and asked the Grasshopper People to accept them as friends and let them live together. Since they shared the same language and could communicate well with each other. The Grasshopper People accepted them as brothers and they all spoke to each other in brotherly terms and lived in harmony for twenty-four days. Once again it was the adulterous behavior of the Air Spirit People that resulted in their expulsion from this Third World.

Once again, the Air Spirit People had to take to the air and soon found themselves at the hard top of the sky. This time they saw a red headed figure appear. This was *Nilch'i lichii* the Red Wind and he instructed them to fly west and they would find a way to the Fourth world. The Insect People flew

through the corkscrew like opening into the Fourth World. Four of the Grasshopper People came with them a white one, a black one, yellow one, and a blue one. That is the reason, the Navajo tradition explains, we have grasshopper of those colors today. The surface colors of the Fourth World was a combination of black and white. The Insect People could see four snow capped mountains one in each of the four cardinal directions. Once again they sent out scouts and the scouts returned finding only barren land and except in the north where a race of strange people were found. These people cut their hair square in the front and lived in houses and cultivated the fields. They also befriended the scouts and gave them food. These new people were the *Kiis'aanii* (today's Pueblo people). Two *Kiis'aanii* visited the camp of the Air Spirit People and guided them to their own camp some distance away. The *Kiis'aanii*s shared their crops of pumpkins, corn and squash. After once again finding friends in a new world, the Insect People held a meeting and vowed to change their ways and return the friendship of the *Kiis'aanii* with honesty and good neighborly behavior on their part.

After living in harmony with their new friends for a quite a while, the Air Spirit People heard strange voices which grew louder till they could see that there were four god like beings among them. These Gods were later to be called *Haashch'eeh dine'e* (*Diyin Dine'e*) or Holy People as the whites or *Bilagaana* would called them. One was *Bits'iiis ligai'*, or White Body which would be similar to today's *Haashch'ceelti'i* or Talking God; *Bits'iiis dootl'izh*, or Blue Body the equivalent of today's *To neinili*; or Water Sprinkler; *Bits'iiis li'tsoiii*, or Yellow Body similar to today's *Hashch'eoghan* which is variously translated to day as Growling God, House God or Calling God; *Bits'iiis lizhin*, or Black Body the equivalent of today's God of Fire or *Haashch eeshzhini* (Paul Zolbrod, p.48).

These Holy People wanted to communicate with these new residents of their land and tried hard with hand gestures to make these new people understand their instructions. Four days in a row they came and tried to make them understand, the Air Spirit People were unable to understand the mysterious signs they made. After the fourth time *Bits'iiis lizhin* (Black Body) stayed behind after the other Holy People had left and spoke to the insect people in their own language. Black Body informed the new residents that the Holy People wanted to create more people in this, the Fourth World. The new people were to look more like the Holy People themselves. The new men were to have 'Hands like ours, they are to have feet like ours. They are to have mouths like ours and teeth like ours. They must learn to think ahead, as we do.' Furthermore, Black Body informed his audience that they were unclean and that the people must cleanse themselves before the Holy People returned in twelve days time (Zolbrod, p.49).

As instructed, the Air Spirit People bathed themselves with the women drying themselves with yellow corn meal and the men with white corn meal. Once they were cleansed the Holy People's voices were heard from a distance and they again grew louder. Once again, the four *Haashch'eeh dine'e*, or Holy People were among them. Blue Body or *Bits'iiis dootl'izh*, and Black Body, or *Bits'iiis lizhin*, held the sacred buckskins. White Body, or *Bits'iiis ligaii*, carried two ears of corn one yellow and one white. The buckskin was laid down very carefully with the head pointing west. Then the Holy People carefully placed the two ears of corn on the buckskin with tips pointing east. Then they covered the corn with the second buckskin pointing its head east. They then placed a feather of the white eagle under the white ear of corn and a feather of a yellow eagle under the yellow corn. Once all of this was

in place the White Wind, or *Nilch'i ligai* was called on to blow between the buckskins as the Holy People walked slowly four times around the items. When they stopped walking they lifted the upper buckskin and there lay *Altse hatiin* and *Altse asdzaa*, or First Man and First Woman.

The Air Spirit People were instructed to build a house for the newcomers so they could start to populate the world with the new people the Holy People had wanted to create. Quickly many sets of twins were born. The first set was born in just four days, but they were hermaphrodites. Other twines were born in successive four day periods. The second set was one man and one women and they grew to maturity in four days and decided to live as man and wife from then on. Their younger siblings all born as twins, continued to be born at four day intervals and they all decide to live as man and wife.. First Woman had five sets of twins in total and only the first were hermaphrodite. The four other set of twins were born as one man and one woman and they all decided to live together as man and wife. The Holy People came again after the birth of the last set of twins and took First Man and First Woman to their home in the eastern mountain for four days and after them their children were taken to the Holy People's home.

Upon their return, the Air Spirit People noticed that First Man and First Woman as well as their children could be seen wearing masks similar to the masks that Talking God (*Haste'ceelti*) and House God (*Haste'hogan*) or Growling God would wear. It seemed that these masks were to be worn to help the people pray for good things or necessary things like a good hunt or good luck and good health. So it seemed to the other people that First Man and First Woman were indeed favored by the Holy People who brought them into being.

When the children of First Man and First Woman came back from their stay with the Holy People they separated and stopped their incestuous ways and married with the Mirage People who also shared the Forth World. This resulted in a stronger people, and it strengthened the moral idea that people should not marry with their own brothers or sisters. The new offspring intermarried with the other people of the fourth world and the population grew and the people prospered.

The Navajo tradition relates that after some years new creatures entered the lives of the people, Coyote and Badger. The Navajo tradition says the people saw the earth rise to meet the sky and that shortly after wards *Ma'ii* or Coyote and his younger brother *Nahashchi'id* or Badger, appeared. This made them the sons of the sky and the earth. The Badger quickly disappeared into the hole that led to the lower world and the Coyote started his troublesome relationship with men. To the Navajo the Coyote would be a harbinger of misadventure who would be the cause of many troubles and hardships for men because of its inability to choose an honest way to do things.

The next big event of the Fourth World was the separation of the men from the women. It seemed that First Man and First Woman were also the first to fight over whether men or women could live better without the other. It seems that the age ole struggle between the sexes would play an important part in the Navajo sacred tradition. The fight started simply enough over whether the role of men or the role of women was more necessary than the other, but soon First Man and First Woman made many strong challenges and things reached a breaking point. It was decide that the two sexes would separate and live on opposite sides of the river. The separation became longer and longer as each side had place a huge value on their pride

After four years of living a part and watching the women slowly starve and see his own men go half crazy by the depression caused from not seeing their wives and girlfriends, First Man 's attitude began to change. He realized that they needed to reunite with the women in order to keep their race alive and he sought a meeting with First Woman. At the meeting First Woman admitted that the women could not survive without the men and First Man acknowledged that men too could not live without women and he said that he would welcomed the women back. However, the reunion did not go smoothly as two girls and their mother were separated from the others and were left on the women's side of the river. They tried to swim the river but only the mother made it to the other shore. The daughters were taken under the water by the Water God (Monster in some texts), *Tieholtsodi*. The People waited in vain for three days and the girls did not reappear then the voice of the Holy People was heard to call four times as usual. White Body showed himself and pointed to the river. The people surmised that he meant to say that the Water God had the girls. White Body was joined by Blue Body and they both had magic bowls which they spun on top of the river. This action created a hole in the water that led to the great house of the Water God. The People went into the house and were secretly followed by Coyote. The people demanded that the Water God return the two girls. The monster said nothing, but the people reclaimed the two girls and returned to the surface. Unfortunately, they did not see that Coyote had taken the two children of the Water Monster and hidden them under his heavy fur coat and secretly returned with them to the surface. This thoughtless, mischievous act was to ensure a bad reputation for the coyote.

The day after returning to the surface, the people saw that many of the deer, antelope and other animals were all running by. They were deeply surprised and troubled by this phenomenon as it continued for three days. At dawn of the fourth morning the people could see a white light in the east. The Locus scouts were sent out to investigate and they returned with word that floodwaters were approaching quickly and they would all die. Many people panicked and got hysterical. They sought help from the squirrels who asked who planted a juniper tree. The tree grew quickly and started to grow tall but stopped and started to grow horizontal. Then the Weasels tried to plant a spruce to see if that could grow high enough to save them. It to started out quick and started to grow up, but then it, too, grew horizontal rather than vertically.

The people were desperate now. Suddenly, they saw two men approach them. The men had brought with them one bag of sacred earth from each of the seven sacred mountains of he Fourth World. The young man placed the sacred earth on the ground and planted thirty-two reeds in the ground. Soon the reeds started to grow and they intertwined with each other and created one great reed. An opening appeared and the people entered the center of the reed as it swayed back and forth. White Body, Blue Body and Black Body all accompanied the people and they helped to steady the reed as it grew. The rear guard of the party was the turkey that entered the reed last and whenever the water touched his tail he gobbled and the party moved higher in the reed. When the reeds had almost reached the sky, a hawk was sent out to find a way through the hard shell sky of the Fourth World. He returned with the news that he had seen light on the other side and tried to dig through the sky but couldn't. The People then sent out all the digging animals the bear, wolf, coyote and the lynx the badger. The latter had hit water as he returned wet from his dig, but he could not continue to dig. The

locust was sent out to see what he could do and he was able to drill a shaft through to the Fifth World. It was the locust that was the first to enter the Fifth World and he met two pairs of loons each loon represented one of the four cardinal directions. They demanded that he pass a test in order to share this Fifth World with them. If he could not pass the test he would die. He had to pass two arrows through his body, piercing his heart. He was able to do this difficult task twice once for the loons of the East and West and once for the loons of the North and South. When both pairs of loons were satisfied that he had successfully passed the test, they gave him permission to live in the Fifth World. The locust returned to the other people, and led them to their new home.

2 . The Fifth World

The Fifth World presented the Air Spirit People and the other people that escaped from the Fourth world with new challenges, but some of these problems were related to things that had occurred in the Forth World. The first thing was that the people notice when they looked down into hole through which they had escaped the Fourth World and noticed that the water was still rising and might flood this Fifth World. It was then that they saw that the Coyote was acting suspicious and they questioned him about doing something to bring the destruction of their Fourth World. After getting inadequate responses from him, they searched his robes and found the two children of the Water Monster. Immediately they threw the children back into the hole and back to their father. This action calmed the flood and the water stopped rising. Other stories relate how the Coyote created death by making what most people thought that it was a poor bet that if a stone floated in the water the people would never die and if it sunk then they would die. Of course, the stone sank and the people would have to die. The people were upset by this knowledge and were angry with him. However, Coyote argued that death would not be all that bad because the Fifth World was not large enough for all the people and their children if some people did not die. Most of the people agreed that this made sense and accepted this fact and realized the Coyote was correct. Later on, as First Man was trying to give more light to the Fifth World by arranging the stars, Coyote got impatient and threw all of the stars into the sky and created what we white men call the Milky Way.

Another important thing that happened was the result of the separation of men and women. It seems that both men and women were driven by loneliness to commit unnatural acts, but some of the women gave birth to babies from their actions and these were to become Alien Monsters or *Binaayee'* that were to devour most of the people in this new world and cause the Holy People or *Haasch'eeh dine'ee* to cause the creation of heroes to rid the world of these evil creatures.

3 . Changing Woman and White Shell Woman

The alien monsters grew to adulthood quickly and started to devour all of the people in the Fifth World. According to some traditions, only First Man and First Woman and two others were left of the people who escaped from the Forth World and some isolated groups of the others who escaped with them. At this time, First Man noticed dark clouds, rain and lightening over Giant Spruce Mountain or Ch'oolii (Governador Knob today) and decided that it was a sign from the Holy People to go there and see what it was all about. Once on the mountain there more lightening as he neared the peak he saw

lightening flashing everywhere and then he heard the cry of a baby, and at that very moment a magnificent rainbow showered the mountain with beautiful colors. First Man went to where he had heard the cry and found only a turquoise doll. The doll was not the shape of a baby though, it was in the shape of a full grown woman. He brought the turquoise doll back to First Woman and told her to treat it like a real baby.

After a few days the *Haaschch'eelti* (Talking God) came to them and asked First Man to bring the figure back to *Ch'ool'ii* or Giant Spruce Mountain. When they arrive they found Holy People and *Haashch'eelti'*, *Haschch'eoghan*, *Bits'iis Ligall*, and *Bitd'iis dootl'izh i*. In addition, they

Found assembled the Image Bring People or *Tseghadi'ndinii* dine, *Nilchi'i* (Wind), *Chahalheel* (the Darkness), *Ji dine'e* (Daylight People), and Mirage Stone People, among others. White Body was holding a figure exactly like the turquoise figure the First Man had brought. However, White Body's figure was made of white shells. In a sacred ceremony utilizing buckskins and, white corn and yellow corn, and conducted by the Holy People with the assistance of the Mirage Stone People the two images came to life. The birth of these two new Holy People was a great blessing to the people. Some traditions say that they are sisters Changing Woman or *Asdzaa nadleehe* and White Shell Woman *Yoolgai asdzaa*. Some of the traditional versions say they are one and the same, Changing Woman. The traditional stories also relate that Changing Woman is the child of Father Sky and of Mother Earth which gives her a very sacred heritage. The white ear and yellow ear of corn used in the ceremony also came to life and became White Corn Boy and Yellow Corn Girl which further strengthen the association of these colored corns for men and women respectively and reinforced the idea of the sacredness of corn.

Changing Woman (White Shell Woman) is the single most beloved of the Holy People of the Navajo. It was the ceremony that the Holy People performed for her puberty that became the traditional puberty ceremony that all Navajo girls receive. This ceremony is still practiced by many of the traditional families. Also, Changing Woman and White Shell Woman each had a child by the Sun or *Jo'honaa'ei* (according to some traditions only Changing Woman) and these 'hero twins' Monster Slayer or *Naayee'neizghani* and He who Cuts the Heart Out of the Enemy or *Na'idigishi* would destroy the monsters plaguing the people with the help of their father the Sun.

After the monsters were destroyed, Changing Woman went to live with her husband the Sun in the west. As she left for her new home in the west, she created the various clans of the Dine from the skin of various parts of her body.

Changing Woman would also become the symbol of the perfect relationship between husband and wife. The roles of man and wife are drawn very clearly in the speech in which Changing Woman argued to the Sun and gave him the reasons for her to have a new home in the west:

You are male and I am female.

You are of sky I am of earth.

You are constant in your brightness, but I must change with the seasons.

You move constantly at the edge of heaven, while I must be fixed in one place.

Remember, as different as we are, you and I, we are of one spirit. As Dissimilar as we are, you and I, we are of equal worth/ Unlike each other as you and I are, there can be no harmony in the universe as long as there is no harmony between us. (Zolbrod 1984: 274)

The Emergence story also goes on to tell how Changing Woman on her way to her new home in the west created the various clans of the Dine from the skin from various parts of her body so that all Dine feel a sort of kinship with her. It is no wonder then that she is so loved and revered by the Dine. She is a symbol of their unity as well as a symbol of motherhood, fertility and benevolence. That is why the *Hozhoji* or Blessingway Ceremony, the ceremony so closely associated with her and the Emergence Story, is the most popular of the many other ceremonies or Ways. Granted, there are many other ceremonies like the Huntingway, Nightway and so on, but since they are for more specific objectives they hold a different position than the Blessingway Ceremony.

4 . Other aspects of the sacred

The Emergence Story also gives the Dine the idea that their traditional home, the Hogan, is also a ceremonial hall and in that way it is sacred too. The door of a Hogan always faces east, the beginning of all things. When visiting the *Dinetah*, I and my students have been instructed to always move clockwise around it and never use a diagonal line to the door. The strong sense or respect of the power of each of the cardinal directions certainly is directly related to the Emergence Story.

Also the Emergence story bestowed sacredness to the *Dinetah* or Navajo Nation. In fact, the ceremonies like Blessingway, Nightway, Huntingway among many others can only effectively be practiced within the boundaries that the Gods gave them to live on. The area located between their four sacred mountains; Mt. Blanca or *Tsisnaassjini* in the east; Mt. Taylor or *Tsoodzil* in the south; San Francisco Peaks or *Doko'ooslid* in the west; Mount Hesperus or Dibe Nitsaa in the north. It is in these mountains that they can make their medicine and gather materials and fetishes needed for their ceremonies. In addition to these four mountains *Dzil Na'oodilii* or Huerfano Mesa, *Ch'oolii* or Governador Knob (the birth place of Changing Woman) and Navajo Mountain are also given sacred status.

Wind is another phenomenon that was given much emphasis in the Emergence story. It was *Nilch'i* or wind showed the Insect People/Air Spirit People the way to the Third World and *Nilch'i lichii'* or Red Wind that showed them the way to the Fourth World. Also, it was *Nilch'i ligai* or White Wind whose breath gave life to First Man and First Woman life. Likewise, it was *Nilch'i's* breath that gave life to Changing Woman, White Shell Woman, White Corn Boy and Yellow Corn Girl. So wind has become a metaphor for life in the Dine language. They often speak about the wind of life that individuals possess and when the wind of life may stop. Of course, the geography of the area and the strong winds that often blow across the *Dinetah* howling as it passes over their sacred mountains and across the land reinforces the power of these spirits or Holy People.

5 . Modern use of the sacred

There is little evidence that the Dine use the sacred or the stories of the sacred like western people. In fact, Dine tradition does not recognize a single supreme being, nor is there a word for religion because life and one's journey through it is religious and holy. They see man as an intricate part of a great system that includes all of their surroundings, animals, forces of nature, and the spirits and Holy People or *Diyyin Dine* (Gods). To the Dine, the world is a place where good, evil and benevolence exist together. They believe that the world presents man with many choices and that it is up to each of

us to choose a good path, one that has balance or has *Hozho*. A man may commit a crime or a bad indiscretion, but he is not on the “Dark side” yet. To the Navajo there is no Dark side or no devil. There are just bad spirits or spirit voices that tempt one from the way of beauty and good that is symbolized by their own favorite deity Changing Woman.

The traditional Dine may look down on Christianity as a “part-time” religion where a man’s God is available to him only a few hours on Sunday and only in the tiny churches which men build. (Raymond Friday Locke, p.5). It is apparent that the Dine believe that the Gods made their own church in the land that was given to the Dine and that the Gods don’t need the puny efforts of man to build a lesser structure. However, the Navajo religion has limitations too as mentioned above it can only be practice within the boundaries of their sacred mountains. The Navajo still use the oral tradition for most of their ceremonies and only some of their people are versed in the ceremonies in which they chant or sing about their various Spirit People or Holy People, although there is a concerted effort to record all the various oral traditions into books and to record sacred chants, there are many chants that may die because only a few are taking up the work of chanting. The Navajo Government has initiated some incentives to protect their traditions.

The Navajo seem to have no tradition of calling on their Gods to kill or do harm to another and no ‘God damn you’. Their war dances and chants simply ask the Gods to give them courage for the fight, purify themselves, or restore balance or *Hozho*. Likewise, I was informed by Walter Jensen, of the Dine College, that the worst a Navajo could be called was a Coyote, which means a trickster who may or may not mean harm. Remember it was the Coyote’s thoughtless act that caused the fourth World to be flooded. Also, as mentioned above, it was he who created death, but he argued that death was necessary so that the Dine did not overpopulate the world. In this way the coyote can be seen as a troubled being, but not without his own merit. This opinion was echoed by Eddie Tzo of the Office of Dine culture and Education who opinioned that most Navajo would use the English swear words to tell someone what they thought of their parentage or ancestry. Mr. Tso also agreed with Walter and others when he said that Navajo don’t usually say grace or any kind of prayer before one eats. One might say thank you after he felt the power of the food racing through his body though. Also, Dine might touch their bodies in a kind of ‘body Navajo’ as they said thank you for a meal. Apparently, the Navajos prefer ceremonies to voice their thanks. Sweat lodges are still a part of Navajo culture and it has its own set of chants that must be sung when entering or leaving it. Also, the Blessingway Ceremony as well as other ceremonies are still performed.

I also talked with a Mr. Sherman, a Christian, who agreed that it is a common sight to see a Dine speaking Navajo and then use an English word that would be more effect in putting his antagonist down. This Sherman was a great grandson of the famous Civil War General who spent some time in the Navajo country and some time with his great grandmother evidently. Other interviewees related similar stories.

6 . Modern Music

I did find some modern Navajo songs which alluded to the Emergence story. Jay Begaye’s CD *The Colorful World* has the songs *Saving Dookooslud* and *In Beauty We Walk*. The former is about trying to

save the sacred mountains from the white man and his snow made of wastewater and the latter seems to be a direct reference to Changing Woman or at least the Blessingway or search for *Hozho* or balance. Another artist Radmilla Cody has a CD entitle *Seed of Life* that contains songs like *Corn Grinding Song*, *Seed of Life*, *The Cycle of Life* and *The Return Home*. Corn grinding can be seen as a sacred act of living given the sacred aspects of corn. Also, seeds seem to relate to beginnings and fertility and they are planted in mother earth so this song seems to bring up many notions of the sacred Earth and the sense of life or beginnings which might bring up the image of Changing Woman. Changing Woman is a symbol of the cycles that the world and women must go through so *Cycle of Life* seems to call to mind the deity and all of the stories about her as well as the changing seasons and the changes women go through and for that matter all people. Likewise, returning home to Navajo Land or *Dinetah* is often a good reason to hold a Blessingway Ceremony so I think this song may invoke memories of such ceremonies as well as the concept of *Dinetah* itself lying between the four sacred mountains. I am sure that these titles reflect an active knowledge of the traditional Emergence Story and the sense of the sacred that is encoded in it.

7 . Conclusion

The Navajo's sense of the sacred is to find *Hozho* or balance or harmony in life in. Their rituals or ceremonies are all designed to encourage one to find this balance with in his family, within his community and across the *Dinetah* and, by extension, across the United States and beyond. To the Dine the path and journey of life is sacred and we must each find our balance our *Hozho* within ourselves and with in our environment. It is apparent that this sacred search for balance in life is still strong among the Dine as they live their lives on their 'Holy Land'.

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